

An Analysis of Emerging Forms of Social Organisation and Agency in the Aftermath of „fast track“ Land Reform in Zimbabwe

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I dedicate this thesis to my lovely wife Mzime

Abstract

The fast track land reform programme resulted in a fundamental reorganisation of rural relations in Zimbabwe, changing the landscape in an irreversible way with people from diverse backgrounds converging on former white-owned farms. This thesis tells the story of how the newly resettled land beneficiaries are organising themselves socially in response to various economic challenges. It makes a contribution towards understanding how redistributive land reforms and local government restructuring influence rural social organisation and agency. Furthermore the study examines local perceptions on the meanings of the „farm“ and „land redistribution“. An utterance by one war veteran “what used to be your farm is now our land and you are free to take your farm but leave our land” provides an alternative rendition to contestations of restitution versus a purely farm productionist discourse.

The study, through an analysis of primary and secondary data, provides a fresh understanding of the social outcomes of fast track. It traces the evolution of land and agrarian reforms in post-independence Zimbabwe and the political and social economic context that led to „fast track“. Through an analysis of field findings the thesis is able to define the dominant social groups that were resettled during fast track and the challenges they face in utilising the land. The findings show that the majority of the land beneficiaries were from the customary areas, with limited agricultural experiences. Local cooperation within informal networks and local farmer groups has been identified as one of the ways in which social reproduction is being organised. These groups are responsible for enhancing production capacity but they face a number of constraints.

The study derives its theoretical foundation from the post 1980s debates on rural society dominated by Mafeje (1993, 2003), Rahmato (1991) and Mamdani (1996). The debates centred on how institutions of inclusion, authority and cooperation such as the lineage groups, local farmer groups and traditional authority remain relevant in the organisation of post-independent rural African society especially in a context of increased commoditisation of rural relations of production. Using theoretical insights derived from analysing the role of the lineage groups in the allocation of critical resources such as land and the influence of traditional authority (indirect rule) as a form of local government, the study examines how social organisation is emerging in areas where neither lineage nor traditional authority are not dominant. The thesis of rural cooperation through local groups as advanced by Rahmato

(1991) and Moyo (2002) provides partial insights into the response mechanisms that land beneficiaries invoke in this instance. It is not necessarily an autonomous space of organisation but rather the state is actively involved through various functionaries including extension officers who invariably advance a very productionist approach. The state's monopoly through its local functionaries hides its political cooptation effect by emphasising organisation for production without questioning the manner in which that production is externally controlled through limited rights over land, the state's monopoly over inputs supply and markets for commodities.

Whilst land reform has been driven by local participation through land occupations, local government reform has been technocratically determined through Ministerial directives. There is however little innovation in the form of local government that is being introduced. It expands the fusion of authority between elected Rural District Councils and unelected traditional authority functionaries. The forms of social organisation and agency that have emerged remain subordinated to the state with no links to other networks of rural producers' associations and urban civil society organisations. These developments form part of a long-held tradition within the Zimbabwean state where the legitimacy of local organisation and authority is usurped to service the interests of the state. Thus whilst land reform has to a certain extent accommodated the majority poor, the ensuing local government and agrarian reforms are more focused on limiting their participation in broader processes of political engagement around distribution and accumulation and their own governance.

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List of Acronyms

AFC	Agricultural Finance Corporation
AFP	Agence France Press
AIAS	African Institute for Agrarian Studies
ARDA	Agricultural Research and Development Authority
AREX	Agricultural Research and Extension department
BFA	Bromley Farmers' Association
BIPA	Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement
BoP	Balance of Payments
CA	Communal/Customary Area
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CFU	Commercial Farmers' Union
CLA	Communal Lands Act
CRD	Cabinet Committee on Resettlement and Rural Development
CSO	Central Statistical Office
CTDT	Community Technology Development Trust
DAPP	Development Aid, People to People
DDC	District Development Committee
DDF	District Development Fund
DERUDE	Department of Rural Development
DLC	District Land Committee
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EFGAZ	Export Flower Growers Association of Zimbabwe
ERS	Export Retention Scheme
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FDT	Farmers' Development Trust
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning System Network
FNC	Food and Nutrition Council
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
GAPWUZ	General Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
GNP	Gross National Product
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HDP	Human Development Report
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPC	Horticultural Promotion Council
ICA	Intensive Conservation Area
ICFU	Indigenous Commercial Farmers' Union
ICG	International Crisis Group

IDS-Sussex	Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University
ILO	International Labour Organisation of the United Nations
IMCRRD	Inter-Ministerial Committee on Resettlement and Rural Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Programme
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
ITDG	Intermediate Technology Development Group
JAG	Justice for Agriculture
JPAC	Joint President Agricultural Committee
LAA	Land Acquisition Act
LFG	Local Farmer Group
LSCF	Large Scale Commercial Farm(er)
MCDC	Ministry of Community Development and Cooperatives
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MLGRUD	Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOL	Ministry of Lands
MOU	Memorandum of Agreement
MPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
MWENGO	Mwelikeyo wa NGO
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NFAZ	National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NLHA	Native Land Husbandry Act
NLIC	National Land Identification Committee
NR	Natural Region
NRA	Newly Resettled Areas
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations
ORAP	Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress
PESSDDAC	Poverty Eradication and Social Services Delivery Development Action Committee
PF	Patriotic Front
PLAAS	Institute of Poverty Land and Agrarian Studies
PLIC	Provincial Land Identification Committee
PLRC	Presidential Land Review Committee
RBZ	Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
RCFU	Rhodesia Commercial Farmers' Union
RDC	Rural District Council
RNFU	Rhodesia National Farmers' Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community

SC (UK)	Save the Children (UK)
SIRDC	Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre
SSCF	Small Scale Commercial Farm(er)
TIMB	Tobacco Industry Marketing Board
TLA	Traditional Leaders Act
TLAA	Tribal Land Authorities Act
TTLA	Tribal Trust Land Act
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UMP	Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNWFP	United Nations World Food Programme
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
WLLG	Women and Land Lobby Group
ZANU (PF)	Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front)
ZAWU	Zimbabwe Agricultural Workers’ Union
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZDLIC	Zvimba District Land Identification Committee
ZES	Zimbabwe Economics Society
ZERO	Zimbabwe Regional Environmental Organisation
ZFU	Zimbabwe Farmers’ Union
ZIDERA	Zimbabwe Democracy and Recovery Act
ZIMPREST	Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation
ZIMVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee
ZNA	Zimbabwe National Army
ZNFU	Zimbabwe National Farmers’ Union
ZNLWVA	Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans’ Association
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police
ZTA	Zimbabwe Tobacco Association
ZUD	Zimbabwe Union of Democrats
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement
ZWRCN	Zimbabwe Women’s Resource Centre and Network

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Introduction

The fast track land reform programme resulted in a fundamental reorganisation of rural relations in Zimbabwe, changing the landscape in an irreversible way with people from diverse backgrounds converging on former white owned farms. This thesis tells the story of how the newly resettled land beneficiaries are organising themselves socially in response to various economic and other constraints.

Land occupations started in Masvingo province in February 2000, exactly a day after the rejection of a draft constitution which would have given the Zimbabwe African National Union, Patriotic Front (ZANU (P.F)) government power to compulsorily acquire land without compensating the former owners who were mostly white commercial farmers. Significant debates have ensued as to whether this was a genuinely grassroots-driven process focused on resolving a colonial injustice or a politically-driven process by ZANU (PF) fearing defeat by a fairly new opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), in the 2000 parliamentary elections.

Indeed, voluminous literature has since been published on the significance of these land occupations in terms of the agrarian and national questions and how they relate to politics and elections (see for instance Moyo and Yeros, 2005b, 2007a, 2007b; Helliker, 2006; Sadomba, 2008a; Alexander, 2003; Moore, 2003). Two tendencies have dominated the discourse. The first particularises the democratic deficit in the manner of the execution, especially the violence that accompanied the land occupations and the regime survival agenda (Raftopolous, 2003; Moore, 2003). The second tendency notes the continuation of land demands since independence culminating in the 2000 land occupations but is equally concerned about the potential coopting effect of the state and the ruling party in particular (Moyo and Yeros, 2005b; Yeros, 2002).

The implementation of land reform has coincided with Zimbabwe's worst economic crisis. It is estimated that the economy has shrunk by 40 percent since 2000 and at the end of 2008 inflation was estimated to be 150 000 percent, the highest in the world (CSO, 2008). Factors

that contribute towards this economic decline include the shift towards authoritarianism within the state and the ZANU (PF) party especially in the manner in which it has conducted itself during elections and in varied attempts to marginalise the main opposition party, the MDC. Other factors include weak macroeconomic management frameworks, frequent droughts, an unfavourable policy environment, and the disruptive effects of the „fast track“ programme and the impact of international isolation (World Bank, 2006). Most companies in the agro-industry sector have either had to downsize or completely shut down, meaning that critical farm inputs such as fertilisers and hybrid seeds that used to be domestically produced are now being imported. Furthermore 2001 to 2005 was characterised by poor rainfall distribution, the worst in the post independence period (Moyo and Yeros, 2007a:18).

This study is on emerging forms of social organisation and local agency in fast track areas where the resettlement process allocated land to people who were mostly strangers to each other and with different socio-economic backgrounds. Existing knowledge on rural organisation has shown how social relations of production are embedded within lineage groupings that are subordinate parts of the clan. Fast track resettlement on the other hand resulted in individual households from different places being resettled together without a clear framework of sociability. Furthermore, the period of resettlement is also associated with a major economic decline which has negatively affected the level of post-settlement support to the land beneficiaries. Fast track beneficiaries amount to approximately 20 percent of the total smallholder families, and such a significant resettlement provides a unique opportunity to analyse in detail the main factors shaping rural social organisation and agency.

The objective of this study is to go beyond the debates on the motivating forces for land redistribution and to use evidence gathered from the field to begin to explore the emerging patterns and forms of social organisation and agency. In order to develop a coherent and adequate analysis I submerge my analysis in the diverse worlds of local actors, village authorities, state agents and the interactions taking place within local organisations. The study pays particular attention to the manner in which official government policies interact with the local forms of organisation in response to production challenges and opportunities. My approach to discussing rural social organisation and agency entails the analysis of emerging local institutions of authority and cooperation and their significance for the survival of the communities involved.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 The Land and Agrarian Question at Independence

Zimbabwe was one of the late decolonisers; it held its first democratic elections in 1980 after a protracted liberation struggle. The liberation struggle waged against the settler regime led to various mediation efforts by the British government, and the Lancaster House talks held in Britain from 1978 to 1979 led to the elections in 1980. The agreement which provided a framework for the holding of elections also agreed on a draft Constitution which could not be amended in the first ten years of independence. The sanctity of property rights was elevated to a constitutional right which could only be amended after ten years of independence or with the full consent of both the House of Assembly and the Senate. The same Constitution also provided for 20 seats for members of the white community.

It was agreed that land would only be transferred on the basis of the „willing seller-willing buyer“ principle except for underutilised land urgently required for resettlement and other public purposes (Moyana, 1984:17). However, such land would still have to be paid for promptly at full market prices in the currency chosen by the seller. In return, Britain, with a hastily assembled consortium of donors including the American government, undertook to mobilise US\$2 billion towards the purchase of land for resettlement (Mudenge, 2001:49).

The new government inherited a number of colonially bred social and economic problems. One of the most visible was a landholding system highly skewed in favour of the minority whites, which also tipped production strength in their favour against the majority blacks. Prior to independence, Palmer (1977:246) had observed that:

the most acute and difficult question confronting the first government of Zimbabwe, whatever its ideological hue, will be that of land bedevilled by its past use as a political and economic weapon by the whites and by the consequent mythologies to which this has given rise to...and the lessons to be drawn from the agricultural failure of neighbouring Zambia and Mozambique will impose constraints on future land and agricultural policies.

Zimbabwe is divided into five natural regions or agro-ecological zones. The first three (I-III) are suitable for intensive agriculture, while the other two (IV-V) are only suitable for limited extensive agriculture (heavily reliant on irrigation) and livestock and game ranching. At independence there were approximately 6 000 white owned, large scale commercial farms, which amounted to 15 500 000ha or 39 percent of Zimbabwe's arable land. 8 500 African small scale commercial farmers owned 1 400 000 hectares of land (four percent) and 700 000

communal area farmers subsisted on 16 400 000 hectares (42 percent). Most of the communal areas were in Natural Regions IV and V. The most dominant tenure categories were „customary“, „freehold“ and „state land“ (Cheater, 1990:188). In order to comprehensively understand the nature of the land question it is necessary to analyse the quantity and quality of land that was alienated and retained, the nature of access to other natural resources such as water, and the attendant legal framework which defined the forms of access and use. Table 1-1 below describes the quality of land and the distribution of such land within the different tenure categories.

Table 1-1 Land Distribution by Tenure and Natural Region

Natural Region	Large Scale Farms (ha)	Small Scale Commercial Land(ha)	Communal Land (ha)	Parks and Wildlife (ha)	Forest Land (ha)	Total Land Area (ha)
I	442 700	7 300	135 000	50 000	70 000	705 000
II	4 308 000	252 000	1 270 000	25 000	2 000	5 857 000
III	3 244 100	535 900	2 820 000	545 000	145 000	7 290 000
IV	3 777 200	522 800	7 340 000	2 510 000	620 000	14 770 000
V	3 652 400	97 600	4 790 000	1 840 000	70 000	10 450 000
Total	15 424 400	1,415 600	16 355 000	4 970	907 000	39 072 000

Source: AIAS, 2006

Starting in 1980 the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) embarked on an ambitious land reform programme, redistributing 430 000 hectares every year until 1984, so that after five years 18 000 households had been resettled on approximately 2 million hectares (Moyo and Yeros, 2005a:183). However, by the end of 1984 the programme decelerated due to reduced budgetary allocations for land purchases. The country faced a devastating drought and government’s funds initially allocated for land purchases were diverted towards the purchase of drought relief. Although there was a commitment on the part of the British government to pay for land transfers it was a difficult arrangement to operationalise. The Zimbabwean government’s responsibility included identifying desirable land and approaching the owner for negotiations and, once a price had been agreed, the former would make the necessary payments. The GoZ would then lodge a claim for 50 percent of the transactional costs to the British government which only reimbursed the GoZ after the act of purchase. In essence land purchases and transfers were based on the availability of funds within the GoZ.

In many instances the land that was acquired in the first three years of independence consisted of farms that had been abandoned by large scale commercial white farmers during the liberation struggle. Most of these farms were lying derelict next to customary areas and farm production activities had been disrupted during the liberation struggle. Furthermore a significant part of the land designated for redistribution had been acquired through land occupations which were quite popular during the first three years of independence and received the tacit support of political party leaders (Moyo and Yeros, 2005a:183). The pace of land reform declined in the latter half of the 1980s and was almost nonexistent during the 1990s. The reasons for the deceleration of land redistribution are discussed in detail in Chapters 3 and 4 but suffice it to note here that other constraints in the economy contributed towards the increased demand for land in the 1990s.

1.2.2 The Fast Track Land Reform Programme

Despite the GoZ's initial enthusiasm with land redistribution in the early 1980s, the programme decelerated to such an extent that by 1998 approximately 4 300 large scale white farmers still owned as much as 30 percent of Zimbabwe's prime agricultural land (Mudzengi, 2008:385). The majority of blacks based in the rural areas continued to eke out an existence on customary lands, the quality and quantity of which was progressively declining, while only around 56 000 households had benefitted from the resettlement programme.

In 2000 the land occupations of white farms began in Masvingo and spread to the Matabeleland and Mashonaland provinces. These widespread land occupations played a critical role in pushing the GoZ to formulate and implement the fast track land reform programme (FTLRP) which culminated in the transfer of 11 million ha within a three year period. It was the largest property transfer ever to occur in the region since decolonisation, with approximately 147 000 new farm units being created (Sachikonye, 2005:32). In effecting land redistribution under fast track, the government developed two resettlement models - the A1 and A2 models - which were modifications of the A, B and C models introduced during the first phase of resettlement in the 1980s (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). The A1 is the main small scale redistribution scheme, designed to be an expansion of the smallholder sector by catering for the landless from both the communal areas and the urban areas. Households were given 5 to 6 ha of arable land and 15 ha of grazing land per household as part of commonage in the case of the „villagised“ settlement. In the villagised model land beneficiaries were allocated small residential plots close to each

other, while arable land was composed of one large tract which was then subdivided for use by the different beneficiary families. The self-contained variant, on the other hand, is a smaller version of the A2 model, whereby households were allocated just one plot of land in which they had to decide the position of the homestead and divide the rest into arable and grazing land. There are close to 130 000 A1 farms in the country and approximately 65 percent of these are villagised (PLRC, 2003).

The A2 model consists of farm units which average 330 ha across the country but there are some small A2 plots considered as peri-urban farms which average 30 ha in size (PLRC, 2003). The A2 model was designed to ensure the continuation of commercial agriculture, at a smaller scale in terms of farm sizes but increased in terms of the number of farmers involved. The model comprises small, medium and large scale commercial settlements. There are approximately 17 000 A2 farms nationwide (PLRC, 2003). Table 1-2 below shows the land ownership patterns after the fast track land reform programme.

Table 1-2 Land Ownership Patterns after the FTLRP

Category	Area (million ha)	Percentage
A1	4.2	10.6
A2	2.2	5.5
Old Resettlement Area	3.7	9.3
Customary Tenure Area	16.4	41.4
Large Scale Commercial	2.6	6.6
Small Scale Commercial	1.4	3.5
National and Urban Parks	6.0	15.2
State Land	0.3	0.8
Other	2.8	7.1
Total	39.6	100

Source: PLRC, 2003

The land distribution outcome from „fast track“ reveals the expansion of the smallholder sector and the broadening of participation in commercial agriculture, albeit on smaller farms. It also contributed to the emergence of a black cadre of agrarian capitalists. The smallholder sector has increased by approximately 20 percent. The average land size in the newly created A1 sector is 22 ha. The new landholdings are significantly larger than the 2 to 4 ha averages in the customary tenure areas and suggest the potential for changing land use patterns and the possibility of an increase in the incomes derived from the preferred land use patterns.

1.3 Scope of the Study

1.3.1 Thematic Framework: Rural Social Organisation and Agency

The study of social organisation is preoccupied with developing an understanding of the peculiarities of social relations of production, reproduction and domination within the countryside and this is vital for any discussion on the agrarian question in Africa (Hendricks, 2007:3). Historically rural forms of social organisation in Africa vary from region to region in a manner that defies neat categorisation, especially with regard to the definition of the forms of access to land. Across Africa there are varieties and complex forms of overlapping rights of clans, lineages and households in relation to land and its fruits that cannot easily be generalised (Hendricks, 2007:4).

Furthermore, the relations between the countryside and the modernising influence of the postcolonial state and the market vary from region to region. Although agriculture in most of Africa has been subordinated to the logic of the international market, the levels of subordination vary. Similarly the way in which rural communities have adapted to modern land use methods and technologies varies across regions (Mafeje, 2003). The manner in which the market has penetrated rural production is also complicated by the fact that, in many instances, the availability of non-wage household labour and resources coupled with the maintenance of local networks based on kinship, friendship or patronage, allows rural households to resolve certain of their livelihood and consumption problems outside the market (Long, 2001:103). Rural factors of production such as land, labour and farming knowledge are still obtained via non-commoditised relationships (Smith 1985:101). Thus rural social organisation is not necessarily a result of market penetration but, in many instances, is a delicate balance between non-capitalist social relations and those that have been valorised by the exchange value of the market.

The scope of this thesis is an analysis of the potential of agrarian reforms (especially the land reform component) to alter “unbenign, landlord and undemocratic forms of capitalist production relations and to foster national development through the smallholder sector” (Bernstein, 1997:52). It makes a contribution towards understanding how redistributive land and tenure reforms combined with the exposure of the newly resettled to commodity markets influence rural social organisation and agency. Studying everyday responses and tactics of rural social reproduction in Zimbabwe and in Southern Africa is essential: such academic efforts have to shed light not only on rural grievances but also on the capacity of the local

state (beyond official structures) to adequately respond to the socioeconomic and political challenges facing rural people. Earlier studies (Moyana, 1984; Alexander, 1994, 2003; Moyo, 1986, 1995) on land grievances and rural responses through squatting or land occupations, fence cutting and poaching of grazing lands have not devoted adequate attention to everyday micro-level economic struggles and tactics for rural social reproduction. Studies of this nature have become more critical in a context where prevailing frameworks such as the lineage form have been weakened in recent decades by the influx of outsiders into communal areas through informal land sale and migration into newly resettled areas. The increased penetration of commodity markets into the countryside and the introduction of new innovations of rural production such as contract farming models and NGO led projects have increasingly altered the forms of social organisation in the countryside (Helliker, 2006; Moyo, 2008). The discussion in this thesis takes cognisance of the ongoing social changes in rural based forms of production and analyses the manner in which the newly resettled land beneficiaries are organising themselves to enhance their farm utilisation capacities.

The resettlement process itself has disrupted ties of reciprocity developed within lineage and kinship ties in customary tenure, thus the study is interested in finding out the emerging social relations and the factors influencing the emergence of forms of sociability. The social relations of production embedded within lineage hierarchies are not necessarily democratic; they marginalise women and create local despots in the form of traditional authority functionaries such as chiefs and headmen (Mafeje, 2003:19). These functionaries have, in the customary tenure areas, been behind illegal land sales which have benefited better off „outsiders“ and contributed toward the emergence of an underground land market (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). Some of the consequences of these activities have been the accentuation of rural differentiation based on the amount of land to which a household has access (Chimhowu and Woodhouse, 2008). This thesis explores the manner in which local power relations are emerging within newly resettled areas and devotes particular attention to the roles that the traditional authority is appropriating to establish its authority and the ways in which its activities are being embedded in everyday practice. The study of emerging social organisation and agency in the aftermath of land reforms provides an opportunity for a more comprehensive analysis of the three interrelated strands central to social reproduction: equity in production and accumulation, livelihood opportunities in the face of declining wage economy opportunities, and the political role of the countryside. These questions are critical

in understanding the role and extent of local action in the context of national and global structures.

In pursuing a comprehensive deconstruction of the complex arrangements that make up rural social organisation the thesis analyses the manner in which the social infrastructure, comprising local institutions, customs, material and non-material relations, either constrains or enables households and communities to reproduce themselves and also to accumulate savings in an agrarian context. It entails an analysis of the prevailing land relations (nature and forms of rights of access, and land use patterns) and the manner in which local institutions operate in the areas and their roles. In the absence of kinship relations the thesis analyses the emerging forms of social relations and other networks of cooperation and power relations including the role of authority structures especially traditional authority. The emerging forms of social organisation and local action are subjected to further study through case study analysis of the social changes that are taking place on four former large scale farms that were converted during „fast track“ into A1 settlements in Goromonzi and Zvimba.

1.3.2 Level of Analysis: Households and Local Formations

The household in most rural contexts is the basic multidimensional unit of social organisation. The family provides the labour on the farm and the farm provides for the consumption needs of the family. The household farm operates as the major unit of production, consumption, social reproduction, identity, prestige, sociability and welfare. However, due to colonially related land alienation processes and also the declining quality of land, most rural families in Africa (and especially Southern Africa) are not entirely dependent on farm production but also engage in other income generating activities, such as waged labour in the formal sector and other forms of petty commodity production.

Rural production in Zimbabwe became oriented towards commodity production prior to 1900 and this feature accelerated during colonialism (Cousins et al., 1992). The need for access to cash to purchase elements of production such as manufactured ploughs, hoes and commercial fertiliser and the imposition of taxes by the settler state led to the increased need to secure cash. In response, male members of rural households moved into the wage economy (urban, large scale farms and mines) but other members of the household remained in the communal areas. During the period of colonisation migration influenced the forms of rural social organisation, as it contributed towards a new category of households active in both the wage

and rural economies. Descriptions such as semi-proletariat have been used as an attempt to fix the in-between nature of these households but it still fails to adequately capture the manner in which the households combine rural and urban incomes (see for instance Moyo and Yeros, 2005a; O’Laughlin, 2004). The advent of independence did not halt the practice of migrant labour; as recently as the late 1990s, a study of 1 500 members of trade unions in textile, metal workers, and food industry commissioned by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) found that 75 percent of the respondents maintained dual homes in the urban and rural areas (Peta et al., 1991).

Rural households inevitably belong to lineage groups which are part of the hierarchy of institutions and structures of social organisation in the countryside. This study pursues an analysis of the manner in which different forms of sociability have emerged in the newly resettled areas, how they have contributed towards increasing capacities for social reproduction and what they mean for local democratic practice. The associational forms under analysis have been given various names in light of the diversity and the fragmented nature of the way in which rural households generate incomes. Furthermore, different household members are engaged in different economic activities to the extent that there can be no neat and precise categorisation of households. Rahmato (1991) and Moyo and Romdhane (2002) prefer to call the rural local associational formations „peasant organisations“. Initially the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) preferred the term „rural organisations“ (1979), but that has recently changed to „promotional organisations“. The latter term is understood to include other larger formations such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Esman and Uphoff (1984) preferred to call them „local organisations“.

For purposes of utility I will modify Esman and Uphoff’s (1984) usage and call these formations „local farmer groups“. The term refers broadly to the localised formations established in the countryside. This conceptualisation helps to fix the geographical and spatial reach of these organisations but it is also important to mention that it includes a variety of other specialised social formations that operate at local level. I include the term „farmer“ because, despite the recent arguments about the declining importance of agriculture to rural livelihoods, different studies have shown how agriculture (cropping and livestock husbandry) remains at the centre of rural social reproduction, especially in a context of declining urban based income opportunities.

Besides rural households, the hierarchy of lineage groups, networks based on kinship ties and local associations, the countryside has also been penetrated by different state and non-state agents which have influenced rural social organisation and agency to varying degrees. A clear understanding of the local institutional and administrative framework of the state and non-state agents is critical for the development of a more coherent understanding of how these, in their interactions with rural communities, influence social organisation.

1.4 Justification for the Study

The fast track land reform has led to significant social change. Approximately 160 000 families have been resettled in areas previously inhabited by approximately 4 000 large scale farmers. The changes not only entail an increase in the number of plots, but changes in the manner in which land is held. Previous owners held land on a freehold title basis, whilst in the new dispensation all agricultural land has been nationalised and the new land beneficiaries hold land in terms of state leases and permits. Beyond the manner of access to land, significant change has also happened in terms of the manner in which the „new“ communities organise themselves to utilise land and their land use patterns do not necessarily conform to the preferences of the former owners.

Despite these significant changes there has been very limited effort within the research community to go beyond an analysis of the motivation beyond land occupations. This thesis focuses on analysing emerging forms of rural social organisation and agency. The study provides a baseline understanding of the socioeconomic characteristics of the land beneficiaries and the nature of evolving local authority, and analyses the significance of the emergence of local farmer groups, which emergence suggests the potential forging of new identities and criteria of inclusion and belonging. Social organisation and local agency provide a lens through which to analyse the strategies and tactics being used by the land beneficiaries to strengthen their livelihood generation capacities. The newly resettled areas have since 2000 been characterised by the simultaneous emergence of local platforms of cooperation which include informal networks and structured groups on the one hand and the introduction of local structures of authority, especially traditional village heads and the mutation of the Committees of Seven into Village Development Committees. The outcome from the interactions between these formations and power structures defines the form of social organisation in these areas.

The study contributes knowledge on processes of agrarian change taking place in the newly resettled areas. Since 2000 there has been limited research on rural social relations to the extent that a knowledge gap exists among policymakers and those within development agencies. The study provides an initial analysis of the activities of local formations and focuses on the challenges that these groups are facing. This discussion is essential for external actors involved in designing interventions aimed at strengthening local institutions and production systems.

1.5 Research Objectives and Questions

The main objective of this thesis is to develop an understanding of the nature of emerging forms of social organisation and agency in newly resettled areas. In order to adequately unravel the emerging trends, the following research questions were used to develop the research process:

- What is the nature of the resettled community (social origin, employment background, family type and size)?
- What are the emerging forms of authority at a local level?
- How dominant are traditional forms of organisation and authority compared to the more civil frameworks at local and meso levels?
- What is the new land tenure system and how is it shaping social organisation?
- How are the resettled communities organising themselves to respond to opportunities and constraints within the new terrain?
- How are the newly formed groups internally organised and to what extent are they inclusive of the varied socio-economic interests represented in these new communities?
- What is the significance of the emerging social organisation and formations in terms of our understanding of rural relations?

The study is not necessarily focused on achieving representivity but through rigorous analysis and „thick descriptions“ of the case studies, the intention is to ensure a comprehensive narrative of the factors shaping social organisation and agency in newly resettled areas.

1.6 Research Methodology and Approach

1.6.1 Epistemological Influences in the Research

In this study I introduce an explicit micro level analytical concern in studying rural social relations while remaining sensitive to the long term structural context. Such an approach contributes towards a better understanding of the forms of social organisation and agency that are emerging and the various purposes that they serve, but more importantly the issues they seek to surmount. The challenge is to understand how newly resettled beneficiaries are responding to the state policies of local government and agricultural production. In studying emerging social organisation and agency I devote particular attention to the socio-economic characteristics of land beneficiaries and the manner in which they interact with each other in the absence of established kinship ties. The influence of local power relations and land tenure is also analysed. The study takes a particular interest in the interactions among households within local groups. It highlights the negotiations between the leadership of the local formations in membership and external service providers.

The call to break away from established theoretical determinism has been made by others, such as Long (2001), but is yet to become practice in Zimbabwe and many other Southern African countries. Moving away from theoretical determinism entails an appreciation of the knowledge and meaning of contexts as understood by the subjects and requires the researcher to learn instead of prescribing knowledge. For too long a number of theories have been rigidly imposed in analysing African rural reality without taking cognisance of different cultural and historical contexts (Long, 2001:105).

The actor-oriented analysis promoted by Norman Long (1977, 2001) on the other hand, with its emphasis on social actors, provides a compelling complementary tool of analysis in this study. At the centre of the approach is the argument that,

social actors must not be depicted as simply disembodied social categories (based on class or some other classificatory criteria) or passive recipients of intervention, but as active participants who process information and strategise in the dealings with various local actors as well as with outside institutions and personnel (Long, 2001: 13).

I find this approach compelling and relevant in analysing local strategies of survival through the lens of local authority and cooperation. The analysis of the social forms of authority and cooperation is done through the examination of quantitative and qualitative data. The

quantitative data mostly answers questions relating to the socio-economic origins and characteristics of the households that were allocated land and the levels of productive asset ownership within the households. The qualitative data is focused on analysing perceptions on tenure and how it influences the emergence of local authority and cooperation. The case studies (in Chapters 8 and 9) describing the social changes relating to authority and labour relations that have taken place since resettlement build upon both quantitative and qualitative data. The case studies lead to a more comprehensive illumination of the manner in which actors on the resettled farms perceive the significance of the changes that they are forging and also the influences of the state. However it is important to note here that social phenomena are not held constant for study-social change, especially in the newly resettled areas where institutions of local government are undergoing restructuring and the economic situation remains austere. This awareness has led me to emphasise the „emerging“ aspect of social organisation and agency. Furthermore the use of case studies in this instance is not driven by the need for generalisation, but to capture and contextualise diversity by showing different responses to certain circumstances or changes (Seur, 1992:121).

The approach provides an opportunity for the social actors to reflect upon their own perceptions of opportunities and challenges. Indeed, social science differs from the natural sciences in that its object – the social world – is undergoing interpretation by the actors who are themselves the source of data (Seur, 1992:131). The case study approach used enables the researcher to interact with social actors in interpreting their reality and to elucidate social forms and processes (Long 1989:247-81). The analysis of the selected case studies involves a brief but concise history of ownership, land use patterns and labour relations on the former large scale farm. It also provides a narrative on the ways in which the farm was occupied and converted into A1 settlements and the subsequent social changes that have taken place. In particular, the discussion details how village authorities have been established, the extent of their authority and the ways in which they relate with other local institutions.

Local farmer groups have emerged on all the former large scale farms selected for case study analysis. The thesis examines the manner in which they emerged and the extent to which they are contributing towards improving the capacities of members to better utilise their plots. The analysis of local farmer groups (see chapter 10) is based on the analytic framework originally developed by Veltmeyer (1997) and recently by Moyo (2002), built around five analytic components, which are: (i) the social basis of the land beneficiaries; (ii) socioeconomic

identity of the land beneficiaries; (iii) organisational dynamic and democratic content of the local farmer groups; (iv) social, political and material demand of the groups (including the organisational strategies and tactics used to achieve these); and (v) the linkages of the local farmer groups to the wider society. The analytic framework is critical for deconstructing local farmer groups in order to lay bare the social relations that give rise to this social system and sustain it. A comprehensive discussion based on the five analytic components contributes to a holistic appreciation of the socioeconomic profiles of the membership, their expectations and the internal practice of the groups, and such an analysis provides critical information on the strengths of local mobilisation. The selected cases demonstrate that although the social base of land beneficiaries is similar, the forms of emerging authority and cooperation and even the manner in which these institutions relate is due to a number of contextual circumstances and socialisation.

The deconstruction of local farmer groups alone does not suffice in developing a total picture of the nature of social organisation and agency that is emerging through these formations. The thesis has combined the study of local cooperation with an analysis of local authority and land tenure relations as these two form critical pillars of social organisation. Furthermore the analysis combines these more local realities with a contextual structural analysis of the immediate and national environments. An appreciation of the interaction between the local and the macro (especially political and economic developments) contributes towards a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that are influencing social processes at a local level.

1.6.2 Research Methods

The research depends on primary and secondary data. Two sets of primary data of newly resettled households were collected in Mashonaland East (Goromonzi District) and Mashonaland West (Zvimba District). In 2006 the African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS) commissioned a six district study of the outcomes of the „fast track“ resettlement process. I was part of the research team that designed the questionnaire and identified sampling sites. The questionnaire that we used collected data on the social characteristics of the beneficiaries, their land use patterns, emerging labour relations, asset holding status, the nature of household grievances, food security status and participation in structured and unstructured reciprocal networks. I worked with a small team of field assistants in Goromonzi and Zvimba in the administration of questionnaires. My main tasks included making sure that

research objectives were properly clarified to respondents, attending to any queries on the questionnaire, actual administration of the questionnaire and conducting focus group discussions.

The data collected included background information on the social origins of the beneficiaries, their education and professional backgrounds, the motivations behind their resettlement and the manner in which they gained access to land. On land access, respondents were asked to reveal their own perceptions of tenure security and what they felt Government should do to improve land tenure. In terms of land use, the survey collected information on the preferred land use patterns and the rationale for such choices, constraints being faced in land utilisation and the levels of productivity. Related to land utilisation the survey examined the nature of labour relations in terms of use of own family labour, hired and reciprocal labour. Finally, and critical for this particular study, were questions of the existence and role of social networks in social reproduction.

One of the findings of the AIAS survey was that approximately 40 percent of the respondents belonged to structured local farmer groups. Based on this finding and the overwhelming need to further understand these new formations I worked on a new field survey focused on those already belonging to such groups. The survey was carried out on four former large scale farms that were converted into A1 settlements in Goromonzi and Zvimba. It was focused on analysing the evolution of social organisation since the period of occupation until 2008. The issues under study were the manner in which the land beneficiaries arrived on the farm, how they managed to evict the former owner, the evolution of local authority and the manner in which the local farmer groups emerged. The survey proceeded to investigate the internal operations of these local formations in order to understand the rationale for their formation, their social composition, activities, demands and the manner in which they interact with their immediate environment. Primary data using a structured questionnaire, focus group discussions and key informant interviews was collected from the following former large scale commercial farms: (i) Dunstan, (ii) Lot 3 of Buena Vista, (iii) Dalkeith and (iv) Whyhill farms.

A total of 31 key informant interviews were held as follows: three with village heads, five with former farm workers, twelve with local farmer group leaders (two per group with chairperson and secretary/treasurer); three with VIDCO members, four with local extension

officers and two with district extension officers. There were also discussions with extension officers which involved the identification of the A1 settlements and the local farmer groups, the logistics of carrying out the interviews and some debriefing sessions to cross-check what respondents had said. A total of ten focus group discussions were held. The initial intention was to hold one focus group discussion on each former large scale farm. However in some A1 settlements there is more than one local farmer group and also in instances where there is one group in a settlement it is composed of more than 30 members which made it impossible to have balanced participation in the discussions. I held three focus group discussions at Dunstan farm, three at Lot 3 of Buena Vista farm, two at Dalkeith farm and two at Whyhill farm (see annexure 1). A total of 119 people participated in the focus group discussion (see subsection 1.6.3 below) I carried out transect walks in the company of either the extension officer or farmer group leader on all the former large scale farms under study. Transect walks is a form of data collection, it entails walking within a defined area to observe and document the similarities and differences of socio-economic and bio-physical features. The methodology was borrowed from Environmental Sciences which it to count different species within a defined transect area (Mahiri, 2001:2). The transect walks enabled me to see the types of houses that the beneficiaries were erecting and to assess the condition of infrastructure inherited from the previous owner. Through the walks I was able to observe the land use and utilisation patterns on the farm without necessarily depending on responses to the questionnaire alone. Beyond the formal research tools I also had access to some of the records of meetings held by the groups and other documentation, such as their constitutions and the Salt Lakes Memorandum of Agreement. I had the opportunity to attend village administration meetings convened by the village heads at Dunstan Farm in Bromley and Dalkeith Farm in Bantet.

Some of the challenges that I encountered in the field had to do with the suspicions and fears that many newly resettled households have when dealing with outsiders, especially those on a research mission. Helliker (2006:8-12) encountered similar problems when interviewing NGOs working on land, and he cites the manner in which the subject had become politicised and the strained relations existing between NGOs and the GoZ. Being part of the AIAS contributed immensely towards getting authorisation to carry out the field work but a high level of suspicion remained, especially given the fact that our organisation is also an NGO. According to key informants some of the respondents assumed, no matter how much we tried to dispel the notion, that we were part of an official exercise to carry out research on land

utilisation which would then be used to determine whether the land beneficiary should be given a formal permit. The approach that we took was to devote more time to establishing relationships before we could conduct any interviews. This entailed field visits to introduce the research subject and to participate in local activities such as village council meetings.

1.6.3 The Sample

The household questionnaire of the AIAS commissioned study in Goromonzi and Zvimba was administered to 1 003 households. In Goromonzi 695 households were interviewed. Of these, 608 are A1 households and 87 A2 households. In Zvimba, of the 308 households interviewed, 211 were A1 and 97 were A2 households. All these were randomly selected households (see Table 1-3 below).

Table 1-3 Goromonzi and Zvimba Household Sample

Area	A1		A2		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Goromonzi	608	74.24	87	47.28	695	69.29
Zvimba	211	25.76	97	52.72	308	30.71
Total	819	100.00	184	100.00	1 003	100.00

Source: AIAS (2006/7) Goromonzi and Zvimba Districts Household Survey

Building upon the above I developed a second thematic questionnaire, focused on the local farmer groups (LFGs). The questionnaire was administered in the same areas where the AIAS household survey had been carried out but in this instance membership of the identified LFGs was part of the criterion for sampling. Two sites for sampling were chosen – Bromley in Goromonzi district and Banket in Zvimba district – and 137 households resettled at Dunstan, Lot 3 of Buena Vista, Dalkeith and Whyhill were asked to respond to the questionnaire (see Table 1-4 below).

The selection of the four former large scale farms and the groups that have emerged in these areas was influenced by the need to show internal variation among the groups, and the preliminary criteria for selection included the differences in the ways that the farm was occupied and the manner in which local authority emerged, the process of the formation of the groups, land use patterns amongst the members and the nature of activities chosen by the groups. These variables provide initial indications of the differences within these local groups and the potential for further variation among the groups. The selection criteria also

considered how the analysis of each case study would contribute towards a more illuminating process of understanding the emergence of local farmer organisations in A1 settlements.

Table 1-4: Sample of Local Farmer Groups

Area of study	Farm name	Farmer group Name	Respondents to Questionnaire	Focus Group Participants	Total in group
Goromonzi	Dunstan	Budiro Maize group	10	7	10
	Dunstan	Mswiti Maize group	9	8	15
	Dunstan	Saltlakes Tobacco farmers	11	12	16
	Buenavista	Tagarika irrigation	30	30	40
	Subtotal			60	57
Zvimba	Dalkeith	Chidziva	59	37	75
	Whynhill	Zhizha	18	25	31
	Subtotal			77	62
TOTAL			137	119	187

Source: Author (2008), Goromonzi and Zvimba Districts LFG Household Survey

1.7 Background to the Study Area

1.7.1 Goromonzi District and Bromley Ward

Goromonzi is 32km south east of the country's capital, Harare. The total population of Goromonzi district is estimated to be 200 000 (CSO Census, 2002). Two former large scale farms in the Bromley area were identified for study. Bromley is a ward within Goromonzi district which is one of the nine districts in Mashonaland East province. The other districts are Chikomba, Mutoko, Murewa, Marondera, Hwedza, Mudzi, Seke and Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe (UMP). Goromonzi district is 2 459 km² in extent, covering a total area of 254 072 ha. It is in natural region (NR) II, containing portions of both IIa (247 072 ha) and IIb (7 000 ha). Of this total hectarage, 168 000 ha are arable. Prior to „fast track“ resettlement there were 257 large scale commercial farms (LSCF) and after resettlement there are 74 remaining. Under the fast track reforms 2 319 A2 units and 9 382 A1 units have been created. The region is suitable for intensive farming; NR IIa has a slightly longer rainy season and is less prone to mid-season dry spells than NR IIb (Jiri, 2007:5).

Goromonzi district is further divided into 25 smaller administrative units called „wards“ or „intensive conservation areas“ (ICAs) and Bromley is one of the ICAs. The total land size of Bromley is 40 000 ha and it straddles NR IIa and IIb. There are approximately 1 602

households in Bromley with an average membership of four (CSO, 2002). The area receives an average of 18 rainy pentads¹ (cycles of rainfall) per season, normally enjoys reliable rainfall conditions and rarely experiences severe dry spells in summer (Jiri, 2007). The region is suitable for intensive systems of farming based on crop or livestock production. Prior to the redistribution under the fast track reform there were 38 large scale commercial farms and there had been no other redistribution or resettlement in the area since independence. Moyo (2000) also observes of these peri-urban areas that these are “areas where the least land redistribution had occurred”. Furthermore, as much as 50 percent of the land was classified as underutilised in these areas (Weiner, 1988; World Bank, 1991). The 38 large scale farms in Bromley employed approximately 4 000 farm workers (suggesting that each farm employed an average of 105 people at a time) on both a permanent and temporary basis. Currently there are 1 382 A1 units and 2 319 A2 units in the area, making a total of 21 625 beneficiaries (Goromonzi AREX Office, 2008). There are no communal areas within the ward (PLRC, 2003).

Bromley was traditionally a crop growing area; the common crops include maize, soya beans, sugar beans, ground nuts, potatoes, tobacco and wheat. Limited animal husbandry existed, mostly for dairy purposes. The introduction of economic reforms in the 1990s saw some large scale commercial farmers introducing horticulture as a new land use pattern in conformity with the export led growth focus of the prevailing economic dogma. Moyo (2000:68) found that the majority of the farmers in Bromley made the switch to horticultural production and they were producing vegetables and flowers for the export market. The switch to horticulture and the attendant technological and infrastructural developments led to an actual decrease in the amount of land devoted to crop production. In some cases, such as Dunstan farm, prior to resettlement the farm had been subdivided to make room for a private game park alongside horticultural production (Interview with AREX Officer, Sept, 2008). Private game parks and lodges mushroomed at a very fast pace during the years of economic reform in areas previously known for commercial crop production, partly because of the switch towards horticultural production and also for the revenues associated with game farming.

¹ A rainy pentad means the second of three consecutive five-day periods which together received a total of more than forty millimetres of rain and any two of which periods received at least eight millimetres of rain (GoZ, Rural Land Act, Chapter 20:18-SI 419 of 1999).

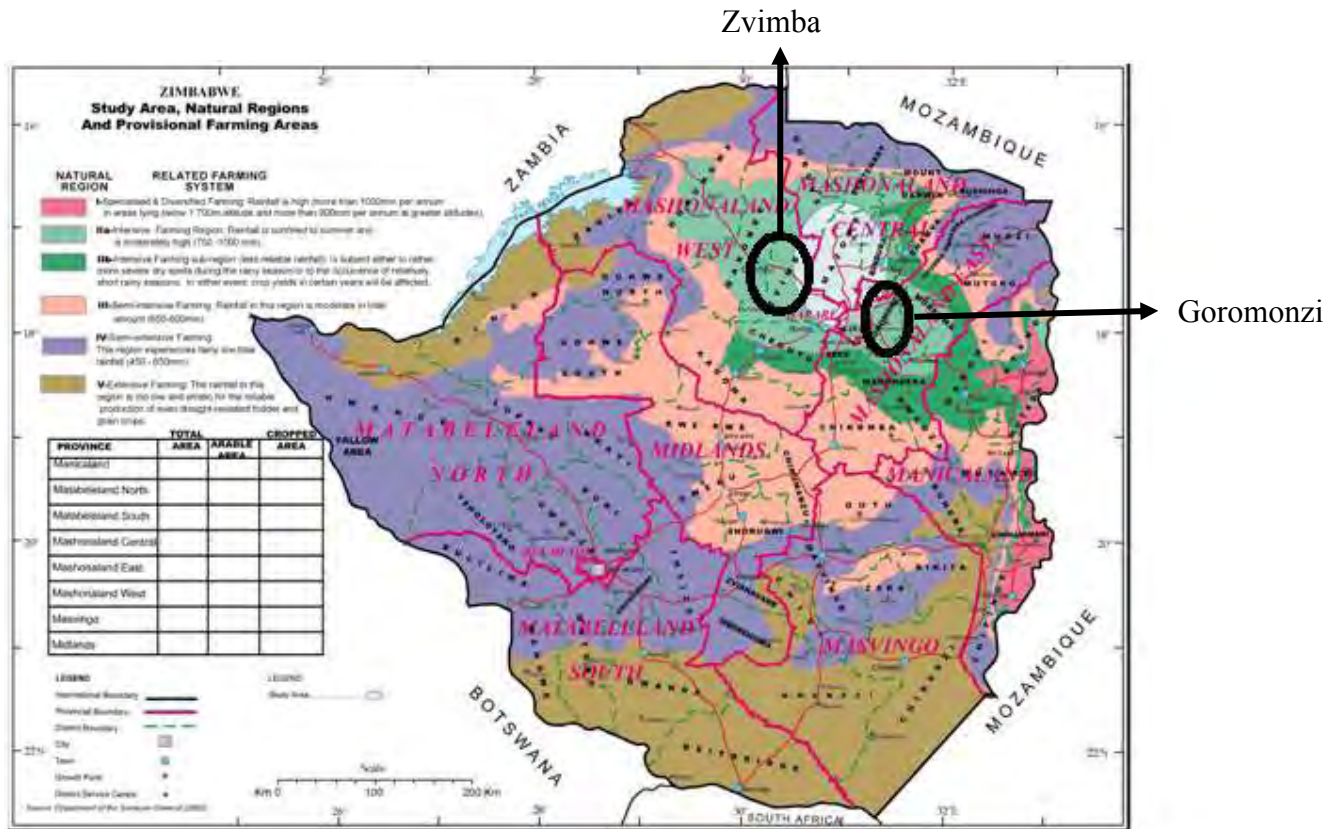
Prior to fast track resettlement large scale farmers were organised within the structures of the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) and the various subordinate commodity associations. The smallholder's representative, the Zimbabwe Farmers' Union (ZFU), had little presence in the area because of the unavailability of their constituency. It is important to note also that at the peak of horticultural production in the 1990s a number of informal horticultural producer groups emerged in the horticulture producing areas such as Bromley. The most important players were the Export Flower Growers Association of Zimbabwe (EFGAZ), which represented and was financed by flower growers (Moyo, 2000) and the Horticultural Promotion Council (HPC). Although the HPC's mandate was to "create an awareness of the requirements of the industry for investment, foreign currency and transport" it mostly derived its membership and financial support from large scale commercial farmers who were also members of the Commercial Farmers' Union (Moyo, 2000:33). On the other hand, farm workers, who were the largest socioeconomic group in the area, were largely represented by the General Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ), the national union for farm workers. The union's records show that less than 25 percent of the approximately 4 000 farm workers were registered fully paid-up members in 1999 (Chambati and Magaramombe, 2008:214).

1.7.2 Zvimba District and Banket

Banket is a ward within the Zvimba district which is part of Mashonaland West Province. The population of Zvimba is estimated to be 220 000 (CSO Census, 2002) and the district lies in natural region IIa. The district is divided into six ICAs – Banket, Darwendale, Gwebi-Manyame, Trelawney, Mutorashanga and Raffingora. Of these, three farming areas were randomly chosen for the study, namely Banket, Darwendale and Gwebi-Manyame. Prior to fast track resettlement the district comprised 718 large scale farms, and approximately 150 000 households within the customary tenure areas with an average hectareage of 2 ha per household. There were approximately 20 500 farm workers employed on both the large and medium scale farms on a permanent and temporary basis (Chambati, 2009:33). Land use patterns in Zvimba prior to resettlement included the growing of staple cereals such as maize within the LSCF, small scale commercial farm (SSCF) and communal areas. Livestock production for both the beef and dairy industry was common across sectors but dairy production was more prevalent amongst the LSCF. Other LSCF land use patterns included flue cured tobacco, wheat and soya beans (Muir, 1994). There was a notable shift towards

export oriented production of horticultural crops within the LSCF sector when economic reforms were introduced. The common horticultural crops produced were tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, peas, onions, rape and cabbages.

Figure 1-1 Study Sites in Relation with Zimbabwe



Source: Sadomba (2008a)

Banket ward was made up of 41 LSCF farms prior to the fast track reforms; 16 of these have been subdivided into A1 farm units and 25 into A2 farms. Land use patterns have not changed significantly since resettlement but there has been a production decline in crops such as tobacco, wheat and to a certain extent maize. According to field interviews, horticultural production for the export market has declined significantly for a variety of reasons, encompassing lack of expertise and capital, loss of markets due to the politicised and contested nature of the process of land reform and the damage to infrastructure, especially the high technology greenhouses that had been established on most of the farms. Signs of vandalism to greenhouses are still apparent today. The residue of horticultural production has essentially been focused on servicing local markets and is based on minimal technologies and

infrastructure. The horticultural produce still includes tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, peas, onions, rape and cabbages.

Politically Banket has been predominantly a ZANU (PF) territory since independence. However, since 2000 the area has seen the penetration of the opposition parties, especially in the form of the Movement of Democratic Change (MDC). In the previous local government elections five seats on the Zvimba Rural District Council were won by the MDC and of these two were from the Banket area.

1.8 Outline of the Chapters

Before discussing findings from the sampled newly resettled areas, the thesis engages with conceptual issues surrounding social organisation and local agency in Chapter 2. In the same chapter the discussion also delves into the issues surrounding rural social organisation and agency through an analysis of the nature of contemporary rural households, devoting particular attention to the manner in which commodification has contributed towards livelihood diversification and rural differentiation and more importantly how it shapes local organisation and action. Chapter 3, entitled Zimbabwe's Tipping Point, provides an analysis of a combination of related developments that took place in the 1990s and how these social, political and economic issues were at the centre of the rupture that occurred in 2000. The chapter goes on to discuss post fast track socioeconomic developments and devotes particular attention to unresolved land policy issues, such as the land compensation and tenure impasse, and economic decline. The discussion of outstanding land policy issues and the economy is part of a critical contextual background for the discussion of field findings in Chapters 6 to 9. The chapter provides a contextual setting for the analysis of rural realities within the newly resettled areas in terms of the policies and the efficacy of support programmes being rolled out in these areas.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide a historical analysis of post-independence rural initiatives, and the manner in which rural communities have responded to the GoZ's lethargic approach to land reform and broader social reproduction constraints. In Chapter 4 the discussion traces the GoZ's land, agrarian and local government reforms. The chapter notes that, although land reform was ostensibly one of the most important policy issues confronting the post-independence government, the pace of land redistribution was constrained by the legal framework which restricted government to a very rigid willing buyer-willing seller scheme.

Furthermore, the pace of land reforms was affected by the post-independence maize and cotton production boom among smallholders based in customary tenure areas, which led to the declining importance of land reform as policy became directed at improving farm production within the customary tenure areas without questioning the patterns of the production boom. Chapter 5 analyses in detail the manner in which rural action has emerged to pursue accelerated land reform and lobby for agricultural policy reforms. The discussion notes the manner in which rural communities have combined legal and illegal (civil and uncivil) tactics to demonstrate their grievances, including land squatting, poaching, fence cutting, associating within local farmer groups, joining national farmer unions and political parties, and lobbying their parliamentary representatives.

The discussion of field findings on emerging patterns of social organisation and agency in the newly resettled areas is in two parts. In Chapters 6 and 7 the discussion, based on data generated from the AIAS field survey, discusses the socioeconomic background of the beneficiaries which includes the area of origin of beneficiaries, age and gender profiles, and previous forms of employment, formal education and agricultural experiences. A detailed analysis of productive asset ownership amongst the beneficiary households is given in order to gain an understanding of their capacities to utilise land. Chapter 7 provides an analysis of the emerging local state in terms of cohering emerging local authority and the nature of social relations promoted by the new land tenure system. It also provides a preliminary analysis of the local networks of cooperation, in terms of the activities they are engaged in and the manner in which newly resettled households cooperate with their customary area neighbours.

Chapters 8 and 9 are devoted to an analysis of the evolution of social organisation on selected former large scale farms through very detailed and thick description case study analysis. The chapters provide a brief background of the ownership of the former large scale farm and the land use activities prior to fast track. They proceed to analyse the social changes that have occurred on the farm since fast track and the emergence of local farmer groups. Furthermore it analyses the activities of the local farmer groups, the patterns of internal governance, participation and the manner in which they relate with immediate structures of the emerging society, including the village authority and local state agents in the form of extension officers. Chapter 10 concludes the thesis by analysing the significance of emerging forms of cooperation and local authority identified within the previous four chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES IN RURAL SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND AGENCY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a conceptual analysis of contemporary rural realities and in the process it delves into the discussion of social organisation and agency. Although there is a rich literature on agrarian change in Africa which stretches from the 1950s into the contemporary period it has serious limitations in comprehensively explaining contemporary rural challenges. The discourse has mostly emphasised the exploitative nature of capital and the uneven penetration of capitalist relations of production in the countryside but there has been very limited analysis of the manner in which rural households have responded to the various challenges they face. Although extensive work has been done on livelihoods this body of literature remains limited due to its failure to analyse how rural dwellers have responded organisationally to exploitation and internal constraints to social reproduction.

Rural social organisation and agency are mutually related and they are determined by the manner in which rural households eke out their existence. Whereas agriculturally based livelihoods have been assumed to dominate in the countryside, Bryceson et al. (2000) and Ellis (2000) have recently made the claim that farm-based income strategies are on the decline due to, among other factors, increased levels of rural to urban migration and the diversification of income sources and livelihoods beyond farm production. This chapter subjects these assertions to further scrutiny and questions whether these increased levels of out-migration ought rather to be treated as clues to how rural households are spreading risk in highly adverse circumstances, especially when the proponents of the „disappearing peasantries“ perspective concede that most of the rural household still maintain their plots of land and migration is usually carried out by one member of the household while others remain to work on the land (Bryceson et al., 2000).

To date three interrelated approaches to analysing rural social organisation and agency as developed by Mafeje (1993, 2003), Mamdani (1996) and Rahmato (1991) have dominated the discourse, and these will be subjected to further analysis in terms of their usefulness in understand emerging forms of social organisation.

The research questions informing the thesis demand a more nuanced conceptual understanding of the constraints imposed on rural households by the set of rules and regulations imposed within the larger polity, especially the macro-economy. In a context of declining support to smallholder agricultural production, an analysis of rural social organisation and agency becomes more compelling in order to develop an understanding of how rural communities through their own forms of social organisation and agency are responding to some of the more local challenges around their social reproduction. Thus the study of social organisation needs to go beyond the traditional preoccupations of political economy and begin to identify the processes underlying the emergence and evolution of local authority and platforms of cooperation.

2.2 Comprehending Diversified and Differentiated Rural Realities

Current discourses on agrarian relations are characterised by tension over the identity of the communities under study - that is, whether to call them peasants, smallholders or semi-proletariats? Since the 1980s there has been a wide-ranging debate on the exact socio-economic character of rural people. It has become fashionable within agrarian literature to use a range of concepts to identify agrarian classes. Social historians such as Isaacman, (1990), Ranger (1985) and Beinart and Bundy (1987) use the term „peasantry“ with ease. Dalton (1972) argues that peasants have been defined so broadly and in such a contradictory manner as to render the concept virtually useless and that the notion should be either discarded or referred to only in negation (Dalton, 1972; Hill, 1963; Moore, 1973). As late as 1972, Post (1972:223) noted that, “most writers either evade this issue or display analytical uncertainty or forthrightly reject the term „peasant“”. At the end of the 1970s the broad political economy approach dominated thinking on agrarian relations and defended the position that peasants existed as an exploited class (Leys, 1975; Bundy, 1972; Saul and Woods, 1971).

During the decades of adjustment (1980s and 1990s) the preferred terms shifted from „tribesmen“ (favoured by structural functionalists) to „rural poor“, „small scale farmers“ and „smallholders“. The World Bank prefers to use the term „smallholder“ in reference to rural households which is an “incoherently broad concept that masks the fact it comprises a highly heterogenous group ... engaging in a series of quite distinct, but overlapping, production forms” (Gibbon et al., 1993:147). Scholars such as O’Laughlin (2000) and Moyo and Yeros (2005a), prefer the term „semi-proletariat“ to fix the in-between, ambiguous and fluctuating

social position of the peasantry (Helliker, 2006). Wolf (1969: xiv) defined the peasantry on the basis of primary involvement in agriculture, with effective control over land and oriented towards subsistence rather than re-investment.

However the current rural experience comprises a combination of land-based and non-farm income strategies (elaborated below), and the level of control over land is mediated by a variety of structures. Furthermore, although the majority have no capacity to acquire power-driven implements there has been a modest investment in animal-driven implements and a concerted effort to penetrate the market (to be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). In reality the great majority of the so-called peasants reproduce themselves with complex economic and social relationships of which autonomous cultivation is part of the bundle of strategies. In light of the foregoing the present discussion identifies with Kearney's (1996:2) position that "the category of peasant whatever validity it may have once had, has been outdistanced and modified by the contemporary history and experience of rural production relations" to an extent that rural dwellers remain difficult to pin down as a conceptual category. The goal of this subsection is to analyse social reproduction strategies of rural households with access to small plots and engaged in petty commodity production and how differentiation and diversification have become part of everyday realities.

2.2.1 Diversified Social Reproduction Strategies

It is extremely difficult to speak of a landed category of rural households with a common experience of poverty, a common set of income strategies and a common political objective. The countryside is made up of households that are not only differentiated but also have diverse sources of income earned through physically straddling town and country (in most cases the husband is a migrant labourer and the wife and the children are based in the rural home). Although many rural households are still producers of agricultural commodities, they have incorporated other highly diversified non-farm livelihood strategies that include seasonal migration and rural based artisanal activities to supplement incomes earned from agricultural incomes (Moyo, 2002). The majority of these rural producers are incorporated into world markets through the export of classic primary commodities (Moyo, 2002).

Contemporary rural families wear more than one hat; they are simultaneously involved in a diverse range of urban and rural petty commodity production and work activities that defy easy class categorisation. For instance, one organisational survey of five trade unions in

Zimbabwe found that 75 percent of households maintained dual homes in town and country (Peta et al., 1991). Migration to urban areas is one of the most visible aspects of diversification. Africa has notched up the fastest rate of urbanisation in the world (3.5 percent annually), and nearly 40 percent of the population is urbanised (Moyo and Yeros, 2005a:27). In Tanzania, a livelihood study identified more than four non-farm income generation strategies that communities participated in (Ellis and Bahiigwa, 2003). In some localities this entails declining involvement by poor rural dwellers in increasingly unreliable and unproductive agricultural activities. Thus the nature of the rural-based petty commodity producer as a socioeconomic and political category in contemporary struggles over land is subject to considerable reconceptualisation and ongoing debate (Veltmeyer, 2005).

Recently, Bryceson et al. (2000) have called into question the contribution of small landholdings to sustaining rural livelihoods. Based on research presented within a collection of essays entitled „Disappearing Peasantries?“ the authors argue that generally these rural households are not dependent on agriculture alone but combine this with other non-farm rural and urban income generation to sustain their reproduction. They characterise this process of depeasantisation as the “the movement of labour from peasant [smallholder] family farms to urban or rural non-agricultural employment...[which] contributes to the shrinkage of the agricultural sector relative to the industrial and service sectors” (Bryceson, 2000:5). According to this school of thought the viability of rural livelihoods based on farm incomes is most unlikely to persist in the twenty-first century where “depeasantisation combined with deagrarianisation which over the past two centuries gained epochal change by virtue of its sustained duration and unmistakable direction” (Bryceson, 2000:5).

The arguments presented above are compelling and deserve careful attention. At the centre of the debate is the role of non-farm incomes to rural livelihoods which in this instance is referred to as diversification. Income diversification implies the existence of many different activities and income sources, also typically requiring diverse social relations to underpin them. Rural livelihood diversification is defined as the process by which rural households construct an increasingly diverse portfolio of activities and assets in order to survive and to improve their standard of living (Ellis, 2000). The cause and consequences of diversification are differentiated in practice by location, assets, income level, opportunity, institutions and social relations. Diversification in many cases is determined by, among other things,

prevailing land tenure regimes, land pressure due to fragmentation through inheritance, the need to raise cash to buy agricultural inputs, and natural disasters such as droughts.

However economic diversification strategies are not new to rural households and have been adopted in different parts of the world. These strategies are pervasive and enduring and are not merely a transient feature in the otherwise smooth transition from agriculture to industry in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America (Ellis and Bahigwa, 2003). Most households, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, have been found to depend on a diverse portfolio of activities and income sources among which crop and livestock production feature alongside many other contributions to family wellbeing (Ellis, 2000). The proportion of income derived from non-farm sources is estimated to be between 30 and 50 percent, and this figure can reach up to 90 percent in Southern Africa (Reardon, 1997). In Southern Africa “ most farmers have always been part-time, combining agriculture with other livelihood activities including a range of off-farm work both locally and further afield, sometimes in other countries” (Scoones and Wolmer 2003:4).

The World Bank and IMF’s led „sink or swim“ deregulation policies, under which farmers were pushed into global commodity markets, accentuated rather than started the process of diversification into new consumer markets where they exported fresh fruits, vegetables and flowers to the North American market (Bryceson, 2000). Bebbington (1999) notes that the presence of non-viable agricultural units has not necessarily led to the end of rural livelihoods but rather there has been acceleration in the growth of a rural proletariat working on capitalist agricultural enterprises. Rather than make a grand claim about „disappearing peasantries,“ the evidence that has been presented suggests that rural livelihoods are composed of a process of maintenance and continuous adaptation of a highly diverse portfolio of activities to sustain their incomes.

2.2.2 Differentiated Rural Households

Africa’s colonial history was associated with varying levels of separation of the direct producers from their means of production, usually in the form of the violent seizure or expropriation of native communal landholdings and the consequent forced insertion of the displaced landholders into the wage economy in a process known as „proletarianisation“. The proletarianisation process was, however, not even, being mostly shaped by the form of colonialism and the extent of land alienation. Former settler colonies such as Kenya,

Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe experienced significant land alienation and attempts at proletarianisation were most pronounced in these countries. The process of land alienation was not uniform even within the settler colonies; in some instances certain communities retained their landholdings or were moved into infertile areas while other groups were totally proletarianised after being rendered landless.

Beyond land alienation, colonialism was also associated with the conversion of small scale agriculturalists previously producing for their own consumption into petty commodity producers. Commodification, with its emphasis on cash crops for the market, disrupted the cycle of household food production with an attendant decline in food production, increased vulnerability to the vagaries of the world market, and rural impoverishment which was partly caused by state and transnational requirements that peasants produce and sell specified crops under unfavourable conditions (Bernstein, 1979; Cooper, 1981; Watts, 1983). However, the effects of commodification varied; in some places, such as Zimbabwe, commodity traders used their control of credit to promote smallholder production in areas easily accessible to the market, whilst the majority in remote areas were marginalised. A good example of this division occurred in the Makoni customary areas in the eastern parts of Zimbabwe, where a combination of reliable rainfall patterns and a road network enabled access to credit and commodity markets unlike their counterparts in remote customary areas (Ranger, 1985:16).

Commodification also yielded defiant responses. Because neither the colonial state nor merchant interests could effectively oversee petty commodity production or completely lock the producers into the market, some enjoyed varying degrees of autonomy (Isaacman 1990:18). Even among those forced into the wage economy, some managed to utilise earnings from the wage economy to accumulate productive farm equipment. The situation was compounded by the fact that, even though officially land markets did not exist in customary tenure areas, other mechanisms of expanding landholdings were devised, including taking over underutilised land belonging to family members and direct purchase of land. Lineage elders (chiefs, village heads) manipulated the laws and, in the process, sold off some land to those willing to expand farm production. Thus the differentiated nature of African rural households has a longer pre-independence history (especially in Southern Africa) than recently acknowledged by some scholars (Moyo and Yeros, 2005a).

Political independence in most of the global south and east did not necessarily halt the process of land alienations and the commodification of agricultural production due to a number of constraints regarding the redistribution of land and the hegemonic influence of the logic of producing for the market promoted by both the local states and multilateral development agencies (especially in Southern Africa).

The bundle of survival strategies adopted by rural-based petty commodity producers contributes towards their further conceptual elusiveness. This elusiveness derives from the indeterminate, disparate and fragmented activities of production and reproduction of rural households (Helliker, 2006:30). Following Bryceson's (2000) arguments with regard to the contradictory process of depeasantisation and the enduring presence of poor rural dwellers within the countryside, there is a definite need to reanalyse agrarian change processes, going beyond the current fixation with class categories to explore rural production realities and what they mean for social reproduction.

Rural differentiation is not fixed; it is based on a number of external socioeconomic and political determinants that affect social reproduction, such as the vagaries of nature, actual landholdings, market fluctuations and own perceptions of wealth. The capacity to adopt a diverse set of income strategies and the presence of structural difference in terms of access to land and other natural resources are some of the factors behind the deepening of rural differentiation. The social relations that emerge are expressed in many interconnected realities that do not necessarily conform to mechanistic formulations of class and domination. Social hierarchies in the countryside are not concretely defined by accumulation of wealth but rather by other intrinsic endowments, such as the manner in which labour is mobilised.

2.3 Imperatives for Agrarian Reforms

There is no overall consensus on the goal of agrarian reform or an acceptable path to attain sustainable agrarian systems. Essentially, agrarian reforms entail designing social processes and policies that ensure the contribution of agriculture to the development of industrialisation and the various paths of transition to capitalism embedded in this relationship (Hendricks, 2007:1). At a practical level, agrarian reform is composed of public policies designed to readjust land tenure and ownership arrangements so as to limit the size of landholdings through expropriations or consolidation of landholdings or both (Laporte et al., 1951). The selected agrarian reform policies and programmes should aim at improving land utilisation

capacity, and facilitate the application of efficient farming methods to increase agricultural production. Therefore, the policies should restructure agricultural support mechanisms to ensure equal access to agricultural financing, input schemes, farm extension and access to markets.

Land reforms, either through redistribution of unused lands, expropriation from the land owners (e.g. the latifundo in Brazil and the large scale farmers in Southern Africa) to the land tillers or land tenure reforms have been the most dominant approach to agrarian reforms in recent history (Veltmeyer, 2005). In certain instances mild versions of agrarian reforms have entailed limited government intervention by public regulation and assistance through the promulgation of regulatory laws governing landlord tenant relations and leasing arrangements.

Given the history of colonial land dispossession, land reform in many developing countries is a precondition for agrarian reform and economic development. However, there is a limit to what land reforms can achieve in their own right, and they should only be the first step towards breaking the cycle of getting a more balanced development. The limitation of emphasising land reforms within the agrarian reform framework has been a constant critique raised by agrarian specialists going as far back as the 1950s. Warriner (1955) argued that to make agrarian reform successful it is necessary to go beyond land reforms and ensure that there is adequate investment in agriculture and in industry to provide wider opportunities for employment. Robert Alexander (1963:561) expanded on this thesis:

the mere distribution of land is not of course, a sufficient reform by itself. An effective program of agrarian reform must make sure that the new proprietors have access to credit, to finance their crops and to buy equipment and it must provide technical assistance and help in marketing.

More recently, Moyo and Yeros (2005a), and Sachikonye (2003) have stated that land reforms are a necessary but not sufficient condition for food security and national development.

Warriner (1955) noted that the most important results of agrarian reform are unmeasurable; they comprise “the complex and nebulous feelings of more humanity, more dignity and more freedoms that are gained by the peasants who receive land” (Warriner 1955:76). The fundamental question is about the political reorganisation of society after the dismantling of feudal, colonial and customary (especially in Africa) relations of production and the new set of liberties that the rural dweller is assumed to have.

Recent historical experiences, especially in Africa, have been of land dispossessions of the majority of indigenous populations and forced insertions into the wage economy that occurred during colonialism. The colonially-based land dispossessions created a new category of agrarian capitalists and in most instances this is made up of minorities (mostly whites) who dominated agricultural policy making through highly networked lobbying and advocacy mechanisms. Agrarian reforms comprising land redistribution tend to dilute the influence of this agrarian class and broaden the scope of economic and socio-political participation of a larger set of actors with smaller pieces of land.

Notably, the large scale commercial farming model (especially in Southern Africa) did not destroy smallholder or peasant production but ensured its survival in very austere circumstances which necessitated the seeking of complementary wages elsewhere (mostly on large scale farms and mines). The reserves that were created served as a labour reserve but were also sites of vibrant smallholder agriculture practice, especially in areas with favorable rains such as in Makoni in Mashonaland East. Labour relations on the large scale farms were highly exploitative of farm labour in terms of incomes and working conditions (Rutherford, 2001, Van Onselen, 1976). Thus the task of “organising the peasantry and the rural proletariat is one of the most pressing challenges of this era” (Hadjor, 1987:45). Embarking on such a political project entails revitalising and mobilising the countryside to counter the urban oriented politics of the elite.

2.4 Rural Social Organisation

There is a symbiotic relationship between rural social organisation and agency: the manner in which communities organise themselves is shaped by existing local authority structures. The form of individual and collective action encapsulated within agency eventually has a bearing on local institutions that define social organisation.

In terms of local authority Africa’s smallholders, unlike those in other parts of the world, did not have to confront a highly dominant feudal landlord class but have been engaged in a continuous struggle with various forms of colonially distorted local authority. The local state in Africa is invariably made up of customary structures that have over the years been elevated beyond their social context into reinforcing the rule of the central state and, at times, are in competition with newly established elected local authorities. Beyond the machinations of the state there are other non-state agents such as NGOs that have penetrated Africa’s countryside

and, in the process, have contributed towards a reconfiguration of social organisation, especially regarding the criteria of inclusion and exclusion. Thus the post-colony is not made up of one coherent public space, nor is it determined by any single organising principle. It is rather a plurality of „spheres“ and arenas, each having its own separate logic yet entangled with other logics when operating in certain specific contexts. Hence the post-colonial „subject“ has had to learn to continuously bargain and improvise (Mbembe, 1992:5). Faced with this, the post-colonial subject mobilises not just a single „identity“ but several fluid identities which, by their very nature, must be constantly „revised“ in order to achieve maximum instrumentality and efficacy as and when required.

A comprehensive analysis of rural social organisation and agency has to be undertaken within such a complex context. Three critical facets have emerged in recent studies on the subject: (i) the nature of local authority (Mamdani, 1996), (ii) the manner in which rural communities organise themselves for production and consumption (Mafeje, 1993, 1997, 2003), and (iii) finally the role of associational forms in redefining social organisation (Rahmato, 1991). An analysis that combines these three facets contributes towards a composite explanation of the underlying factors shaping rural social organisation and agency. The sections below revisit the issues raised within these studies and some of the responses that have contributed towards enriching the understanding of social organisation and agency.

2.4.1 ‘Indirect Rule’: Local Government and Tribal Communities

While many Africanist scholars were still debating the influence of colonialism on accumulation, Mamdani (1996) steered the debate towards analysing the mode of domination and consequently the form of social organisation bequeathed to the post-colonial state. At the centre of Mamdani’s (1996) project is an analysis of the extent to which the structure of power, especially in rural areas in contemporary Africa, was shaped in the colonial period rather than born of the anti-colonial revolt. This is done by an explanation of the features of contemporary politics through an analysis of the modes of state power, domination and resistance. According to Mamdani, state power in colonial Africa was derived from the imperatives of dealing with the native question – “how to maintain foreign control over large indigenous populations” (Mamdani, 1996:22). According to Mamdani (1996) the common response across Africa entailed the devolution of power to indigenous rulers in the name of custom and tradition, creating a „decentralised despotism“. To his credit, however he

identifies that the process was not uniform; there were countries such as Mozambique and Zimbabwe that instituted local government reforms at independence that were aimed at marginalising traditional authority in favour of political party structures. In the case of Zimbabwe, the independent state sought to minimise the influence of the chiefs by establishing modern bureaucracies that operated within the confines of civil law (Alexander, 1993, 2006).

In countries where indirect rule was perpetuated, such as Kenya, ethnic forms of organisation led to ethnically defined authorities in the countryside, while urbanites (especially minority whites) were subject to civil laws. This led to a bifurcated state of „citizens“ and „subjects“. The „subjects“, primarily peasant households in the countryside, had to contend with the wrath and arbitrariness of native authorities, chiefs and their subordinate structures. He further argues that the form of rule shaped the form of revolt against it, thus ethnicity was simultaneously a dimension of social organisation and colonial domination as well as a valid mobilisation platform for resistance against colonial rule.

Transitions from colonialism have, in many cases, failed to comprehensively deracialise civil society and democratise the local state by reforming customary authority. In the urban areas independence tended to deracialise the state but left civil society intact, such that historically accumulated privilege (usually racial) was embedded and defended in civil society (Freund, 1997:102). In terms of countryside reforms, Mamdani (1996:24-25) states that

a consistent democratisation would require dismantling and re-organising the local state, the array of the Native Authorities organised around the fusion of power, fortified by an administratively driven customary justice and nourished through extra-economic coercion.

Thus the bifurcation of the state has been bequeathed to the post-colonial state and „indirect rule“ continues to be the dominant form in a context in which the state has been „deracialised“ but not „democratised“. In summary, the Mamdani argument rejects the political economy approach in favour of a Weberian model of authority; „possession of the means of administration“, and for him civil society is civil law. Within this framework, colonial and post-colonial bureaucracies are claimed to have encapsulated the local state (in this instance chiefly power in systems of customary law) and curtailed its decision making authority to suit the needs of the centre (Dijk and van Nieuwaal, 1999:4).

However there are serious shortcomings with this formulation. Mamdani's (1996) attempt to theorise peasant-state relations in colonial Africa has obscured the relationship that emerges when smallholders and the landless are part of hired labour for large scale commercial farmers (Yeros, 2002:17). More importantly, Mamdani (1996) privileges „tribal“ identity in the majority of mobilisations that have occurred from the townships in South Africa to the Rwenzururu in Toro, Western Uganda. This is problematic for several reasons. The privileging of „tribal“ identity as a concrete category of political behaviour, especially in reference to Southern Africa, was discredited as far back as 1959, when it was established that township- based identities bore little resemblance to traditional or rural tribes, which were themselves often creatures of the vortex of social and administrative change (Chege, 1997). In fact, mobilisations for struggle have emerged in contexts of despotism fanned by the need to resolve material inequalities created by harsh and exploitative relations promoted by the market and enforced by the state which have conditioned peasant responses.

Furthermore, Mamdani (2006) has been challenged especially on his treatment of traditional authority with broad strokes that do not acknowledge the different interests that traditional authority had to service in order to retain legitimacy. In practice the chief and their subordinate structures are not necessarily mere instruments of „indirect“ despotism but rather were and are by nature „Janus“ faced: on the one hand serving the interests of the colonial and post-colonial state and, on the other, representing popular local causes. The latter role of the chiefs explains their continued existence and legitimacy within African communities. Alexander (1994, 2006), Moyana (1984) and Dzingirai (1994) have detailed how chiefs in Zimbabwe were part of the struggle against colonialism and the ways in which they increased their mobilising strength on the basis of rallying for the restoration of the alienated lands. Furthermore the chiefs have retained their influence despite the post-colonial state's attempts to coopt them, and they have done this through not letting themselves “be pushed aside and [rather] kept on fulfilling these customary laws, thereby entering into full competition with the relevant state institutions” (Rouveroy and Dijk 1999:29). Thus rather than depict the process as one of full cooptation of traditional authority into the service of the post-colonial state the former has in fact mobilised a complex set of tactics to maintain and retain its legitimacy within the customary areas. The tactics include limited collusion with the post colonial state in areas where it stands to benefit and competing with the structures of the state when its authority especially over land is under threat.

The post-colonial state has on many occasions been compelled to enlist the support of chiefs in order to acquire some measure of legitimacy, while chiefs similarly need the state to defend their position in local government (Rouveroy and Dijk, 1999:4). In some parts of Africa, such as Tanzania and Malawi, chiefs have been at the forefront of direct action against the government's policies on land. In Malawi the chiefs using their historical claim to land have mobilised communities to occupy land alienated by the state for foreign investment (Shivji, 2006).

2.4.2 Custom based forms of organisation

Archie Mafeje (1993, 1997 and 2003) argued that the dominant form of rural sociability in rural Africa is in some form of a structural relationship within a lineage grouping and an ethnic clan. At the helm of the customary model is the office of the chief and its subordinate structures. The organisation for access to natural resources, production and consumption is based on principles of inclusion in or exclusion from the clan or lineage group. Ahmed (1980:127) defines the lineage as

A corporate group of unilineal kin with a formalised system of authority. It is generally named and within it are accepted genealogical relationships known between all members. It includes both the living and the dead.

The hierarchy of institutions within the traditional framework establishes criteria for access to land and also the norms for defending these land rights. The clan asserts political and ritual rights over land, followed by the lineage, which establishes concrete claims over land supported by actual ties of consanguinity and corporate interests, and finally use rights conferred on the household, in most instances through the male household head. Only the products of social labour – crops and livestock – are objects of appropriation (Mafeje, 2003:3). Recognition of certain clan domains makes it easy for lineages to maintain a steady pool of land to control any influx of strangers (non-kinspersons). In this kind of framework production, consumption and accumulation are organised at household level and sharing of labour or produce in instances of distress is among those who already have certain commonalities in movable and immovable property and are bound together by exclusive ties of mutual obligation. Thus the lineage framework provided a mechanism of cooperation and fostered mutual sharing. The distribution system encapsulated within the lineage framework functioned as a method for reconciling the individual's total interests with those of the community (Adholla, 1962:22). This form of social organisation also provided norms of

cooperation centred on the idea of sharing between the richer and poorer members of the lineage group (Von Freyhold, 1979:81). The implicit rules of cooperation attempted to strike a balance between the richer members who were obliged to share their surplus by compensating them with the social esteem they gained from it. On the other hand the parasitism of the poor was held in check by the social sanctions against idleness (Freyhold, 1979).

Rahmato (1991) questioned the tendency to privilege lineage- based forms of organisation at the expense of other forms of social organisation. To his credit, Mafeje (1993, 2003) was one of the foremost critics of this form of social organisation, arguing that it was highly undemocratic and, in many instances, oppressed women (Mafeje, 1993, 2003). Although the lineage-based form of organisation has made provisions in the event of the death of the male head of the family, in practice, the surviving widow and minor children have often been removed from the land or reduced to unpaid labour for the lineage group (Cheater, 1984). This notion of a form of social organisation that is in equilibrium was mostly dominant prior to the introduction of petty commodity-based forms of rural production. The introduction of a market value of rural goods and trade in them contributed towards exploitative social relations within the lineage group, where the more competent preferred to use their surplus to establish relations which brought more tangible benefits while those left behind found themselves exploited. Rather than view the lineage-based forms of social organisation as sustainable mechanisms of balanced social reproduction, it becomes an instrument of accumulation through establishing criteria of „inclusion“ and „exclusion“ when issues of access to natural resources such as land are under consideration. These are considered crucial criteria for gaining access to vital resources and organising forms of social reproduction. The underlying philosophy of customary tenure is a notion of belonging within a defined lineage grouping that ensures access to land and related benefits (Adholla, 1962:23).

Furthermore, the importance of lineage-based forms of organisation tends to be exaggerated, especially in former settler colonies where there has been a virtual remaking of tribal authority, first to suit the needs of settler regimes and currently those of post-colonial states. Rural households have been involved in social and political struggles which have been organised under the influence of tribal leaders but, in many instances, outside the realm of traditional leadership structures. Even in terms of land allocations, studies by Dzingirai (1994), Yeros, (2002a) and Chimhowu and Woodhouse (2008) in Zimbabwe have shown

how traditional leaders have violated their own „customs“ by allocating land to people considered „strangers“ because of the absence of familial ties.

Moreover, many studies (for instance, Bratton, 1986; Moyo, 1995, 2000) have shown that the influence of lineage forms of local organisation of communities for production (labour, sourcing of inputs and extension advice) is waning and in its place is emerging a variety of local associational forms that organise beyond the confines of belonging within a lineage group. Localised production groups, marketing cooperatives and other ad hoc mechanisms, such as labour beer parties (nhimbe), which mobilise beyond the ethnic and lineage framework, dominate the organisation for production and exchange in the countryside. Bratton's (1986) study of communities belonging to local farmer groups in Hwedza District in Mashonaland East demonstrated that these institutions tend to be more influential than traditional hierarchies even in sanctioning social behaviour and organising consumption, especially in times of distress.

2.4.3 Associational Rural Society as a Form of Social Organisation

The failure of the „independence project“ to deliver on national development, especially on efficiency, equity and freedom, yielding instead monopolisation of property and concentration of power in the hands of a small elite, led to the questioning of the role of the state in rural development. Rural communities responded to this failure by mobilising organic associative activities and relationships (Rahmato, 1991:3). The associative activities take the form of popular local organisations, and their proliferation is based on the real needs, interests and knowledge of the people involved. These flourish in any environment, even in areas that do not encourage independent association. There is a wide range of associational forms in rural settings, including savings and loans societies, self-help organisations, multi-purpose cooperatives, occupational groupings, farmers unions and, since the 1960s, rural based NGOs. The leadership in these groups originates from amongst the concerned communities.

In essence, this model is based on the thesis that rural society in most of Africa has a tendency towards collective action through different forms of associations and that these formations ultimately have an influence on the social relations of production and the power relations in any locality. The purpose of such organisations is to serve as defensive and promotional instruments in the everyday struggles of smallholders, to contribute to the

economic viability of rural households, and to help create the enabling conditions for the pursuit of rural autonomy.

However experience has shown that the formations of collective action on which Rahmato's (1991) „model“ is based were mostly formed through external agents (especially external NGOs) and have instead pacified demand for structural transformation by facilitating the introduction of other non-farm income sources to rural households. In many instances, rural households through these associational forms have been coopted into the modernisation framework to service the logic of technological and knowledge transfer focused on modernising farming practice. The local associations are, in most instances, subordinate partners of intermediary NGOs which have steered them into localised „development projects“ that focus on ameliorating poverty without a clear transformational agenda.

A limited and non-transformational form of agency emerged out of this process as rural actors' activities and lived realities were subordinated to measurable project goals, such as increased household food security, or improved literacy and sanitation. The result of externally established associational forms has been the worsening of rural social reproduction opportunities, increased differentiation, especially between project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, and the demobilisation of the countryside. Furthermore, these associational forms only constitute part of society, and an analysis of rural social organisation based only on an analysis of these formations might be misleading given their exclusionary nature. They tend to be exclusive due to the different criteria they use for recruiting members, and these include ownership of certain assets, defined levels of vulnerability and territorial proximity.

2.5 Rural Agency and Agrarian Reform

„Agency“ is about the individual's capacity to process social experience and to devise ways of coping with life even under the most extreme forms of coercion and exploitation. According to Long (2001), social actors possess „knowledgeability“ and „capability“ to solve problems, and learn how to intervene in the flow of social events around them. More critically, agency depends upon the emergence of a network of actors who become partially enrolled in the project of some other person (Giddens, 1984). Agency is embodied within closely-knit social relations and can only be effective through them. It entails the generation and use or manipulation of networks of social relations and the channeling of specific items such as claims, orders, goods, instruments and information (Long, 2001). A discussion on rural

agency is ultimately concerned with how rural households respond collectively to the immediate constraints to social reproduction.

In this instance the analysis of agency examines how local rural associations respond to social reproduction grievances within their environment. The study devotes particular attention to how these local forms are performing in terms of realising the aspirations of the members and also in the manner in which they encourage participation in group decision-making and activities. The discussion remains alert to the existence of other actors within the rural communities and their potential to influence the nature and forms of agency that emerge. In this context, an analysis of rural authority, farmer unions that organise on a national platform and NGOs is carried out.

Over the years rural communities have developed innovative support systems that cushion them against possibilities of vulnerability and are aimed at enhancing the quality of life. These support systems include social arrangements of reciprocity, forced generosity, communal land and work-sharing. In many instances these have been supported by traditional norms and forms of traditional authority. The role of tradition in this context remains highly contested. Chatterjee (1986) argues that tradition is useful in shaping agency as it lends legitimacy, furthers mobilisation and puts moral pressure on mediating forces such as the state. In Zimbabwe research by Moyana (1984) and Alexander (1993, 2006) has shown how traditional authority was part of the resistance to colonially enforced measures. In post-independence Zimbabwe the role of traditional authority has varied from being part of civil society (mobilising for land) to being an instrument of coercion on behalf of the state (silencing the demand for land).

However, the intrusion of the market and the state has led to the emergence of more autonomous responses that do not necessarily receive leadership guidance from traditional structures. There is emerging within the countryside what Moyo and Yeros (2005a) have called the „rural intellectual“ whose task of mobilisation has been made easy by the strain imposed on rural livelihoods by market forces and weak state policies. Furthermore households engage in a variety of politics both simultaneously and over time. They vote in local and national elections; they engage in covert and unorganised acts of defiance such as trespassing, squatting, poaching and stealing (Scott, 1985).

2.5.1 *Local Formations and Rural Struggles*

Subtle forms of rural struggles, such as poaching grazing lands and fence cutting to allow livestock entry into private large scale farms, have been neglected in academia because of an urban bias in analysis (Moyo, 2002). At the centre of rural struggles for social change is a variety of structured and unstructured local organisations that employ both legal and illegal tactics to achieve their goals. Over time a number of rural households have indeed been mobilised into rural associational forms that have emerged across the global south and east as a result of either local or external agency, ostensibly to serve local needs. However, rural development literature referring to voluntary collective action (Chambers, 1983; Friedman 1992 and Korten, 1980) made no reference to locally emerging public action around land reform. Earlier studies, for instance Klein (1980) and Hyden (1983) emphasised the unique nature of these entities and how they serviced certain specific cultural contexts and needs but recent studies, especially Bratton (1986) and Romdhane and Moyo (2002) have argued that these have various shades but have mainly been formed in response to the harsh and exploitative market relations that have been promoted by the post-colonial state.

There are various ways in which rural communities act collectively and Rahmato (1991) has identified nine forms of associations that thrive in the rural setting as: (i) mutual support networks; (ii) welfare associations; (iii) societies for resource mobilisation; (iv) self-help organisations; (v) cooperatives; (vi) non-governmental organisations; (vii) farmer organisations; (viii) secret societies; and (ix) political organisations. According to Rahmato (1991) the most common localised formations are mutual support networks, cooperatives, savings and loan groups, informal organisations and social movements. These have been given various names. Multilateral agencies such as FAO favour „rural organisations“, Esman and Uphoff (1984) prefer „local organisation“, Bratton calls them „farmers“ organisations but in most instances this term refers to larger trade union type organisations. Influential Africanist scholars (for instance, Rahmato, 1991; Mafeje, 1993; Moyo and Romdhane, 2002) prefer to call these formations „peasant organisations“, which refers to a variety of discrete associations formed by and involving peasants (Mafeje, 1993:17). This is despite the challenges surrounding use of the term „peasant“ in Africa. The emergence of such rural formations on the continent has been conceptualised as one of the rural responses against economic and political crises and as a potential force in a possible endogenous movement for alternative forms of development (Moyo, 2002:1).

The study of these local formations in Africa has a fairly short history. The dominant discourses, especially Marxist structuralism, did not treat local associational formations as an analytical concept, thereby overlooking critical forms of organisation and social struggle. Popular readings, such as Shanin (1987) and Gutkind (1988), simply ignored them. This is despite the fact that local organisations have been in existence over a number of years in various shades and serving different roles. The proliferation of local organisations in Africa is impressive: there are 35 000 in Nigeria, 60 000 in South Africa, over 3 000 in Zimbabwe and in Botswana one study identified 25 different organisations in several villages (Korten, 1982; Moyo, 2002:15). Rural local organisations have been found to thrive even in countries where the government is pursuing hard-line statist policies.

Corporatism has been used to analyse the relationship between rural associational activity and the state and market activity (Bratton 1994:11). Corporatism can be defined as

A set of policies and institutional arrangements for structuring interest representation...the state often charters or even creates interest groups, attempts to regulate their number, and gives them the appearance of a quasi-representational monopoly along with special prerogatives (Stepan, 1978:46 [Quoted by Bratton 1994:11])

Within such a context rural associations have been reduced into willing appendages of either the ruling party or the state. Rural formations are reduced to instruments of bringing about modernising rural development projects, such as the introduction of non-farm income generating projects. The colonial and post-colonial states have indeed been successful in nurturing national associations. For instance, prior to independence they were instrumental in the establishment of the Rhodesia Commercial Farmers' Union (RCFU) and the smallholders' national farmers association. However these formations did not have an influence on local associational activity but were rather more concerned with national agricultural policy.

The corporatism approach oversimplifies the rationale behind group formation among rural households and local level politics. It exaggerates the grasp African governments have over associational activity, especially in the rural areas (Bratton, 1994:11). In practice it fails to adequately interpret the actual meanings of such interactions and local practice within local associational activity in terms of defending rural social reproduction through bargaining,

negotiations and compromises struck with the urban based elites (Murisa, 2007). The potential contribution of these forms to democratic practice remained outside the scope of this discourse, despite the fact that these formations tend to be resistance movements or organisations against domination by the state, landlords, merchant capital, or men in the case of women's associations (Mafeje, 1993:17).

Furthermore rural households are not just economic units of production but sites of social and cultural interaction, and they operate within a political context in which their interactions with the external environment cannot be easily defined, as within a coopted or autonomous framework. These organisations are defenders of political space as they play a political adaptive role and respond to the exploitative relations unleashed by the state and the market (Holmquist, 1980; Moyo, 2002). Increasingly they have become centres of micro-democracy given the revolving of leadership positions, unlike within the traditional framework where positions are held for life. Within this thinking it is argued that the petty commodity-producing smallholders belonging to these associational forms are active and empowered forces that continue to occupy the terrain of struggle over land and agrarian reform.

2.6 Post-Independence Historiography on Social Organisation and Agency

2.6.1 *Lacuna on Rural Agency*

Discourse on agrarian change and rural politics in Zimbabwe has tended to overlook localised rural forms of mobilisation and action. The 1970s were characterised by the emergence of studies steeped in the political economy approach which in many instances clarified in a very neat and systematic manner the exploitative nature of the different forms and stages of capitalism. Studies such as Arrighi's (1973) essay on the political economy of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), through an analysis of shifts and realignments among the various sectors of capital, were able to comprehensively explain how capital functioned and exploited the various underclasses. Focusing on inter-capitalist conflict, Arrighi (1973) concluded that Zimbabwe was being held hostage by white agrarian capital, which insisted on extending its colonial occupation into the nationalist period (Yeros, 2002:120). Arrighi (1973) did not make much of African politics or consider the various forms of response from the countryside.

In the post-independence period the debate on rural politics has been contentious in Zimbabwe; scholars such as Von Blackenburg (1984) dismissed the smallholders' demands for land as morally and economically weak because of their low productivity. Sachikonye (1995:132) argues that there is "no independent peasant (rural) organisation *Vis à vis* the ruling party that has survived or emerged after independence". He is not alone in making these assertions, Bratton (1994) similarly argues that rural politics "is pervaded by a neo-patrimonial political culture which derives from precedents of arbitrary rule established in traditional, colonial and post-colonial regimes" (Bratton, 1994:12). Within such reasoning an objective analysis of organic collective responses to unfair land distribution and exploitative agrarian relations has been very limited.

Rarely did alternative organic forms of social organisation and mobilisation feature in the discourse on broader struggles of economic and political development in Zimbabwe or even in Africa. Suggestions of a rural protest in post-independence Africa were rare, unwelcome and seen as utopian (Amin, 1990:12). Furthermore, the totality of the mode of rule of traditional authority was assumed. As yet there are very few systematic studies into the class dynamics of these struggles, which particular groups participated, how and under what conditions (Veltmeyer, 2005).

The 1980s saw the first signs of attempts to break away from the established orthodoxies of understanding agrarian change in Africa. Two important studies – a collaboration between Beinart and Bundy (1987) and another by Ranger (1985) – on South Africa and Zimbabwe emphasised the interrelationship between social action and social structure. While focusing on rural agency, these works remained attentive to the structural constraints at the local and national levels that have shaped the daily lives of the peasants and limited their range of options. Beinart and Bundy (1987) demonstrate how rural opposition to the Glen Grey Act, which raised taxes and challenged the indigenous land tenure system, compelled the South African government to slow down the process of land alienation and to abandon the proposed labour tax. Ranger (1985) notes that, in Zimbabwe, „illegal squatting“ allowed peasants to use portions of land long after they had been designated as European areas, and describes how they resorted to acts of sabotage against the property of the settler who had appropriated their land.

There have been few other studies on rural responses and they have made a considerable contribution towards an understanding of the different forms of rural organisation, such as farmers' unions, and how these have influenced agrarian policies especially producer pricing (Bratton, 1986; Skalnes, 1995). Even so, the analysis has been limited and does not adequately delve into the broader meanings of local organisation and mobilisation (discussed above). Whilst significant attention has been devoted to the analysis of the roles of large farmer unions such as the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) and the Zimbabwe Farmers' Unions (ZFU) in terms of the manner in which they influence agricultural pricing and input policies, very little work has been done on the everyday practices and realities of rural households and local formations. Another dominant trend has been purely agriculturalist, focused on identifying methods to improve or modernise agriculture in the smallholder sector. These approaches tend to overlook the broader political and social grievances behind group formation and instead adopt a rather instrumental economic approach in analysing the role and place of rural formations.

Debates on „the agrarian question“ in Zimbabwe have mostly been influenced by the political economy framework in which local patterns of existence are viewed as linked to and having been shaped by the wider framework of the capitalist economy (Nuijten, 1992:199). The few studies that actually focus on the organisation of smallholders tend to dwell on the “large movements and on revolutionary change, not on the everyday organising practices of peasants and their ways of perceiving and coping with daily realities“ (Nuijten, 1992:199). Studies on rural organisation carried out by Herbst (1990) and Bratton (1986 and 1994) do not adequately appreciate the role of existing forms of organising, but are caught up in developing arguments oriented towards a particular goal of crafting a certain form of development that evolves around the successful implementation of agricultural pricing policy.

There has been some limited research on local collective action that rejects the myths of isolation and backwardness associated with the peasantry and empirically shows the level of mobilisation into various associational forms (Bratton, 1986; Moyo, 1995, 2000, 2001, 2004; Arnaiz, 1998; Alexander, 1993, 2003, 2006; Burgess, 1997). The various field-based research studies show that the traditional form of organisation was one among many other platforms of organising communities for production and social welfare. This group of scholars looked for insights to social organisation and agency from the colonial period and argued that the growing membership of churches was one of the early forms of political expression (Burgess,

1997:129). Furthermore, it has been argued that after land alienations and resettlement into reserves the smallholders went into a process of „accelerated petty commodity production“ – a process of quick adaptation to new cash crops (Ranger, 1985). Prior to colonialism these communities had not virtually engaged in one or other form of commodity production. The accelerated process of „petty commodity production“ took place as a strategy of defiance against the very different economic future planned by the new conquerors (Ranger, 1985:27). The research detailed how rural communities were responding to unfair state policies and market exploitation. Furthermore, there are others who have noted that rural action was not only confined to structured and visible forms of organisation. Many struggles for land reform starting in the colonial period have been championed by underground movements whose inspiration ranged from spirit mediums and militant chiefs to popular claims for restitution (Moyana, 1984, Sadomba, 2008b:163).

2.6.2 Debates on the 2000 Land Occupations and ‘Fast Track’

Debates on post-independence land reform in Zimbabwe are dominated by Sam Moyo (1986, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2005). Beginning from the early 1990s, Moyo has sought to emphasise the significance of rural and informal politics in the changing political economy of the land question (Yeros, 2002:123). Critical issues raised by Moyo regarding rural politics and land occupations include, firstly, the inability of formal, urban-based, donor-dependent civic organisations to tap and articulate systematically the rural grievances of smallholders engaged in petty commodity production and the wage economy. Secondly, he notes the existence of a fragmented land occupation movement that emerged in the euphoria of independence in 1980 and has been going through various phases of intensity and visibility. Moyo is not alone in raising the issue of land occupations; others such as Ranger (1985), Alexander (1993, 2003, 2006) and Marongwe (2002) have made similar observations of the existence of land occupations (squatting) as a tactic of attaining land. However, it is the interpretation of the 2000 land occupations that has led to acrimonious debate.

The contestations over the heightened occupations and the consequent formalisation of the process through the „fast track land reform programme“ led to polarised positions among scholars akin to the political divisions that beset Zimbabwe soon after 2000. Basically two seemingly opposed schools of thought have emerged: Moyo and Yeros based on their collaborative works in 2005 and 2007 and their individual works (especially Moyo, 2001, 2003 and Yeros, 2002b) pitted against others such as Hammar and Raftopolous (2003) and

Sachikonye (2003, 2005). Yeros (2002b:4) has described the divide along the following schematic lines:

one takes the side of civil society and concerns itself with ensuring free and fair party elections remaining cognisant of the bourgeois nature of the „civil“ electoral platform; the other takes the side of the „uncivil“, endorsing the radical land acquisition programme of the ruling party, while remaining cognisant of the latter’s democratic deficit (Yeros, 2002b:4).

Beyond some of the opportunistic labeling that has taken place the interpretation of events in 2000 needs to take cognisance of how the demand and hunger for land increased in the 1990s and also how political realignments within the ruling party and civil society were instrumental in shaping the nature of the land movement and the response of the state. Moyo and Yeros (2005b) place their discussion within a context of failed market-led land reform policy and the effects of Zimbabwe’s economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP) on livelihoods, a discussion that is lacking among other critics of land reform.

Moyo’s (2001) interpretation of the land movement, especially his views on the similarities between the land movement prior to 2000 and the post-2000 phenomenon, has been a subject of intense debate. In brief, Moyo (2001) argues that the essence of land occupations has been the same since independence; the overriding grievances spurring demands for land reform remain, the land movement is still made up of landless rural people and urban unemployed, and the manner of mobilisation and leadership has been the same since 1980. Furthermore, since 1980 the state has been ambivalent about land occupations. In the early years (1981-83) the state used a strategy of formalising land occupations and in the mid-1980s preferred to use squatter control committees to contain land occupations.

Hammar et al. (2003), Sachikonye (2005) and Marongwe (2002) argue that there was no continuation or similarity between the land occupations from 1980 to 1999 with those of the post-2000 period, largely because of the changed role of the state. Selby (2006) argues that while prior to 2000 the state mostly aligned itself with large scale commercial farmers and opposed land occupations, after the February 2000 referendum the state seemed to be the main instigator of the land occupations. Moore (2003) and Alexander (2003) portray the post-2000 land occupations and fast track programme as a response on the part of ZANU (PF) to the referendum defeat. For instance, Moore(2003) describes the referendum loss as “the straw that started to break the ZANU (PF) camel’s back” and posits this as the direct catalyst for

the third Chimurenga (Moore 2001:255). Scholars such as Sachikonye (2005), Moore (2001) and Raftopolous (2003) reduce „fast track“ to a regime survival strategy. However their analysis does not include the motivations of those among the land occupiers, especially their socioeconomic contexts and the significance of land to rural social reproduction. Much of the literature, such as Bond and Manyanya (2003) and Campbell (2003) has posited that the crisis that emerged soon after the land occupations of 2000 is a „retreat from the development project or signifies the „end of modernity“. Such a narrative suggests that developmental and democratising imperatives had been abandoned by the state in favour of increasing authoritarian role (Fontein, 2009:5). Whilst the period surrounding land occupations and „fast track“ saw the ZANU-PF state adopt a more authoritarian stance the negative effect of the shift toward compulsory acquisition on the development remains open to debate.

The arguments provided by Moore (2003), Raftopolous (2003) and Selby (2006) remove land occupations from their social context and are only analysed through the lens of an electioneering political strategy. Selby’s (2006) assertion that the state was the main instigator of the land occupations overlooks grassroots-based forms of mobilisation and the role of war veterans in land occupations. However the tendency has been to conflate war veterans as part of the ZANU (PF) machinery without comprehensively analysing the relationship between the two (discussed in more detail in the following chapter). These scholars privilege the political factors, especially the regime survival imperative at the expense of the colonial history of land alienation, the difficulties associated with the Lancaster House Agreement in redistributing land and the impact of structural adjustment, especially the loss of urban wage jobs and accentuation of rural poverty. Even the first phase of land reform is dismissed as largely benefitting ZANU (PF) elites without acknowledging evaluations carried out by Cusworth and Walker (1988) and Kinsey (1999) that showed the positive outcomes of land reform.

Recently, Sadomba (2008a) has noted that land occupations did not really stop between 1999 and 2000 but that in some parts of the country political elites convinced the rural people desirous for land to wait first for the outcomes of the donor conference and then the constitutional reform process, in which it was envisaged that the new dispensation would allow the state to redistribute land quickly. The NO vote was translated as meaning the denial of land reform through the legitimate process.

Moyo and Yeros (2005b) recognise, and maybe over-emphasise, the local and global significance of these land occupations and argue that they are “the most important challenge to the neo-colonial state in Africa under neo-liberalism” (2005:165). To their credit they acknowledge the agency of the rural dwellers through land occupations as possibly the only remaining force of resistance to the market philosophy of resource management, although its ideology has not been adequately developed to wage a sustained campaign against the postcolonial state. However they do not adequately devote attention to the violence that surrounds land occupations and instead of engaging critically with ZANU (PF)’s turn towards authoritarianism they make an impressive attempt to explain why it is so and in the process suggest that there was no democratic alternative.

However while the turn towards authoritarianism has done much to exclude many, particularly farm workers, women and white commercial farmers, it did simultaneously manage to appeal to some of the other localised aspirations for land which has often been thwarted since 1980 (Fontein, 2009:5). Furthermore in discussing the 2000 land occupations it is necessary to analyse the factors that embolden public action at a particular period to act in a certain way (Kerkvliet, 2009). The emergence of leaders and groups to „frame“ discontent and resistance in ways that enabled those among land occupiers to overcome or set aside reluctance and fear and collectively confront powerful entities was one of the most important driving factors in the 2000 land occupations. Firstly, the leadership of mostly war veterans had previously won a huge concession in the form of pensions and gratuities from Government and knew the weaknesses in the party especially after the referendum defeat. Secondly, the realignment within civil society and the letter from the British government clarifying their new position on funding land purchases provided necessary emboldening on the radical faction within ZANU (PF) which favored compulsory acquisition (discussed in detail in the following chapter). Thirdly, any state led opposition to land occupations would have exposed that ZANU (PF)’s position on land reform was rhetorical in a context where it had all but lost the urban vote to the MDC. These conditions provided sufficient grounds for war veterans working through the state to initiate national land occupations in a more aggressive manner (Moyo, 2001:320).

2.7 Concluding Remarks

The discussion in this chapter has shown the importance of pushing at the margins of political economy by not only focusing on the forms of domination and coercion but also devoting

particular analytical attention to the various rural subordinate classes in terms of the manner in which they organise themselves and respond to grievances. There is a need for balance between the local responses and an understanding of national and global systems of accumulation and domination. The chapter introduced the three facets critical to analysing social organisation and agency – the nature of local authority, organisation of social relations of production, and the role and space occupied by local associational forms. These three facets of social organisation provide an important overarching framework for the analysis presented in this study.

CHAPTER 3

ZIMBABWE'S TIPPING POINT

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a contextual understanding of the events that led to „fast track“ land reform and, more importantly, how the redistribution exercise negatively influenced the macro-economy. It examines in detail how economic decline, closely associated with the economic reform programme, although it has a longer history than ESAP, contributed towards the realignment of social forces in shaping the pace and nature of land reform. The discussion traces the emergence of two opposed alliances: an urban based coalition of civil society organisations in association with a new opposition political party focused on governance and human rights reforms, and an alliance between an underground agitation for land including war veterans which eventually worked through the ruling party and the state to attain land reform. The urban alliance was mostly made up of human rights focused NGOs such as the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Crisis Coalition and the National Constitutional Assembly working with the Movement for Democratic Change to effect governance reforms, while the rural alliance comprised the landless rural dwellers, traditional leaders, the war veterans and ZANU (PF)

In tracing the events surrounding the 2000 land occupations the chapter identifies what Kerkvliet (2009) has appropriately described as „emboldening“ factors in public action. These are conditions under which those involved in public actions, either land occupations or national strikes; perceive the changing national political circumstances as favouring public action (Kerkvliet, 2009:235). The goal of the discussion is to understand the factors that contributed towards the GoZ's adoption of the „fast track“ land reform programme. The discussion provides a contextual analysis of the different economic and political developments that occurred in the second decade of independence and examines their role in shaping the manner of land reform that emerged in 2000.

In 1990 the ten year Lancaster House Agreement conditionality stating that the constitution of Zimbabwe could only be amended by the full consensus of all members in parliament and senate expired. The state now had room for legal manoeuvres to amend laws surrounding land reform. At this stage the GoZ had only managed to redistribute less than 15 percent of Zimbabwe's land, half of which was still held by the LSCF sector. However instead of

pursuing land reform in 1991 the GoZ adopted an International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank sponsored economic reform strategy as part of measures to ensure adequate balance of payment support. Besides the public sector reforms, which entailed the restructuring of the civil service and privatisation of state enterprises, the economic reform programme was undergirded by the philosophy of the sanctity of property rights, which in essence put a damper on any prospects of compulsory acquisition of land for redistribution.

3.2. Economic Policymaking and Socio-political Development

3.2.1 Liberalisation

In July 1990 the government released an economic policy statement, *Zimbabwe-A Framework for Economic Reform (1991-1995)*, in which it announced a major policy shift from state-led economic development towards a market based approach. The five year programme was premised on orthodox reform packages prescribed by the IMF, including public sector reform, trade liberalisation, deficit reduction and creation of a „favourable climate“ for economic growth, the target of which was five percent per annum (Sachikonye, 2003). Achievement of this meant “moving away from a highly regulated economy to one where market forces play a greater role within the context of government objectives” (GoZ, 1990). The programme entailed correcting monetary and fiscal imbalances and other inefficiencies emanating from centralised domestic markets and trade regulation (Moyo, 2000:161).

The incentives offered in agriculture were mainly targeted at motivating production for the export market. The package offered to exporters (the bulk of whom were large scale farmers) included a nine percent tax reduction and an Export Retention Scheme (ERS), which allowed exporters to retain a proportion of income in foreign currency with which to import foreign goods (Selby, 2006:23). The dominant thinking within the framing of the ESAP strategy was that the concentration of agricultural production or land use on non-traditional exports such as horticulture, wildlife and related tourism land use would yield positive environmental and socioeconomic benefits (GoZ, 1990). The privileging of export oriented land use through various incentives led to a shift in land use patterns from household and domestic markets towards new export land uses, to the extent that by 1996 close to 30 percent of the entire LSCF (about 1 500 of the farms) had become engaged in one or more of the new land uses (Moyo, 2000:163).

However, the adjustment did not create sufficient incentives for the smallholder sector to increase production or diversify into new land uses. Although the Lancaster House willing seller-willing buyer conditionality had expired by 1990, the overarching principles of liberal economic reforms subordinated land reform policy to the philosophy of property rights, thus effectively enforcing the „willing buyer and willing seller“ approach that had been under threat with the expiry of the Lancaster House conditionality on amending the constitution. It was considered to be a matter for markets to resolve the land question under the ESAP regime (World Bank, 1991; GoZ, 1991; Moyo, 2000:52). Furthermore, ESAP did not contain interventions aimed at resolving smallholder specific constraints such as discriminatory financial constraints, distorted water rights which favoured the LSCF, and the lack of access to essential infrastructure such as dams and irrigation equipment.

The adjustment programme had a negative effect on smallholder agricultural production; while it removed tariff restrictions on agricultural commodities it also removed state subsidies for small scale agriculture without necessarily putting in place an alternative financing mechanism for the sector. Secondly, while a major component of most of the adjustment policies in Africa was the upward review of agricultural commodity prices, the Zimbabwean situation was slightly different. Agricultural commodity prices were mostly already at par with market trends due to the previous lobbying efforts of the three farmer unions, the Zimbabwe National Farmers“ Union (ZNFU), National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe (NFAZ) and the Commercial Farmers“ Union (CFU) (Bratton, 1994). In line with commodity price reforms marketing boards were commercialised and converted to „purchasers of last resort“ while private traders were allowed to compete (Moyo and Murisa, 2008:78). Commodity prices began to fall as the economy opened up through the open general import license rule, in which adjusting countries had to ensure that they lowered tariffs on a number of commodities. The situation was compounded by the loss of urban jobs which had been crucial in financing agricultural production and also the onset of inflation which eroded incomes. In summary, the effects of structural adjustment smallholders were

the integration of smallholders into the formal seed market under the control of transnational corporations...in addition to the fertiliser and chemical market which these corporations already controlled; the extension of peasant production to marginal land, the intensification of rural women’s labour and the upsurge of demand for land (Moyo and Murisa, 2008:78).

Furthermore, structural adjustment led to the reinforcement of the division of labour between smallholders and large scale farmers (Moyo, 2000). The large scale farmers expanded operations to non-traditional farming activities which included ostrich farming, eco-tourism and increased hectarage under cash-crops. The smallholders remained in petty commodity production of grain staples due to historical constraints such as land, water, credit and infrastructure (Moyo, 2002).

Thus the immediate outcomes from the ESAP period were economic decline, political tension and a social pandemic due to the introduction of user fees at health centres and school fees in an environment of declining employment. Formal employment decreased from 1990 so that, by 1995, 20 000 workers had lost public sector jobs and 25 000 had lost jobs in the private sector (Murisa, 2004:23). The impact of adjustment on welfare is critical; by 1998, 60 percent of the population was earning less than US\$1 a day, and 80 percent of these lived in the rural areas (UNDP, HDR, 1999). The same 1999 report ranked Zimbabwe 130th out of 170 on the Human Development Index.² The burden of adjustment was borne by the ordinary working people based in the cities and countryside.

In 1996 the GoZ officially abandoned ESAP as a macroeconomic development and stabilisation strategy and developed a more home grown strategy called the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST), which nevertheless pursued similar goals to the previous ESAP. The programme did not receive the anticipated external support and the country experienced a sustained economic meltdown between 1997 and 2000. The meltdown was exacerbated due to, among other factors, a major budgetary shortfall that had been caused by vast amounts of compensation paid to war veterans, the military intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the dramatic decline in the currency which lost 74 percent of its value within four hours on 14 November 1997 (Bond and Manyanya, 2003; Sachikonye, 2003; Lahiff, 2003).

3.2.2 Urban Based Protests and the State

Politically, the 1990s are associated with a shift in civil society politics from one of development partnership with the state to a more overt anti-state position. The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and affiliates were at the centre of mobilising against what were seen as the negative effects of the economic reform programme. The labour-led

² The Human Development Index measures quality of life using GDP per head, adult literacy rate and life expectancy.

coalition, comprising protesting students, striking public and private sector employees, and intellectuals, coalesced around issues of the need for improved wages, job security in an era of deregulation, and improved financial support for students at tertiary institutions. Civil society, for the first time in the post-independence era, became increasingly confrontational and began to challenge ZANU (PF)'s control of the mantle of nationalism (Raftopolous, 2003). Opposition to the government policy was expressed through the privately controlled press, nation-wide strikes, street protests and frequent work stay-aways (in the wake of the banning of strikes).

In 1992 the GoZ amended the Labour Relations Act to conform to the requirements of capital for flexible working hours, and ease of recruitment and firing of labour. The ZCTU responded by protesting both the content and process of legal reform; it complained that it had not been consulted in the design of the amendment and also that the Act jeopardised the rights of the worker. In the following year the ZCTU took a more radical anti-liberalisation reform stance when it accused the IMF and World Bank as enforcers of liberalisation in Africa (Yeros, 2002a:174). A walk-out by nurses at Chinhoyi hospital on 19 August 1996 triggered a nationwide civil servants' strike and the ZCTU, sensing the possibility of a bigger action involving even private sector workers, called for a general strike. Only a few affiliates of the ZCTU heeded the call for the strike and it largely remained a public servants' strike against poor working conditions and wages.

Even under such circumstances of confrontation with the state and capital, internally the ZCTU strategy was changing course from confrontationalism towards dialogue with the state and the international financial institutions; whereas the 1991 ZCTU conference theme was „Liberalisation or Liberation“, in 1995 the theme had evolved to „Progress through Cooperation, Participation, Involvement“ (Yeros, 2002a:178). As part of the GoZ's conciliatory measures towards labour it invited the ZCTU to be part of the trade negotiations with South Africa. In a strategy document entitled *Beyond ESAP (1996)*, the ZCTU shifted the focus of the development problem from politics to economics, identifying the problem not as a political one requiring worker control, but as a technical one requiring state level solutions (Yeros, 2002a:181). The strategy placed among its principal objectives “the need to upgrade the performance of the economy so that it meets international standards of global competitiveness” (ZCTU, 1996:10). As part of this strategy the ZCTU accepted the

inevitability of privatisation and retrenchments under structural adjustment and resorted to dialogue and training of retrenched workers.

Meanwhile the economic situation continued to deteriorate and the country was rocked by industrial action. Most notably farm workers downed tools for the first time in protest over poor working conditions and wages which stood at less than one-sixth of the poverty datum line, demanding a 135 percent increase against the 20 percent offered by employers (Yeros, 2002a:183). In all there were more than 230 strikes in 16 sectors during 1997.

In an attempt to increase revenue levels the GoZ introduced a new regime of levies and taxes on already overburdened workers. In May 1996, the ZCTU called for a general strike in all the six regions of the country. Approximately 3 000 out of an expected 250 000 workers from Harare and Chitungwiza participated in the general strike which was violently disrupted by riot police who used teargas, batons and dogs against demonstrators converging on the centre (Yeros, 2002a:185). The violence continued into the offices of the ZCTU. Exactly two days after the strike several assailants appeared in Morgan Tsvangirai's office and proceeded to beat him unconscious (Yeros, 2002a:186). The violent nature of the state led to indignation with the scare tactics and, whereas earlier the ZCTU through its *Beyond ESAP* document had acknowledged the centrality of the ZANU (PF) in handling economic problems brought about by the reform programme, the discourse within civil society veered towards the possibility of taking over state power. Strategies shifted from public strikes, where workers would gather as a crowd holding protest placards and march towards government offices, to stay-aways where workers were asked to stay at home on the designated day of action. There were increased calls from the membership for the ZCTU to form a political party (Yeros, 2002a).

Furthermore, from 1995 onwards many civil society organisations emerged in the area of human rights activism in response to the violent nature of the state's response to general strikes, taking advantage of the global agenda of governance reforms as a necessary precondition for economic development. The increase of organised civil society activity within this area was not accidental. Although many NGOs seemed to be local formations they mostly depended on donor funding which suggested possibilities of foreign influence in programming, especially on government policy matters. The period was also characterised by a shift within the donor community towards human rights and these were often defined restrictively to emphasise first generation rights – the political and civil rights - and to

exclude second and third order social and economic rights. During the same period NGO lobbying and discourse made a comparable shift towards emphasising political and civil rights without a complementary discourse on social and economic rights (Masunungure 2008:64). All of a sudden, society's struggle had taken the form of the Polish and Latin America model of civil society as „society against the state“ and capital was no longer the enemy (Masunungure, 2008:61).

The urban labour protests of the 1990s kept rural grievances such as the need for land reform peripheral to their demands. Very few NGOs, including the umbrella body *Mwelikeyo wa NGO* (MWENGO), Zimbabwe Economics Society (ZES), ZERO regional environmental organisation and the Zimbabwe Farmers' Union (ZFU), organised themselves to make an input into the GoZ's Land Tenure Commission. The Land Tenure Commission was appointed by the President to consult on land tenure issues and was chaired by Professor Mandivamba Rukuni. It recommended that Government should retain but decentralise communal tenure in communal areas, allocate longer term leases in purchase and resettlement areas with a view to granting private tenure, and retain freehold tenure in commercial areas (Rukuni, 1994a:49, 69, 83, 99). An NGO taskforce was established in 1997 to mobilise other NGOs to make an input into land policy.

These activities were at the periphery of the main urban protests that animated the public space of the 1990s. The failure to take up land reform as an agenda of the ordinary working people is significant, and many analyses of civil society continue to identify a perpetuation of a false separation between urban civil society, which is preoccupied with governance issues, and human rights reforms couched within a political and civil rights framework and paying little attention to the structural causes of inequality within society. On the other hand another more rural and uncivil force has focused on land reform within a nationalist restitutive agenda without an adequate questioning of the violence that is associated with the process (Yeros, 2002a; Moyo, 2001; Helliker, 2006).

3.2.3 Deteriorating Relations with the Former Colonial Master

The ZANU (PF) leadership has historically been sceptical of the British government's strategies since the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965. The latter was seen as largely passive about the future of Rhodesia (Stoneman and Cliffe, 1989:29; Raftopolous and Savage, 2004). During the Lancaster House talks Joshua Nkomo, one of the

leaders of the Patriotic Front (PF), singled out the failure of the British government to meet her decolonisation responsibilities as the reason behind the waging of the liberation struggle and the loss of lives that accompanied the war (Nkomo, 1979:3).

Relations between the British government and the new Zimbabwe government improved in the 1980s due to a number of foreign policy achievements on the part of the British, including giving the then Prime Minister (Robert Mugabe) several awards for statesmanship and supporting Zimbabwe's bid to host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Harare in 1987. In terms of land reform, the British honoured their pledge to provide compensation for acquired farms and from 1980 to 1988 they released £44 million towards the purchase of farms. The British government, working with local partners in Zimbabwe, undertook an evaluation of the land reform programme. The Cusworth and Walker (1988) report produced empirical evidence that supported land reform and showed that land beneficiaries were better off than their customary counterparts in terms of asset accumulation and food security (Cusworth and Walker, 1989). The report concluded by urging the British government to release more funding for land reform. However the passing of the Land Acquisition Act (1992) was greeted with hostility by the British government (Selby, 2006:13)

In 1996 there was a change of government in Britain. The Conservative Party, in power since the late 1970s, lost to the Labour Party under Tony Blair. The new Labour government made fresh land reform funding conditions and explained to the Zimbabwe government that funds for land reform were to be based on a „community initiated market assisted“ model of land reform. In 1997 the UK government absolved itself of responsibility to pay compensation for land redistribution despite the fact that during the deliberations the Chair of the Lancaster House talks, Lord Carrington, had made a commitment to support a land reform programme in Zimbabwe. He said that:

the British government recognises the importance of this issue [land] to a future Zimbabwe government and will be prepared within the limits imposed by our financial resources to help (Carrington, Lancaster House, 1979:2).

In a letter to the Zimbabwean Minister of Lands the then Overseas Development Secretary, Ms Claire Short, acknowledged the positive outcomes of land reform from the previous decade, cautioned the Zimbabwean government against an accelerated land redistribution exercise and went on to claim that

I should make it clear that we do not accept that Britain has a special responsibility to meet the costs of land purchase in Zimbabwe. We are a new Government from diverse backgrounds without links to former colonial interests. My own origins are Irish and as you know we were colonised not colonisers (Short, 1997:1).

The letter was instrumental in aligning moderate camps within ZANU (PF) with the more radical groups (Selby, 2006:15). Furthermore, the letter allowed the ZANU (PF) government to portray the land deadlock as part of a bilateral disagreement within a wider set of historical grievances (*Mail and Guardian*, 5 November, 2005). A number of initiatives meant to restore negotiations over land were set in motion from both Britain and Zimbabwe. In Britain, Tony Blair, realising the lack of tact in Claire Short's letter, wrote directly to President Mugabe and assured him of his government's commitment to Zimbabwe's land reform (Selby 2006:16). In Zimbabwe a joint initiative of the CFU, finance sector and land policy technocrats formed „Team Zimbabwe“³ as an attempt to find an amicable solution to the land issue and also to keep donors and the government engaged on the possibilities of funding land reform (Selby, 2006:32).

The various diplomatic efforts did not necessarily contribute towards the softening of ZANU (PF)'s position. A form of highly charged and confrontational nationalism focused on a redistributive approach last seen during the liberation struggle re-emerged and President Robert Mugabe was at the forefront of this process (Alexander, 2006). President Mugabe was quoted declaring that:

We are going to take the land and we are not going to pay for the soil. That is our set policy. Our land was never bought [by the colonialists] and there is no way we would buy the land back...Britain would have to do that (President Robert Mugabe quoted in *The Guardian*, 15 October 1997).

In 1998 the government designated 1 471 farms for compulsory acquisition under the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme Phase 2 and promised “overnight completion of the resettlement programme” (Kinsey, 1999:174). The official target was the resettlement of 91 000 families and “youths graduating from agricultural colleges and others with demonstrable experience in agriculture” (GoZ, 1998:23). Eventually 625 of the listed farms were delisted because they did not meet Government's criteria for resettlement.

³ The leading actors of this initiative were former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr Robbie Mupawose, Chairperson of the Bankers Association, Greg Brackenbridge, and land policy technocrats, Professors Mandivamba Rukuni and Sam Moyo.

3.2.4 Weakening of Ties between the State and the CFU

During the 1989 CFU Congress the then President of the CFU had described the ZANU (PF) government as, “the best government for farmers” they had ever seen (Murisa 2004:24). Indeed ever since independence the GoZ had maintained a cordial open door relationship with the CFU. The Union had also, through its joint lobbying activities with the black farmer unions, managed to influence agricultural pricing throughout the 1980s (Bratton, 1994). By the close of the 1980s a number of large scale land owning Cabinet ministers and senior government officials belonged to the CFU.

However the union’s influence on Government began to decline, especially in light of the possibility of compulsory land acquisition. Technical studies on land use carried out by the World Bank suggested that 65 percent of commercial farmland in Zimbabwe was underutilised and these statistics were used to strengthen the agenda for land reform. The CFU’s Director, David Hasluck, dismissed the World Bank 1991 report on land utilisation and claimed that the World Bank exaggerated the degree of inefficiency of commercial agricultural land (Selby, 2006). Similarly in 1995 the World Bank produced the *Achieving Shared Growth* Report in which it suggested the introduction of a land tax as a strategy for improving land utilisation and a means by which to establish a government fund to enable market-based land reform. Once again the CFU declined to entertain the Bank’s proposals (Moyo, 1994). These cases were cited as part of a culture of „resistance to reform within the CFU leadership“ (Selby, 2006:29).

Instead the CFU pursued a minimalist route to land reform through managed settlements. As part of efforts to promote co-existence and managed resettlement the Zimbabwe Tobacco Association (ZTA), an affiliate of the CFU, established the Farmers’ Development Trust (FDT) in 1994 which was run by a representative board appointed from the agricultural industry and the CFU and reported directly to the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture (Selby, 2006:28). The Trust’s mandate was to establish resettlement projects where potential black tobacco farmers would be selected, resettled and provided with necessary training and inputs. By the end of 1995 the FDT had established four tobacco growing projects on about 300 ha for 150 families (Selby, 2006:28). However, on a national scale this was insignificant and did not constitute a sufficient strategy to delay land reform.

A major disagreement soon ensued between the GoZ's newly-found route to compulsorily acquiring land and the CFU's preference for a market based approach. The CFU felt that Government should exhaust the available land first before new land for resettlement could be acquired, while Government insisted that the commercial farmers should be more forthcoming with land for resettlement (Selby 2006:29). Moyo (1994:8) summarised the CFU's position as "white farmers believe that they and not the state, should decide on land designation [but] such decision making power in designating land undermines the legitimacy of the elected government".

The CFU was particularly incensed by the manner in which the government had not consulted them in the drafting of the Land Acquisition Act (LAA) in 1990. Their response to the draft was to show Government that they still had policy clout and they organised a national conference to respond to the draft to which a total of 4 380 (approximately 90 percent of the LSCF community) large-scale farmers attended. The meeting was timed to ensure global press coverage, which was a critical part of their strategy of self-preservation (Selby, 2006). According to CFU Director, David Hasluck (quoted by Selby, 2006:33) "the meeting was a necessary exercise to raise awareness within the international community and to demonstrate the power and unity of the farming community". Such an aggressive and public stance was a clear contrast to earlier diplomatic lobbying and direct meetings with ministers and even the President that the Union had developed over the years. The change of tactic by the CFU was not missed by Government and from this point it began to reduce contact with the Union as it was seen as representing, "a privileged, but politically illegitimate white minority publicly challenging government's land policy" (Mangwende, 1991:2).

When Government listed 1 471 farms for compulsory acquisition in 1997 the CFU was warned against a legal recourse by the government and even its own lawyers (Selby, 2006:8). Instead, the CFU established the Agricultural Promotion Trust, a central fund from which its members could draw resources to fight designation in the courts independently. Approximately 1 200 farmers appealed against compulsory acquisition. By the end of 1997, when official lobbying was seemingly failing, the CFU began to directly lobby the diplomatic community resident in Zimbabwe and also embarked on a pre-emptive publicity offensive through local and international media campaigns, delegitimising land reform before the compulsory acquisitions had actually begun and emphasising the importance of commercial

farming to the economy. Throughout 1997 the CFU and the ZTA ran media campaigns in which they attempted to dismiss the rationality of land reform on the basis of the importance of the large scale sector to agricultural production, foreign currency generation and employment.

However the CFU's attempt to avert land reform did not take advantage of its growing black membership, nor did it actively recruit into its ranks the increasing number of influential black people who had either purchased or were leasing state farms. Despite the growing numbers of black commercial farmers the union had not made any serious efforts to integrate black members within its leadership structure, so that by 1996 not a single black member had been elected to the CFU national council and provincial structures (Selby, 2006). Rather when compulsory acquisition became a real possibility some of the white CFU members defected to the black unions, approximately 100 joined the Zimbabwe Farmers Union and another 200 joined the newly formed Indigenous Commercial Farmers' Union (ICFU) (Selby 2006:29).

In terms of engaging the state the CFU misjudged the political shifts that were occurring within the ruling party, especially from 1997. The mobilisations of war veterans within ZANU (PF) had contributed towards a shift within the ruling party in which the technocratic approaches that had previously dominated land reform had declined and given in to a radical and populist nationalist camp (Helliker et al., 2008:14).

In 1999 the CFU leadership was invited to be part of the GoZ-led Constitutional Commission to consult widely on a new constitution. The CFU insists that their inputs on property rights were subsequently altered in the draft that was later presented to the national referendum. The referendum constitutional draft contained a land clause that would have given Government the right to compulsorily acquire land without compensation. The CFU and its members opposed the draft constitution publicly and mobilised locally. They urged farm workers to reject the constitution and provided logistical support to the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) and the MDC to campaign for a NO vote against the draft (Mudzengi, 2008:389). The CFU's active participation in ensuring that the constitution was rejected through the referendum should be viewed as a culmination of the failure of a ten-year effort to ensure that the GoZ stuck to the willing seller-willing buyer model of land reform, and also reflects a real decline in its political influence when dealing with the ruling party ZANU (PF).

3.2.5 Internal Pressure- War Veterans and Land Reform

War veterans in Zimbabwe are of varied class origins. A few are part of the political elite, another small minority makes up the senior members of the state security apparatus, and some after demobilisation entered the private sector either as professionals or entrepreneurs (Moyo, 2005:8). The majority of the war veterans belong to the rural and urban poor as opposed to the visible elite (Moyo 2005:11). Up until 1990 they had not made any significant demands for land reform and most of the advocacy work by the representative association had been focused on ensuring that members were adequately compensated for injuries sustained during the war (Sadomba, 2008a:86)

After a number of false starts since independence war veterans finally managed to form and register the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans' Association (ZNLWVA) in 1989. Cracks between the ruling party and the war veterans became apparent at the inaugural meeting of the Association in 1992 when the war veterans demanded that President Mugabe (the patron of the association) "throw out the rest of the leadership" and insisted on acceleration of the land reform, stating that otherwise they would forcibly take land from the whites (Sadomba 2008a:87). They argued at the same meeting that the party had been hijacked and taken over by outsiders who did not live according to the principles of the party. It is important to note that the war veterans did not see themselves as breaking away from ZANU (PF) but were focused on internal reform through the weeding out of corrupt elements derailing the vision of their party (Interview with war veteran leader, September 2008).

In 1996 the War Victims Compensation Act was amended to allow the GoZ to release money to compensate war veterans for their injuries but the distribution of these funds was poorly implemented to the extent that some who were not war veterans benefited and others over-claimed, so that within a short space of time the funds had been exhausted. Sadomba (2008a:86) argues that the hardships caused by ESAP, the general strife, retrenchments and unofficial information on the abuse of their funds had an influence on the radicalisation of war veteran politics at this juncture.

Between 1996 and 1997 war veterans held a number of street marches and demanded an audience with the head of state. In July 1997, they disrupted the proceedings of the African-African American Summit that was being hosted by the GoZ and demanded an audience with the President. The war veterans list of issues of discussion with the president included the

looting of the war victims compensation fund, the outstanding compensation of the majority of the war veterans for injuries they suffered during the war, the demobilisation packages they had been promised but never received, pensions and gratuities (Sadomba 2008a:87). Towards the end of 1997 they laid siege to State House, the official residence of President Mugabe, and he capitulated to their demands. Without consulting Parliament, he announced through the Executive Presidential Powers Act that war veterans were to receive a once-off payment of ZW\$50 000 (approximately US\$6 000) and a monthly pension of ZW\$2 000 each but he remained silent on the land issue.

In early 1998 some war veterans from Harare went around the country to mobilise chiefs and headmen to reclaim land that was held by white commercial farmers (Sadomba 2008a:98). Thirty farms across the country were occupied through war veteran leadership. In most of the camps that were established the structure for beneficiary selection and defence of land rights was led by the base commander who was always a war veteran (Chaumba et al., 2003:8)

3.2.6 Emergence of Formidable Opposition to ZANU (PF)

The opposition MDC was born of a protracted process of civil society based struggles against the state, initially over macroeconomic policy and the heavy-handed approach of the state in response to protests and demands for improved governance and wages. In December 1997, the ZCTU, the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), youth groups, women's groups and students formed a civic coalition that became known as the National Constitutional Assembly (Mudzengi, 2008:388). The coalition was established to campaign for the drafting and adoption of a new constitution for Zimbabwe. In response to the constitution writing agenda proposed by civil society, the GoZ in 1999 established a parallel commission to consult the whole nation on a new constitution and invited the NCA to be part of this process.

However this course of action by the GoZ was viewed as a cooption tactic and the NCA rejected the overture and instead continued with its parallel process of drafting an alternative constitution and raising awareness in the country on why this was needed. The government-sponsored draft constitution contained two controversial clauses, on property rights and presidential terms. The draft constitution empowered the government to compulsorily acquire land without compensation and did not impose any limit on presidential terms. The NCA campaigned vigorously against the constitution and benefited from a new ally in the form of

the CFU, which was in opposition to the clause on land. The CFU's members gave "logistical and voting support to the NO vote" (Selby, 2006:39; Mudzengi, 2008:389).

As the constitutional reform process was unfolding the same coalition partners backing the NCA established an opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which was launched in September 1999 under the leadership of the first chairman of the NCA and former Secretary General of the ZCTU, Morgan Tsvangirai. It campaigned vigorously against the draft constitution and the eventual NO vote was largely seen as victory for the new party.

The convergence on the need to defeat ZANU (PF), albeit for different reasons, led to an alliance between white farmers and the MDC, with the farmers giving invaluable logistical support to the MDC which other previous post-independence opposition parties such as the Zimbabwe Union of Democrats (ZUD) and the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) had not had in tackling a well-resourced institution such as ZANU (PF). Campaigning against the constitution was critical to the growth of the MDC and in the process it managed to establish branches throughout the country within six months of formation, thereby ensuring that by the time of the 2000 Parliamentary elections it seemed certain that it was the government-in-waiting.

3.3 The NO Vote and Shifts within ZANU (PF) on Land Redistribution

In 1997 a coalition of mostly urban based civil society organisations under the leadership of the ZCTU established the NCA. The first chairperson of the NCA was Morgan Tsvangirai. The NCA was formed to lobby for a new constitution and to facilitate the process of consulting Zimbabweans on "issues they want covered in the constitution" (Mudzengi 2008: 389). In response the ZANU (PF) government initiated a parallel process; it hastily established a constitutional review commission to be the main body that would lead the process of writing a new constitution. The GoZ's constitutional commission embarked on nation-wide consultations and these consultations included workshops on awareness on the weaknesses in the existing constitution. Various civil society organisations, including the CFU, made submissions on issues they would want to see included within the constitution. Towards the end of 1999 the constitutional commission presented a proposed draft to the president, and a referendum on whether to adopt the constitution was held in February 2000. The proposed constitution contained two contentious clauses on the terms of the executive president and compulsory acquisition of land. The NCA mobilised for a vote against the

proposed constitution and they found a willing logistical partner in the form of the CFU whose members were threatened by the proposal to make compulsory acquisition of land lawful. The proposed constitution was rejected in the referendum.

On the other hand the combination of economic decline exacerbated by structural adjustment, consequent urban protests and the emergence of an anti-state civil society, the formation of a viable national opposition party, radicalisation of rural politics through war veteran mobilisation around restoration of alienated lands, the internal threat posed by war veterans within ZANU (PF) and the NO vote to a new constitution contributed towards a tipping point⁴ in the ruling party's position on land and the appropriation of the nationalism discourse. It was however the referendum defeat that marked a watershed moment in ZANU (PF) politics. It became clear that the ruling party was not invincible and that it was going to face a major electoral challenge in the 2000 Parliamentary elections. There was a dramatic shift in the strategies of ZANU (PF) as the populist rhetoric without actual delivery of land could no longer convince the electorate and there was a real threat of being manoeuvred out of power by the newly formed MDC. By 2000 the ruling party was re-invoking its radical liberation credentials, returning populist land reform to the agenda, and making it the central plank of its electoral campaign (Yeros, 2002a:160).

The ruling party, and President Mugabe in particular, sought to strengthen existing ties with the war veteran elements within the party. Although it was common practice for ZANU (PF) to commit itself to resolving the land question during every election campaign, circumstances in 2000 were very different: "it was faced with a formidable opposition from within [war veterans] and from outside, the MDC" (Sadomba 2008a:15).

Exactly a day after the announcement of the February 2000 referendum results rejecting the draft constitution, war veterans occupied a derelict farm in Masvingo belonging to a white farmer (Sadomba, 2008a:119) and this triggered a wave of occupations such that by the end of the month this had occurred on 30 farms across the country. At their height in June about 800 farms had been occupied (Moyo and Yeros, 2005b:188). Yet again the response of the state to the new wave of occupations was ambivalent. There seemed to be two camps, one

⁴ Malcolm Gladwell (2000) describes this phenomenon as the moment in which little changes, actions, ideas and ways of behaving cross a threshold and spread like a veldfire or epidemic.

that preferred to pursue a legalistic route and another that was “in favour of radical nationalist solutions to the land question” (Moyo and Yeros, 2005b:188). When the national land movement re-emerged in 2000 the latter camp appeared able to dominate but not without resistance (Helliker et al., 2008:14). Unlike in earlier times when land occupations were resisted by the state, this phase of occupations enjoyed tacit endorsement from the Government, for instance whereas during the earlier land occupations the state had evicted the land occupiers, in the post-2000 period the land occupation movement received logistical support from the ruling party and the state (Moyo and Yeros, 2005b:192).

3.3.1 Organisation of Land Occupations

The land occupations from 2000 have been characterised by some (for instance, Hammar et al., 2003; Human Rights Watch, 2003) as either contrived or farcical or narrowly instrumental for electioneering (Moyo, 2001). Clearly it was not entirely coincidental that fast track land reform was unleashed when it was, at a moment when the ruling party faced for the first time in 20 years, a credible political threat to its success in the forthcoming parliamentary elections (Fontein, 2009:2). Many of the land occupations were spearheaded by war veterans and in a few cases by traditional leaders (Moyo and Yeros, 2005b:189). The overriding social base of the land occupiers was the rural-based petty commodity producers and the landless from neighbouring customary areas, and in certain instances it expanded to include urban unemployed elements (Chaumba et al., 2003a:9). The categories of people participating in land occupations included farm workers, urban unemployed and people from communal areas, including those on resettlement waiting lists, who joined the occupations to enhance their chances of resettlement (Moyo, 2001:323). Rural and urban elites also participated in the land occupations with the intention of attaining more land for grazing or in order to penetrate new frontiers for petty trading purposes (Moyo, 2001; Chaumba et al., 2003a:23).

Although the land occupations seemed chaotic, it has been shown through various studies (Moyo, 2001; Moyo and Yeros, 2005; Chaumba et al, 2003a; Sadomba, 2008aandb) that structures and procedures were established in land and beneficiary identification and allocation of plots. Smaller and localised administrative units capable of making decisions within a short amount time were established in most of the locales. At district level the new land committees included local government ministry officials, traditional leaders, the ruling

party, security organs and war veterans. Locally the role and place of traditional leaders varied, in some instances they were called in to lead the land identification process based on historical claims and in others they were asked to legitimise occupations and also to „bless“ the occupation (Chaumba et al., 2003a:21). In certain instances traditional leaders competed among themselves in defense of the boundaries of their territories and also competed with local government structures and outsiders in order to settle their „subjects“ (Moyo and Yeros, 2007b).

A field survey conducted by Chaumba et al. (2003a) noted the visible leadership role of war veterans and the replication of an „army barrack“ like form of organisation in which curfews were established and visitors had to report to the base commander first. Furthermore, the “organisation of the base camp reveals a highly militarised organisational structure to an extent that the base camps took on the semblance of a military camp, with for example, occupiers being segregated by sex” (Chaumba et al, 2003b:29). War veterans played an influential role in the land committees, continuing to influence the identification of land for acquisition and vetting land beneficiaries based on waiting lists submitted by customary area leaders. The land committees emerged as the most influential local institutions in bringing order and coherence to the implementation process at both district and provincial levels (Chaumba et al., 2003a:11). Their roles included mobilisation of communities, monitoring of progress in terms of pegging of land, regulation of the actual occupations, identifying land to be expropriated by the state and resolving land conflicts (Moyo, 2001; Chaumba et al., 2003b).

3.3.2 Fast Track: Re-emergence of Technical Planning in Land Policy

Whilst land occupations were ongoing the GoZ launched the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) on 15 July 2000. The objectives of „fast track“ were to respond to “compelling national economic and social imperatives of poverty eradication and foster economic development” (PLRC, 2003:18). In essence fast track meant that the GoZ would “speed up the pace of land acquisition and resettlement” and the main target of the policy was “the immediate identification of 5 million hectares for compulsory acquisition and an accelerated programme of planning, demarcation and settlement placement on all acquired farms” (GoZ, 2001a:6-7). It is important to note that land occupations did not necessarily stop

because of the announcement of an official government programme of land acquisition but rather they were energised by the programme. By the end of 2002 fast track land reform had compulsorily acquired some ten million hectares, or approximately 90 percent of white commercial farmland and redistributed most of it to 127 000 smallholder households and 8 000 middle capitalist farmers (Moyo and Yeros, 2005b:188). This was a considerable increase in the number of farms acquired, especially when compared with the approximately 800 farms that had been occupied prior to fast track between February and June 2000. In the fourth year of the fast track programme the number of beneficiaries increased to 140 866 households allocated land under A1 and 14 500 households under A2 by the end of 2005 (GoZ, 2006:2). In practice land occupiers would occupy farms that would have been listed for acquisition by the GoZ, and in other instance the occupiers' actions would compel government to list a previously unlisted farm.

Besides energising the land occupiers in terms of accelerated occupations it also provided a cover for some illegal activities on the farms. The situation on the farms deteriorated to such an extent that the period of fast track was associated with more violence than the earlier occupations and estimates show that over 100 died in politically related deaths and six white farmers died when their farms were being occupied between 2000 and 2002 (Moyo and Yeros, 2005b:188). Although the fast track programme was essentially aimed at restoring technical order in land acquisition, intermittent land occupations continued until mid 2003 and then on a diminished scale in 2004 (Sachikonye, 2005:33).

There are three significant features of the fast track approach. Firstly it was associated with the reimposition and resurgence of legalistic and technocratic planning approaches to land reform, in the process marginalising some of the land occupation era structures and centres of power (discussed in more detail in Chapter 7). The policy was only adopted after the revision of relevant legislation. The Constitution had been amended in April 2000 to "reaffirm the financial obligations of the British government towards land reform in Zimbabwe" and the Land Acquisition Act of 1992 was amended in May 2000 to "clarify and streamline various procedural aspects of the acquisition process and to prescribe new compensation rules in accordance with the constitution" (GoZ, 2001a:9).

Secondly, whereas land occupations prior to June 2000 were highly dependent on local decision making, the inception of the fast track programme in July 2000 is associated with the

centralisation of the coordination of land reform. At the apex, the Cabinet Committee on Resettlement and Rural Development (CRD) under the chair of the Vice President and comprising relevant ministries was revived to focus on “policy formulation and coordination of rural resettlement and development” (GoZ, 2001b: 16). The technical arm of this committee was the Working Party of the CRD which was made up of permanent secretaries heading the ministries within the CRD and under the chair of the Principal Director in the Office of the Vice President (GoZ, 2001b:17). Other national level structures included the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Resettlement and Rural Development (IMCRRD), the National Land Identification Committee (NLIC) and the Land Task Force of Ministers. The land identification task was decentralised through Provincial and District Land Identification Committees, the former being chaired by a provincial governor and the latter by a district administrator (GoZ, 2001b:17-18).

Thirdly, fast track was also characterised by the re-adoption of earlier strict technical criteria for land acquisition, infrastructural planning and rezoning of land. The policy document states that land for resettlement should either be “derelict, underutilised, under multiple ownership, foreign owned or near communal areas” (GoZ, 2001a:8). The design of the models of resettlement was characterised by technical concerns of productivity and infrastructural support. Concerning the A1 for instance, the policy document lists several types of socioeconomic infrastructure that were required to be put in place during resettlement, such as “a borehole for every 20-25 families, a clinic for 500 families, a dip tank...a decent housing unit per household”(GoZ, 2001b:11). In some instances farms that had been occupied prior to the fast track programme were rezoned into either A1 or A2 plots depending on the technical opinion of government functionaries.

These technical considerations were not part of the 1998 and 2000 land occupations that had contributed towards the radical shift in land acquisition. Whilst fast track in itself symbolised a radical turn within the ZANU (PF) government, it also marked a break with and the onset of marginalisation of the war veteran leadership and movement as a whole (Sadomba 2008a: 187). The carefully constructed bureaucratic maze associated with fast track did not provide room for radical and non-state actors such as war veterans. Through the re-organisation of resettlement schemes a number of radical war veterans lost plots they had allocated themselves, while others who seemed pliable to close cooperation with government were re-allocated farms with improved infrastructure. Although specific figures of the actual number

of war veterans who lost plots during the „fast track“ period are not available, Sadomba (2008a:187-189) discusses at length the various incidents in which war veterans were removed from their plots and sidelined from the local land acquisition structures. „Fast track“ empowered the District Administrators to appoint members of the District Land Committees. In Mazowe District in Mashonaland West the District Administrator barred the war veteran representative from attending the District Land Committee meetings and these meetings mostly overturned allocations that had taken place prior to the introduction of the „fast track“ land reform programme (Sadomba, 2008a:190). Fast track served the role of marginalising the war veteran movement, whose political clout had significantly increased during the time of land occupations to the extent that its ambitions could not be trusted by the oligarchs in ZANU (PF) (Sadomba, 2008a:190).

3.4 The Post Fast Track Socioeconomic Context

3.4.1 Economic, Political and Social Aspects of the Multifaceted Crisis

The FTLRP coincided with and to a certain extent fuelled Zimbabwe’s worst economic performance crisis. It was characterised by a 40 percent decline in GDP (World Bank, 2006), a rate of inflation that had been rising since 2000 and reached its highest at more than 1 500 percent in 2008 (CSO, 2008) and acute foreign currency shortages. The economic meltdown has also been associated with the shrinking of industrial activity, through the closure of many manufacturing concerns and downsizing of some, and consequent high unemployment rates (estimated to be in the range of 70 percent of the total labour force). The economic decline has affected the social reproduction capacities of both urban and rural households. Formal sector urban employment shrunk from 3.6 million in 2003 to 480 000 in 2008 (*Mail and Guardian, 18 January 2009*) and even those who have managed to retain their jobs are in most cases receiving wages that are below the poverty datum line, mostly eroded by the hyperinflationary environment.

There are various explanations for the emergence of the crisis. Some identify the roots of the crisis in the IMF and World Bank led economic reform programmes adopted in 1990 (Moyo, 2001; Yeros, 2002a; Moyo and Yeros, 2005b; Murisa, 2008), while others (Hammar et al., 2003; Richardson, 2005) emphasise the „mismanagement“ of the economy, corruption and the inappropriate manner in which land reform was executed by the GoZ and the consequent loss

of property rights. These two supposedly opposing viewpoints are complementary and only provide a more comprehensive picture when analysed as two sides of the same coin.

More critically, the initial causes of the crisis are to be found in the history of decolonisation, especially the conditionalities of the Lancaster House Agreement which limited the possibility of a sweeping land redistribution process in the first decade of independence. The reformist approach promoted by the Lancaster House Agreement and also religiously pursued by the new ZANU (PF) government contributed towards an enclave form of economic development in which only a minority benefited from the peace dividend of independence. The failure on government's part to come up with a comprehensive form of development based on significant redistributive land reforms ensured that the majority of the population remained very vulnerable to poverty (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). Furthermore, government's increased social expenditure, especially in the area of education and health delivery, was not complemented by an increase in government revenues but was highly dependent on government borrowing. The government financed most of its social reforms through domestic and international borrowing (Bond, 1998). The economic reforms of the 1990s were partially imposed on the government as part of a strategy to reduce social expenditure but instead they contributed towards the shrinking of most sectors of industry, in the process fuelling urban to rural migration which also renewed demands for land redistribution (Moyo, 2000).

Foreign funding continued to trickle in during most of the 1990s. In fact the last balance of payment (BoP) support of US\$193 million dollars from the IMF was received in August 1999 (ICG, 2004:67). From that time until the end of 2008 Zimbabwe did not receive any support from the IMF. Most of the World Bank supported infrastructure development projects came to an end towards the end of the 1990s. Even the World Bank (2006:4) acknowledged that "isolation from the global economy" was one of the major causes of the crisis.

Besides the structural constraints and isolation from international finance there has been significant economic mismanagement by the ZANU (PF) government. In 1988 the then Prime Minister (Robert Mugabe) had to assemble a commission of inquiry under the chairmanship of Judge Wilson Sandura to investigate allegations of impropriety in the use of a ministerial car vehicle scheme. The allegations were that cabinet ministers were buying cars

at a very low cost through the scheme and selling them on the open market. The commission's report named five cabinet ministers who had abused the scheme and they were forced to resign (Sandura Report, 1987). This is one of the few proven examples that demonstrate the corrupt practices of ZANU (PF) elites. The process of land redistribution has also been marred by allegations of multiple farm ownership amongst ZANU (PF) elites.

In the post-2000 period one of the most salient areas where principles of public finance management have been violated in the country is the manner in which the central bank has been given considerable policy space to run the economy in an effort to respond to the crisis and also to ensure that the state can continue to provide support to critical sectors such as Agriculture and Manufacturing. From 2003 to 2008 the central bank was engaged in what it termed „quasi-fiscal“ activities which entailed expenditure in a number of agrarian reform programmes and economic recovery programmes. This form of government expenditure did not go through the normal channels of the budget-making process, such as prior consultations and seeking approval from Parliament. In the era of hyperinflation these quasi-fiscal activities became more important than the national budget allocations which were swallowed by inflation within two months of announcement, thereby reducing every government department and programme to dependence upon an unelected authority. The 2006 World Bank report on Zimbabwe correctly cited “weak and incoherent macroeconomic management frameworks, frequent droughts, an unfavourable policy environment and the disruptive effects of the fast track land reform programme as contributing factors to the crisis” (World Bank, 2006:4-5).

Some of the causes of the economic crisis are to be found within the political landscape. The ZANU (PF) dominated regime has since the late 1990s, especially after the abandonment of ESAP and the military intervention in the DRC, been under close scrutiny by the international community. Its intolerance of dissent and handling of the opposition and civil society based political and human rights activists have earned the country's leader, President Robert Mugabe, the title of „dictator“ and at one time he was equated to Milosevic (Yeros, 2002b).

The manner in which land was compulsorily acquired from 1997 onwards affected the confidence of would-be investors as it destroyed one of the sacred values of neoliberal

economic management, the sanctity of property rights. In response to compulsory land acquisition and other politically related human rights violations the US government passed the Zimbabwe Democracy and Recovery Act (ZIDERA) in 2001. The Act effectively empowers the US to use its voting rights and influence (as the main donor) in multilateral lending agencies, such as the IMF, World Bank, and African Development Bank, to veto any applications by Zimbabwe for finance (Hondora, 2008:1).

The opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was during the same period able to sustain the agenda for democratic change in Zimbabwe on the international agenda. At times the description of the social and economic conditions have been characterised by hyperbole to suggest „catastrophic collapse and ruin“. The haemorrhaging of bilateral aid and BoP support has had a broader negative effect on economic growth and social service delivery.

The effect of political conflict on the economy has also contributed towards other dimensions of the crisis within the local political and social arena. Ever since the constitutional referendum of 2000 there has been hardening of political positions bordering on intolerance and impunity on the part of the state. The political contest has been constructed through the dichotomy of either a radical nationalist redistributive project carried out as historical redress in the face of neoliberal orthodoxy, or a breakdown of the norms of liberal governance through the machinations of an authoritarian political figure (Raftopolous, 2005:10).

The social dimensions of the crisis have been the most visible and the impact has been devastating on the majority of the ordinary working people. The social crisis is characterised by the decline or absolute collapse of social service delivery in housing, health and education, and the erosion of household incomes leading to an increase in cases of food insecurity and general vulnerability. The user fees at health centres introduced during the height of economic reforms imposed a strain on a number of households and in the current period the capacity of these centres to effectively service communities has been severely eroded. There is a widespread shortage of essential medical supplies such as drugs, gloves and qualified personnel (Human Rights Watch, 2003). Parallel to the collapse of social service delivery has been a brain drain of health and education professionals and it is estimated that more than 3.5

million people have left the country since 1997 (*Zimbabwe Independent*, 19 December, 2004).

Furthermore, in 2002 the Central Statistical Office (CSO) estimated that seventy percent of the population was living below the poverty datum line and this figure could only have moved upwards during the intervening period because, firstly, there had been a considerable increase in the price of food and other consumables due to inflation and, secondly, the plight of the poor was exacerbated by a substantial shortfall in maize production, with the GoZ estimating in 2005 that an extra 91 000 metric tonnes of maize would be required to meet the deficit. The 2005 Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC)⁵ report estimated that 36 percent (2.9 million) of the rural population would not be able to meet its household food requirements during the 2005/06 season.

The cyclical linkages of support and cooperation that have traditionally existed between the rural and urban households that involved cash remittances from urban to rural and grains from the rural to the urban sector were under severe threat. The economic decline and high unemployment rates potentially contributed towards a shrinking of the level of urban to rural remittances required for the purchase of essential inputs and working capital (Chigumira and Matshe, 2004). A country that was in the late 1980s close to food self-sufficiency, with the best literacy records on the subcontinent and closest to achieving the goal of health for all, was now facing the possibilities of undoing some of the post-independence gains (World Bank, 2006).

3.4.2 Unresolved Land Policy Issues: Compensation, Tenure Insecurity and Squatters

The fast track approach to land reform implemented since 2000 has been characterised by a number of outstanding policy issues which have led to grievances among the dispossessed and even the resettled. Recent studies (PLRC, 2003; World Bank, 2006) indicate that most of the grievances related to land access are due to policy ambiguity, inconsistency of implementation, suspicion of multiple farm ownership by political elites, and ineffectiveness of the administrative structures. Two government-commissioned audits of land allocations and plot uptake have since been carried out. In 2002 the President commissioned the Minister

⁵ The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) is a sub-committee of Poverty Eradication and Social Services Delivery Development Action Committee (PESSDDAC). This Committee is chaired by the Food and Nutrition Council (FNC), which is part of the Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre (SIRDC) and is also composed of the UNWFP, FAO, UNICEF, OCHA, FEWSNET, SC (UK) and the University of Zimbabwe.

of State in charge of Land Reform, Flora Buka, to carry out an audit of land ownership patterns. The report was never published but an unofficial version was leaked to the international press. The leaked report suggested a number of anomalies in land reform, including multiple farm ownership amongst the elites and the allocation of land to some elites in areas that had already been designated for A1. In 2003 the President appointed another commission, the Presidential Land Review Committee (PLRC) of 2003 chaired by Dr Charles Utete (former secretary to Cabinet).

The PLRC (2003) is the more influential of the two audits and its report has been widely distributed (available on the internet). However the publicly available report is prefaced by a note stating that sections of the report dealing with the highly controversial issues of multiple ownership of farms by members of the elite, have not been made public. Ironically this is one of the most contested outcomes of the fast track programme and it has caused a significant amount of controversy. Besides the failure to report on individual cases of multiple farm-ownership, the report makes an important contribution to understanding actual land allocation practice and plot uptake rates versus policy prescriptions.

As of the end of 2003 a total of 2 652 farms with a combined hectareage of 4 231 080 had been allocated to 127 192 households under the A1 resettlement model (PLRC 2003:5) and the national take up rate was 97 percent. The corresponding figures for the A2 resettlement model were 1 672 farms amounting to 2 198 814 hectares which was redistributed to 7 260 beneficiaries. The take up rate under the A2 ranged from 42 percent (Manicaland) to 100 percent (Matabeleland South), with an average rate of 66 percent nationally (PLRC, 2003:6).

Alongside a number of other recommendations, the PLRC (2003) proposed the reallocation of vacant A2 plots, the speedy resolution and clarification of tenure systems, and the efforts to ensure gender equity in land tenure and flexibility in farm size guidelines taking cognisance of the different land use patterns. It urged the GoZ to ensure the availability of inputs and extension support to deserving cases within the newly resettled areas but also emphasised the need to promote an ethos of self-reliance and pride within the new farming communities. Government's responses to some of the recommendations, such as the need to rationalise multiple farm ownership, and allocations to provide for the needy and to settle disputed land claims, have not been very well documented. Cases of multiple and oversized

farm ownership, competing land claims and the marginalisation of certain social groups persist (Moyo, 2007:9).

Although the fast track land reform programme has redistributed more land than was distributed in the earlier phases of resettlement, the problems discussed above contribute towards its continued delegitimisation as a programme that benefitted the elites and was essentially driven to ensure the survival of ZANU (PF). A number of critical policy issues remained unresolved by the close of 2008. First, the compensation of previous farm owners remains highly contested and litigation opposing compulsory acquisition has been externalised beyond Zimbabwe's courts to SADC tribunal and the International Court of Justice at The Hague. Of the 7 862 farms that had been acquired by September 2005, only 1,174 farms had been confirmed as legally acquired through the courts and by consent (outside courts) and 3,380 farms had been evaluated for compensation purposes (World Bank, 2006:7). As of September 2006 approximately 206 farmers had received compensation⁶ for improvements on their farms (see Table 3-1 below).

Table 3-1 Compensation on Fixed Improvements

Progress towards Compensation	Number of Farms
Farms valued for compensation (August 2005)	3 380
Farms confirmed in the Administrative Courts (as of September 2005)	1 174
Farms on which compensation agreed, fully or partially paid for	206
Farms not yet valued for compensation	3 102
Total farms gazetted	7 862

Source: World Bank, (2006)

The compensation process is characterized by major disagreements between the GoZ and the former large scale commercial farmers, represented by the CFU and a radical break away group from the CFU called Justice for Agriculture (JAG). The areas of disagreement include the criteria to be used for compensation and the methodology of farm valuation (World Bank, 2006:8). In late 1999 the GoZ took the position that it would only compensate displaced farmers for improvements on their land, while the displaced farmers insist on compensation for land and farm improvements. The GoZ position argued that the former colonial authority should compensate for removal from the land despite Claire Short's 1997 letter to the

⁶ Official sources state that there are no official records of compensation payments to former white farmers after 2005. In 2006 the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Lands reported that the Ministry had paid out US\$3million to 206 white farmers.

Minister of Lands in Zimbabwe absolving the British government of any responsibility towards land reform.

The dispute over what has to be compensated for has meant that even the valuation of farms is contested. The CFU estimates that fair compensation owed to displaced members is approximately US\$1.2 billion,⁷ while JAG is leading a proposed law suit to compel the government to pay an estimated US\$28 billion as compensation for land, improvements on acquired farms and loss of income due to disruptions on farms (*Financial Gazette, 18 July 2003*). The GoZ proposed figures are significantly lower than the ones suggested by the CFU and JAG. This disparity potentially explains the low numbers of farmers who have accepted compensation as per Table 3-1 above. The GoZ compensation package is characterised by values that are two to five percent of those derived by the valuers consortium, and staggered payments in Zimbabwe dollars in a context of hyperinflation which diminishes the value of compensation being paid (Moyo, 2005).

In an effort to circumvent the process of bargaining over the compensation method in August 2005 the GoZ amended the Constitution through Amendment No. 17 to, among other things, nationalise all agricultural land. The amendment effectively removes the authority of the courts to mediate in cases of contested compensation levels between the farmer and acquiring authority (GoZ). This „legal“ move seems to have been in response to the impasse that had developed between the GoZ and the large scale commercial farmers“ representatives. The state could not formally offer any form of title to those who had been resettled as this would have been null and void in the courts of law where acquisition was being contested. Even with these „legal“ manoeuvres land acquisition remains contested both locally and through international law suits. The GoZ has been sued by a consortium of farmers whose farms were under Bilateral Investment Protection Agreements (BIPA) and the case has been lodged at The Hague, while another law suit by a different set of former land owners has been lodged with the SADC⁸ arbitration court in Windhoek.

⁷ Figures presented by Trevor Gifford (CFU President) at Multi-Donor Trust Fund Seminar on Agriculture Recovery at World Bank Harare offices, March 2008.

⁸ In 2008, 78 farmers from the Chegutu area appealed to the SADC Tribunal against their unlawful removal from their farms. The court ruled that Zimbabwe“s white farmers had legal title to remain on their farms and ordered the Zimbabwe government to “take all measures to protect the possessions and ownership” of the farmers“ land. On 3 March 2009, the High Court of Zimbabwe ruled that the Tribunal“s decisions and rulings do not apply and cannot be enforced in Zimbabwe, unless Parliament ratifies the protocol that set up the Tribunal (Bell, 2009:www.allafrica.com).

On the surface Amendment No. 17 gives the impression that the issue of ownership has been resolved and that the outstanding issue is the resolution of compensation. After the passing of the constitutional amendment it was expected that the state would accelerate the pace of issuing leases and permits but the process has not progressed smoothly. By 2006 GoZ was still in the process of revising the draft of the lease through a number of consultative dialogues. Even then government could not issue the leases because according to law they were obliged to undertake a land survey of all resettled land and develop maps that would form the basis of issuing the A2 lease. At the beginning of 2008 officials from the Ministry of Lands were citing the lack of interest among the resettled to return the signed lease agreements and register their leases (Mushonga, 2008:6). By the end of 2008 most of the resettled beneficiaries' access to land was based on a seemingly very insecure offer letter with a clause that states clearly that the offer can be revoked without notice by the issuing authority with the government having no obligations to compensate for any improvements made (GoZ, 2001, Offer Letter for Resettlement). The provisions of the A1 permit and the A2 lease are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

3.4.3 Post Settlement Agrarian Reform Support

As part of an effort to establish the context in which social organisation and agency are emerging this subsection is devoted to an analysis of the various post fast track agrarian reform measures undertaken by the GoZ. The newly resettled households face farm production constraints that range from draught power shortages to unavailability and non-affordability of agricultural production inputs, such as seeds, fertilisers and agrochemicals. Prior to the fast track Zimbabwe was self-sufficient in terms of hybrid seed and fertiliser production. In fact it was the only country in Sub Saharan Africa besides South Africa which had the capacity to produce treated seeds and fertilisers adequate for domestic use and exports. However, the post- 2000 shortages of foreign currency, compulsory acquisition of seed producing farms and price controls on agro-inputs contributed to a near collapse of the agro-inputs industry. For instance production figures from the Zimbabwe Fertiliser Producers Association show that the industry in 1999 produced a total of 504 614 metric tonnes of fertiliser but by 2007 total output had been reduced to 166 238 metric tonnes (Murisa and Mujeyi, 2008: p12). In response to the deficit the GoZ has since 2004 been importing from neighbouring South Africa and direct injections of foreign currency into the local industry to boost production have been limited (Mujeyi, 2008:3). Furthermore, following the inception of

the FTLRP in 2000 the proportion of commercial bank loans to the agricultural sector declined from a peak of 71 percent (of total loans issued by the banks) in 1999 to 14 percent in 2003 (Murisa and Mujeyi, 2008:17). Prior to the FTLRP, the irrigated area per farm averaged 100ha in the LSCF sub-sector while in the smallholder sub-sector it ranged between 0.1 and 2 ha. In the aftermath of the fast track programme the area under operational irrigation declined significantly by 35 percent (Makadho et al., 2006).

As part of an effort to respond to these constraints the GoZ has since 2000 come up with a number of interrelated agrarian reform interventions. The four major agricultural development programmes implemented include the Crop and Livestock Input Credit Scheme administered through the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), Agricultural Development Bank of Zimbabwe (Agribank) and the Tobacco Industry Marketing Board (TIMB). Under this scheme farmers were given inputs to grow maize, soya beans, tobacco, sugar beans and cotton. All categories of farmers were initially included in the scheme until the 2005/06 season when the GoZ weaned the A2 from the subsidy (Govere, 2006:10). The second intervention was the Irrigation Rehabilitation and Development Programme administered through the Department of Irrigation. The objective of the programme was to identify and repair non-functioning irrigation equipment. However, it only managed to meet 15 percent of its target before it was discontinued due to the non-availability of the necessary spares and the diesel for the team of engineers (Samakande, 2007:15).

During the 2005/06 agricultural season the GoZ launched Operation Maguta/Inala (food security) carried out by the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA). The objective of the programme was to ensure food security mainly by focusing on production of maize, wheat and small grains in the newly resettled and customary tenure areas (Govere, 2006:11). The army entered into a partnership with the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) to grow maize on the farms owned by the latter. In 2008 the GoZ, through the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ), launched the Farm Mechanisation Programme. The RBZ claims to have distributed a total of 2 625 tractors, 105 combine harvesters, 1 846 ploughs, and 100 000 ox-drawn ploughs by the end of 2008 (Murisa and Mujeyi, 2008:17). The power-driven implements were mostly distributed to A2 farmers while A1 customary land farmers received ox-drawn ploughs.

The overall impact of these programmes is difficult to measure adequately given the lack of reliable figures on the exact amounts that have been spent. However initial field findings indicate that the programmes excluded most of the A1 beneficiaries in Goromonzi and Zvimba. Furthermore the programmes have been abused by politicians with accusations that they have been used as an electioneering tool, especially the farm mechanisation programme (Murisa and Mujeyi, 2008:14). Furthermore, the implementation of the post-resettlement agrarian reform programme has been hampered by the lack of coordination among the relevant ministries. Although the Ministry of Agriculture is the lead agent in the formulation and implementation of agricultural policies it has on several occasions had to defer to the resource rich central bank, which has in the past six years created parallel structures to the Ministry of Agriculture (Pazvakavambwa, 2008).

3.5 Concluding Remarks

The period just before the 2000 land occupations is without a doubt a very contentious one as far as land and national politics are concerned. The decade was dominated by shifting alliances; the CFU defending its privilege initially by engaging with the state and eventually moving towards a survival imperative by actively opposing the draft constitution. Urban civil society, especially the ZCTU, began the decade on an anti-imperialist and anti-ESAP stance but had to respond to the violence of the state and to think around the possibility of confronting the state in the reorganisation of the economy. The union leadership moved into governance issues and played a leading role in opposing the ZANU (PF) draft constitution, in the process entered into an alliance with the CFU and its members. On the other hand another alliance emerged between war veterans and some elements within ZANU (PF) focused on land reform. The war veterans were eager to resolve the land question but ZANU-PF was focused on regime survival. No sooner had the 2002 Presidential elections ended than ZANU (PF) began to marginalise the war veteran movement through cooption of the leadership and removal through technically contrived means of those seen as too confrontational from their recently acquired land.

The crisis immediately after the FTLRP manifests itself in a three dimensional manner, comprising: (i) the political crisis centred on governance concerns that arise because of the nature of ZANU (PF) rule and also the manner in which it has handled land transfers since 1999; (ii) the economic implosion, the causes of which are multifaceted, ranging from economic mismanagement on the part of government to implicit sabotage measures through

sanctions; and (iii) the collapse of social service delivery and increased vulnerability of ordinary working people. Prior to a discussion of the micro level changes within the agrarian structure the discussion in the following two chapters will cover in detail post-independence agrarian reforms and their impact on social organisation and local action.

CHAPTER 4

POST-INDEPENDENCE AGRARIAN AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS

4.1 Introduction

Analyses of Zimbabwe's agrarian question emphasise the land alienation aspect as central to the politics and as a major mobilisation platform in the execution of the liberation struggle, especially among rural households (see for instance, Moyana, 1984; Ranger, 1985). However, recently there has emerged another school of thought which argues that it was not only land-based grievances that provided an impetus for the liberation struggle but the quest for other broader civil and political rights (Kriger, 1992; Hammar et al., 2003; Derman and Hellum, 2004). The separation of land from broader political and civil rights is conceptually messy, especially in a context in which land represented not just territory for social reproduction but also closely resembled social and cultural identity.

In Zimbabwe, as in the rest of Africa, the manner of access and use of land is a critical pillar of social organisation. Land is a storehouse of nature for the reproduction of future generations and is also central to the concept of nationhood. Inherent in political questions of land are issues of community participation in production, governance and cultural organisation. Furthermore, questions of access, use and governance of land are critical to understanding rural social organisation because the majority of the black people in Zimbabwe derive their identity from association with a place of origin (mostly rural), where their ancestors lived and were buried.

The discussion in this chapter notes the influence of agrarian and local government reforms on social relations within customary tenure areas in terms of the contribution of reforms to rural differentiation and the severing of lineage-based forms of organisation for production and consumption. It traces the various post-independence attempts at agrarian and local government reforms, paying particular attention to the constraints that these reforms faced, and examines whether they have contributed towards improving community participation and strengthening the capacity of communities to recreate the conditions for their existence. In discussing rural local government an attempt is made to show continuations between the colonial and post-colonial state's treatment of traditional authority.

4.2 Background

4.2.1 *The Economy and Perspectives on Land Reform*

The nature of the economy inherited at independence was not comparable to that inherited by any other newly independent African country. In the years 1945 to 1975 it was one of the fastest growing economies in the world and the result of such sustained growth created an economic structure virtually unique in Africa except for South Africa (Gordon, 1984; Herbst, 1990). Rhodesia's economy was characterised by a largely self-sufficient agricultural sector with huge export potential, and an industrial sector that was producing 25 percent of the gross national product (GNP) and producing over 6 000 different commodities for domestic consumption (Gordon, 1984).

Immediately after independence the new government found itself in an awkward position. It had to maintain existing production structures and adopt policies aimed at improving the living conditions of the majority of the population neglected during the colonial period (Raftopolous, 2003; Gordon, 1984). The development strategy that emerged attempted to postpone the hard strategic choices that were being urged upon the state from the radical nationalist camp within the ruling party which wanted significant redistribution of land and nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy (Herbst, 1990:7). Initially the government did not show any desire to curtail or disturb commercial agriculture as it was felt that it would destroy the agricultural base of the country if the farms were acquired too quickly (Palmer, 1990:166). The government defended the central role of whites in the economy and post-independence political statements suddenly changed: instead of the whites being targets of attack they "rapidly became something of a protected species" (Palmer, 1990:167). Enos Nkala, one of the hard-line ministers in Mugabe's cabinet, is quoted as saying "it would be quite possible to distribute everything we found, but after that, what? The answer is too ghastly to contemplate" (quoted in Gregory, 1987:139).

The Riddell Commission's (1981) report into Incomes, Prices and Conditions of Service and the lobbying activities of the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) were influential in determining the policy measures adopted by the new administration. Government was urged to avoid a hasty land reform exercise in order to ensure that the commercial farming sector continued to provide for both domestic and export markets and also to retain white confidence in both agriculture and the business community. Furthermore, the largely white commercial farming sector was at independence one of the most important modern sectors

of the economy, contributing at least 45 percent to GDP (Von Blackenberg, 1994). In 1980 the LSCF sector produced 90 percent of marketed food requirements as well as a significant part of the exports and supplies to the manufacturing sector (Alexander, 2006:106), making it difficult to ignore the sector's economic contribution to national development.

4.2.2 Land and the Politics of Independence

The land question dominated the political discourse that led to independence and there was recognition among the contesting political parties and observers that political stability would only be brought about through an exhaustive land reform exercise (Palmer, 1990). In the years leading up to independence observers such as Riddell (1977 and 1978) and Palmer (1977) had identified land as the „central issue“ of concern for any incoming government because the problems arising from the historical distribution of land lay at the core of the main political and economic forces that would shape the future of Zimbabwe. Even the political statements of the time largely revolved around the need for a land reform programme, and it was a major feature in election manifestos of the political parties that participated in the first elections. The 1980 ZANU (PF) election manifesto identified the resolution of the land and agrarian problems as one of the most pressing tasks:

It is not only anti-people but criminal for any government to ignore the acute land hunger in the country especially when it is realised that 80 percent of our population live in the rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihood (ZANU-PF, 1980:40).

In accordance with the politics of redistribution the ZANU (PF) government largely presented itself and was also perceived as articulating socialist redistributive principles which would lead to the eradication of class-based inequalities. Thus with the ZANU (PF) victory in 1980 it seemed as though a socialist transformation was about to take place in Zimbabwe (Dashwood, 1996). However the socialist claims were largely rhetorical and grandiose opposition politics made in the period prior to independence. Although there was visible commitment to socialism, the incoming ruling party did not have a clear political programme that would be implemented upon the attainment of power to guide the transformation to socialism (Herbst, 1990). Rather, the liberation struggle was viewed as a means to dismantle the white settler colonial system and to replace it with an African government and hardly encompassed within it “even the idea of a socialist revolution” (Phimister, 1983:257).

4.2.3 Local Government: Evolution of Traditional Authority and Land

Traditional authority has evolved in three distinct stages of Zimbabwe's history. Firstly, prior to colonialism traditional authority was based on military conquest and establishment of subject groups who deferred to the king on the basis of the ability of the new authority to provide protection to the subjects. Historical narratives have recorded the exploits of the Munhumutapa Empire and the Ndebeles under Mzilikazi and Lobhengula. Before the onset of colonialism the chief and their subordinate structures provided land and protection to their subjects.

The second stage was during the period of settler colonialism. Colonial policy towards traditional authority evolved from a position of despising traditional authority to one of exaggerating the power and role of such authority in African society. At the time of conquest the chiefs and their subordinate structures were stripped of land allocation and mediation authority. The 1951 Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) marked the peak of the marginalisation of traditional authority. The Act conferred individual rights on households and established strict farming methods as an attempt at environmental conservation. Government's thinking at the time was that certain practices, such as overgrazing within „communal“ land tenure, were destructive to the environment. However the NLHA faced opposition from the rural population and it became a mobilising point for the nationalist movement.

In 1963, in the face of opposition from mostly two nationalist political parties (ZAPU and ZANU) and the chiefs' agitation for more power over land, the government abandoned the NLHA. In doing so the newly elected Rhodesia Front government was trying to respond to the opposition that was emerging from Africans in the reserves by redefining the state's relationship to land rights in a way that would be less controversial (Nyambara, 2001:778). In 1965 the state passed the Tribal Land Authorities Act (TLAA), according to which land allocation in African areas became the responsibility of the traditional authority. The responsibilities of traditional authority entailed controlling the use and occupation of land in the African areas under customary law. The tribal land authority consisted of the chief and headmen of the area.

In practice government was retreating from the function of land allocation and administration, a policy area where it had caused so much social and political conflict through significant land alienation. A new form of authority was introduced under the guise of the „power of communal tenure“ without ceding any new lands. In the new dispensation under the TLAA (1965), as is typical of indirect rule, the traditional authority was now expected to deal with land allocations within the already congested communal areas. State thinking at the time was that customary rights of access to land constituted an effective system of social control versus the individualising of rights that had been attempted during the NLHA period.

Furthermore, the dominant thinking within the state was that that customary land rights could only be adjudicated by the community itself. The new position was based on the new understanding that land was vested in the chief who held it in trust for the people. In a memorandum the Acting Provincial Commissioner of Manicaland stated authoritatively that,

there is no individual ownership. All land vests in the chief...The tribesmen may use the land for cultivation and for destocking but only with permission of the chief...who may withdraw the permission to cultivate or depasture stock (Ranger, 1985:26).

This suggested that the chief had absolute control over land, but the state still remained wary of ceding all land allocation and conflict resolution powers to the chiefs as per the demands of the latter. Rather the state preferred to combine and balance in a very precarious way the authority of the chief with that of Native Commissioners and extension agents. In the end the chiefs did not get unchecked authority over land or any new lands to allocate to their people. Further attempts at coopting traditional leaders included the African Law and Tribal Courts Acts of 1969, which returned power under customary law to traditional authorities and the 1965 UDI Constitution which reserved seats for chiefs in the Senate and House of Assembly.

Despite these attempts to coopt traditional authority, research on rural politics has convincingly shown that many chiefs, headmen and village heads did not compliantly accept the new dispensation. Instead they tried to exploit the government's need for allies by setting conditions for their exercise of power, refusing some and making use of the new authority conferred on their offices and tradition (Alexander, 1994:109, Ranger, 1985). In his study of land politics in Gokwe, Nyambara (2001) had access to the minutes of provincial meetings

held between the chiefs and Provincial and District Commissioners. In these meetings chiefs made demands for the abolition of individual tenure conferred in their areas during the NLHA period and “demanded more land” (2001:781). The “chiefs stressed that they should be solely responsible for land allocation” (Nyambara, 2001:781). Furthermore some chiefs refused to enforce conservation farming measures as prescribed within the TTLA. Alexander (1994:67) has argued that “the Rhodesian government did not always win the struggle for chiefs’ allegiance”.

In passing the Tribal Land Authority Act (1965) the Rhodesian government had misunderstood the underlying principles of communal tenure, especially chiefly authority over land, and in the end created a system aimed at bolstering the powers of clan and lineage elites (mostly chiefs and headmen) at the expense of other social controls and rights embedded in customary tenure. In practice there was an ongoing struggle to control land access between different categories of chiefs, commoner lineages, individuals and the state (Scoones and Wilson, 1989). The fortunes of these groups varied with time and defined the nature of the alliances that they entered into.

4.3. Rural Social Reproduction at Independence

4.3.1 Customary Area Challenges

The discussion will show that most of the „communal areas“ formerly known as „reserves“ were created during the early years of colonialism to accommodate the rural black population being moved from the then newly designated white farming areas. The first reserves were established in Matabeleland in 1894, in the Gwai and Shangani areas, to accommodate the defeated Ndebele people under Lobhengula (Moyana, 1984:38). Five years later the creation of reserves was extended to Mashonaland (Alexander, 2006). In 1914 the settler authority put together the Reserve Commission to properly define the areas where reserves were to be established (Ranger, 1985: xi). Notably the commission criticised the work of the 1894 commissioners who had set apart Gwai and Shangani as reserves for the whole Ndebele people, arguing that they had overestimated the capabilities of the reserves (Moyana 1984:39). An overwhelming number of these reserves were located in areas that the white settler authority regarded as unsuitable for their commercial farming enterprises (Phimister, 1983:256). These were the middle or lowveld areas where rainfall was mostly inadequate and

soils were generally poor and incapable of supporting the dense African population that was meant to reside on them. Phimister (1983), in an attempt to illustrate the quality of land that the natives were being resettled on, quotes a settler's comments with regard to the establishment of one of the native reserves:

I see no objection to making it a Native Reserve as the area in question is practically a conglomeration of kopjes with very small cultivable valleys in between, is infested with baboons and is only traversable with pack animals (Phimister, 1983:258).

The settler authority retained the right, through the 1894 Order in Council, clause 51, to compulsorily acquire land, even within the newly created reserves, as long as it showed good and sufficient cause for such action (Moyana, 1984:40). As part of an effort to buttress these changes the Land Apportionment Act was passed in 1930 and it officially divided the country into three tenure categories: the reserves for the majority blacks; large scale commercial farms on which Africans could only live as employees; and a new category of native purchase areas where African yeoman farmers could gain limited ownership of farms (Ranger, 1985: xi). More than 50 percent of the country was reserved for white settlers, with the bulk of it being on the arable central highlands, while the indigenous African population was allocated 30 percent of the land largely on the plateau sloping down into the Zambezi valley and in the mountainous escarpment regions (Lebert, 2002).

At the time of independence there were 173 communal areas located within 56 districts and these occupied 42 percent of Zimbabwe's land area, with over 85 percent of them located in NR III and V (Moyana, 1984; Moyo, 1995:129). All the communal areas are administered under a mixture of customary and state-defined tenure which is not necessarily „communal“ in essence but has combined features such as communal grazing land and water sources with individual tenure on arable land (Cheater, 1990; Tshuma, 1997). Families hold an average of 2 ha of arable land, which is passed down in the family. They also own homestead sites of up to half a hectare. Available grazing, arable and homestead areas have been declining as the communal area population increases (Kinsey, 1983; Bush and Cliffe, 1984; Cusworth and Walker, 1988; Cliffe, 1988). The majority (83 percent) of the black population was resident in communal areas and had to contend with declining quality of land, diminishing land sizes, overpopulation and insecure usufruct to customary lands. Studies on land use have shown that over 66 percent of the communal areas had excess populations of more than double their assessed carrying capacity.

The discriminatory allocation of various factors of farm production, especially land and capital (inclusive of productive assets and inputs), reduced the economic incentives for agricultural production in these areas. Discriminatory legislation, such as the Maize Control Acts of 1931 and 1934 and the Cattle Levy Acts in 1931 and 1934, were instituted to protect fledgling white farmers from the competition of black smallholders who, instead of capitulating to settler ambitions to create a purely labouring class, had gone through what Ranger (1985) has called „self peasantisation“, whereby the smallholders aggressively increased their farm output for consumption and marketing of the surplus. Keyter (1978) aptly summarises the nature of pricing discrimination brought about through the Maize Control Act of 1934: “whereas the average price per bag paid to African farmers from 1934-1939 fluctuated between 1s to 6s white growers over the same period received average price of 8s per bag” (Keyter, 1978:28).

At the time of independence the communal areas were characterised by high levels of landlessness, which became manifest through increasing population density and declining average farm size. As the families were growing the male head was forced to subdivide his portion of arable for his male sons, who would also do the same when their own male children had grown. This negatively affected the social reproduction capacities of many rural households. The communal lands had on average over 25 people per square kilometre contrasted with nine people per square kilometre on commercial land of superior quality. The average landholding size was 3.8 ha in areas with average family sizes of six (Moyo, 1995: 166). The restricted land resource base limited the spontaneity and efficiency required for sustainable social reproduction at the household level (Moyo, 1995:167). There were also glaring disparities in terms of access to productive resources: in 1980 there were 7 000 dams in „white areas“ irrigating 100 000 hectares whereas there were only 5 000 hectares of irrigated land in small scale farming areas (Stoneman, 1981:139). Furthermore, many of them experienced severe shortages of draught power, farm equipment and fertiliser which prevented them from fully cultivating their allotted plot. Even though most of the families were large, family labour alone could not compensate for the lack of assets and many poorer farmers had to hire themselves out as casual labourers to compensate for production shortfalls (Burgess, 1997:128).

Population growth and a diminishing land base, as well as lack of employment opportunities to absorb the communal labour force, resulted in the adoption of agricultural practices that

potentially harm the environment, such as cultivating of land close to the stream and failure to leave some fields lying fallow to revive the land's fertility (Bratton, 1994). The main forms of environmental degradation included soil erosion, deforestation, siltation, overgrazing of the veldt, stream bank cultivation and a general loss of biodiversity (Gore et al., 1992).

4.3.2 *The Farm Worker Question*

Farm workers based on white-owned large scale commercial farms constituted the second largest group of agrarian labour after the customary based smallholders, the difference being that the smallholders had some form of access to arable land whilst the majority of farm worker livelihoods were based on hiring out their labour to the large scale commercial farmers. At the time of independence commercial agriculture employed a total of 218 817 farm workers with 166 411 employed on a permanent basis and 51 761 employed on a casual basis (CSO, 1984). Sixteen years later another survey found that, for every worker employed on any farm on a more or less regular basis, there were at least another five who lived in the „compound“, sometimes employed as casuals, suggesting a significant increase in the labour pool available for casual work on the farms (Tandon, 2001). In the late 1990s the sector accounted for 26 percent of total employment or an estimated 325 000 part-time and full-time workers (CSO, 2001; Chambati and Magaramombe, 2008:207).

Farm workers were more disadvantaged than other social groups in Zimbabwe and were amongst the poorest in the rural areas. Historically they have had the highest rates of infant mortality and occupational health morbidity, and the poorest nutrition and education standards of any social group the country (Loewenson, 1992; Mugwetsi and Balleis, 1994; Amanor-Wilks, 1995). Politically they were the last group to be allowed to vote in local and national government elections or to be considered as a unique social category with special social service needs, and this group has always been weakly organised and dependent on the paternalism of the employer (Moyo et al.; 2000b). Their access to adequate housing is contingent on the continued existence of a contract of employment between themselves and the land owner. Some studies have noted an increase in income diversification over the years among the farm worker community which includes the combination of casual labour on other farms and non-farm activities such as petty commodity trading and illegal gold panning (Chambati and Magaramombe, 2008:211). These activities are estimated to generate between

15 and 20 percent of total monthly household income (Chambati and Magaramombe, 2008:211).

In the 1980s discourse on the political rights, housing security and social reproduction situation of farm workers was fairly limited. This group was largely hidden from the public space due to the provisions of the Master-Servants Act in which the LSCF farmer was given a mandate to provide for their welfare. In most instances they were seen as tied to the LSCF sector and also many of them were seen as of foreign origin and hence not viewed as a legitimate or relevant category for resettlement (Moyo et al., 2000b). The continued marginalisation of farm workers based on the claim that they are foreigners is difficult to sustain. In their recent study of farm workers, Chambati and Moyo (2003) found that one of the strategies used by many farm workers to access land was to go back to their villages within customary areas and register for land. Indeed this could only have been done by people known to the chief and with kinship networks in the area. In another study, Rutherford (2001) found that approximately 40 percent of the farm workers in his sample with a foreign origin had married a local suggesting that their children could no longer be called foreigners. However despite the lack of a basis to categorise farm workers as foreigners the discourse of marginalisation continued along those lines.

Furthermore the farm worker union the General Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ) has never made resettlement part of their demands. The failure to demand for land reform ensured that, although farm workers generally fall within the broader category of „poor and landless“, they were not included as a specific category for land redistribution purposes. In fact from the late 1990s the Union demanded that Government introduce settlement villages for farm workers within the commercial farming areas (Chambati and Magaramombe, 2008:214).

In terms of labour relations the Zimbabwe farm labour community has, in general, been the most marginalised since the introduction of the LSCF sector in colonial times. Farm workers were historically not regarded as „workers“ or defined as „employees“ but, instead, were described as „servants“ and governed by the Master-Servants Act (Tandon, 2001). The labour relations that ensued on the farms based on such paternalistic legislation constrained the mobilisation of workers into the trade union activities that primarily mobilised and empowered labour in both colonial Rhodesia and independent Zimbabwe.

Unionism among agricultural workers has been weak, fragmented and generally nominal. Post-independence agrarian labour trade unionism emerged out of the ruling party's corporatist agenda of the early 1980s. The Zimbabwe Agricultural Workers Union (ZAWU) was formed in 1980 as the first union to represent agrarian labour. However, within two years of existence there was a split which led to the formation of GAPWUZ. The new union only managed to formally register itself with the GoZ in 1985 after being denied official recognition since 1982 due to government's demands that each sector should be represented by one union at any time. The union started off with a membership of 5 000 members which eventually grew to about 65 000 paid up members but this only represented less than a third of the permanent workforce by the end of the 1990s (Kibble and Vanlerberghe, 2000). The isolation of and great distances between farms, as well as the distances from farms to towns, made organising very difficult (Chambati and Magaramombe, 2008:213)

The liberalisation policies of the 1990s encouraged the formation of many unions to represent one sector. During this period agricultural capital, especially the larger estate and plantation employers encouraged the formation of at least four splinter unions from GAPWUZ. This splitting further weakened an already struggling union. However, formal trade unionism has not been the only channel used by agrarian labour to present their grievances and to seek relief. In 1997 farm workers from Mutoko, Macheke, Gweru, Chiredzi, Mutare and Darwendale protested against worsening living conditions through mass action which entailed slashing fields, burning tobacco barns and setting alight cars belonging to white farmers (Tandon, 2001). However, there has not been a repeat of such radical mobilisation of farm workers since then.

4.4 Agrarian Reforms

Prior to independence, agrarian scholars such as Bratton (1977), and Simson (1979), had argued that the capitalist structure was heading towards dualism. There was limited room for unification of the economy but rather increased possibilities of exclusion and impoverishment of a large majority of the population. These scholars identified land reform as one of the key programmes that would end the extremely overcrowded conditions that existed in the communal areas and also spoke of replacing the commercial farm sector with a smallholder

alternative, although the „alternative“ was never really elaborated. However the terms of the Lancaster House agreement and the performance of the LSCF sector constrained whatever radical intentions the new government may have had in terms of land redistribution.

Instead advice from Berg (1980) and Ridell (1977, 1980) prescribing building upon the existing economic structures and seeking to make these more equitable, was found to be more practical and within reach. They argued that the productive areas of the LSCF sector should be retained but with substantial reallocation of land to black smallholders. They also insisted that the economy should remain open and emphasised export-led growth in order to generate the resources needed to provide cover for imports in the manufacturing sector.

The Growth with Equity policy issued in July 1980 adopted a reformist position in an attempt to accommodate the interests of both capital and the majority of Zimbabweans. The policy gave primary emphasis to equity and meeting the welfare needs of the poor. The central concern of the policy was to create a largely rural-based, egalitarian society. The strategy did not in any way threaten the position of white agriculture and international capital.

4.4.1 Agricultural Policy Reforms

By the time of independence a number of adaptations in terms of agricultural practice had occurred within the smallholder sector and the use of animal traction and the iron plough was widespread. Better-off farmers were also using fertilisers and treated seeds to improve yields but the use of these techniques was not widespread (Moyo, 1995). The agrarian reforms entailed the removal of pre-independence discriminatory agricultural pricing policies which had been instituted to favour the LSCF sector and the post-independence measures were meant to provide an incentive to boost smallholder production. Output marketing infrastructure was established, 13 primary depots with a capacity to handle about 500 000 tonnes were built and 50 local tertiary depots set up (Cliffe, 1988:7).

Extension support to the smallholder sector was also increased and the new measures reduced the extension officer farmer ratio from 1:1000 in 1980 to 1:800 in 1982. Furthermore, extension moved away from the individual farmer approach to group approaches. The Master Farmer training initiative, which had begun in the 1930s with the objective of spreading modern scientific farm production methods, was expanded and a new qualification of Advanced Master Farmer was added to the training. Besides training, extension support also

provided a framework through which smallholders were organised into functional groups in order to gain access to production resources such as credit, inputs, marketing services and information on government development programmes (Mlambo, 2002:1). The post-independence spread of extension services is credited with the high adoption rate of innovations such as hybrid seeds and fertilisers which contributed towards notable increases in farm yields. However the programme was mostly associated with the better-off smallholders who could afford to purchase the inputs or access agricultural loans from the state.

Since independence, Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) loans increased in the customary areas from 18 000 for a total value of Z\$4.2 million in 1980 to 64 000, worth Z\$30 million in 1985. In addition, some Z\$12 million was supplied to farmers in resettlement areas (Cliffe, 1988:6). The new rural development policies also focused on land use reorganisation, population planning, promotion of off-farm activities, and provision of primary water supplies, small scale irrigation schemes, road construction and rural electrification (Cliffe, 1988:7).

These reforms had a positive but limited impact upon smallholder agricultural productivity: in most cases those who benefitted were mostly within Natural Regions (NR) I and II (the characteristics of the regions have been discussed in Chapter 1). By 1983 the smallholder sector (mostly those in NR 1 and II) was contributing significantly to the agriculture market; there was a twelve-fold increase in the amount of maize and sorghum offered for sale from the customary areas between the 1980/81 harvest and 1985/86, and a four-fold increase in the volume of cotton. The customary area producers' share of marketed grains and cotton increased from less than 10 percent before independence to about 50 percent (Moyo, 1995).

The patterns of increased marketed grains by communal farmers in Zimbabwe had a clear regional differentiation that demonstrated the limited impact of some of the major agrarian reforms. Weiner (1988) shows that in 1983/4, a dry year, 63 percent of the customary areas marketed maize came from areas within Natural Regions (NR) I and II, where only 15 percent of the customary areas' population lives, while smallholders living in NR IV and V, which make up 85 percent of the area and have two-thirds of the population, had only small marketed surpluses. Furthermore the 64 000 recipients of AFC credit represent only eight percent of all communal area smallholdings and the recipient profile was skewed regionally

(the majority were from the better watered regions – NR I and II) and socially – larger households with more land and livestock made up the biggest beneficiary group.

Furthermore the „bumper harvest“, especially the maize surpluses, were heavily concentrated; about 75 percent of the marketed surplus came from two of the eight provinces that have better land and higher and more regular rainfall (Cliffe, 1988:5). The majority of the marketed output from communal areas emanated from three provinces in NR I, II parts of III. Furthermore, only customary areas with a geographic location close to the Harare-Gweru and Mutare transportation axis, where agricultural services and infrastructure had been located during the colonial period for the benefit of the LSCF, managed to increase their marketed outputs (Moyo, 1986).

At least 20 percent of the smallholders gained from the reforms, suggesting further polarisation of existing agrarian structures. The agrarian reform initiatives did not necessarily halt the declining levels of subsistence among the smallholders but instead deepened rural differentiation according to natural regions and also asset endowment on the part of the households. The remainder of the households continued to eke out a desperate existence in a context of increased scarcity of land and biomass resources for social reproduction. Furthermore access to critical support for agricultural production, such as cheap credit and extension advice, was not as widespread as has often been claimed and this was mostly concentrated in areas linked to agricultural service centres.

4.4.2 Land Reforms

Significant land redistribution occurred between 1980 and 1984. Government's initial target for resettlement was 36 000 households within the first three years of independence, but by 1982 the target was raised to 162 000 households (Kinsey, 1983). During this period most of the land set aside for resettlement was acquired in an opportunistic manner as it was mainly composed of farms abandoned by white farmers during the liberation struggle. Furthermore, a significant part of government's resettlement programme was actually a process of formalising land occupations undertaken by smallholders in response to the promises of liberation made during the 1970s (Alexander, 1993, 2003). By the end of 1983, only 15 000 families had been resettled on approximately 1 million ha. Thereafter the pace of land redistribution decelerated to the extent that by 1989 Government had only managed to resettle 51 000 households, which constituted 32 percent of its resettlement target.

A number of explanations have been advanced by different scholars for the slowing down of land reform in the mid-1980s. Officially the GoZ cited the dwindling of resources for land purchases, especially in the aftermath of the 1983/84 drought during which resources initially allocated to land reform were channelled towards drought relief (Cliffe 1988:8, Moyo, 1986). Furthermore the latter half of the 1980s was characterised by a mood of questioning the existence of the land question, given the bumper harvest that smallholders had supposedly managed to produce in the communal areas without taking into consideration the regionally differentiated patterns of production (Moyo, 1986). There was growing international consensus and local acceptance that there may really be no „land question“ worth speaking of in 1986 in the face of the country’s stellar agricultural performance, especially the dramatic increase in marketed output from communal areas despite the apparent structural inequalities (World Bank 1983). Kinsey (1983) introduced another dimension to the debates on the land question and reform and argued that the net effect of resettlement would be an overall decline in output and in the number of people gainfully employed in agriculture. Instead of seeing a need for more thoroughgoing land redistribution, the discourse veered towards identifying means of enhancing production within the communal areas. Cliffe (1988:18) noted that

Even despite the virtually total absence of sustaining documentation and hard evidence, this latest initiative [by Kinsey] did allow the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) to continue to define the conventional thinking about the inferiority of resettlement and land issues in Zimbabwe.

Thus even the proposals for the introduction of a land tax, which would have facilitated the subdivision of large scale farmers on the basis of what the owner actually needed and the transfer of „excess“ land to the market, were not taken up by Government (Moyo, 1995:109).

In 1990, at the expiration of the Lancaster House Agreement, the government announced a new National Land Policy which reaffirmed the goals of resettlement. The Policy promised an additional five million ha to resettle 110 000 families in order to meet the original resettlement target of 160 000 families. The Land Acquisition Act of 1992 and constitutional changes of 1990 and 1993 made it possible for Government to compulsorily acquire land. However, fewer than 20 000 households received land between 1990 and 1997 (Sachikonye, 2003).

The Land Acquisition Act (1992) also brought about a new criterion for selecting resettlement beneficiaries. It was no longer to be based on social need, but on proven farming experience and competence (GoZ, 1992:6). The shift towards a „productionist“ perspective occurred when the GoZ had taken the policy towards liberalisation which is discussed in the preceding chapter. The shift in beneficiary prioritisation was also in response to the emergence of new demands for commercial farm land from the indigenisation lobby group (Moyo, 2000). The newly formed vocal and elite based economic indigenisation lobby began to make calls for the entrance of blacks into commercial farming. The lobby directed its efforts towards the de-racialisation of the ownership base of commercial farmland. Government responded favourably to these demands, so that by 1997 there were over 800 black commercial farmers (Moyo, 2003). Thus the interests of the poor and landless were seemingly abandoned to benefit the „indigenous elite“ as a counter-weight to the established white agrarian bourgeoisie (Moyo, 2000; Alexander, 2003).

4.4.3 Resettlement

The resettlement schemes that were introduced in the first years of independence attempted to develop new forms of rural organisation. There were three resettlement models – A, B and C. The most common resettlement types were Model A and Model B. The former offered individualised plots averaging five ha per household and provided for common grazing lands, while the latter entailed the formation of cooperatives.

The majority of those who were offered land for resettlement were settled within the Model A scheme, which replicated the pattern and conditions of the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 that had been designed to promote limited individual ownership and production for Africans. In terms of land tenure the beneficiaries“ claim to land was based on state-issued, annually renewable permits that provided very little security (Gaidzanwa, 1981). The state used the resettlement programme to acquire land from the freehold sector and to cancel title to it and expand state ownership (Cheater, 1990:197).

The settlers had no elected representation within the schemes or in District Councils as resettlement schemes did not fall under the jurisdiction of the local government structures. The most immediately available local authority was the resettlement officer who was a decentralised functionary of the Department of Rural Development (DERUDE). The resettlement officer“s responsibilities included overseeing that the conditions of the permit

were strictly adhered to. Resettled households had to utilise land efficiently and follow modernist methods of conservation, and to sever all social and cultural ties with their past lives in order to achieve a new status. Labour migration was discouraged; beneficiaries had to forego wage employment and claims to communal area land (Alexander, 2006:114). This technical and economic emphasis paved the way for a shift away from the liberation war rhetoric of reclaiming lost lands to a discourse of production cast as rational and scientific (Alexander, 2006:85).

The resettlement schemes were dominated by a production oriented planning framework in which technical expertise from DERUDE was given room to imagine and establish fundamentally new societies constituted of rational, disciplined and productive settlers. The land “offered for redistribution, was not cast as the historical right of a dispossessed people but as productive space in need of close state regulation” (Alexander, 2006:113). In order to emphasise the new thinking dominating resettlement the 1983 DERUDE report stated that:

The resettlement process discourages spontaneity in settlements and fights against attempts at reversion back to traditional methods of agriculture...[Thus] resettlement can never be about extending the boundaries of existing communal land...creating new power bases for the restoration of traditional authorities, such as chiefs, headmen etc. (quoted in Alexander, 2006:114).

Despite official insistence on maximising production, the immediate concern of many resettled households was to forge new social relations, given the fact that the land beneficiaries had been allocated plots randomly. The communities of newly resettled areas were characterised by a scarcity of kinship relations compared to their counterparts in the communal areas. The social composition in which they were resettled differed markedly from that of the areas they had come from. There were some rare instances of family relationships, by either blood or marriage between near neighbours (Dekker, 2004) and so people would move into the new areas with friends or acquaintances from their places of origin. But in the majority of cases there were many households that were strangers to one another (Barr, 2004:1753). Studies by Barr (2004) and Dekker (2004) concluded that in the absence of defined customary leaders settlers invested in new social relations by entering into more association within local organisations. The new social synergies created were utilised to improve production capacity, share risks and attend to other social obligations.

Government did not adequately integrate the newly created resettlement schemes into rural district councils and the dominant „authority“ on the ground was the Resettlement Officer responsible for the administration of the permit and land use practices in these areas. Still, the Resettlement Officer’s authority was seriously curtailed by the fact that most of the planning and administration of resettlement schemes was overly centralised.

4.4.4 Resettlement and Cooperativism

Within Model B, the government encouraged prospective land beneficiaries to form collective cooperatives with membership ranging from 50 to 200 persons so that they could approach the implementing ministry with the intention of being resettled on a group basis. The government’s input included the provision of a large farm or group of farms to be operated as a producer cooperative and a grant through the AFC of ZW\$63 000 (approximately US\$21 000) to help members to set up residence structures, and to purchase necessary farm inputs to cultivate crops and raise livestock. In the majority of cases the large scale farms were left intact for members to use as a whole entity. As of 1987 there were 67 Model B cooperatives occupying 176,000 ha distributed across the provinces – 25 percent of these cooperatives were in Manicaland, 22 percent in Mashonaland Central, 18 percent in Midlands, 15 percent in Mashonaland West, 13 percent in Mashonaland East, three percent in Masvingo and two percent in Matabeleland South, while Matabeleland North had none (Moyo et al., 1991:9).

The validity of the permit was at the discretion of the responsible minister after consideration of the productive performance and land use of the cooperative. The target beneficiaries of this scheme were mainly the “young and more ideologically conscious especially the ex-combatants who had acquired a collective approach to solving economic problems” (Mumbengegwi, 1988:63).

However, the cooperative model did not survive beyond the first decade of independence. First of all, the government gradually attached less importance to these formations. At independence in 1980 a ministry of cooperatives was created to develop and nurture the expansion of cooperatives but in 1986 this ministry was dissolved and cooperative affairs were demoted into a department within the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development. Central government budget allocations for cooperative development declined during the same period. Secondly, the cooperatives did not perform according to

expectations: their land and labour productivity on five schemes surveyed were 39 percent and 53 percent respectively of the average productivity on the large scale commercial farms. On average the cooperatives only managed to utilise 59 hectares or 13 percent of the total net arable land available per cooperative (Moyo et al., 1991:29). Thirdly, the incomes derived ranged between ZW\$75 and ZW\$260 per annum, and these were on average only on 40 percent of the targeted income of ZW\$400 (Mumbengegwi, 1988). Fourthly these formations were not popular; approximately six out of thirteen cooperatives surveyed within the Makoni District Union had less than 50 percent membership of the recommended size of the cooperative on the basis of landholding (Moyo et al., 1991:33). Finally they were never a dominant form of social organisation. At their peak only 10 000 out of over 800 000 rural families belonged to cooperatives.

One of the major reasons for the mediocre performance of the cooperative sector was the lack of adequate government support. The grants were disbursed late and in a fragmented manner that did not enhance production. Moyo et al. (1991), note that most of the disbursements were made in areas with little overall impact in the production sphere of the collectives in the absence of basic farm machinery. In comparison with funding for the parallel resettlement (Model A) it was found that “assistance to Model B cooperatives by the Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) was relatively insignificant compared to that given to the Model A beneficiaries” (Moyo et al., 1991:10)

It is important to note the alien nature of this model of social organisation for rural production in Zimbabwe. The country has no history of collective farming but there have been many instances of households associating among themselves to assist each other to boost production on individual plots or consolidating their commodities as a strategy to reduce the cost of penetrating the market. It is no wonder that those who joined the cooperatives always did so as a last resort, and whenever an alternative opportunity arose they would leave the cooperative. In an evaluation of membership patterns in the Makoni District Union cooperatives it was found that “those who had left had unfulfilled expectations about the material prospects of the cooperatives” (Moyo et al., 1991).

Many of the criticisms have related to the internal organisational weakness of the cooperatives without necessarily analysing the supporting institutional framework. Whenever

such radical measures to reorganise society are introduced as an integral component of some overall strategy for rural transformation, they cannot be simply evaluated as isolated units of production whose success depends on their internal features (Cliffe, 1988). The evaluation must be located within a broader analysis of the political economy of agrarian transformation.

4.5 Local Government Reforms

Zimbabwe's modern history spanning over one hundred years has been characterised by varied attempts to configure local power relations for the benefit of the central authority. Two competing sites of power, traditional and statutorily-derived authority, have been in existence since the establishment of settler rule in 1890. The crafting of local government practice has yet to identify a balanced co-existence of the two competing sites of power and the interests of central government have seemingly taken precedence over local interests. Consultations on ideal local power relations have been limited in the post-colonial state.

4.5.1 Post-Independence Local Government Reforms

In the colonial era, the policy of racial segregation dominated economic and social policies and was enforced by such legislation as the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 (Mutizwa-Mangiza, 1985). Rural councils formed in the 1960s serviced only white areas with a fair degree of autonomy, while the Native (later termed African) Councils which covered the reserves were subject to central control (Stewart et al., 1994:3). The Native (African) Councils were under the supervision of a centrally appointed Native (District) Commissioner. These councils also included chiefs who were paid and appointed officials of the government, and were supposed to represent African opinion.

By the time of independence the councils were barely functioning, and in those areas where the war had been fought chiefs had been forced to withdraw from their often ambivalent cooperation or face violent attack (Alexander, 2006:107). The initial efforts of local government reform saw the new government working through district councils established in lieu of African-based chieftaincy councils that had been established by the transitional government and political party structures.

The attainment of independence made local government reform a vital necessity. Among the underlying objectives of local government reform were: to create a modern unified state linked from village to national level; to replace customary authority with democratic

institutions; to create an entirely new basis for rural authority; and to institutionalise development (Alexander, 2006:107-111). These reforms were expected to lead to the redefinition of identity outside the narrow customary or tribal limits to create identification with the nation.

The reforms were carried out via two interrelated strategies: firstly, the creation of some new ministries and the deconcentration of others. The Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development (MLGRUD) and the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperatives (MCDC) were introduced as part of local government reforms, and the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture formally introduced provincial and district structures (Stewart et al., 1994). The second strategy of local government reform was the enactment of legislation and directives to put policy changes in motion. The District Councils Act of 1980 (amended in 1981 and 1982) applied to customary lands and consolidated the previously fragmented authorities from over 220 to 55 (Mutizwa-Mangiza, 1985).

The District Councils, which consisted predominantly of elected members, were responsible for principal planning and development within their zones of jurisdiction and had limited powers of taxation. The Prime Minister's Directive (1984-1985) provided for the creation of a hierarchy of representative bodies at village, ward and district levels. The local development committees – the Village and Ward Development Committees (VIDCOs and WADCOs), also composed of elected members, were charged with the responsibility of defining local development needs (Mutizwa-Mangiza, 1985). These development committees were described as “democratic institutions of popular participation to promote the advancement of development objectives set by government, the community and the people” (Alexander, 2006:108).

While these new structures were being created, rural councils servicing largely white-owned large scale farms continued to operate in isolation. It was only in 1988 that the GoZ, through the Rural District Councils Act (1988), developed legislation to formally amalgamate white Rural Councils with black District Councils into 56 Rural District Councils (RDCs). The process was fraught with difficulties. Firstly, although it envisaged full democratic participation, the criteria for voting specified that one had to be, or be married to a local taxpayer with access to land, thereby excluding the majority population in the area, the farm

workers. Secondly, the Act did not come into effect until 1992 due to boundary disputes over the jurisdiction of the newly created RDCs. Finally, these reforms were curtailed by the lack of sufficient devolution of authority, especially in terms of revenue collection.

Local authorities remained dependent on the national purse, and in some cases wealthy large-scale commercial farmers subsidised the operations of the councils through donations of money and offered their equipment such as tractors for road maintenance at no charge to the local council. Civil servants working in line ministries at the district level made up the District Development Committees. On paper the VIDCOs were supposed to submit their plans to WADCOs, who in turn would submit the development plans to the District Development Committees, in the process bypassing the elected Rural District Councils (RDCs). However, in reality the VIDCOs rarely came up with anything more than lists of needs, WADCOs hardly functioned, and councils did not have the sufficient capacity to analyse and respond to the plans made by the District Development Committees (Alexander, 2006:110). Furthermore, despite the stated democratic intentions the formulation and implementation of the new local structures was characterised by bureaucratic coercion. For instance the creation of the VIDCO was based on an arbitrary unit of 100 households, a unit that did not necessarily share resources, interests or a common identity.

4.5.2 Tradition vs. Modernity: Customary Area Reorganisation

The newly elected government did not entirely trust the office of the chief and its subordinate structures given the latter's previous alliances with the colonial government, especially from the 1960s to the 1970s. The chiefs had largely benefited from the limited reforms implemented by the colonial government as an attempt to counter the spread of nationalism. However, as Alexander (1994, 2006), Ranger (1985) and Nyambara (2001) have shown, the chiefs did not necessarily accept political cooption but in certain instances attempted to take advantage of local government reforms to insist on further changes which would bolster their authority and probably their interests. Some, such as Chief Rekayi Tangwena, openly challenged the colonial government in the courts over land alienation and later aligned with the nationalist movement (Moyana, 1984). Government was in a quandary over how to treat the chiefs in the post-independence era, especially given the ruling party's desire to establish its own forms of control in the countryside under the guise of democratic decentralisation.

During the establishment of reserves (1894 to 1915) the settler government had depended on administrators and anthropologists to interpret the relationship between traditional authority and land. Colonial functionaries such as Bullock (1913) wrote that “the land was the property of the chief...the district (nyika) of a chief (mambo) was subdivided (matunhu) governed by headmen, who, however, had no absolute property in their section” (Cheater, 1990:190). Based on such analysis it was believed that land was not property (chinhu) but something that one uses for a time and abandons (Hollerman, 1952:322). It was also believed that the chief held land in trust for the use of his followers and would rarely make allocations to strangers who begged for land in his district (nyika). Primary usufruct went to married men, and the allocation of his own fields marked the independence of a new head of household within the lineage framework (Cheater, 1990:191).

To summarise, in its pure form the framework of social organisation that emerged within the customary areas was characterised by a hierarchy of institutions, the clan, the lineage and the household. The clan was responsible for asserting political and ritual rights over land, while the lineage held the concrete rights supported by consanguinity and corporate interests (Mafeje, 1997; 2003). Households through male members were allocated plots for their own production.

However the practice of customary tenure is far from the benign picture illustrated above. The labels „communal“ and „customary“ disguised a wide range of practices and claims to land in which individual rights sat alongside social obligations to defined groups, and in which the regulation of access to land was far from the sole prerogative of „traditional leaders“ operating according to customary rules (Alexander, 2006:112). Although Hollerman (1952) argued that land was not property (chinhu) he also records in his field work notes that compensation was paid in cash to those leaving their land in Buhera by those taking it over, suggesting the existence of an informal land market (Cheater, 1990:191). Bourdillon (1982:63) also noted the existence of these land markets and he states that:

means have been found according to which land can be bought and sold...as land becomes scarce, value for the land itself is added to the compensation fee, and chiefs and headmen can charge settlers a fee for the allocation of land.

Cheater (1990:190-193) has also argued on the basis of long identified forms of differentiation within customary areas such as the hurudza (agricultural entrepreneur) class,

which could only have emerged and thrived on the basis of access to larger landholdings, therefore dismissing the egalitarian myth purported under customary tenure. She further argues that the customary land tenure allocated land to those able to use it rather than to those who most needed it (Cheater, 1990:193).

As a form of social organisation the lineage grouping was expected not only to intervene in land allocation but also in ensuring the availability of labour. Yet the existence of the hurudza social category suggests that it could only have emerged and thrived on the basis of expanded petty commodity production and utilisation of non-family labour (Cheater, 1990:192). Moyo 1995 has shown through his field work in Mhezi ward that approximately 20 percent of the sample of smallholders utilised hired labour. Consumption was individually organised, and with the entry of the smallholders into commodity markets the rationale for welfarism within the lineage group could only have become subsumed within the profit imperative, suggesting that those who could not effectively utilise their land ended up working for the hurudza.

Administratively this model has gone through a number of distortions to the extent that in practice customary tenure is characterised by “multiple overlapping and sometimes internally inconsistent sets of rights and means of access and control” all of which were subject to contestation (Nyambara, 2001). In fact the influence of customary tenure and chiefs has been exaggerated and oversimplified in both the colonial and the post-colonial state. At many stages of the development of modern Zimbabwe the state tended to be more direct in exercising its authority (Moyo and Yeros, 2007a). Notably, it was not the chief with his customary garb who stalked the countryside, but from the 1920s, the technocrats of the Native Affairs Department and fellow experts from Extension and Development armed with the authority of western science and an unshakeable belief that what they were doing was good for the Africans (Alexander, 2006:6). This practice continued into the post-independence period.

There are similarities in the manner in which the colonial and post-colonial state related with traditional authority. Both states initially sought to marginalise traditional authority, but in the face of rural insurrection and continued deference to the authority of the chief they quickly reinstated the land allocating powers of the chiefs through the Tribal Trust Land Act (TTLA)

of 1967 and the Traditional Leaders Act (TLA) in 1999 respectively. Even so the chiefs remained in subordinate positions. In practice, communal areas were administered under a mixture of customary and state-defined tenure systems (Cheater, 1990; Tshuma, 1997). The post-independence government continued with the colonial practice of subordinating custom to state control through the passing of the Customary Law and Primary Courts Act (1981) which replaced chiefs' and headmen's courts with elected presiding officers. Through a number of pieces of legislation and directives the state created new local government structures and transferred significant power from the traditional authority to the new structures. The District Councils Act of 1982 led to the establishment of 56 elected Rural District Councils which replaced the Tribal Lands Authority. In the same year the government passed the Communal Lands Act (1982) which gave district councils authority over land allocation. Sub-structures within the RDCs such as the Land Use and Natural Resource Committees, made up of elected officials were charged with land allocation. Officially occupation of communal land was now by the consent of the District Council (later the Rural District Council).

The direction of local government took another path in the second decade of independence when the GoZ introduced the Rural District Councils Act (1996) and the Traditional Leaders Act (1999). Whilst in the previous dispensation prior to the RDC Act (1996) the chiefs had been regarded as ex-officio members of the council, the new legislation did not make any reference to traditional leaders. The RDC Act (1996) is silent not only on the relationship with the chiefs but also on the council's role in terms of the communal lands. The Traditional Leaders Act (TLA, 1999) on the other hand creates the impression that the two institutions of local government can easily work together. In terms of land the TLA (1999) states that the chief will

ensure that land is allocated in accordance with the Communal Land Act (20:041) and to prevent any unauthorised settlement or use of any land; and to notify the Rural District Council of any intended disposal of a homestead and the permanent departure of any inhabitant from his area, and, acting on the advice of the headman, to approve the settlement of any new settler in his area.

The Communal Lands Act (CLA-1982 amended in 2002) ascribes land authority to the RDC. It states that a person may occupy and use communal land for agricultural or residential purposes with the consent of the RDC established for the area concerned (GoZ, CLA 1982: 3). It goes on to state that when granting consent the RDC shall "consult and cooperate with

the chief appointed to preside over the community concerned in terms of the TLA (1999)”. It creates the impression that the RDC is the initial point of contact in granting authority over land, whilst actual practice in the customary areas suggests otherwise. The concept of „kuombera“, which has now become embedded in customary practices, means that outsiders seeking land approach the chief or lineage elder with a gift which symbolises the request to be considered as part of the lineage or clan – thus deserving land.

Terms such as „consult“, „cooperate“ and „notify“ within the TLA (1999) and the CLA (1982, amended in 2002) create an impression of a harmonious existence between the two institutions. The CLA (1982 amended in 2002) fails to appreciate the real contestations and competition between RDCs and traditional authority. The Act stipulates that the RDCs should

grant consent only to persons who, according to the customary law of the community that has traditionally occupied and used land in the area concerned, are regarded as forming part of such community (CLA, 1982 amended in 2002).

However the act does not specify how the RDCs will verify this complex issue of belonging, especially considering the fact that lineage and clan affiliations are determined by the elders of those particular groups. The foregoing discussion provides a background on the challenges associated with the combination of local government between elected and hereditary structures. It forms a very crucial background to the discussion on local government in newly resettled areas in Chapter 7.

The link between agrarian reform and local government was made apparent by the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture (1992), stating, “resettlement alone can never fully solve all the problems of the communal areas...the implementation of the programme has to be carried out in tandem with the programme of communal area re-organisation” (quoted in von Blackenburg, 1994:37). The different local government reforms were seen as measures to “leave the traditional, conservative leaders with little more than spiritual functions...and allow substantive innovation”. Government planners viewed communal tenure as static and opposed to the market (von Blackenburg, 1994:38).

In 1985 the Ministry of Lands passed the Communal Lands Development Plan which promoted the establishment of surveyed and planned „economic units“, consolidated villages and state control of tenure through a leasehold system. The plan condemned communal

tenure and dismissed customary leaders as the “conservative guard of an unproductive system” (GoZ, 1985). The plan also sought to reduce cases of labour migration to the urban areas and large scale farms. The ideas contained in the Communal Land Development Plan were incorporated into the First Five Year Plan which allocated funding for a rural housing programme using the „consolidated village“ vision. The consolidated village was meant to promote both land and labour productivity (Cliffe, 1988:11).

The rural housing programme was officially launched in 1986 when a directive requiring a pilot village in each district was issued. These were cast as „properly planned villages“ against haphazard and scattered settlement patterns. A carrot and stick approach was used to mobilise interest in the schemes. Promises of piped water and electricity were used to encourage people to move into the planned villages, and those who refused were threatened with eviction from the unplanned villages (Alexander, 2006). However, the demarcation of planned villages was greeted with hostility and local councils emphasised that villagisation could only take place within a context of accelerated land reform. Government’s negative position regarding labour migration ignored the importance of wages within smallholder production. Cliffe (1988) and Cousins et al. (1992) have shown that the majority of households that were able to access farm inputs outside of the GoZ’s subsidies had an active member within the wage economy.

The underlying objective of the local government reforms was to officially usurp the land-allocating powers of chiefs in a manner very similar to the Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) of 1951 and to introduce new social relations of production that are not defined by belonging to a lineage grouping. In terms of land allocation the District Council Act (1982, section 8 [2]) required District Councils merely to “have regard to customary law relating to the use and allocation of land allocation”. These measures were, however, resisted by chiefs who had enjoyed land allocation powers in the last decade of colonial rule.

In practice, the passing of the District Councils Act (1980) and the introduction of new structures did not necessarily diminish the prestige of the office of the chief, as rural inhabitants continued to defer to traditional authority, especially in land allocations and in resolving land-related disputes (Dzingirai, 1994). In a study of land allocations in Binga, Dzingirai (1994:168) noted that migrants bypass the Rural District Council and seek

permission from traditional authority functionaries such as the chiefs, village heads and influential lineage elders. Even in instances of land conflicts where a land case reached the Rural District Council (RDC), the headman's court (dare) continued to be the primary legal arena for dispute resettlement (Anderson, 1999). Traditional authorities regularly involved themselves in land administration and they were often at „loggerheads“ with elected authorities (Alexander, 2003:587). For instance, „outsiders“ were being given land in the grazing areas at a price by chiefs or the kraal head but without approval from the land authority, the Rural District Council (Dzingirai, 1994; Yeros, 2002a). Rural District Councils and traditional bodies represented two competing „parallel systems of authority“ (Chaumba et al 2003b:587).

A decade long struggle between elected and customary authority over control of land ensued. In 1994 the government's Commission of Enquiry into Land Tenure commented that

there is evidence that the dissolution of traditional authority and their role in land and natural resources matters at independence was premature, and currently, there is widespread resistance to VIDCO/WADCO structures as credible authorities over land and natural resources (Land Tenure Commission, 1994:33).

The position of customary authorities benefited particularly from increasingly central control exerted on elected local councils by both the ruling party and government ministries (Alexander, 2006:109-10). The local accountability of VIDCOs was thus eroded as they were cast in the role of implementing agencies for centrally designed programmes modelled along the lines of the discredited colonial NLHA „villagisation“ schemes.

The Traditional Leaders Act (1999) formally restored customary chiefs' land allocation role in communal areas (although still notionally subject to approval by the Rural District Council) and created a governance structure that resembled a hybrid between the 1982 District Development Committees and the 1969 model for „tribal“ governance by customary chiefs. The Traditional Leaders Act (1996) extended to A1 resettlement areas the model of local governance used in communal areas, in some cases imposing „headmen“ and „chiefs“ where elected officials had represented villages for the previous 20 years (Kinsey, 2005). These recent measures have reaffirmed the role of the chief and their subordinate structures. Moyo (quoted by Yeros, 2002a) says that there was a legitimacy problem in the communal

areas due to the absence of a clear role for the chief, and consequently rural mobilisation for „developmental“ projects was constrained. The reversal of policy served to ensure the further cooption of the office of the chief towards the logic of the state in terms of both the political and development agendas. These reforms are similar to the 1967 Tribal Land Authority Act which elevated the authority of the chief in land matters and local administration. The reforms are part of the state’s broader political agenda to win over the support of the chiefs. Indeed, ever since the reforms the chiefs have been beneficiaries of state largesse. Besides a monthly wage, chiefs were provided with brand new vehicles and their rural homes were given first priority in the rural electrification programme (Murisa, 2007).

From 1980 to 1996 smallholders in customary tenure areas were subordinated to a fusion of authority revolving around an awkward „institutional mélange“ in a similar situation to practice under late colonialism, including elected Rural District Councils (RDCs), traditional chieftainships and local ruling party cell structures (Tshuma, 1997:90). In practice, however, beneficiary participation was „seriously curtailed“ and development committees “were incapable of producing development plans” (Makumbe, 1996:47). The RDCs had limited financial autonomy in relation to the central state and became “basically incapacitated and weak agents of the centre” (Makumbe, 1996:85) The Rural District Councils Act of 1988 sought to provide overarching district authorities by incorporating commercial, communal and resettlement areas, but it was not particularly successful in ensuring a functional integrated rural authority structure. The decentralisation that emerged was a highly politicised process that strengthened the state at the expense of a nascent rural civil society, and this facilitated central government’s “penetration of the periphery for purposes of control and manipulation of the local people” (Makumbe 1998:53).

4.6 Implication of Reforms on Social Organisation

Although the agrarian reforms implemented have been hailed as responsible for the boom in smallholder production in maize and cotton, their impact was in actual fact minimal and left the historical advantages of the LSCF intact. For instance, between 1980 and 1984 the number of dams in the commercial farming areas increased by 50 percent from 7 000 to 15 000 irrigating nearly 400 000 ha, compared to only 50 000 ha within communal areas (Rukuni, 1994b). While agricultural financing was extended to smallholders, on average they

were only gaining access to 9.25 percent of the aggregate agricultural loans granted by the AFC between 1980 and 1984 (Bratton, 1986:194).

The various GoZ attempts to reform customary tenure through the removal of the land allocation powers of the chiefs and their subordination to the Rural District Councils and the eventual capitulation and restoration of their land allocation and mediation roles have had a significant impact on rural social organisation. The early measures weakened the institution of traditional authority that had been elevated in the previous decade through various legislative measures of the colonial government. However, ironically the new measures did not result in a strong local government system with the ability to democratise the countryside.

The newly created Rural District Councils did not have sufficient resources to carry out development plans and they were also placed in direct competition with the District Development Committees (DDCs) comprised of representatives of various ministries operating at local level. The plans developed by the VIDCOs and WADCOs were submitted to the DDCs instead of the RDCs. Central government emphasised that it was the role of civil servants working at local level to advise councils and to ensure that the policy positions adopted were aligned to those espoused by central government (Alexander, 2006). Furthermore, councils and VIDCOs were heavily dependent on centrally generated and controlled resources. Alexander (2006:110-111) quotes a disgruntled Provincial Administrator saying,

If you are going to plan and plans are going to be workable you also need to control the budget [and]... the system of VIDCO [to Provincial Administrator]...was brought from another country but they forgot to bring the authority...There is no use of talking of decentralised structures when decision making staff is at head office.

Although the decentralised structures were initially greeted with excitement they failed to deliver on the practical goals of development, especially land allocation.

In the meantime chiefs and rural elites exploited the gap created by the failure to deliver land, continuing to preside over land matters and distribution of land (albeit unofficially). Illegal land sales, presided over by chiefs and other lineage elite were very common across the length and breadth of Zimbabwe. Different studies record the practice of illegal land sales: Dzingirai (1994) in Binga (Matabeleland North), Yeros (2002a) in Shamva (Mashonaland Central), and Chimhowu and Woodhouse (2008) in Svosve (Mashonaland East). More

interesting is the fact that it was not only chiefs engaged in the practice but other rural elites and RDC officials. These actors were taking advantage of the ineffectiveness of the policy and institutional measures in place. The newly created Rural District Councils did not have the capacity to follow up on these processes nor the moral influence to oppose such land transactions.

In such a context the role of traditional structures in land allocation and mediation remained visible and the people continued to defer to the chiefs on land adjudication matters. Due to the contest for authority and legitimacy, traditional structures and the newly formed government structures often took populist stances when it came to mediation of issues such as land use, boundary conflicts and natural resource use (Anderson, 1999). The position of traditional authority was buttressed by the unofficial invocation within official discourse of what Alexander (2006) has called „cultural nationalism“ through comments made by senior state officials, such as the former Minister of Local Government, Edison Zvobgo’s statement that, “We felt in the end, we could not do away with our traditions...we therefore agreed that chieftainship was part and parcel of our culture” (*Herald*, 18 January, 1982). These sentiments also served to diminish the importance of some of the goals behind local government reforms, such as the need to democratise local government practice.

The reforms led to the deepening of relations of political patronage between rural elites and the rural poor. It is important to note that it was not the landless rural poor who participated as buyers in this market. In fact in most instances those who purchased were outsiders from neighbouring urban areas (Chimhowu and Woodhouse, 2008). Such a practice suggests a deepening of rural inequalities.

More importantly these unofficial land transactions have led Cousins et al. (1992) to ask whether available evidence on „private“ transactions suggests that a „market“ in land that allows „strangers“ into the otherwise neatly organised lineage structures is emerging in the communal lands, thus destroying the customary framework of social organisation. In many instances the land sales in customary areas do not lead to the development of a freehold land market but rather the transactions take the form of a “negotiated entry into the collectivity of the „community“ or the village which brings with it the property rights and obligation held by others” (Chimhowu and Woodhouse, 2008:17). The terminology used to describe such land transactions, such as „kuombera“ (clapping of hands) suggests a more culturally steeped form

of incorporation than a mere land sale. The new rights that the settlers gain are codified by a variety of social obligations in which group interests are emphasised.

In the case of post-independence land resettlement areas the decentralised bureaucracy established in the areas ensured that there was no role for traditional authority in the administration of the new areas. Cliffe (1988) argued that the central government's rural development planning unit was so eager to modernise farming that it did not trust any other agency to share the same vision and ensured that newly resettled areas were not even incorporated into the newly established Rural District Councils but remained under the administrative oversight of the Resettlement Officer who received orders from DERUDE. The resettlement officer was not accountable to the new settlers and was essentially responsible for approving the renewal of permits on the basis of meeting strict conditions set out in the permit. Therefore, unlike in the communal areas where there were two competing centres of authority, the settlers in resettlement areas had to deal with a very coercive institution that emphasised the supremacy of a modern technocratic approach to agriculture. The new settlers had been made to surrender any claims to their communal area homes but the majority maintained these claims due to the insecurity of the annually renewable permits offered (Cliffe, 1988).

4.7 Concluding Remarks

The discussion has shown that the liberation movement that came to power sought to implement reforms that would not alter agrarian accumulation within the large scale farms but, through redistribution of derelict land and agricultural policy reforms would bring the previously marginalised groups into an agricultural commodity market dominated by the large scale sector. These measures appear to have assuaged rural discontent in the first decade of independence but they also contributed to accelerated rural differentiation based on unequal access to farm inputs, extension support, the market and limited land reform.

While the debates on the land question have been ongoing, there has been inadequate attention paid to investigating landholding practice especially in customary areas (Cheater, 1990:188). The discourse on clarifying customary tenure rights is critical for correcting colonially held misconceptions about traditional authority and actual landholding practice. The nature of authority and the ways of access to land have a significant influence on the form of social organisation that emerges. However, the approach to land reform in the 1980s

suggested that instead of learning from the previous mistakes made by the colonial government the new authority sought to impose a new social order in the newly resettled areas. A resettlement officer was introduced as the new supreme authority responsible for land allocations and oversight of production, in place of the traditional structures. These measures were part of a continuation of distortions of the way in which rural people related to land. Under the new government land was reduced to a site of production without taking cognisance of other social and cultural considerations that existed with regard to the land. Indeed customary tenure as it exists has serious flaws, especially when it comes to gender relations and inheritance. However there are equally important pillars of customary tenure, such as belonging to a defined lineage group, that guarantee access to land and welfare. Government's ambivalence with regard to the preferred tenure system amongst the smallholders within newly resettled areas leads to further confusion on desirable social relations to land and creates artificial divisions within the countryside between the customary areas and resettled areas.

Beyond the official forms of agrarian reform and organisation discussed in this chapter, rural households have been engaged through a variety of associational forms in resolving some of their social reproduction challenges. The following chapter looks at these and details how they interact with the officially recognised authority structure.

CHAPTER 5

RURAL AGENCY AND AGRARIAN CHANGE IN ZIMBABWE

5.1 Introduction

The discussion in this chapter traces the evolution of rural collective agency in responding to land and broader agrarian grievances such as limited access to farm inputs, financing and markets. Although the study is mostly concerned with the post-independence period, it briefly analyses how collective action emerged in response to unfair colonial policies of land alienation and discrimination in agriculture (especially in pricing). Specific analyses of rural agency in the post-independence period are very rare, and in many instances research energy was devoted towards a state-centric analysis framed within a modernist discourse of agrarian reform, more interested in the continuation of the expression of the “science of development” (Alexander, 2006:8). The discussion examines the extent to which rural agency in the form of land occupations has influenced the pace of land reforms and the contribution of associational forms towards improving the capacity of rural communities to recreate the conditions of their existence. The discussion also provides a historical analysis of the emergence of underground land movements and representative farmer unions.

5.2 Rural Agency and the Land Question in Zimbabwe

5.2.1 *Pre-Independence Actions against Land Evictions*

Struggles for land have a pre-independence history and in most cases were championed by popular land movements. Terence Ranger’s (1999) study of the Matopos has detailed some of the land movements that emerged in response to attempts by the Rhodesian government to move inhabitants off their land. Initially there were demonstrations against land alienations led by trade unionists and traditional chiefs and the formation of the movements was a “landmark in the development of national consciousness” (Ranger, 1999:162). In the Matopos area a land movement known as Sofasonke (we will die together) was formed by Nqabe Tshuma in 1945. Nqabe was born in the 1890s and spent ten years in Johannesburg in the 1920s. During his stay in Johannesburg he became a member of the African National Congress and the Industrial Commercial Workers Union. On his return to the then Rhodesia he was recruited as a teacher at Hope Fountain and sent to Inyathi Mission for teacher training. However, he was evicted from the school after leading two protests against “the

authoritarianism of the headmaster” (Ranger, 1999:153). He formed Sofasonke with five other committee members and its membership included most of the households within what is now the Matopos Park. Sofasonke was established to resist the threats of eviction to make room for the establishment of a national park and also the destocking measures that were being introduced. They refused to slaughter their livestock and the leader argued that

we do not like to sell our cattle without reason, as they are our living...We are overstocked and overpopulated because some of the Europeans have large farms and turn the natives off the land they have occupied for years (Nqabe Tshuma, 1948 [Quoted by Ranger, 1999:159])

The plans of the settler government were that affected households would be moved into the Gwaii reserve, which was the only land available at the time. The leadership of Sofasonke engaged Bulawayo based lawyers, Webb, Low and Barry, to represent them against the government’s threats of eviction. As part of a strategy for the government to pay attention to their demands they threatened to disrupt the 1947 Royal Indaba which was to be held at Fort Usher in Matabeleland South, where chiefs of Matabeleland were expected to meet with King George VI and Queen Elizabeth of Britain. The government gave in to their demands and committed to holding a commission of inquiry on their claim to land. They based their claim on the basis of oral evidence that Cecil John Rhodes had made a commitment to them that they would not be moved from their land and also that their former king, Mzilikazi, was buried at Matopos. Sofasonke mobilised on the platform of Ndebele identity and the past legacies of victories. They established links with both urban and rural movements such as Sofasihamba led by Daniel Dube, a trained teacher and active in the Wenlock area of Matopos district (Ranger, 1999:117-119). They also had relationships with an urban movement known as The Voice which was led by one of the pioneers of the nationalist movement, Benjamin Burombo. Despite the active intervention of the Sofasonke leadership and its members they lost their claim to Matopos and more than 600 families were moved into the Gwaii reserve (Ranger, 1999: 174). Resistance to eviction was nipped in the bud through the arrests of the leadership and using the police to enforce evictions.

In the Eastern parts of Zimbabwe another land movement led by Chief Tangwena was involved in a number of activities of defiance against government’s orders for eviction from the Gaerezi area in the Eastern Highlands (Sadomba, 2008b:149) The chief challenged the government’s eviction order and won a High Court case in 1969, however a political decision was made not to respect the legal judgement (Moyana, 1984:164-167). Although these cases

suggest the fact that native Africans did not passively accept land alienation and other environmental innovations such as destocking, they also point to the fact that unless the movements were nationally organised they were not an adequate force to take on the might of the settler regime.

5.2.2 Post-Independence Agitations for Land Reform

Immediately after independence, unrealistic expectations of a rapid and popularly controlled redistribution of land ran high, fed by guerrilla promises and nationalist claims to the lost lands. In the first three years of independence (1980 to 1982) much of the land that was formally „acquired“ and then „resettled“ was done so as a means of regularising de facto occupations that had occurred during or just after the war (Cliffe, 1998). The Riddell Commission (GoZ, 1981) reported that by 1980 at least 50 000 families had taken land for themselves and forced government to modify its plans. Thus during the first three years of the independence period, land reform policy should be understood in the context of government“s responses to squatter demands for land (Cliffe, 2000; Alexander 2003:86).

Land-needy rural households used a variety of methods to acquire land which included land occupations (squatting), natural resource poaching and fence cutting (Moyo, 2001:313; Alexander, 2003:87). The tactics used by land-hungry peasants varied according to the natural region; in the drier parts (NR IV and V) the tactics entailed „poach grazing“ (Alexander, 2003:85) while in the wetter areas (NR I to III) they involved land occupations. People turned to the local party structures to demand specific pieces of land on the basis of historical claims (Moyana, 1984).

Some of the tactics that are associated with breaking prevailing laws have been conceptualised by Moyo and Yeros (2005a) as „uncivil“ (paralegal) in contrast to the more legal tactics such as changing ineffective leaders through voting, writing petitions to government and forming structured groups as vehicles to channel member grievances (Moyo and Yeros, 2005a). The uncivil actions have been organised around underground movements that have at certain times, especially in the 1980s, received support from radical elements within the ruling party such as MPs and war veterans (Alexander, 2003:86-8).

In terms of the organisation of these demands for land, Moyo (2001:312) states that empirically a land occupation movement that is not necessarily nationally organised but one which shares common grievances has existed since the pre-independence period across the

country. These land occupations have remained the single most important and visible strategy of advocacy for radical land reform in the country, especially since 1980 (Moyo, 2001:313). The essence of the movement has been the same since 1980 and the tactic of land occupations has been used to gain access to land in various tenure categories which include white-owned commercial land, state land and communal lands (Moyo, 2001:314). The occupations have gone through different phases of intensity throughout the post-independence period. Accordingly land occupations or squatting have tended to become an organised community strategy and state-owned lands increasingly became a soft target for occupations for years especially in Matabeleland and Manicaland where forests and parks are predominant” (Moyo, 2003:68).

The Four Phases of Land Occupations in Post-Independence Zimbabwe

Moyo (2001:313), on the basis of tracking the land occupations has developed a four phased periodisation of the land occupations. The periodisation and the differences within each phase are however at times difficult to follow. The discussion below briefly summarises his arguments with regard to the phases and raises some objections regarding the rigid application of the phasing. The first phase according to Moyo (2001:313) was from 1980 to 1983 and was a period of „low profile but high intensity land occupations“. During this period there were widespread land occupations which received substantial support from local and state elites with links to the ruling party. However these occupations remained hidden from the public in terms of media coverage. The media was more focused on the wildcat strikes taking place within the urban areas and on celebrating the euphoria of independence. The central government tolerated the occupations as long as they were on abandoned farms but disapproved of occupation of utilised commercial land. As independence progressed and the initial equity thrust of land distribution tapered off because of the increasing disinterest with land reform within the ruling political party and the fiscal crises of the state, a rift began to grow between ZANU (PF) and its rural base (Helliker, 2006:188).

The second phase of land occupations beginning from 1984 until 1996 was a period of „low profile low intensity occupations“ and it took place in a context of dwindling resources for continued land resettlement alongside economic liberalisation which resulted in many people losing their jobs in urban areas and mines (Moyo, 2001:318). During this period there was a shift in the treatment of land occupiers. Those occupying white-owned farms were evicted

and described as “undisciplined and criminal elements who intended to frustrate the agricultural industry and resettlement process” (Alexander, 2003:90). In 1985 the Minister of Local Government was assigned the responsibility to „deal“ with „squatters“ by cabinet and rapidly instituted a number of changes which included the establishment of squatter control committees in every district council (Alexander, 2003:89).

The effectiveness of land occupations declined during this period of ‘low profile and low intensity occupations’ as vacant land became scarce and resettlement schemes filled up. The government used forced evictions to restrain land occupations, especially during the transition to the liberalised economic policy framework. The brutality with which these evictions were carried out by police and farmers alike was reminiscent of the colonial era (Moyo, 2001). In 1986 the Minister of Local Government stressed that land grabbers would be removed and that no squatter would be allocated land (Alexander, 2003:89). Instead the government made promises of formal land redistribution and other agricultural support schemes intended to improve the intensity of communal area land use and returns *in situ*.

The third phase, from 1997 until 1998, was a period of „high profile and low intensity“ land occupations. The designation of 1,471 white owned farms in 1998 and then the removal of the majority of listed farms from the list due to legal contestations was followed by a spate of occupations, mostly on the originally designated farms throughout the country. The land occupations that followed received wide media coverage (high profile) and were initially viewed as a form of political demonstration to symbolise the level of demand for land.

The occupations during the third phase came in waves, starting with about 30 cases in 1997, mostly on farms that had been identified for compulsory acquisition (Moyo, 2001). Ten more land occupations occurred in Mashonaland East within Goromonzi district. In Matabeleland 200 families occupied about four farms in the Nyamandlovu area, apparently where 25 of the 26 farms earlier listed for designation had been delisted by the GoZ as unsuitable for resettlement (Lisbeth, 2000; Marongwe, 2002:23). In a high profile case, the Svosve people of Marondera in Mashonaland East occupied four farms in June 1998 and received support from some government officials. The group, led by Chief Svosve and war veterans, approached Igava, Daskop and Homepark farms in Marondera and informed the owners of their intention to take over based on their historical claim to the land. This was followed by

the actual movement of villagers into these farms with their belongings within five days of their giving notice of intention to occupy. In Masvingo province 36 war veterans occupied ARDA Mkwazine Estate (owned by the state) in Chiredzi district, while some 700 people led by war veterans occupied Longdale Farm, 15 kilometres south of Masvingo (Marongwe, 2002:23; *Daily News*, 15, December 1999). There were further occupations nationwide carried out by thousands of people who were mainly communal and resettlement area farmers, retrenched workers and war veterans (Yeros, 2002a:241). Knight (1998:13) aptly captures this moment: “land invasion followed land invasion becoming almost a national movement”. The occupations spread to Guruve, Makonde, Macheke, Hurungwe and Odzi (Yeros, 2002a:241). Unlike in past phases of land occupations most of the land occupied was white-owned commercial land.

Sadomba (2008a) argues that the occupations during this period heralded a new era in agrarian reform struggles. While previous occupations had been very clandestine, these were well planned and overt in execution. At Oribi farm, for instance, the war veteran leadership sent an advance party to notify the farmer of their “intention to occupy the farm and to mark out fields for occupation by their landless followers and also to remain on the farm until government paid attention to their demands” (Sadomba, 2008a:102). Farms targeted for occupation were chosen on the basis of a very broad set of criteria, the first condition being ownership by whites and others including „a history of racist behaviour“. The occupiers were largely peaceful and in some cases defied the government’s calls to move off occupied farms (Alexander, 2003).

While government clearly opposed land occupations during the previous phase of „low profile and low intensity“, its position during the 1997-8 period was highly ambivalent. Outwardly it opposed the occupations and at times used force to remove villagers from some occupied farms (Marongwe, 2002:25). President Mugabe’s position on land occupations displays the contradictions within ZANU (PF) at the time; initially he defended the settlers but reversed his position in August and warned of stern government action (Alexander, 2003:97). However in September he was happy to use the Svosve occupiers as evidence of land hunger during the Land Conference and donors were transported to see the occupiers on the farms (*Herald*, 23 September 1998). In certain districts, such as Goromonzi and Mazowe, villagers were arrested and brought before the courts where they were made to pay fines or

jailed if they failed to do so (Sadomba, 2008a:110-111). In some cases the squatters were persuaded by the local ZANU (PF) leadership to „wait“ for orderly resettlement after the constitutional reform process, which it was envisaged would empower government to compulsorily acquire land without having to pay compensation. In some cases, especially Matabeleland, the Squatter Control policy measures were invoked and those illegally occupying land were forcibly evicted by the government in 1998. The final round of land occupations from 2000 was a period of „high profile and high intensity“ and has been discussed in Chapter 3 as part of setting the context of the events immediately surrounding fast track land reform.

The first two decades of independence were indeed characterised by the growth of the land movement across classes and regions. As the land occupations were proving successful, the numbers began to swell and the membership broadened (Moyo, 2001:315). While in the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s the movement was essentially composed of the rural landless and poor, in the late 1990s it began to incorporate retrenched workers from the urban and mining areas (Yeros, 2002a:244).

Moyo's (2001) four periods of land occupations over-privileges the local self-provisioning method and elevates it to make it seem if there was an unbroken continuation of land occupations throughout the entire post-independence period. This gives an impression of a rural terrain that is continuously engaged in an ongoing conflict over land. Such an approach underestimates the impact of state coercion through squatter control committees in the late eighties which effectively stopped land occupations on white commercial farms and state lands until the late 1990s. It was in 1989 that John Brown, the then President of the CFU, remarked that “this is the best government for commercial farmers that this country has ever seen” (quoted in Selby, 2006:126). This remark was made in reference to the ZANU (PF) government's policies on agricultural pricing policies but also the efforts of the state established squatter control committees in ensuring that there were no disturbances on the farm.

The emphasis on continuous land occupations does not adequately consider the significance of agricultural policy reforms introduced by government since independence and the NGO-led interventions in strengthening rural livelihoods. While land shortage was a rural reality the intervention of the state and other development actors ameliorated the impact of land

alienation, especially during the 1990s when new off-farm rural livelihood strategies were introduced. These interventions potentially explain why there were fewer land occupations in the 1990s up to 1997 when government listed 1,417 farms and then delisted more than half of these within a few months. Furthermore, the discourse on land occupation privileges uncivil tactics such as direct land occupation and poach grazing, without acknowledging the importance of other more civil and legal strategies, such as the lobbying efforts of the middle class oriented empowerment groups for land, and the eventual capitulation of the state to these demands.

It is more helpful to identify what Kerkvliet (2009) has called emboldening factors; the shifts in power relations within the state and what they suggest in terms of mobilisations for land reform. In Zimbabwe it is apparent that even though land occupations as a form of demand were widespread they only received their legitimacy through the state which would formalise occupations. When land for land redistribution began to decline and the state was not interested in destabilising large scale agriculture it came up with squatter control committees which received invaluable support from the large-scale farmers. Even the response of the state to the 1997 to 1999 land occupations was ambivalent: it only endorsed them as part of its campaign for more funding during the Donor's conference in 1998, and afterwards some Ministers called for the removal of land occupiers on the pretext that the grievances for resettlement would be acted upon by government. At their best uncivil tactics in Zimbabwe served the purpose of demonstrating the need for land redistribution, but the eventual fulfilment of this need could only be attained through the state which operated according to its own logic and without necessarily always bowing to pressure from the grassroots but as part of a more complex political strategy.

5.3 Responses to Agricultural Production Grievances

Parallel to land occupations the country has seen the emergence of more structured and formal organisations that seek to respond to questions of farm production and the raising of incomes in the countryside. A variety of hierarchical associational forms that include local and national representation are in operation and there is overlapping membership of these organisations. The associational forms have ostensibly been established as part of an effort to improve the capacity of rural households to recreate the conditions of their existence. The previous chapter discussed at length the various grievances that customary area households

confront in their efforts at producing food and generating incomes. Rural on-farm grievances can be grouped into two sets: production constraints and exchange constraints (Bratton, 1986:368). Production constraints include the unavailability or non-affordability of inputs (credit, seeds and fertiliser), and lack of labour and productive assets. Exchange constraints include unfair prices, limited access to the market and exploitation by middle persons who offer below market prices for commodities. The discussion below covers the various activities that structured rural associational forms engage in to mediate in individual rural household social reproduction challenges.

5.3.1 Collective Action through Labour and Asset Pooling

Rural households enter into a variety of associational forms in order to address production constraints (Bratton, 1986; Moyo, 2002; Arnaiz, 1998). Labour and productive asset constraints have provoked localised forms of action such as entering into labour gangs (Ranger, 1985; Bratton, 1986). Collective action in the form of labour pooling has a longer pre-independence history. Ranger's (1985) study quotes the Makoni District Native Commissioner's July 1910 report to the Native Affairs Department explaining how the people of the district were able to increase their hectareage by working together in labour pools:

while on patrol in the Southern part of the Makoni and Chiduku reserves...at many kraals [villages] I visited I found gangs of young men engaged in threshing corn and in breaking up new lands for the coming season (quoted in Ranger, 1985:65).

Labour pooling is one of the most common activities in Zimbabwe's customary areas (Bratton, 1986:369). At times the groups that emerge from this activity expand into asset pooling. The local organisations formed at this level have operated under different names which suggests their purpose as "asset-sharing groups" (Arnaiz, 1998), and "mutual support networks" (Rahmato, 1991). They tend to be informal and are frequently invisible to outsiders. The participating individuals are few in number and the networks that are formed are based on proximity of residence or kinship ties.

5.3.2 Farmer Unions and Exchange Activities

Cooperation at the „level of exchange“ entails the coming together of households into social forms, which include unions to lobby for services such as extension information, credit, chemical inputs and transport. Earlier studies (Bratton, 1986; Moyo, 1995, 2001; Arnaiz, 1998) indicate that there are more cases of formalised cooperation at this level, i.e. the

majority of local organisations operate at the level of exchange where they handle interactions with the state and the market in terms of demanding improved services and also seeking to exploit opportunities presented by the state. Local organisations operating in this manner are also known as „access groups“ (Arnaiz, 1998). According to Bratton (1986) and Zinyama (1992) there is a strong correlation between membership of farmer groups that access outside services such as loans and increased productivity, while the same cannot be seen among asset-sharing group members.

Grievances relating to the unavailability of sound technical advice, cheap credit, seeds and fertilisers have led to the formation of access groups (Arnaiz, 1998). These groups are also small in size and in many instances operate as branches of the large farmer unions. They become conduits for the distribution of inputs and knowledge. At the end of 1988 the National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe had established 4 000 local clubs (Bratton, 1994:15). Such formations worked within the structures of the large farmer unions that were ultimately responsible for soliciting for inputs for members.

The national farmer unions in Zimbabwe are better known for their role in lobbying for competitive producer prices for commodities. Since 1980 the unions representing different categories of farmers – smallholders in customary tenure areas, small-scale and large-scale commercial farmers – have combined their special skills such as research capacity (found among the large-scale commercial farmers“ union) and strengths such as political muscle (resident within the black-led farmer unions) to lobby government to ensure that their members get market related prices for their commodities (Herbst, 1988:270). In the 1980s the NFAZ and the ZNFU had to rely on the CFU“s elaborate computer models of costing production to make the case that farming was becoming less economically viable in the context of the producer prices established by the state (Herbst, 1988:270). Over these years the large unions developed expertise to negotiate with financial and marketing institutions for affordable credit to members (ZFU, undated: 4). They also bargained with manufacturers for discounts on inputs such as fertilisers (Interview with ZFU Programmes Manager, December 2008). The unions, taking advantage of their presence in the city, also engaged donor organisations for the initiation and implementation of commercial projects on the farms.

5.4 Evolution of Rural Formations

Zimbabwe's countryside has historically been made up of a mosaic of associational forms including loose unstructured mutual networks such as faith-based groups, credit associations, women's groups, labour sharing groups, and the more structured peasant organisations which are either localised or national (Bratton, 1986:358). Their origins vary but labour and asset pooling formations tend to emerge out of the traditional institutional framework of cooperation, whilst those entailing the introduction of a new innovation, such as joint marketing or mobilisation of savings, are founded by charismatic leaders (especially peasant organisations). State-based local functionaries such as extension officers tend to have an influence in the formation of groups for sourcing inputs and for extension support (Mlambo, 2002). Rahmato (1991) argued that communities live by a shared system of values and that these traditional values have an integrative function, especially in mobilising networks of cooperation. In certain instances traditional leaders have been identified as a form of legitimising process of mobilisation into these networks (Chatterjee, 2002). Petty commodity producers are likely to enter into associative relationships because of the perceived benefits of such endeavour, especially in a context of repeated social, economic and environmental crises (Bratton, 1986:368). Some of the most common rural formations in Zimbabwe are discussed in the sub-sections that follow.

5.4.1 National Farmer Unions

Origins and Membership

The colonial government's bias towards white large scale commercial agriculture and its attempts to develop a small cadre of medium scale black commercial farmers on freehold tenure as a buffer against the remaining small scale farmers provided a basis for the shape of farmer unions that emerged. The unions replicated the agricultural model; there were three national farmer unions which serviced the fragmented categories of farmers according to land tenure and size. The largely white Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) grew out of the Rhodesia National Farmers' Union (RNFU) which had formed in 1942 when various regional associations of large scale white farmers and ranchers agreed to unite under a central institution (Bratton, 1994). The RNFU (and then CFU) was an important pillar of white farming power bolstered by the passing of the Farmer Licensing Act (1942) which made it mandatory for all commercial farmers to buy a farming licence from the newly formed union

(Herbst, 1988:268). Through this legislation the union avoided the problem of inadequate funding and focused on developing research and lobbying capacity.

The Zimbabwe National Farmers' Union (ZNFU) was formed in 1945 to represent the special interests of smallholders who owned private farms from 20 to 200 ha and averaging 80 ha (Bratton, 1994:14) in the then African Purchase Areas. Mufema (1997:16-17) argues that this was a successor to the Bantu Farmers Association, formed in 1938, "a quasi political group operating alongside and as part of the Rhodesia Bantu Voters Association, the Matabele Home Society and the Southern Rhodesia Native Welfare Society". The ZNFU had approximately 9 500 members. It represented the elite of the African smallholder farming community. However under white rule the ZNFU had no influence on the policy process because its loyalties were seen by the settler government as lying with the guerilla forces (Herbst, 1988:268).

The National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe (NFAZ) represented the majority of the farming community. Its membership was derived from the communal areas and it originated from the Master Farmer programme initiated by the settler regime to promote the adoption of modern farming methods among the peasantry. It was led by another tier of elite peasants based within the communal areas but it did not adequately embrace the aspirations of the land and asset poor. The NFAZ was severely handicapped by the fact that its constituency was fragmented, far from the main transportation and communication routes. It also lacked independent research capability, especially in a context in which no comprehensive research had been done on smallholder producers in the country before 1980 (Burgess, 1997:139). At the time of independence the ZNFU and NFAZ were probably the only self-managed national smallholder unions on the continent, with 9 000 and 85 000 members respectively (Bratton, 1994:15).

Financing and Leadership Styles

Beyond the land tenure categories of the constituencies that these farmers unions served, other deeper differences existed amongst them. The CFU and ZNFU drew their financial strength from the levy on their member's agricultural sales, as authorised under the Farmers Licensing and Levy Act of 1942 (Herbst, 1988:268). Under the act the two unions were entitled to receive one percent from the member's marketed output through the Grain

Marketing Board (crops) and the Cold Storage Commission (livestock). The CFU was the strongest and most organised of the three unions. It was financially self-sufficient, utilising the funds from its levy, farmer licence fees and investment in agri-business ventures (Sibanda, 2002:317). The ZNFU was financially self-sufficient but it was organisationally the weakest in terms of coverage on the ground. The NFAZ did not have access to the levy but it received a small grant from government's public budget and it expanded its base to include uncertified and women farmers from communal areas countrywide. Membership of the NFAZ peaked in 1988 with some 4 000 clubs, 85 000 paid up members and perhaps 150 000 occasional adherents, though just two years later these numbers had declined by at least 20 percent (Bratton, 1994:14). In order to strengthen its viability the NFAZ appealed for financial support from external donors. By the late 1980s the NFAZ had established an administrative structure with headquarters in Harare and field offices in every provincial capital.

Leadership and management of the unions was another critical area of differences. The CFU was seemingly more democratic than other unions. There was a customary two-year term limitation on incumbent CFU presidents and regular elections for all office bearers (Bratton, 1994:19). The ZNFU and NFAZ presidents had governed for unbroken periods of 18 and 11 years respectively (Bratton, 1994:25). Whereas the CFU president was bound by decisions of the council, power was concentrated in the hands of the presidents of the NFAZ and ZNFU.

Material Demands of the Unions

The constitution of all three unions specified in almost identical language, that "the principal objective(s)... (are) to protect and advance the interests of farmers...and the promotion of and development of a viable agriculture industry" (Bratton, 1994:15). The unions ran a joint programme of lobbying for competitive prices and the GoZ, under pressure from farmers' unions, regularly adjusted producer prices upwards to remain above or at world market levels (Herbst, 1988:271). However, while initially the NFAZ and ZNFU had collaborated with the CFU they began in the mid 1980s to pursue preferential prices for their members because of the structural constraints that they faced such as higher transport costs because of the absence of an efficient road network service in the communal and small scale areas.

The NFAZ was the most vocal in terms of demands for land redistribution. As production within the communal areas increased, the association began to lobby for accelerated land reform on the basis of the competency of the membership. The union emphasised that the land reform should prioritise the more productive master farmers rather than needy rural dwellers (Burgess, 1997:140). The NFAZ took advantage of the increases in customary area production, one of the great successes of independence, as a legitimising factor to demand granting of land to its members (Herbst, 1988:270). The association also demanded that the government lift the suspension of land purchases in communal areas and broaden the scope of land redistribution. However, although there is evidence of dialogue between the unions and the state, the extent to which the latter adopted some of the policy recommendations is not clear. By 1990 the beneficiary selection for resettlement did not necessarily include the criterion or need for one to have been a successful smallholder farmer. The competency condition was only introduced after the passing of the Land Acquisition Act (1992). However the period between 1992 and 1998 was characterised by very little land reform and after 1998 beneficiary selection was based on one having participated in the land occupations.

In February 1990 the presidents of the CFU, ZNFU and NFAZ presented a common policy paper on land reform, concurring that only underutilised land should be acquired by the government and that only experienced and productive farmers should be resettled (Bratton, 1994:19). While all the unions through the common policy paper endorsed land reform and insisted that land should be given to trained and competent beneficiaries, differences began to emerge through the various media statements the leaders made, especially on compulsory acquisition. In an interview on ZTV during the programme „Face the Nation“ the CFU president confirmed that his union wanted a continuation of the willing seller-willing buyer approach. The leadership of the other unions saw an opportunity for their members to access land through compulsory land acquisition and endorsed it through public statements.

Some of the policy demands of the ZNFU included calls for the construction of schools, hospitals, roads and marketing depots in the native purchase areas (Sibanda, 2002). In the post-independence era the ZNFU ran a modest programme emphasising advocacy on producer prices, agricultural credit and water development (Bratton, 1994). The ZNFU demanded tenure reforms for the benefit of their members and they wanted the GoZ to convert the leases in small-scale areas into freehold title. The NFAZ’s material demands

included calls for the provision of improved transport services and building of more decentralised marketing depots for the convenience of rural households. The union also raised the need for accelerated land reform, especially for its competent members (Bratton, 1994).

Attempts at Merger

At independence the government encouraged the unions to merge and “although this was imminent at several instances it never really came about” (Bratton, 1994:23). They did manage to set up a loose umbrella committee known as the Joint President Agricultural Committee (JPAC) comprising the presidents of the three unions and serving as a forum to discuss marketing, pricing and related issues (Bratton, 1994:24). The JPAC was described as a “practical and worthwhile forum in which frank and full discussions have taken place on economics, viability, crop reports, marketing labor and security” (Sibanda, 2002:334). The Committee’s lifespan was cut short because of disagreements over land reform in 1994.

After the collapse of the JPAC, the state, in pursuit of the „one sector, one union“ policy, actively promoted the idea of a merger between the two black farmer unions. In August 1991 the Minister of Agriculture compelled the NFAZ to join the ZNFU to form the new Zimbabwe Farmers’ Union (ZFU). However the new union was dominated by leadership from the former ZNFU.

5.4.2 The New Union and Agrarian Change

The process of the merger of the unions was perceived by members as undemocratic. District level and below structures of the NFAZ complained of inadequate consultation prior to the merger (Bratton, 1994:21) and many of the members felt excluded from the process of selecting national ZFU leaders. The national leadership was elected at a national congress which the NFAZ leadership had been led to believe would be the platform for discussing the process of merging the unions’ structures from the district up to provincial levels before national elections could be held. However, when the Minister of Agriculture (who was the guest of honour) came to the podium he made the suggestion that the elections be held during the congress (Bratton, 1994). There was no agreement on the specific quotas for each

organisation and almost all the leadership from NFAZ failed to gain entry into the new executive structures of the newly formed ZFU.

Prior to their merger, the two unions had developed different specialisations; the ZNFU had focused on policy advocacy on prices and inputs while the NFAZ had emphasised organising smallholders to respond positively to production and marketing incentives made available by government. The activities of the NFAZ had partially contributed towards the maize production boom experienced in the first five years of independence (Bratton, 1986). However, the new entity, with its recycled, mostly former ZNFU leadership, decided to take on new tasks which entailed transforming the organisation into a service delivery agency for farm supplies and new agricultural projects. The new activities included providing small farmers with credit, inputs, research and extension service. These activities potentially contributed to the greater visibility of the organisation at the local level.

However it still failed to attract new members and by 1995 the ZFU membership was less than 10 percent of the total number of smallholder households in Zimbabwe. Mobilisation and recruitment was particularly challenging in the resettlement areas where neither of the former organisations had previously penetrated.

One of the weaknesses of the new union was its failure to recognise the high levels of internal differentiation among smallholders. The ZFU leadership resisted identifying different socioeconomic groups within their structures and potential membership. The refusal to accept internal differentiation was inconsistent with some of the strategic decisions made by the Union. For instance the Union's structures of participation were designed according to landholding size, small scale commercial plot holders, indigenous large scale, and communal and resettlement area farmers (ZFU, undated: 3). The new leadership insisted that communal, resettlement and small scale farmers had common interests with regard to agricultural issues (Bratton, 1994:27).

Failure to accept internal specificities led to an undifferentiated strategy for the whole union that did not respond adequately to the real needs of some of the actual members or those who might have joined. The new leadership was reluctant to target resources to the neediest members concentrated in the communal areas, instead giving priority to programmes aimed

at securing tractors and pick-up trucks which promised to benefit mainly members in the small-scale commercial sector. Some of the assumed common interests included the need for improved availability of seasonal inputs, transport and markets. They disregarded differences in infrastructural developments especially in resettlement areas, the land tenure challenges that resettled farmers faced, and the overcrowding that communal area based farmers suffered (Bratton, 1994:28). Even those who retained membership within the new structures were widely differentiated, while policy was dominated by elite „capable farmers“ whose demands for freehold land for productive purposes were different and far from representing the majority of black farmer demands.

Officially the ZFU endorsed the programme of land redistribution but only to competent farmers, without clarifying exactly the criteria to be used in determining the incompetency of others who also felt that they needed land. Its position on customary tenure was that „deserving farmers“ should be granted freehold title. The ZFU tended to divide membership according to an unclear framework of competency, focusing its activities on the medium scale commercial farming areas and neglecting problems specific to communal and resettlement area farmers. Hence, despite the officially granted monopoly that the ZFU had in the representation of small and medium scale farmers, it did not adequately represent the different socioeconomic sub-groups within the farming community.

5.4.3 Local Organisations

Origins and Roles

Within the context of weak representation other platforms of collective agency have emerged. The most commonly existing formation is the local farmer organisation⁹ which operates under a variety of forms, such as farmer clubs, community- based organisations, savings and credit associations and women’s clubs. Exact statistics on the total number of local organisations in Zimbabwe are not available, but it was estimated in 1982 that 44 percent of households in customary areas belonged to such associational forms and in 2002 it was estimated that there were 3 000 local organisations in Zimbabwe (Bratton, 1986:371; Moyo, 2002; Sibanda, 2002). A local level study by Arnaiz (1998) on rural responses to economic

⁹ An organisation emerges whenever people come to rely upon one another for help to fulfil their individual plans (Butler, 1983:325).

reforms in the late 1990s in Shamva found out that over 50 percent of the smallholders in the district belonged to a local farmer group. These are often localised, at times registered with the local government structures or the national farmers' union and with hierarchical structures and defined mandates, although they have been found to modify themselves in response to the grievances affecting a particular community.

However, some local organisations remain very informal with no known premises, not encumbered by a structured leadership and also not legally registered. These informal types might appear fragile and impermanent but they tend to be ubiquitous and play a critical role in smallholders' struggles for viability (Rahmato, 1991:2). They are formed to serve a variety of purposes and assume a multitude of roles, but are mostly formed in response to the negative effects of state policies and market penetration (Bratton, 1986:371; Moyo, 2003). In fact collective action by farmers is most common where the state and market both have a strong presence and least likely where both are weakly represented. A few examples can be given, for instance in Mashonaland East "group development areas have risen since 1972 in response to a government programme to deliver extension advice on a group basis" (Bratton, 1986:371). The state owned AFC's expansion into communal areas coincided with the mushrooming of "credit and cash groups" (Bratton, 1986:372).

Amongst a variety of the other roles local groups are involved in defending the interests of smallholder rural households from outside threats and are part of an attempt to preserve a way of life in times of social stress. Other objectives may include social, religious, mutual welfare or community integration. There are two broad types of local farmer organisations, the agricultural and non-agricultural groups (Arnaiz, 1998). The agricultural groups can also be further divided into two categories – asset-sharing groups and access groups.

Non-agricultural groups include welfare associations, women's groups focused on income generation (such as sewing and poultry production) and savings clubs. The benefits derived from these non-agricultural activities play an important role in supporting farm-related activities such as the purchase of inputs. These groups generally have a medium to large membership and their objectives range from social welfare, to solidarity and promotion of identity either through religion or recruitment into cults or secret societies (Rahmato, 1991). Some of the groups take advantage of the existence of ethnic and kinship networks or occupational affiliations (Rahmato, 1991:4).

It is important at this juncture to reiterate that rural life is complex and is neither fully commoditised nor fully pre-capitalist but rather inherent within it is a hybrid of both worlds. The associational forms that have emerged are in most cases alert to these complexities and at times mobilise and operate within pre-capitalist social relations to enhance access to the market. A good example of an organisation that attempts to respond to market challenges by taking advantage of pre-existing networks of kinship is the Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP). This Matabeleland-based rural development organisation was established in 1981 and by the end of 1983 had established 300 local groups known as „amalima“ which in isiNdebele means “meeting together for working and helping ourselves” (Chavhunduka et al., 1984:3). The local amalima groups took advantage of pre-existing women’s clubs and were made up of families settled next to each other on the basis of ties of inclusion within lineage groups. The activities of ORAP include the establishment of service projects (water and sanitation), income-generating projects (sewing, carpentry) and training on new farm skills (Chavhunduka et al., 1984:13). These activities contributed to the further penetration of the commodities market by the participating households.

Nature of Leadership and Participation

Most of the local farmer organisations operate through elected representative structures (Rahmato, 1991; Moyo, 2002). The leadership is mostly made up of locals and there is usually no requirement for special skills to run these organisations as they are characterised by face-to-face relations and based on mutual trust (Mafeje, 1993:17). In certain instances lineage heads have emerged as leaders of organisations made up of members from a similar clan, and at times higher level traditional authorities appoint candidates of their choice in these organisations. ORAP, operating mostly in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands, is made up of smaller local units referred to as „village groups“ that are headed by lineage elders (Chavhunduka et al., 1984:6).

According to Rahmato (1991) most of the commonly elected leaders were found in organisations that mobilised and recruited on the basis of age, while clan-based mutual support and survival associations tended to be led by those appointed by traditional leaders. Although these organisations have been popularised by the participatory school they tend to minimise popular participation in everyday decision-making. According to Moyo (2002) some of the local organisations have been found to be lacking in terms of promoting effective

and inclusive participation. Besides the lack of participation other undemocratic internal organisational features include failure to acknowledge women as effective decision-makers (in some organisations) and the exclusion of other social groups, especially rural landless households (Moyo, 2002).

Composition

The social basis of the local organisations, and their class and gender-based identities, are critical for understanding the extent to which these formations include different economic and social interests within their structures. An understanding of the social base contributes towards determining the extent to which local organisations mediate rural differentiation. Opinions differ on the social groups that are best represented in formal organisations. Bratton (1986:373) argues that the „middle smallholder“ is the prime force in these organisations while others believe that rural elite are the dominant force and the greatest beneficiaries. Arnaiz's (1998) study on local organisations in Shamva found that access (marketing) groups tend to have wealthier members while the asset-sharing groups tend to be made up of women and/or resource-poor households (Arnaiz, 1998). A study of local associational activity in three districts found that members of access groups tend to be the wealthier, cattle-owning (a proxy for wealth) members of the community while the labour and asset-sharing groups were comprised of poorer members of the community (Bratton, 1986:373-4). These households tend to have limited access to productive assets such as land, farm tools and draught power. Others have noted that poorer peasants, landless labourers and women are excluded from the development project based organisations and therefore from the material benefits that could be derived from them (Rahmato, 2001; Sibanda, 2002). The poorest with no assets generally find difficulty in joining either type of group.

Evidence gathered by Bratton (1986) and Arnaiz (1998) suggests that rural elite are not active in any form of local organisation. They do not join groups because the scale of their farm enterprises is sufficiently large to be economically viable or because they are reluctant to share assets with other less endowed households (Bratton, 1986:373). Instead they concentrate their activities within organisations involved in resource generation and distribution. Wealthier households were found to gain disproportionately more from local associational activity than the poorer ones in terms of access to credit, water rights, land, infrastructure for irrigation, and equipment such as tractors derived from state, NGO and

donor support to the associations' projects. Those who do not produce commodity surpluses do not belong in marketing-focused organisations. Interlocking memberships and leadership of peasant associations thus tend to undergird the class and social differentiation of the peasantry rather than merely accentuate the different cultural and social identities existing within it (Moyo, 2002).

5.5 NGOs and Processes of Agrarian Change

5.5.1 *NGO Presence and Activity in Rural Zimbabwe*

The practice and discourse of rural development has in recent years come under the modernising influence of external agents such as NGOs, church organisations and political parties, which seek to „speak“ for the rural poor (Moyo and Yeros, 2005a:41). Increasingly aggregate NGO budgets covering a wide array of social activities equal or are more than national budgets of some of the countries in which these organisations work (Bebbington et al, 2008:4). Globally NGOs are a relatively recent organisational form, particularly when compared to more deep social arrangements such as religious institutions, political movements, governments and transnational networks of various kinds (Bebbington et al, 2008:6). However, they have become a ubiquitous feature of development interventions especially in Africa (Moyo et al, 2000a: ix). They are viewed as flexible and willing to introduce new innovations (Helliker, 2008: 240). The discussion in this subsection analyses the various interventions of NGOs within Zimbabwe's rural landscape.

While Alexander (2006) has argued that it was not the chief running the countryside in the colonial era, but a wide range of state officials, one can also argue that in the post-independence period it was not only the chief and the newly established local structures in charge of the countryside but also a variety of other non-state organisations such as farmer unions, churches and NGOs engaged in various livelihood improving projects. NGOs are among the different external formations making an impact upon rural social organisation and agency. In the process of implementing their innovations they also facilitate the development of new social relations of production.

Although NGOs are a fairly recent phenomenon in Africa (having begun to appear in the late 1960s), they have over the years carved a niche for themselves as vehicles for delivering development change in the communal areas, especially the transfer of modernising technologies. Zimbabwe has over 1 000 formal NGOs which include local and national level

organisations (Moyo, 2005:45). In the 1990s NGO presence through a variety of community development projects was pervasive in the communal areas. One community in Mhezi ward (Chiduku District) was dealing with at least 15 NGOs operating in one ward alone, while another study by Makumbe (1996) notes that the respondents in one ward were dealing with over seven local and international NGOs in their ward (Moyo, 1995:45; Makumbe, 1996:75). These NGOs vary greatly in size from those with over 100 000 members to smaller ones with 10 to 100 members or households (Moyo, 2005:45). In addition, some of the NGOs are not membership-based but position themselves as vehicles of innovative interventions in rural development and in the process they also become intermediaries between donors and local communities.

The NGOs active in the rural terrain are engaged in interventions that have the potential to alter prevailing forms of agrarian social relations of production and in the process affect prevailing forms of organisation and agency in order to attain developmental goals such as food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable development. For instance the importance of kin networks in organising production and welfare has been weakened in communities where NGOs have made significant project investment through the establishment of new criteria of inclusion in the form of local groups which are established as the vehicles of project implementation. In such instances inclusion within NGO-established circles of association has become crucial for the attainment of social goals of well-being such as food security.

A wide array of services is provided by NGOs. This includes project formulation, execution, training and consultancy services for international NGOs aid and donor agencies. Several factors explain the ascendance and prevalence of the NGO sector but some of the major reasons have to do with the failure of bloated state bureaucracies to deliver essential social services and the seeming advantage of leaner and easier to run organisations (Moyo et al., 2000a). Historically rural development focused NGOs in Zimbabwe have responded to four interrelated challenges affecting rural communities: (i) declining land quality as a result of continuous use and soil erosion; (ii) declining agricultural yields; (iii) inadequate farm-based incomes; and (iv) inadequate social service provision. The NGOs design a variety of interventions, some of which are influenced by integrated rural development programmes (IRDP) philosophies.

In response to the declining quality of agricultural land NGOs have introduced a variety of environmentally-friendly land management support services that potentially mitigate the declining quality of the land and related resource base to ameliorate potential household reproduction crises. The most dominant approach has been „conservation farming“.¹⁰ In responding to declining farm yields, NGOs have gone beyond promoting conservation farming to mobilise the necessary inputs through direct input acquisition support, including the purchase of seeds and fertilisers and the promotion of locally occurring nutrient-enhancing manures.

Organisations that prefer the provision of direct input support are very few and are mostly local NGOs such as the Community Technology Development Trust (CTDT) and the Zimbabwe Project, while many international NGOs such as Care International, Red Cross and World Vision have in the past seven years restricted their interventions to famine relief service. In 2003 River of Life Church, a multiracial local Pentecostal church started an agricultural recovery programme called Operation Joseph. The programme identified 83 sites of operation within customary areas in all the 11 provinces of Zimbabwe and initially targeted 60 households per site. In its first three years of operation it provided free inputs to approximately 4 566 households and trained beneficiaries on conservation farming (Operation Joseph, Annual Report, 2008). After the third year of operation it introduced a new system whereby beneficiaries trade part of the new produce for the next year’s inputs. The number of beneficiaries had increased to 9 600 by the end of 2008 (Operation Joseph, Annual Report, 2008:4).

In order to arrest declining farm-based incomes, NGOs have come up with interventions that either seek to intensify land utilisation, such as through the provision of irrigation equipment, or through promotion of diversification from dependence on farm incomes alone. Prior to 2000 a number of international NGOs, such as Pump Aid and Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) now known as Practical Action, and local NGOs provided communities with infrastructure for improved water harvesting and in some instance assisted them to build boreholes and other innovations for storing water for market gardening. Non-farm diversification strategies promoted by NGOs include providing material support in the

¹⁰ Conservation farming is an old approach. It is essentially a suite of land, water and crop management practices used to improve productivity and sustainability. Its main tenets include minimal tillage of the soil, performing other operations (planting and weeding) on time, keeping the soil covered with crop residues or other organic material, and mixing and rotating crops.

establishment of market gardens that function throughout the year, and the non-farm income strategies include the establishment of cottage industries, beekeeping ventures, craft making and woodlot development (Makumbe, 1996).

Multinational NGOs such as World Vision and Care have been engaged in initiatives that are focused on transformational development through integrated rural development programmes. Their areas of activity include water and sanitation, dam construction and irrigation, housing, health, and technology transfers in agricultural production. Others such as Practical Action emphasise community-based management of projects and training village community workers to ensure a sustainable technological and maintenance programme once the project is complete.

5.5.2 NGOs and Rural Agency

The manner of implementing NGO interventions has influenced rural social organisation and agency. In the process of implementing rural programmes and projects NGOs, through various criteria, have to select beneficiaries from the communities as resources are rarely adequate to cover all members of the communities. In many instances the selected beneficiaries are brought together into a local organisation, mostly referred to as a community based organisation (CBO). These are mostly localised formations comprised of 10 to 100 members and established to receive development aid which could be in the form of community development projects, such as cattle feeding schemes, well digging, market gardening and promotion of diversification into non-farm income generating strategies (Makumbe, 1996:75; Moyo, 2005).

The criteria used for selection of participants in NGO-based projects vary from area to area and different NGOs use varying criteria for selection. Those that provide direct agrarian support such as inputs use a combination of factors, such as vulnerability, gender (often seeking high representation of women-headed households) and access to land, while those focused on introducing new farm or non-farm innovations search for certain skills within the beneficiary community, proximity of the group or claims that members of the community might make on a natural resource that forms part of critical resource for the „development project“ such as a dam (Interview with Norwegian People’s Aid Programme Officer, 2008). In certain instances project beneficiaries and consequently members of a CBO self-select or are selected by influential members of the community such as traditional leaders. These

processes tend to exclude poorer, households leading to heightened social differentiation (Ridell and Robinson, 1995:242). Furthermore the processes of formation of local community-based organisations lead to the redefinition of identities on the basis of inclusion within a certain formation and its attendant benefits and the exclusion of other groups on the basis of unclear frameworks of beneficiary selection.

5.5.3 NGOs and Agrarian Change: Emerging Critique

Critical academic work on NGOs in Zimbabwe is rare but some notable recent efforts include the collaboration by Moyo, Makumbe and Raftopolous (2000a), Rich-Dorman's (2001) and the most recent studies by Helliker (2006 and 2008). Earlier studies did not capture adequately either the interrelations between NGO action and land reform or the substantial extent to which NGOs have influenced and affected rural social organisation and agency (Helliker, 2008:239). Organised civil society (especially in the form of NGOs) has not made much of an effort to radicalise demands for land reform due to the nature of its relationship with international donor capital and the inherent class interest (Moyo, 2001:313). In fact, "Zimbabwe has historically had no organised civil society that has made radical demands for land reform or land redistribution" (Moyo, 2001:313).

Some of the reasons that NGOs have not made radical demands for land include the fear of being sucked into the political issues of the country, i.e. many donor-driven campaigns and NGOs avoided taking up land as a priority issue for fear of the political repercussions. A 1998 study on civil society perceptions of the land question confirmed these observations. The report states that, "civil society has opted for an observer role" in the country's land reform process" (Marongwe, 1999:4). The failure to articulate the demand for land reform created a political and social vacuum in the charting of a new land reform agenda which was eventually filled by the war veterans in alliance with the ruling party (Moyo, 2001:321).

There have been some exceptions to the above: in 1998 a national NGO, the Women and Land Lobby Group (WLLG), was formed to provide a forum to coordinate the efforts of many NGOs in negotiating with government on women's access to land (Chingarande, 2008:280). The WLLG was the only visible land NGO during the International Donor Conference on Land Reform and Resettlement in September 1998 (Chari, 1999:8). It distributed materials on the land question to the delegates at the conference and held a parallel workshop on women and land (Chingarande, 2008:280), as well as addressing the

main donor conference. From 1998 to 1999 the WLLG engaged in a publicity and education campaign, taking women's issues into the public arena and educating the public, and women in particular, about discriminatory land policies and practices. The lobbying efforts of the WLLG contributed to the acceptance by government at the policy level of women's individual rights to land, as evidenced by the redrafted Land Redistribution and Resettlement Policy Framework and the inclusion of gender in the draft Land Policy Framework document (Chingarande, 2008:282). However the efforts of the WLLG remained isolated within NGO discourses and the Group remained silent during the period of land occupations.

Despite the rare intervention of the WLLG into the land sector, international and indigenous development NGOs have actually made a negative aggregate contribution, dampening demand for land reform through interventions that have a significant agrarian thrust and are potentially capable of improving rural livelihoods, albeit during the life of the project, but do not address the structurally skewed patterns of land ownership in the country (Helliker, 2006:258). These interventions have tended to uphold existing land ownership inequalities and forms of governance in rural areas which has major implications for social organisation and struggles for land and related agrarian reforms. In certain instances, NGO interventions have accentuated differentiation within the communities based on improved access to other sources of income and other benefits such as access to water.

Beyond the cooptation and depoliticisation theses, Helliker (2008:263) has argued persuasively that NGOs as social formations are constantly engaged in processes of rethinking their approaches and relevance in a highly dynamic world. In relation to the changes brought about by the „fast track“ land reform Helliker (2008:259-261) notes varied responses among intermediary NGOs from non-engagement through to distancing themselves from „fast track“ and the redefinition of „engagement“. Regarding the latter, the example of Development Aid, People to People (DAPP) Zimbabwe is given. After losing two of its farms that were being used as sites for teaching modern methods of farming the organisation approached the Zimbabwean government in order to ascertain the possible interventions in a changed landscape and was advised to train newly resettled farmers on their plots. They took this up enthusiastically without necessarily questioning the legitimacy of the process of land reform.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the variety of ways in which rural communities enter into collective agency, ranging from uncivil to civil activities. Although the state is ultimately responsible for land reform it remains an empirical truism that most of the recent anti-systemic struggles for land have emerged from the countryside. The smallholders, through land occupations, have recently scored some victories against the elite and large scale farm model bias inherent in the state's post-1990 land reform policy. Still, these struggles have been too uneven and in certain instances too isolated to warrant unbridled optimism for the future of poor smallholders.

Rather than adopt a rigid position on the potential of these formations it is critical to take cognisance of the complexity of rural social organisation and reproduction forms which in most instances combine on-farm commodity production with other non-farm income activities. These complexities have an impact on rural mobilisation. The large farmer unions have disregarded the urban or wage moment of rural households in instances of mobilisation and have pursued a purely farming agenda focused on improved access to farm-inputs, extension support and market related commodity prices. Although the demands of the farmer unions are relevant, they are based on the simplistic assumption of a „rational rural household“ with a secure landholding, and fail to take cognisance of other constraints that emerge in rural life due to insufficient and insecure forms of access to land, temporary migration and the diversified nature of rural livelihoods.

National smallholder unions historically have not been able to champion the demand for land and tenure reform for all their members and have neither a strategy for representing their members when in temporary or permanent wage employment, nor one for enhancing other non-farm income generation strategies. On the other hand NGOs have also tended to be selective in their engagements and have failed to develop a comprehensive response to rural poverty to the extent that in some cases they have been identified as contributing towards the further marginalisation of the poor. In a survey of rural communities in which NGOs worked, a significant proportion of respondents in Kenya and Mozambique felt that NGOs failed to work with more marginalised sections of the community. In Kenya, 40 percent of the respondents felt that the NGOs discriminated against sections of the community and worked with community leaders to exploit the community. In Mozambique, the responses of

community members indicated that NGOs only engaged with leaders and that youth and women were not represented at the meetings (Kanji et al., 2002).

Local organisations are not necessarily a corrective or sufficient response to the weaknesses within the national unions, and indeed some of them are local appendages of the former and perpetuate rural inequalities. Research has shown, however, that they are behind the mobilisation of critical assets such as labour and productive resources among the asset poor to enhance production capacity. The following case-based chapters discuss the emergence of local farmer groups on resettled lands in Goromonzi and Zvimba districts and their emerging influence in strengthening local capacities for farm production.

CHAPTER 6

WHO GOT THE LAND?

6.1 Introduction

Recent discussions on the outcomes of the fast track land reform have been constrained by limited field research and inadequate methods of analysing the data. These discussions emphasise the violence of the process or the manner in which politically connected beneficiaries got land (see for instance, Marongwe, 2008). In so doing this research trajectory attempts to delegitimise the process of land acquisition and the manner of beneficiary selection by suggesting that most of the beneficiaries were merely political actors whose agenda was regime survival.

The description of land beneficiaries on the basis of belonging or connection to a political party dominated the land reform discourse from 2003 to around 2007 but such an approach is limited as it does not provide an adequate socio-economic profile of the newly resettled. Furthermore the definition of land beneficiaries by political association is very fluid and highly unreliable as the association can be based on coercion or as a tactic that is instrumentalised at a specific period in order to attain a certain benefit such as land. More importantly such association is not permanent and can change anytime. Furthermore the political affiliations suggested do not adequately explain the socioeconomic characteristics of the resettled people, and their motivations for resettlement and even their capacity to effectively utilise land falls away in such a discourse (see for instance Hammar et al., 2003; Moore 2005).

A more comprehensive approach which analyses the socio-economic characteristics is necessary in the process of trying to develop a deeper understanding of the nature of people settled in fast track areas. Critics of the fast track approach to land reform, such as Richardson (2005) and Sachikonye (2003, 2005) have mostly criticised the programme on the basis of six controversies of land reform: (i) the land occupations of 2000 were politically contrived and had nothing to do with the need for land reform; (ii) land reform has been a total failure; (iii) the beneficiaries of land reform have been largely political cronies; (iv) there has been no investment in the new resettlement areas; (v) agriculture is in complete ruins; and (vi) the rural economy has collapsed (Scoones, 2008). The discussion in this chapter and the following chapters engages more fully with these controversies through the lens of emerging social organisation and reproduction in Goromonzi and Zvimba.

A few organisations and individuals have managed to carry out research on the outcomes of the land reform programme.¹¹ The previous chapter has shown how popular self-provisioning of land was later overtaken by a more centrally organised process of land allocation commonly referred to as „fast track“.

Based on field evidence gathered from Goromonzi and Zvimba, this chapter examines certain aspects of the social and economic characteristics of the land beneficiaries through an analysis of their social and economic origins. The initial point of enquiry for such an approach is through a discussion of the geographic area of origin and the socioeconomic backgrounds of the land beneficiaries. Household data collected from representative samples in Goromonzi and Zvimba are used to provide a deeper analysis of the demographic patterns of the resettled people. The data is further disaggregated according to categories of people who have historically made demands for land, such as the war veterans of the second Chimurenga and women, in order to provide a much deeper characterisation of the land reform beneficiaries. The final part of the chapter assesses the productive asset ownership of the land beneficiaries in order to determine their levels of capacity to derive sustainable levels of social reproduction from the farm. The assessment entails the analysis of landholding size, availability of own household labour and hired labour, their asset base and the skills to effectively utilise available land. Indeed one of the nagging questions provoking the study is whether land reform has contributed towards the emergence of a new rural social and economic order that is capable of providing opportunities for improved accumulation and a possibility of rural democratisation.

6.2 Settler Selection and Organisation of Land Occupations

The criteria for selection of beneficiaries varied from area to area depending on local organisation for land reform on the ground. During the period colloquially referred to as „jambanja“, beginning in 2000 until late 2001, the land occupiers generally allocated plots to themselves. „Jambanja“ is a Shona word that quickly became popular to describe this new uncertain period, literally it means violence or angry argument and it has been used to refer to

¹¹ The AIAS recently carried out a six district household survey of the outcomes of land reform. There has also been another study on land reform outcomes in Masvingo Province carried out collaboratively by PLAAS, IDS-Sussex (UK) and the University of Zimbabwe.

farm invasions and more broadly to politically instigated violence (Chaumba et al, 2003a:7). The period of „jambanja“ started soon after the announcement of the rejection of the draft constitution in February 2000 when war veterans led land occupations. Self-allocation of plots was commonplace prior to the introduction of the official fast track land reform programme which was introduced to overcome the spontaneity and lack of centralised planning associated with „jambanja“ (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3). However it is important to note that „jambanja“ did not necessarily stop because of the adoption of „fast track“ but land occupations continued to provide momentum for the official land redistribution programme. In practice the land occupiers would target the farms that would have been served with Section 8 notices and in this way put pressure on both the commercial farm owner to vacate the premises and the government to follow up on its eviction notice. Such land occupations occurred until the end of 2003.

During the period of „fast track“ the chiefs were assigned the role of identifying potential land beneficiaries for the A1 scheme and forwarding the list to the district land committees (made up of ZANU (PF) officials, the district chairperson, the District Administrator’s office, national intelligence, the district chairperson of the war veterans and the chief). However other social groups, such as the politically connected and members of the indigenisation group, managed to lobby the committee or to muscle in based on their connections with ruling party and state elites. The variation in terms of the level of inclusion of social categories such as former farm workers across districts is indicative of the extent to which the groups were involved in the occupation and also the level to which the land allocation committees and the chiefs were sensitive to their plight.

The process of applying for A2 plots was different to that for A1 plots: applicants were required to submit a business development plan covering the first five years of farm operations and proof of capacity to mobilise financing for farm operations. Most of the A2 beneficiaries from the urban areas were able to use title deeds on their urban homes as collateral to secure credit to finance farm operations (Moyo and Sukume, 2004). Most of the A2 allocations were done by government bureaucrats who were in certain instances susceptible to pressure from political elites and at times did not consider whether an applicant satisfied all the necessary requirements for an A2 plot (Interview with GoZ Lands Officer, July 2008). The conditions and procedures of applying could have been a barrier to many

aspiring A2 farmers from the rural areas (see, for instance Sachikonye, 2005; Moyo, 2007; Marongwe, 2008).

6.3 Social Characteristics of Land Reform Beneficiaries

6.3.1 Geographic Origins of Land Beneficiaries

Although Zimbabwe has undergone rapid urbanisation since independence, colonial policies have left an imprint on the manner in which families (especially those in the low income group) have continued to treat urban life. They view it as impermanent and mainly for economic maintenance while customary areas remain as the site of family reproduction. This has yielded households divided between the rural and urban; an organisational survey carried out in the 1990s found that more than 70 percent of males working in low income jobs maintained communal area homes (Peta et al., 1991).

The geographic location of a household prior to fast track land reform provides clues as to whether it had a legitimate need for land. Land grievances in customary tenure areas have been discussed in detail in Chapter 4, where it was mentioned that the majority of the households faced declining land sizes due to continuous fragmentation to accommodate other adult members of the family and lineage group. Some of the customary tenure areas were situated in regions unsuitable for agricultural purposes. Those coming from commercial farms may have been either farm workers or squatters on commercial farms. Table 6-1 below describes the nature of land beneficiaries by area of origin.

Table 6-1: Place of Origin of Plot Owner

Place of origin	Goromonzi						Zvimba						Grand total	
	A1		A2		Total		A1		A2		Total		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Communal area	313	61.3	44	52.4	357	60.0	144	71.6	55	48.7	199	63.4	556	61.2
LSCF	32	6.3	3	3.6	35	5.9	13	6.5	6	5.3	19	6.0	54	5.9
Urban area	149	29.2	33	39.3	182	30.6	33	16.4	26	23.0	59	18.9	241	26.5
Employment in other area	10	2.0	4	4.8	14	2.4	5	2.5	5	4.4	10	3.2	24	2.6
Other*	7	1.4	-	-	7	1.2	6	2.9	21	18.6	8	2.5	15	1.7
Total	511		84		595		201		113		314		909	

Source: AIAS Household Baseline Survey (2006), N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

* Other areas include growth points, mining areas, old resettlement areas and the diaspora

The biggest sub-group (61.2 percent) of land recipients came from customary tenure areas. Proportionally there are more A1 beneficiaries in Zvimba (63.4 percent) than in Goromonzi

(60 percent) who come from customary tenure areas. Explanations for this minor difference include the fact that resettled former large scale farms in Zvimba were mostly surrounded by customary areas, while in Goromonzi the areas under study were dominated by the large scale farm areas, with customary areas such as Murehwa, Seke and Mahusekwa being further away from the areas designated for resettlement. This potentially explains the existence of a large number of beneficiaries in Goromonzi from customary areas distant from Goromonzi but within Mashonaland East.

Proportionally there are less A2 beneficiaries from customary areas in both districts compared to the A1 scheme. There are 52.4 percent A2 beneficiaries from customary areas whilst there are 61.3 percent A1 beneficiaries from the same areas in Goromonzi. The trend is similar in Zvimba where 48.7 percent within the A2 are from customary areas compared to 71.6 percent within A1. These figures suggest that A2 farmers from customary areas constitute approximately 50 percent of the A2 scheme in the district under study compared to an average of 66 percent of A1 farmers from customary areas. The slightly lower figures of A2 farmers from customary areas in comparison with A1 can be explained by the hurdles that were imposed in terms of conditions for applying for land under this scheme which required one to show proof that he/she had capacity to effectively utilise the land and to develop a business plan. However the disparity is not so high and it is possible that the scheme potentially accommodated the elite sections of the smallholder farming community (hurudza). Some of the more successful farmers who could have otherwise benefitted from A2 did not do so because of lack of information on how to apply for land within the scheme (based on Focus Group Discussions held at Dunstan Farm, September 2008).

The second largest (26.5 percent) sub-group of land recipients is made up of people who came from urban areas. There are more beneficiaries from urban areas in Goromonzi (30.6 percent) than in Zvimba (18.9 percent) and this is due to a number of reasons, such as its close proximity to Harare and it having been an epicentre of the 1998 and 2000 land occupations. Recent studies (Sadomba, 2008; Marongwe, 2002, 2008) have shown how urban based war veterans and other unemployed and landless people from urban areas were at the centre of land occupations in Goromonzi. Starting from mid-2002 as land redistribution moved away from popular land allocations dominated by war veterans towards a more official programme through the adoption of the fast track approach as government policy, a

number of people, especially those from urban areas, came forward to apply for A2 plots and it was more convenient to seek land in areas closer to Harare.

There are more A2 (39.3 percent in Goromonzi and 23.0 percent in Zvimba) beneficiaries from urban areas than there are A1 (29.2 percent in Goromonzi and 16.4 percent in Zvimba) beneficiaries from urban areas. Survey findings (Table 6-1 above) from Goromonzi and Zvimba show that there is a very small group (5.9 percent) of land beneficiaries who came from the large-scale farms where farm workers would have been located. On the basis of these figures very few farm workers benefited from the land distribution process but the figure is higher than earlier estimates that only five percent of the beneficiaries were former large scale commercial farm workers (PLRC, 2003).

There are various explanations for such a low percentage of farm worker beneficiaries. Sachikonye (2005:37) states that they were marginalised by the chiefs who were allocating land because they were considered outsiders with no legitimate claim to land and did not participate in the land occupations. The failure to absorb commercial farm workers has contributed towards the further delegitimisation of the redistribution process in the eyes of many critics (Sachikonye, 2003; Alexander, 2006). However Chambati and Moyo (2003) and Magaramombe (2003) argue against the generalisation that farm workers did not benefit from fast track. They state that the pattern of land allocation to former farm workers varied between provinces. In some provinces, such as Mashonaland Central, some farms were set aside for former farm workers by the Provincial Land Identification Committee (PLIC) as a result of the lobbying of farm workers so much so that in these provinces the total percentage of farm workers could be as high as 12 percent. However even then the total number of former farm workers who managed to get land is still very low.

6.3.2 Gender Composition of Land Beneficiaries

Despite the fact that women in the majority of cases are the ones who till the land, they tend to be marginalised with regard to the distribution of benefits from the land and their future is uncertain in the event of the death of the spouse. Prior to the fast track programme the Women and Land Lobby Group (WLLG) lobbied government to ensure that a specific quota of 20 percent of resettled land was set aside for women (Chari, 1999:3). The origins and activities of the WLLG are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. Suffice it to note here that their lobbying efforts did not culminate in government adopting the suggested quota as policy

but the 20 percent quota remains a popular standard for evaluating the gender inclusiveness of fast track (see for instance, Chingarande, 2004, 2008; Ndoro, 2006). Post fast track studies (Moyo, 2004; PLRC, 2003; World Bank, 2006) indicate that the average national allocation rate to women was 18 percent. Findings from the survey show that there were 195 women-headed households (21.22 percent of the whole sample) that received land and approximately 85 percent of these got land under the A1 scheme (see Table 6-2 below).

Table 6-2: Marital Status of Plot Owner by Sex

Plot owner	Marital status	Goromonzi						Zvimba						Grand total	
		A1		A2		Total		A1		A2		Total		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Male	Married	399	94.5	63	92.6	462	94.3	140	87.0	64	87.7	204	87.2	666	92.0
	Single	13	3.1	3	4.4	16	3.3	13	8.1	7	9.6	20	8.5	36	5.0
	Divorced	5	1.2	1	1.5	6	1.2	5	3.1	-	-	5	2.1	11	1.5
	Widowed	5	1.2	1	1.5	6	1.2	3	1.9	2	2.7	5	2.1	11	1.5
	Total	422		68		490		161		73		234		724	
Female	Married	69	59.5	4	57.1	73	59.3	29	59.2	15	65.2	44	61.1	117	60.0
	Single	8	6.9	-	-	8	6.5	3	6.1	-	-	3	4.2	11	5.6
	Divorced	7	6.0	1	14.3	8	6.5	4	8.2	3	13.0	7	9.7	15	7.7
	Widowed	32	27.6	2	28.6	34	27.6	13	26.5	5	21.7	18	25.0	52	26.6
	Total	116		7		123		49		23		72		195	

Source: AIAS Household Baseline Survey, Household questionnaire, N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

The average of 21.22 percent is barely above the national average of 18 percent and is probably due to the fact that Goromonzi was characterised by early land occupations prior to the announcement of fast track. In these occupations women were a significant population of the land occupation movement in areas such as Dunstan and Chabwino farms in Goromonzi and thus managed to avoid the segregation associated with customary structures that took over the redistribution of land during the fast track period (Sadomba, 2008a). The majority (60 percent) of the women who got land in their own right are married and the rest was shared amongst the various categories of single (5.6 percent), divorced (7.7 percent) and widowed women (26.6 percent).

The processes of land allocation, especially the role of the chief in identifying potential beneficiaries to be forwarded to the district land committee, were perceived by gender relations scholars such as Ndoro (2006) and Chingarande (2008) and activist organisations such as the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) to be biased against women. Women lobbyists noted that oftentimes chiefs operate within a framework of

customary law which does not recognise women's rights of access to land in their individual status (Ndoro, 2006). Such an attitude, they argued, could lead to the sidelining of women beneficiaries. Chingarande (2008) has suggested that considerations of gender equity should prioritise the requirements of unmarried women who have no other means of access to land. The above critique gains more weight when one considers the actual need for land by women-headed households which has increased in the context of devastation of the family as unit of social reproduction due to HIV, the number of recorded cases where women have failed to inherit customary land from their spouses because of skewed inheritance norms within the patriarchal system, and the loss of formal wage employment opportunities due to structural adjustment. Furthermore, studies on farm labour, for instance Sachikonye (2003) and Chambati and Moyo (2003), have shown that in many instances males held the permanent jobs on the farms while women were usually employed as seasonal casual labour with no secure access to accommodation on the farm unless married to one of the permanent workers.

The discussion on gender relations and access to land has to go beyond an analysis of what women received in their own right to focus on the nature and quality of access to land. The land rights being bestowed in newly resettled areas are qualitatively different from those prevailing in communal areas. The GoZ has since 2006 been introducing the permit system (discussed in more detail in the next chapter) for A1 plots and leasehold tenure for A2 farms (Moyo, 2007:12). These confer significantly more rights for women. In the first instance, as a result of lobbying from CSOs, the permit and lease are to be registered in the names of both spouses (in the case of married couples). Furthermore in the event of permit disposal the husband or wife is required by law to seek written consent of the other party before the disposal can be legally recognised. However, there are still some outstanding issues such as the rights of spouses in the event of divorce or at the time of death of the male spouse. The lease document states that the lease should be administered within the prevailing inheritance laws of Zimbabwe, a collection of pieces of legislation that is being contested by the gender lobby as responsible for the marginalisation of women because they do not protect the rights of women married under customary terms and only recognise statutorily enforced civil marriages, commonly called „Chapter 38 marriages“ in reference to the legal Act which establishes such marriages (Chingarande, 2008:276). Another possible area of conflict that has been raised is on the distribution of land in polygamous marriages.

These outstanding issues are residues of the „fast track“ manner in which the land reform was implemented and also the desire on the part of the GoZ to introduce new laws governing these areas. Gender relations specialists argue that there is a need for a comprehensive overhaul of laws related to gender relations such as the inheritance and customary marriage laws (Ndoro, 2006:4; Chingarande, 2008:292).

6.3.3 Inclusion of War Veterans

The importance of analysing war veterans as a social group arises partly from their leadership role in the land occupations and the need to understand the extent to which they used their status as leaders of the movement to acquire land for their members. Although narratives by Sadomba (2008a and b) and Moyo (2001) of the land occupations discuss the leadership role that war veterans played in the jambanja period of early occupations (1998 to 2000) there is limited information on the actual number of war veterans who benefitted from the fast track programme.

In terms of GoZ policy, 20 percent of A1 land should have been set aside for war veterans (GoZ, 2001b:11). War veterans played a key role in mobilising for land occupations and in planning the new communities in the areas under occupation (Chaumba et al., 2003a:8-9). In the midst of the seeming disorder and disregard of the conventional tenets of „rule of law“ the war veterans“ leadership prior to and during „fast track“ established new structures, networks and institutions of local government that had not existed before the land occupations (Masuko, 2009:1). Command structures were established on all occupied large scale commercial farms to coordinate the demarcation of plots and identification of beneficiaries, and to ensure the security of the new settlers. These command structures were mostly under the leadership of a war veteran who was given the title of „base commander“ and worked with a „Committee of Seven“ (Masuko, 2009:6). Furthermore, the command structures on the large scale farms reported to the district command centres also under the leadership of war veterans (the evolution of these local structures is discussed in more detail in Chapters 7, 8 and 9).

Findings from Goromonzi and Zvimba indicate that 156 (16.8 percent of the total sample as per Table 6-3 below) of the land beneficiaries are war veterans and of this number 36 (23 percent) received A2 land and 120 (77 percent) received land in the A1. War veteran beneficiaries in Goromonzi are 21.1 percent of the district sample whilst in Zvimba they are 8.1 percent. There are proportionally more war veteran beneficiaries in Goromonzi than in

Zvimba, possibly due to the fact that the former was a site of heightened early mobilisation for land occupations from 1998 onwards. During this period war veteran leaders were responsible for land allocations, unlike in the latter phase where the new structures and processes of beneficiary selection actually served to marginalise war veteran authority (Sadomba, 2008:187)

Table 6-3: War Veteran Status

War veteran status	Goromonzi						Zvimba						Grand total	
	A1		A2		Total		A1		A2		Total		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
War veteran	110	20.3	21	27.3	131	21.1	10	4.7	15	15.6	25	8.1	156	16.8
Not a war veteran	433	79.7	56	72.7	489	78.9	201	95.3	81	84.4	282	91.9	771	83.2
Total	543		77		620		211		96		307		927	

Source: AIAS Household Baseline Survey, Household questionnaire, N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

The discussion on the social origins of land beneficiaries has so far shown that there is a diverse set of beneficiaries, dominated by people from customary tenure areas, followed by those from urban areas and large scale commercial farms. Also included in these categories are women who own land in their own right and war veterans. The combination of people from various areas of social life – customary tenure, urban and large-scale farms – suggests the emergence of new communities that are made up of people from different socioeconomic backgrounds. The following discussion analyses the socioeconomic backgrounds of the land beneficiaries.

6.4 Socioeconomic Backgrounds of the Newly Resettled

6.4.1 Employment Background

The discussion in Chapter 5 on the outcomes of the structural adjustment programme has shown how the onset of economic reforms was characterised by an increase in the number of company closures (especially in the textile sector) and retrenchments within government owned parastatals. Field findings from Goromonzi and Zvimba show that indeed approximately 52 percent of the land beneficiaries had been part of the wage labour force in the urban sector, mines or large-scale farms. This figure potentially contradicts the finding that the majority of the households were from customary areas, but as already discussed in

Chapter 4 the tendency in many customary area households was for the husband to be based within the wage economy whilst the rest of the household members were in customary areas.

Table 6-4: Employment Background

Employment background	Goromonzi						Zvimba						Grand total	
	A1		A2		Total		A1		A2		Total			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Unemployed	364	59.9	46	52.9	410	59.0	38	18.0	32	33.0	70	22.7	480	47.9
Private sector skilled	14	2.3	8	9.2	22	3.2	10	4.7	5	5.2	15	4.9	37	3.7
Private sector semi or unskilled	91	14.9	16	18.3	107	15.4	48	22.7	14	14.5	62	20.1	169	16.9
Self-employed	52	8.6	7	8.0	59	8.5	15	7.1	2	2.1	17	5.5	76	7.6
Public service managerial/skilled	15	2.5	2	2.3	17	2.4	2	0.9	-	-	2	0.6	19	1.9
Public service semi or unskilled	41	6.8	5	5.7	46	6.6	15	7.1	16	16.5	31	10.1	77	7.7
Public service uniformed	30	4.9	3	3.4	33	4.7	73	34.6	23	23.7	96	31.2	129	12.9
Farm worker	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	3.8	4	4.1	12	3.9	12	1.2
Domestic worker							2	0.9	1	1.0	3	1.0	3	0.3
Student	1	0.2	-	-	1	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.1
Total	608		87		695		211		97		308		1,003	

Source: AIAS Household Baseline Survey, Household questionnaire, N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

The field survey found out that out of the 480 (48 percent of the sample) people with no prior employment history 410 are resettled in Goromonzi and the remaining 70 in Zvimba. The fact that Goromonzi has more land beneficiaries without an employment background and that most of the land beneficiaries in Goromonzi are from the urban areas reinforces the idea that most of those from the urban areas who received land, especially A1 plots, were part of the urban poor and unemployed.

Amongst the 523 (52 percent) with wage employment experience 249 have managed to retain the jobs, 196 lost their jobs in the late 1990s and 78 resigned when they were resettled. The land beneficiaries were employed in both the public and private sectors and across the organisational ladder from management positions to shop floor level. Table 6-4 below provides an illustration of the different activities that the resettled were engaged in prior to being resettled.

The largest sub-group (16.9 percent) is made up of those who were or are still formally employed in the private sector either as semi-skilled or unskilled workers. The second biggest sub-group (12.9 percent) consists of those who were in the uniformed forces of the

government and this category includes former police, prison services and army officers. There is an approximately equal percentage of beneficiaries who were previously in semi-skilled and unskilled public service work (7.7 percent) and those from the informal sector (7.6 percent).

Only 12 (1.2 percent) of the respondents in Zvimba were former large-scale farm workers and more than two-thirds of these were resettled within the A1 scheme. There were no former farm worker beneficiaries in Goromonzi and this is partially explained by the manner of mobilisation for land during the jambanja. Farm workers were initially not a part of the land occupations and there are recorded cases in Goromonzi and Mazowe where they sided with the farm owner in attempting to repel the land occupiers as part of a strategy to defend their jobs and livelihood (discussed in Chapter 8). There is evidence however to suggest that in some areas, such as Matepatapa and Mazowe in Mashonaland Central, farm workers were part of the land occupations (Sadomba, 2008:130-40).

A preference survey carried out before the FTLRP showed that 53 percent of the former farm workers wished to benefit from the land reform (MPSL&SW, 1998). The other 47 percent preferred better working conditions on the farms. The reasons for such a large segment of farm labour not being desirous of land is partially explained by the fact that even the leadership of the most popular union, GAPWUZ, has never articulated such a trajectory of empowerment in their demands but instead has pursued improved working conditions and wages as the hallmark of worker welfare. Chambati and Moyo (2003) argue that GoZ land reform policy in practice included farm workers as beneficiaries and those who wished to be allocated land were expected to apply through their provincial and district land committees. In some cases former farm workers went back to their customary areas and applied for land as landless customary area dwellers and this practice was common in Chikomba in Mashonaland East.

There are more beneficiaries (282) with a private and informal sector background than those previously working for the state (225) and this further challenges dominant myths about land being redistributed only to those in the security services (Scoones, 2008:2). There is a slight difference between the A2 and A1 with regard to those previously engaged in the private sector. There are more A2 beneficiaries (28.1 percent) with private sector experience than those in A1 (19.9 percent). In many cases those who could show proof of capacity to

successfully utilise an A2 plot were people engaged in middle and upper levels of management within the business sector. They used their links with financial service institutions to generate supporting letters showing their capacity to mobilise necessary financing (Sukume, et al., 2004). On the other hand public service professionals such as teachers, school principals, post office managers and administrators dominate the A1. The majority of these professionals were based in the rural areas and were part of the local elite, therefore when it came to applying for A1 land they took advantage of existing good relations with the chiefs and the local authorities but could not break into the A2 because of lack of official documentation proving their financial capabilities. These findings suggest the entrenchment of class differences on the basis of previous employment background and the ability to lobby the local authorities concerning one's potential to utilise the land effectively. However the criterion of allocating A2 plots on the basis of proven financial ability to develop the farm marginalised the more competent and trained farmers who could not show such proof. This is because they were based in customary tenure areas and in many cases their savings were in the form of farm assets such as livestock which were not considered as demonstrating wealth despite the fact that previous studies such as Cousins et al., (1992) on rural differentiation showed that cattle are an acceptable criteria of wealth and accumulation in rural Zimbabwe.

The workplace is not only an arena of production but also a site of political contestation and the establishment of certain forms of networks of solidarity. Power relations between the authorities and social conditions amongst the workers influence the manner in which they organise themselves with the common formations at the workplace, including workers committees and trade unions. In some instances the workplace provides opportunities for the development of networks of reciprocation such as savings and burial societies. These experiences have a bearing on the manner in which the newly resettled with a formal employment background conceive of strategies of social action. Therefore, the analysis of previous and current employment is critical in the discussion of emerging forms of rural agency.

6.4.2 Residency Status

Previous studies by Bush and Cliffe (1984) and Moyo and Yeros (2005b) have shown that many customary area households cannot be specifically categorised as peasant households due to the fact that they combine a number of income generating strategies. In the process the

families are physically separated between the wage-earning zone, which is a critical but not sufficient source of family social reproduction, and the rural zone which is a site for family maintenance. The maintenance of the family in the rural areas is not only driven by economic considerations of survival and well-being but also includes issues of socialisation, preservation of culture, identity and heritage. During the first phase of land reform the GoZ tried to prevent the practice of maintaining dual households between town and country by imposing rigid migration restrictions into urban areas on land beneficiaries (Kinsey, 1999). However, the trend of temporarily migrating into wage earning zones such as the urban areas, mines and large-scale farms continued as a strategy to supplement incomes from the allocated plots and also to ensure that the household was able to purchase necessary inputs. In recent times critics (such as Sachikonye, 2003; Ruswa, 2004) of the land redistribution exercise have argued that most of those who benefited are urban-based „cellphone farmers“, partially referring to the continuation of the households“ practice of straddling the urban wage and rural economies as a survival strategy.

According to findings from the field, the majority (78.3 percent) of the beneficiaries are permanently based on their allocated plots and 15.3 percent are based in urban areas (see Table 6-5 below which analyses the current residency status of land beneficiaries). Proportionally the majority of those based in urban areas are A2 beneficiaries (31.1 percent in Goromonzi and 15.6 percent in Zvimba) and these could be part of the small group that is still engaged in formal employment in the urban sector. Even then approximately half of those within this category have some members of the household living on the plot permanently (based on Focus Group Discussion held in Goromonzi and Zvimba, 2008). There are very few beneficiaries (5.9 percent) who commute from their customary area homes and most of these are A1 beneficiaries.

Important insights for social organisation can be gleaned from the high number of farmers who are permanently settled on their farms and the nature of the macro-economic environment where unemployment figures are in the range of 80-90 percent (CSO, 2008). The fact that approximately 78 percent of A1 and A2 beneficiaries are permanently settled on their plots, the lack of employment opportunities within the urban areas and the large-scale commercial farming sector suggests that land reform, especially the fast track programme, could be reversing the practice of temporary migration into wage earning zones. This finding

also suggests that the newly resettled are likely to face difficulties in financing their farm operations in the absence of remittances from the formal wage economy. This explanation gains credibility when one looks at the formal employment figures in the country; it is estimated that unemployment within the formal sector has increased to between 80 and 90 percent (CSO, 2008). The high levels of permanent residency on the farms (78.3 percent) combined with the fact that the majority (62.5 percent) of the land beneficiaries are from the customary tenure areas suggest that the land reform programme has, to some extent, contributed to the decongestion of customary lands, one of the objectives of the land reform, especially in the A1 sector.

Table 6-5: Residency Status of Beneficiaries

Residency	Goromonzi						Zvimba						Grand total	
	A1		A2		Total		A1		A2		Total			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%	No.
<i>Stays on-farm</i>	391	76.4	45	60.8	436	74.4	182	87.5	74	82.2	256	85.9	692	78.3
Customary Area	28	5.5	4	5.4	32	5.5	18	8.7	2	2.2	20	6.7	52	5.9
Urban area	90	17.6	23	31.1	113	19.3	8	3.8	14	15.6	22	7.4	135	15.3
Diaspora	3	0.6	2	2.7	5	0.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	0.6
Total	512		74		586		208		90		298		884	

Source: AIAS (2005/6), Household Baseline Survey, N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

6.5 Social Reproduction Capacities and Constraints

Beyond the socioeconomic characteristics of the land beneficiaries, the discussion is also focused on a preliminary understanding of how individual households are equipped to utilise the land effectively. Land utilisation is predicated on the availability within a household of certain specific skills, labour and access to productive assets. The discussion takes cognisance of the fact that the forms of social organisation and associationalism (discussed in the following chapters) provide opportunities of cooperation which might overcome some of the challenges being faced by individual households in terms of land utilisation. Furthermore the discussion that follows contributes towards understanding the rationale behind cooperation, especially the joint pooling and hiring of labour and productive assets amongst the newly resettled households.

The assessment of social reproduction capacity in this subsection examines household capacities to utilise received land adequately and in a manner that enables food self-sustenance, generation of income to finance social needs such as education, health and transportation, and the accumulation of savings to gradually invest in productive and non-

productive assets. The assessment entails an analysis of household on-farm production capacities and non-farm income generation strategies and is carried out through an assessment of landholding size, ownership of and access to various farm equipment and assets and utilisation of household and hired labour, availability of a skills base to utilise land and determination of income sources. Although the literature (Bryceson et al, 2000, Ellis, 2000) on rural incomes has shown that there is an increasing tendency amongst rural households to earn incomes from diversified non-farm strategies, the data from Goromonzi and Zvimba indicates that very few (16 percent) households have diversified income sources.

6.5.1 Land Holdings

One of the stated objectives of the fast track programme was to ensure equity in land redistribution. The determination of farm sizes was guided by considerations of agro-ecological conditions, recommended land use patterns in a particular area, and the aggregate demand for resettlement. It also included the adequacy of land to enable a competent person and his/her household to derive an adequate livelihood and income from working the land (GoZ, 2000). The exact meaning of „reasonable standard of living“ is vague in GoZ documents. Some, such as Sukume et al., (2004:2), have suggested that a reasonable standard of living should be one that enables the entire household to provide for its own consumption needs, to keep some of the produce in store in case of production stress, to be able to trade a portion of the produce for cash in order to buy other food and non-food items that are not locally produced, and also to be able to afford reasonable healthcare, pay school fees for children and cover transportation costs.

The planning guidelines of the GoZ stated that A1 households were to be allocated farm sizes ranging from five to seven arable hectares in wetter regions (NR I to III) and 10 arable hectares and at least 30 grazing hectares in the drier regions (NR IV and V) (Sukume et al., 2004:3). The prescribed farm sizes for A2 land allocations provide for four categories of farm size – small, medium, large-scale and peri-urban plots (Sukume et al., 2004:3-4). As in the A1, the amount of land allocated varies with agro-ecological zone. The small A2 farms in the wetter regions (NR I to III) range from 30 to 60 ha and in the drier regions (NR IV and V) they range from 120 to 240 ha. The medium scale A2 farms range from 100 to 300 ha in the wetter regions and from 700 to 1 000 ha in the drier regions. The large scale A2 farms within the wetter regions fall within the range of 250 to 500 ha and from 1 500 to 2 000 hectares in the drier regions. The size of peri-urban A2 farms is standard across all regions, ranging from

2 to 30 ha. The peri-urban farms were designed for intensive land use activities such as the growing of horticultural products. According to GoZ land planning regulations these should be close to a city and easily accessible by road to ensure smooth delivery of perishable goods to the market.

The AIAS survey found that the majority (96 percent) were allocated plots within the 0.1 to 20 ha range (inclusive of arable and grazing land) and very few were allocated plots within the 20.1 to 30 ha range. All the A1 plots that made up the sample were within the villagised schemes (described in more detail in Chapter 1) where grazing land is shared among the land beneficiaries¹². In both Goromonzi and Zvimba most of the land recipients are entitled to 14 hectares for grazing land which are combined to make up the grazing commonage. Land beneficiaries are allowed to graze their cattle and any other livestock on these grazing lands. Beneficiaries sharing the grazing pasture have common access to other natural resources occurring in the areas such water, firewood and medicinal plants.

In the A2 slightly over a third (32.3 percent) of the plots are within the medium scale and these range from 60 to 120 ha. The pattern varies slightly between Goromonzi and Zvimba. In Goromonzi the second largest category is made up of 18.1 percent of beneficiaries who were allocated A2 plots of 250 ha or larger, while in Zvimba the second largest category consists of beneficiaries (29 percent) who were allocated A2 plots ranging from 30.1 to 40 ha. There are very few small peri-urban plots in either district.

6.5.2 Ownership and Access to Productive Assets

The level of ownership and access to farm implements is a critical indicator of the potential capacity of the household to utilise land. The Goromonzi and Zvimba survey found that there are very few households that were adequately equipped to utilise the land fully (Table 6-6 below). The biggest sub-group (42.5 percent) within the surveyed population own only hand tools, including hoes, axes, mattocks, spades and wheelbarrows. These households are considerably better off than the 0.9 percent of the sampled population who do not own a single farm implement but their capacity to prepare their land independently is still very limited, especially given the average available arable land sizes in A1 (ranging from six to eight ha) which require access to at least animal-drawn land preparation equipment. In most cases these households enter into hiring relationships with those who own either animal

¹² The self-contained variant of the A1 model is not common in NR I, II and III.

drawn or power-driven implements (discussed fully in Chapters 7, 8 and 9). Proportionally there are more households that own only hand tools in the A1 than there are in the A2. Goromonzi has more A1 households (51.6 percent) that only have access to hand tools than Zvimba (33.2 percent).

The third category is made up of households who own hand tools and animal-drawn implements and these consist of 29.4 percent of the whole surveyed population. There are more A1 households with animal implements than those in the A2 in both districts. The average A1 arable landholdings of six ha in Goromonzi and Zvimba suggest that it is more possible to prepare land with animal-drawn implements in these areas than in the A2 areas where the average land size is 20 ha in both districts. Prevailing land sizes in the A1 and also the fact that the majority of the beneficiaries are from customary areas where they also used animal drawn equipment potentially explain the greater propensity among A1 households to invest in animal-drawn implements than among their A2 counterparts. However the spread of such ownership is not even: some households have animal-drawn implements but lack draught power and in others the situation is reversed.

The fourth category consists of households with hand tools, animal- drawn and power-driven implements such as planters, ridgers and trailers. The power-driven implements may or may not include a tractor but interviews with key informants revealed that once one has access to power implements such as ridgers, planters and trailers they are bound to belong to some exchange agreement with someone who owns a tractor. There are very few such households within the A1 (Goromonzi 19.9 percent and Zvimba 16.6 percent). However, they are the majority within the A2 where 65.5 percent in Goromonzi and 60.8 percent in Zvimba of the A2 households have hand tools, animal-drawn and power-driven implements. There are many probable explanations for this, including the fact that at the onset of land redistribution the GoZ specified that moveable „inherited property“ from the large-scale farmer „belongs“ to the new owner of the farm and many A2 farmers were resettled on previously well-managed and well-equipped farms. Furthermore, the restrictive criterion used in the selection of A2 beneficiaries ensured that those able to mobilise finances would be given first preference.

Current patterns of asset ownership suggest varying levels of capacity constraints to effectively utilising the land. There is a small minority that depends on either borrowing or

renting both hand and animal-drawn implements while the largest sub-group only borrows or rents animal-drawn or power-driven implements for land preparation. This becomes more apparent when the data on landholding size are taken into consideration. The average landholding of six ha of arable land within the A1 suggests the need for a household to at least own or have secure access to animal-drawn implements. Most of the A2 plots are 20+ ha, which suggests that they can only be utilised optimally through the use of power-driven implements.

Currently approximately 40 percent of the A2 households do not own power-driven implements (including a tractor), suggesting either the availability of other forms of access or under-capacity which would negatively affect land utilisation levels. Extension officers working in the area identified the lack of draught power and animal-driven and power-driven implements as one of the reasons for the failure of the majority of A1 households to utilise all the arable land at their disposal. In Goromonzi district most of the newly resettled A1 farmers have been able to utilise an average of three ha of the available six or seven ha (interview with Goromonzi District Extension Officer, September 2008). The situation is compounded by the erratic and weak state-driven programme of land preparation coordinated by the District Development Fund (DDF). The effectiveness of the DDF has been hampered by the unreliable¹³ equipment that the department uses. The erratic supply of diesel that affected the country since 2000, has constrained planning and completion of land preparation for newly resettled households in need of the service (interviews with Extension Officer responsible for Goromonzi District, September 2008).

According to the Goromonzi District Extension Officer the lack of draught power affecting the majority of A1 beneficiaries has led to delays in the preparation of land for planting, as they have to wait for those adequately equipped to prepare their plots first before they can hire their equipment out (interviews with Extension Officer responsible for Goromonzi District, September 2008). Furthermore, local farmer group leaders within the A1 stated that the DDF tractor service prioritises A2 plots before providing service to the A1 farmers. There are a number of reasons for draught power shortages, including a real lack of livestock on the part of some resettled households. In 2000 the GoZ imposed a restriction on the movement of cattle across districts as part of a measure to restrict the spread of foot and mouth disease and

¹³ Surprisingly the DDF was not allocated any tractors during the farm mechanisation programme.

this has negatively affected some of the households who could otherwise have brought their livestock from their communal area homes. There is a small group of households with livestock but these do not provide adequate draught power for the new land sizes they have.

Table 6-6: Farm Asset Ownership Patterns

Ownership of Assets	Goromonzi				Zvimba				Total	
	A1		A2		A1		A2			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Asset poor*	3	0.5	1	1.1	6	2.8	0	0.0	10	0.9
Owns hand tools only	314	51.6	20	23.0	70	33.2	22	22.7	426	42.5
Hand tools and animal-drawn implements	170	28.0	9	10.3	100	47.4	16	16.5	295	29.4
Hand tools, animal-drawn and power-driven implements	121	19.9	57	65.5	35	16.6	59	60.8	272	27.1
Total	608		87		211		97		1,003	

Source: AIAS (2005/6), Household Baseline Survey, N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

*Asset poor = household does not own any assets

6.5.3 Availability and Utilisation of Labour

A recent study of rural labour relations in Zvimba found four major forms of rural labour utilisation: (i) family labour use on own agricultural plots; (ii) family labour hired out of the household for farming and non-farm activities; (iii) family labour use for own non-farming activities; and (iv) labour hired in by households for farming and non-farming activities (Chambati, 2009:80). The combination of household and hired labour has a long history in the customary areas and the tendency to recruit hired labour was associated with the better-off rural households. The analysis presented in this sub-section assesses the availability and use of household and hired labour for production.

Household Labour

A household is defined as a set of family members living together and sharing the same hearth (Moyo, 1995:131). The most common household in customary areas is made up of three to five members, followed by those with six to seven members (Moyo, 1995; CSO Census Report, 2000). This suggests highly nucleated households with an average number of three children. Findings from the Goromonzi and Zvimba survey show a similar picture (see Table 6-7a below), where the most common (37 percent) household has three to five members across both resettlement models.

Table 6-7a: Household Size by Model

No. of members	Goromonzi						Zvimba						Grand Total	
	A1		A2		Total		A1		A2		Total		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
1	167	27.9	34	39.1	201	29.3	20	9.5	10	10.4	30	9.8	231	23.3
2	63	10.5	9	10.3	72	10.5	23	10.9	19	19.8	42	13.7	114	11.5
3-5	196	32.8	27	31.0	223	32.6	104	49.3	40	41.7	144	46.9	367	37.0
6-7	110	18.4	10	11.5	120	17.5	43	20.4	20	20.8	63	20.5	183	18.4
8-9	52	8.7	6	6.9	58	8.5	13	6.2	4	4.2	17	5.5	75	7.6
10-11	10	1.7	1	1.1	11	1.6	8	3.8	3	3.1	11	3.6	22	2.2
Total	598		87		685		211		96		307		992	

Source: AIAS (2005/6), Household Baseline Survey, N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

The second largest (23.3 percent) sub-category of household sizes is the single member household. Proportionally there are more single member households in Goromonzi (29.3 percent) than in Zvimba (9.8 percent). When I queried this finding with the Lands Officer in Goromonzi he explained that beneficiary selection was not based on marital status and some single people, albeit in the minority, was also allocated land (interviews with Goromonzi District Land Officer, September 2008). As mentioned earlier there are more land beneficiaries from urban areas in Goromonzi than in Zvimba. The third largest (18.4 percent) sub-group is made up of households with six to seven members and these are evenly distributed across models and districts. On the other end there are very few (2.2 percent) households with ten and more members and these occur mostly in A1 areas. The average size of the household suggests a potential limitation in the maximum utilisation of land based on family labour, especially considering the lack of farm mechanisation and use of hand tools for such activities as seeding, weeding and application of fertilisers and related chemicals.

Analysis of household demographic data disaggregated by sex (Table 6-7b below) shows that males constitute 55.6 percent of the entire sample which is made up of 3 836 people. This finding contrasts with the customary areas which were dominated by females as males had to migrate to urban or other formal sector areas to earn a wage. The biggest sub-group (30.9 percent) is those aged zero to 15 years. According to national legislation and ILO regulations active labour on the farm should be fifteen years and above. Only 6.7 percent of the sample is aged 56 years and above. Although the national retirement age in Zimbabwe's public service has been set at 65 years there is no restriction within the customary areas on whether the aged can remain active on their farms but there is evidence that they select lighter tasks as they

grow older (Moyo, 1995). The data, therefore, suggest that approximately 70 percent of the population is able to work on the farms and of this population 6.7 percent are aged above 56.

Table 6-7b: Age Distribution by Sex

Age	Goromonzi				Zvimba				Grand total	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0-15	387	27.4	384	34.9	226	31.2	187	31.1	1,184	30.9
16-25	356	25.2	241	21.9	177	24.4	144	24.0	918	23.9
26-35	168	11.9	172	15.7	117	16.1	106	17.6	563	14.7
36-45	182	12.9	152	13.8	87	12.0	81	13.5	502	13.1
46-55	197	14.0	89	8.1	69	9.5	59	9.8	414	10.8
56+	121	8.6	61	5.6	49	6.8	24	4.0	255	6.7
Total	1,411		1,099		725		601		3,836	

Source: AIAS Household Baseline Survey, Household questionnaire, N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

Utilisation of Hired Labour

Discussions of hired rural labour in Zimbabwe have largely focused on the LSCF sector, despite the fact that customary area households have also been known to engage non-family hired labour to supplement household labour (Chambati and Moyo, 2003). In Mhezi ward within Chiduku customary land in Mashonaland East 75 percent of the households reported some limited hiring of labour (Moyo, 1995:145). Recently, others engaged in rural labour studies have correctly criticised the fast track programme over the manner in which it has disrupted rural labour opportunities, especially on the large-scale farms (Sachikonye, 2003). However, this argument does not adequately consider the implications of the expansion of the commercial farming sector (although on smaller landholding) in terms of opportunities for hired labour. Chambati and Moyo's (2003) recent research in Chikomba and Mazowe districts demonstrate the trends of rural employment in the aftermath of „fast track“ and their findings show that even though „fast track“ disrupted employment on the large farms it has expanded the scope of employment within both the A1 and A2. Findings from the Goromonzi and Zvimba districts survey show that the use of and dependence on hired labour exist in various shades within the newly resettled areas. The tendency to hire in labour for farming and non-farming activities is critical for this particular discussion.

In the majority of cases labour requirements are closely related to the type of agricultural activity, size of landholdings and extent of farm mechanisation. The data on landholding size shows that the majority of A1 plots range from 5.1 to 10 ha, while those in the A2 range from 60.1 to 120 ha. The most common crops in the newly-resettled areas are maize, wheat, sunflowers, soya beans, potatoes and sweet potatoes. These crops require significant amounts of human labour with the specific tasks including ploughing, planting, weeding and harvesting. The survey found that approximately 40 percent (Table 6-8 below) of the surveyed population hires outside labour on a permanent basis and close to 66 percent hire casual labour.

Table 6-8: Labour Utilisation

No. hired	Goromonzi								Zvimba								Total			
	Permanent (P)				Casual (C) (annually)				Permanent (P)				Casual (C) (annually)							
	A1		A2		A1		A2		A1		A2		A1		A2		P	C		
0	370	67.2	45	54.2	210	38.1	37	44.6	133	63.0	41	42.3	56	26.5	19	19.6	589	62.6	322	34.2
1	32	5.8	8	9.6	5	38.1	0	0.0	22	10.4	7	7.2	4	26.5	0	0.0	69	7.3	9	0.9
2	56	10.2	4	4.8	12	0.9	2	2.4	14	6.6	11	11.3	3	1.9	0	0.0	85	9.0	17	1.8
3-4	31	5.6	8	9.6	54	2.2	10	12.0	20	9.5	11	11.3	28	1.4	9	9.3	70	7.4	101	10.7
5+	62	11.3	18	21.7	270	9.8	34	41.0	22	10.4	27	27.8	120	13.3	69	71.1	129	13.7	493	52.3
Total	551		83		551	49.0	83		211		97		211	56.9	97		924		942	

Source: AIAS Household Baseline Survey, (2005/6), N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

There appears to be a preference for casual labourers in these areas, a trend that has grown among large-scale farms from the 1980s. Most of the casual labour is recruited during the planting, weeding and harvesting periods which are considered as labour intensive times on the farm (interviews with Extension Officer Responsible for Wards 21 and 22 in Goromonzi District, September 2008). The survey data further reveal that as the need for labour grows the preferred additional labourer is normally a casual worker. In Zvimba it was found that most of the permanent workers are involved in planning and supervision of farm labour while casual labour is recruited to provide manual labour normally required in large numbers for activities such as weeding and harvesting (Chambati, 2009).

Approximately 50 percent of the farm labour being utilised in these areas worked in the LSCF prior to resettlement. The retention of the skilled farm workers, especially in specialised areas such as tobacco growing, potentially enhances the productivity of the farm. Chambati's (2009) study of Zvimba found that that the greatest proportion of households (45.7 percent) that employ former farm workers have been successfully growing tobacco,

which is considered a specialised crop. Households that recruit labour tend to utilise more land than those that do not. In Zvimba it was noted that 32.8 percent of those who hire farm workers utilise all their allocated arable land (Chambati, 2009:118).

6.5. 5 Skills: Educational Qualifications, Agricultural Training

Formal Education

As part of an assessment of the capacity to utilise land the study considers the levels of formal education attained by the newly resettled. The presence or absence of literacy suggests difficulties in the uptake of extension messages and also in basic accounting skills. Study findings (see Table 6-9 below) indicate that only 4.7 percent of the beneficiaries have not had any formal education and the remainder (95.3 percent) have varying levels of educational qualifications. The majority (37.2 percent) among those who have had access to education have studied up to Ordinary level,¹⁴ followed by those who have had access to primary education (27.5 percent) only. Approximately 15.4 percent of the sample has Advanced level and tertiary education qualifications.

Table 6-9: Education Level Attained by Plot Owner

Education level	Goromonzi						Zvimba						Grand total	
	A1		A2		Total		A1		A2		Total		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
No formal education	25	4.7	1	1.4	26	4.3	16	7.6	1	1.1	17	5.6	43	4.7
Primary education (Gr 7, Std 6)	178	33.5	9	12.2	187	30.9	48	22.7	16	16.8	64	20.9	251	27.5
ZJC	86	16.2	6	8.1	92	15.2	35	16.6	9	9.5	44	14.4	136	14.9
Ordinary level	195	36.7	18	24.3	213	35.1	84	39.8	45	47.4	129	42.2	342	37.2
Advanced level + Tertiary	48	9.0	40	54.1	88	14.6	28	13.2	24	25.3	52	16.9	140	15.4
Total	532		74		606		211		95		306		912	

Source: AIAS Household Baseline Survey, Household questionnaire, N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

The levels of education of people resident in the newly-resettled areas are different to those prevailing in customary areas and even older resettled areas. In the 2000 census it was found that 17 percent of the population in Zvimba and Goromonzi districts had never been to school

¹⁴ Up to 1998, Zimbabwe's secondary school grading and examination system was regulated by the United Kingdom based University of Cambridge Ordinary level and Advanced level exams. The GoZ has since localised the examinations but follows the same University of Cambridge approach.

whilst 33 percent of the population had completed secondary school and beyond (CSO, 2000, Census Report). The findings from the survey when compared with the whole district's data suggest that newly resettled communities represent a notably more educated sub-group than the rest of the population in customary areas.

Agricultural Training

Zimbabwe's smallholder sector has been characterised by various training initiatives that vary from the more long-term forms offered at tertiary level (degrees and diplomas in various aspects of agriculture) to on-site training offered to practicing farmers such as the Master Farmer certificates and related training on environmentally sustainable agriculture practice (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). The latter were offered by government extension agencies and non-state actors such as farmer unions, NGOs and the private sector. Agricultural training centres were established in almost all the provinces and extension support agents were mandated to carry out more field-based training through „field day“ demonstrations (Mlambo, 2006). The smallholder farmers' union, in collaboration with a number of NGOs, also established several short-term training initiatives for members. In most instances these initiatives were aimed at either household heads or their spouses with ready access to land.

In the 1990s discourse within the GoZ and national farmer unions on land beneficiary selection veered towards the need to allocate land to trained individuals who would be the most effective in land utilisation (discussed in more detail in the previous chapter). However, during the process of popular land biddings and self-selection of beneficiaries, previous agricultural training was not prioritised in the selection (Marongwe, 2008). The subsequent fast track period was dominated by the need to resettle every applicant considered in need of land based on verifications of actual need made by the chief and the District Land Committees. Evidence gathered from Goromonzi and Zvimba shows that most (79.1 percent) do not have any formal agricultural training. There are 84 (9.4 percent) beneficiaries with certificates in agriculture and more of these are A2 recipients than A1 recipients. Only 73 of the land beneficiaries in the total sample have the prestigious Master Farmer certificate and of these 65 are settled within the A1 (33 in Goromonzi and 32 in Zvimba).

In most instances beneficiaries from the urban areas were not previously engaged in any agricultural activities on a full-time basis and would not have had the privilege of agricultural

training unless they were graduates of the more specialised colleges. The apparent lack of agricultural training amongst the majority of the newly resettled suggests the possibility of capacity constraints to effectively engaging in either livestock or crop husbandry.

Table 6-10: Formal Agricultural Training Acquired

Formal agricultural training	Goromonzi						Zvimba						Grand total	
	A1		A2		Total		A1		A2		Total			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No formal training	427	82.8	50	69.4	477	81.1	151	72.6	75	80.6	226	75.1	703	79.1
Certificate	45	8.7	12	16.7	57	9.7	15	7.2	12	12.9	27	9.0	84	9.4
Master Farmer certificate	33	6.4	6	8.3	39	6.6	32	15.4	2	2.2	34	11.3	73	8.2
Advanced Master Farmer certificate	6	1.2	3	4.2	9	1.5	9	4.3	4	4.3	13	4.3	22	2.5
Diploma	5	1.0	1	1.4	6	1.0	1	0.5	-	-	1	0.3	7	0.9
Total	516		72		588		208		93		301		889	

Source: AIAS Household Baseline Survey, Household questionnaire, N=1003, Goromonzi=695, Zvimba=308

However, the lack of agricultural training should not be analysed in isolation from other important variables related to individuals' capacity to utilise land such as agricultural experience, the level of formal education reached by the household head, and past and current professional experience. Earlier sections have indicated that the majority of the land beneficiaries come from customary areas where they would have had some contact with farming either on their own plots, their parents' plots or as hired labour. Such experience is very important to consider especially given the fact that it was partly due to such training interventions that there was a significant boost in smallholder agricultural production during the 1980s. Furthermore on-site training provided by the ZFU and other NGOs during „field days“ did not lead to the attainment of certain formal qualifications but participants benefited from the technical expertise of extension workers and those with Master Farmer certificates who were commissioned to provide ongoing training support in their areas. In addition, most of these beneficiaries have received some formal education and more than half of the sample population has reached Ordinary level.

In an earlier study of communal area farming methods the lack of education had been identified as a potential constraint in the uptake of training and extension advice (Moyo, 1995). It will be potentially easier to roll out new training initiatives within the newly

resettled areas given that the majority can read and write, and there is a high probability of a quicker uptake rate of technical extension compared to their customary area counterparts.

Finally, the majority of the beneficiaries have previously been engaged in either skilled or unskilled professional employment. Although this might not have a direct bearing on their agricultural skills, there are a number of advantages that come from having received some form of education, and some of the skills gained in professional wage economy employment might be easily transferable to the new economic activities, such as basic disciplines of work routines and some planning and record-keeping skills from the private and public sector (see Section 6.3 and Table 6-4 above). Although customary area farmers have been involved in formal sector employment, the new cadre of farmers in the newly resettled areas is different in that the farmers are a mix of both high level skills (some with university degrees) and medium level skills. Potentially the new cadre of farmers has had exposure to different cultures, and forms of organisation and agency. These skills and experiences potentially suggest different forms of social relations on the farms and are discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

6.6 Concluding Remarks

The research findings demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of people who benefited from the fast track reforms are poor people from the customary tenure areas. Survey findings indicate that land beneficiaries came from different geographical and socioeconomic backgrounds with varying skills and assets. The socioeconomic profile of the land beneficiaries bears similarities to that of their colleagues in customary areas but the former are mostly slightly younger and more educated on average. Nevertheless, they are equally vulnerable when it comes to acquiring necessary inputs for farm production. Unlike in the customary areas, these people were mostly „strangers“ from different areas and socioeconomic backgrounds. At a preliminary level the manner of resettlement suggests highly atomised households organising their production separately. However, it is necessary to recognise that most of the beneficiaries are from customary tenure areas where production is usually organised in groups of inclusion within either a lineage grouping or other associational forms. These factors suggest that an assessment of social reproduction capacity needs to go beyond household endowments and to understand the emerging forms of sociability and social organisation and how these contribute to enhancing land utilisation capacity (this is discussed in the following chapters).

Another critical finding from the survey is the manner in which differentiation is emerging. Landholding sizes in the A1 seem to be promoting a more egalitarian smallholder sector and differentiation is emerging on the basis of varying levels of access to productive assets such as livestock, hand and power-driven implements and the ability of households to organise farm inputs independently. The majority of A1 households only have full access to hand tools. Furthermore, some of the A1 households hire out their labour to their colleagues within the A1 or the A2 thus negatively affecting their capacity to utilise their own plots effectively. Intra-A1 processes of differentiation are therefore not necessarily based on landholding but rather the ability to mobilise farm inputs and labour to utilise the land.

On the other hand the differences in land size within the A2 suggest the perpetuation of differentiation on this basis. Those A2 beneficiaries with medium scale plots ranging from 60 to 120 ha are the minority and the rest have land sizes of more than 120 ha. These land sizes combined with the ability to mobilise credit finance suggest the possibility of the entrenchment of a black medium and large scale agrarian capitalist class. The co-existence of these large A2 farms alongside A1 plots could potentially mean that some of the poorer A1 households will depend largely on hiring out their labour to the former. Furthermore, these differentiated power relations between the A1 and A2 could influence the manner in which agrarian support systems are rolled out by the GoZ, and cases in which the A1 have been marginalised in the allocation of resources such as tillage support have already been reported. The following chapters analyse some of the arrangements that are emerging to complement households' efforts to utilise the land effectively and ensure survival.

CHAPTER 7

LOCAL AUTHORITY, PLATFORMS OF MOBILISATION AND ACTION

7.1 Introduction

The recent land redistributions have altered not only the physical agrarian landscape but also authority structures and social relations at the local level. Although post-independence governance reforms have attempted to alter authority structures by introducing representative structures such as the Village Development Committee (VIDCO) and Rural District Council (RDC), the elected officials and the councils they form have rarely been effective in addressing the various grievances of rural communities. Instead unelected hereditary structures of power continue to influence the allocation of critical resources such as land and their authority is perceived at times to be superior to that of elected functionaries. Beyond authority structures the chapter discusses in more detail associational forms that have emerged around the question of survival within the newly resettled areas. This chapter analyses the complex forms of rural social organisation, especially the mechanisms of cooperation that have been forged by land beneficiaries who were mostly strangers to one another at the time of resettlement. These forms of cooperation vary from the more structured and visible forms to informal networks and ad hoc arrangements for farm production.

The combined analyses of the forms of local authority and of cooperation contribute towards a more comprehensive understanding of social relations in the newly resettled areas. The discussion is focused on the social interactions that take place among households that have been resettled within the same A1 villages. The discussion counterposes the official position of government on local government and agrarian reform to local interpretations and experiences. Beyond analysing the identities and capacities of who was allocated land the discussion focuses on how the land rights conferred through the new tenure system of permits (for A1) and leases (for A2) influence the relationship between land beneficiaries and local government structures. It also analyses how the local government reforms being suggested by the GoZ relate to the new tenure system.

7.2 Defining the Local State in Newly Resettled Areas

Rural local government in Zimbabwe is composed of a combination of traditional authority and elected local authorities (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). The ineffectiveness of local government is mainly due to the GoZ's unwillingness to effect real decentralisation

(discussed in Chapter 4). Local government's officially designated agents (the traditional structures and elected councils) have been undermined by the enabling legislation which has, among other things, failed to adequately delimit the roles of traditional authority or of the local councils, leading to animosity and power struggles within local authorities. Furthermore, the legislative framework of decentralisation in the form of the Rural District Councils Act (1996) and the Traditional Leaders Act (1999) concentrates significantly more power in the Minister of Local Government. The revenue collection powers of the RDCs are limited and they have no right of use of the revenues, therefore depending on central government allocations. These weaknesses have led to poor service delivery and have contributed to the proliferation of other platforms for organising local communities aimed at improving social reproduction capacity, such as NGOs, churches and local groups. These non-state actors have gained legitimacy even though they do not explicitly possess instruments of coercion unlike the official agents of local government. The local state is thus a sum total of the different public spaces in which households interact with the aim of extracting specific social gains such as food security and improved health status. In such a case, as Mbembe (1992:5) has correctly pointed out the post-colonial rural inhabitant is involved in an ongoing process of shifting identities which include ordinary villager, member of a local farmer group, political party activist and project beneficiary (in the event of NGO intervention).

The land occupations, especially during the period of „jambanja“, raised the possibility of re-imagining local government in areas that had no recent experience with traditional authority and were covered ineffectively by elected representatives of the RDC. The actual organisation of the process of land occupations was under the leadership of a new cadre of popular leadership. At the peak of the land occupations the leadership, mostly war veterans, restricted traditional leaders to subordinate advisory roles and they invited them to identify ancestral lands and also to lead cleansing ceremonies after an occupation (Sadomba, 2008:98). In some instances however, such as in Svosve communal land in the Marondera district neighbouring Goromonzi, traditional leaders were instrumental in mobilising subject communities to occupy lands on the basis of restitution claims (interview with Chief Bushu, Harare, 2006; Moyo and Yeros, 2005b:187).

In an effort to evaluate the presence and effectiveness of local authority structures the AIAS survey ran an awareness test to check whether respondents were aware of the presence of

rural district council and local government structures (see Table 7-1 below). The extension officer is the most visible government agent on the ground and approximately 83 percent of the respondents are aware of their availability in the community. The GoZ has resettled extension officers among the A1 land beneficiaries as part of efforts to increase farm production. They mostly reside in what used to be the former farm owner's house or the manager's quarters (observations at Dunstan and Lion Kopje Farm in Zvimba).

Table 7-1: Awareness of Presence of Local Government Structures

Local government Structure	Goromonzi				Zvimba				Total	
	A1		A2		A1		A2		F	% ³
	F	% ¹	F	% ²	F	% ¹	F	% ²		
Village Development Committee	361	59.5	30	34.5	40	18.9	4	4.1	435	43.3
Ward councillors (RDC)	489	80.6	61	69.9	173	82.0	79	81.3	802	80.0
Lands officers	207	34.0	27	31.1	57	27.0	20	20.6	311	31.0
Department of Natural Resources	493	81.3	66	75.8	48	22.7	17	17.5	624	62.1
AREX	494	81.3	64	73.5	191	90.9	83	85.5	832	82.6

Source: AIAS (2005/6) Goromonzi and Zvimba District Household Survey

¹ Percentage of A1 district population; Goromonzi=608, Zvimba=211

² percentage of A2 district population; Goromonzi=87, Zvimba=97

³ percentage of total population=1,003

The second most easily recognised agent of the local state is the Ward Councillor. The Ward Councillor is the most local elected official of the RDC. Responsibilities of the Councillor include the establishment and chairing of the Ward Development Committee (WADCO) which has the responsibility of considering development plans from the VIDCOs and integrating them into a ward development plan for onward submission to the RDC (GoZ, Rural District Councils Act, 1996:460). However, as discussed above, ward development activities have been limited by financial constraints. The ward councillors' popularity does not necessarily derive from their official roles as councillors but rather as political functionaries at the forefront of mobilising the newly resettled into political party activities (based on Focus Group Discussions held in Goromonzi and Zvimba, June and September, 2006). The AIAS survey was carried out just after the 2005 elections which had been associated with aggressive mobilisation of the newly resettled to vote for ZANU (PF) as a strategy for retaining their land. The fact that many respondents were aware of the presence of the ward councillors could be due to the political nature of the office which requires that the councillor embark on more periodic consultations with their constituencies than any of the functionaries of local government who are bureaucratically appointed.

7.3 Local Government in the Newly Resettled Areas

7.3.1 Village Level Authorities - Renegotiating Traditional Authority?

The local government reforms that had been implemented since independence (discussed in Chapter 4) were essentially about limiting the role and power of traditional structures and providing platforms for participation of the majority of rural dwellers in local government activities through voting for their representatives and consultations in the various local structures, such as VIDCOs, that were established from the village level up to the district level. However, since 1999 the GoZ has been undoing some of these reforms and in the same year it passed the Traditional Leaders Act (1999) which provided for salaried chiefs and village headmen. Through this Act, traditional leaders can now participate in council activities in an ex-officio capacity. Furthermore, traditional leaders' courts can mediate in land conflicts (GoZ, Traditional Leaders Act, 1999).

At the height of land occupations „seven member committees“ were established to facilitate the selection of land beneficiaries and to provide them with administrative support at the local level. Chaumba et al. (2003a:10) describe these new village authority structures as “a sudden emergence from seemingly nowhere” but in reality they were a new version of the defunct VIDCOs that had been established in the first year of independence (their origins and roles are discussed in Chapter 4). The seven member committees were an innovative, integrated, top-down system of governance in the new resettlements which were as “striking as the dramatic physical transformation of the landscape” (Chaumba et al., 2003a:11). They were characterised by a hierarchical committee-based structure with parallels to the decentralised local government development committee structures of the 1980s. These committees were called „Committee of Seven“ because seven members made up the committees, which were established at every occupied farm to ensure that land occupiers were not evicted by previous owners among other tasks (discussed in Chapter 3, and the case study discussions in Chapters 8 and 9 analyse how they have evolved from the period of occupations).

Initially these committees were dominated by war veterans who in many instances occupied the post of Base Commander (Chairperson) and Head of Security (Chaumba et al., 2003a:8; Masuko, 2009:5). Traditional authority functionaries such as chiefs and headmen were rarely part of the structures but were consulted on some matters which included traditional cleansing ceremonies and beneficiary selection. The activities of the committee, in particular

the pegging of plots, stand in stark contrast of the depiction of „chaos“ on the farms, and Chaumba et al. (2003a:17) state that, “at the same time as they were riding roughshod over the rule of law, war veterans and other land occupiers employed the tools and practices of colonial land use planning to becoming visible and legitimate”.

The committees of seven were also responsible for ensuring that farm production commenced as soon as land beneficiaries had been allocated their individual plots (Sadomba, 2008:115). However production on individual plots was not automatic; some well-endowed individuals managed to utilise the land in the first year of occupation while others had to wait for state subsidies. Collective fields were established on many occupied farms in Goromonzi in the tradition of the Zunde raMambo. This is a long established tradition in rural Zimbabwe where subjects of the Mambo (chief) work in the zunde field. The harvest from the zunde is then stored for times of crisis and various households rely on these reserves only when their food stocks run out (Sadomba 2008a: 114). Farm inputs were supplied by war veterans. The Zunde raMambo practice has not fared well in most of the areas visited except at Dalkeith farm where a specific portion of land has been set aside as a zunde field and maize has been grown annually on the plot since resettlement in 2001 (discussed in more detail in Chapter 9).

Beyond collective work on the zunde fields the occasion provided a moment of building solidarity among the land occupiers and an opportunity for the chief to legitimise the land occupations on the basis of a historical link with the occupied lands. Field observations in Glendale, Goromonzi and Zvimba indicate that the committees of seven are still thriving on many of the resettled farms although their composition and names have changed. They are now mostly headed by Village Headmen and are referred to as Village Development Committees.

In 2003 the GoZ issued a directive on local government which stated that “in terms of the Traditional Leaders Act (Chapter 20:17) all resettlement areas shall be placed under the relevant traditional chiefs or headmen” (GoZ, 2003:4). The Traditional Leaders Act (TLA) empowers the chief to nominate headmen for appointment. The chiefs have, since the 2003 Government directive on local government, been appointing headmen in the newly resettled areas from among the land beneficiaries. The criteria and manner of appointment varies. Chief Rusike in Goromonzi has been combining arbitrary appointments with elections in

areas where he is not familiar with the land beneficiaries (interviews with Extension Officer in Wards 21 and 22 of Goromonzi, September 2008). The appointments without elections have been more common in areas contiguous to customary tenure areas where the chief has appointed those related or belonging to a lineage group with a history of holding such office. In areas previously dominated by large scale farms, such as in Bromley, the land beneficiaries have been asked to elect their village head, while Chief Matibiri of Zvimba has mostly appointed land beneficiaries with whom he is familiar to positions of village head in consultation with extension officers. Most of the headmen appointed in the Banket area are from the neighbouring Zvimba customary lands.

From the time of their appointment, the village headmen chair the new Village Development Committee. Members of the VIDCO are directly elected into office by the members of the village. Within the new VIDCOs a new post of war veteran representative has been created and is reserved for one of the war veterans resettled on the farm. Other posts in the village council include officers responsible for village development, security, women's affairs, health and the youth (based on interviews with headmen based at Dunstan and Buena Vista farms, September 2008).

The village head has administrative oversight of the village and works with the VIDCO. The responsibilities of the new village authority include administrative functions such as developing mechanisms for sharing inherited infrastructure like dams, irrigation equipment and tobacco barns, conservation of natural resources and enforcing traditional norms and government directives on infrastructure use (interview with village head at Dunstan Farm, September 2008). During interviews with headmen based in two A1 villages in Goromonzi I noticed a disconcerting change from a focus on the land beneficiaries towards a preoccupation with satisfying the demands of the local council. The two village heads I interviewed listed their duties as ensuring that there is no unlawful cutting down of trees, ensuring that beneficiaries utilise received inputs instead of selling them and ensuring that there is no subletting of the plots (based on interviews held with village headmen at Dunstan and Lot 3 of Buena Vista, September 2008). While the roles that were emphasised by the headmen are an essential part of local government they are mostly focused on ensuring that government directives on agrarian reform are implemented at a local level. The headmen did not necessarily balance government's interest against the interests of the village members which include a need for wood to build their homes and storehouses and being allowed to

sublet some of their land in exchange for inputs and tillage support (based on focus group discussion with local farmer group members, held at Dunstan and Lot 3 of Buena Vista September 2008). The new cadre of village leadership is different from the populist committees of seven which were more focused on the security of the land beneficiaries in the face of a real threat of counter eviction from the former owners. The village headmen seem to be more content with policing the areas on behalf of Government.

7.3.2 Expansion of RDC Frontiers and Roles

The same GoZ directive on local government that empowered the chiefs to expand into newly resettled areas also stated that, “all resettlement areas shall fall under the jurisdiction of Rural District Councils and shall thus be incorporated into either existing wards, or new wards shall be created as necessary” (GoZ, 2003). This policy vision was made official government policy in 2005 with the passing of the 17th Amendment to the Constitution. These local government reforms expanding traditional authority and elected rural district councils replicate the forms of local government in the customary areas where elected ward councillors have to share political space with traditional authority functionaries. The clear delineation of roles, especially authority over land, between these two strands of local government in the customary areas has been difficult in practice (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4).

The discussion in Chapter 4 has shown how chiefs and other lineage elites have disregarded the provisions of the Communal Land Act (1982 and amended in 2002) in land allocation and presiding over land conflicts. Anderson (1996) and Dzingirai (1994) have shown how local practice around land has continued to defer to chiefs despite the envisioned consultations between the two institutions within the legislation.

Besides the contestations between the institutions local government structures remain poorly funded and ineffective on the ground. While traditional authority structures have been introduced at the village level the RDCs do not have the same representation. Rather they depend on village heads to enforce their policies. The current Village Development Committees consisting of elected officials operates as a subordinate structure of the village head, unlike in customary areas where they were a parallel structure of local government made up of popular party functionaries elected by the villagers. Meetings of the VIDCOs in the newly resettled areas are chaired by the village head except for rare cases such as at

Whyhill farm in Zvimba where they are chaired by the VIDCO chairperson (discussed in more detail in Chapter 9).

Although the RDCs have slowly regained their authority over the informal structures and are empowered to work with VIDCOs and Ward Development Committees to formulate area development plans the coordination has not yet really taken off. According to the RDC Act (1996) WADCOs are supposed to be chaired by the council's Ward Councillor but in reality, as in the customary areas, these are non-existent. The councillors do not have any budgets to convene meetings and have made little progress in terms of establishing functioning WADCOs. Traditional authority structures have not yet introduced the office of the Sadhunu (Ward Head) in these areas. In the customary areas the Sadhunu works with a number of village heads operating within his dhunu (ward) but this office has been largely ineffective because of the arbitrariness of the establishment of wards to the extent that in many circumstances the chiefs preferred to deal with the village head also known as the Sabhuku (interviews with Chief Bushu, June 2006).

Local authorities such as the Goromonzi Rural District Council have developed a five-year strategic plan for infrastructure development without any significant input from the decentralised structures (VIDCOs). Village heads and members of the VIDCO in Goromonzi were not aware of the five year strategic plan that had been developed by the Goromonzi RDC. During interviews with officials of the Goromonzi Rural District Council they revealed that the plan had been developed on the basis of perceived needs and in consultation with extension officers (interviews with Goromonzi RDC, Chief Executive Officer, September 2006). It is important to note that the district extension office is housed within the RDC offices; hence such consultation would have been more convenient for the council than getting their hands dirty by going to the farms. The RDC officials stated they had not started implementing the plan because they were still waiting for the funds from central government. Although the lease document for the A2 scheme has a clause on land rentals local authority personnel were not sure if they would be the ones to collect and use the rentals for local area development (interview with Goromonzi, RDC Chief Executive Officer, September 2006). At the end of 2008 there were very few A2 plot holders (less than six percent of the total number of beneficiaries) who had signed the lease agreements due to problems around the registration of the lease (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3). Generally the local authorities have been affected negatively by the hyperinflationary environment in which they

operate and a number of infrastructural development projects have been suspended (interview with Zvimba RDC, Chief Executive Officer, June 2006).

7.3.3 The Extension Function in Fast Track Areas

In the aftermath of the fast track reforms the Ministry of Agriculture announced that it would need 6,000 new extension officers in addition to the approximately 3,000 extension officers already in service (Mlambo 2005:7). By the end of 2008 approximately 2 900 extension officers consisting of graduates from the University of Zimbabwe, Bindura University and other agriculture colleges had been recruited. In fact the GoZ was so desperate for extension officers that it had to lower the entry level requirements for this post (interviews with Zvimba District Extension Officer, August 2009). Whereas previously one had to have at least two passes at A level and a Diploma from a recognised tertiary college in the period after fast track resettlement, the GoZ recruited into the position of extension officer even those with only five O level subjects as long as one of these was Agriculture. Besides the lack of personnel, the department faces numerous challenges summarised by Mlambo (2005:8) as including but not limited to “increasing budgetary constraints, poor remuneration and conditions of services and lack of transport and equipment and the fact that extension officers are expected to provide services over too wide an area”. As part of measures to address these challenges the Ministry of Agriculture took the decision that extension officers involved in field demonstrations should be allocated A1 plots in the areas they cover. This new directive was accompanied by an instruction to the District Land Officers that the extension officers should be allocated houses on the former large scale farms. However the decision was made late and most of the farm-houses in A1 settlements had already been converted into social amenities such as schools or clinics or in some instances occupied by the Commander of the Committee of Seven (based on interviews held with Zvimba and Goromonzi District extension officers, September 2008). The majority of extension officers in Goromonzi are settled on A1 farms but in Zvimba very few got accommodation on the farms.

During the period of fast track resettlement extension officers worked with officials from the Ministry of Lands and the Surveyor General’s office in the official demarcation of the new plots. The roles of the extension officers in the aftermath of land allocations include training on improved farming methods assisting the newly resettled farmers in obtaining necessary farm inputs and to also monitor the proper usage of received inputs on behalf of Government (interview with Acting Zvimba District Extension Officer, September 2008). They are

responsible for the relaying of information on crop prices and other changes to the marketing of crops and livestock.

Current extension support methods in the newly resettled areas remain limited by the fact that there is not sufficient knowledge of the training needs and land use preferences of the newly resettled beneficiaries. The newly resettled households comprise different training and professional backgrounds, literacy levels, skills and resource endowments and the Department of Extension has not yet undertaken proper research on the specific needs of these communities. Furthermore the actual methodologies of extension are highly inappropriate. The majority of the extension officers still use top-down methods based on the transfer of knowledge which have been challenged on the basis that they do not adequately consider indigenous knowledge (Mlambo, 2005:8). The methods preferred by extension officers, which include securing treated hybrid seeds and the use of inorganic fertilisers, increase the farmers' dependence on the agricultural supply markets.

Despite these shortcomings locally based extension officers have been at the forefront of introducing innovations in social organisation that are aimed at enhancing farm production such as the establishment of structured local farmer groups. In wards 21 and 22 of Goromonzi the extension officer has aggressively promoted the establishment of local farmer groups (discussed later in this chapter and in Chapters 8 and 9). The extension officers carry out their extension work within these groups and they facilitate the acquisition of farm inputs from the GoZ.

7.4 Emerging Land Tenure and the Local State

The recent land redistribution has substantially transformed agricultural land relations by extending state land ownership to the bulk of Zimbabwe's land and by expanding leasehold and permissory forms of tenure (Moyo, 2007:8). During the initial stages of resettlement land beneficiaries were issued with an „offer letter“ representing official recognition of the right over land. However this offer letter did not provide adequate security to new landholders. Clause 7 of the letter states that the offer to land can be withdrawn at any time with the government having no obligation to compensate for any improvements that might have been made (World Bank, 2006). Evidence from the field, however, shows that cases of eviction since resettlement have been very limited. Sub-section 7.5.1 of this chapter (below) discusses the prevalence of land evictions in Goromonzi and Zvimba based on research findings and it was found that there are only 0.5 percent cases of evictions of resettled farmers in these areas.

According to officials from the Ministry of Lands (MoL) in Goromonzi and Zvimba there have been cases of removals of resettled beneficiaries in both districts to suit the re-organisation of land reform models. In all cases the displaced have been allocated land on other former large-scale farms within the area. However Sadomba (2008a) argues that there has been a targeted removal of war veterans who had allocated themselves land during the period of jambanja. The actual figures of the number of war veterans are not readily available but the practice seems to have been popular in Mazowe where more than four former large scale farms that had initially been converted into A1 plots were later re-converted into A2 plots (Masuko, 2009:7).

Some scholars and policy experts, such as Richardson (2005) and Mhishi (2007), argue that the manner in which land was acquired despoiled agricultural land property rights and that these no longer exist in Zimbabwe. They further dismiss the legal basis of introducing new forms of property rights due to the fact that the land rights of the former landowners were undermined and that the redistribution exercise is still under litigation in the courts (Moyo, 2007:92). Richardson (2005) goes further to argue that land reform is the cause of economic decline because of the way it undermined property rights and dampened investor confidence. The perception of security of property rights in land is fickle and not necessarily based on legal pronouncements. It is determined by the level of confidence that communities have in the regime establishing these laws. Although the ZANU (PF) government nationalised all agricultural land in 2005 and committed to a new tenure system of permits held in perpetuity for A1 and 99-year leases for A2 plots there remains a perception of insecurity of tenure. The GoZ justified the nationalisation of land and introduction of permissory and leasehold tenure as a safeguard against land concentration within a few hands if the freehold system continued (interviews with official from Ministry of Lands, September and March 2007).

The doubt derives from the fact that the state has with a stroke of a pen cancelled freehold land without attendant consultations and compensation for the actual land, raising the question of what would stop it from doing the same with permits and leases, especially considering that it now owns the land (based on submissions made at an AIAS Policy Review Dialogue on Land Tenure, August 2007). Furthermore the GoZ has not clarified the institutional arrangements for the administration of the new land tenure system. The Land Board that was introduced in 2000 remains largely inactive and is based within the Ministry

of Lands instead of having an autonomous structure that would enable it to interact with the MoL as an equal.

In 2006 the government introduced the permit system for A1 farms and leasehold tenure for A2 farms. According to Ministry sources the delay in the issuance of permits was caused by legal hurdles in the acquisition of land and these were only resolved in 2005 when the Constitution was amended to enable the government to nationalise all agricultural land. Prior to the constitutional amendment that nationalised all agricultural land the government could not transfer the ownership of land to the new land beneficiaries because of the appeals against compulsory acquisition lodged by the former land owners. The government faced two options: either to respond to every individual appeal or to come up with legislation that nullified these appeals. In 2005 the state took the latter route and through Amendment No. 17 it precluded the courts from deliberating on matters surrounding compulsory acquisition although they retained jurisdiction over contests over the improvements on the farms. By the close of 2007 the GoZ had not issued any permits to landholders in the A1 while approximately 6 percent of A2 beneficiaries had been issued with leases (Moyo, 2007:12).

The A1 permit offered by the state is a formal statutory land right (Moyo, 2007:9). The permit tenure essentially offers partially similar usufruct land rights to those provided under customary tenure in terms of the nature and breadth of rights to use land for the homestead, cropping and the shared utilisation of common grazing and woodland areas (Moyo, 2007:12-13). The permit is registered in the names of both spouses (in the case of married couples) and is offered in perpetuity to the beneficiary household.

However there are nuanced differences between the land rights being bestowed in the newly resettled areas and those existing in customary tenure areas. In the customary areas, land access and use rights are based on belonging and membership of a lineage group. Traditional institutions and authority are prominent in the distribution and administration of customary lands. Whereas traditional leaders have been at the forefront of land administration and allocation in customary areas, the A1 permit elevates the role of the state as the initial provider of land and responsible for administrative oversight. The permit is silent on the role of the traditional authority regarding the administration of the land despite the fact that chiefs were mobilised by the state to verify applicants for A1 farms.

Evidence from the field shows that village headmen have appropriated for themselves the role of land allocation. The village head at Dunstan farm in Goromonzi offered A1 plots to four households that had been excluded during the official demarcations (interviews with Dunstan Farm Village Head, September 2008). At Whynhill farm the village head was removed from office by the chief and officials from the Ministry of Lands after he had sold A1 plots that were vacant after the official beneficiaries had not taken the land.

It is important to note that land tenure is a social construct that is influenced by socialisation rather than legal contracts. While the legal contract through the permit seeks to promote a certain form of social relations it remains inadequately explained and promoted. On the other hand the introduction of traditional authority without the necessary rule book of what the village heads can and cannot do has contributed to misunderstandings concerning their powers in terms of governing the land. The introduction of the new permissory system has not yet been adequately explained to the beneficiaries. Their understanding of land tenure provisions is currently based on sketchy information from local leaders and government officials to the extent that some of the beneficiaries interviewed believe that the chiefs have the authority to allocate land or to move them off the land. Some of the respondents indicated that they see no difference between the rights they have in the newly resettled areas and those of their colleagues in the customary areas (focus group discussions in Zvimba, September 2008). The situation is compounded by the fact that the majority of the beneficiaries are from customary areas where a strong relationship between traditional structures and land exists. During interviews with A1 beneficiaries in Goromonzi and Zvimba the respondents revealed that they expect traditional leaders to ensure that land and natural resources are being managed properly. Notably, most of the respondents did not see a problem with the expansion of traditional authority into the fast track resettlement areas (focus group discussions, Goromonzi and Zvimba, September 2008).

Despite the previous attempts to marginalise the office of the chief by both the colonial and post-colonial governments it remains as one of the most enduring institutions in Zimbabwe. The authority of the chiefs derives from links with ancestors and certain beliefs in the protecting powers bestowed upon the chief. A similar connection between traditional authority and land was made by one of the chiefs when he said that “the president does not own the land. The land belongs to the chiefs. The white settlers took the land from the chiefs and not the president” (Chief Charumbira quoted in *The Herald*, 3 December 2000). The

history of land alienation is closely associated with the history of local government which at one stage focused on marginalising traditional authority only to elevate the same authority in the 1960s as a response to an escalation of demands for land through the nationalist movement. The enduring popularity of the office of the chief among the people derives from the fact that despite the overt attempts at cooption by the state and the lack of explicit means of coercion the former has maintained a form of independence and autonomy in articulating the interests of the subject communities. Studies by Ranger (1999) in Matopos district and Alexander (2006) in Insiza district suggest that the relationship between traditional leaders and the state, whether colonial or post-colonial, have always been more nuanced and complex than is captured by the notion of cooption (Fontein, 2009:5).

Furthermore, the discussion of tenure has been dominated by concerns of financing and investment in agriculture. The discussions have focused on the logic of improving production, tenure security and the tradability of the A2 lease (see for instance, Moyo, 2007; Richardson, 2005; Mhishi, 2007). The A2 land beneficiaries are being issued with a 99 year lease agreement and

the lease provides for an annual rental to be paid to the lessor (state), the leased land to be effectively utilised with due regard to good husbandry and environmental enhancement and protection and bans ceding or subletting of land without the express permission of the lessor's representative (GoZ, 2006:4).

The lease is subject to the succession and inheritance laws of the country. The government retains the right to cancel the lease in cases where the lessee has been judged insolvent, or where the lessee either owns or is leasing some other property for agricultural purposes and fails to pay rentals, levies and rates (GoZ, 2006:6). The lease explicitly prohibits subletting but the permit is silent on the issue. The extension officer based at Dunstan farm revealed that there is an emerging practice of temporary subletting of certain portions of A1 plots in exchange for tillage support and farm inputs. A similar trend was observed at Whyhill farm where urban-based workers have approached some of the A1 farmers for land (an average of two ha per tenant) and have offered the plot owners inputs for the land they retain (discussed in more detail in Chapters 8 and 9).

Most of the farms that were taken over had social and productive infrastructure. The Government of Zimbabwe policy on social infrastructure inherited from the previous owners in A1 areas is that it becomes state property to be used for state-specified public purposes

such as conversion of farm houses into schools or clinics, while productive facilities are to be used on a shared basis. The latter provision has in some cases provided an impetus towards the establishment of structures to coordinate the use and maintenance of these facilities (Murisa, 2007:39). Within the A2 scheme, the lease agreement provides the holder of the farm on which infrastructure is currently installed authority to “use and to sublet infrastructure to other farmers and obliges them to grant such subtenants right of access to the infrastructure” (World Bank, 2006:24).

7.5 Individual Household Response Mechanisms

The discussion in this section analyses the manner in which individual households cooperate within their immediate local environment to achieve subsistence. The first reference point for agency in response to various social reproduction constraints is the set of actions adopted at individual household level (discussed in Chapter 1). The nature of prevailing land relations shapes some of the forms of social organisation and responses that emerge in the newly resettled areas.

7.5.1 Maintenance of relationships with communal areas

The majority of the fast track land reform programme beneficiaries are males aged between 36 and 46 years, mostly from communal areas with some form of secondary education (discussed in more detail in the previous chapter). At independence the oldest in this category of beneficiaries would have been in their early twenties and probably living with their parents. Given the dominant form of customary area organisation some of the members of this demographic group left behind their parents and other siblings in the communal areas but maintain varying levels of contact. Evidence from the field shows that social and economic interactions between the newly resettled land beneficiaries and their counterparts in the customary areas is ongoing albeit at varying levels. One of the key questions used to determine the existence of a linkage with customary areas was whether land beneficiaries who used to live in customary tenure areas still maintain a home there. Several reasons were given by the beneficiaries as to why they did maintain dual homes. Table 7-2 below summarises some of the common responses. Out of the whole sample surveyed, approximately 18 percent maintain a communal area home for a variety of social and economic reasons that include the imperative to boost yields, as a risk management strategy (to minimise the impact of crop failure and also in case of eviction) and other more sentimental attachments to the customary area home.

Table 7-2: Reasons for Maintaining a Customary Area Home

Reason	Goromonzi				Zvimba				Total	
	A1		A2		A1		A2		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
To boost production	18	2.9	8	9.2	12	5.7	3	3.1	41	4.3
To reduce risk of crop failure	4	0.7	-	-	1	0.5	-	-	5	0.5
In case of eviction	8	1.3	-	-	4	1.8	3	3.1	15	1.5
Sentimental value	7	1.1	2	2.3	-	-	6	6.2	15	1.5
Home part of extended family	53	8.7	13	14.9	13	6.1	9	9.3	88	8.8
Children in school in CA	-	-	-	-	4	1.8	-	-	4	0.4
Sub-Total*	90	14.8	23	24.1	34	16.1	21	21.6	168	16.4
Does not maintain a CA home	220	36.2	24	22.9	110	52.1	34	35.1	384	38.3
<i>Not originally from CA</i>	<i>198</i>	<i>32.6</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>45.9</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>27.0</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>40.2</i>	<i>334</i>	<i>33.3</i>
Total Sample Size	608		87		211		97		1 003	

Source: AIAS (2006/7) Goromonzi and Zvimba District Household Survey

*Percentage of total sample

The most commonly cited reason for the maintenance of a customary area homestead is because it is still home to other members of the extended family. There were very few instances of lineage groups being resettled together. During the survey we only noted one A1 settlement on what used to be Dalkeith farm that was composed of land beneficiaries from the same clan (discussed in detail in Chapter 9). In the Shona and Ndebele cultural context, the concept of „family“ has a broad meaning that includes what has generally been called the „extended family“. In certain cases, these customary area homes are the location of gravesites for lineage members and according to Shona custom abandoning such homes would be seen as turning away from one’s people (Bourdillon, 1982:3).

Furthermore, the movement of people from one locality to new areas that potentially provide for more land for grazing and cropping but still maintain the old communal area home for the rest of the family has been common ever since the opening up of formerly largely wildlife areas, such as Gokwe in the 1970s and 1980s (Nyambara, 2001:773). There are 168 households still keeping the customary area home and of these 124 have A1 plots and the remainder are settled in the A2 areas (see Table 7-2 above). Among the 41 households maintaining customary area homes to boost production, thirty are from the A1 and 11 from the A2. The fact that there are more A1 farmers retaining use of communal area homes for production boosting purposes suggests that there is a category of A1 farmers who have the capacity to utilise more land than they were allocated. Only 15 land beneficiary households (1.49 percent) that are maintaining a communal area home do so as a safety measure against

eviction. This figure provides a clue to the perception of security of tenure and previous landlessness of beneficiaries, namely that beneficiaries have a level of satisfaction with their form of access to land and also that according to the age of most of the household heads it is unlikely that they have customary area homes of their own.

These newly resettled areas are not necessarily insular as they are made up of people who associate in various ways with the outside communities. The nature and form of association with neighbouring customary areas is defined by various factors but the most important seems to be physical proximity. The new communities associate with the customary areas to fulfil both economic and social needs. The activities range from drawing labour to establishing relations through marriage. Table 7-3 below lists some of the areas of cooperation between the communal and newly resettled areas.

Historically, customary areas have served as a reservoir of cheap labour for the large-scale farms, mines and the urban formal sector. The tendency to recruit labour from customary areas is still prevalent. In Goromonzi 59.9 percent of A1 and 31.1 percent of the A2 farmers depend on such labour. The figures are slightly lower in Zvimba where only 19.9 percent of the A1 and 22.7 percent of A2 farmers depend on labour from customary tenure areas. Most of those providing labour for A1 beneficiaries in Goromonzi come from Seke and Murehwa customary areas (interview with AREX officer, September 2008). Respondents tend to go back to their area of origin to recruit labour, especially during periods when a huge amount of manual labour is required.

There are also cases of land beneficiaries acquiring inputs and other productive resources from customary areas. The figures from the survey seem to suggest that there are more A1 farmers (especially in Goromonzi) than A2 farmers utilising labour from customary areas. This could be due to the fact that in the majority of cases A2 farms retained farm labour that used to work on the large scale commercial farms. The GoZ policy was that farm workers should not be removed from their compounds and studies have shown that the A2 farmers have largely retained the former large-scale commercial farm workers (Chambati, 2009).

Table 7-3: Cooperation between Customary and New Resettlement Areas

Nature of Linkage*	Goromonzi				Zvimba				Total	
	A1		A2		A1		A2			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farmers getting labour from CA	363	59.9	27	31.1	42	19.9	22	22.7	454	45.3
Farmers utilising productive resources from CA	246	40.5	15	17.2	69	32.7	25	25.8	355	35.4
Farmers sourcing inputs from agro dealer in CA	241	39.7	18	20.1	55	26.0	18	18.6	332	33.1
Students enrolled in schools in neighbouring CA	161	26.5	20	22.9	62	29.4	22	22.7	265	26.4
Access to health facilities in neighbouring CA	78	12.8	10	11.5	56	26.5	16	16.5	160	15.9
Share the same spirit medium	-	-	-	-	1	0.5	-	-	1	0.1
Marriage	1	0.2	1	1.1	-	-	-	-	1	0.1
Sample Total	608		87		211		97		1,003	

Source: AIAS (2006/7) Zvimba and Goromonzi Districts Household Survey

*Multiple responses, percentage calculated on the basis of total sample (A1 and A2).

Approximately 35 percent of the resettled households hire draught power and other productive resources from customary area farmers. Although the GoZ has been running a tillage programme through the District Development Fund (DDF) in most of the resettled areas, the service has been stretched in terms of its capacity and has at times been abused by the politically connected land beneficiaries within the A2 (interviews with Goromonzi District Extension Officer, September 2008). There are more A1 farmers in both districts relying on productive assets from the customary areas than A2 farmers. In Goromonzi there are 40.5 percent of A1 households hire productive assets from customary areas compared to 17.2 percent within the A2, whilst in Zvimba there are 32.7 percent A1 beneficiaries relying on productive resources from the customary areas compared with 25.8 percent of A2 farmers. These findings conform to the analysis of asset ownership among the newly resettled which was carried out in the previous chapter. The analysis of the level to which land beneficiaries are endowed with productive assets showed that there are more A1 beneficiaries who do not own such resources than A2 beneficiaries. Furthermore the revelations of abuse of the GoZ's tillage facility by the Goromonzi District extension officer explain why fewer A2 farmers depend on productive resources from the customary areas. In many instances customary area farmers who hire out their draught power also hire out their labour for the same function to operate the draught animals and the ploughs (Goromonzi district focus group discussions, 2008).

Since the fast track reforms agro-dealer activities have been curtailed and have not expanded into the large scale areas. While the former large-scale owners did not necessarily need local agro-dealers because they had capacity to move inputs from the neighbouring towns, the new breed of farm owners does not possess similar capacities. Since 2002 the GoZ has been reversing some of the agricultural liberalisation measures introduced in the 1990s which allowed private sector actors such as commodity brokers and manufacturing concerns to purchase commodities directly from the producers. The GoZ has revived the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) from being the buyer of last resort to the only supplier of inputs and buyer of controlled commodities such as maize and wheat (Govere, 2006:9). The price controls on controlled commodities have had a negative effect on the viability of agro-dealership networks that had contributed to the farm-input delivery. The GoZ's decision to supply A1 and A2 farmers with subsidised inputs has also dampened private sector participation in the inputs market. Furthermore through fast track reforms the GoZ compulsorily acquired large-scale farms involved in the production of seed maize which led to a general decline in input availability across the whole economy. Farm inputs from agro-dealer channels and informal markets within customary areas have been acquired by 33.1 percent of the newly resettled farmers in the sample.

Due to the failure on the part of Government and other social service delivery agents there is still a significant dependence on education and healthcare facilities in customary areas by the recently resettled A1 and A2 households. A total of 265 (26.4 percent) households have children attending schools in customary areas and there are proportionally more A1 than A2 households in both Goromonzi and Zvimba accessing these facilities. There are 160 households (15.9 percent) utilising healthcare facilities based in customary areas. Nevertheless investigations through key informant interviews revealed that resettled communities preferred to go to health centres in the satellite towns closer to their areas. In Goromonzi they prefer to go to the district hospital at Goromonzi centre and some go to Harare (interview with Goromonzi Rural District Council official, June 2008). In Zvimba most of the resettled go to Chinhoyi, where there is a district hospital and a clinic (Zvimba focus group discussions, 2008). However, due to exorbitant commuter fares they cannot afford to send their children to urban areas for schooling.

7.5.2 Economic Diversification Strategies

Newly resettled households also engage in a variety of non-farm income-generating strategies as a means to supplement incomes generated from the farm for household use and also to enhance their own productive capacity. Previous studies by Moyo (1995), Yeros (2002a) and Gaidzanwa (1999) have already noted the prevalence and varied nature of these economic diversification strategies. Moyo (1995:52) noted that off-farm informal income-generating activities are as critical to social reproduction as is the exchange of entitlements derived from agriculture. These range from extractive activities, such as gold panning and river and pit sand extraction for resale, to petty commodity trade in second-hand clothing, beer brewing and skilled services that include craft making and artisanal repair work. However, the household survey in Goromonzi and Zvimba found that there were very few households engaged in these activities (see Table 7-4 below) and in many instances these represented less than five percent of the population.

Very few respondents confirmed their involvement in non-farm income activities, especially gold panning. Only 17 percent of the total sample is involved in non-farm income generating strategies and the majority of these are women engaged in tailoring and the vending of second-hand clothes in the newly established communities.

Key informants, mostly extension officers, revealed that many resettled households in both Goromonzi and Zvimba are engaged in a variety of non-farm income generating activities and these include illegal activities such as gold panning and river and pit sand extraction for resale. Other activities cited include fishing from some of the nearby rivers and dams in both Goromonzi and Zvimba. Most of the A1 households resettled at Dunstan and Buena Vista farms are engaged in fishing for wholesale to petty traders who come from nearby Harare (Marongwe, 2008). Honey gathering and mushroom harvesting are quite popular in the Bromley area of Goromonzi, the former is mostly carried out by men and the latter by women. The products are mostly sold along the highway to motorists. The areas under study do not have a long history of gold mining activity and only 0.4 percent of the total population admitted involvement in such activities. There are some unreported incidents of gold panning. For instance, in 2006 the AIAS field research team held discussions with a group of land beneficiaries (at least 12 men) resettled on Dalkeith farm who were engaged in gold panning in one of the small rivers close to Banket in Zvimba but they refused to respond formally to the questionnaires.

Table 7-4: Off-Farm Income Activities

Major Sources of Income	Goromonzi				Zvimba				Total	
	M		F		M		F		No.	% ³
	No.	% ¹	No.	% ²	No.	% ¹	No.	% ²		
Extractive Activities										
Gold panning, collecting river and pit sand	1	0.2	2	2.3	1	-	1	1.0	5	
Selling firewood	1	0.2	1	1.1	1	0.5	1	1.0	4	0.4
Wildlife harvesting for resale	2	0.3	1	1.1	-	-	-	-	3	0.3
Skilled Activities										
Wood carving	3	0.5	1	1.1	4	1.9	-	-	7	0.7
Stone carving	1	0.2	1	1.1	1	0.5	-	-	3	0.3
Carpentry	6	1.0	-	-	6	2.8	-	-	12	1.2
Tailoring	28	4.6	1	1.1	6	2.8	5	5.2	40	4.0
Basket weaving	2	0.3	-	-	4	1.9	-	-	6	0.6
Bricklaying	18	3.0	2	2.3	7	3.3	3	3.1	30	3.0
Pottery	5	0.8	-	-	-	-	4	4.1	9	0.9
Repair work	10	1.6	-	-	7	3.3	4	4.1	21	2.1
Petty Trade										
Vending of new and second hand clothes	16	2.6	-	-	8	3.8	1	1.0	25	2.5
Beer brewing	3	0.5	1	1.1	-	-	-	-	4	0.4

Source: AIAS (2006/7) Zvimba and Goromonzi Districts Household Survey

¹ percentage of A1 district population: Goromonzi=608, Zvimba=211,

² percentage of A2 district population: Goromonzi=87, Zvimba=97,

³ percentage of total population of 1 003

Some of the males (three percent of the total sample) involved in non-farm income strategies engage in bricklaying. The process of resettlement itself was associated with an increase in the construction of houses suggesting an increased demand for bricklayers. During the early years of resettlement the majority of the houses that were constructed were fairly rudimentary structures of pole and mud but over the years, brick and thatch houses have begun to dominate the physical landscape (based on personal observations through transect walks carried out on research sites from 2006 to 2008).

Combining the hiring out of some portion of household labour with their own farm production seems to be the most popular form of economic diversification. Table 7-5 below shows that 26.6 percent of the households have members formally employed in the urban wage economy, and 37.5 percent are permanently employed in the remaining large-scale commercial farms and newly resettled farms. There is another segment of A1 farmers who also seek seasonal employment in the large-scale and newly resettled farms. Proportionally there are more households in the A2 that have members formally employed in either the urban wage economy or on the large-scale farms. This phenomenon partially explains the better resource endowment of the A2 farm households. There seems to be an even distribution of households across resettlement models seeking to complement their incomes

by hiring out their labour. In most instances the male member of the household is the one who seeks employment on a fulltime basis while the female engages in seasonal employment (Chambati, 2009). Labour migration in Zimbabwe and its continuation in spite of seemingly satisfactory farm sizes is based on the need to acquire inputs and to meet other cash needs such as food purchases, school fees and healthcare.

Table 7-5: Labour Based Off-Farm Income Earning Strategies

Type of Labour Activity	Goromonzi				Zvimba				Total	
	A1		A2		A1		A2		No.	% ³
	No.	% ¹	No.	% ²	No.	% ¹	No.	% ¹		
Formal employment in urban and other areas	164	27.0	36	41.3	36	17.1	31	31.9	267	26.6
Permanent employment in NRA farms and old LSCF	201	33.1	41	47.2	77	36.5	57	58.8	376	37.5
Seasonal employment in NRA farms and old LSCF	396	64.9	52	59.9	157	74.6	79	81.3	684	68.0

Source: AIAS (2005/6) Zvimba and Goromonzi Districts Household Survey

¹ percentage of A1 district population: Goromonzi=608, Zvimba=211

² percentage of A2 district population: Goromonzi=87, Zvimba=97

³ percentage of total population of 1 003

7.6 Networks of Cooperation within the Newly Resettled Areas

As discussed earlier, rural social organisation is complex. It is composed of a number of interrelated associational forms of cooperation, some of which are highly visible to the outsider while others are organically embedded in the manner in which certain activities are organised. The AIAS survey found that there are a number of ways in which newly resettled households cooperate with each other. The motivation for cooperation ranges from social to economic imperatives. Most of it is carried out at a localised level with immediate neighbours but also in some instances with distant communities within the newly resettled or customary areas.

The land redistribution process was implemented in such a way that it brought together strangers from different backgrounds to settle on previously large-scale farms that had been subdivided into smaller units for the land beneficiaries. Most of these previously large farms had immovable productive and non-productive assets that could not be utilised effectively by a single household resettled on six ha of land. As part of its efforts to rationalise access to such equipment the GoZ issued a directive that all A1 households should share the productive and social infrastructure left behind by the previous owner without necessarily outlining how

this would be done (GoZ, 2001b:2). Productive infrastructure includes tobacco barns, dip-tanks, cattle handling facilities and irrigation equipment. Social infrastructure includes farmhouses and farm worker compounds (GoZ 2001b:3). The farm divisions in A1 areas created common grazing lands which had to be utilised by the resettled beneficiaries on a particular former large scale commercial farm, thereby suggesting another arena for engagement among the beneficiaries. The survey found seven common areas of cooperation among households resettled on what used to be a large-scale farm, as described in Table 7-6 below and discussed in the sub-sections that follow.

Table 7-6: Cooperation among Farmers on Newly Resettled Large Scale Farm

Nature of Cooperation	Goromonzi				Zvimba				Total	
	A1		A2		A1		A2		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Sharing of productive infrastructure	315	51.8	43	49.4	74	35.0	29	29.9	461	45.9
Sharing of social infrastructure	193	31.7	34	39.1	78	36.9	45	46.4	350	34.9
Reciprocal hiring of equipment arrangements	229	37.6	27	31.0	75	35.5	48	49.5	379	37.8
Reciprocal labour sharing	159	26.2	15	20.7	76	36.0	44	45.4	294	29.3
Combined farming operations	111	18.3	5	5.7	79	37.4	33	36.1	228	22.7
Sharing of advice and information	219	36.0	29	33.3	63	29.9	32	32.9	343	34.2
Membership of same agricultural and social groups	43	7.1	4	4.6	39	9.0	22	23.7	108	10.8
Sharing of seed and planting materials	91	14.9	6	6.9	25	11.8	20	20.6	142	14.2
Sample Total	608		87		211		97		1 003	

AIAS (2005/06) Zvimba and Goromonzi District Household Survey

*Multiple responses, percentage calculated on the basis of total sample (A1 and A2).

Joint Use of Productive Infrastructure

Slightly below half of the population (45.9 percent) of the total sample stated that they have an arrangement for sharing productive infrastructure. According to Table 7-8 above the phenomenon of sharing is most common in Goromonzi where 51.8 percent of A1 and 49.4 percent of A2 farmers said that they commonly use productive assets existing on the former farm. The infrastructure that they share includes tobacco barns, irrigation equipment, farm compounds, dams, cattle handling facilities and dip-tanks (interviews with AREX officers in Goromonzi and Zvimba, September 2005 and 2006).

The initial stages of resettlement were characterised by rampant vandalism and looting of productive assets from the farms. Highly sophisticated equipment such as tobacco barns remained mostly unused in A1 areas due to the changes in land use patterns. Sunga and

Moyo's (2004) study on the immediate outcome of fast track land reform found that in certain localities sharing of access to infrastructure was done through various arrangements, including the Committees of Seven, and contributed towards enhancing production capacities. However they also noted cases in which the holders of plots where the infrastructure was located refused to share with other land beneficiaries (Sunga and Moyo, 2004:7).

The AIAS survey in Goromonzi and Zvimba found that land beneficiaries have, beyond the Committees of Seven, devised other mechanisms for managing the joint use of inherited infrastructure. The most common means of ensuring equitable joint use of infrastructure includes the creation of sub-committees within the Committee of Seven that specifically focus on the maintenance of equipment and its equitable distribution. The second most common practice is an agreement among the beneficiaries to let the locally-based extension officer coordinate the use of productive infrastructure in consultation with the village authority and the leadership of local farmer groups (interviews with Goromonzi District Extension officer, September 2009). Beneficiaries at Dunstan farm in Goromonzi district have come up with such an arrangement, partly due to the fact that there are at least four local farmer groups on the farm.

The GoZ's directives on access to and use of infrastructure on the farms have had a direct influence in providing an impetus for cooperation even beyond sharing of the particular infrastructure mentioned in the 2001 directive. Land beneficiaries have realised other areas in which they can cooperate to increase production capacity. During the process of sharing and preserving productive infrastructure, beneficiaries have established some coordinating mechanisms to ensure equal access and safe use of these vital assets. In some instances, such as at Whyhill farm in Zvimba, a sub-committee of the Committee of Seven was established to coordinate the equal sharing and utilisation of inherited irrigation equipment. This sub-committee in the past few years has mobilised funds from households utilising the equipment to purchase a new pump after the old one had been stolen and also to purchase new pipes in order to expand the area under irrigation (discussed in more detail in Chapter 9).

Joint Use of Social Infrastructure

Nearly 34.9 percent of the respondents commonly use some of the inherited infrastructure for social purposes. This category of infrastructure includes health and sanitation facilities, water supply, education facilities and teachers' houses, farm worker compounds, service centres

and recreational facilities. There are proportionally more A2 (39.1 percent in Goromonzi and 46.48 percent in Zvimba) than A1 households involved in the sharing of social infrastructure. This is despite the fact that the GoZ has sought to promote autonomous A2 units by stating through policy that infrastructure found on an individual plot belongs to the beneficiary of the plot. This is one of the many cases in which local practice defies official policy based on perceptions of what is practical. The most shared assets among the A2 households are the farm worker compounds. At Warrendale farm in Goromonzi the land beneficiaries, both A1 and A2, have agreed not to evict farm workers from their compounds and these workers provide labour on both a temporary and a permanent basis to those resettled on the former large scale farm. In A1 settlements some of the farmhouses have been converted into schools, clinics or houses for the extension officers while on some of the farms taken over during jambanja some of these properties were claimed by the base commander. At Dunstan farm in Bromley the former owner's double storey house has been converted into a primary school: the top floor has been subdivided into classrooms while the ground floor has been reserved as accommodation for the teachers.

Labour Sharing

There are reciprocal labour hiring arrangements in both districts. These arrangements include utilising one pool of semi-skilled workers, such as mechanics, tractor drivers, seedbed handlers and curing experts. Farmers then come up with an agreement as to when these workers' services will be required on each farm. In certain instances these arrangements also apply to the hiring of general casual workers who will work as part of a labour collective on adjoining plots especially during planting, weeding and harvesting periods (interview with Goromonzi AREX extension officer, September 2008). Approximately 37.8 percent of the resettled farmers engage in such labour hiring arrangements and the practice is most common among A2 farmers in Zvimba (49.5 percent).

There are cases of jointly carrying out farming operations such as land preparations especially where the fields are adjacent to each other. Approximately 22.7 percent of the respondents have been engaged in such combined farming operations since resettlement. The most common form of cooperation is the establishment of labour teams that work jointly on farms. This is a common labour supplementing practice in the customary areas which entails the grouping of available labour from nearby farms and then carrying out a specific task, such

as harvesting on a single plot over an agreed amount of time before moving on to the next farm. The practice, known as „nhimbe“, was developed within a lineage framework of social organisation where members of the same lineage group would be organised into labour teams for ploughing, planting, weeding and other tasks. The practice of nhimbe has been exported into an area where the lineage framework is either non-existent or very weak, as a strategy to address labour shortages and maximise productivity.

Information and Extension Services

Although the GoZ has a robust policy on extension support, its effectiveness has been restricted by a number of logistical constraints. One of the ways in which land beneficiaries have responded to the non-availability of extension support has been through unofficial channels of technical advice. Some of the resettled farmers have experience in agriculture and they have been informally providing extension support to their colleagues. Approximately 34.2 percent of the resettled households are engaged in providing local extension advice to others based on their previous experience. The issues that farmers advise each other on include where to buy inputs (seeds, fertilisers and chemicals), the dates on which to plant, and responding to new market opportunities. The advice is normally reciprocal and instances where it has to be paid for are rare. Closely related to this practice is the sharing of seed and planting materials among resettled farmers. Only 14.2 percent of the population is engaged in sharing seeds and planting materials. Although there has been an attempt since colonisation to commercialise all seeds for staple crops there are certain crops, such as sorghum, cassava and sweet potatoes, for which seeds can still be obtained through various networks of cooperation (especially those from customary areas) and other local markets.

Furthermore, there is a relationship between some of the unstructured networks and the more formal local farmer groups. Many of the structured farmer groups that were identified in the course of this study emerged from these unstructured networks and membership was mobilised on the basis of previous membership of these networks (interview with local farmer group leader in Goromonzi, September 2008). A tenth of the population (10.8 percent) revealed that they belong to the same local groups as their neighbours.

7.7 Structured Multifaceted Farmers Groups

Recent studies by Murisa (2007) and Masuko (2009) have found that even though beneficiary selection did not emphasise lineage links the newly resettled beneficiaries have set about establishing networks of cooperation that include structured local farmer groups in the few years of being settled together. There are many reasons for associationalism and they include the previous socialisation of beneficiaries, most of whom come from customary tenure areas where production, consumption and accumulation were usually organised within certain identifiable frameworks of association (discussed in more detail in Chapter 5). These frameworks of association include the lineage structure, farmer unions, local clubs, and projects of cooperation organised by NGOs. The second largest segment of beneficiaries comes from the urban areas where there are varied associational activities, ranging from rotating savings and credit clubs among vegetable vendors to religious activities. These groups are multi-focused, the most common activities including mobilising resources through pooling of labour, productive assets and expertise, ensuring access to critical inputs such as fertilisers and seeds, and mediation of farmers' grievances with regard to production.

There are various layers of associational activity. Representative associations have been established at district and the Intensive Conservation Area¹⁵ (ICA) and the ward level in many provinces. In Bromley in Goromonzi district the land beneficiaries have formed the Bromley Farmers Association (BFA) with approximately 250 active members drawn from the A1 and A2 farms. The Association was formed in 2005 and seeks to address common grievances within the resettled community (interviews with BFA members, September 2008). The Association has been involved since its establishment in the bulk buying of inputs such as fertilisers and seeds for members. The executive committee of the association is almost entirely made up of A1 beneficiaries with just one A2 farmer as an ex-officio member. However, the Association has been facing viability challenges since 2008 because it failed to secure inputs for its members and has not managed to come up with a constitution that clarifies its mandate and objectives (interview with AREX officer, September 2008).

The Zvimba South Farmers Association services half of the Zvimba district, which includes Banket and surrounding areas. The Association has a pre-fast track resettlement history. It was created by local leaders (mostly politicians) to foster improved yields and nurture good agricultural practice among smallholder farmers but was always hampered by low

¹⁵ An ICA comprises 4-5 administrative wards and ICAs make up the district.

membership levels. In the aftermath of the fast track programme the Association experienced a new lease of life. It was revived as a mobilising platform for those who had been offered land but were struggling to obtain inputs (interview with Executive Committee member of the Association, August 2006). The Association represents all the newly resettled farmers and customary tenure area households. Since 2003 the Association has been involved in securing inputs for its members through bulk buying or entering into contract farming arrangements. However, due to its broad-based membership it has not managed entirely to satisfy the differentiated internal interests and has been seen to prioritise the interests of the A2 farmers.

The case studies in Chapters 8 and 9 discuss the emergence of local farmer groups at village level and these comprise the second tier of associational activity. The village in the newly resettled areas is composed of A1 households settled on what used to be one large-scale farm. In some cases, where there are more than 100 A1 beneficiaries, more than one village has been created within a previously single large farm. For instance there are two villages at Dunstan farm in Bromley where there are a total of 115 beneficiaries and three at Chabwino farm near Juru growth point in Goromonzi.

Beyond the highly fluid networks of cooperation there are structured local farmers' groups ranging from groups that include all the resettled members within a former large-scale farm to other former large scale farms where there are multiple smaller farmer groups operating within one village. The absence of coherent post-settlement support programmes and weak private sector investment in these areas partially explains the seemingly ubiquitous existence of such formations. Membership levels vary from as low as ten (Goromonzi) to as high as 75 (Zvimba). The 2006-07 AIAS study found that approximately 40 percent of the resettled households (both A1 and A2) belong to such farmer groups (see Table 7-7 below).

Table 7-7: Membership of a Local Group

Membership	Goromonzi				Zvimba				Total	
	A1		A2		A1		A2			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Belong to a local group	206	40.5	31	37.4	81	40.3	33	35.1	351	39.7
Do not belong to a group	302	59.5	52	62.6	120	59.7	61	64.9	535	60.3
Total	508		83		201		94		886	

Source: AIAS (2005/06) Zvimba and Goromonzi District Household Surveys

*117 Respondents did not answer the question

These groups serve a variety of purposes and at times duplicate the activities carried out within the unstructured networks discussed in previous sections. The most common activities carried out by the groups include mobilisation of resources such as savings, advancing loans, labour and asset pooling for production, and marketing of farm products (see Table 7-8 below).

The AIAS Goromonzi and Zvimba survey provided the initial evidence of the existence of these localised groups and the basis for the selection of groups for further and deeper study. The survey identified 14 groups in Zvimba and nineteen in Goromonzi (Murisa, 2007:42). The method of identifying and selecting these groups was discussed in detail in Chapter 1. Suffice it to note here that the selected cases differ in terms of activity, membership levels and criteria of recruitment, nature of leadership and objectives, and these factors help to illuminate how local factors influence forms of organisation and agency.

Table 7-8: Activity and Number of Groups Involved

Activities*	Goromonzi		Zvimba		Total	
	No. (19)	%	No. (14)	%	No. (33)	%
Savings	6	31.5	7	50.0	13	39.3
Accessing loans from institutions	9	47.4	5	35.7	14	42.4
Infrastructure sharing	3	15.8	4	28.6	7	21.2
Production (labour and asset mobilisation)	8	42.1	8	57.1	16	48.5
Extension (technical advisory services)	2	10.5	3	21.4	5	15.2
Social work group	3	15.8	3	21.4	6	18.2
War veterans	3	15.8	5	35.7	8	18.2
Marketing	5	26.3	6	42.8	11	33.3

Source: AIAS (2005/6) Household Survey, Goromonzi and Zvimba Districts N=886

*Multiple response analysis

The following two chapters adopt a case study approach in analysing the social changes that have taken place on four former large-scale farms in Goromonzi and Zvimba since their conversion into A1 schemes through the fast track resettlement process. The discussion pays particular attention to the emergence of local authority and structured associational forms. The striking feature that the study notes is the prevalence of local associational formations and the commonality of issues that they are attempting to address. The motivation for the formation of the groups includes prior experience of formalised associational activity, perceived benefits of working within a group, and in some cases external agents such as lending institutions having shown a preference towards dealing with small groups rather than individuals. Local farmer group leaders and extension officers based on the resettled farms

explained that most of these groups started off as informal networks of mutual cooperation but eventually formalised themselves for a variety of reasons which include an increase in membership, the need for increased accountability and transparency in the handling of resources, or to meet the lending conditions of financial institutions.

7.8 The Local State and Prospects for Local Democracy

When the GoZ regained the initiative in land redistribution in late 2001 through the fast track programme it began a process of marginalising the leadership of war veterans. This involved the restoration of planning authority in the central state using the recently acquired powers to remove war veterans from the plots they had allocated themselves on the pretext of the need to re-zone the farms (Sadomba, 2008a:187). Although the programme was often perceived as „chaotic“ in execution it was implemented through a centralised mechanism that controlled decentralised structures from local (farm) level up to central government level (Chaumba et al., 2003a:9-10). In the process, the fast track approach gave “a new impetus to local structures at a relatively low direct budgetary cost” (Moyo and Yeros, 2007b:108). The defunct Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) were revived and reconstituted in structure to be run by a seven member committee¹⁶ (Chaumba et al., 2003a:10). These were later subjected to the „traditional“ authority of village heads appointed by chiefs. At the district level there were District Land Committees (DLCs) which included the Rural District Council (RDC) Chairperson, the District Chairperson of the War Veterans Association, traditional leaders (chiefs and headmen), an officer from the President“s Office (Intelligence), the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA), and officials from the departments of Social Welfare, Health, and Veterinary and Agricultural Research and Extension (AREX). The responsibilities of the DLC included identification of land for resettlement, beneficiary selection and attending to land disputes among the newly resettled farmers (GoZ, 2001). The DLC reported to similarly constituted provincial land committees, coordinated by provincial governors, which in turn reported to the central government (Moyo and Yeros, 2007b:108).

Parallel to the reconfiguration of the local state, new power relations have emerged. While during the period of jambanja the role of traditional leaders in beneficiary selection was overridden by war veterans, the former were elevated during the fast track programme. The

¹⁶ The seven member committee comprised a Chairperson (usually a war veteran), Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Vice Secretary, Treasurer, Security Officer (usually a war veteran) and one ordinary member.

chiefs managed to weave their way into official structures and advocated for the extension of their territories into contiguous resettlement areas. While the pronounced role of traditional authority in beneficiary selection and the expansion of territorial control were logistically rational, especially in beneficiary selection, it reinforced customary authority as a whole, giving sustenance to possibilities of ethno-regional biases in land allocation (Moyo and Yeros, 2007b:111). The local leadership of war veterans, once dominant within the Committees of Seven at village level and within the DLCs, has increasingly been replaced by the various tiers of traditional authority, including chiefs (at district level), headmen (at ward level) and village heads (at village level). The replacement of war veteran led and dominated structures has been discussed in this chapter and will also feature in the next two case study chapters.

Government of Zimbabwe policy pronouncements on local government in the newly resettled area seem intent on replicating the prevailing form of local government in customary areas despite the tenure differences between the two areas. In the newly resettled areas the permit creates a direct relationship between the land beneficiary and the state through civil courts, while in customary areas the traditional authority has considerable influence in land administration and allocation matters. While within the customary areas allegiance to the chief and their structures is based on a historical claim to power and social relations that have been developed over a number of years, the newly resettled areas are composed of a mixture of people from different social backgrounds who might not necessarily recognise the authority of the chief. The tensions that defined the relationships between war veterans and traditional authority leadership remain in a number of areas. In the selection of village heads traditional leaders have used the criteria of belonging as the main qualification for one to operate in the office. Many of the war veterans who were previously responsible for village administration on occupied farms have been marginalised. The tension between settlers and the newly installed village heads is more pronounced in areas such as Goromonzi where land occupations were more dominant. At Dunstan farm, one of the first farms to be captured by the land occupiers, resettled war veterans reiterated that they could not respect the newly installed village head because he did not participate in the land occupations (Goromonzi, key informant interviews, September 2008).

7.9 Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter has shown how land occupations initially contributed to the emergence of new forms of popular rural authority. However ever since the actual resettlement these have gradually been replaced by the fusion of traditional and modern institutions which bring together customary and popular political functionaries to serve on the same platforms. New structures, such as the District Land Committees and the more local Committees of Seven, made decisions on the basis of consensus but in some instances these were influenced by radical war veteran elements, especially concerning decisions on the number of farms to be occupied. The Committees of Seven were established at more localised levels to help coordinate the affairs of the new settlers, ranging from pegging of new plots to security on the farms. However the capacity of these committees remained constrained by resource limitations and conflicting war veteran agendas, seen in some instances as being in conflict with political party and state positions especially regarding the extent of land to be allocated.

In the post fast track period there has been a shift in the form of the local state towards re-establishing traditional structures in the newly resettled areas. The manner in which the turn towards re-instituting traditional authority has taken place does not augur well for local democratic practice, and is reminiscent of the manner in which the colonial state imposed traditional authority structures after the land alienations and also replaced those who were seen to be in opposition to the state with more pliable „traditional leaders“. However the acquiescence of the newly resettled areas suggests that an alternative or competing strategy of local government democracy was never adequately articulated.

The forms of social relations and action that have emerged in newly resettled areas vary but do not necessarily confront the turn towards the re-establishment of traditional authority. Rather, they respond to weak state delivery and limited market activity. The state has failed to respond adequately to rural grievances by providing adequate support for farm production through the supply of inputs such as seeds and fertilisers, and more critically it has in many instances failed to pay a fair price for agricultural commodities. The private sector in general and the agro-supply industry chain in particular has not responded proactively to the changes in the agrarian structure that the fast track reforms have facilitated, thus the newly resettled areas are characterised by a dearth of agro-dealer networks and general non-availability of

critical inputs for agricultural production. The local actions have also been a political response to the weak and ineffectual structures established by the state.

Although none of the existing fast track resettlement models provide for the creation of collective schemes, such as Model B in the first phase of land reform in the 1980s, the resettled are combining individual and group action in response to different social reproduction constraints. Furthermore there are other mainly income generation strategies that households have adopted to supplement farm incomes. These range from a variety of non-farm income generating strategies to hiring out of labour.

Local networks of cooperation have been established to complement individual household efforts. Evidence gathered from the field survey from 2006 to 2008 shows that a variety of local networks and associational forms have been formed recently on a number of former large-scale farms that have been recently converted into A1 schemes. These serve a variety of functions from the pooling of labour to asset sharing, security watch over crops (in areas where wild animals and birds are rampant) and pooling of savings. Labour and asset sharing were found to be the most common activities in which individual households cooperate. The associational forms are established in various ways and these include the very informal (with no structures) and at times invisible forms that are only activated during specific periods. For instance, labour and asset sharing structures lie dormant through the non-farming seasons and are only activated at certain stages of land preparation. Some funeral committees are activated in the case of death only while in other cases there are regular meetings to discuss savings. The highly structured and formalised local formations are discussed in more detail in Chapters 8 and 9. The basis of mobilisation and membership varies: it includes recruitment from within a certain lineage grouping (common totem), those who share a common resource, and geographical proximity to each other.

One of the notable outcomes of the fast track period has been the surge towards „organic“ (in the sense that it has mainly been driven by the land beneficiaries with minimal input from external agents) and formalised associational activity. Approximately 40 percent belong to the more structured associational forms and there are more who belong to unstructured networks of cooperation. The type of leadership in these associational forms ranges from lineage elites to wealthy and educated individuals and a few cases of war veterans and ordinary women. The existence of such informal networks and more formalised groups is not

unique to newly resettled areas but the intervention of land reform affords an opportunity to observe the birth and evolution of these processes in areas that have remained isolated from external agents such as NGOs which at times distort group formation dynamics. The following chapters discuss in more detail the emergence of these local formations through an analysis of changes in social relations of production on what used be single large- scale farms, now converted into A1 settlements.

CHAPTER 8

CASE STUDIES: DUNSTAN AND LOT 3 OF BUENA VISTA FARMS

8.1 Introduction

Through an analysis of field data, the previous discussion, especially in Chapters 6 and 7, attempted to determine the capacity of the newly resettled land beneficiaries to utilise available land effectively. This involved an analysis of the beneficiaries' socioeconomic backgrounds and their asset holding status, and included a discussion on the nature of access to land emerging from the fast track resettlement programme and the nature of the local state. The discussion in Chapter 7 began a process of laying bare the social relations underpinning socioeconomic survival and the ways in which village authority is emerging in the newly resettled areas. In this and the following chapter the discussion is deepened through a case study analysis of four former large-scale farms that were converted into A1 settlements following fast track land reform.

This chapter describes the changes that have taken place at Dunstan and Lot 3 of Buena Vista farms (see Figure 8-1 below) in Bromley in the Goromonzi district. The manner in which the farms were forcefully occupied during the period of „jambanja“ is explained briefly and a short but comprehensive sketch of the social relations and land use patterns on the large-scale farm prior to resettlement is provided. Such a background when combined with an analysis of the social changes that have taken place since the conversion of the large-scale farm into an A1 village clarifies the social significance of the fast track programme and, more importantly, brings to light some of the complex challenges surrounding the emergence of local authority and the capacity of land reform to contribute towards improved livelihoods. It traces the manner in which a particular form of social organisation is emerging around local farmer groups and the processes by which traditional authority is being externally introduced to the A1 villages.

Local farmer groups are discussed mainly in relation to the capacity they have so far exhibited in other contexts to contribute to improving the social reproduction capacities of the membership as discussed in Chapter 5. The nature of fast track resettlement, in which strangers from different backgrounds were allocated land next to each other, has imposed a new burden of forging and strengthening social relations among the beneficiaries. Significant

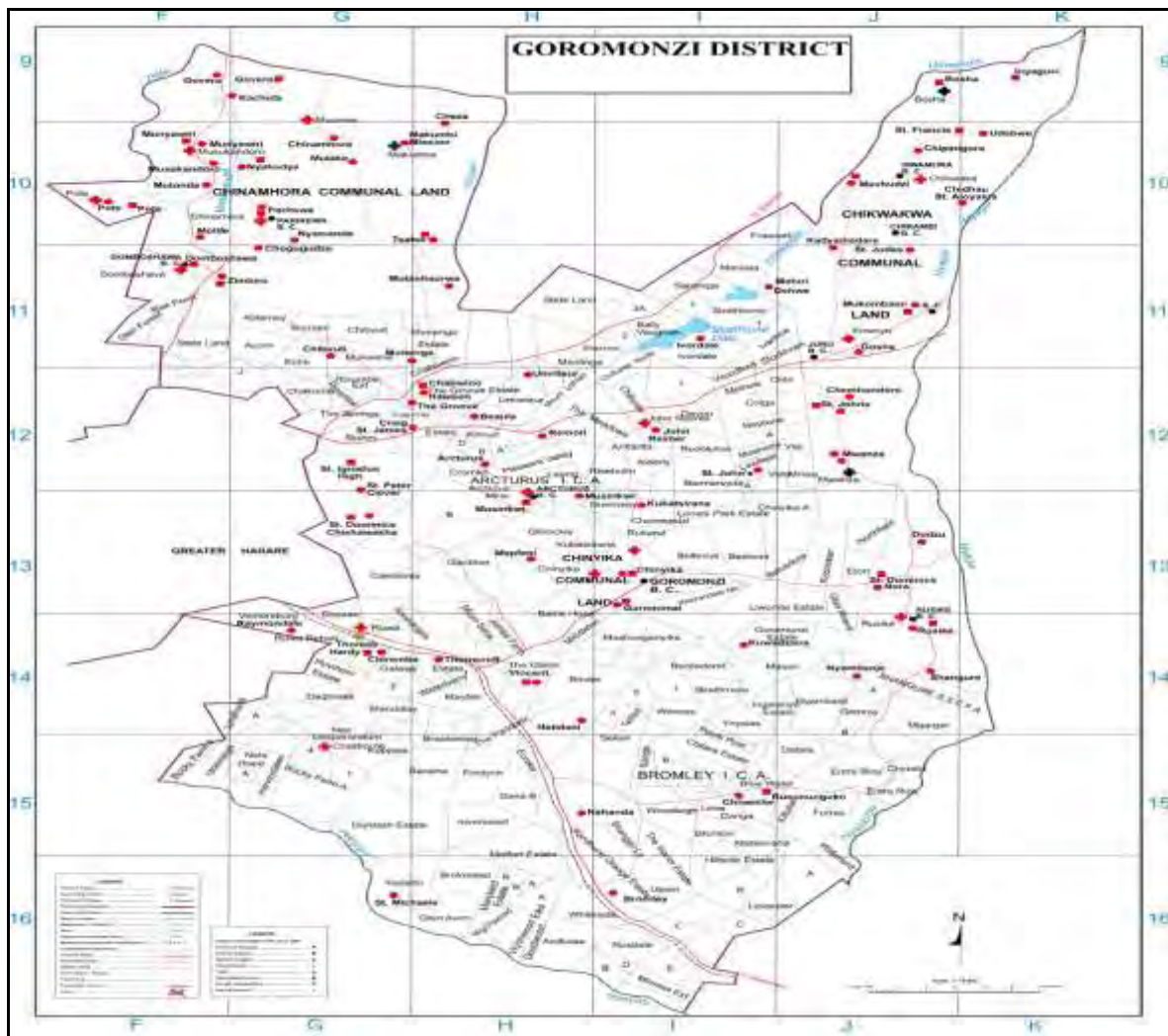
attention is therefore devoted to the analysis of the emergence and role of local farmer groups in strengthening social ties and improving the land utilisation capacities of their members. The discussion on local cooperation through farmer groups becomes even more compelling in light of the austere economic environment in which the fast track programme has evolved. State-based support to the smallholder sector has collapsed and the fast track resettlement areas continue to be shunned by other non-state actors, such as NGOs who have been actively supporting communities in the customary areas leaving the land beneficiaries to forge their own coping strategies. Furthermore, the focus on the local farmer groups arises out of the fact that these social formations are the most commonly occurring type in almost every A1 resettlement area. The previous AIAS household survey carried out in the same districts and four others found that approximately 53 percent of resettled A1 households belong to local farmer groups. The analysis of local farmer groups is aimed at laying bare the social relations that underpin the existence of these formations and it entails an examination of the rationale behind their formation, the activities in which they engage, the processes of recruitment and selection of members, and the ways in which members participate in group activities. Such a discussion contributes towards an understanding of the significance of the intervention of local farmer groups in improving household social reproduction capacity and strengthening social ties. The discussion is highly cognisant of the fact that the local farmer groups are still at a nascent stage and have to co-exist with a relatively new form of village authority which is also attempting to define its powers and functions within these communities.

8.2 Dunstan Farm

8.2.1 Background

Dunstan farm was established in 1902 and had been owned by the Calinan family ever since. The Deeds office records the previous owner of the farm as the Dunstan Estate Private Limited. From the 1950s to the early 1980s the farm was expanded through the acquisition of neighbouring farms into the Dunstan Estate which measured 6 000 hectares at its peak in the 1980s. Under the ownership of Lesley Calinan the farm was expanded through the direct purchase of Banana Grove, Fordyce, Dinhiri, Danab, Xanadu, Glen Avon and Brook Mead farms.

Figure 8-1 Goromonzi Study Sites



Source: MoL, 2009

In the mid 1990s the estate was subdivided according to the original boundaries of the farms that had been purchased in the 1980s. The Calinan family retained ownership of the original Dunstan farm, and portions of Xanadu and Brook Mead were registered under the name of Calinan MSM with the „Deeds Office“. The other farms that had made up the estate (Banana Grove, Fordyce, Dinhiri and Glen Avon) were sold to different large-scale commercial white farmers. However these changes are not recorded at the Deeds Office, current records indicate that Dunstan Estate was owned by the Calinan family. After the splitting of the estate Lesley Calinan’s son, Michael, took over the running of the farm in 1992. In 1993 Michael Calinan subdivided Xanadu farm and gave a portion to his brother-in-law, Mr Hutchins, who was one of the farm managers. Michael Calinan retained 3 200 hectares which was called Dunstan Farm and at his death in 1993 his grandson, Mike Guysford, took over the farm

(based on interviews with the extension officer and former farm workers at Dunstan, September 2008).

Activities on the farm included cattle ranching, tobacco, wheat, maize and soya bean growing and horticultural production. Running through the farm is Muswiti River which provides a perennial source of water for irrigation and other uses. Prior to fast track resettlement Dunstan farm had 3 000 head of cattle for beef which in the 1980s was mostly exported into the then European Commission and South Africa. Approximately 250 hectares was used for cropping purposes in the following manner: 80 hectares of the farm was devoted to growing tobacco which was sold at the local auction floors; during winter an average of 50 hectares was used for growing wheat, which was mostly sold to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB); and maize was grown on 100 hectares during summer and also sold to the GMB, although some was processed into feedstock for cattle and some was kept for staff rations.

In 1990 horticulture was introduced and a greenhouse covering four hectares of the farm was constructed. The flowers were exported to Holland. There were approximately 220 full time farm workers on the farm who were engaged according to agricultural activity: 80 were engaged for crop production (tobacco, wheat, maize and soya beans); 120 were hired to work in horticulture production (attending to both greenhouse and field flowers); and the remaining 20 were responsible for looking after livestock. All the full-time farm workers were provided with accommodation in the farm compound. Approximately 100 casual labourers were hired during specific periods of farm production, such as planting, weeding and harvesting, and these were mainly drawn from the neighbouring Seke communal lands.

There were four tobacco barns, three silage banks, two dip-tanks, two storage sheds, four blocks of greenhouses covering approximately four hectares and two storerooms for cattle feeds. There were three farmhouses surrounded by electric fencing. One of these, a double storey building, once reputed to be „the most beautiful house in the whole of Mashonaland East“, has since been converted into a primary school and the other two are used as houses for the teachers and the extension officer. The tobacco barns are still functional but the greenhouses were vandalised, allegedly by people from Seke communal lands.

8.2.2 Movement onto the Farm

Nationwide land occupations began in earnest in February 2000 after the rejection of a proposed constitution (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3) and in April 2000 war veterans based in Mashonaland East held a meeting in Ruwa. Members of the public were invited to the meeting to discuss the programme of land occupations that had been agreed upon in previous meeting of the national association of war veterans in Harare. In May 2000 a group of eight war veterans occupied Lot 2 of neighbouring Buena Vista farm. After a week-long stand-off in which they disrupted farm operations and held all night vigils, which included singing and political discussions with the few farm workers who attended, they successfully convinced the farm owner to move from the farm for his own safety. The war veteran leadership gave the farm owner a week to move or else the farm would be „unmanageable“ and they would make sure that none of the moveable property was moved from the farm (based on interviews with local veteran leader Mr Mavhangira, September 2008 and August 2009). The core of the war veterans group used the occupied farm as a base from which to organise the occupation of surrounding farms which included Lot 3 of Buena Vista farm, Xanadu and Dunstan.

During the same period ZANU (PF) structures in Epworth¹⁷ and Mabvuku (high density areas in Harare) mobilised members of the party to participate in land occupations that had begun in nearby Goromonzi (interviews with former ZANU (PF) Political Commissar, Epworth branch, June 2008). Those interested in land were advised by the party leaders to organise themselves and work with the leadership of the war veterans already on the ground in Goromonzi. Some of the would-be land occupiers from Mabvuku, Tafara and Epworth managed to hire buses to take them to the farms and others walked into the farms (a distance of about thirty kilometres). A group comprising approximately 60 men and women walked from Epworth and settled at Dunstan Farm. The group was joined by 50 others who had hired a bus from Epworth, Mabvuku and Tafara and approximately another 35 who came from Seke communal lands. One of the leaders of these occupiers was a female Political Commissar for the Epworth ZANU (PF) branch. On arrival at the farm the war veterans who were already settled at Lot 2 and 3 of Buena Vista farm assumed leadership and used this

¹⁷ Epworth is a peri-urban settlement that emerged from a mission farm owned by the Methodist Church. It is situated 12kilometres south-east of Harare and its jurisdiction is under a local board. Over the years there has been an upsurge of informal settlements in the area due to the high demand for low cost urban houses.

new mass of people to make a demand for land and food supplies from the farm (the role of this core of war veterans is discussed in more detail in the second case study).

The group approached the owner and advised him of their intention to occupy a portion of the farm. It is alleged by the former political commissar of ZANU (PF) Epworth district and now land beneficiary at Dunstan that the farm owner refused to share the farm. He approached the local police in Goromonzi and when they visited the farm they held talks with the leaders of the occupation and informed them that they were trespassing and should not engage in any violence (interviews with one of the war veteran leaders at Dunstan Farm, Mr Choto, September 2008). The police advised the farm owner that expelling the occupiers would lead to violence and instead they advised him to enter into negotiations with the local leadership of the occupations. The occupiers insist now that they made suggestions for the sharing of the large-scale farm with the former owner but he had refused and decided instead to move off the farm (based on interviews with war veteran leaders at Dunstan, Mr Choto and Ms Maveka, September 2008). The farm owner, accompanied by the police, was allowed to remove all his productive moveable equipment from the farm. After the departure of the farm owner the war veteran leadership on the ground carried out what has been called „rough subdivisions“ to 145 occupiers and limited farm production began in 2000 (interview with Dunstan Farm Village Headman responsible for Villages 1 and 2). The District Development Fund (DDF) provided tillage support.

In 2001 the District Administrator's office, officials from the Ministry of Lands and agricultural extension officers operating under the regimen of the fast track land reform programme came to peg A1 plots and the number of plots was reduced to 115. Twenty-six of the original land occupiers had left the farm between the time of occupations and official pegging, some citing the uncertainty of the acquisition process and others having to return to their urban jobs (interviews with Village Headmen and Extension Officer, September 2008). There are 115 households resettled on the farm and all the beneficiaries have been issued with offer letters by the GoZ through the Rural District Council. The provisions of the offer letter are discussed in more detail in Chapters 3 and 7, suffice it here to note that it provided the initial acknowledgement by the state of the occupier's claim to land.

None of the 220 former farm workers based at Dunstan was officially allocated land but it was agreed that they would not be moved from the compounds. The farm workers were excluded despite the fact that they had not actively resisted the occupation, unlike on other farms where acrimonious stand-offs between white farm owners and land occupiers left farm workers caught in the middle. The farm workers did not have the opportunity to be part of the rank and file of the land occupiers as they were treated with hostility in the early days by the latter and the former owner was removed within a very short space of time. Currently approximately 70 of the 220 former farm worker households remain at Dunstan farm and they are engaged in a variety of activities which include providing farm labour to A1 farmers settled at Dunstan and neighbouring Lot 3 of Buena Vista, and to A2 farms (interviews with Dunstan Farm Extension Officer, September 2008). Besides providing farm labour they are also involved in fishing for sale to neighbouring A1 farmers and traders from Harare, and collecting grass for thatching and firewood for sale. The former farm workers are reluctant to work for the A1 farmers due to alleged poor remuneration and working conditions (interview with former farm worker based at Dunstan Farm, September 2008).

8.2.3 Evolution of Village Level Authority

The emergence of village authority has been shaped by the manner in which land occupations were organised. The first farm to be occupied in Ward 22 was Lot 2 of Buena Vista. The core of war veterans based at Lot 2 of Buena Vista farm was responsible for identifying farms for further occupations, developing plans and timeframes for occupations and mobilising people to join the land occupations. The occupation of farms was never done simultaneously due to fears of resistance and being overpowered by the farm owners (interviews with war veteran leader, Mr Mavhangira, September 2008). There was no officially sanctioned form of local authority on the farms. Rather the land occupiers organised themselves and established fairly new structures known as command centres and these were responsible for identifying farms that would be occupied, providing security and organising welfare for those on occupied farms under the leadership of war veterans settled at Lot 2 of Buena Vista. Prior to the occupation of Dunstan the leadership of the occupations gathered intelligence from farm workers, including the farm owner's domestic worker, on where he kept his guns and two-way radios. On the day of the occupation the core group split into two, the first group was responsible for making sure that the farm owner had no access to his gun cabinet and two-way radios while the other one knocked on the front door and announced that they had come

to take over the land (based on interviews with former Base Commander and other war veterans, September 2008). The confrontation with the former farm owner was generally instigated at night and it was kept a secret even from the collaborating farm workers (interviews with former Base Commander, September 2008).

The second and lower tier of local authority was established on the individual former large-scale farm after its occupation and was known as the „Committee of Seven“. The Committee was under the leadership of a war veteran who also became the Base Commander at Dunstan farm and it included war veterans (who are 22 of the 119 beneficiaries) and non-war veterans. One of the early roles of the Committee was to set up security structures to defend the occupied land. Within weeks of its establishment the Committee was vetting and approving candidates for land allocation. A total of 145 households were issued with plots and subdivisions were carried out by the Committee and other volunteers. Beginning in late October 2000 the Committee approached the District Development Fund (DDF) for tillage support but the DDF was overwhelmed with demand and could only prepare one hectare for each beneficiary. The Committee of Seven was also responsible for the maintenance of immovable equipment found on the farm.

As previously discussed in Chapter 7 the Ministry of Local Government in 2003 issued a directive for the expansion of chieftainships into the newly resettled areas. Chief Rusike of Seke communal lands and the neighbouring Hunyani area was a beneficiary of this government policy as his territory was expanded to include the Bromley area in Goromonzi. In 2004 the chief accompanied by the police, officials from the Ministry of Lands and the Ward Councillor of the Rural District Council appointed two village heads and subdivided the former large-scale farm into four villages for administrative purposes. Each of the village heads was given the responsibility of administrative oversight of two villages. Unlike in customary areas, where village heads are appointed on the basis of belonging to a lineage grouping, in this instance the Chief's criteria revolved around issues of leadership, popularity and availability on the farm (based on Interviews with local Extension Officer and Village Head, September 2008). The practice of selecting village heads was not uniform at Dunstan. While the Chief appointed a war veteran as the village head for Villages 1 and 2 on the basis of his own criteria, he invited those in villages 3 and 4 to vote for their own village head and they voted for a Mr Chiambiwa who is not a war veteran. Focus group discussions revealed

that Mr Chiambiwa was voted into office ahead of others who had canvassed for the position because of his ability to farm and willingness to share his productive infrastructure (interviews with Village 3 resident, Ms Marewa, September 2008).

The village heads are part of the hierarchy of traditional authority and their responsibilities encompass administrative, juridical, policing and cultural activities. They have the right to hold court (dare) with a panel of advisors (currently restricted to VIDCO members described below) and to mediate in conflicts over land boundaries and domestic disputes that include cases relating to issues of adultery and violence. Mr Choto, the head for villages 1 and 2, revealed that he has handled a number of boundary disputes and on many occasions has had to consult with the extension officer resident at Dunstan farm. He has however been powerless in effecting environmental conservation controls, especially the practice of establishing gardens along the river bank which is common within the former large-scale farm. The village heads are also responsible for ensuring that the day of *chisi* (a day set aside for rest where cultivation of the land is not permitted) is observed by all the farmers. None of the village heads at Dunstan have prior experience of village leadership and they have not had the opportunity to learn more about their responsibilities.

In 2005, the village heads were advised by officials of the Goromonzi Rural District Council to establish a subordinate structure with seven elected officials to be called the „Village Development Committee“ (VIDCO). The VIDCO is made up of a chairperson, security officer, treasurer, women’s representative, and health and youth representatives, all elected by members of the village. It was created to provide support to the activities of the village head. The Committee works with the village head and meets once every three months. The village head and the Development Committee are responsible for coming up with development plans which are then submitted to the Ward Development Committee. At Dunstan the VIDCO has to date mobilised villagers to repair a bridge.

8.2.4 Emerging Land Use and Utilisation Patterns

Prior to embarking on a discussion of the emerging associationalism this sub-section briefly outlines the changes in land use and the capacities of the land beneficiaries to utilise their allocated plots. Since resettlement most of the beneficiary households have focused on maize, soya bean and tobacco growing. The majority grow maize for their own consumption and

dispose of the surplus through the GMB. Land utilisation capacities vary among the beneficiaries. Approximately only twenty percent of the households on Dunstan farm have managed to continuously utilise their allocated six hectares through the hiring of tillage services from private contractors (interviews with Extension Officer, September 2008). This group is composed of those who used to have and those who retain urban jobs. Besides their ability to hire private tillage contractors they also have access to cash to purchase farm inputs. The majority of the settlers depend on state subsidised support which has been unreliable in the past five years. In fact the only time that all members received support from the government operated DDF tillage support programme was in 2000 when the latter prepared one hectare of land for each beneficiary. Since 2001 the service has been constrained by the shortage of diesel or by non-working equipment.

In a sample of 41 of the 119 households settled at Dunstan farm only 24.3 percent own a pair of bullocks that they can use to prepare land and 41.5 percent of the interviewed households own an ox-drawn plough (see Annex 8-1). Approximately 60 percent of the sample own non-productive assets such as bicycles, solar panels and radios. These figures suggest that, although resettlement has occurred under very difficult economic circumstances, some of the households have managed to accumulate but they have shown a preference for non-productive assets. The bias towards non-productive assets arises partly out of the uncertainty of tenure security and also the expectation that the GoZ will provide farm equipment (based on focus group discussions held with local farmer group members).

The newly-resettled farmers have established a number of mechanisms of cooperation and other arrangements that contribute towards enhancing individual households' capacity to fully utilise land. One of the emerging arrangements at Dunstan farm is the practice of subletting a portion of allocated arable land in return for tillage and inputs support. According to the extension officer resident at Dunstan, approximately 10 percent of the beneficiaries are involved in some form of subletting of land. In some cases the sub-tenants include fellow land beneficiaries in need of more land after fully utilising their allocated plots, and in other cases outsiders from urban areas with relations on the farm have approached those land beneficiaries who are not fully utilising their allocated plots. On average the households involved rent out one to two hectares of land. The extension officer resident at Dunstan is one of the few people who have managed to access extra land for farming through this practice.

In the 2006/07 and 2007/08 seasons he entered into an informal tenancy agreement with his neighbour who had been struggling to effectively utilise the six hectares allocated to him. In return the extension officer paid for the preparation of his neighbour's four hectares and provided him with a 25kg bag of hybrid maize seed.

Besides the informal tenancy agreements the newly resettled beneficiaries have entered into various associational forms of cooperation within the confines of what used to be Dunstan farm. During the early years the Committee of Seven was responsible for coordinating the use of inherited infrastructure such as tobacco barns, dip-tanks and allocation of market gardening plots alongside Muswiti River. Labour and asset sharing pools have been established among neighbouring households and the practice of *nhimbe* (labour collective) is quite common during the planting, weeding and harvesting seasons. However, beyond these informal and unstructured forms of association structured local farmer groups have emerged at Dunstan farm.

8.3 Associational Activity at Dunstan

8.3.1 Background

The extension officers¹⁸ (a husband and wife team) responsible for Wards 21 and 22 which include Dunstan farm were deployed to the area in 2002 and they have been very active in introducing new land use patterns among the beneficiaries and in promoting the idea of cooperation through local farmer groups. As part of their responsibilities an extension officer is expected to provide information on inputs, and in the context of challenges in securing these the officers on Dunstan farm advised land beneficiaries to consider establishing groups which would be responsible for obtaining inputs. In response one local farmer group, called Budiro, was established at Dunstan farm with 64 members (based on interviews with Extension Officer, September 2008 and focus group discussions held at Dunstan Farm, September and October 2008). The group faced challenges in convening meetings and even in agreeing within the group on the actual objective of association (Dunstan focus group discussion notes 01/08, September 2008). Again on the advice of the extension officer the

¹⁸ The GoZ Extension Officers have also been offered an A1 plot on Dunstan farm. They live in what used to be the farm manager's house. The husband is responsible for land beneficiaries resettled at Dunstan, Xanadu, Brook Mead and Banana Grove farms and the wife is responsible for Harveysdale and Lots 1, 2 and 3 of Buena Vista farm. The male officer has a very technical approach to group formation, views such groups as purely platforms for extension, and prefers smaller groups.

group was split into smaller units on the basis of preferred land use to enable easier organisation, extension support and financing arrangements (interviews with Bromley area Extension Officer and Budiriro Maize Group Chairperson, June 2009). In 2004 the group was subdivided and four groups for those interested in growing maize, Budiriro (Shona for development or progress), Muswiti (named after the river that passes by the farm), Dunstan and Shingai (Shona for resilience) were eventually formed. Table 8-1 provides a summary of the groups that exist at Dunstan. Out of the 115 official beneficiaries 71 (61 percent) belong to such associational forms. Four out of five local groups were initially established to enhance maize production capacity.

Table 8-1: Local Farmer Groups at Dunstan Farm

Name	Land Use	Year of Formation	Total in Group	Number Interviewed
Budiriro	Maize	2003	10	10
Dunstan	Maize	2004	10	0
Gutsaruzhinji	Tobacco	2006	14	0
Muswiti	Maize	2004	15	15
Salt-Lakes	Tobacco	2005	16	16
Shingai	Maize	2004	16	0
Total			81	41

Source: Author (2008) Goromonzi and Zvimba, LFG Households Survey

Initially there were very few farmers interested in venturing into tobacco growing, even after receiving training from the extension officer. Only seven households have consistently grown tobacco since 2002 and these pioneered the establishment of the Salt-Lakes¹⁹ local farmer group in 2005. The group has 16 members and on average each member devotes two hectares of their plot to growing tobacco. There were others who ventured into tobacco growing late and could not enter Salt-Lakes because of the binding agreement that had been made with the multinational tobacco company on the number of farmers to be within the group and the amount of inputs to supplied. These households formed Gutsaruzhinji in 2006 which also focuses on tobacco growing but without the same contract farming relationship that the members of the Salt-Lakes group currently have.

The formation of the local farmer groups in Goromonzi has mostly been driven by the local extension officer except for Salt-Lakes whose origins derive from the contract farming model

¹⁹ Salt-Lakes is a multinational tobacco company that entered into an agreement with a consortium of mainly A2 farmers growing tobacco. Within the consortium one of the leading A2 farmers also acts as an agent for A1 farmers interested in growing tobacco.

established by the multinational company of the same name. The initial impetus for association within Salt-Lakes local farmer group came from the Salt-Lakes Ltd multinational's local representative, and one of the current leaders led the initiative of setting up the group. The pull factor for associational activity and growing of tobacco was the promised improvement in access to tobacco inputs and the reduced burden of marketing. Under the agreement all the tobacco produced by the members is sold to the multinational on the basis of prevailing tobacco auction floor prices (interview with Chairperson of Salt-Lakes LFG, September 2008).

8.3.2 Activities of the Local Farmer Groups at Dunstan

The majority of the local farmer groups at Dunstan have been established in order to improve the accessibility of farm inputs. Salt-Lakes farmer group is the only group that is focused on ensuring that members get fair prices for their product. Since their formation all the groups have registered formally with the local extension office based at the Goromonzi service centre, which also acts as the centre for the distribution of inputs within the district. The groups submitted their constitutions and lists of members as part of the registration process (interview with Goromonzi District Extension Officer, August 2008).

The groups have managed to secure limited quantities of inputs for their members through the GoZ's input subsidy programme (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3) since the 2004/05 agricultural season. Although the groups submit estimates of their required inputs the quantities supplied by the GoZ have been consistently inadequate, covering an average of 0.5 to one hectare per farmer. Besides the limited quantities the inputs have rarely been delivered on time. While the normal planting season in Zimbabwe is from late October to the end of December the majority of the farmer group members confirmed that they have always received inputs from government in January (Dunstan, focus group discussion notes, September 2008).

In the 2007/08 season all the farmer groups at Dunstan that had submitted applications for inputs were reportedly „skipped by the computer“ and thus there were no allocations for any of the land beneficiaries (interviews with Muswiti LFG Chairperson, September 2008). In fact there was a broader problem with input allocations in that year: most of the A1 local farmer groups in Goromonzi were not allocated any inputs due to the fact that the local

distribution officer received less than 20 percent of the inputs they had requested (interview with Goromonzi District Extension Officer, September 2008).

Beyond the acquisition of farm inputs all the groups based at Dunstan have introduced joint savings as a core activity of the group. They have opened joint savings accounts with the local branch of Agri-Bank. Since 2005, the local Agri-Bank branch has been issuing short term micro-credit loans under the Strategic Grain Reserve Facility to local farmer groups that maintain savings accounts (interview with Agri-Bank Branch Manager, November 2008). The loans are issued specifically for the purchase of farm inputs. The leadership of the groups was tasked with ensuring 100 percent repayment of the loan to the bank. Muswiti and Salt-Lakes farmer groups were among the first recipients of the loans. In December 2006 the Muswiti farmer group was issued with a loan of ZW\$5 040 000.00 (approximately US\$1 000 for the purchase of inputs which was to be repaid by September 2007 (Agri-Bank 2006, Loan Agreement Form with Muswiti LFG). According to the leader of the Muswiti local farmer group the amount was not given as cash but the bank assisted them in obtaining seed maize and fertilisers. Each member of the group received two 50kg bags of seed maize and two 25kg bags of fertiliser. The group managed to repay the loan by the end of June 2006 when the members had sold their maize to the GMB and a private milling company.²⁰

The relationship between Agri-Bank and local farmer groups thrived from 2005 until the end of 2007. During this period other groups such as Salt-Lakes also managed to acquire loans to purchase farm inputs for two consecutive seasons but during the 2007/08 farming season the bank could not issue any loans. The reasons for the discontinuation of the loan facility were not properly explained to the leaders of the farmer groups who still think that it was due to the fact that the bank lost confidence in them (Dunstan focus group discussion notes, September 2008). In actual fact the bank was also a victim of inflation. It failed to maintain the Strategic Grain Reserve Facility as a revolving fund because even though it tried to adjust interest rates the measures were not a sufficient response to the hyperinflation (interviews with Mr Hlophe, Agri-Bank Branch Manager, September 2008).

²⁰ At the time of repaying the loan the actual amount owed had been reduced substantially due to hyperinflation and according to the leader of Muswiti the amount was equivalent to one tonne of maize, which was at the time valued at US\$100.00 on informal markets.

The maintenance of savings accounts by the groups was also negatively affected by the hyperinflation that characterised Zimbabwe up to late 2008. On two occasions members of Budiro and Muswiti lost all their funds because they left the money in the bank for too long (interviews with Budiro and Muswiti chairpersons, September 2008). The groups still maintain a savings account but as of 2008 Budiro and Muswiti had moved towards rotating savings (colloquially referred to as stokvels in South Africa and kukandirana in Zimbabwe), where the agreed amount for saving in each month is given to one member on a rotating basis. Funds from these initiatives have been deployed towards a number of social functions and farm investments. Social uses for the funds realised from the rotating savings include travelling to attend a relative's funeral in the customary areas, purchase of groceries, and purchase of chickens and feed for a small chicken project (Budiro, Muswiti, focus group discussions, September 2008). Two members of Muswiti managed to take advantage of the savings generated from kukandirana and purchased a small water pump which they use jointly for the irrigation of their vegetable gardens (Muswiti, 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008).

Among the groups under study at Dunstan farm, Budiro and Muswiti have limited areas of official cooperation. The groups are only involved in the coordination of joint savings and obtaining maize inputs and financing. Once these have been attained the members revert to individual production and their own marketing of the commodities produced. However the members of Muswiti farmer group indicated that they were also involved in labour and asset sharing (Muswiti 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008). Amai Maveka, the leader of the group, clarified that most of the members live close to each other and engage in these activities on the basis of their own understanding but these activities remain outside of the scope of the group (interviews with Muswiti Chairperson, September 2008).

Salt-Lakes local farmer group goes beyond joint mobilisation of savings and inputs to include activities such as the pooling of labour and group marketing of tobacco. The uniqueness of Salt-Lakes from other farmer groups at Dunstan derives from its formalised relationship with a private sector company for the supply of inputs where others mostly rely on state agencies. Furthermore, tobacco growing requires specialised skills which were depleted during the process of occupation and acquisition of the farms and in an attempt to reduce the effect of this constraint Salt-Lakes has taken up as one of its activities the joint hiring and group utilisation of specialised labour. This kind of labour pooling is different from the more

common *nhimbe* (labour pools) in that it involves the joint hiring of special skills for activities such as the treatment and transfer of seedlings and the curing of tobacco. These skills were initially hired from neighbouring A2 farmers to service the needs of all members. However since the 2006/07 season some of the members of Salt-Lakes have become experts in seed handling to the extent that they are now being hired by neighbouring A2 farmers to prepare seedbeds for them. The group is also engaged in the joint use of productive assets, making use of the inherited tobacco curing barns and grading sheds that were left behind by the previous owner. Since its formation in 2005 the members of the group have received tobacco inputs and chemicals sufficient to cover two hectares per member from the contracting Salt-Lakes Limited. In the first year the contracting company sent in an extension officer to help the contractee farmers in the growing of tobacco. As part of the agreement the group is expected to jointly sell all its tobacco to the contractor. Average yields since 2005 based on marketed output show that each member has been able to deliver at least three tonnes of tobacco (based on records of tobacco deliveries from 2005 to 2007). However these average yields are much lower than the average tobacco yields of a minimum of five tonnes per hectare prior to land reform.

8.3.3 Criteria of Membership of the Local Farmer Groups

The most salient feature of membership in these groups is that it is based on a household basis rather than on an individual basis. This form of membership is seen as more inclusive and allows continuous participation of households even in the absence of the household head. The process of recruitment into groups is characterised by an almost equal distribution of efforts between the extension officer and the founding members. A core of active members of the original Budiriro group (which had to be split because it was too big) was tasked with establishing other smaller groups with the assistance of the extension officer. They engaged in recruiting new members among those settled at Dunstan but not belonging to any group. The Muswiti Maize Group emerged from such a process. It started with five members and by the end of 2006 the membership had increased to 15. Budiriro Maize Group retained some of the original members and the new chairperson managed to recruit two new members who prior to 2005 had not belonged to any local group (interview with Budiriro Chairperson, September 2008).

The majority of the members of Salt-Lakes confirmed that they had been encouraged by the manner in which one of the founders of Salt-Lakes, a woman, had managed to grow tobacco in the first year of resettlement and when she approached them to join the group they enthusiastically took up the offer (Salt-Lakes focus group discussions notes 01/08, September 2008). Only one member of Salt-Lakes within the sample was persuaded by the village head to join the group after growing tobacco for two consecutive seasons independently.

The intervention of the extension officer and village heads in supporting either an ongoing initiative or the establishment of a new group has also been critical for successful recruitment. Most of the resettled farmers speak highly of their extension officer, and his recommendations regarding farm production and organisation are usually followed without question.

8.3.4 Involvement of Members in the Local Farmer Groups

Structure and Formalisation of Groups

As part of an effort at formalisation the groups have come up with their own constitutions which spell out the objectives of the group, its activities, conditions of membership and the different roles of office bearers. These constitutions are in some instances very basic, one-to-two page typed documents, while others are more elaborate. The constitution of Salt-Lakes for example is a technical, 18 page document. The Chairperson of Salt-Lakes revealed that she had asked her son, a university graduate, to draft the constitution for them. However, none of the members had managed to read the whole document (Salt-Lakes, 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008). The groups also keep a register of members' attendance of meetings and payment of subscription fees.

Beyond the constitution and registers there are other documents that prove the existence of a group. For example in 2006 Salt-Lakes entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the representative of the multinational group, Salt-Lakes Limited. Budiriro and Muswiti opened savings accounts with Agri-Bank in early 2006: the banking and loan records are further proof of their existence as a formal entity that can enter into legal contracts. All the groups keep records of their meetings which provide an insight into the nature of the issues that have been discussed since the groups were formed. However the manner of recording the minutes is erratic, with some (especially in the Muswiti group) only

showing the number of people who attended a meeting without the details of the issues discussed. In other instances, such as Budiro where there has been a change of secretaries, some of the records from the first year of operation up to 2007 have been lost.

Participation in Group Activities

This sub-section demonstrates the manner in which the leadership and membership interact in adopting decisions within a group. I recorded the frequency of meetings and attendance by the members of each group in order to determine the sense of belonging and ownership within the groups. Respondents participating in focus groups were asked if they felt that their input was important in shaping the activities of the group and whether they could identify instances in which they had opposed decisions taken by the leadership and prevailed.

At the beginning the groups held their meetings once a fortnight, on Thursdays, to take advantage of the practice of *chisi* (defined in the previous chapter), when people and the land are allowed to rest. However after a year of operations the interest in holding meetings every fourteen days has waned. The two maize groups have moved to holding monthly meetings and these most often coincide with the day of kukandirana on which members bring their savings and give them to the recipient for that particular month. Salt-Lakes farmer group also holds regular monthly meetings but because of the complexity and range of activities it is involved in, ad hoc meetings are called for regularly especially during the tobacco growing period.

All the groups specify that the attendance of meetings is compulsory and continued absenteeism may lead to the expulsion of members.²¹ The meetings have an average of 90 percent attendance and if the head of the household cannot attend they are allowed to nominate their spouse or child to attend on behalf of the household. Various issues are discussed during these meetings, ranging from feedback on activities and trips undertaken by the leadership on behalf of the group to consideration of new activities. They also provide a platform for the general membership to make an input into planned activities and to query certain decisions. The meetings of the smaller groups can take one hour or an entire afternoon

²¹ This rule is specified in most of the constitutions but does not seem to have been invoked in any of the groups, as evidenced by high levels of absenteeism especially in the medium and large groups.

depending on the issues under discussion (interviews with Budiriro and Salt-Lakes chairpersons, September 2008).

Two of the groups under study (Muswiti and Salt-Lakes) are dominated by women in leadership and in general membership (see Table 8-2 below). At Muswiti the Chairperson, Secretary and one of the committee members are female. The Chairperson of Muswiti used to be the Political Commissar for the ZANU (PF) branch in Epworth and is now the Chairperson for the new ZANU (PF) branch which covers A1 settlements at Dunstan, Xanadu and Lots 2 and 3 of Buena Vista. At Salt-Lakes the Chairperson, Treasurer and one of the committee members are women. The Chairperson of Salt-Lakes is a widow who owns a house and runs a shop in Epworth. She is usually based in Epworth when the tobacco growing and marketing seasons are over. Budiriro is the only group in the sample that is headed by a male. The Treasurer and one of the committee members are male. Members of Budiriro were generally satisfied with the levels of consultation within the group, while the male members within the Muswiti group complained that they are excluded from certain decisions, such as in setting amounts for regular savings (based on focus group discussions held with Budiriro and Muswiti members, September, 2008).

Table 8-2: Structure and Gender Composition of Farmer Group Leadership

Farm	Name of Group	Position			
		Chair	Secretary	Treasurer	Comm. Members
Dunstan	Budiriro	Male	Female	Male	Female and male
	Muswiti	Female	Female	Male	Female and male
	Salt-Lakes	Female	Female	Male	Female and male

Source: Author (2008) Goromonzi, LFG Households Survey

The trend in the Salt-Lakes group is slightly different from that of the other small groups. The group has developed a number of innovations for ensuring that members benefit from the synergy created by their collective capacity and this also contributes to certain differences in participation trends. One of the conditions of membership of Salt-Lakes is that members should be willing to devote some of their land to tobacco growing. Furthermore the members have agreed to consult each other when purchasing productive assets in order to avoid duplication and to limit their dependence on external service providers (Salt-Lakes 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008). However there is a minority who feel that the leadership of the group has taken a number of decisions without necessarily consulting them

and they also complain about the long absence of the chairperson of the group from the farm. They pointed out during focus group discussions that the group charges the highest membership and subscription fees and some of the members felt that the fees were exorbitant and that they were continuously being revised upwards by the leadership without adequate explanation. When these issues were presented to the leadership they were quick to identify the people who could have raised these complaints (without the names being given) and explained that they have a long history of complaining. The leaders argued that, unlike other groups, they have to constantly revise subscription fees because of the fact that they engage third parties to help them maintain their tobacco crop and also they incur transport costs travelling to Harare to meet with the contracting agent.

There are subtle differences in the decision-making styles within the groups. The general meetings of the Budiro group have on a number of occasions reversed decisions taken by the leadership without initial consultations with the group. Towards the end of 2006 the leadership of Budiro wanted the group to expand into tobacco production but the members of the group argued against the decision. Most members felt that they were not adequately prepared to make the switch to tobacco production at that stage, especially given the unavailability of inputs such as fertiliser (Budiro 01/08, focus group discussion notes, September 2008). However this was not an easy decision to reach. The minutes show that the matter was deliberated over several meetings and the majority of the members urged those who wanted to go into tobacco farming to either join Salt-Lakes or form another group. Subsequently another group called Gutsaruzhinji which focused solely on tobacco production was formed. Only three members of Budiro also belong to Gutsaruzhinji and the rest of the membership is drawn from the 22 war veterans settled on the farm.

In 2007 the Muswiti group faced the prospect of declining subscriptions and savings due to a variety of factors but mostly lack of income among the membership with which to make contributions towards the group due to the austere economic environment (interview with Muswiti Chairperson, September 2008). As part of an effort to arrest this decline the leadership of Muswiti proposed that they take over the marketing of the fresh vegetables from the gardens run individually by members. The membership rejected the proposal citing the same reasons of austere economic circumstances and also the fear of losing control over one of the few farm activities that generate both a cash income and contributing towards household food security in the form vegetables. In a focus group discussion the members

clarified that they were not sure what the group would do with the cash generated (Muswiti, 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September, 2008). At the end the Chairperson and Secretary had to use their own funds to travel to Marondera and Harare while representing the group (interview with Muswiti Chairperson, September 2008).

There have also been instances in which decisions made by the leadership of Salt-Lakes have been challenged. In 2006 the leadership proposed a scheme of joint production of tobacco seeds on the leader's garden. The members refused to cooperate due to the fact that the leader is not permanently based on her plot and at the time she did not have permanent workers. The members perceived this as an attempt to get free labour and they were not sure how the seeds would eventually be transferred to other members (Salt-Lakes, 01/08, focus group discussion notes, September 2008). At the beginning of 2008 the leadership suggested the revision of subscription fees. Most of the members refused to pass the decision on the basis that there would not be a lot of travelling during the period and suggested that subscription fees should only be increased when the leadership has to travel (Salt-Lakes, 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008).

The manner in which a final decision is adopted is a critical aspect of internal participation practice. A consensus-building approach is used by Budiro and Muswiti in which a matter is brought before the group and is discussed until an acceptable solution is found. However even here there is evidence of issues being discussed prior to the meetings among some of the members, especially in Muswiti. The idea of the joint marketing of vegetables grown individually by members in the 0.5 hectare gardens was mooted by some of the leaders in order to arrest the decline of member contributions for the savings account (interviews with Muswiti Secretary, September 2008 and August 2009). On the day of the meeting some of the members felt that they were being ambushed without adequate preparation and refused to endorse the decision (interview with group member, Dunstan Farm, September 2008). Despite the seeming highly engaging approach of the leadership within Muswiti, most of the ordinary members spoken to felt that participation was biased in favour of the leaders. The male members especially felt that women dominated the processes but could not be removed because of the good relationship they have with the AREX officer (interview with male Muswiti group member Dunstan Farm, September 2008).

8.4 Benefits of Membership of a Local Farmer Group

Although the local farmer groups are fairly nascent their positive impact on household social reproduction is beginning to be evident. In separate focus group discussions members of Budiro, Muswiti and Salt-Lakes stated that they are now better off in terms of food security because of the intervention of the farmer groups in obtaining inputs. The life story of an individual household provides an illustration of how the intervention of a local farmer group has contributed towards improved social reproduction capacity. This section provides a concise narrative of how one individual participated in land occupations and later joined the Salt-Lakes farmer group. In the process it details the social transformation that has occurred in his family. The objective of the biographical account is to highlight the impact of the intervention of the local farmer group in social reproduction and accumulation.

Mathias Mandikisi, a 52-year-old man, was part of the group that hired a bus from Epworth to occupy Dunstan farm in the Goromonzi district. He was initially allocated an A1 plot by the war veteran leadership and this was subsequently made official by the District Administrator's team comprising officials from the Ministry of Lands, Agricultural Extension and the police. Mathias is married to Esther who is 46 years old and they have five children, three boys and two girls. The boys are aged 19, 13 and eight. The teenagers attend a high school that is 15 kilometres away from the farm, whilst the eight year old attends the local primary school. The eldest child is a girl aged 21; she is married and stays with her husband in Epworth and their youngest child is a girl aged four. Beyond the nuclear family, three relatives stay in the home as part of the family.

Mathias is originally from the Mutoko communal lands (within Mashonaland East) and was a farm worker at Lot 1 of Buena Vista in the Goromonzi district from 1981 to 1998. He was employed as a records clerk and was responsible for weighing and recording of tobacco bales, and in the off-season he would act as a foreman responsible for the supervision of general farm workers. He supplemented his income by doing part-time photography, gardening and soldering pots in Harare. He resigned from his full-time job in 1998 with the hope of establishing his own business.

Due to work commitments and limited savings he did not manage to establish regular contact with his lineage group in Mutoko and thereby failed to secure land in his rural home. Prior to resigning from his farm job he had managed to buy a 300 square metre plot in Epworth and

the owner of Lot 1 of Buena Vista had allowed him to mould bricks at the farm for the construction of his Epworth home. His attempts to establish a pot soldering and photography business were not successful due to lack of financing.

In May 2000 Mathias heard from war veterans and ZANU (PF) party officials that those who wanted land for farming should apply to the local party structures. Some war veterans who were based in Epworth town mobilised those who wanted land and these would-be land occupiers contributed money to hire a bus which took them to Dunstan farm.

Since his resettlement in 2000 he has been growing maize on two hectares, and sunflower and groundnuts on 0.5 hectares each. In the first season (2000/01) he received tillage support from the DDF which prepared one hectare of land per family. The maize yield, which forms an important part of the staple diet, is an average two tonnes per hectare and he has sold an average of 1.5 tonnes of maize every year since the 2002/03 agricultural season. The 2002/03 season was a turning point for his farm operations; the good maize harvest enabled him to purchase most of the small farm equipment he needed, to construct an extra round hut and to buy blankets and sofas from the proceeds of the sale.

In 2005 Mathias decided to expand into tobacco production and joined the Salt-Lakes local farmer group. His membership entitled him to access to tobacco inputs sufficient to cover three hectares of land. He has been growing tobacco on three hectares of his six hectare plot since the 2005/06 agricultural season. On average he has sold about 2 500kgs annually. Through his membership of Salt-Lakes group he has received on-site training in growing of tobacco seedlings, their transfer and proper methods of looking after the crop. He has also been able to gain access to inputs without having to pay up front for them and to receive ongoing support in tobacco growing. During the curing process Mathias combines his tobacco with that of other members of Salt-Lakes. The practice of joint-curing of tobacco was devised by the group in order to maximise use of the curing which has a maximum capacity of 20 tonnes of tobacco at any time (interviews with Salt-Lakes Chairperson, September 2008).

As part of an attempt to maximise benefits from the river that runs through the farm the extension officer has encouraged land beneficiaries to clear land 30 metres away from the river to grow leafy vegetables and tomatoes. Mathias also uses his garden as a nursery for tobacco seeds and in the past two seasons he has been growing tobacco seedlings for fellow

members within Salt-Lakes and neighbouring A2 farmers for a fee. He also sells some of his excess vegetables to market traders from the city. In addition to cropping Mathias has since 2006 managed to accumulate some livestock. He has four cattle (two oxen and two cows), four goats and 25 chickens. The cattle are mostly used for draught power and as a source of milk.

During the initial years of resettlement Mathias relied on his family for farm labour but since the 2006/07 season he has employed one full-time worker who works with him in the garden and in the fields. During the peak periods such as planting, weeding and harvesting he employs an extra three to four casual labourers annually to assist with farm operations. The employment of hired labour has enabled his sons to concentrate on their studies. In an interview with one of the sons he explained that he is grateful because he “no longer has to wake up every morning to water the garden before going to school” (interview with Mathias’ son Kundai, September 2008). His wife also stated that their ability to hire labour means she can spend more time looking after her children (interviews with Amai Mandikisi, September, 2008 and August 2009). Since 2008 she has been repairing worn clothes belonging to her neighbours for a fee and also sewing new clothes for resale. Income derived from these activities has been used to supplement income from the garden but more importantly she stated that “now she no longer has to depend on her husband for money and can visit her daughter in Harare any time without waiting to be given money for transport” (interviews with Amai Mandikisi, September 2008 and August 2009).

Mathias considers himself to have been one of the poorest in the village at the time of resettlement and he ascribes his new status to the benefits derived from membership of Salt-Lakes. When he received the A1 plot he had no household furniture, farming implements or livestock. Since being resettled, and in particular since making the shift to tobacco production, he has managed to buy an electric generator, a seven horsepower water pump, a DVD player / home theatre, four bicycles, a kitchen unit, a 21-inch colour television, a sewing machine, five cellphones, a tobacco baling box, two knapsack sprayers, a scotch-cart and an ox-drawn plough. He has also built a brick house. In 2007/08 he provided his daughter and her husband living in Harare with grain for five consecutive months.

Despite their seeming success Mathias and his family still face a number of challenges. Maize production on his farm has been constrained by the unavailability of inputs such as

fertiliser. Some of the attempts to overcome these challenges include expanding into tobacco production and joining Salt-Lakes and these tactics have enabled him to accumulate savings and invest in draught power. As part of attempts to improve his tillage situation he also engages in barter trading with neighbouring A2 farmers. For every tobacco nursery that can cover 1ha he gets 2 bags of fertiliser and tillage support for 1ha of his arable plot. Since he bought his own cattle in 2007 he has been demanding maize inputs as part of payment for his tobacco seedlings.

8.5 Lot 3 of Buena Vista Farm

8.5.1 Background

Lot 3 of Buena Vista Farm is part of a group of farms that used to be known as Raymondale Farms. From 1979 to 1990 Raymond Evans managed to convince neighbouring farm owners to sell their farms to him and by 1985 he owned five farms which included Old Windsor, Lots 1, 2 and 3 of Buena Vista, Harveysdale and Dagbreek farms totalling approximately 4 000 hectare which he called Raymondale Farms. The dominant land use activities included tobacco and dairy cattle rearing. In 1991 Raymond Evans sold his farm to a private company, Anchor Yeast, which registered the new owners as a charitable organisation called the SAR Foundation. There were no major changes to land use patterns except for the introduction of paprika as an export crop and the expansion of land under maize production which was mostly donated to several charitable organisations (interviews with former farm worker, September 2008). Most of the farm workers previously employed by Raymond Evans were retained.

In late 1996 the group of farms was sold to Arthur Harley, a wealthy large-scale commercial farmer of American descent who already owned Taga Estate in Beatrice (approximately 50 kilometres south east of Harare), Mara Estate within the Bromley area and the Kadiki Pig Farm just after Ruwa on the 28 kilometre peg along the Harare-Mutare highway. In 1997 and 1998 Arthur Harley sold all the other farms that made up Raymondale estate and retained Lots 1 and 3 of Buena Vista farm. Lot 3 of Buena Vista is 533 hectares and GoZ records show that the farm was owned by Decayon Enterprises. I did not obtain permission to inspect the list of directors for Decayon Enterprises but the same company was listed as the owner of Taga Estate in Beatrice (GoZ, 2001c). Besides the ownership of these farms the former owner was also a shareholder in Hi-Veld, a paprika processing company, and in 2003 he established

Mega Pack Cigarettes, a tobacco processing company. The new owner had good relations with the ZANU (PF) elite, especially the former governor of Harare whose family was residing in the United States at the time of occupations with support from the farmer (based on interviews held with war veterans and former farm workers at Lot 3 of Buena Vista). The farm was initially listed for resettlement in 1997 but it was allegedly delisted after the intervention of a politically connected white farmer who was a business partner of Arthur Harley (interview with war veteran settled on the farm, September 2008).

Less than half of the farm was cleared for crop production purposes and the remainder was left as a woodlot. The principal agricultural activities at Lot 3 of Buena Vista included the growing of paprika, tobacco, maize and wheat under irrigation. Paprika was grown on 80 hectares and was mostly exported to Spain through Hi-Veld, the processing and exporting company that the former farmer owned jointly with other paprika growers in the area. Although paprika has always been grown in Zimbabwe, land devoted towards its production was increased in the 1990s when it was promoted by the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) as a lucrative crop (interview with Goromonzi District Extension Officer, September 2008). At Lot 3 of Buena Vista paprika was introduced for the first time in 1992 and initially it was grown on 20 to 25 hectares. It was only in 1995 that it became the major crop, overtaking tobacco on the farm.

Prior to the introduction of tobacco the farm was well known for tobacco growing, averaging a marketed output of 80 to 100 tonnes every year (interviews with Goromonzi District Extension Officer, September 2008). Maize was mostly grown on 40 hectares and used as feedstock for the dairy cattle kept at Mara Estate belonging to the same owner. The farm is serviced by a dam with capacity to irrigate approximately 350 hectares of land (Acting Chief Engineer, Goromonzi District, 2007: 1). The farm was used to grow wheat in the winter under irrigation on an average of 100 hectares annually and this was mostly sold to the GMB.

Prior to the fast track resettlement programme there were 12 tractors with ploughs, harrows, and ridgers, three 125 horsepower water pumps, irrigation equipment, two tobacco barns, grading sheds, storage facilities, cattle pens and two dip-tanks, and a farm workshop. There was a compound for farm workers which accommodated 200 households but the numbers of farm workers employed on a fulltime basis varied from around 80 to 150 at any time. The

farm workers were given a monthly ration of a 20 kg bag of maize meal (interviews with former farm worker, September 2008).

8.5.2 Movement onto the Farm

In November 2000 a group of nine war veterans approached farm workers who were preparing land for growing tobacco and advised them that they should cease operations and the rest of the farm would now be used for maize production. The war veterans proceeded to plant maize on the already prepared fields. The farm owner, Arthur Harley, was alerted of the invasion and upon his arrival he demanded that the war veterans move away from his land. In response the leader of the war veterans advised the farm owner that “what used to be your farm is now our land and you are free to take your farm but leave our land” (interview with Tagarika Farmer Group Leader, September 2008). The farm owner had arrived at the scene with armed guards but advised his workers to remain calm. However the farm workers attacked the war veterans during the night. For two consecutive nights enraged workers hurled themselves at the invaders with spears, axes, machetes, crowbars, catapults and rocks, forcing the veterans to retreat in panic as smoke and flames filled their hastily constructed temporary shelters (interview with former farm worker at Lot 3 of Buena Vista). The war veterans appealed to the local police and with uncharacteristic swiftness, the police arrested the workers – 26 were picked up after they had severely injured four veterans, part of a group that was trying to occupy the farm. One of the farm workers is quoted as saying,

Everyone is tired of war vets. If they come with violence, we will make violence. We are not scared now, to die is no problem. The white man can go. He got his passport, everything. Me? Where can I go? To the bush? (Eliot, a farm worker, quoted by Raath, 2000).

Whilst the arrests were taking place the war veterans called for reinforcement from their colleagues who had already occupied neighbouring farms in Wards 18 and 19 of Goromonzi.

After a week long stand-off and suspension of farm operations the war veterans were advised by the Minister of Local Government to get off the farm as it was not designated for resettlement. The war veterans then went to the Goromonzi Rural District Council to verify whether the farm had been listed in 1997. They were advised that the farm had indeed been designated for compulsory acquisition because of multiple farm ownership by the current owner. The war veterans then approached the Minister of Local Government and demanded

that he allocate them another farm or else they would invade his own farm (based on interviews with war veterans settled at Lot 3 of Buena Vista, September 2008).

The white farm owner eventually moved off the farm after another week of being targeted with threats of death and sabotage of his farm operations. Approximately 20 war veterans converged on the farm owner's house and sang songs of the liberation struggle throughout the night. During the day the war veterans made sure that there were no operations on the farm. On the third day the farm owner left very early in the morning and returned in the company of police and the former Minister of Finance to collect the moveable productive infrastructure on the farm. Only one water pump was left behind. The former farm owner is now settled at Kadiki Pig farm a few kilometres from Ruwa.

The war veteran leadership then proceeded to allocate plots to those who had been part of the occupations and to call for others interested in land. The majority of those who were given land were from Epworth, Mabvuku and Tafara, low income residential areas in Harare. Nine of the beneficiaries were former farm workers, who had collaborated with the land occupiers despite the specific instructions from the former farm owner that they should not interact with them. They allegedly provided necessary intelligence information to the war veteran leadership. The base commander of the Committee of Seven took up residence in the former farm owner's house. A total of 41 households were issued with A1 plots comprising six hectares of arable land and 15 hectares for grazing which form part of a common grazing area. In 2001 the A1 plots were officially pegged by officials from the Ministry of Lands and extension officers and all the 41 beneficiaries were issued with offer letters.

8.5.3 Emergence of Local Level Authority

The initial group of land occupiers was composed of only nine war veterans and when they faced resistance from the former owner they called on other war veterans who had established a base at Lot 1 of Buena Vista. An extra 11 war veterans converged at Lot 3 to assist in evicting the white farm owner. However when they had successfully evicted the former owner the reinforcement returned to their plots and the initial core of nine war veterans was left to select beneficiaries and allocate plots. The self-appointed base commander at Lot 3 proceeded to establish a Committee of Seven which was dominated by war veteran land beneficiaries. The Committee of Seven quickly established itself as an entity for ensuring security on the farm especially in ensuring that the equipment inherited from the previous

owner was not misappropriated. The Committee also lobbied central and local government officials to recognise the occupation of the farm as a legitimate course of action in a context in which political party leaders had condemned the occupation on the basis that the former owner used to contribute towards the party's welfare (interview with war veteran settled at Lot 3 Buena Vista, September 2008). The Committee enlisted the support of the DDF to ensure that all beneficiaries received tillage support and the latter prepared one hectare for each household.

The Committee established the first mechanism of cooperation for agricultural work when they called for a number of *nhimbe* (labour pools) to clear the portions of land that had been allocated to beneficiaries but had previously not been used for agricultural purposes (Tagarika 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008). The Committee also ensured that all the former farm workers interested in staying on the farm kept their compound homes and were each allocated 0.2 hectare of land for their own production. A smaller sub-committee on security was established and it was mainly charged with ensuring that beneficiaries or outsiders did not cut down the perimeter fencing surrounding the large-scale farm, and reducing the incidence of poaching of small game and illegal fishing in the dam using nets (interview with Tagarika Chairperson, September 2008).

The authority of the Committee of Seven lasted until 2004 when Chief Rusike, working with the District Administrator's office and the police, appointed one of the non-war veteran land beneficiaries as the village head. The Chief was operating under a directive from the Ministry of Local Government which stated that all the A1 resettlements were to come under existing chieftainships (discussed in more detail in Chapter 7). The former Base Commander and head of the Committee of Seven was appointed as the deputy village head. The new village head took over some of the responsibilities of the Committee of Seven. However the chief's arbitrary appointment of an individual previously not associated with the leadership structures was seen as an attempt to marginalise those who had been at the forefront of the occupation of the farm and their efforts in establishing local authority. The members of the previous committee led by the former Chairperson mobilised the villagers to resist the appointment of a village development committee, a practice that was taking root on neighbouring farms. Instead the leadership of the Committee of Seven accelerated the process of establishing the Tagarika Irrigation Scheme cooperative which is discussed in more detail

below. The establishment of the cooperative led to the creation of a competing centre of local authority on the former large-scale farm.

8.5.4 Emerging Land Use and Utilisation Patterns

The majority of the land beneficiaries grow maize, tobacco, groundnuts, soya beans, cotton and to date very few have managed to grow winter wheat. From 2004 until the 2007/08 farming season, all the land beneficiaries contributed 50 kg of maize each for resale and the proceeds had been used to purchase irrigation equipment (discussed below in more detail). In the first year of resettlement most of the households benefitted from the GoZ tillage programme implemented through the DDF, which prepared one hectare of land for each household. However ever since 2002 they have been hiring tractors and ploughs from private contractors and also from the DDF. According to the Chairman of the farmer group the DDF was unreliable and it pushed them to seek private contractors to help them with tillage although the latter were more expensive than the DDF.

Despite the fact that there is a large dam that could irrigate up to 350 hectares, the beneficiaries have not yet actualised the irrigation potential that it provides. The Chairperson of Tagarika Irrigation alleged that the former owner vandalised some of the equipment and also took the pumps with him and this claim was repeated in the focus group discussions. The land beneficiaries have only managed to irrigate approximately 18 hectares of land in the area close to the dam for joint wheat production.

Approximately a third (33 percent) of the land beneficiaries at Lot 3 of Buena Vista own productive assets such as ploughs and bullocks, while 46 percent own small livestock (LFG Household Survey, 2008). The ownership patterns of productive assets at this farm mirror those occurring at Dunstan farm. There has been limited investment in productive assets and the majority of the beneficiaries rely on borrowing or hiring from those who have. On the other hand there has been significant investment in non-productive assets such as solar panels, radios and bicycles since resettlement in 2000.

8.6 Associational Activity at Lot 3 of Buena Vista

8.6.1 Background

While the traditional leadership was in the process of expanding into the newly resettled areas through the appointment of village heads, the land beneficiaries at Lot 3 of Buena Vista were

engaged in an ambitious project to establish an irrigation cooperative, involving all the land beneficiaries to take advantage of existing irrigation potential. The project was ambitious in the sense that it sought to bring together all the land beneficiaries from different backgrounds but resettled on the same former large-scale farm to jointly produce and market their commodities. The main driver for the establishment of the cooperative was the current leader of the group who also used to be the Base Commander. He was trained in the former Soviet Union and worked on agricultural collectives there as part of his training (interview with Extension Officer, September, 2008). The functional irrigation system that existed prior to land reform had the capacity to irrigate 350 hectares. Since resettlement the land beneficiaries have engaged in various attempts to resuscitate the irrigation system.

In early 2005 the group formally established the Tagarika Irrigation Scheme Cooperative with the adoption of a constitution and the election of an executive committee which was led by the former Base Commander. According to the constitution the purpose of the cooperative is “to improve the lives of the members and to increase production at the farm through the resuscitation of the irrigation system on the farm and to venture into crop, horticulture and market gardening under irrigation” (Tagarika Irrigation Scheme Cooperative Constitution, 2005:2). The current leader took the lead in mobilising for the establishment of the group. One of the initial motivators for the formation of the group was the need to ensure that there is equitable access to irrigation equipment among the members and that the equipment is maintained. The group has also established a small sub-committee to maintain the irrigation equipment.

8.6.2. Activities of the Group

In this sub-section the discussion provides a brief sketch of the activities that the local farmer group has been engaged in since it was formed. It highlights some of the challenges that the group has faced in the pursuit of its objectives as listed within the Constitution. The essence of the intervention of the group is captured in the Constitution as “to improve the lives of the members” and this is a recurrent theme even within focus group discussions (Tagarika Irrigation Scheme Cooperative Constitution, 2005:2). The Constitution lists fishing, resuscitation of irrigation equipment, venturing into market gardening and horticulture as some of the activities in which the group engages. The group has however faced a number of challenges in terms of translating the objectives stated in the Constitution into reality. It has struggled to revive the irrigation system to its full capacity despite having appealed

successfully to the GoZ in 2005 for the replacement of the missing water pumps. When the group was formed it put together a smaller sub-committee to approach the Ministry of Agriculture's Department of mechanisation (prior to the latter's conversion into a fully fledged Ministry in late 2007) and was provided with two 125 horsepower water pumps. However there were still other parts missing. In 2006 the members of the group contributed 50 kg of maize each for resale and the proceeds were intended to purchase the outstanding valves and sprinklers (interview with Tagarika Chairperson, September 2008). However, less than half of the required valves and sprinklers were purchased from the proceeds of the sale (Interview with Tagarika Chairperson, September 2008).

In 2005 the group opened a savings account with the Agricultural Bank (Agri-Bank) and secured a loan of approximately US\$500 for the 2005/06 agricultural season to purchase farm inputs for members (interview with Extension Officer Responsible for Lot 3 of Buena Vista, September 2008). One of the group's objectives is to organise farm production and the marketing of commodities on a collective basis. Since resettlement, members of the group have been producing individually except for the joint production of wheat in 2005 and 2006. The most visible intervention of the group has been through securing inputs and repairs to irrigation equipment. The group has created three sub-committees: (i) one responsible for marketing and production, (ii) another for property and security, and (iii) finally welfare and health. The marketing and production sub-committee is responsible for research into innovations taking place in terms of agricultural production and markets (Tagarika Irrigation Scheme Cooperative Constitution, 2005:3). The sub-committee is expected to play a leading role in advising land beneficiaries on what to grow and where to sell. However during focus group discussions very few members were aware of the responsibilities of this sub-committee (Tagarika 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008).

The sub-committee for property and security is responsible for the maintenance of all the assets owned by the group, and maintains a register of assets and regulates the use of the limited irrigation infrastructure that is currently working. This sub-committee is very influential, it determines access to jointly-owned equipment for individual use. It is also responsible for the hiring of tillage services. The joint hiring of tillage services has not been implemented in a uniform manner since the group was formed. In the 2005/06 and 2006/07 agricultural seasons the group secured the services of DDF to prepare three hectares for each member but in 2007/08 a private contractor was invited to prepare an average of five hectares

per member but the service only covered 14 members including the entire executive committee (Tagarika 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008). Explanations for such a discrepancy differ. According to a member of the sub-committee those who were excluded had not paid for the services, while participants in the focus group discussion argue that they had been made to understand that the 50 kg of maize they had provided in the previous season would cover the cost of hiring the tillage services (Tagarika 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008). The welfare and health sub-committee has been tasked with monitoring any possibilities of outbreak of disease but in essence it remains non-functional and participants in the focus group discussion held at the farm were not aware of the existence of such a sub-committee.

The leadership has mostly focused on resuscitating the irrigation equipment. To date they have managed to use members' subscriptions to purchase the outstanding parts required for the underground irrigation system to cover the whole farm. They are yet to acquire adequate sprinkler heads and mainline underground hydrant taps and caps (interview with Tagarika Chairman, September 2008). The group has pursued a number of options for purchasing the required equipment. In early 2008 they applied to the GoZ for a loan to finish installing the irrigation equipment. An assessment team led by the acting Engineer for Goromonzi district came up with an inconclusive appraisal which stated that,

the nature of the [irrigation] project is so massive and the options for financing include: (i) resettled farmers mobilise funds to buy the outstanding equipment and the local council will provide electricians to fit the equipment or (ii) the Ministry of Mechanisation to assist in buying the remaining equipment and farmers pay for it through agricultural commodities (Acting Engineer Goromonzi, RDC, 2008:1).

By the end of 2008 the GoZ was yet to commit itself to supporting the venture beyond the water pumps that they had already provided and the chairman of the group conceded that it was proving difficult to continue asking members to contribute financially and with grain given the manner in which the prices kept changing.

When the GoZ through the Reserve Bank and the Ministry of Mechanisation introduced the mechanisation programme in 2007, in which land beneficiaries were issued with brand new tractors, ploughs, ridgers and harrows, the Tagarika leadership applied for a tractor to be issued to the cooperative but they were advised that the tractors were for land beneficiaries with more than 50 hectares of arable land, in essence excluding all A1 farmers (interview with Tagarika Chairman, September 2008).

In 2006, 15 of the land beneficiaries at Lot 3 of Buena Vista were facing eviction. A local politician from ZANU (PF) resettled on a neighbouring A2 plot without irrigation equipment approached the group's leadership to devise means by which they could share the use of the dam. The members agreed but later on the A2 farmer came back with an offer letter for a portion of Lot 3 adjoining to his farm. He argued that he was better positioned to utilise the dam on the farm (interview with Bromley Ward 21-22 Extension Officer, June 2009). The leadership of the group approached the provincial offices for clarification on the offer letter and demanded to know where the affected 15 households were to be resettled and why the farm was being further subdivided. They also threatened the A2 farmer that they would occupy his allocated plot if he pursued his claim (Tagarika 01/08, focus group discussion notes, September 2008). It was only after the intervention of the Provincial Administrator that the claim to Lot 3 by the A2 farmer was withdrawn.

There is a discrepancy between the stated objectives of the group as detailed in its Constitution and practice on the ground. The group has not managed to organise collective fishing on the dam located within the farm, thereby missing out on potential revenue from fish sales. The group's sub-committee on security has been at the forefront of ensuring that no fishing takes place on the dam to the extent that land beneficiaries based on the farm who were fishing have been treated as illegal and those caught have been fined.

8.6.3 Recruitment, Criteria and Conditions of Membership

According to Section 3 of the Tagarika Scheme Constitution, membership of the group shall consist of "those persons whose names appear on the farm register at the date of the adoption of the constitution" (Tagarika Irrigation Scheme Cooperative Constitution, 2005:2). In other words all the beneficiaries resettled at Lot 3 of Buena Vista are members of the group. The idea of the group and process of recruitment was driven by a core of those who had led the occupation of the farm. Furthermore the leading figure (former Base Commander and now Chairperson of the group) had, for the brief period of resettlement, individually managed to outpace his neighbours in terms of crop production. When he and his colleagues mooted the idea of a cooperative group most of the land beneficiaries supported it on the basis of his competency to run his own plot.

Members are expected to abide by a code of conduct which is spelt out in the Constitution. Obligations of membership include attendance of quarterly and annual meetings of the group

and contributing financially towards the group's activities, and it is envisaged that once collective agriculture is introduced members will be able to make their labour available. In the recent years members have been asked to contribute a part of their grain harvest towards the purchase of equipment.

8.6.4 Structure and Patterns of Participation within Tagarika

The Tagarika Constitution defines the parameters of participation within the group, stating that “the final authority and responsibility in all matters concerning the cooperative rest with the whole membership” (Tagarika Constitution, 2005:2). Office bearers in the executive committee and other sub-committees are elected on one-year terms. However, since its formation the group has not changed leadership.

According to the Constitution there are four scheduled quarterly meetings and an annual general meeting but the records kept by the Secretary show that the group has been meeting at least once every month. The Chairperson explained that in trying to get the cooperative off the ground they have had to meet more regularly so that the membership is kept abreast of developments. The attendance register shows that the responsible extension officer attends most of the meetings.

Despite the fact that nine of the beneficiary households (24 percent) are female-headed there are no women in the leadership structures of the group. The only woman leader heads the sub-committee on welfare and health, which some of the women did not know (Tagarika 01/08, focus group discussion notes, September 2008). The meetings are usually poorly attended and the deliberations tend to be dominated by those in leadership. The members raised a concern that the group has not really made any significant progress in terms of consolidating group activity except to make sure that the irrigation equipment is working properly and that inputs are secured on time (Tagarika 01/08, focus group discussion notes, September 2008).

During focus group discussions the members revealed that joint winter wheat production was stopped in 2007 to make way for individual production and since then only a few members have actually used the irrigation equipment. The majority have failed to utilise the equipment during the winter due to their inability to secure the necessary farm inputs (seeds and fertilisers) for winter cropping. The Tagarika members also revealed that they have been hoping for the group to help improve their capacities to utilise the irrigation equipment and

land but the leadership seems to be more focused on individual production (Tagarika 01/08, focus group discussion notes, September 2008). As such most of the members at Tagarika do not think that their input during group discussions is adequately considered by the leadership. The response within Tagarika initially seemed contradictory but further questioning showed that the leadership has not adequately responded to the expectations of members, especially in the design of the activities of the group. The leadership seems averse to introducing other joint activities to the group, such as labour and asset pooling on individual plots, and they argue that members have not responded with enthusiasm to the maintenance of irrigation equipment and thus they fear more lethargy if they were to introduce new activities (interviews with Tagarika Chairperson and Secretary, June 2009).

8.6.5 Tagarika Irrigation Scheme and the Village Authority

While at Dunstan Farm there are clear delineations between village authority and local farmer groups, the picture at Lot 3 of Buena Vista is more complex. Although a village head was appointed by the chief, the land beneficiaries decided not to elect a village development committee on the basis of representations made by the leadership of the defunct Committee of Seven that they were in the process of establishing a cooperative that would cover all the development issues on the former large-scale farm. However this decision left the village head without a subordinate structure to effect local governance in the village. Furthermore his subordinate, the deputy headman, is the head of the cooperative which has developed its own elaborate structures. The cooperative has been more active in mobilising villagers into meetings and suggesting development action plans, to the extent that the post of village head has been rendered ineffectual especially given the fact that the holder of the post was invited by the Chairperson of the group (the former Base Commander) to come and help them occupy the farm and was not part of the initial leadership structure. The leadership structure of the group has expanded its scope of activities into areas being handled by traditional leaders on other A1 settlements, such as resolving border disputes and enforcing the day of rest (chisi). Village development meetings are called for and convened by the group. Thus while local farmer groups in other areas such as Dunstan have remained focused on enhancing farm production, the scope of Tagarika's activities has expanded well beyond this to include intervention and mediation in local village administration and inevitably dealing with local politics in a more direct way.

8.7 Conclusion

There are a variety of ways in which the newly resettled are responding to the challenges they face on the newly resettled farms. The most common response has been through cooperation within local farmer groups. The leadership that emerged during the period of land occupations and during the uncertain period between occupation and the formal subdivision of the farms has in the past few years managed to consolidate its influence within the farmer groups. The two cases presented in this chapter have shown that, although local farmer groups occur on the former large-scale farms, their origins, the scope of their activities and the nature of the influence that the leadership carries vary. In the case of Lot 3 of Buena Vista the war veteran leadership behind the original farm occupation has managed to retain its influence despite some attempts by the local chief and other villagers to neutralise their influence. In spite of the various attempts by the extension officer to replicate the model of many small local farmer groups within one former large-scale farm existing at Dunstan, the leadership at Tagarika has maintained a firm hold on the cooperative model.

There have been attempts to remove or marginalise war veterans through the introduction of village heads but the latter have had to rely on the support of those who were behind the farm occupations, and in most cases these are war veterans. In some cases, such as at Dunstan, the chiefs have been left with no choice but to identify a more pliable war veteran in order not to be seen to be attempting to marginalise the war veterans. Emerging local power relations reflect the ongoing struggles around authority on the land and the state's dilemma over how to govern at the local level and these issues are not new in local government politics (this issue is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7).

While the emergence of local farmer groups and their mobilisation of capacities to improve farm production is critical, these formations should not be viewed from a narrowly productionist perspective with no political angle. They have carved a niche of mobilisation and in the process are shaping the emerging identity politics on the basis of inclusion with a particular group and the benefits derived from such activity. Association within a particular group is one of the factors currently contributing to a nascent process of differentiation on the basis of the group's capacity to extract benefits from service providers, especially the state. The groups find themselves in competition against one another when it comes to accessing benefits and the importance of the leadership's ability to endear itself with service providers including the extension agent is critical. The extension officer has had a more pronounced

role at Dunstan farm in determining the structure, size and rationale of the local groups. His influence has led to a very rigid technical production perspective and underplayed the politics of farm production.

The following chapter discusses the manner in which social organisation has emerged on two former large-scale farms recently converted into A1 settlements in Zvimba district. One of the settlements is composed of beneficiaries belonging to the same lineage group while in the other case most of the beneficiaries are from customary areas with little war veteran presence. These factors potentially point towards possibilities of a different form of social organisation.

CHAPTER 9

CASE STUDIES: DALKEITH AND WHYNHILL FARMS IN ZVIMBA

9.1 Introduction

The Banket area in Zvimba district lies approximately 95 kilometres to the north-west of Harare along the route to Chinhoyi. The area lies in Natural Region (NR) II and is suitable for intensive agriculture. Prior to land reform the town of Banket thrived on servicing the needs of large-scale commercial farm owners and workers from surrounding farms. Besides the large-scale farms, the area is also surrounded by a number of gold and chrome mines dotted along the mineral bearing Great Dyke which lies to the east of the town. Banket is bordered by customary lands: Murombedzi to the south, Chirau in the south west and Kasanze further to the north.

The large-scale farms surrounding Banket were involved in a variety of land use activities which included cash crops and food crops such as tobacco, maize, wheat, soya bean and horticultural production. Large-scale farmers in the area were famous for maize and tobacco production, to the extent that most of them belonged to the „ten tonne“ club, referring to their ability to produce ten tonnes of maize on one hectare. There was also limited livestock activity for both dairy and beef purposes. Very limited land reform had taken place in the Banket area prior to the fast track programme due to the low availability of derelict farms, most of which had been taken up by the initial land reform programme in the early 1980s (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). In 1998 there were some attempts at land occupations led by traditional leaders and spirit mediums but these were mostly quashed by the large-scale commercial farmers with the support of the police. Chief Matibiri of Zvimba persuaded his fellow traditional leaders and spirit mediums to suspend land occupations until the government had come up with a more concrete plan for land reform (interview with Zvimba AREX Officer, September 2008).

Soon after the rejection of the draft constitution in 2000 the area immediately surrounding Banket experienced dramatic land occupations. Unlike in Goromonzi, where most of the occupations were led by war veterans, the leaders in Zvimba were traditional leaders such as spirit mediums, and ordinary people from neighbouring customary areas and the urban areas such as Banket. War veteran activity was very limited but they worked with traditional leaders in mobilising people from the customary areas to occupy large scale-farms. This

chapter presents case studies of two previous large-scale farms that went through different forms of occupation and acquisition in 2000 and 2001 and have been converted into A1 settlements. The discussion analyses the ownership and production patterns on the farms prior to land reform and then looks in detail at the manner in which the land beneficiaries are organising themselves socially. The analysis pays particular attention to the emergence of local farmer groups on the farms and the extent to which they contribute towards strengthening household production capacities and their role in shaping village level power relations and authority.

9.2 Dalkeith Farm

9.2.1 Ownership, Land Use and Social Relations of Production

Dalkeith farm lies approximately 12 kilometres to the south-west of Banket and measured 600 hectares prior to fast track land reform. The farm used to belong to the late Ian Barrett and had been in the Barrett family since the 1920s. Besides Dalkeith farm the former owner had another large-scale farm called Fennemerre and a grocery shop in Banket. He also used to lease neighbouring St Lucia and Noordt Gate large-scale farms (see Figure 9-1 below). The former owner was involved in a diverse set of farm activities which included livestock rearing for beef at Noordt Gate farm, and a pig project at Fennemerre which mostly supplied the export market (interview with Extension Officer, September 2008). Crops grown on Barrett's farms included wheat, maize and tobacco. There was a 36 hectare tea tree plantation at Dalkeith. The farm owner also reared crocodiles at Dalkeith. The skin was sold to foreign markets and some of the meat was sold to a nearby luxury lodge and other hotels in Harare.

When the owner introduced the tea tree plantation in the 1990s he also invested in an oil extraction plant. The project was financed through a World Bank Export Incentive Scheme which was introduced in the early 1990s in Zimbabwe. The plant employed 12 fulltime workers and could produce at least 6 000 litres of tea tree oil per month in a good summer. The tea tree oil was extracted through a very sophisticated distillation process and most it was sold to an Australian cosmetics company. A few other farmers in the district also brought their tea tree leaves and stem for oil extraction at a fee. Crocodile rearing and slaughtering facilities were built in the 1990s to cater for the diversification into crocodile farming. At its peak in 1999 the farm had more than 80 crocodiles (interview with former farm worker, August 2008). Other immovable assets on the farm include a farm house, two store houses,

meat when it was available (interview with former farm worker, August 2009). During peak planting seasons the management on the farm encouraged permanently employed farm workers to recommend members of their households for casual work and in many cases this also involved the use of children to carry out tasks such as planting, weeding and harvesting on a casual basis (interview with former farm worker, August 2009). Apparently the farm owner was popular with the former farm workers because of the generous portions of maize he gave every month.

9.2.2 The Manjinjiwa Claim over Dalkeith Farm

The claim by the Manjinjiwa lineage group for land where Dalkeith farm is located dates back to their original eviction from the area bordering Mupfure river to the east of what is now the town of Banket and the border with Guruve to the south-west in 1919. According to oral evidence presented by one of the remaining elders, the Manjinjiwa lineage group under the headship of the Matibiri-Magaramombe chieftainship was forcibly moved from the area now converted into Dalkeith and Noordt Gate farms. The majority of the lineage members were settled in Kasanze, which then was an inhabitable forest area within Murombedzi, and a few members of the lineage moved on to Hurungwe after they had lost most of their cattle to tsetse flies in 1938 (interviews with Village Head at Dalkeith Farm, August 2009). Very few members of the lineage group were retained on the farms as part of the labour force. At independence one of the elders of the clan, who was also the spirit medium of the family, began to agitate for the return to the alienated ancestral lands. However this was unsuccessful and instead some of the lineage members decided to move to Makonde communal areas in Hurungwe district in 1983 as the Manjinjiwa spirit was „unsettled“ in the spiritual world because the medium (*svikiro*) resided far from its sacred lands (interview with Village Head at Dalkeith Farm, August 2009).

In 1994 the spirit medium and lineage elders again renewed efforts to return to the alienated territory and engaged Chief Matibiri of Zvimba on the possibility of facilitating resettlement of the lineage within Zvimba. But the chief did not have adequate land to resettle members of the Manjinjiwa lineage group. When the GoZ publicly announced the acquisition of large scale farms in 1997 the leadership of the clan made claims for some of the farms including Dalkeith farm. However most of the farms they claimed were not on the list for resettlement and their claims were not acted upon by the responsible government officials. In the same

year a small group comprising the lineage elders and the spirit medium approached the owner of Dalkeith farm (which is known to the lineage group as Chirorodzi) to try to gain access to their shrines and sacred places to offer „muumba“ (traditional snuff put in a gourd for appeasing the spirit) and traditional beer to appease the spirit in preparation for the homecoming (interview with Village Head, August 2009). Ian Barrett refused to have the ceremony conducted at the farm.

When land occupations began across the whole country in February 2000 the Manjinjiwa spirit medium is said to have gone into a trance and directed their lineage members to occupy the farm. The leadership of the clan negotiated with Ian Barrett for a portion of the farm which they considered sacred and he acquiesced to their demands and also offered them accommodation within the farm worker compound. The current headman, Mr Manjinjiwa, personally telephoned President Mugabe to inform him of their occupation of the farm. The President is reported to have said that what they had done was illegal because the farm was not on the list of farms to be acquired but assured them that they would get back their ancestral land. In August 2000 the farm owner was served with a Section 8 notice that informed him that the farm had been designated for compulsory acquisition, and he was required to vacate the property within two months without permission to remove any property from the farm. The owner contested compulsory acquisition through the courts but was not successful.

The official subdivision of the farm and pegging of A1 plots began in 2000 and this was done by officials from the Department of Extension and Ministry of Lands officials. The former large-scale farm was subdivided into 79 A1 plots, eight of which were allocated to women members of the lineage group. Twenty-three households belonging to the lineage group could not be accommodated on the plot and were resettled on newly established A1 settlements in neighbouring farms such as St Lucia and Wannock Glen. There are three households settled at Dalkeith who have no access to any arable land: apparently they refused to be resettled in neighbouring A1 settlements. When the farm was occupied the majority of the former farm workers moved into other areas and only 56 former farm worker households remain in the compound, providing farm labour to the new settlers. Each was also allocated 0.3 hectares of land for his own use when the farm was subdivided. The former farmhouse and office have

been converted into a primary school but the building is not big enough to accommodate all the classes.

9.2.3 Emergence of Local Level Authority

The Chidziva local governance structure revolves around the Headman who was selected by the spirit medium and formally appointed by the Chief in 2001. The Headman, Mr Manjinjiwa, is the younger brother of the spirit medium. A Village Development Committee (VIDCO) consisting of seven members elected by the villagers was put in place in 2002. The seven members of the VIDCO consist of a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and four committee members.

The main duties of the Headman and his subordinate committee include resolution of conflicts and village development. Since his installation the village headman has been engaged in resolving social conflicts among the land beneficiaries, the most common of which are marriage disputes and land boundary disputes. There have been a number of cases in which land beneficiaries have attempted to encroach on each other's arable land and residential stands. In some of the cases the village authority has had to call for the assistance of the extension officers. The VIDCO has mobilised the village community to engage in the maintenance and building of small roads and bridges within the former large-scale farm. By the end of 2008 two small bridges made of stones and clay had been constructed on one of the roads leading to the arable areas by the land beneficiaries (interviews with VIDCO Treasurer, September 2008). A smaller sub-committee has been established within the VIDCO to spearhead the building of a primary school. Currently the former farmhouse is being used as a primary school but it does not have enough rooms to cater for all the grades and also to accommodate the teachers (interviews with VIDCO Treasurer, August 2008). By the end of 2008 the sub-committee for building the primary school had completed digging the foundations for the school.

Traditional practices and ceremonies are very common at Dalkeith. While the village headman is the most visible authority the spirit medium is treated with reverence and rarely makes a public appearance. He is a very old man and lives close to the dam, a place that is viewed as sacred on the farm. It is alleged that the former farm owner died²² after he had desecrated the area by "visiting the spirit medium without following proper protocol" (interview with village Headman, August 2008). The spirit medium makes appearances

²² He fell off a boat that he had just finished repairing exactly a week after making the visit to the spirit medium.

during ceremonies (known as Biras) held to appease the spirits of the lineage group. However despite the claims of the supremacy of ancestral worship there are many members such as the VIDCO Treasurer who also belong to the apostolic sect (vapositori). There have been instances in which traditional rituals, such as the brewing and drinking of beer in honour of the ancestors, have clashed with the beliefs of the vapositori.

At resettlement a portion of the farm was set aside for the Zunde RaMambo (discussed in more detail in Chapter 7). The Headman however complained that the land allocated for the Zunde is too small and they have only been able to harvest an average of ten 50 kg bags of maize which might not be enough during a time of famine. The Headman in consultation with the spirit medium also set aside a portion of the farm as a graveyard. All the land beneficiaries are entitled to be buried in the graveyard, however former farm workers have to request permission which is mostly given after a token payment to the Headman. The token is generally in the form of a small bucket of maize or any other agricultural product or small livestock such as a chicken (interviews with Village Head, August 2009). The village headman is also responsible for ensuring that there is no work activity on the day of rest (chisi), and that no one works during the days appointed for other traditional ceremonies (interview with Village Head, August 2009).

9.2.4 Emerging Land Use and Utilisation Patterns

When the former farm owner Ian Barrett's attempts to oppose land acquisition failed he entered into a verbal agreement with the settlers. In the agreement he committed himself to preparing their land in return for being allowed to continue with his tea tree plantation and the oil extraction business. The agreement worked well in the first two years of resettlement. Barrett made his tractors and ploughs available for the preparation of every beneficiary's land and in the winter he provided them with assistance to prepare 40 hectares of wheat. In the first year they managed to harvest 65 tonnes of wheat and in the second year they increased the yield to 70 tonnes (statistics from Zvimba District AREX Office, September 2008). However even these figures are significantly below the average of 200 tonnes that the former large-scale farmer used to sell to the GMB annually (interview with Zvimba District Extension Officer, September, 2008).

Nevertheless, the smaller quantities produced by the A1 beneficiaries were remarkable in a context of declining farm production capacity and in response to this, the Governor of the

Reserve Bank held a field-day²³ at the farm in 2004. The field day was one of the numerous premature celebrations of the successes of fast track land reform held countrywide by ruling ZANU (PF) elites. During this particular celebration the Governor of the central bank committed continuous support in terms of securing farm inputs and other mechanical requirements (interview with Extension Officer, August 2008).

Despite the good working relations that had been forged with Ian Barrett the land beneficiaries demanded that he surrender the tea tree plantation and the extraction plant to them in 2003. He gave in to their demands but removed all his productive equipment including water pumps used for irrigation. The settlers tried to oppose the removal of farm assets but were overwhelmed by the police who had been called to the farm by Barrett. The land beneficiaries through their local farmer group tried to take over the running of the tea tree plantation but they faced difficulties in maintaining production levels and retaining access to the markets (discussed below in more detail). They approached a local cosmetics company which had capacity to use only 20 litres per month, yet the extraction plant had capacity to extract 6 000 litres per month every summer season (interview with VIDCO Treasurer, August 2008). The leadership did not have adequate information on how to gain access to export markets. In the same year the crocodile rearing and treatment of skins business of the farm was leased to a neighbouring A2 farmer but after harvesting the remaining animals and stockpiling the skins with no access to an export market he failed to replenish the stocks and eventually stopped the operation (interview with Extension Officer, September, 2008).

Currently the main farming activities being carried out include maize, soya bean, sugar bean, wheat, tobacco, cattle, chickens, guinea fowl, and sheep production. Wheat was collectively produced by all the resettled farmers in the first three years of resettlement using Barrett's irrigation equipment. When he removed his equipment the beneficiaries successfully appealed to the central bank which provided them with water pumps and irrigation equipment in 2004. However the equipment remains unused due to the non-availability of electricity. The oil in the transformer that supplies electricity to the farm was stolen and this caused the

²³ Field-days are associated with field demonstrations carried out by extension workers where a particular field will be chosen to demonstrate good crop husbandry and to explain to invited farmers how the farmer had managed to come up with a good crop.

transformer to blow up. In the meantime the beneficiaries have devoted their energy to summer crops. Only six households have dedicated portions of their arable land to tobacco production. The tobacco is mostly sold at the local tobacco auction floors in Harare.

Besides the farm-based income activities there is a minority of land beneficiaries who successfully requested permission from the village head for authority to fish in the lake. These land beneficiaries have recently been joined in fishing by some of the former farm worker households. Initially in 2004 the fish were either dried or consumed while fresh. In 2006 this group of fishermen was asked to supply fish to traders from Harare for a fee. Every Friday the traders arrive at the farm to pick up a consignment of at least 20 kg comprising fresh and dried fish.

In terms of asset accumulation the majority of the beneficiaries (81 percent) either brought their own assets from the customary area in which they had been resident or have accumulated productive assets since resettlement. These assets include ox-drawn ploughs, scotch carts and wheelbarrows, and at least 49 percent have adequate stocks of oxen to ensure farm production. The asset ownership and accumulation trends at Dalkeith are different from other case studies and there are several possible explanations why the majority of beneficiaries are endowed with productive assets. Firstly it is important to note that the Chidziva claim for restitution was not necessarily driven by impoverishment but the main driver was to be found within the traditions and the desire to re-establish a link between the living and the dead and also being close to the graves of their ancestors. Agitation for restitution was in this case driven by a spirit medium and members of the lineage group followed because they were afraid of disrespecting their ancestors (interview with VIDCO Treasurer, September 2008). Secondly, more than 50 percent of the members of the lineage were successful farmers in the Kasanze and Hurungwe customary tenure areas in NR III which, although not necessarily good for intensive agriculture, is better than natural regions IV and V where most of the customary lands are situated. Thirdly the lineage-based framework of cooperation was not necessarily dissolved through land alienation but continued to thrive based on oral traditions of previous legends where most of their known ancestors were successful smallholders. The legacy of successful farming (hurudza) within the lineage group is part of the social identity and has been used extensively by the elders to inculcate an ethos of hard work and enterprise among the members of the lineage group (based on interviews with Village Headman, August and September 2008).

9.3 Associational Activity at Dalkeith

9.3.1 Background

Starting in 2001 land beneficiaries at Dalkeith entered into a collective arrangement for growing wheat in the winter under irrigation. However the process of growing the winter crop was marred by tensions. Members of the lineage group felt that the allocation of tasks had unfairly burdened some of the households. It was thereafter felt that there was a need for a committee to facilitate the joint production of wheat. Initially the village head wanted a smaller sub-committee to be established and to operate within the confines of the VIDCO but some of the younger members advocated for a more fully fledged association that would focus on farm production (interviews with Dalkeith Farm VIDCO Treasurer, August 2009). They also argued that the new association would focus on securing farm inputs which were difficult to obtain at that time. The village head was approached to approve the idea of the Chidziva Farmers Association. In late 2002 one of the lineage members, a son of the spirit medium, was tasked by the lineage elders to pioneer the group based on his previous agricultural experience and modest education. Local extension officers were invited to provide assistance in the establishment of structures of the group. Two common resources were initially used to justify mobilisation into a group: the common lineage background and the existence of a water source that could be used jointly for irrigation purposes (based on interviews with Gibson Manjinjiwa, Chairman of Chidziva Farmer's Group, and Mr Kapembeza, Acting Agritex Extension Officer for the Banket area, November 2008).

Initially the group focused on growing and marketing of the winter wheat crop through securing inputs, and coordination of household and hired labour. In 2003 the leadership of the farmer association began to agitate for the eviction of Barrett from the use of the tea tree plantation and the extraction plant. They allegedly convinced the village head that they could continue with the running of the extraction process and the marketing of the oil to the benefit of all the members (interviews with Dalkeith Farm VIDCO Treasurer, August 2009). Barrett was eventually expelled by the village head from access to the tea tree plantation and plant. The process of decision-making within the various structures is discussed in detail below; suffice it to mention here that Barrett's expulsion was carried out without the knowledge of other members of the VIDCO or the village members (Dalkeith focus group discussion notes, September 2008). The leadership of the farmer association kept the same labour pool that was working in the plantation and the plant. However they struggled to find a market for the oil

and in 2006 made the decision to cut down the tea trees. The other motivation for the formation of the group was the realisation that it could be beneficial to seek subsidies jointly from the state for items such as farm inputs (interview with Chidziva LFG Chairperson, September 2008).

9.3.2 Activities of the Chidziva Farmers' Association

According to the founding Constitution the Chidziva Farmers' Association was established to "improve the farming capacities of the members and to contribute towards better lives through collectively seeking for farm inputs, markets and introducing other income generating projects" (Chidziva Farmers' Association Constitution, 2004:1). Since its inception the group has been involved in securing farm inputs for all the members and also organising the joint production of wheat. The inputs have mostly been secured through registration of the group and the number of members with the government's local extension office. In the 2006/07 agricultural season the leadership of the group attempted to break away from dependence on government-subsidised inputs by entering into an agreement with a maize seed company called Pannar Seeds, to grow seed maize on its behalf. The company provided the group with inputs consisting of seeds and fertiliser. However the group's leadership also expected the company to provide them with tillage support but the company insisted that they could only supply farm inputs. The inputs provided were inadequate and could only cover approximately 40 of the members (interviews with Chidziva Chairperson, September 2008).

Although not clearly mentioned in the Constitution the association seemed to be a potential collective cooperative due to its unique advantage of mobilisation on the basis of a common lineage identity and the availability of irrigation capacity. It was assumed that the common identity would reduce the burden of building group ties and trust (interview Chidziva Chairperson, August 2009). Possibilities for organising joint farm production have been constrained by the non-functional irrigation equipment and the refusal by some of the members to cede their fields for collective production. The leadership of the group successfully requested assistance from the GoZ after the co-existence deal with Barrett had collapsed. The government issued them with two brand new 125 horsepower water pumps and some of the pipes required for irrigation. The process of installing the new irrigation was handled by a private contractor and took approximately one and half years from the end of 2004 until 2005. Government insisted that the group should produce wheat for resale to the

GMB. However by 2008 the group members had yet to use the new equipment due to the non-availability of electricity.

In the aftermath of the collapse of the deal with Barrett regarding the tea tree plantation and the crocodile rearing the leadership of the group approached one of the neighbouring A2 farmers to help them to look after the crocodiles. The agreement between the A2 farmer and the leadership of the group was never written down and disagreements arose over the distribution of proceeds (interview with Chidziva Farmers' Association Treasurer, August 2009). The leadership of the group also alleges that the A2 farm owner was behind the attempts by the Zvimba District Land Identification Committee (ZDLIC) to remove them. In 2006 officials from the Ministry of Lands informed the leadership at Dalkeith that the farm had been re-zoned into an A2 farm (interview with Chidziva Farmer Group, Chairperson, September 2008). The Chidziva leadership lodged their appeal against eviction to the Minister of Local Government (who was also the MP of the area) and threatened that if the matter were not resolved they would approach the President.

In terms of external alliances the leadership at Chidziva has established relations with the local extension office and the fact that the central bank governor visited in 2004 them as a show of support for their success continues to count in their favour when it comes to input distribution. Beyond the cordial relations with state functionaries the leadership of the group has made attempts to attain membership of the Zimbabwe Farmers' Union (ZFU). In 2006 the Chidziva leadership approached the ZFU and was given forms to complete. When they submitted the forms to the national ZFU office they assumed that their membership was confirmed (interview with Chidziva Chairperson, June 2009). The promised benefits of membership of the ZFU include access to fertiliser and treated seeds at a discount from specific agro-dealers such as Windmill. However the leadership mentioned that they are yet to realise these benefits because they do not have documentation confirming their membership. In fact when I checked with the ZFU national office they did not have records of any application from local farmer groups in newly resettled areas and they clarified that they were yet to establish structures in the newly resettled areas.

9.3.3 Membership and Participation in Chidziva

Chidziva is the only group among the case studies in which members belong to the same lineage group which also served as a circle of inclusion and association prior to the

establishment of the farmer group. When it was formed the lineage elders insisted that all the plot-holders on the farm would be members (interview with Village Head, September 2008).

The current leader was appointed by the village head and was asked to identify others to work with in the committee (interview with Chidziva Farmers' Association Chairperson, September 2008). The Chairperson of the group hand-picked five others to form the executive committee. The group operated for three years from 2002 until 2005 without a constitution. It was only after the local extension office in Banket had insisted that the group should come up with a constitution in order to be registered to receive subsidised inputs that the leadership convened a meeting and tasked a smaller group headed by the Secretary of Chidziva to design a constitution. The outcome from that meeting was a document that spells out how inputs should be treated and also the roles of each office bearer.

Besides the stated objectives of the association it is also active in village administration issues. In 2005, the Chairperson of the farmer group was incorporated into the village administration in order to report on progress being made in the association to the village authority (interviews with Village Head, September 2008). The association, like the village administration structure, is male dominated and there are so far no women office bearers.

The meetings called for by the association are poorly attended and those in leadership dominate deliberations. According to participants in one of the focus group discussions the leadership does not necessarily consult the members but uses the meetings as platforms for briefing on progress. A good example of lack of consultation was when the leadership of the group working with the village head decided to terminate their verbal agreement with Ian Barrett without consulting the rest of the membership. During focus group discussions members of the group argued that the relationship had been beneficial to them and since his removal they have been struggling in terms of farm production capacity (Chidziva 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008). Women members of the association explained that the idea of the group and the selection of the leadership were never discussed openly. They felt that in most cases they are only needed when the leadership requires a labour pool but are marginalised from making important decisions such as who should lead the group (Chidziva 02/08, focus group discussion notes, September 2008). Members privately complained about the non-functioning irrigation equipment which was donated by the central bank to the group. They accuse the leadership of lack of initiative in repairing the

transformer that was vandalised. Ironically, the leadership brags about the acquisition of the irrigation equipment as one of its biggest achievements, without realising that by failing to make it work their rating amongst the members has been affected negatively.

The automatic membership through belonging to the same lineage has also created a problem of free-riders, those who do not contribute to group activities such as the payment of subscriptions and attendance of meetings but still expect to benefit from the group (interviews with Chidziva Chairperson, September 2008 and June 2009). Members of the group are expected to make their labour available for the *nhimbe* (labour pool) organised by the group. Where a prior arrangement for joint marketing of a certain crop exists the members are required to bring in the required quantities to meet the contractual agreement.

9.3.4 Chidziva and the Village Authority

The manner in which the farmer group at Dalkeith has emerged is different from other farms that have been discussed so far. While the leadership of the farmer group claims that it has autonomy from the village authority, in practice it remains a subordinate structure of the latter. In fact separating the two institutions remains a huge challenge. The leadership of the group confirmed that it is difficult to separate the issues for discussion during meetings from purely village administrative issues to those directly relating to the activities of the group. While the meetings called specifically for group matters are poorly attended, those called by the village council have a better turn-out (based on personal observation during August and September 2008). In such instances the local farmer group leadership takes advantage of the mobilising clout of the village head and requests to be allocated a slot during the proceedings to present matters pertaining to production and the payment of subscription fees. In one instance the leadership actually appealed to the village head to help them enforce the collection of subscription fees (notes from Chidziva village meeting, November 2008).

The process of leadership selection for the farmer group provides more clarity on the nature of the relationship that exists between the village head and the group. The leader of the farmer group was hand-picked by the village head on the pretext of his good farming background, but there are others in the village who have better experience than he does and it seems that his appointment had a lot to do with the village head's balancing act in making sure that sons from the different lineage elders are in positions of authority. His own son

heads the VIDCO and one of his brother's sons is the leader of the sub-committee responsible for building a primary school.

Among the land beneficiaries there are two brothers with Master Farmer Certificates who used to work as extension support workers for the ZFU in Hurungwe prior to resettlement. They have been sidelined from any post, allegedly because their father is not a Manjinjiwa but rather their late mother was a sister to the village head. They were initially denied land by the village head until other lineage elders and the spirit medium intervened on their behalf. In 2002 they were assigned the responsibility of planning and coordinating activities in the growing of the wheat on the joint fields but once the farmer group took over the role was given to somebody else. These two brothers live next to each other and their arable plots are furthest from other fields but they seem to be the most successful. They are among the six farmers who are growing tobacco and they also have a joint chicken project. They both have built brick houses with corrugated iron roofs. In 2007 one of the brothers bought a second hand 4x4 pick-up truck (bakkie) from one of the local traders in Banket.

Although farm-based experience and competency is touted as the guiding criterion for the selection of leaders within Chidziva there is an underlying tendency to promote males belonging to the Manjinjiwa lineage. Furthermore, the leadership of the group depends on the village head to gather members for meetings and uses threats of expulsion not only from the group but from the farm against those who refuse to comply with rules established by the leadership. Thus while the group has definitely contributed towards easing the burden of obtaining inputs it is difficult to see it as a purely voluntary formation.

9.4 Whyhill Farm

9.4.1 Ownership, Land Use and Social Relations of Production Prior to Land Reform

Prior to fast track land reform Whyhill farm was owned by Mr Douglas Campbell who also owned a neighbouring large-scale commercial farm called Sutton B jointly with his mother (see Figure 9-1 above). Mr Campbell inherited the farm from his father who had bought it in 1962 from a family that was moving to the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe. He took over the running of the farm in the late 1980s (based on information provided by an old former farm worker resident at Whyhill farm). The farm is 1038ha in extent. Farm activities before land reform included the rearing of a beef herd of approximately 600 cattle and a piggery project with capacity to carry approximately 200 pigs. Crops grown on the farm included maize,

wheat, sugar beans, soya beans and tobacco. The maize was grown on an average of 60 hectares and more than half was kept on the farm as stock feed and rations for farm workers. He devoted approximately 80 hectares to tobacco production (interview with former Whynhill Farm Supervisor, Banket, September 2008). The tobacco and maize fields were rotated on an annual basis.

Campbell won the Mashonaland West Tobacco Farmer of the year award twice, in 1994 and 1995. The tobacco was sold at the tobacco auction floors. During winter the farm produced wheat on 50 hectares and green peas on 2 hectares. The wheat was sold locally to the GMB. The farm owner was also a recipient of a loan from the World Bank's Export Incentive launched in 1992 to encourage diversification into export crops. Soon after, in 1993, horticulture production was introduced on the farm and a greenhouse covering approximately 2ha was constructed. Horticultural crops grown in the greenhouse included mangetout, green peppers, cucumbers and tomatoes. These were mostly exported to the United Kingdom except for tomatoes which were sold to local supermarkets in Banket and Harare. In 1996 the farm owner expanded the area under greenhouses by 3 hectares and started planting roses. The flowers were exported to Holland (interview with former Whynhill Farm Supervisor, Banket, September 2008).

Campbell was a member of the CFU and was active in the provincial structures of the Union. In 1995 he joined the Horticultural Producers Council (HPC) which was one of the commodity associations of the CFU. Through the HPC Campbell and other horticultural producers in Mashonaland East and West established a cooperative called Produco which was tasked with identifying markets and taking care of the freighting of the fresh produce from the farms to the destination markets. At the time of resettlement the cooperative's plan for building a flower and vegetable handling facility close to the airport had been approved by the City of Harare (interview with former Whynhill Farm Supervisor, Banket, September 2008). In the meantime, the cooperative had managed to purchase four refrigerated trucks to carry flowers and other fresh produce from the members' farms.

Over the years the farm owner had made significant investments in farm equipment and at the time of resettlement there were three tractors, two Nissan diesel trucks, two motorbikes, one diesel generator and an irrigation system consisting of two water pumps and over-head pivots capable of irrigating approximately 55ha. Immoveable assets found on the farm included a

double storey farm house, two tobacco barns, three silage banks, a workshop and three boreholes.

In the 1990s the farm used to employ a total of 70 full-time employees and during seasons demanding more manual labour the number of employees would increase threefold. Of the 70 full-time employees, 18 were responsible for the greenhouses, 10 took care of the beef herd and the remainder worked in the crop fields. The farm workers were provided with accommodation on the compound (interview with former Whynhill Farm Supervisor, August 2009).

9.4.2 Movement on to the Farm

The farm was initially spared occupation until April 2001 when a group of approximately 18 villagers led by a war veteran from Chirau village attempted to occupy the land and erected temporary structures on the edge of the farm. They stayed on the edge of the farm for about three months. In July the farm workers alleged that the occupiers were harassing them and also that they were behind a number of bush fires on the farm (interview with former Whynhill Farm Supervisor). The farm owner sought the assistance of the police to evict would be occupiers.

When the GoZ officially launched the policy of fast track land reform in August 2001 Whynhill farm was included on the list of farms to be compulsorily acquired. In September 2001 the farm owner was served with a Section 8 notice that informed him of Government's intention to acquire the farm and that he had to vacate the farm without removing any of the assets.

Campbell contested the Section 8 Notice on a technicality that he had not been served with a Section 5 Notice which would have informed him of the Government's intention to acquire the farm. He also claimed that he did not own another farm. While he was in the process of lodging his appeal against removal from the farm government extension officers arrived to subdivide and demarcate plots. Within a month of being served with the notice people from Chirau and Kasanze communal lands were bussed into the farm. These people had been selected by their respective chiefs as deserving beneficiaries of land reform (interview with Banket Area Extension Officer, September 2008). Initially 55 households including people from Banket town, Chirau and Kasanze customary lands were allocated A1 plots. Nine of the beneficiary households are female-headed. None of the former farm workers were allocated

A1 plots. A minority of the former farm workers followed Campbell to Sutton B where they remain employed (interview with former Whynhill Farm Supervisor, Banket, September 2008). The majority however remained on the farm. Initially the farm owner continued residing in his farm house but was restricted from access to the fields and other parts of the farm.

When the Campbell's appeal to remain on the farm was unsuccessful he applied for permission to move his property off the farm. He managed to move all his equipment off the farm except for the water pumps that had been stolen by the time he was given the permission and the police escort. The beef herd was initially moved to Sutton B farm which he co-owned with his mother. Campbell is now reported to be running a transport operation in Harare (interview with former Whynhill Farm-supervisor, Banket, September 2008).

Further subdivisions to the farm were effected in 2003 when 380 hectares of the farm was converted into an A2 plot. It was allocated to a former ZANU (PF) female councillor. In the process the number of A1 plots was reduced to 45. Seven of those affected were offered vacant plots in a neighbouring A1 settlement at Lion Kopje farm while the other three went back to the communal lands (interviews with Whynhill VIDCO Chairperson, September 2008).

9.4.3 Emergence of Local Level Authority

The official demarcations of A1 plots in 2001 led to the creation of three small villages on the farm. The citing of the villages was influenced by a need for settlers to be close to their 6ha arable plots. When the resettlement occurred on the former large-scale farm there were no visible leaders amongst the group and for up to a year the beneficiaries resided without any local structure of power or organisation. It was only in 2002 during the Presidential elections that Chief Matibiri of Zvimba visited the areas and installed one of the land beneficiaries, originally from Chirau communal lands, as the village head. The newly installed village head presided over the election of a VIDCO which consisted of a secretary, treasurer and four committee members. There were only two females voted into the VIDCO and they occupied the position of committee members. In early 2003 the village head and the VIDCO initiated the process of appealing to the GoZ for support to resuscitate the irrigation system that had been vandalised during the period of occupation. The government responded positively to the request and supplied the land beneficiaries with three 125 horse power water pumps and

pipes. The VIDCO also entered into negotiations with Campbell to purchase his old irrigation equipment but they could not agree on the price.

It is alleged by VIDCO members that beginning in late 2005 the village head started selling plots to people mostly coming from Banket town. At the time Whynhill farm had approximately 328ha of land allocated for communal grazing by all the A1 beneficiaries. The village head initially offered two A1 plots measuring approximately 3ha each and he defended his decision on the basis that the families were destitute and had nowhere to stay (interview with VIDCO Chairperson, August 2009). In 2006 the village head took advantage of the availability of four vacant A1 plots and allocated them to teachers from Banket, allegedly for a fee although it has been difficult to prove how much he got. Other members of the VIDCO reported him to the local authority, the Zvimba Rural District Council and the Chief. The village head was removed in 2006 and the two families that had been allocated land in the grazing area were formally allocated land at a neighbouring A1 settlement (interview with VIDCO Chairperson, August 2009). Rather than appoint a new village head, the Chief working with the local council presided over the election of a Chairperson of the VIDCO. The current incumbent was elected in 2006 and re-elected at the beginning of 2008. The Chairperson is one of the latecomers at Whynhill; he only received his six hectare plot in 2004 after one of the beneficiaries had moved out. In a focus group discussion, residents at Whynhill confirmed that they had elected him on the basis of his farming skills (Zhizha 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008). In the first year of being resettled he sold the highest number of bags of maize to the GMB of any resettled farmer on the former large scale farm.

Another caveat to local authority at Whynhill farm is the nature of relations existing between the A1 land beneficiaries and the A2 farmer. It is alleged that when the A2 farmer was resettled the Minister of Local Government introduced her as his niece (interviews with VIDCO Chairperson, August 2009). The A2 farm is not under the jurisdiction of the VIDCO. While in other A1 settlements such as at Dunstan and Dalkeith farms the VIDCO has converted the former farmhouse into a school, at Whynhill the former farmhouse, tobacco barns and workshop belong to the A2 farmer. Children at Whynhill have to travel approximately seven kilometres to the nearest primary school. The extension officer appointed to service the A1 farmers on the former large scale farm could not secure accommodation on the farm.

Furthermore the A2 farmer has since resettlement encroached on the area set aside as a grazing area for A1 beneficiaries, and restricted other land beneficiaries from access to the boreholes as they all happen to be in her area. In 2007 she received permission from the Ministry of Lands officials to expand her plot by 70 hectares and that expansion led to the demolition of an entire village of 20 households. As at the end of 2008 the A2 farm officially measured 450 hectares. The VIDCO appealed to the A2 farmer and the Ministry of Lands officials against the eviction of the villagers from their homes but was not successful. Currently the affected households have built new structures on the edge of the farm close to a hill. The expansion of the A2 farm has also restricted the movement of cattle belonging to A1 beneficiaries in the affected village.

9.4.4 Land Use Patterns and Utilisation Capacities after Land Reform

The majority of A1 beneficiaries are involved in crop production and the most common crops are maize, cotton, tobacco and soya beans. Twenty-eight households are involved in market gardening, in hedged 0.2 hectare gardens that are situated close to the dam. The majority of those with gardens are growing leafy green vegetables mostly for own consumption but some (seven) reported that they also sell to neighbouring villagers. Animal husbandry is very limited in comparison to the period prior to resettlement: 11 households have a combined herd of 72 cattle. Only one A1 farmer has established a pig project by taking advantage of the pig handling facilities left behind by the former owner that are located on his plot. The pig project has an average of 38 pigs at any time. He sells the pigs to a local butchery in Banket. Of the 11 households with cattle only three have adequate draught power to prepare six hectares of land. The beneficiaries received tillage support from the DDF for two hectares per household in the first two years of resettlement (interviews with Extension Officer responsible for Whyhill, August, 2008). Since 2003 the majority of the farmers have been hiring a private contractor to prepare their land (interviews with VIDCO Chairperson, August 2009). Beginning in 2004 the residents of Village A have come up with a scheme for jointly preparing land for each other through the hire of a private contractor. The private contractor is a neighbouring A2 farmer with a tractor and he demands one 50 kg bag of maize for every hectare prepared. The AI villagers concerned take advantage of the fact that their plots are adjacent to each other and through the relationship they have forged with the A2 farmer they can pay him at the end of the farming season (interview with VIDCO Chairperson, August 2009).

The practice of subletting some of the land to fellow A1 farmers and others from outside in return for inputs started in 2003. The current VIDCO Chairperson admitted that he had on two occasions managed to gain access to land through such a practice. In 2003, prior to being allocated a plot at Whynhill he managed to get access to an entire six hectare plot belonging to an A1 beneficiary working in Banket town. He used some of the harvested maize as a payment to the owner of the land. In 2006, after being officially allocated his own six hectare plot he was allowed to use two hectares of his neighbour's plot on the understanding that he would pay for the preparation of the latter's three hectares (interview with VIDCO Chairperson, September 2009). Exact figures of households that are involved were not available but estimates indicate that a third of the beneficiaries could be involved in such a practice. Other farming arrangements include cases in which relatives or friends of a land beneficiary secure farm inputs and asked the land beneficiary's household to provide labour on the farm. At least two household heads participating in the focus group discussions revealed that they were part of such arrangements and would share the harvest equally.

Besides the common constraints surrounding access to farm inputs, A1 farmers at Whynhill also face a challenge in securing farm labour. During a focus group discussion, the A1 farmers revealed that they have to go back to Chirau and Kasanze communal lands to secure labour. The majority of the farm workers are still resident on the farm compound but they allegedly prefer to work for the A2 farmer settled within Whynhill and others work for neighbouring A2 farmers (Zhizha 01/08 focus group discussion notes, September 2008).

9.5 Associational Activity at Whynhill Farm

9.5.1 Background

In 2003 the A1 beneficiaries at Whynhill came together to form the Zhizha (fresh harvest) Farmers Cooperative. The extension officer responsible for the greater Banket area was part of the team that demarcated A1 plots and during further visits he made suggestions for all land beneficiaries to come together and form a production cooperative that would utilise the dam on the farm and available irrigation equipment. The same group would also be registered as a beneficiary of government farm inputs (interviews with Extension Officer, September 2008). The extension officer and the members of the VIDCO were instrumental in mobilising all the households to commit to the idea of the group. Initially the group comprised all of the 45 A1 households, until 2007 when 12 of the members split off to form the Whynhill Farmers

Association. The original group was formed mainly to ensure equitable and optimum usage of inherited irrigation equipment through joint production and marketing of wheat (interview with Zhizha Secretary, August 2008).

9.5.2 Activities of Zhizha Farmers' Group

The approach in Zhizha is unique: the group is a prototype of a collective cooperative during the winter season. In the winter the group takes on a collective approach towards the production of wheat as members combine their six hectare plots of land, obtain wheat inputs as a group and use the available irrigation capacity to water the crop. At the end of the season the group is responsible for the marketing of wheat and shares the returns equally among the members.

One of the first activities of the group was to follow up on a request for irrigation equipment that had been made by the VIDCO in late 2002. In 2003 the GoZ hired a contractor to install three new water pumps and to repair available irrigation equipment. Since 2003 the group has been utilising the donated irrigation equipment jointly to grow wheat during winter. In the first three years they managed to grow wheat on 40 hectares. The inputs for wheat were obtained by the leadership from the local extension office in Banket. The first three years of winter production were quite lucrative for the group and marketed output averaged 60 tonnes per year (AREX, 2008, Wheat Deliveries Records).

However the joint growing of wheat has been on the decline since 2007. In 2007 the group managed to plant wheat on 16 hectares and in 2008 this was reduced to three hectares. A number of reasons are behind the fall in production. Firstly the A2 farmer has in the past few years encroached into the irrigable area and some of the A1 plots that were once part of the pool of fields combined for winter production now belong to the A2 farmer. Secondly when the group split in 2007 it lost some land in the process. Thirdly the group did not receive payment for the previous crop on time and they were not given subsidised inputs in the following year. Fourthly the actual irrigation capacity of the group has been reduced: when other group members split they demanded one of the water pumps and some of the pipes and the A2 farmer working with the first chairperson managed to appropriate a water pump for her own use.

During the summer agricultural season (November to March) Zhizha focuses on sourcing of inputs for group members who revert to individual production. The group takes over the

responsibility of ensuring that members receive subsidised inputs. Leaders of groups are required to submit the names of members, their plot numbers and input requirements three months before the commencement of the season. Since the formation of the group they have only been able to secure inputs for members twice, in the 2004/05 and 2007/08 farming seasons. The extension officers alleged that the leadership did not submit their application for the 2006/07 input allocations on time and were therefore not included in the request sent to head office (interview with Extension Officer, August 2009). The leadership however alleges that inputs intended for the group members were allocated to the A2 farmer (interview with Zhizha Secretary, August 2008).

9.5.3 Group Structure, Recruitment and Participation in Zhizha

Elections for the executive, comprising the chairperson, secretary, treasurer and two committee members, were held in March 2003. The committee is dominated by males with the treasurer being the only female officer. Besides overseeing the group's meetings the Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that members have access to farm inputs. After two years of operation the leadership established three new sub-committees: one for the coordination of the group's labour requirements during the growing of wheat, another for maintenance of irrigation equipment and the third responsible for marketing. In 2006 the VIDCO Chairperson was added to the structure as a committee member and the VIDCO made a similar provision by accommodating the Chairperson of the farmer group into the VIDCO structures. This was done in order to ensure better coordination among the structures and to minimise duplication of activities (interview with VIDCO Chairperson, August 2009).

Membership of the group was opened to all the A1 beneficiaries resettled on the farm. Those willing to join were expected to pay joining and subscription fees agreed at a general meeting. They were also expected to surrender their portion of arable land during the winter season for the production of wheat and to contribute towards the group's labour requirements during the winter. The group, through the marketing sub-committee, would then make sure that the winter crop was sold and proceeds were distributed equally to members.

Since its formation in 2003, elections for positions in the executive committee have been held only once at the inaugural meeting. Although Zhizha looks like a successful prototype of a cooperative it faces many internal problems which arise out of weak leadership. In 2005 the Zhizha Chairperson was approached by the neighbouring A2 farmer about the possibility of

sharing irrigation equipment and the Chairperson apparently agreed without consulting the rest of the executive committee members (Zhizha focus group discussion notes, 01/08, September 2008). When the groups learnt of this, approximately 26 percent of the members resigned to form a rival group. The remaining members tried for more than two years to remove their chairperson from the post because of lack of consultation with the executive committee and the irrigation sub-committee when entering into asset sharing arrangements with the neighbouring A2 farmer. Initially they could not remove him because of his perceived good relations with the local extension officers as the latter were seen as instrumental in ensuring timely access to inputs. Even when he was eventually deposed the group still failed to extricate itself from the agreement on sharing irrigation equipment with the A2 farmer and the latter has been refusing to surrender some of the irrigation equipment she got from the group claiming that she had paid for it (interviews with Zhizha Secretary, September 2008).

Meetings called by the executive committee are usually poorly attended except for those held during the preparation season for summer crops. The group has, since its formation, struggled to secure adequate supplies of labour during the period of joint wheat production. Less than 40 percent of the members have consistently contributed labour to the group's activities (interview with Zhizha Chairperson, August 2009). The problem is so acute that the group's biggest costs involve the hiring of external labour to complement the labour contribution from the members.

The Zhizha approach to farm production is very rare and reminiscent of the state established cooperatives of the 1980s. At a surface level the group looks like the ideal form of joint collective action with the potential to optimise available land, labour and infrastructure. However, Zhizha has the most problems compared to any of the groups that have been discussed: characterised by quarrels and threats of splits and members of the group have lagged behind in terms of accumulation of productive and non-productive assets (only 27 percent have managed to do this). Initially the group had 45 members but as of December 2008 only 31 remained.

During a focus group discussion the majority of participants revealed that they disagree with the leadership's decision to grow wheat jointly because of the failure of the GoZ to pay for deliveries on time (the GoZ did not pay for the 2006 wheat crop despite earlier promises to

pay using the principle of import parity). Other members claim that they have been pushing for the group to switch from wheat to other uncontrolled crops such as soya beans and sugar beans but the leadership considers it a risky move (Zhizha 02/08, focus group discussions, October 2008).

9.6 Conclusion

This chapter and the previous ones (Chapters 8 and 9), have through four case studies, detailed the manner in which fast track land reform beneficiaries are engaged in an ongoing process of social organisation that responds to the austere economic environment characterising Zimbabwe and the unique circumstances existing on each former large scale farm. Local farmer groups of various shades have emerged as one of the most common responses within A1 settlements. These groups are in some circumstances both a form of social organisation and agency, contributing synergies to the acquisition of farm inputs and better utilisation of land.

The extent to which the local groups are a dominant feature of social organisation is influenced by other factors such as the relationship of the local farmer group with the village authority. In cases such as at Dalkeith, where lineage elites dominate through the village administration structure, the local farmer group plays a subordinate role to the former and actually depends on the coercive influence of traditional authority to gain cooperation among the members. However the Chidziva experience is rare: in most cases land beneficiaries were not settled on the basis of belonging within lineage groups. In cases such as at Whyhill both the village authority and farmer group are at their formative stage of development and are still struggling with defining their operational boundaries. They have to negotiate their terrain of operation with a politically connected A2 farmer and a very austere economic environment. These external challenges have so constrained the farmer group from developing its collective approach to farm production that the actual existence of the group, if not the whole A1 settlement at Whyhill, is under threat.

The sudden emergence of such local associational forms is partly related to the survival imperative among most of the newly resettled households who typically have limited ownership of productive assets to prepare the land and lack resources to hire these from service providers individually. Entering into collective action within the local farmer groups

has been one of the ways of overcoming the productive asset challenges that many A1 households face. The intervention of local farmer groups is potentially one of the positive developments in the A1 settlements under study. A number of interviewed members of local farmer groups associate their ability to expand their actual hectareage of cropped area to the intervention of the groups. On average, since joining the groups, more than 60 percent of the members have been able to expand their cropped area from an average of two hectares to about four to five hectares (based on focus group discussions held with Chidziva and Zhizha members, September 2008). According to the members the local farmer groups have contributed to improved access to inputs.

The local farmer groups have not only pursued an inward-looking strategy but have also been outwardly focused by engaging with service providers such as state agents and financial institutions on behalf of their members. The outward-looking strategy has been critical for the mobilisation of farm inputs and tillage support which individual households would have struggled to mobilise on their own. Their growth and expansion remains highly uneven and dependent upon on a number of opportunistic factors which include availability of inherited infrastructure that necessitates association and imperative from state agents. They however occupy an important space in mobilising the resettled households for farm production.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

10.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters have demonstrated the manner in which two seemingly opposed institutions have emerged on former large-scale commercial farms that were converted into A1 farms under the fast track land reform programme. The local farmer groups and village councils have through varied negotiated processes of formation attempted to delineate areas of activity for each other. These delineations are superfluous in this instance given the nature of the social space in which they are emerging and the challenges of survival faced by the resettled which make them amenable to multiple loyalties as a strategy of improving social reproduction. Membership of either formation is not necessarily a matter of conviction but rather of convenience.

The manner in which the newly resettled connect with both the village authority and the local farmer groups and the relationship between these two institutions is critical to the discussion in this chapter. In pursuit of an understanding of how the newly resettled members connect with each other the discussion delves into an analysis of what goes on within the groups in terms of their activities and the dynamics of participation. Prior to a detailed analysis of the village authority the link between land tenure and social organisation is discussed in detail.

10.2 Summary of the Discussion

In order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the changes to social organisation that are occurring in the newly resettled areas it is necessary to recap on the discussion so far. Chapter 2 described the lineage framework of social organisation and showed how the introduction of commodity markets has negatively affected the viability of the lineage form of organisation in terms of resource allocation and distribution of surplus. In its pure sense the lineage was the most important land holding group and it comprised the collective group of people derived from any male agnate above the first agnate generation (Adholla, 1962:26). Despite the apparent forms of social differentiation that emerged in the first phase of agrarian reforms, rural households managed to cope with the inequalities due to the fact the prevailing forms of social organisation in customary areas ensures that households are not totally individualised or separated from each other in terms of production and welfare. Social and blood relations provide a framework of production assistance and welfare during periods of

need. Scoones and Wilson (1989) have called this form of organisation „shallow patrilineage“, with poor affines receiving support from their rich partners while the latter are constrained by social obligations from exploiting their position. This system is strengthened by the fact that currently communal area villages are made up of clusters of kin-related households. The networks of kinship that emerge are important sources of cooperation in agricultural activities, for instance ploughing, as these relationships often ensure access to draught animals, and support in times of need, for example the payment of school fees (Muchena, 1989; Cliffe, 1988:38).

However it is important to note that even in customary areas the importance of the lineage framework of organisation has been on the decline. There are various explanations and the most important are the combination of changes in labour relations that emerge within sites of commodity production, increased demand for land and the austere economic situation. Labour relations within the lineage framework are characterised by voluntarism within the kinship network, especially given the expectation that in the event of a famine the whole group will benefit from the crop. However the logic of the commodity markets have contributed to the emergence of more individualised and profit-seeking farming methods. Under these conditions labour relations are more exploitative and even petty commodity producers hire extra labour (Moyo, 1995). The lineage framework loses its importance in the arena of facilitating social relations of production but gains notoriety as it ferments a new form of identity politics where it is appropriated by the lineage as a mechanism to determine who should be included or excluded from access to certain natural resources, especially land. Chapter 4 discusses in detail the emergence of informal land markets that are presided over by lineage and clan elites.

Chapter 5 comprehensively demonstrated that the space for organising rural production, consumption and especially welfare has been filled by various development agents that range from local farmer groups and NGOs to state agencies. These external agents have reorganised rural communities according to different categories which include vulnerability, possession of certain skills, ability and willingness to enter into a defined land use activity, and in some instances proximity to a water source that can be used for irrigation or any other natural resource considered vital for the success of the innovation being introduced by the external actor. Local groups in customary areas have become the main facilitators of farm production as they enable the members' access to extension support and discounted inputs. In the process

the lineage framework has been marginalised to an extent that generally households belonging to the same lineage group are characterised by an intense spirit of individualism as income, production and consumption have become a function of the household usually made up of a strictly nuclear family (Ahmed, 1980:127). The changes have been caused not only by the intervention of external agents but also by the entry of commodity markets to the rural terrain which have promoted individual enterprise and accumulation. In the new context nuclear households have become the basic unit of consumption.

However the dynamics in the newly resettled areas are slightly different. Chapters 7 and 8 have shown that, whereas in the customary areas rural households are interacting with various agents of development that include NGOs, churches and private sector agro-contracting companies, the newly resettled areas have remained isolated from external support except for the state's extension services. There are isolated cases however where private sector companies have entered into agreement with newly-resettled farmers such as within Salt-Lakes in Goromonzi. Even the waning influence of the lineage form of organisation is not present in most of these areas except for the few cases such as at Dalkeith farm in Zvimba. The newly resettled areas are mostly made up of strangers from diverse backgrounds, including customary areas, urban and the former large-scale commercial farming areas. In the majority of cases the newly resettled households are made up of very small families, without adequate productive and financial assets to effectively utilise their landholdings.

The purpose of land and agrarian reform is to restructure agrarian property relations and ultimately to ensure that land is given to the tiller. Zimbabwe does not necessarily fit the „land to the tiller „model because of the existence of various poor rural and urban dwellers who at the time were not working on the large scale commercial farms but deserved consideration for land reform due to their socio-economic status. Furthermore such land reforms should contribute towards the prioritisation of agricultural reconstruction with an emphasis on the development of industrialisation and the expansion of the home market (Moyo and Yeros 2005:200, Hendricks 2007:1). The thesis (especially chapters 1 and 6) has shown how approximately 4 000 former large scale farms have been subdivided into 127 000 small A1 plots and 15 000 A2 plots. These have benefitted two categories of beneficiaries, subsistence oriented smallholders who were earlier settled in communal lands, large scale farms and urban areas. The A2 was created specifically to cater for those with proven resource capacity to operate a farm on a commercial basis.

The responsibility for the contribution of agriculture towards industrialisation falls on the A2. State thinking, demonstrated through the design of agrarian reform programmes and prioritisation of A2 in the allocation of resources seems to be inline with the desire for accelerated growth in the commercial sector of agriculture. In the past eight years the GoZ has embarked on a very ambitious mechanisation programme and various agricultural export promotion incentives targeted at the A2 beneficiaries. The A1 beneficiaries have largely been excluded from such programmes, further cementing the view that „fast track“ does not necessarily suggest a major rethinking of the organisation of agriculture within the broader economy. Neo-colonially established patterns of production of primary agricultural commodities for the export market still prevail.

Furthermore the smallholder's position remains subsistence oriented, thus perpetuating a colonially established dualism in agriculture. Although sections of smallholders in Zimbabwe have proved their capacity to produce maize for the market in the first decade of independence policy measures continue to marginalise them. Measures to create or expand a home market remain very limited due to the restricted allocation of farm production resources to the A1. However there is a category of smallholders within the A1 who have through other non-state means managed to enter the non-food cash export sector and in the process strongly demonstrating to the state and industry the possibilities that smallholders can produce beyond subsistence levels and contribute towards the development of agriculture. Farmers in this sector are operating within a very austere environment and the coping mechanisms noted in this study such as associationalism (analysed in more detail above) although necessary are not in themselves sufficient for a major production increase. They need to be complemented by state based policies and programmes which ensure that these beneficiaries are fairly integrated into the market in order for them to make a significant contribution towards national development.

Agrarian reform theorists (discussed in chapter 2) have highlighted the limitations of what land reforms can achieve in their own right without broader agrarian reforms. Fast track exposes the limitation of land reforms carried in the absence agrarian reforms aimed at realigning the national development vision. Supporting institutions and industries such as the financial sector, seed and fertiliser manufacturing organisations have not yet adequately restructured themselves to the new ways in which their services and goods are demanded.

These reforms are urgently required to reverse patterns of production previously established to cater for a particular form of large scale agriculture.

10.3 Cooperation within A1 Settlements

10.3.1 The Rationale for Local Farmer Groups

One of the major tasks of this thesis is to understand these groups in their own right and what happens within them both because they have emerged as the most common formation and their actions have an effect upon the lives of the members. The majority of the resettled households do not possess adequate capacity to meet their social reproduction needs. Although the manner of resettlement, especially the land tenure system (discussed below), seems to promote an atomised and isolated existence, there has been a spontaneous movement towards the formation of local farmer groups. These local associational forms promise to respond to some of the constraints identified by the member households. The absence of strong social ties based on kinship (except within Chidziva) has contributed to the emergence of groups that do not discriminate along the lines of belonging within a lineage. The emergence of local farmer groups in fast track resettlement areas is not entirely a novel process. Studies by Barr (2004) in resettlement areas established in the 1980s showed that there is a tendency towards increased socio-civil activity in areas where the lineage framework does not dominate.

In the period just prior to the land occupations (1993-98) the liberalisation of agriculture, which among other things removed restrictions on agricultural commodity trade, led to an increase in the number of agro-dealers and competition for smallholder business (Arnaiz, 1998). During this period a number of commercial enterprises provided incentives to attract smallholder custom which included input schemes and advance payments for crops not yet ready for the market. Access to these benefits was on the precondition that rural households established local organisations for access to production and marketing benefits (Arnaiz, 1998).

Moyo (2002) argued that local associational forms are a response to the exploitative nature of state and market relations. However the case studies in Goromonzi and Zvimba informing this study found very little market penetration in these areas but found instead that they are engaged in competition among themselves to extract benefits from both the state and a very

reluctant private sector. Indeed the newly resettled land beneficiaries do face a wide array of socioeconomic and political challenges (discussed in Chapters 3 and 7) that have a negative impact upon the possibility of rural social reproduction but these socioeconomic conditions actually have more to do with the absence of the market in the countryside than the exploitative relations suggested by Moyo (2002).

The mobilisation of newly resettled households into local farmer groups as a strategy for social reproduction arises out of the recognition of the objective conditions of the household and the wider economy in which social reproduction takes place. The socioeconomic characteristics of the land beneficiaries were discussed in Chapter 6 but it is worth reiterating that the majority owned very few hand tools or productive assets. Since the inception of the fast track resettlement programme the economy has been in a state of accelerated meltdown. Networks of reciprocity and structured farmer groups have been formed as part of a response to the challenges of lack of adequate productive assets and limited capabilities to secure farm inputs. In such a context the overarching concern within the local farmer groups has been the need to improve agricultural production capacity.

The local farmer groups that have emerged vary in terms of origin, size and scope of activities. The numbers involved in these local groups range from as low as 10 to over 70. Most often these formations seek to maximise group synergies such as the improved ability to mobilise finances for travel to the local government offices to request assistance. All the groups existing on the four former large-scale farms studied were formed as part of an effort to improve the means by which inputs are obtained from government agencies. There have also been moments of opportunism in the formation of some of these groups and the availability of irrigation equipment on the former large-scale farm has provided a justification for the establishment of groups at Lot 3 of Buena Vista, Dalkeith and Whynhill farms.

In some instances local power struggles influence the formation of local farmer groups. At Lot 3 of Buena Vista the origins of the group have much to do with such struggles as well as the imperative of access to irrigation equipment. When the chief appointed someone who was not part of the local leadership as the village head, the war veterans active within the structures of the Committee of Seven rushed through the process of establishing the group. The need to optimise the use of irrigation equipment that was found on the former large-scale farm was used as an overriding objective but in reality, the war veterans who had dominated

local processes from the days of land occupation were not prepared to cede authority to non-war veterans. In essence to do so would have meant the loss of control over equipment on the farm and the possible eviction of the leader of the Committee of Seven from the farmhouse so that it could be converted into a clinic (interviews with Extension Officer at Lot 3 of Buena Vista, September 2008).

The limited activity of market players has provided incentives for the formation of certain types of local organisation. Prior to fast track land reform economic reforms created market-driven opportunities for the formation of mostly loan and inputs groups that thrived in areas such as Shamva District in Mashonaland East Province (Arnaiz, 1998). In the aftermath of the fast track programme the residue of market players that include a semi-private financial institution and tobacco marketing firm have provided new incentives for the formation of specific groups in newly resettled areas of Goromonzi district.

10.3.2 Nature of Cooperation within Local Farmer Groups

The groups that have been studied combine a survivalist outlook with a more long-term approach to organising themselves in varying degrees. On the one hand these formations seem to be an opportunistic and survivalist response to the immediate macroeconomic meltdown that has affected the whole of Zimbabwe. Within this line of thinking they arise out of a need to improve their access to inputs provided by the state. Survivalist tactics include obtaining inputs from local agents of other state-based subsidies such as tillage support. These attempts at survival include activities aimed at enhancing farm production, such as approaching the DDF for land preparation support. On the other hand there are a number of local farmer groups that have also managed to combine a survivalist approach with more strategic initiatives such as the mobilisation of savings, the pooling of their own productive assets and labour, and entering into innovative agricultural financing arrangements as part of a response to internal capacity constraints and a weak agricultural financing policy framework. Groups in Goromonzi, such as Budiro, Muswiti and Salt-Lakes, have a more long-term strategic outlook than the groups in Zvimba whose logic of collective action seems to be based on extracting benefits from the state.

Beyond the stated activities and tactics of the local farmer groups (discussed below) there are several discrete actions that the leadership and the membership have to undertake to ensure

success. The leadership in most of the groups has to devote attention to the building of solidarity within the group by improving social relations among the members. Strategies for establishing solidarity vary between the groups but mostly entail finding ways of spending time together at social events. The approach is more common in the smaller formations occurring at Dunstan farm. In these groups the leadership has arranged end-of-year parties for their members and members have been invited to come and share in the festivities of the new harvest. This has however been very difficult to do in the larger groups such as Tagarika and Zhizha. At Chidziva the group takes advantage of the already existing autochthonous ties among the members. Most of the local farmer groups have developed songs and slogans about their groups. The most apt slogan is the one used by Budiro which states “Budiro yedu tose!” (We develop together). Slogans such as these are slowly contributing to the creation and strengthening of solidarity. The building of local solidarity is critical especially for groups involved in the pooling of labour through the *nhimbe* and the current challenges in effectively organising such cooperation are partly explained by the lack of strong relations. The subsections below assess the different forms of cooperation within the groups.

Local Farmer Groups and Sourcing of Inputs

The sourcing of actual inputs, such as seed and fertilisers, from the state is a fairly recent phenomenon. Prior to the fast track resettlement the state through its own agricultural financing parastatals mostly ensured that farmers had access to agricultural financing which they would use to purchase inputs on the open market. Even then the smallholder sector was never a major beneficiary of such financing arrangements and mostly depended on self-financing through savings and remittances. The more vulnerable households in the smallholder sector relied upon non-state agents such as NGOs for the supply of farm inputs. In the new dispensation most of the local farmer groups obtain their inputs through state-led input subsidy programmes, except for rare cases in which contract farming arrangements with a private company have been established. The practice of obtaining farm inputs from the state is so pervasive among the local farmer groups that one extension officer based in Zvimba referred to them as „input groups“. The description of these formations as such is significant for it tells how they are perceived by outsiders and more importantly their reliance on state-subsidised inputs and the role which they have been assigned by influential actors such as the extension officers and even the members. The dependency on state-subsidised farm inputs has partly been caused by the fact that the agro-supply industry has been in a state of decline

since 2000 and is unable to produce sufficient quantities of required inputs (discussed in more detail in Chapter 3).

The local farmer groups have in the majority of cases contributed to improving the accessibility of inputs and also reduced the cost of individuals visiting the local distribution centres. The synergies derived from collective action have made it easier for those who otherwise would not have been able to afford the numerous visits to such centres. Members indicated that belonging to a group has lessened the burden of individually obtaining inputs although they still face delays in terms of access to the inputs.

Rather than depend on the state-based input subsidy programme and in response to the incentive offered by the local Agri-Bank branch, groups in Goromonzi are involved in the mobilisation of their own savings to purchase inputs. The mobilisation of savings has contributed towards nurturing a philosophy of independence from the state's free subsidies and this is a critical aspect of cooperativism. The ability to mobilise savings is critical for accumulation of on-farm assets, ensuring the ability to pay for other social services and as a safety net in case of drought or any other phenomena that might negatively affect production. However the hyperinflation that has characterised Zimbabwe has not spared these groups (as discussed in Chapter 8). The introduction of savings has not made a significant dent on the dependence upon state subsidies. Most of the savings were very low (in 2007 members of the groups based at Dunstan farm in Goromonzi were contributing less than US\$4 per month in Zimbabwean dollars) and the groups engaged in this activity are very small (an average of 12) so that the amounts saved do not represent a significant comparative advantage. Furthermore the bank was not necessarily helpful in terms of technical advice. Rather than advise the groups to convert their money into foreign currency (a common practice among informal traders at the time) which would have at least maintained the value and buttressed them against inflation, Agri-Bank continued to receive savings even though it had no capacity to maintain the value of the money.

The groups that were studied in Zvimba are still struggling with establishing mechanisms of transparency, especially in the allocation of the scarce resources attained by the group. There have been instances in which inputs received under the GoZ inputs subsidy programme were not adequate to cover all the members and the leadership had to use its discretion as to who would be allocated the inputs. The lack of a clear criterion of resource allocation has

contributed to accusations of gender bias against the leadership by the members and complaints that the leaders prioritise themselves.

Furthermore the inputs subsidy programme has fallen victim to the local bureaucracy and the patronage of local state agencies. The process of acquiring inputs requires that groups register their requirements with the district extension office three months before the beginning of the planting season, and in between the formal application and the actual receipt of inputs the groups engage in a variety of, at times costly, discrete lobbying activities to be prioritised in the allocation of the inputs. Some of these activities entail regular visits to the distribution centres just to maintain steady relations with the responsible officers. The fact that the whole experience in forming local farmer groups has been one of mobilising members around a government-built core of services has two unfortunate effects: it is doing anything but fostering an attitude of self-reliance and related to this is the fact that it has created the impression that local farmer groups are created solely for deriving benefits from the state.

Joint Production and Marketing

Successful agricultural collectives involved in joint production and marketing of agricultural commodities are rare in Zimbabwe. Most of the agricultural cooperatives that were established in the 1980s had collapsed by the close of the first decade of independence. The reasons behind their collapse range from inadequate budgetary allocations from the parent ministry to lack of leadership within the collectives themselves, but the most compelling is the one provided by Mumbengegwi (1988) that the majority of Zimbabweans recruited into these cooperatives had not been properly socialised into collective agriculture. It is no wonder, for instance that those who joined always did so as a last resort and whenever an opportunity arose they would leave the cooperative (Murisa, 2008:122).

Collective farming and marketing of wheat was opportunistically introduced within Zhizha at Whyhill farm in order to take advantage of existing irrigation equipment and an irrigation rehabilitation programme being undertaken by the GoZ. None of the members had any prior experience of joint production, nor were they given an opportunity for training on this new form of social organisation. Most of the land beneficiaries are from the Chirau and Kasanze customary lands where they had practiced individual farming until their resettlement. The challenge that the leadership faced, and still faces, is how to get members sufficiently involved in a new form of social organisation for production. This point might seem mundane

but one should consider the fact that smallholder enterprises are run along established routines which no longer need much thought, but the same mode of decision-making is not applicable to a large-scale enterprise especially in its early stages. It is not surprising that Zhizha faces the most challenges of any of the groups studied, including the failure to utilise available irrigation equipment adequately and lack of capacity to mobilise labour effectively among the membership. The split in the group that occurred in 2007 is partly a manifestation of the failure by the leadership to resolve some of the internal problems of the group.

Among the case studies Salt-Lakes is another group that approximates a marketing cooperative. Production remains individually organised among the Salt-Lakes' membership and the group intervenes only through the mobilisation of specialised skills for the preparation of seed beds, handling of seedlings and their transfer, and the curing of tobacco. The Salt-Lakes approach is more successful than the one being used by Zhizha as it nurtures individual enterprise and accountability, in contrast to Zhizha where those who have not made equal contributions of labour are still equally rewarded.

Furthermore, the approach used by Salt-Lakes encourages members to acquire productive assets. Through this gradual accumulation of assets a modest pool of small productive assets, including spraying cans, hoes, wheelbarrows, water pumps and pipes is now available for use by members of the group. The deliberate discussion around purchasing productive assets has contributed to an understanding of the necessity of such accumulation among the members of the group.

Farmer Groups and Labour Pooling

The pooling of labour is a very common rural practice but has mostly been organised within the framework of the lineage group. Currently there is only one out of four groups in Goromonzi involved in the pooling of labour, while in Zvimba both groups list labour pooling as one of their stated activities. Labour and asset pooling is the most involved in terms of time. It is the only activity in which members are expected to make themselves available for a specified period of time as part of the labour force, and it has a tendency to create conflict. Currently these activities remain poorly managed and the complaints that have emerged suggest gender-based perceptions of labour exploitation: female members, especially at Chidziva and Zhizha, see themselves as contributing more labour than their male counterparts. (Chidziva and Zhizha focus group discussion notes, September 2008). The

failure to coordinate this activity effectively has caused rifts in the groups and loss of production capacity. At Zhizha the failure of the leadership to mobilise adequate labour capacity has necessitated the hiring of labour which has negatively affected profit margins on the marketed wheat.

10.3.3 Participation in Local Farmer Group Activities

Local farmer groups belong to the family of voluntary institutions that have emerged throughout Zimbabwe's countryside and although they operate under various names they are usually

associations of persons who have voluntarily joined together to achieve a common objective through the formation of a democratically controlled organisation, making equitable contribution to the capital required and accepting a fair share of the risks and benefits of the undertaking (Hussi et al., 1993:13).

Like any other social formation there is no uniformity in terms of the presence of some of the vital characteristics such as the level of democratic participation and equitable contribution to the capital which may be in the form of labour time, cash injection or other physical assets mentioned in the definition above. Mafeje (1993:17) argued that these formations "require no special skills to run them as they are usually small and characterised by face to face relations and based on mutual trust". The discussion in this sub-section pays particular attention to the extent to which the local farmer groups represent the interests of the members and the manner in which the latter participate in decision-making and other activities of the group.

Rahman (1993:12) argues that for a voluntary association to be successful the associating individuals must possess a sense of identity with the entity so that collective interest registers emotionally in the consciousness of the member as part of their individual interests. Furthermore effective participation requires that members manage to internalise the factors of creativity that are objectively external to individuals subjectively and to develop a sense of purpose in the exercise of ownership and decision making (Rahman, 1993:17). The case studies (Chapters 8 and 9) have shown that groups with fewer members, such as those based at Dunstan farm have provided significant scope for members to make an input to the activities of the group and the meetings are held more frequently. Groups with more than 30 members (Chidziva, Tagarika, and Whynhill) were found to be more closed in terms of allowing decision-making and most of the decisions, including the name, activities and frequency of meetings of the group had been taken by the leadership. There are longer

intervals between meetings in groups with more than 30 members than in the smaller groups at Dunstan farm.

However the mere frequency and high attendance of meetings of the groups based at Dunstan does not necessarily mean that members have internalised the goals of the group and identify emotionally with it. There have been instances even in these groups in which key decisions concerning the group were made by the leadership without consultation with the membership. Despite these weaknesses the situation in the groups at Dunstan is better than that prevailing in the other groups. Within the groups at Dunstan farm it is easier for the leaders to call for a meeting within a day and to allow everyone to discuss an issue before an agreement is reached on what to do. It is also easier for all to see who was doing their share and who was not so that one who is shirking might meet with disapproval from others. Frequent face-to-face contact and some sort of a common commitment make it easier for members to trust each other and to reach a common understanding.

The bigger the local farmer group is the more difficult it is for the members to achieve a common sense of purpose. In the bigger groups such as Chidziva, Tagarika and Zhizha the leadership was overwhelmed by the task of organising activities in which so many members had to participate. It took an average of four to five days for the leadership to get all the members together into one meeting. Most of the meetings are poorly attended for a variety of reasons which include insufficient notice of the meeting, no knowledge of the meeting and trusting that others would make the right decision (based on focus group discussions held with three groups and personal observations, August-October 2008). One of the reasons for this low member participation in group activities is that there are no prior social relations within the groups and also that the majority of those belonging to such formations did not belong to any form of association before being resettled. The lack of prior experience with such formations means that members do not understand why they should attend meetings, especially when they have a leadership committee in place, and also that they are not used to any conscious planning or depersonalised discussions on farm management problems. The most common practice that has emerged within the groups is that they elect anybody who claims to have experience of such issues as the leader and agree with the decisions made without seeking explanations. Once leaders have been elected power is not shared in common to the extent that members do not necessarily identify with the decisions taken by the leadership.

While Mafeje (1993) is right to assert that the groups are usually too small it is the claim that they need no special skills that needs qualification. There is a definite need for leadership skills in these groups to inculcate an ethos of consulting and designing acceptable resource allocation mechanisms. The current practices, where leaders make decisions without consulting and are rarely questioned, have served to weaken group unity. In extreme cases, such as at Zhizha, the group has had to pay heavily in terms of loss of members. Furthermore the current isolation of the local farmer groups from the national smallholder union (discussed in more detail below) makes it imperative for the leaders of these groups to have certain skills in lobbying and an ability to track government programmes for the benefit of their groups. Innovations that are being introduced in gaining access to farm inputs such as contract farming arrangement with private sector players makes it imperative for the leadership to have some basic literacy, accounting skills and understanding of commodity markets.

The current pool of leaders is made up of those who are capable in farming, politically connected, war veterans and those close to lineage elites. Most of the leaders of the groups at Dunstan were identified by the extension officer on the basis of their farming competency, while at Lot 3 of Buena Vista the group is dominated by war veterans who were behind the initial occupations of the farm and are also active in political party activity. In Zvimba the leadership at Chidziva was handpicked by the village head as an expression of his political balancing act to satisfy the different lineage elders. In all of the other groups in Zvimba elections were held for all the positions. The holding of elections suggests a certain level of popularity among those voted into office. However there is no group that has held elections for the second time except Zhizha which held elections for the vacant post of Chairperson. Thus while the local farmer groups and the constitutions they produce promise some form of democratic practice they can easily be manipulated by rural elites for their own benefit. The failure to hold elections by these groups means that they do not represent a democratic alternative to the village authority being introduced by the GoZ. Furthermore the current practice, whereby members disgruntled by the leadership of a certain group have gone ahead to form a new group, only leads to further fragmentation without necessarily reforming the internal practice of these formations.

10.3.4 Alliance Building: Local Farmer Groups and External Agents

The Extension Officer

The distribution and role of extension officers has been discussed in Chapter 7 but the discussion here devotes attention to the manner in which these officers relate to local farmer groups. In the areas under study extension officers are the most locally available agents of the state. Extension officers have played either a leading or facilitative role in the establishment of local farmer groups. Three of the four groups under study in Goromonzi were established through the intervention of the extension officers. There are however some nuanced differences in the importance of their role in the establishment of the groups, especially in Zvimba. At Dunstan farm the extension officer was mostly responsible for the idea of the group. He identified land beneficiaries who he thought would be capable of leading the groups and advised them to begin mobilising members. The influence of the extension officer at Dunstan is so visible that two of the three groups under study (Budiro and Muswiti) have similar constitutions. The similarity also extends to the structures and activities of the groups. However, despite the modernising concerns raised against the extension approach in Chapter 7, none of the land beneficiaries interviewed had any problems with the technical interventions of the extension officer. In fact most of those who participated in local farmer groups are satisfied with the advice so far received and in Zvimba they would actually prefer to have more extension officers – at least one on every farm. These aspirations fly in the face of the previous critiques of extension services (see for instance Alexander, 2006) which suggested the undesirability of extension advice especially concerning the building of contour ridges. Fontein (2009:7) made similar observations that “the different and overlapping aspirations of war veterans and new farmers did not exclude the desire for technocratic interventions or commercial and productive agriculture normally associated with „modernising developmentalism””.

Local Farmer Groups and the National Smallholder Union

The Zimbabwe Farmers’ Union has no established structures in the newly resettled areas. In the sample there was a very small minority (18.5 percent) of the respondents who thought that their local farmer group had a relationship with the national smallholder farmers’ union, the ZFU. The presence of the ZFU in the newly resettled areas is critical to this study and all the responses claiming the existence of a relationship with the ZFU were followed up with the leadership of the local farmer group concerned. All the groups except Chidziva denied having an official relationship with the ZFU. The affirmative response given by the

membership of the other groups is probably based on previous association prior to resettlement and an assumption of the ubiquitousness of the ZFU. Prior to and after field work, interviews were held with ZFU officials and they explained that by the close of 2008 the Union had no official structures in newly resettled areas but was in the process of planning how to replicate the organisation's structures that exist in customary areas (interview with ZFU Programmes Coordinator, January 2009).

Within such a context local farmer groups remain fragmented without any coordinating structure. This fragmentation has exposed them to reliance on the state and even in some circumstances to a felt need to compete against each other for resources instead of seeing opportunities for joint mobilisation. While local organisations in the customary areas are invariably part of the ZFU structures or an NGO network, those in the newly resettled areas are stand-alone units and this imposes a limitation on their potential to influence the nature and pace of agrarian reforms.

The ZFU's position on newly resettled areas is contradictory in many ways. Whilst the majority of the beneficiaries are from customary areas, which happen to be its main constituency, it has not actively established structures in the newly resettled areas and had no official strategy of how to go about this process in newly resettled areas by the end of 2008. A brief recap on the history of ZFU contributes further insights into why it is not actively involved within the newly resettled areas. The union was formed in August 1991 as a result of a merger between the Zimbabwe National Farmers' Union (ZNFU) and the National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe (NFAZ) to represent the smallholder farming community in Zimbabwe (discussed in Chapter 5). One of the incentives for the merger was the promise by the GoZ that the new union would have levying authority over its members. The levying authority would have entitled the Union to a fixed percentage of all agricultural commodities marketed by its members through the GMB. However after the merger the GoZ did not extend the levying authority to the new union and instead raised a number of technical concerns which included questions such as "which producers would be levied (all smallholders or just ZFU members), what rates of levy would be charged on each commodity, how would the levy be collected?" (Bratton, 1994: 29).

When the prospects for the financing of the Union's activities through the levy diminished, the leadership made a turn towards donor funds. The Union reorganised itself to carry out

projects that included the establishment of commodity associations in every province. In the process of reorganisation and restructuring the Union's orientation was turned towards establishing processes of accountability to donors. The campaigns to recruit new members and ensure that the old members had paid their subscriptions that had been popularised in the late 1980s²⁴ were stopped. During this period the ZFU had to restructure itself in order to develop capacities to run projects and report back to donors and therefore it invested more energy in cultivating relations with the donors supporting its development projects. When the fast track programme occurred it found itself in a very awkward position. On one hand its members potentially stood to benefit from the programme, thereby creating the possibility of an increase in its membership. On the other hand its financial survival was highly dependent on donor aid and donors had taken an anti-land reform position in 2000. Eventually the Union condemned the land occupations, arguing that they would negatively affect production on the farms (ZFU Press Release, 2003).

10.4 Local Authority

10.4.1 Land Tenure and Social Organisation

Fast track resettlement is not only associated with the movement of people from lineage-held land but also with changes in the manner in which the land is held. The 17th Amendment to the Constitution virtually nationalised all agricultural land and the state has emerged as the biggest landowner and landlord to both A1 and A2 farmers (discussed in more detail in Chapters 3 and 7). Through the permit the A1 household head and their spouse enter into a usufruct agreement for an indefinite period with the designated agent of the GoZ, in this instance the Ministry of Lands.

The migration into newly resettled areas and tenurial changes has deep significance for social organisation. An individual living on their lineage land amongst their kinsfolk obviously fulfilled certain obligations towards their lineage group, not necessarily out of a spirit of voluntarism but as part of expected duties codified within the customs. Resettlement and tenurial change on the other hand suggest freedom from the tyranny of the mechanisms of cooperation embedded in the lineage and the possibility of the individual focusing or maximising output on their own landholding. The A1 permit does not make any reference to traditional authority and states that any disagreements between the permit holder and the

²⁴ For instance Bratton (1994:14), records that the membership of the NFAZ (precursor to the ZFU) peaked in 1988 with some 400 clubs and 85,000 paid-up members as a result of the membership campaigns.

lessor will be mediated by the courts of law. The introduction of the A1 permit contributes to nurturing a more direct relationship between the land beneficiary and the state. This is in direct contrast to trends within the customary areas where the chiefs' historical claim to certain land allocation and adjudication powers holds sway, especially after the promulgation of the Traditional Leaders Act (1999) which restored their land allocation powers.

Land tenure cannot however be analysed in isolation from the local government system that is responsible for the newly resettled areas. The official position on local government states that the newly resettled areas will eventually become part of existing chieftaincies and wards of Rural District Councils. Although this looks neat on paper, in practice it is a messy arrangement characterised by competition for turf between the RDCs and chiefs, especially over land. Previous research (Anderson, 1996; Alexander, 2003) has shown how, prior to the 1999 changes, the chiefs disregarded the official local government regulations on land and continued to intervene in land conflicts. The research by Anderson (1999) in particular demonstrated the fact that people preferred the intervention of the chief to that of the RDC officials. The case studies presented in Chapters 8 and 9 have shown how within a space of less than five years village heads have already begun to violate the land laws. At Dunstan and Whynhill farms the two heads have allocated land to members previously left out of the official allocation in different ways. At Dunstan one of the village heads has allowed four households to resettle on what had been set aside as grazing lands and at Whynhill the village head allocated plots that had not been taken up by the official beneficiaries. Both the Goromonzi and Zvimba Rural District Councils remain invisible on the farms due to logistical constraints. Thus although the tenure system does not officially recognise the role of traditional authority their power lies within the local government system and their presence at a very local level where the RDCs are markedly absent.

10.4.2 Traditional Authority in A1 Villages

The fast track resettlement period and its aftermath offer contradicting opportunities. On one hand the physical and social changes to the agrarian terrain suggest the emergence of a certain kind of social organisation with potential to nurture a more inclusive and participatory process of local government. At the same time land reform has provided an opportunity for the expansion of traditional authority into areas that had previously been effectively dominated by the authority of large scale farmers. Thus while land beneficiaries are engaged in their own trajectory of forging relations of sociability that aim at enhancing farm

production, state-based policy „craftsmen“ are attempting to replicate customary area forms of authority in the newly resettled areas.

Traditional authority is being introduced in the newly resettled areas in the absence of lineage and kinship ties except in rare cases such as at Dalkeith farm in Zvimba (see Chapter 7 for a fuller discussion of the process). However the entire village council is made up of a fusion of traditional and elected officials. Whilst the village head is mostly appointed by the chief the members of the subordinate Village Development Committee (VIDCO) are elected by members of the village.

Traditionally village heads are supposed to be lineage elders responsible for single or related lineage groups and in such a context they command authority and power not only on the basis of delegated responsibility from the chief but also on the basis of seniority within the lineage group. However the A1 villages that have emerged out of the fast track reforms are not organised according to lineage ties, except for the Chidziva case, and the authority of the village head is only based on delegated authority from the chief without the attendant seniority within a certain grouping of inclusion. The village authorities under the leadership of the village head are not socially rooted among the communities and lack the authority of organising communities for production and consumption that their counterparts within customary tenure areas possess.

In such a context there are limited possibilities for mobilising around the other obligations that normally arise out of such networks, such as participation in ritual events and mutual assistance in case of need. A critical question that arises is whether the introduction of traditional authority is synonymous with the re-introduction of the lineage-based form of organisation. The evidence so far indicates that these village authorities are struggling to establish themselves and have limited mobilisation capacity to intervene in the socioeconomic production challenges faced by the land beneficiaries. State functionaries such as the Chief Lands Officer explain the establishment of the village head in the newly resettled areas simplistically as part of an effort to replicate customary area organisation on the basis of the fact that the purpose of the A1 is itself to expand customary areas. The Chief Lands Officer is quoted saying

If you look at what we call A1 farms, that is almost like the communal areas, (sic) it includes villages which have communal grazing areas or small plots... The aim is to

bring people from communal areas where they live under the chiefs and to preserve their value system (quoted in Fontein, 2009:3).

These opinions suggest a lack of understanding of the web of social relations that undergird the system of customary tenure in communal lands. Although the lineage framework has been on the wane in terms of nurturing social relations of production it remained intact and relevant when decisions of land allocation had to be made, and the exclusionary nature of the identities that emerge within this form of social organisation have been crucial in preserving the customary areas even in the face of an increase in demand for land in the 1990s. It is difficult to understand how state planners can assume that this model could easily be replicated over a short space of time in areas where autochthonous relations do not exist and where the form of land tenure actually marginalises the role of chiefs. According to the Traditional Leaders Act (1999) the chief is responsible for the allocation of land and prevention of illegal settlement in customary areas. In the newly resettled areas the chief does not have such powers. The permit that confers usufruct on the land beneficiary in perpetuity makes it clear that the agreement is between the GoZ represented by the Ministry of Lands and the lessee.

There are visible attempts at not only introducing traditional authority but importing culture from customary areas into the newly resettled areas despite the fact that the land beneficiaries come from different areas with unique cultural practices. The village heads are responsible for ensuring that the land is given rest on the day of chisi and in Goromonzi and Zvimba they have chosen to observe this ritual on a Thursday. However the decision to have chisi on Thursday was arbitrarily made without consulting the rest of the villagers. During focus group discussions in both districts a number of people queried why chisi should be on a Thursday instead of a Wednesday. Although chisi is part of the common traditions of rural Zimbabwe it has been converted into a Christian ritual and those who worship on Sunday prefer to have Chisi on a Thursday while those who worship on Saturdays prefer to have it on a Wednesday. Those who observe Sunday as a day of worship also use Thursday as day for activities such as women's meetings and those who observe Saturday prefer to hold these meetings on Wednesday.

10.4.3 Implications of Local Government and Land Tenure Reforms

On Local Institutions and Associationalism

The case studies have clearly demonstrated what Mbembe (1992) aptly describes as the mobilisation of fluid identities and loyalties within separate but interrelated spheres of social organisation. The newly-resettled have entered into relations of voluntary association within local farmer groups, have accepted and are conforming to the newly introduced traditional authorities and also have to receive farming practice advice through a state functionary in the form of the extension officer. These social relations for the mobilisation of farming capacity (inclusive of labour, assets and inputs) are being created in a context where there is limited existence of the lineage based relations. The rules of belonging within these emerging social formations vary from purely voluntary towards state based directives to do so. In many instances the newly resettled join local farmer groups freely after weighing the costs of non-belonging or after being instructed to do so by the extension officer.

Although the extension officer is very junior within the state bureaucracy he/she wields influence in an environment of input availability uncertainty and where the new tenure provisions have not been adequately clarified. The extension officer has used his administrative authority and technical superiority to impose new ideas such as the formation of local farmer groups that benefit him/her in the execution of his duties. The fact that the extension officer has the ultimate decision making power over who receives subsidies has elevated his authority in the sphere of farm production to being unquestionable and this is compounded by the desire for increased yields amongst the land beneficiaries.

The newly introduced village head also benefits from government's failure to adequately explain the new land tenure provisions- even though officially the A1 permit is administered by the Minister of Land and his designated agents but that information has not cascaded into the local levels. The state has created the impression that the traditional authority being introduced carries similar powers with what prevails in the customary areas. The land beneficiaries have accepted these institutions as a natural process of local administration and have not questioned the manner of appointment nor the manner in which they exercise their authority especially as land administration is concerned.

Prospects for Rural Democratisation

Besides the physical restructuring of the agrarian landscape from large farms into smaller farms, it can also be argued that the land tenure reforms that accompanied „fast track“ land reform contribute towards some of the initial steps in the creation of what Mamdani calls 'citizens' although the expansion of traditional authority functionaries requires a more cautious examination of the significance of these reforms. Currently 'fast track' associated reforms have not necessarily led to a comprehensive democratisation process which is vital to the reorganisation of the local state (Mamdani, 1996). Traditional authority, deriving its legitimacy from the state, has been weakly inserted into areas where there is no countervailing force on the ground to oppose such state led efforts. The agenda of the state in carrying out local government reform also includes some unspoken goals such as the need to silence the popular appeal of war veteran leadership that at one stage threatened to radicalise the countryside through land occupations and the committees of seven that were established on almost every former large scale farm (discussed in more detail in chapters 7, 8 and 9).

Whilst Mamdani (1996) observed that ethnic identity on which traditional authority is based was not only a form of colonial domination but also provided a valid mobilisation platform for resistance against colonial rule. The new form of traditional authority within the newly resettled areas has no legitimacy to mobilise on the basis of ethnic identity against state driven exploitation like its predecessor in the customary areas but rather it finds itself positioned to defend the interests of the state. The demise of war veteran based forms of mobilisation has thus given into structures and processes that can potentially be easily coopted to suit the interest of political party elites further diminishing prospects of a much needed critical engagement between the neo-colonial state and the rural dwellers, a process that seemed to be on course during the days of land occupations.

The local farmer groups studied seem to pursue a very narrow farm production oriented agenda which does not question the national agrarian reform programmes and policies especially the allocation of critical resources such as implements and inputs. Most of the groups studied have been dominated by a state functionary, the extension officer, and this has reduced prospects for discussions on the politics of resource allocation and other more politically embedded discussions.

However even within such a context it is difficult to accept without qualification Mamdani's (1996) argument about the continued despotism of chiefs and perpetuation of indirect rule in a post colonial setting. The changes contained in the land tenure reforms provide prospects for a more direct interaction between the rural dwellers and the state than posited by Mamdani (1996). However the re-introduction of traditional authority demonstrates the tension between democratisation and the need for the post-colonial state to continue controlling the countryside albeit through indirect and seemingly culturally accepted mechanisms. The emerging associational forms, although currently very narrowly conceived, provide some clues in the manner in which not only production but rural politics will be organised in a context of limited democratic reforms.

10.5 Towards a Cooperative Civil Society?

10.5.1 Defining Civil Society: Nailing Jelly to the Wall

The contradictory changes relating to landholding practice, the emergence of local associational forms and introduction of village councils made up of traditional authority and elected officials form part of an important stretch in Zimbabwe's tortuous path towards development and democratisation. The land redistribution tenure changes imply two fundamental changes: firstly equality before the law, and secondly freedom from the tyranny of traditional authority which still dominates customary areas. These lie at the heart of modern democracy. Within this line of thinking the civil and political rights of the land beneficiaries have been asserted and they have become members of civil society with a clearly defined set of human rights.

Concepts of civil society have a rich history, but it is only in the past ten years that they have moved to the centre of the international stage (Edwards, 1993:2). „Civil society“ is a very difficult and fluid concept which in Alan Fowler's (1996) words is like to “trying to pin a multi-coloured jelly to a wall”. Gramsci's conceptualisation provides a more illuminating clarification of the concept especially in reference to the subject of rural associational forms. Gramsci was preoccupied with exploring the relations and boundaries between civil society and the political economy especially the state (Mckeen et al., 2004:4). According to Gramsci the extent to which the state or civil society invaded the other was key in establishing the means by which hegemony was created- how rulers maintained their powers over the

subordinate class and attempted to manufacture a sort of political consent. The voluntary associations, in essence the hallmark of civil society, are autonomous but not necessarily independent of the state, for the latter is the guarantor of that autonomy. Within this context civil society is not necessarily a sphere to facilitate development rather it is an arena in which the character of rule is determined and fought over (Mckeon et al., 2004:5). In this regard it is the nature of the relationship between the state and associational forms that is critical for development.

Another related conceptual analysis of civil society was done by Mamdani (1996). He argues that in Africa the history of civil society is laced with racism as it was primarily a creation of the colonial state (Mamdani, 1996:19). According to Mamdani (1996:19) the colonial state was bifurcated between the civil and the customary. The rights of free association and eventually of political representation were the rights of citizens and not of subjects indirectly ruled by the customarily organised tribal authority. The intervention of independence in most of the African states only led to the deracialisation of the state and expanded civil rights to urban-based natives who were mainly middle and working class persons (Mamdani 1996:20). The anti-colonial struggle was at the same time a struggle of an embryonic middle class and working classes for entry into civil society while the native strata (within the customary areas) remained in limbo. Consequently, to paraphrase Mamdani (1996), the historically-accumulated privilege which was usually racial was embedded and defended in civil society. Furthermore historical privilege was not only defended within civil society but it was moralised in the language of civil rights, individual rights and institutional autonomy.

However the discourse of civil rights within the post-colonial state remains locked up with the constraints view of human rights. In this line of thinking rights are intrinsic and any violation of a right is wrong per se even if such violation would result in the best consequences or an improved state of affairs. The approach is focused on negative freedoms, that is, ensuring the absence of interference or constraints from others. Karl Marx dismissed this approach to human rights as “the „rights of egotistic man“, promoting the separation of „man from man“ and „recognition of slavery“” (Lefort, 1988:21, 44). Within such a framework freedom and equality before the law on their own can be oppressive and oriented towards the status quo in areas where ownership of property (such as land) is skewed in favour of a defined social group and the law is formulated by the same group.

10.5.2 Evolution of Rural Civil Society in Zimbabwe

Using the same schema of reasoning as Mamdani (1996) and Gramsci's notion of civil society, the discussion below summarises the significance of the fast track reforms, associationalism in local farmer groups and village authority. As already mentioned, the fast track programme not only redistributed land but significantly altered relations of property ownership, with the state becoming the landlord holding land in trust for all the A1 and A2 beneficiaries. This is in direct contrast to the previous situation in which land was either privately owned or held in trust by clan elders on behalf of their people.

The introduction of permissory tenure that is statutorily defined within A1 settlement gives the immediate impression of the expansion of citizenship to the countryside. Besides the introduction of civil laws in property relations the programme is linked with associational activity outside the parameters of kinship (except in few instances). These developments suggest that the hallmarks of civil society have been attained. However the movement towards this civil society remains constrained by a number of factors. Firstly it lacks an organic leadership (what Gramsci calls „the intellectual“) to challenge for autonomy against the state. The leadership previously provided by war veterans during the period of occupations has dissipated. There are remnants of war veteran leadership within some of the local farmer groups but it is too fragmented and isolated to have a significant impact on broader mobilisation. Secondly fast track resettlement areas remain not only isolated from the national smallholders“ union but also from global and national civil society comprising a complex web of networks involving local and international actors such as NGOs, unions and donors. The local farmer groups that have emerged operate outside the parameters of this civil society. They sit uneasily in both the civil society and as subordinate agents of the state as they help their members to undertake productive and economic activities, a role associated with the state. They remain shunned and isolated by other civil society based networks despite the state“s attempts to civilise the fast track resettlement areas by ensuring that the land beneficiaries are legitimate property holders through the 17th Amendment to the Constitution which nationalised all the agricultural land.

The continued exclusion of fast track resettlement areas from the networks characterising civil society is not surprising. Civil society discourse in Zimbabwe and globally is united around the need to protect human rights and it is the interpretation of the right of the individual that is problematic. As discussed above the constraint view as an approach to

human rights tends to be ahistorical and status quo oriented. The Commercial Farmers' Union managed to operate within this sphere of rights and to defend the rights of its members to due process in land redistribution, while disregarding the historical theft of land, labour and livestock. Other civil society networks including the ZFU were also mobilised to defend the racially-defined privilege on the basis of due process and the „rule of law“. The CFU in the process emphasised (to the point of exaggeration) its importance to the economy and the urban civil society based networks joined in the process of ridiculing „fast track“ as “chaotic and likely to lead to a decline in agricultural production” (Zimbabwe Crisis Coalition and National Constitutional Assembly Joint Press Statement, August 2001). While the fears of production decline are genuine, the statements from urban-based civil society were not accompanied by viable alternatives to the „fast track“ approach.

The fact that fast track resettlement areas are isolated from receiving support from development and relief NGOs is convenient for both civil society and the state. It simplifies a very complex problem where civil society, by choosing not to engage with the land beneficiaries, can continue to dismiss the land reform process as largely benefiting politically connected elites. In the meantime the ZANU (PF) dominated state remains the only active external agent in providing support. In the absence of partnerships with civil society the local farmer groups in newly resettled areas have entered into relationships of survival with the state. This is convenient for the ZANU (PF) dominated government for two reasons. Firstly, the state and the party remain the only players active in responding to the challenges these communities face, and this dependence entrenches clientelist relations. Secondly the GoZ uses the isolation of the newly resettled areas from any outside help to strengthen their case of sanctions. The rules of engagement with the state have been mostly welfare and production oriented to an extent that the politics of local farmer groups remain very underdeveloped.

However although these formations look similar to the groups existing in customary areas they need not to be treated as similar. In customary areas they are a product of a society with established structures of authority, while in the newly resettled areas they are emerging within a space where there is no defined framework of cooperation and the legitimacy of local authority is in a state of flux and contestation. In certain instances, such as in Goromonzi, the local farmer groups have become a more dominant structure of inclusion and allocation of resources, especially in the absence of the lineage form of organisation, while in rare cases such as at Dalkeith, where beneficiary selection was on the basis of belonging

within a certain lineage group, traditional authority functionaries have taken the lead in establishing village structures that include the farmer group. There is a need to qualify the foregoing by briefly discussing the significance of the emergence of traditional authority in these areas.

10.5.3 Domination and Control

While the dominant democratic discourse provides an appealing idea of universal civic nationalism based on individual freedom and equal rights irrespective of distinctions of religion, race, language or culture, the particular demands of a cultural identity call for the differentiated treatment of particular groups (Chatterjee, 2002:53). Indeed this conflicting position is apparent in the evolution of Zimbabwe's post-independence local government system where initially traditional leaders were literally marginalised but since 1999 they have been resuscitated as a crucial cog of local government and control.

The measures of local government reform within the newly resettled areas should not be analysed in isolation from what the GoZ had begun in 1999 with the introduction of the Traditional Leaders Act (TLA) and also the way in which fast track land reform was organised (discussed in more detail in Chapter 7). The TLA (1999) was part of a bigger shift from the prior concerns of democratic decentralisation which had seen Government establish local participatory structures such as the Village Development Committees and Ward Development Committees and reduce traditional authorities to ex-officio functionaries within these structures. The local government reforms of the 1980s had usurped the land allocation and conflict resolution powers of the chiefs and transferred them to the Rural District Councils. The TLA reinstated the juridical, political and social powers of the chief over land which included its allocation, resolution of disputes and use. In justifying this shift, which in essence weakens the power of the RDCs, the GoZ cites the empirical reality that in most cases the chiefs ignored these reforms and continued to hold court over land disputes and to allocate land. The people also seemed to prefer traditional courts over RDC processes. Anderson (1999) and Fontein (2009) have shown that in many areas the locals continued to pay allegiance to their chiefs. The GoZ thus justified its move as a form of capitulation in the face of unchanging local practice, restoring the powers of the chiefs through the TLA. Thus the shift in 1999 reflected a convenient convergence between demands from „below“ for familiar forms of authority and the „challenges“ of governance from above. The „challenges“ of governance essentially relate to the costs related to effective decentralisation. However the

objective of establishing control over chiefs who were viewed as popular by the GoZ cannot be dismissed. Soon after the promulgation of the TLA, chiefs became salaried officers of the government, were issued with brand-new vehicles and had their homes electrified as part of the rural electrification programme.

Although the fast track reform was introduced as a programme to finally resolve the land question, it was also a government strategy to take over leadership on land reform from the war veteran leadership. One of the immediate changes brought about by the fast track programme was the manner in which chiefs were elevated to be the sole selectors of land beneficiaries for A1 schemes (Fontein, 2009:4). During the same period war veterans were being removed or marginalised from the District Land Committees (Sadomba 2008a:187).

The introduction of traditional village authority is problematic in the age of democracy where leadership positions are filled through elections. In this study none of the informants questioned the expansion of traditional authority but rather the manner in which candidates were selected for the position of village head. The lack of consultation on village heads also extends into the definition of their roles and powers within the new communities. The emergence of village heads is part of the GoZ efforts to establish local forms of control. However it is also important to note that these local functionaries are not necessarily agents of cooption on behalf of the state. Their popularity and legitimacy derives from their relationship to and defence of the interests of their constituents.

Besides the indirect forms of rule the state's agrarian reform agenda is represented by the extension agent. The extension officer is not just a functionary of strengthening farm production but is focused on establishing a certain form of agricultural production and environmental conservation ethos and this marks a continuation from the late 1930s when extension was introduced to „modernise“ African land use patterns. Thus even though the agrarian reforms programme and especially smallholder production is facing severe constraints, the state's agenda and forms of cooptation and control are intact. The local farmer groups that have emerged are in a precarious balance between the state and the members' interests but so far these have converged on the need for improved farm production.

10.6 Conclusion

While local farmer groups have emerged on almost every A1 settlement this does not necessarily mean they are an adequate response to the constraints faced by the newly resettled farmers. However it would be equally barren methodologically to fail to appreciate their significance and the clues these formations provide to understanding how social organisation in the newly resettled areas is evolving under austere economic circumstances. Their emergence has been a critical intervention in the survival of the newly resettled communities. The benefits derived from common membership are broader than the stated objectives of the group. Although groups such as Budiriro and Muswiti were established to focus on maize production the members have established other areas of cooperation such as the joint marketing of the fresh produce from their gardens.

These formations have within a short space of time improved farm production capacities, especially at Dunstan and Dalkeith farms. The groups have made a contribution towards broader rural participation by nurturing democratic practice within and outside the organisation. At an immediate level local organisations have managed to shift the locus of rural power from traditional structures (headmen and chiefs) in terms of organising communities for farm production and relations of exchange. They have also contributed to pluralising social organisation beyond the traditional structure. Their emergence has not been a neat process but combines self-organisation and externally imposed rationalities to engage in collective action in order to lessen the external agents' (in the case of the newly resettled areas, the state) burden of introducing new farm innovations and direct support.

The attempts by the land beneficiaries to form associational forms are part of the initial steps towards addressing broader issues of distribution and long term economic sustainability but they remain without a visible alternative agrarian vision. Furthermore the groups that have emerged have no links with both the national and global networks of rural producers' associations that are at the forefront of mobilising against the negative effects of globalisation especially the removal of subsidies to smallholder farmers, rather the forms of social organisation that have emerged are deeply subordinated to the state. These developments form part of a long-held tradition within the post-colonial state of usurping legitimacy found in local authority structures and institutions to its own ends. This has involved reconfiguring traditional structures to be more focused on servicing the needs of the state and also to ensure that traditional authority functionaries derive their power from the state. In terms of local

cooperation the strategy has entailed co-opting the emerging formations through the provision of subsidies and deploying a modernising state agent in the form of the extension officer. Thus whilst land reform has to a certain extent accommodated the majority poor, the ensuing local government and agrarian reforms are more focused on limiting their participation in broader processes of political engagement around distribution and accumulation and their own governance.

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Schedule of Interviews *(the names of the interviewees are given only in the case of those who granted me the permission to do so)*

Ms P. Bganya, Norwegian People's Aid Country Manager for Zimbabwe (NPA Offices, March, 2008)

Mr. H. Chigwedere, Zvimba RDC Planning Officer (Zvimba RDC Offices, August, 2008)

Mr. Madhovi, Goromonzi Rural District Council Chief Executive (Goromonzi RDC Offices, 18 September, 2007 and 1 August 2008)

Ms P. Midzi, Lands Officer Responsible for Goromonzi District from 2000 until 2004 (Ministry of Lands Head Office, Harare, May, 2007, May 2009 and June 2009)

Ms Mushonga, Officer in the Surveyor General's Office (Harare, May 2007).

Mr. Kapembeza, Acting District Extension Officer for Zvimba District (Banket, various interviews between May 2007 until October 2008).

Mr. Hlophe, Agri-Bank Branch Manager, (Marondera Agri-Bank branch, August 2007 and May 2008)

Mrs. Mandishona, ZFU, Programmes Coordinator (Harare, various interviews August 2007 and October 2008).

Mr. Mliswa, National Agent for Salt Lakes (Harare, October 2008)

Mr. Louis Masuko, War Veteran and Land Occupier (Harare and Mazowe, June 2008)

Chief Bushu, (Nyanga 2006 and 2007)

Mr. Choto-Dunstan Village 1 and 2 (Dunstan Farm, September 2008 and August 2009)

Mr. Manjinjiwa, Dalkeith farm (Dalkeith farm, August 2008 and August 2009)

Chidziva

Mr. Manjinjiwa, Chidziva Farmers Group Chairman (Dalkeith Farm, various interviews carried out in August 2008)

Chidziva Farmer Group Treasurer (Dalkeith farm, August 2009)

Budiriro

Budiriro Farmers' Group Chairperson (September 2008 and January 2009)

Budiriro Farmers' Group Secretary (September 2008)

Muswiti Farmers' Group

Mrs. Maveka Muswiti Chairperson (Dunstan Farm, various interviews carried out during September 2008 and August 2009)

Mrs. Mukono, Muswiti Secretary (Dunstan Farm, September 2008 and August 2009)

Salt Lakes Group

Mrs. Nhemachena, Salt Lakes Farmer Group (Dunstan Farm and Epworth, August and September 2008)

Salt Lakes Treasurer (Dunstan, September 2008)

Mr. Mathias Mandikisi, Member of Salt Lakes (Dunstan Farm, August 2009)

Tagarika

Mr. Mavhangira, War Veteran and Tagarika Irrigation Scheme Chairperson (Lot 3A of Buena Vista Farm, various interviews in September and October 2008)

Zhizha Farmers Association

Mr. Nduna, Chairperson of Zhizha Farmers Association (Whyhill Farm, August 2008 and October 2008)

Treasurer of Zhizha Farmers Association (Whyhill Farm, August 2008)

Annexure

Annexure 1: Schedule of Focus Group Discussions

Place	Name of Group	Reference No.	No. of Participants	Date
Dalkeith farm	Chidziva	Chi-01/08	18	17 September 2008
Dalkeith farm	Chidziva	Chi-02/08	19	24 September 2008
Dunstan arm	Budiriro	Bud-01/08	7	03 September 2008
Dunstan Farm	Muswiti	Mus-01/08	8	04 September 2008
Dunstan	Salt Lakes	Salt-01/08	12	07 September 2008
Lot 3 of Buena Vista	Tagarika	Tag-01/08	8	09 September 2009
Lot 3 of Buena Vista	Tagarika	Tag-02/08	12	11 September 2008
Lot 3 of Buena Vista	Tagarika	Tag-03/08	10	12 September 2008
Whynhill	Zhizha	Zhi-01/08	12	21 September 2008
Whynhill	Zhizha	Zhi-02/08	13	30 September 2008