

The State, Land Reform, Old Farmers and New Farmers: An Assessment of Farming in the Shangani Area of Zimbabwe

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Declaration

I, Shepherd Chikowore, declare that:

The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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Abstract

After the lapse of the Fast Track Land Reform Program in Zimbabwe, agricultural production slumped and the slump persisted for a decade. An assortment of factors explaining the slump has been brought forward and the new farming strategies of the new farmers were elaborated in passing. This dissertation identified and assessed the farming strategies and practices employed by the new farmers at De Beers Shangani ranch after the Fast Track Land Reform program of 2000. It discussed the land reform process in Shangani and specifically its outcomes mainly on agricultural production. It examined the impact of the socio-political environment in Shangani and explored how the socio-political environment has influenced the choice of strategies hence affecting the farmers' production. Guided by the Agricultural Sustainability and Political Ecology conceptual frameworks it assessed how sustainable these strategies were in relation with the soil types, climatic conditions and socio-political milieu in Shangani. In addition, state-farmers relations were explored to ascertain how the relationship has affected agricultural production of the new farmers. In-depth interviews were conducted to a sample population of 20 participants who were purposively selected basing on their knowledge and expertise on farming systems employed by the new farmers at Debshan. Conclusions drawn from this dissertation reveal that some strategies adopted by the well-off farmers have managed to increase production while some strategies adopted by the impoverished and financially struggling farmers have resulted to low production. It concludes that farming strategies employed by the new farmers at Debshan have an impact on the agricultural production of the farmers. The state-farmer relations have also affected agricultural production negatively and led to low utilization of land hence low production.

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Abbreviations

AGRITEX	Agricultural Technical Extension
CSC	Cold Storage Commission
DA	District Administrator
DDF	District Development Fund
Debshan	De Beers Shangani
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Program
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
LRRP	Land Redistribution and Reform Program
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MoAMID	Ministry of Agriculture Mechanization Irrigation and Development
US\$	United States of American Dollar
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Party-Patriotic Front
ZESA	Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union
ZFU	Zimbabwe Farmers Union
Z\$	Zimbabwean Dollar

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Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

This thesis explored the farming strategies and practices employed by the new farmers at De Beers Shangani ranch after the Fast Track Land Reform Program of 2000. Agriculture had experienced a massive slump due to various factors which included farming strategies which have not been fully documented in the livelihoods after land reform debates. This study sought to identify and assess how they may have contributed to the slump. Guided by a perspective focused on agricultural sustainability and political ecology, the study brings out how these strategies contributed to the slump and it enlightens how socio-political factors influenced the agriculture sector as well as the farmers' production. It utilizes a case study of De Beers Shangani ranch to unpack the factors that contributed to the slump. In-depth interviews were used as a data collection tool and the participants were purposely selected to maximize the validity of the findings. The findings of this study outlined the strategies used by the new farmer as well as linking them to the slump. The socio-political environment in Shangani was discussed and its contribution to the slump was outlined. The conclusion points out that the farming practices employed by the new farmers have affected the productivity levels differently as some improved it while others caused it to deteriorate. The relationship between the state and the new farmers has also played a part in the deterioration of productivity levels of the new farmers.

Chapter one gave a general overview of the land reform in Zimbabwe looking at the socio-political environment in which it was undertaken and its relationship to agricultural production. This chapter introduced the research problem that was necessitated by the persistent decline in agricultural production. It outlined the research questions which sought to understand the farming strategies used and how they were chosen. To identify and assess the farming strategies used by the new farmers was the main objective of this thesis. The significance of the study helps it to fill the lacunae in the livelihoods after land reform debates which fail to provide an in-depth understanding of the farming strategies used at Debshan after land reform. I also outlined the definitions of key terms used in this study.

Overview of land reform in Zimbabwe

Just after Zimbabwe gained its political independence in 1980, land reform became the mantra of the era. Even though the issue of land reform started as early as September 1979 at the Lancaster House Conference, it did not gain momentum up until the nineties. Motivation for undertaking the land reform program was derived from the genuine desire to redistribute land to the majority who were landless and to fulfill the promises made to the masses during the war (Chitiyo, 2000; Scoones et al, 2010). The reform strategy aimed at improving livelihoods and reducing poverty by distributing land to the poorest who will then contribute to a balanced development (Scoones et al, 2010). The land reform program in Zimbabwe has undergone changes in the way it was implemented, the methods of land acquisition, types of resettlement model, beneficiary selection, land reform objectives etc. Land redistribution process in the first two decades of independence can be characterized as ‘snail-paced’ but orderly. The first phase of land reform in Zimbabwe was the Land Reform and Resettlement Program (LRRP) which started in 1980 which was guided by the provisions of the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979¹. The Lancaster House Agreement stipulated that the redistribution of land in Zimbabwe was to commence ten years after independence. Zimbabwe was bound to comply with these pre-independence arrangements which saw it abiding to the willing seller-willing buyer principle. This protected the white² farmers from losing their land as the provisions of the constitution protected private property rights; this came as a set-back to the progress of the LRRP. During the first phase the government only managed to purchase 2.6 million hectares instead of the 8.3 million hectares it had targeted (Thomas, 2003).

After the expiration of the Lancaster House Agreement’s ten years in 1990, Zimbabwe was released from the Lancaster House Agreement constraints and compulsory acquisitions of land for redistribution and resettlement became possible (Human Rights Watch, 2002). The phase two of Land Reform and Redistribution Program (LRRP2) was steered by the Land Acquisition Act of 1992. The Land Apportionment Act was enacted to speed up the process and to facilitate the purchase of land on a fair compensation basis (Coldham, 1993). After the LRRP2 did not fully

¹ Lancaster House Agreement was the negotiation, which covered the pre-independence arrangements, ceasefire and the new constitution of Zimbabwe. It was negotiated between Britain under the chairmanship of Lord Carrington and Zimbabwe delegation with Robert Mugabe, Joshua Nkomo and Bishop Abel Muzorewa.

² The term “whites”, however academically problematic, will be used to refer to the British settlers and other people of European descents due to the common usage in Zimbabwe.

address the land issue in Zimbabwe as it did not meet the projected targets, the radical Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) was implemented. The FTLRP was haphazardly implemented with spontaneous land grabbing that was spearheaded by war veterans, ZANU-PF³ cadres and supported by ordinary citizens. This haphazard nature of the land reform was condoned by the state which provided material and logistical support (Chaumba et al, 2003a and 2003b). The FTLRP saw the restructuring of the agrarian sector as land was taken from the hands of the few experienced and productive white large-scale commercial farmers and redistributed to the hands of the majority black emergent small-scale farmers as well as the well-off middle class referred to as ‘cellphone’ or ‘weekend’ farmers (Moyo and Nyoni, 2012).

Land reform and Agricultural production in Zimbabwe

Historically agriculture has held a significant position in the economy and has been referred to as the mainstay of the economy of Zimbabwe as it contributed 12-20% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 1985 and 2007 (Rukuni et al, 2006). The commercial sector of agriculture alone contributed at least 75% of the total agricultural output in Zimbabwe and the remainder was contributed by the small-scale sector which complemented the commercial sector in the total production of the agriculture sector (Scoones et al, 2010). Agricultural productivity rates since the eighties have not been constant but were characterized by ups and downs. In Zimbabwe the land reform was envisioned to improve the production rates based on the inverse farm-productivity relationship which posits that small farms are more productive. Small farms are expected to produce more when juxtaposed with large farms due to maximum utilization of land (Zikhali, 2008). The outcomes of the land reform however were undesirable as agricultural production plummeted by 50% in 2003 (Chikowore, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2002; Richardson, 2006; Scoones et al, 2010). The total output of agriculture deteriorated and resulted in a number of challenges which include food insecurities, political instability, and low GDP as well as economic contractions. According to Zimbabwe’s former minister of finance Tendai Biti (2009), between the period 2000 and 2008 the agriculture sector underwent a heavy drop which saw it shrinking with a cumulative agricultural output of -74.9% (Biti, 2009). The economic contraction had an impact on the agriculture sector as it brought about shortages of inputs which were only available at high prices stipulated by the black market. The United States of America

³ Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) is the ruling party led by Robert Mugabe.

imposed sanctions and Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) of 2001 also had a grip on the agriculture sector as it reduced the government subsidies on agriculture (Hornes, 2009). This however had an effect on production which turned the bread basket of the Southern region of Africa to be the ‘basket case’ of Africa.⁴

Statement of problem

Following the FTLRP in Zimbabwe, agricultural production declined massively and persisted for a long time and this has challenged the nation’s food security situation. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy of Zimbabwe and the persistence in the drop has affected the national economy as a whole. New farmers who were resettled by the FTLRP haven’t been successful in agriculture especially in the semi-arid regions of Zimbabwe. Their knowledge of agricultural systems in the region has failed them as they have employed new practices which are not favorable for the region. These new farming practices and strategies employed by the new farmers have contributed significantly to the drastic slump in agricultural productivity rates. Thus this thesis will identify the new farming strategies and establish how these new farming practices have reduced the production rates of agriculture.

Research objectives

The main objective of this thesis was to identify the post year 2000, FTLRP farming strategies which were employed by the new farmers at De Beers Shangani ranch⁵ and assess the influence of the socio-political environment on such. This thesis was to gain an in-depth understanding on how the relationship between the socio-political environs and the new farming strategies may have contributed to the persistent drop in agricultural production rates in the region. In addition the thesis also explores how the state-farmer relations have contributed to the productivity slump in the region.

Research questions

1. How has the socio-political environment in Shangani affected agricultural output at De Beers ranch?

⁴ See http://www.economist.com/node/1201137?story_id=1201137

⁵ It was commonly referred to as Debshan Ranch owned by Nicky Oppenheimer, the owner of De Beers Diamonds Corporations. The ranch is located in the Matebeleland South province of Zimbabwe and covered 137000 hectares of land before it was partitioned by the land reform.

2. Which new strategies have been employed by the new farmers since the FTLRP?
3. What criterion was used in the selection of these strategies? Were geographical and climatic factors considered in the selection of the farming strategies in Shangani?
4. What is currently being produced in Shangani? Is production for commercial or subsistence purposes?
5. What are some of the barriers and constraints faced in improving production? How can they be mitigated?

Research hypothesis

This thesis will be guided by the following hypothesis;

1. New farmers' agricultural production rates have deteriorated when compared to those of the old farmers'.
2. The new farmers' strategies have not responded to the needs of the climatic conditions.
3. There is a positive relationship between farming strategies employed and agricultural production.

Significance of study

Identifying and understanding the new farming practices and strategies employed by the new farmers in the semi-arid region is of great importance in explaining the slump in agricultural production rates in Shangani in particular, and in Zimbabwe in general, and by extension the world over in places where redressing colonial imbalances and inequality is a priority. An understanding of these strategies and practices is not only important in historical explanations but helps in understanding how socio-political factors affect all sectors of the economy including the agriculture sector. Policies that have been implemented in Zimbabwe since the land reform aim at improving the productivity rates of the smallholder farmers and with this new knowledge policies will be formulated addressing the socio-political factors at play and their effect on agriculture. This research can also be used as a policy advocacy tool to enhance effectiveness of programs that promote agricultural production in the post-land reform period in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

Definition of key terms

The following terms are defined according to what they mean in the proposed research.

- Land reform - is the purposive change in ownership of land, tenure systems and/or land use. This strategy aims at redistributing land for farming and resettlement to the landless people as a way of empowering them. Land Reform may lead to an increase in agricultural production thus resulting in bringing about economic development and social justice.
- Fast Track Land Reform - used to refer to the Zimbabwean Land Reform Program of 2000 which was speedily executed.
- Agricultural productivity – the ratio of agricultural outputs to agricultural inputs used to measure performance and provide a guide to the efficiency and profitability of the sector.

Delimitations

This study was carried out in Shangani area (Zimbabwe) and the results are applicable to Shangani and other areas that fall under the natural region four of Zimbabwe and by extension in other African states that have gone through land reform. Shangani is a small town located in the Insiza district of Matebeleland South province of Zimbabwe. Natural region four is semi-arid and is characterized by high temperatures, low and erratic rainfall which ranges between 450mm-650mm per annum which makes seasonal droughts common (SADC, 2008). The farming systems in the region are mainly semi-extensive livestock production, wildlife and cultivation of drought resistant crops (Auret, 1990). Under the vicinity of this region lies De Beers Shangani ranch which occupies 137 000 hectares and stretches over four of the eight rural provinces of Zimbabwe (Kazungu and Dube, 2002; Rukuni, 2004).

Before the FTLRP of 2000, the De Beers Shangani ranch was largely owned by Mr. Nicky Oppenheimer who also owns South African based De Beers Diamonds Corporation, but now the ranch is shared between the Oppenheimer family and the newly resettled black farmers. The Oppenheimers are one of the wealthiest families in a Zimbabwe reeling under perennial economic and political challenges. They have influence over economic and political decisions made within and around their area. Their farm lies in the Matebeleland region which is largely settled by people of Ndebele tribe who have faced retribution and suffering under the ZANU-PF

government which is predominantly Shona speaking. The Shona and Ndebele people have over the years been polarized and the zenith of conflict was the *Gukurahundi*⁶ civil strife which took place in post-colonial Zimbabwe (Mutero, 2013).

The ranch was remodeled partly into a game ranch in the 1990's and has been specializing in livestock production and wildlife. The farming systems then were profitable as the ranch exported over 4000 cattle a year and it earned over US\$2 million from foreign exchange, safari and hunting concessions (Kazungu and Dube, 2002). The ranch alone employed over two hundred permanent workers who worked on the ranch and it also contributed to the national economy of the country. Of late farming methods and profitability of the De Beers Shangani ranch have drastically changed plummeting to low levels.

Chapter breakdown

The dissertation consists of five chapters which are broken down as follows; Chapter one is the introduction which gives out the background of the study and outlines the gap in knowledge on the farming strategies employed by the new farmers hence necessitating this study. The objective of this study was to identify the farming strategies employed by the new farmers at Debshan. Significance of the study is explored and shows that the study contributes to the livelihoods after land reform debates and gives a starting point to policy formulation with regards to agricultural productivity.

Chapter two is a literature review that outlines what other scholars have written on agricultural production after the land reform. Established literature has noted that after the land reform a drop in productivity was recorded and was accounted for by various factors including the new farming strategies of the new farmers. The debates guided the research as it sought to get an in-depth understanding of the various farming strategies adopted and to ascertain if/ how they may have contributed to the slump in productivity.

The methodology employed in this research is unpacked in Chapter three. For this study I adopted qualitative methodologies, for data collection I used in-depth interviews to gather information. To select participants for the study I used purposive sampling which ensured

⁶ *Gukurahundi* refers to a civil war which broke out in Zimbabwe after the Fifth Brigade murdered thousands of Ndebele speaking people in the Matebeland and parts of Midlands Province. The war was a political move by Robert Mugabe to exterminate the Ndebele people.

validity and reliability of my findings as I used my judgment to select participants due to specific qualities and capabilities.

Chapter four follows with the presentation of data and discussion. The data is presented using thematic frames while the analysis uses content analysis, discourse analysis and narrative analysis as data analysis strategies. Major findings point out that new farmers within the study area employ conservation farming methods, use hand sprays, reduction of fertilizer uptakes, cross-breeding of cattle, irrigation schemes, dry planting amongst others as strategies to increase their production. However, most of the farmers have a background of subsistence farming and are now occupying commercial farms. The farmers also bemoan the lack of requisite government support in their farming initiatives and the flexing of political muscles in allocating the sporadic government aid. Chapter four as the core of the research discussed the responses of the participants and gave meaning in relation to the research objectives of the study identify the farming strategies and to ascertain if they contributed to the slump.

Chapter five is the concluding chapter of the dissertation. The conclusion drawn from the findings tell that some strategies are increasing farmers' production and at the same time others are reducing the production levels. Farmers who are well off and well-connected use strategies which improves their productivity such as use of fertilizers, use of machinery, use of irrigation and cattle breeding while their counterparts chose to reduce uptake of fertilizer, cultivate maize without irrigation schemes, use unreliable dry planting techniques. It will conclude that the state-farmer relations are bad as the farmers are disgruntled with the neglect they got from the state which has failed to support them.

Conclusion

Chapter one outlined the background of the land reform program in Zimbabwe. Here I explored the relationship between agricultural production and the land reform in Zimbabwe. I outlined the research problem which focused on the slump in agricultural production after the FTLRP and this slump had a close nexus with the farming strategies of the new farmers. With the main objective of the study, to identify and assess the new farming strategies which were employed by the new farmers, the research questioned on the strategies employed by the farmers, the criterion

used in selecting them and the challenges being faced by the new farmers. This study assumed that the new farmers' strategies have not responded to the needs of the climatic conditions in Shangani. To contextualize this study, I defined the key terms so as to create a vivid background of the study. I briefly described my case study, De Beers Shangani Ranch and I explained what makes the area a case worth studying in this research. Chapter two will discuss the concept of land reform globally, regionally, nationally as well as in Shangani. Agricultural production as a key concept of the study will be discussed and related literature will be reviewed.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter outlines narratives on land reform and sets it within a global context with specific attention to Southern Africa. I will review the already established literature on the land reform process in Zimbabwe. The chapter unpacks what various scholars have written on agricultural production after the controversial FTLRP. It gives a situational analysis of the case study of the research as it explores land reform and agricultural production at De Beers Shangani ranch. The socio-political environment in the area is outlined making the context of the study clear. Agriculture and production at Shangani and Debshan is explored hence giving the state and role of agriculture in this geographical setting. I will give out a detailed description and characteristics of Zimbabwe's Natural Regions.

Land reform in global context

In the history of mankind, land has remained a very distinctive factor as it serves as a store of value, factor of production, status symbol as well as a source of social or political influence (Stilwell and Jordan, n.d). It however has remained a source of political conflict between different groups (Human Rights Watch, 2002). The struggle for land is global and this can be evidenced by the history of land reform world over which is filled with violent struggles between the landless and the landowners (Harvey, 2004). A clear definition of land reform defines it as the purposive change in the way which agricultural land is owned or held in favour of peasants and small farmers, methods of cultivation and the relationship of the agricultural sector to the rest of the economy (Dorner, 1972). Others simplify it as the principle of dividing land for farming into smaller pieces so that more of the poor people own some (Adams, 1995 and 2000). The list of potential definitions is endless, but the meaning I draw from these is that land reform is the changing of land ownership by partitioning land such that the landless will get a piece.

Historically the rationale for undertaking the reforms were diverse and include abolishing feudalism by overthrowing the landlords' class, to defeat imperialism, to free peasants from subjugation to and dependence on the exploiters, to create democracy by promoting private ownership of property, improve land use and raise production etc. In recent times land reform

has been given a developmental implication, as it has been entrusted to improve agricultural production and expand employment (Dorner, 1972, Manjengwa et al, 2013).

Land reform is not a modern phenomenon, peasants have throughout the centuries fought for more secure rights to the land they tilled (Dorner, 1972). It started as early as the second century where land was redistributed as a way of empowering the poor peasantry class. Other examples are found across modern Europe; the French Revolution had land reform as an aspect and serves as an example of land reforms in the modern era. The main objective of the reform in France was to overthrow the feudalist landlord class. The poor peasantry class was heavily burdened with feudal dues and taxes from which other classes namely the noble and the bourgeoisie (upper middle class) were exempted; yet the peasantry did not own land, a main factor of production. The French revolution was seen as a necessary evil which saw all the land owned by the upper classes being confiscated by the aggrieved peasants and sold at auction. With this revolution the feudal tenures were repealed, serfdom was abolished and the landlord class was disbanded. The same scenarios also took place all over Europe for instance in England, Sweden, Denmark and in North America in Mexico. At the heart of these land reforms was the need to make land available to the poor, landless and over-exploited peasants.

Land reform in Southern Africa

In Southern Africa land reform has been undertaken differently, for different reasons and has yielded different results. The longstanding objective for undertaking land reform in Southern Africa, with the exception of countries like Botswana, was mainly to redress the racially skewed land distribution. Generally these land reforms mainly aimed at addressing the land question by redistributing land to the landless majority, as a way to reverse the uneven distribution of land that was brought about by the colonial powers (Moyo, 2007). This made the colonial regimes and the colonial descendants own a higher percentage of the prime land while the majority subsisted on marginal land (Lipton, 2009). The major problem of land alienation by the settlers was massive in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia; it was entrenched through the use of segregatory and repressive laws. Most African countries in the region lost their land to the colonizers who strategically placed them in infertile and marginal lands as a way to mobilize cheap labour for their farms, industries, mines, estates etc.

Following decolonization in the Southern African region and the ending of Apartheid, most of the newly independent countries inherited an unbalanced distribution of land where the minority owned the prime land and dominated the economy while the majorities were relegated to the peripheries of the economy. Moyo (2007) notes that after decolonization the land question faced by many Southern African countries was intensified by the slow progress of the land reform. After the liberation from imperial rule, Africans expected to control their resources, including land. To the African liberation movements land was not just materialistic, but it was symbolic of their political and economic independence from their oppressors. In southern Africa there are two trends when it comes to the land question. In countries like Mozambique and Angola where liberation was definitively concluded through revolution the land question has been largely resolved, but in countries like Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia which gained independence or greater political freedoms through negotiated settlements, their land question has remained largely unresolved (Moyo, 2007). These countries also have sizeable settler populations making land reform more difficult, as it must involve another displacement that will see the majority displacing the minority. Figure 2.1 below shows the land issue in Southern African countries.

Fig. 2.1 Profiles of Land Reforms in Southern Africa

Country	Type of reform	Type of problem	Source of reform	Type of land acquisition	Role of state/market
Zimbabwe	Redistribution	Settler alienation, black capitalist	Political pressure/squatting	State market purchases & state compulsory purchases	State driven
Namibia	Redistribution	Settler alienation	Political pressure/squatting	State market purchases	State driven
South Africa	Restitution Redistribution	Settler alienation	Political pressure/squatting	State compensation for restitution; State grants	State and community
Mozambique	Tenure Redistribution	Settler/ state alienation	Post-war crisis	Expropriation	-

Source: Adapted from Moyo (1999)

Types of land reform undertaken in Southern Africa

The most common approach used in most Southern African countries except in Mozambique was the neo-liberal approach. This approach can be referred to as the market-led or market based approach and just as it sounds it was driven by the market. Wolford (2007) notes that this approach attempts to restore private property rights to ensure a smooth functioning market economy. Its sole purpose is to improve production and efficiency through the security of titles. This approach parallels the neo-liberal perspectives, which sanctify the market to play a role in allocating property to individuals. In countries like Zimbabwe, South Africa, Zambia and Namibia where the market-based approach was adopted, the willing-buyer/willing-seller equation was introduced. Under the willing-buyer/willing-seller, the willing-seller has the autonomy to bargain whatever price they desire for the land within market dictates (Khan, 2007). This slowed the progress of land reform as private property rights were respected so the prices for land were to be demanded by the seller. This approach to land reform has resulted to a slow paced land reform, which has created political and social pressure on the governments to resolve the land question.

Socialist approaches were used mainly in Angola, Mozambique and Tanzania for example. Socialist approaches were against privatization of land but instead opted for nationalization of all land. By nationalizing all land it was supposed to ensure that people from marginalized classes are able to access land, hence resulting in accumulation from below. The ideology states that land belonged to the state and the state itself belonged to the people, so land was given to the people for free and in some countries only infrastructure was paid for. This approach despite its flaws which includes nepotism, corruption and clientillistic networks was more practical for resolving the land question after decolonization in Southern Africa.

Land reform in South Africa

When the African National Congress (ANC) won the 1994 general elections that saw it getting into power, it inherited a racially skewed land distribution and social inequalities, which created a land question in South Africa. The minority whites still owned massive tracts of the best arable land while the majority subsisted in the Apartheid era reserves. The euphoric ANC new government promised its people that a new and transformed South Africa was imminent since the sole objective of waging war against their oppressors was to free the people economically, politically and socially. As outlined in the ANC Freedom Charter, drafted in 1950, the land question was to be resolved as a way to curb hunger and poverty in the new South Africa (Ntsebeza, n.d). A land reform process was initiated as one way to redress the social inequalities and bring social justice to the masses of South Africa.

The main motive of the land reform in South Africa after the demise of the apartheid regime was to rectify the historical injustices brought about by colonialism and apartheid (Khan, 2007). In this manner land reform was to equitably redistribute land, address social inequalities by bridging the rich-poor gap, ensure equal development and growth, and provide tenure security amongst a myriad of factors (Cousins, 2007). In summation the main objective was to ensure that the ordinary and poor people have access to land with secured rights in order to resettle and improve their livelihoods.

Just after independence the South African government committed itself to the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP). It was believed that this policy framework would create an enabling environment for the transformation of the South

African society (ANC, 1994). After consulting with the World Bank, the ANC-led government adopted neo-liberal approaches that declared the land reform a market-based reform (Moyo, 2008). This model utilized the willing-buyer – willing-seller equation (Ntsebeza, 2007), which entails the government to avail funds for purchasing land from the white commercial farmers in the form of grants. However criticism shows that these grants were too little when juxtaposed with the prices demanded by the market (Khan, 2007). This approach resulted in the majority of the poor South Africans failing to purchase land leading to exacerbated class stratification. As criticized by Lipton (2009) this approach has largely failed to reduce poverty, redress the social inequalities and promote accumulation from below.

The land reform process had three pillars namely land redistribution, land restitution and land tenure (Khan, 2007). Land redistribution encompassed the need to give land to landless people through grants provided by the government. Land restitution aimed at returning what had been wrongfully taken during the colonial period and apartheid era to the rightful owners. Land tenure mainly was to protect the rights of the tenants on the predominantly white owned farms and improve the land administration system (Rugege, 2004). On land redistribution, the grants namely the Settlement Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) which was used until 1999 and the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development program (LRAD) were elitist in nature as they were based on an individual's monthly salary; the more you earn the larger your grant. Especially the latter that targeted the elites and full-time farmers ensured that only those who were well-off could purchase land while the poor had to rely on the SLAG which did not meet the prices demanded by the market. The land question in South Africa is yet to be resolved and pressure is starting to mount on the government (Bond, 2007).

Land reform in Namibia

Just like its neighbor South Africa, Namibia at independence also inherited a racially skewed distribution of land. Namibia falls under the same category as South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique that had massive land alienation due to colonialism. In this setup, at independence the land question was on redressing these inequalities when it comes to the control of natural resources. Just like South Africa, Namibia redressed its land

question using the neo-liberal approach which stipulated that land question will be addressed by the willing-buyer willing-seller equation which has failed to yield any results in most countries of the south. Under the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme established in 1992, previously disadvantaged people were given financial assistance in the form of government loans to purchase land. The whole process was assisted by the government which assessed offered land, valued it, negotiated with the owners and processed the lease agreement registration through the Deeds office. In 1995 the Agricultural Commercial Land Reform Act (ACLRA) was passed giving 99-year leasehold rights to land. These were signed in compliance with the Deeds Office regulations, but served to limit control of land by the people. It has been reported (The Windhoek Observer, 20/12/08) that the farmers did not have right over land to mortgage or sublet without the Minister of Lands' approval. This stood as an impediment to access of credit to boost the agricultural production of the newly resettled.

The beneficiary selection criterion of the land reform was elitist in nature as it favoured the powerful over the poor and landless. It has been seen that the major beneficiaries of the Namibian reform were the highly echeloned government officials who can be considered as well off. It was reported (The Windhoek Observer, 20/12/08) a farm estimated at 11 756ha was allocated to a well-off couple that were said to be managing directors of some successful companies. Since Namibian lands are differentiated with climatic conditions ordinary people with no influential positions whatsoever were resettled in areas with poor soils, erratic rainfalls and to make matters worse the amount of land was inadequate for livestock rearing as it resulted in overstocking and overgrazing. This further impoverished the already poor and forced them to leave agriculture and join the labour market as they couldn't sustain the cost of living.

With the current rates of poverty and Namibia it clearly shows that the 27.6% of people are living in poverty while 13.8% being extremely poor (Jauch, 1998). The economic structure has regional disparities, as there is a significant urban-rural dichotomy. Recent researches have shown that unemployment rate has increased by year with a 75% unemployment rate amongst youths has been recorded (Labour Force Survey, 2008). In pursuit of reducing poverty by empowering people the Namibian land reform did not succeed.

Land reform in Zimbabwe

When discussing the land reform program in Zimbabwe, what stands out first in the minds of people is that it was the highway to chaos that led to the Zimbabwean crisis. No wonder why Scoones et al (2010) lament that the land reform in Zimbabwe is shrouded with myths and lies as there are many misconceptions. There is no uniform story when it comes to the land reform process in Zimbabwe; various scholars have had divergent views on what actually transpired, what motivated it and who benefitted from it. In narrating the land reform process and outcomes in Zimbabwe there are voices of the beneficiaries, the displaced white farmers, some former farm workers facing the prospects of displacement and the international community at large. Thus the story of the land reform in Zimbabwe is open to debate, as various scholars have diverging views (Centre for Peace Initiative, 2005; Chitiyo, 2000; Sachikonye, 2003; Scoones et al, 2010; Thomas, 2003).

Following from Zimbabwe's attainment of political independence, which came after the negotiations at the Lancaster House Conference of 1979, Zimbabwe inherited a racially skewed land distribution. This was in favour of the minority white settlers. In this setup over 6 million people lived in the marginal lands of Zimbabwe and thus relegated in the periphery of the agrarian economy. This brought about inequalities in accessing the natural resources of the country such as prime land hence exacerbating the land question in Zimbabwe (Moyo, 2000). The centrality of land issues in the history of the country shows that after gaining independence there was a need to 'right the past wrongs' by redressing the social ills brought about by the colonial legacies. History shows that since colonialism the tension that was there between the blacks and the whites was centralized on land issues; this gave the blacks the motivation to fight against the colonial powers in the famous liberation struggles christened the Chimurenga war⁷ (Human Rights Watch, 2002).

The land question in Zimbabwe since independence mainly focused on redressing the past inequalities that were inherited from the colonial government. In tandem with the land question reversing land alienation, promoting equity by equally redistributing land, promoting economic efficiency etc. were the main priorities (Moyo, 2000). The question was even exacerbated by the slow progress made in land reform, since victors who fought

⁷ Chimurenga is a Shona word which means war of liberation.

in the wars of liberation were promised tracts of land; they were impatient and starving due to their land hunger. The need to reward the war victors and to redress the social inequalities was the main constructs of the land question in Zimbabwe before the land reform.

Land Redistribution and Resettlement Program Phase 1 and 2 (LRRP-1/2)

The idea of land reform in Zimbabwe started as early as 1979, during the negotiations at the Lancaster House Conference, but was overshadowed by the urgent need to gain political independence from the British colonial power. The provisions of the Lancaster House Constitution stipulated that white farmers were to retain their farms for ten years and a proper market based land reform was to be undertaken guided by the willing-buyer/willing-seller principle (Thomas, 2003). As alluded to before, the willing-buyer/willing-seller principle has failed to bring about tangible results elsewhere in the world. In Zimbabwe after 1980 it only managed to resettle 70 000 families on at least three million hectares of land thus failing to meet the set targets (Bowyer-Bower and Stoneman, 2000; Moyo, 2000). The market-based approach gave the reform a snail's pace as only under-utilized land was to be offered for purchase by willing sellers (Khan, 2007; Thomas, 2003).

After the 1998 Donor Conference on Land which was held in Zimbabwe, the principles of the Land Reform and Resettlement Program Phase 2 (LRRP-2) were set and the Inception Phase Framework Plan (IPFP) 1999-2000 was drafted to guide the LRRP-2 (Bowyer-Bower and Stoneman, 2000). The Inception Phase Framework Plan drafted how the LRRP-2 was to be developed, implemented and supported throughout its 2-year inception phase (Government of Zimbabwe, 1999). The LRRP-2 was to commence using 118 farms that were being offered for compulsory acquisition and an additional one million hectares were targeted for the inception phase (Bowyer-Bower and Stoneman, 2000). The World Bank supported the inception phase of LRRP-2 by availing a US\$5 million loan to support land reform. Due to the colonial legacy of land ownership, President Robert Mugabe argued that the former colonial government was obliged to pay compensation to the farmers that were further based on the reassurances made at the negotiation table before independence, which obliged the international community to support the process (Bowyer-Bower and Stoneman, 2000). However, animosity arose between Zimbabwe and Britain following the new policy

that saw Britain under Blair government declining to support Zimbabwean land reform financially after the government sent officials to appeal for funding (Thomas 2003). In a letter by Clare Short⁸, the Minister of International Development, she stated that,

“we do not accept that Britain has a special responsibility to meet the costs of land purchase in Zimbabwe”.

According to Human Rights Watch (2002), the government then adopted ‘radical redistribution’ as a device to rapidly resolve the land question in Zimbabwe and to calm the war veterans who were mounting so much pressure on the government.

Fast Track Land Reform Program in Zimbabwe

The infamous Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) also referred to as the ‘Third Chimurenga’ started in 2000 after the constitution was amended and according to Chitsike (2003) and Thomas (2003) the main reason why it was undertaken was to speedily resettle people since the British government and other international donors were not forthcoming with providing the funds for land acquisition. As they had promised to avail funds for resettling and compensating the white farmers, the government had to amend the constitution and placed the onus for providing compensation for the acquired farms on the former colonial power as per the promises they made at the Lancaster House Agreement (Chitsike, 2003; HRW, 2002). With these provisions in the draft constitution⁹ the government attempted to release itself from the obligation to compensate white farmers for the acquired land, but not for other farm infrastructural improvements like buildings, irrigation systems, dip tanks, granaries and barns. In a nutshell this draft constitution would make compulsory acquisition of land without compensation lawful in Zimbabwe.

⁸ Letter from British Minister for International Development Clare Short to Zimbabwe’s Land and Agriculture Minister Kumbirai Kangai, quoted in Chris McGreal, “Blair’s worse than the Tories, says Mugabe,” Mail and Guardian (Johannesburg), December 22, 1997.

⁹ Section 16a stipulated that, among other things: (1)(c)- the people of Zimbabwe must be enabled to reassert their rights and regain ownership of their land; and accordingly— i) - the former colonial power has an obligation to pay compensation for agricultural land compulsorily acquired for resettlement, through an adequate fund established for the purpose; and ii) - if the former colonial power fails to pay compensation through such a fund, the Government of Zimbabwe has no obligation to pay compensation for agricultural land compulsorily acquired for resettlement.

At the referendum in February 2000, the draft constitution was rejected as the political party the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)¹⁰ campaigned for a 'no vote', which saw ZANU-PF being defeated by 53% of the 1.3 million votes cast (Human Rights Watch, 2002). It is believed that the reasons for the rejection of the referendum were more political than anything else (Chitsike, 2003; Thomas, 2003). The rejection of the draft constitution at the referendum however angered the war veterans who were hoping to see the new constitution addressing the land question in Zimbabwe that had been slowly resolved in the past 20 years. This marked the genesis of the 'spontaneous demonstrations' and land grabs spearheaded by the war veterans.

It has been argued that the FTLRP of 2000 was undertaken as a political move to calm the war veterans and as a device to seek political patronage ahead of the parliamentary elections (Alexander, 2003; Raftopolous, 2005; Sachikonye, 2004; Richardson, 2006; Human RightsWatch, 2002). After losing the national referendum Mugabe felt threatened and this led him to twist and turn the constitution and make land seizure without compensation constitutional (Human Rights Watch, 2002; Thomas,2003). Chitsike (2003) and Manjengwa et al (2013) also note that after losing the referendum the ruling party and government was now under pressure to deliver on the land question. At the 1998 Land Donor Conference, President Mugabe in his inaugural speech, which soon became the prognosis of what transpired in the FTLRP said;

If we delay in resolving the land needs of our people, they will resettle themselves. It has happened before and it may happen again.

These pressures led the ruling party to adopting the slogan, *The Land is the Economy and the Economy is the Land*. More so, it drew out political stronghold in the masses and made the ruling party to reclaim its safeguard once again after the protests and stay-away which were spearheaded by the Zimbabwe Congress for Trade Union (ZCTU)¹¹

However, Scoones et.al (2010) believe that motivation for the FTLRP was derived from a genuine desire to speedily redistribute land to the landless and fulfilling the promises made

¹⁰ MDC is the opposition party which is led by Morgan Tsvangirayi. It was formed in 1998 to pursue regime change in Zimbabwe. It is funded by foreign donors from the west mainly Britain and America.

¹¹ ZCTU is a labour union which was at that time headed by Morgan Tsvangirayi who soon became the leader of the emergent opposition political party MDC.

to the masses by the guerilla fighters during the war (Chitiyo, 2000). Contributions made by Scoones et al shows that other explanations which argue that the FTLRP was done for drawing political patronage do not consider why the wars of liberation were waged. Historically, it is a well-known fact that the guerilla fighters promised the masses that their victory would lead to the masses getting fertile and productive pieces of land hence the FTLRP was just a fulfillment of promises made during the war (Chitiyo, 200).

Scoones et al (2010) argues that the FTLRP benefited ordinary people without any affiliations whatsoever to ZANU-PF and their political cronies. Furthermore they argue that informal political practice was at play as the beneficiaries were ordinary citizens with a genuine need for land (Scoones et al, *ibid*). The reform strategy aimed at improving livelihoods and reducing poverty by redistributing land to the ordinary people who would then contribute to balanced development (Scoones et al, *ibid*). This has been challenged by Marongwe (2008 and 2011), Hammer (2005) and Zamchiya (2011) who purported that the FTLRP was characterized by absolute cronyism and clientelism. They have argued that politicians and their loyalties benefitted more, as they was a clientilistic network which was superintended by ZANU-PF for its survival. Murisa (2008) cements these arguments as he points out that some of the so called agrarian reforms which have been undertaken were for entrenching the interests of the politicians, these reforms are often implemented hiding behind the name 'the poor' when they have nothing to do with the poor and the landless. However, the Human Rights Watch (2002) elucidates that the program was hijacked by the war veterans and these notions are agree with Scoones et al (2010) and Chitsike (2003) who noted that there was a genuine need of land which led to spontaneous land grabs around Zimbabwe.

The FTLRP was declared over in August 2002 by President Robert Mugabe. The Mugabe-led government promised that the state was now ready to concentrate on improving agricultural production and resuscitate the black agricultural sector in Zimbabwe (Thomas, 2003). Issues of success or failure of the FTLRP still remains an elephant in the room as there is contestation on whether it can be termed as a successful land reform or a total failure. Myths, as referred to by Scoones et al. (2010) shrouds the narratives on the successes and failures of the land reform and bad publicity gives a bad picture of the land reform outcomes. These myths have been demystified by Scoones' case study that clearly

showed that in the light of the aims of the reform, the Zimbabwean reform has succeeded. These narratives raised 5 myths which states that; i) the land reform was a total failure, ii) the beneficiaries were mainly political cronies, iii) there is no investment in the new resettlements, iv) agriculture is in complete ruins and v) the rural economy has collapsed (Scoones et al, 2010). Scoones et al have put forward a list of success stories that prove that the land reform has succeeded to meet its longstanding goals.

Figure 2.2: The distribution of land after FTLRP in 2003

Land Holding Category	Farm Number	Farm size (%)	Area (Ha)	Area (%)	Settlers	Take Up	Unallocated land
A1	2,652	32.7	4,231,080	15.7	127,192	97%	
A2	1,672	20.6	2,198,814	8.2	7,260	66%	
Communal	-	-	16,400,000	60.9	-		
Church	64	0.8	41,902	0.2	45		
Whites	1,377	17.0	1,175,607*	4.4	1,323	?	
Indigenous	1,440	17.8	938,723	3.5	1,340		
Corporate	743	9.2	1,364,173	5.1	509		
Parastatals	153	1.9	572,786	2.1	42		
Total	8,101	100	26,923,085	100	137,711		2,8 million (367 farms)

Source: PLRC, 2003; Moyo, 2004. *- This is 3% of the total agricultural land.

The table above outlines the land-holding after the FTLRP of 2000. Out of a total of 8, 101 farms, 2, 652 farms were allocated to the A1 model which resettled 127, 192 settlers. 1, 672 farms were allocated to the A2 model which resettled 7, 260 settlers in 8.2 percent of the total land under acquisition. The white farmers were left with 1, 377 farms which covered 1, 175, 607 hectares which is 3 percent of the total agricultural land in Zimbabwe. This Presidential Land Review Committee report noted that 134, 452 families were resettled and taken up land in both A1 and A2 farms by the land reform program (Moyo, 2004).

Fast Track Land Reform Program at Debshan

Land reform at Debshan has not been fully documented as there is a relative paucity of literature on land reform experiences and outcomes in Shangani. Due to its size, which has often been likened to be the same size as that of Belgium, Debshan ranch as a white owned farm would have given out a vivid picture of the land reform process in Zimbabwe. Bad publicity has portrayed the land reform simply as a process of taking land from the whites and redistributing it to the blacks. After land reform at Debshan, the white farmer still owns land and now co-exists with the newly resettled black farmers. This example may bring out a new dimension to the narratives of the Zimbabwean land reform. The term land reform in Shangani became prominent towards the beginning of the second millennium albeit the process had started a very long time ago. The name De Beers Shangani Ranch was listed on the list of farms that were to be on compulsory acquisition in 1999, but had often eluded being redistributed. Rukuni (2011) has referred to redistribution of the ranch a ‘political hot potato’ as he argues that the issue was dealt with by the presidency. Mr. Nicky Oppenheimer¹², who is said to be on good terms with the president, offered the government to take 34 000 hectares of land from the 137 000 hectares he owned. In this offer US\$200 000 was to be provided to support the new farmers with agricultural inputs, machinery and training for agriculture in natural region four¹³ (Rukuni, 2004). According to Ncube (2001) the government and the Oppenheimer family clashed over land as the government insisted

¹² Nicky Oppenheimer was the owner of Debshan ranch before FTLRP. He is also the owner of the De Beers Diamond Corporation of South Africa.

¹³ Natural Region four is located in the low-lying areas and receives rainfall as low as 450mm-650mm per annum and the conditions make it suitable for semi-extensive livestock production and cultivation of drought resistant crops.

on taking 65 000 hectares. This ultimately resulted in the government accepting the offer, as they feared to lose one of Africa's wealthiest families as an investor. The ranch was broken up into 3 pieces which includes the Joseph's Block which is 10 419.3 hectares, Bulawayo Syndicate which is 17 499.1 hectares and the remainder which was retained by the Oppenheimer family (Rukuni, 2011).

Land reform and agricultural production

Land reform in the modern era has mainly aimed at improving agricultural production so as to realize economic development, which in turn would improve the livelihoods of the majority (Dorner, 1972). It has been noted that most of the poor people have a direct dependence on natural resources and their outputs, hence land reform sought to prioritize agricultural production as it will enhance the well-being of the people (Frost et al, 2007). This creates a close nexus between land reform and agricultural production.

Agricultural productivity refers to the overall output produced by a certain input in the agricultural sector of a given economy (Fulginiti and Perrin, 1998). It is measured as the ratio of the final output to the total input; these inputs include seeds, fertilizer, labour and skills. Agricultural productivity is most favourable when the level of outputs sky-rocket while the input levels remain constant or when inputs decrease but output remains the same (Adewuyi, 2006). This is only achieved in areas where the agricultural systems are strategic; good practices will exploit the natural resource base to its fullest, but at the same time will employ practices that are environmentally sound. As posited by Pretty (2008) agricultural sustainability will allow the farmer to use their skills and knowledge in exploiting the natural resources whilst at the same time conserving the land for the future generations to enjoy these same benefits. Gerber (1990) also notes that sustainable agriculture improves agricultural production as it leads to the full realization that good farming practices have a positive impact on agricultural production.

Agricultural productivity can be measured using these indicators, i) efficiency and ii) profitability (Liverpool-Tassie et al, 2011). Firstly, efficiency as a concept mainly focuses on the farmer more than anything else. The economic efficiency of the farmers is a determinant that may be used to safely conclude that there is agricultural productivity. To measure the efficiency of farmers, you look at how good the farmers are in utilizing the

same quality and quantity of inputs and this is measured against the total output that comes from these inputs. Secondly profitability relates to the ability of the farmers to cover costs incurred during production and remain with a profit. This is often calculated by the profit margins that are expected to portray a huge difference between the cost of production and the profit. These two mentioned indicators helps to ascertain the levels of agricultural productivity in a given area or economy.

In a study of Nigeria, these two indicators have indicated the level of agricultural productivity (Liverpool-Tassie et al, 2011). A list of intertwined factors constraining agricultural productivity were brought forward including educational attainment of farmers, land ownership and farming systems, access to credit, membership to cooperatives, contact with extension services agents, the list is endless. Liverpool-Tassie et al (2011) posits that educated farmers are likely to adopt progressive farming practices and new technology hence increasing production. Mixed cropping, social capital, years of farming experience, farm sizes etc. were listed as other factors that increase production, profitability and efficiency of the farmers.

In light of the land reform, the opinion¹⁴ of Godfrey Huggins, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia in 1952 may also show that the best use of land is maximizing production, both of food and export crops. Manjengwa et al (2013) note that the best use of land is to increase agricultural production and this goes in tandem with Bowyer-Bower and Stoneman (2000) who have also argued that land reform as a process of societal transformation should not only address issues of equity but should also increase agricultural production. These sentiments are echoed earlier by Dorner (1972) who clearly elucidates that land reforms undertaken in the modern era has been given a developmental implication and has been entrusted with improving rates of agricultural production and expansion of employment.

Setting aside the political motivations of land reform it has been shown that land reform and agricultural production are inseparable. However Manjengwa (2006) also argued that issues of production and environmental sustainability were not mainstreamed in the land reform programs in Southern Africa. Land reform has led to desertification caused by land

¹⁴ Godfrey Huggins in 1952 is quoted by Rifkind (1968) to have said, "the ultimate possessors of the land will be the people who will make best use of it."

degradation, deforestation, overgrazing, overstocking and mismanagement. These environmental problems related to the redistribution of land have an impact on the overall production of land. Hence the discourse on land reform and production are premised on these arguments.

Agricultural production before FTLRP in Zimbabwe

When Zimbabwe gained its political freedom in April 1980 from the Rhodesian government it inherited an agricultural sector characterized by a duality and racially skewed land ownership pattern (Zikhali, 2008). In this setup there was the dominant sector which comprised of large-scale commercial white farmers while the other sector was occupied by the black farmers who mainly specialized in small-scale farming while a small proportion participated in commercial farming. These two groups differed in the sense that they produced for different reasons; although the heavily mechanized large-scale commercial farmers produced for the market mainly exporting, the non-mechanized small-scale sector produced for consumption while surplus produce was forwarded to the markets.

A steady growth of the agricultural sector was recorded in Zimbabwe during the period 1980 to 1999 (Moyo, 2004). Weiner et al (1985) notes that during the eighties Zimbabwe's agricultural sector was thriving and resulted it in being assigned the role of coordinating food security strategy for the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) now Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). This assignment was based on the fact that Zimbabwe was in a position to provide food to feed other countries in need since it had an on-point agricultural sector that produced enough to feed the region. It is during this period that it earned the title, 'bread basket of the SADC region'.

During this period the agricultural sector was still dominated by the minority white large-scale commercial farmers. Smallholder black farmers and black communal farmers partially contributed to the total output of the sector. In 1981, 75% of the agricultural output in Zimbabwe was contributed by the large-scale commercial farmers alone (Weiner et al, 1985). At this period, the levels of production, methods of farming and land use patterns of the large-scale commercial farmers were superior to those of the small-scale farmers (Weiner et al, 1985). Moyo (2004) however argues that agriculture was liberalized by the structural adjustment macro-economic policies, which gave an unfair balance of payments

to peasant production. With the separate development policies indigenous agriculture was not supported and this however made it look inferior to that of the white farmers. It is against this background that this research sets to investigate the relationship of the new farmers and the state with regards to support needed in agriculture. Production levels were also related to factors such as levels of land productivity as well as access to credit, technical services and inputs. The large-scale commercial farmers were at an advantage as they occupied the prime land and had access to credit, inputs and technical services (Weiner et al, 1985). Likewise for the new farmers to succeed, they needed to access credit facilities. It is therefore the prerogative of the state to avail lines of credit to the farmers so that they match, surpass or they are close to the production levels of the white farmers. This study acknowledges that the Zimbabwean government has offered support to new farmers and it also realizes that Matebeleland region has over the years been neglected by the government and lags behind on many developmental projects (Mabhena, 2010). It thus sets to find out if the government has the capacity and sincerity to help the new farmers regardless of their tribe or political affiliation in the Matebeleland.

In the nineties agricultural production levels were hamstrung by a series of droughts, which especially impacted peasant production that relied on rainfall. The peasant and small-scale farming sector produced at least 70% of staple food production while the large-scale commercial farmers specialized in cash crops like tobacco, cotton, barley, tea etc. The series of droughts heavily affected the rain-fed staple food-producing sector that had less than 5% of national irrigation resources; the levels of production fell and led to the food insecurity situation in Zimbabwe (Moyo, 2004).

Agricultural production in Zimbabwe has differed from crop to crop, region to region and to different farming systems. The agro-ecological zoning in Zimbabwe shows that production differs due to differences in climatic condition, soil types as well as the farming systems required. Zimbabwe is divided into five agro-ecological zones also referred to as natural regions (N.R.). The quality of land declines from N.R one to N.R five in terms of agricultural production. The natural regions have been classified as follows: i) Natural Region one receive at least 900mm of rainfall per annum, the temperatures are low and the land is suitable for intensive livestock and crop production. The region occupies only 2% of the total agricultural land in Zimbabwe, ii) Natural Region two occupies 15% of the land

and the soils are good, it receives a fair amount of rainfall between 700mm-900mm per annum. It is best suitable for intensive grain crop production and livestock production, iii) Natural Region three receives an annual rainfall of 650mm-800mm and is characterized by high temperatures and mid-season dry spells. It occupies 18% of the total agricultural land and is suitable for semi-extensive livestock production, small-scale livestock ranching and cultivation of drought resistant crops like sorghum, rapoko and millet, iv) Natural Region four occupies the biggest chunk of the total agricultural land in Zimbabwe with 38% of the total. It is located in the low-lying areas and receives rainfall as low as 450mm-650mm per annum and the conditions make it suitable for semi-extensive livestock production and cultivation of drought resistant crops. Severe dry spells and frequent seasonal droughts are common while, v) Natural Region five experiences erratic rainfalls with less than 450mm per annum. It occupies 27% of agricultural land in Zimbabwe and is suitable for extensive beef production and wildlife ranching (GoZ, 1994).

Agricultural practices in Zimbabwe cannot stray away from the dictates of the Natural Region in which they are implemented. It is against this backdrop that this research investigates the motivation of the government in allocating semi-arid land suitable for cattle ranching to peasant farmers who rely on maize production for their livelihood. Traditionally, agricultural production rates were higher in natural regions one, two and three and were a bit lower in regions four and five due to the soil types, climatic conditions and farming practices required. The bulk of the maize, tobacco, cotton, tea etc. produced in Zimbabwe came from the first three regions while livestock rearing and beef production came from the last two regions. It has been recorded that 25% of the total production in 1999 was derived from the livestock sector mainly practiced in the region four and five of Zimbabwe (Homann et al, 2007). The droughts in the 1990's also affected beef production and dairy farming in these regions and most farmers had to shift to wildlife farming (Gambiza and Nyama, n.d). Some of the farmers who shifted to wildlife ranching include the Oppenheimers of the De Beers farm in Shangani, which later changed its name to De Beers Shangani Ranch. Operating a wildlife ranch in the semi-arid region of Zimbabwe paid off, as this type of farming was profitable. Debshan ranch earned over half a million US dollars a year from safari and hunting concessions (Rukuni, 2004) and exported over 4000 cattle which earned the agriculture sector an average of US\$1.5 million in foreign

exchange (Kazungu and Dube, 2002). The farming practices employed by the commercial farmers were mainly sensitive to the climatic conditions, since the natural region was only suitable for livestock and wildlife ranching given demands of the climatic conditions increased the production levels in the natural region four and five. Drinkwater (1991) argues that in the natural regions 4 and 5 with the poor quality of the soil types the employment of unimproved traditional farming practices would lead to a progressive decline of agricultural production. However in some parts of region four, crop production was practiced but limited only to drought resistant crops, which simply means that the cultivation of rain-fed grain crops such as maize, wheat, groundnut etc. was not suitable for the conditions.

At the dawn of the new millennium the standing of production level was not clear although it was noted that it was deteriorating due to the economic effects of the first phase of the land reform (Human Rights Watch, 2002). Homann et al, (2007) and Sachikonye (2003) have posited that in the late nineties some agricultural sectors of production were satisfactory. This shows that productivity rates were not constant but was characterized by ups and downs in different sectors. Human Rights Watch (2002) has argued the push for the FTLRP in 2000 was the pressure mounted on the government by the masses due to price hikes caused by food shortages. This shows that the commercial sector that specialized in export cash crops was thriving, while the small-scale sector that produced maize and other food crops were struggling to survive. The difficulties faced by the small-scale farmers were due to the economic pressures from the impacts of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programs (ESAP) and related policies on smallholder agriculture coupled with the effects of the droughts. The ESAP was initiated in 1991 as an economic reform which aimed at reducing government spending: to that end it had reduced subsidies to smallholder farmers on farm inputs, equipment and technical services (Makamure et al, 2001).

Agricultural production after Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe

The longstanding economic motive for undertaking land reform in modern day is to improve production. In Zimbabwe, land reform was undertaken as a way of empowering the rural poor by decongesting the communal areas in a bid to improve and increase agricultural production (Kinsey, 1999). A total of at least 70% of the population directly

depended on land as a source of income hence levels of production are of utmost importance (Weiner et al, 1985). Deininger et al (2002) have noted that small farms are very productive when compared to large farms; these notions are based on the inverse-farm productivity relationship. Small farms tend to be more productive as there is maximum utilization of land as well as minimal supervision challenges on farm processes and stages. With this in mind after the FTLRP of 2000, an increase in production was projected as large landed estates were broken up into small pieces and redistributed to a large number of households around Zimbabwe.

However when it comes to the outcomes of land reform, there might be circumstances that can make the inverse-farm productivity relationship contestable since not all land reforms undertaken have led to increased production. These programs are often implemented differently and guided by different principles and policies. The land reform in Korea is a good modern example of a land reform program that has led to an increase in agricultural production (Jeon and Kim, 2000). While in India, a study showed that land reform had a negative impact on agricultural production despite the fact that agricultural production was a longstanding objective of land reform (Ghattak and Roy, 2000). The above-mentioned case studies clearly show that land reform as an agrarian process can yield varied results when it comes to agricultural production.

The FTLRP had a negative impact on agricultural production (Moyo, 2004). Scholars have agreed that agricultural production plummeted from 2003 and persisted for a number of years (Human Rights Watch, 2002; Manyani, 2011; Moyo, 2004; Scoones et al, 2010; Thomas, 2003; Richardson, 2004). From an economist's point of view, the slump in agricultural production, which was recorded after 2003, was bound to happen since there was transfer of land ownership and change of land cover and land uses. However the persistence then makes the case peculiar as it shows that the causative factors of the slump have remained unresolved. This persisting decline in agricultural production has affected food security and has reduced the number of small farmers (Manyani, 2011). Prior to radical land reform and redistribution in Zimbabwe, the agriculture sector had employed at least 70 percent of the labour force (Chitiga and Mabugu, 2008) but the tables turned after the completion of the land reform. It thus amounts to reaching a conclusion that land reform *per se* has undermined agricultural production in Zimbabwe. The slump in agricultural

production after the land reform has led to formulation of anecdotal notions and speculations that the land reform is a complete failure as it has failed to increase agricultural production as measured by exports and cash crops. While agricultural exports clearly declined there are a range of other considerations required to fully analyze the processes undertaken.

Moyo (2004) noted that the main crops and livestock that were affected were those that have been previously produced by the large-scale commercial white farmers. Export crops such as wheat, sunflower, soya beans and tobacco declined, as they were now being produced by inexperienced first timers who did not have adequate funds at their disposal (Derman, 2006). An 87% decrease in the total output of sunflower oil between 2002 and 2003 led to the scarcity of oil and related product both on local markets as well as global markets (Moyo, 2004). However some cash crops such as tea, coffee, forestry products and citrus were to a lesser extent affected as the areas were not disturbed by the FTLRP due to legal protection of certain agro-industrial estates. Grain crops such as maize and groundnuts, and cotton mainly produced by the smallholder farmers also suffered from the same fate. Albeit being produced on large areas in the virgin lands, agricultural production of maize and other grain crops plummeted dismally thus creating food insecurities in the country. The slump in regard to maize production can also be linked to the 2002-2003 droughts, which struck all parts of the country. Profitability of maize decreased due to the high cost of expenses incurred in farming in an economic sanction struck economy¹⁵. Inputs were being sold at exorbitant prices on the black markets and this reduced the uptake of fertilizers and improved seeds. This was a low blow to production rates of maize and other grain crops as Manjengwa et al (2013) noted that maize yield is directly proportional to fertilizer used. The interaction between usage of land and farming practices lately has severely affected agricultural production, which has been on the decline since 2003. On the other hand, the livestock and wildlife sector has deteriorated dismally due to rampant poaching; game meat biltong¹⁶ was often seen drying on granaries around Zimbabwe (Manjengwa, 2006; Rukuni, 2004). Some rare species are becoming extinct as the wildlife ranches are being attacked by poachers. Also in some parts of region four and five land uses

¹⁵ The United States of America imposed sanctions and Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) of 2001 had a grip on the agriculture sector as it reduced the government subsidies on agriculture.

¹⁶ Biltong is lean meat that is salted and dried in strips.

have been changed to the cultivation of rain-fed maize and other non-drought resistant crops that are poorly performing.

Recent reports have shown that agricultural production in Zimbabwe is reviving, with maize reaching 86% of 1990 output, tobacco with a 67% and an impressive 125% for cotton (World Bank, 2012). Manjengwa et al (2013) have argued that the increase in production levels for tobacco, cotton and horticulture is credited to contract farming; lack of contract support for maize has also undermined the food securities as support is only available to farmers producing the export cash crops. Former Minister of Finance, Tendai Biti in his 2011 mid-year review¹⁷ pointed out that he was overjoyed with the levels of agricultural production in Zimbabwe. He applauded the resettlement farmers as he noted that 49% of total maize output came from the resettlement farmers and 43% from communal farmers.

In explanation of the agricultural production slump in Zimbabwe an assortment of factors prejudicing production in Zimbabwe were put forward. These factors include land-use changes, lack of technical extension services, inadequate state support, new farming strategies, financial incapacities, and inability to adapt to climatic conditions as well as unreliable rainfall (Chikowore, 2013; Mashava, 2010; Mbereko 2010; Richardson 2006; Sithole, 2007; Thebe, 2012). These factors have complemented each other in prejudicing production after the FTLRP in Zimbabwe. There was also an insecure land tenure system that delimited access to loans by the farmers, as they could not use their land as collateral. With these financial incapacities it saw them returning to their subsistence farming which used simple tools, labour and inputs which resulted in low production. This also inspired the changing of land uses, as the farmers did not get enough training and services from the state through technical extension departments. The land lost its fertility due to the farming practices that were not environmentally sound; this was coupled to the unreliable rainfall that persisted for three years.

Zimbabwe's natural regions have different production rates due to different climatic conditions and this makes the factors prejudicing production not to be generalized. However while some factors like lack of funds, insecure tenures, inadequate state support,

¹⁷ 2011 Mid-year Review from 2 November 2011 the Financial Gazette.

unreliable rainfalls, lack of machineries can apply to all regions but for factors like land-use changes and new farming practices vary from region to region. New farming practices and strategies have been adopted mostly in natural regions four and five after the newly resettled farmers failed to succeed in the farming systems demanded by the climatic conditions and soil types (Chamunorwa, 2010). These new strategies and practices have not been fully explored so as to give a nuanced picture of these new strategies and their relationship with production. Thus a noteworthy gap in literature is to be filled as the deficiencies in the farming strategies need to be clearly highlighted.

Conclusion

The chapter has reviewed literature on the land reform process in Zimbabwe, it has brought out the debates and arguments that surround the land reform discourse. The motivation for undertaking reform in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in the world has mainly prioritized improving agricultural production. However in Zimbabwe it remains contested as the land reform is said to have been undertaken to regain political patronage ahead of the general elections. Such debates show the political environment in which the controversial FTLRP was undertaken and power dynamics are evidenced on the case of land reform at Debshan. The relationship between agricultural production and the land reform was discussed and has given a clear picture of the production levels in Zimbabwe before and after the FTLRP. Chapter three of this thesis will look at the methodologies used to find answers for the research questions. The research paradigm, research design and data collection methods will be discussed. The data collection procedure is given out on a step by step basis up until the end of the data collection and data analysis process.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I discuss my research methods and chosen methodology. I used a qualitative approach that helped in getting an in-depth understanding on the farming strategies used by the new farmers in Shangani. Shangani was used as a case study as it gives a clear picture and an example of land reform processes and outcomes in Zimbabwe. Its geographical location in the semi-arid Natural Region four and its socio-political environment which is polarised made it a case worth studying. The study was guided by the Agricultural Sustainability concept that enabled identification and assessment of the new farmers adopted strategies. To understand the influence of the socio-political environment on the strategies employed, an approach highlighting Political Ecology was adopted in this study. Data was collected through the use of in-depth interviews with the respondents who were selected purposely using the purposive judgmental sampling technique. Snowballing sampling was used as the respondents referred me to other knowledgeable people in the community. The collected data was analysed and presented on a thematic frame answering the research objectives. During data collection, ethical issues to research were considered and all respondents were treated equally.

Conceptual framework

This study identified and assessed the farming strategies used by the newly resettled black farmers at the De Beers Shangani Ranch *viz a viz* the socio-political environment within which these strategies are employed. It is guided by ‘agricultural sustainability’ conceptual framework. Jules Pretty (2008) argues that agricultural sustainability can contribute to an increase in agricultural production with a minimal damage to the natural resource base if practiced in a neutral socio-political environment. It is thus imperative for this study to take a look at how the political power dynamics in Shangani influence farming within the area. Agricultural sustainability as a concept also entails making good use of the environment so as to get favourable results. Pretty (2002 and 2008) and Gerber (1990) outlines the key principles for sustainable agriculture and these include; i) making productive use of farmers’ skills, knowledge and techniques, ii) making productive use of human and social capital in managing and solving agricultural and natural resource problems, iii) minimizing the use of inputs that damage the environment and consumers, and iv) integrating biological and ecological processes with food production processes. The government of Zimbabwe redistributed land to the majority of its people. It is thus inevitable that the government intervenes politically to agricultural processes and be sincere in allocating resources and training of the farming constituency (Khan, 2007).

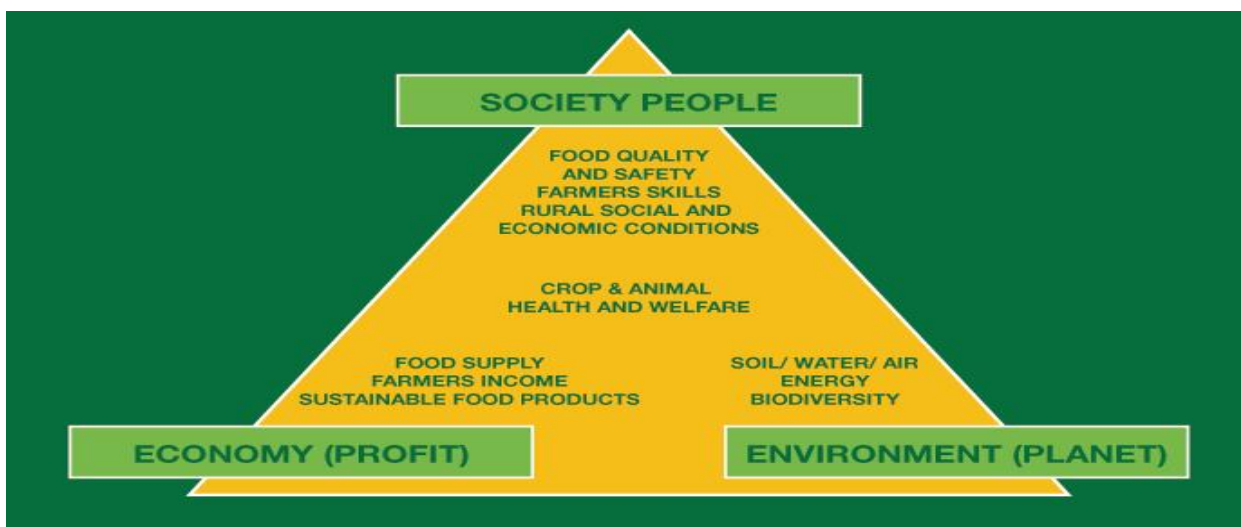
De Beers Ranch is situated in an area which has political and cultural interest from the government, the Oppenheimer family and the Ndebele people. The study thus borrows the lenses of the Political Ecology framework to help understand how political dynamics influence and affects agricultural production. Political Ecology builds the understanding of the connection between the Shangani socio-political environment and the farming systems employed at Debshan ranch by the new black farmers and the white farmer. Political Ecology as a concept assesses the political construction of what is considered to be ecological (Forsyth, 2001). According to Leff (n.d) it explores the power relations between society and nature embedded in social interests and knowledge that weave the life-worlds of the people. In some areas of Zimbabwe, redistribution was done without due regard to the farming competence of the farmer it was rather based on political affiliation (Zamchiya, 2011). There are power dynamics that make the area an uneven socio-political milieu for farmers of different tribes, religions, ideologies and partisanship. Hence in this study the

framework guides in understanding the influence of power relations in human-environment interactions (Vayda and Walters, 1999). The framework also complements the Sustainable Agriculture triangle in linking socio-political and economic factors to agricultural production and sustainability (see Figure 3.1).

Furthermore, Pesek (2001) notes that agricultural sustainability seeks to sustain farmers by promoting farming practices and methods that are profitable and environmentally friendly. Some environmentally friendly and profitable practices like conservation tillage, integrated pest management; aquaculture, water harvesting, and agroforestry have been listed as farming practices and interventions that encompass agricultural sustainability (Pretty, 1995; Uphoff, 2002). It is worth noting these strategies require specialist training and their implementation is expensive thus out of reach for many Zimbabweans in the absence of government support. Political ecology frames the study to bring out how socio-political factors have influenced selection and implementation or lack of implementation of these farming strategies (Vayda and Walters, 1999). The political ecology framework guides in understanding how the relationship between the socio-political environment and farming practices employed by the newly resettled farmers contributed to the slump in agricultural production.

After investigating the criteria used in allocating land and questioning the government's capability and sincerity in supporting newly resettled farmers, this research assessed the production levels of the farmers. The assessment was drawn on the basis of how sustainable these farming practices were, questioning whether they managed to increase production or they reduced the natural resource base hence impacting on the input-output ratios. The first principle on the use of farmers' knowledge, skills and techniques to ensure best use of the environment identified the practices employed by the newly resettled farmers and helped in understanding how these practices promoted an increase in agricultural production. The second principle enabled the researcher to understand the role played by the farmers in their attempts to address problems such as rain shortages and infertile and hostile soil types which obstructed increase in production. The third principle led to the understanding of the agricultural products that are being produced in Shangani by the black farmers; this helped in explaining their purposes of practicing agriculture in the region.

Fig 3.1 Agricultural Sustainability triangle



Adopted from Sustainable Agriculture Initiative, 2010¹⁸

Research design

This research is a case study research of the De Beers Shangani Ranch (Debshan ranch). The study sought to find out the new farming practices and strategies being used by the newly resettled farmers at the ranch. This study gives a vivid picture of land reform process and outcomes. It shows that the land reform resettled indigenous people and the white farmer retained part of the farm. The chosen area also brings out how productive or unproductive the said land owners have used land within similar geographical conditions. The uneven socio-political environment provides fertile ground for understanding the relation between politics, society and agriculture. Yin (1984) notes that case study research design investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life experiences, from an interpretive viewpoint Debshan case study clearly brings out how the new farmers have reduced their production challenges in a socially and politically stratified society and the strategies they employed also showing how effective they were in terms of increasing agricultural production. The Debshan case study enabled me to understand critically the outcomes of the FTLRP of 2000 so as to ascertain if the new farmers and their practices or their relations with the state and the white farmer have prejudiced agricultural production at Debshan. Using the Debshan case study I got to understand the FTLRP beneficiaries'

¹⁸ www.saiplatform.org

perspectives on the program. From their responses I got an in-depth understanding of the outcomes of the FTLRP at Debshan and linked it with the agricultural production slump.

Strengths of case study research design

The Debshan case study offered a multi-perspective analysis as it allowed collection of data from both the white farmers who owned vast tracts of land before the FTLRP at Debshan and the newly resettled black farmers involved in the land reform as well as other knowledgeable participants such as local authorities and agricultural extension officers. It allowed me to capture the voice of the marginalised groups including the poor and widowed farmers hence making the data engendered. Using the Shangani area I purposely selected participants from the Debshan proximity as they were knowledgeable of the socio-political and economic activities in the area. I interviewed the councillor who represented the local authority office as well as the ward development committee member who was knowledgeable about development projects that were implemented in the Debshan area. For a political perspective, I interviewed a member of the ZANU-PF district committee as well as opposition party members who live near the resettlement area. Extension officers who have worked with both the white farmer and the newly resettled farmer were interviewed for a technical perspective. The white farmer represented by management was interviewed, the contribution made the findings to be balanced as the voice of the minority was presented. The majority of the respondents were farmers from all walks of life and political divide Gender sensitivity was considered and both males and females were interviewed.

Weaknesses of case study research design

The dependence on Debshan ranch as a case study may lead to finding a single story which cannot be generalised as it might differ from other cases. It may be argued that a case study approach cannot provide a generalized conclusion as the results are only applicable to Shangani. However, the findings of this study can also apply to other areas under the same agro-ecological zoning. The broader themes of land reform, agricultural policy, farming systems and agricultural productivity will speak to similar issues faced by other post-colonial states undertaking land reform. The theories guiding this study do not specifically

speak in the Shangani context but they can speak on a wide variety of issues in areas where land reform was undertaken especially in a much politicized environment.

Population and sample

The population of Shangani is estimated to be around 3 845 (Central Statistics Office, 2008). The population of the study was 184 households which were resettled at the De Beers Shangani Ranch by the FTLRP. A sample of 20 participants was selected for this study and purposive judgemental sampling techniques were used. I selected the participants due to their knowledge on the land reform program and their current engagement in agriculture (Kumar, 1999 and Maree, 2007). Snow-balling technique was used in the study as the other participants referred me to more knowledgeable people in the community. My sample consisted of the white farmers at Debshan (represented by a management team), the newly resettled farmers, war veterans, women, agricultural extension service officers, local authorities such as councillors and Land Committee members. With this sample I was able to obtain a multi-perspective approach to land reform and agricultural production at Debshan. The sample selection was interviewed twice during the preliminary interviews to ensure that all the participants would provide the research with valid, trustworthy data.

The data for this study was collected from 20 respondents who were interviewed at least twice as it was an in-depth study which sought to gain an in-depth understanding on the topic at hand. The findings are gender sensitive as female respondents were included. However, the female respondents were less numerous than their male counterparts largely due to cultural beliefs which made males the head of households. In some areas women did not participate in the study because they said that the household head was not around and they were not comfortable with participating. Since the study was politically sensitive, they also feared to be victimized as the environment was patriarchal and politically sensitive. Majority-minority issues on racial basis were also addressed as the voice of the white farmer at Debshan was also heard. The contribution of the white farmer's voice enriched the study with a multi-perspective views on agricultural production after the FTLRP at Debshan.

Table 3.1 Respondents disaggregation by sectors

Sector	Respondents
Farmers	14
Local authorities	1
Technical extension services	4
Farmers union	1
Total	20

The majority of the respondents were farmers who included the white farmer and the newly resettled black farmers. Amongst the black farmers were war veterans who gave this study a political perspective of the land reform process. Local leadership contributed in the study, their contribution also enriched the study as they were representatives of the state. The voice of the technical extension services officers makes my research findings more acceptable as they are the key sector as far as farming strategies and practices are concerned. These extension officers gave out a balanced and informed perspective that falls between the views of the farmers and the state, their neutrality helped in my criticism as their responses criticised both the farmers and the state.

Data collection procedures

I used in-depth interviews as my main research method. I did 43 interviews with my 20 interviewees and some were interviewed twice or three times so as to obtain more data. I travelled to Shangani which is situated 42 km away from my home town Gweru to interview my participants. Since there is a protocol for outsiders seeking information, I sought permission to enter the area from the gatekeepers. I was given permission by the Ward 13 councillor, Mrs Fellenche Sikhosana, who turned out to be my first respondent. Using snow-ball sampling I was referred to other farmers like Mr Hospital Nkomo, the Chairman of the

Populars Resettlement Ward Development Committee (WADCO), Gogo Mpofu, a ZANU-PF politician, who seats in the Central Committee of the party in the Insiza District. I also engaged in interviews with one of the extension officers, Miss Chiseko of Agricultural Technical Extension Services (AGRITEX), who later co-ordinated my meetings with the other young and vibrant extension officers namely Mr Nxaba, who formerly worked for De Beers. Snowball sampling has been critiqued as producing biased results as respondents with common ideas and interests may recommend people who share the same ideas. However, this was not a concern with this set of respondents as they are public figures who were involved in the land reform process. Their interviews were important in understanding policy issues, government programmes and in gaining an overview of the area. Here snowball sampling facilitated interviews with people who were very important to the study at hand. I also interviewed two others who contributed anonymously and chose pseudonyms – Lloyd Jinjika and Marwei Mafirakureva due to fears of being victimized. With the information I got from the extension officer I then picked my other respondents and these were mainly ordinary farmers within the Debshan boundary who seemed to be knowledgeable and had an interest in participating in the research. Their interest in participating in the study made me accept their contribution as they sought to assist in resolving the problems they faced as new farmers on improving their agricultural production. Even though the research data was to be enriched by the contribution of the white farmer who was to be represented by Mr Edwards, the farm manager, I failed to have a contact interview with him due to tight schedules he had. I was referred to Mr Ommar, the workshop manager and he assisted me with some information for the research. On the part of the deficit of data from the white farmers' point of view, it was compensated for by Mr Nxaba, one of the AGRITEX officers who were formerly employed by De Beers soon after the FTLRP who enlightened me of Debshan farming systems and challenges.

My first contact with my respondents consisted mainly of introductions and orientation on the topic of study. I outlined what I expected from them as my respondents and I made known how I was going to interview them and we negotiated on the length of these interviews. I also built a rapport with the participants and I then went on to set up appointment with them and it was hectic and challenging as I had to interview participants

from different angles of the ranch on the same date. My data collection was intensive; I managed to make 13 visits to Shangani in a space of 5 weeks.

My interviews were unstructured and flexible in the sense that I could rephrase some statement as a way of elaborating for the benefit of the respondents. I had the freedom to change the structure, the wording or even the questions basing on the responses of the participants. In my conversation with the respondents I took notice of their verbal gesture and body language. In-depth interviews helped in documenting information on agricultural production after the FTLRP in Shangani. The probing, clarification and the rephrasing of questions allowed me to obtain rich and relevant data from the respondents. The research was enriched with real life experiences which were given out by the respondents due to the type of interviews used. Unstructured interviews create a bond between the interviewer and the respondent as it allows the respondent to go as wide as they can in telling their stories and experiences. My interviews were recorded on paper in point form while the voice recorder was running for those who gave me permission to record the interviews.

Construction of interview guide

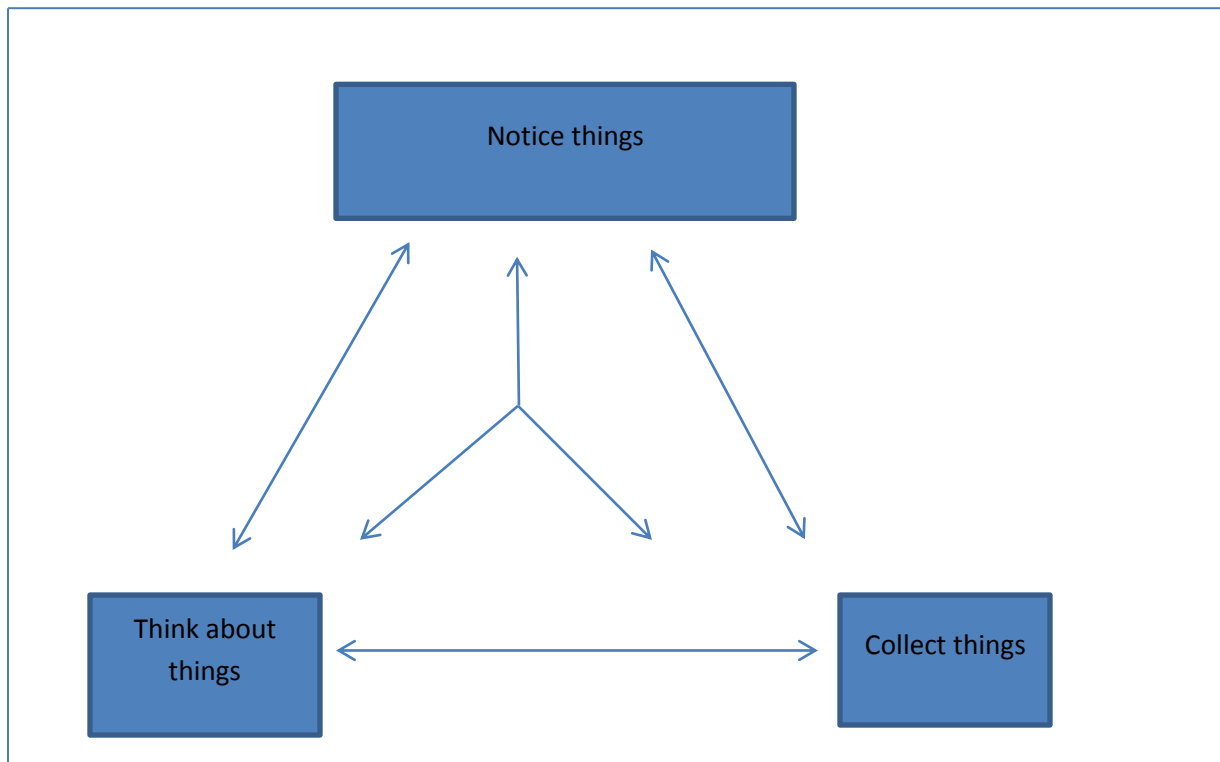
Kumar (1999) says that an interview guide is a loose list of questions which acts as a starting point for discussion. Kumar (1999) points out that the questions on the interview guide must raise issues around different areas of enquiry. In constructing the interview schedule I had to restrict myself to relevant aspects only and enquire on aspects that cover and answer the research questions. Kumar (1999) also notes that questions must be formulated in an effective manner so as to get the best quality of data. The questions must use simple language which avoids ambiguities and presumptions. Dirwai et al (2003) points that there are two types of questions namely open ended questions and closed questions.

My interview guide consisted of the key issues that I sought to find out for the research. The questions consisted of the three aspects namely i) the background of the farmers, how long they have been residents of Shangani, what they do for a living etc, ii) the involvement of farmers in agriculture, the farming strategies they use, their production levels, challenges they face etc, iii) the state-farmer relations, contributions by the state and how it is impacting on agricultural production etc. My interview questions were in English and were

also translated to both Shona and Ndebele as an advantage to respondents who preferred their mother' tongue. The questions were open-ended so as to provide in-depth information in the absence of interviewer's bias (Kumar, 1999).

Data analysis and presentation

Fig. 3.2 Qualitative Data Analysis Process adopted from (Maree 2007:100)



A model for qualitative data analysis from Maree (2007) on Figure 3.2 above was adopted in the study. Data collection is an on-going process and the model allowed the researcher to reflect, notice gaps and collect additional data for the research through follow-up interviews or by finding new respondents. Analysis of data from the conducted interviews was achieved by using the following data analysis strategies; content analysis which was used to identify and summarise the message content, discourse analysis which focused on the meaning of spoken words as words reveal source of power and dominance and how it is maintained and narrative analysis which interpreted the narratives generated from the interviews in search of commonalities and emerging themes (Maree, 2007). The study also adopted the Hills (2003) design presented below to link the answers to the research problem

and questions. Data was analysed, presented and arranged into thematic frames so as to identify the trends that point to theoretical understanding (Babbie, 2004). All the data from the interviews conducted was transcribed in verbatim and coded. Pieces of data were categorized by related concepts and were interpreted separately (Seale, 2004).

Table 3.1 Data Analysis Frame adapted from Hills (2003:1)

TASK	QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THE ANALYSIS PROCESS
Prepare data for analysis	What data has been collected for each research question or objective?
Go back to research questions	What did the study aim to do? What are the issues involved?
Go back to literature review	Who said what about your research focus? Whose work seems most important? Does your data seem to match/contradict the work of others?

Validity and Reliability of research findings

Rigour and validity of data was ensured by using purposive sampling techniques to select respondents who are strongly in a position to enrich the research with rich information on the land reform experiences and outcomes. As noted earlier on, my sample consisted of key people in as far as the land reform debate is concerned, namely the farmers, local leaders, agricultural extension officers as well as war veterans. I verified the knowledge levels of these participants before engaging into interviews with them. I checked if they owned a farm at Debshan, if they have been resident of Shangani for nothing less than 10 years and if they had any peculiar or fascinating story to tell about the land reform. Additionally I solidified the data by juxtaposing the findings from interviews with my own observations and interpretations.

Ethical considerations

As a researcher I adhered to research ethics during the data collection and presentation (Maree, 2007 and Kumar, 1999). My participants were at liberty to participate in the study. The participants gave me their informed consent to participate in my research and they signed the consent forms to show that they participated in the research out of their free will. I allowed participants to withdraw from the study at any time. Issues of confidentiality and anonymity were ensured and information from the interviews was only used for research purposes. Some of my participants chose to remain anonymous as they feared to be victimized as I was researching on a very sensitive issue especially after the August 2013 presidential elections. I was given permission to use the participants' names by some and the rest preferred pseudonyms. I ensured that any responses made by those remaining anonymous could not be traced back to them via any statements made, description of roles or by content of any statement.

Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed the reasons for the particular methods I used for data collection. I utilised qualitative methodologies as I sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the farming strategies used by the new farmers at Debshan. The case study approach was used to get an in-depth understanding of the area; the case study was selected on purpose due to its significance to the matter in discussion. A mixture of purposive and snowball sampling enabled me to obtain meaningful results from my in-depth interviews as only knowledgeable people were recruited to participate in the study. I rigorously interviewed only 20 people, but did so on multiple occasions and obtained rich data that surpasses any data I would have obtained from brief questionnaires or short interviews. Many of the interviewees were public figures and they appear by name here. Others chose to remain anonymous, which speaks volumes as to the contested nature of land reform and the much politicized milieu. The following chapter draws from these interviews and breaks the data down through the use of content analysis, discourse analysis and narrative analysis. The data findings will be presented thematically answering the research objectives of the study.

Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Analysis

Introduction

Chapter Four presents and discusses the findings of the study. It gives a situational analysis of the Debshan ranch looking at the household characteristics, geographical area characteristics as well as discussing the socio-political environment. The relationship between the new farmers and agriculture is explored and it shows that agriculture is part of the farmers' lives even though some farmers were not reliant on agriculture. The challenges faced by the new farmers are outlined and the new strategies adopted by the farmers are identified. The nexus between these strategies and agricultural production will be drawn as a way to ascertain if the new farmers' strategies have contributed to the production slump in the area. The socio-political environment is explored to see how it influenced the farmers as well as their agricultural production. Lastly the relationship between the state and the farmers is explored and it is concluded that the farmers were disgruntled by the services which the state rendered to them. With the little support they got from the state it was hard for them to realize their full potential in agriculture.

Situational Analysis: De Beers Shangani Ranch

Household characteristics

As I travelled into the core of the De Beers Shangani ranch I noticed that most of the households had at least 4 to 7 family members of which in most cases children constituted the large number. This is similar to the national average of 4.2 persons per household (Zim Stat, 2012). Most household heads live in urban areas where they are engaged in formal employment, while agriculture is practiced by women, children and hired workers. Apart from the concrete buildings inherited from the Oppenheimer family, the infrastructure was

mainly huts thatched with grass; each household had at least three huts and a small granary made from poles. The former white-owned homesteads were occupied by mostly war veterans and civil servants including the agricultural extension officers. New farmers' investment in farm infrastructure such as irrigation, boreholes, dip-tanks, paddocks and roads is very low. Investment in livestock is minimal as the households owned between 3 to 7 cattle, small numbers of goats, sheep and chicken ranging between 10 and 15. In fewer households, mainly those owned by the well-off people in the area, there were large herds of good breed cattle. In the fields, I observed that despite the fact that it was during the rains and planting season most of the farmers had not started cultivating yet. I was told that this was due to the lack of rain and the hot temperatures, which are not good for seed germination. A few households were preparing their fields and dry-planting while the rest waited for the rain.

Area characteristics

The area which covers Debshan ranch falls under a very hostile soil type which does not give crops and plants an enabling environment for growth (Interview, 15/12/13). The soil is lightly sandy and rocky and it makes it difficult to plant or cultivate seeds as ploughs and tractors cannot work properly. It is difficult for one to differentiate which one is the field and which one is the road as both the field and roads look like they are gravelled. The type of natural trees and vegetation are thorny bushes which show the status of rain water supply. Thorny trees show that there is limited water supply in the region and with the soil types it becomes difficult for intensive crop growth. The type of grass is thick, tall and soft and provides livestock with good grazing pastures. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 below shows the soil types and vegetation found out the Debshan ranch areas.

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 Shangani ranch in picture (photographs by author)



Socio-political atmosphere

Shangani falls under the Matebeleland province and is predominantly an Ndebele speaking area. However, it has been diluted by the land reform program that resettled others including the Shona people. The Matebeleland province has been seen as a dissident province since the formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party in 1999. Amongst the leaders in the area, most of them are Shona speaking Ndebele mainly affiliated to the ZANU-PF party. The environment in Shangani is politically polarized.

Overview of agricultural sustainability, farming practices and agricultural production at Debshan after FTLRP

After the Fast Track Land Reform Program at Debshan ranch, not only the land distribution was shaken but also the agricultural sector was re-arranged and re-defined. At Debshan ranch that had previously practiced livestock and wildlife ranching on its vast tracts of land which was estimated to be roughly 137 000 hectares of land, the tables were turned. The FTLRP had not only divided and sub-divided land between the whites and the blacks but ushered in a new phase in agricultural history. This phase can be termed as the battle for survival; the two groups of farmers were battling to survive as both their futures were bleak. The old farmers who previously owned large tracts of land had to adapt to the few hectares they were left with while the new farmers had to adapt to the large tracts of land they now owned. In this light the new farmers were euphoric and were envisioning higher levels of success as their thirst for land had been quenched by their government.

For the white farmer after the FTLRP, the future of commercial agriculture at Debshan was uncertain, noted Mr Ommar the workshop manager at Debshan ranch. To this effect Mr Ommar had this to say:

“Wildlife and livestock ranching is a very sensitive type of agriculture which is very demanding when it comes to the requirement... Debshan ranch had since the nineties specialized in game ranching and livestock rearing which was profitable as it produced for both the local market and the international market... after the series of droughts in the 1990’s crop production was reduced due to the climatic conditions

which turned to be unfavourable. Irrigation was practised and managed to curtail the mishaps caused by the water shortages and climatic changes”

Sustainability of agriculture after the FTLRP was challenged due to the minimal tracts of land with which the white farmer was left. Agricultural farming types like animal husbandry and wildlife ranching require large pieces of land for them to be sustainable (Interview, 14/12/13). For biodiversity reasons, animals of different species had to own their own piece of land far away from other species so as to balance the ecosystem. The old farmer lamented the amount of land he was left with, for livestock and wildlife ranching. It was inadequate for the farming systems to be sustainable noted the manager (Interview, 14/12/13). Firstly, the grazing areas were encroached by the new farmers hence disturbing the white farmer’s practice. The grazing areas which were highly admired as the grass was said to be a sweet veld¹⁹ which is very rich in minerals required for good growth of the cattle and wild animals (Interview, 11/12/13). After the FTLRP the conservation of grazing land was a bit challenged; the paddocking system is now not effective as the paddocks are not getting enough time to recover. Overgrazing has been recorded in various parts of the ranch as the large herd owned by De Beers estimated to be over 10 000 cattle is facing challenges with finding new grazing areas (Interview, 14/12/13).

The breeds of cattle at De Beers have deteriorated due to contamination from the new farmers’ cattle noted Mr Nxaba, an ex-Debshan ranch extension officer (Interview, 15/12/13). De Beers owns a variety of good breeds such as Simentawa, Friesland and Brahman which are healthy, fit and reproductive when compared to the new farmer’s breeds (Interview, 14/12/13). The breeds have been collected from various areas and they bring with them new genes which are modified so as to fit with the climatic conditions and geographical area. Those owned by the new farmers are just ordinary Afrikaaner breed cattle with little or no resistance to diseases and infections, he added on. Thus with the interaction between the new farmers cattle and De Beers cattle in the grazing areas or at the water sources, there is a great chance that the De Beers large herd were contaminated with diseases like foot and mouth. The new farmers do not dip their cattle regularly to kill the

¹⁹ Sweet veld is a special type of grass which is rich in nutrients required for proper growth of livestock mainly cattle (Interview with Miss Chiseko, 11/12/13)

ticks and other insects that suck blood and disturb the growth of cattle. Hence the white farmer is negatively affected by the diseases brought by the new farmers' cattle which, he sees as hindering the growth and production of his herds.

The wildlife sector has not been flourishing as it used to be due to challenges caused by the new farmers and the community at large. Firstly the numbers of the wildlife species mainly impalas, elephants, zebras, springboks etc. are declining yearly noted the manager. There is rampant poaching within the ranch. The poachers are believed to be mainly some of the new farmers who have resorted to hunting and Debshan ranch is their hunting grounds. It was noted by the manager that, "it is so disheartening when you see people sell game meat at the Shangani centre when the only possible source is Debshan ranch" (Interview, 14/12/13). The poachers will be having a freshly slaughtered beast after every three days and this shows how the population of these wild animals are being depleted. This is supported by Rukuni (2004) and Manjengwa (2006) who have posited that there is rampant poaching in the new resettlement areas where you see the new farmers drying game meat in their granaries.

The manager also noted that the community is not supporting the white farmer as they continue to rob him every day. He noted that despite the help the white farmer has given to them, "the new farmers remain unappreciative enough to bite the hands that feed them" (Interview, 14/12/13). His tone showed anger as he is saddened by the new farmers' behaviour towards wildlife ranching. De Beers also owns a fishing conservancy which used to have large shoals of all fish types. The poachers come with fish nets and they even took the smallest fish leaving the conservancy with no future. "We tried to bring in new fish so we can breed them and improve our fish population but the poachers do not make it any easier for us", he complained (Interview, 14/12/13).

Not only poachers are prejudicing De Beers but also the illegal miners known as the '*Amakorokoza*'. These illegal miners have also done harm to the ranches. In search of gold and other minerals, the *Amakorokoza* are digging anywhere they may suspect that there is gold and afterwards they do not fill in the hole. These holes have ended up trapping cattle and wild animals at Debshan. De Beers loses over 200 beasts annually to these death traps dug up by the illegal miners (Interview, 14/12/13). These miners also use fire to clear the

land before they use their metal detectors²⁰ around the ranch. These fires have destroyed the grazing area and trees around the ranch. It was noted that some time in 2001 fire burnt up to 19 elephant²¹. This however gives De Beers a low blow as it lost up to US\$3 million worth of livestock. Sustainability and productivity is now being disturbed by the illegal miners who come from the new farmers in the resettled areas.

New farming strategies adopted by De Beers after FTLRP

The farming practices and land use remained the same even though new strategies were implemented so as to maintain the agricultural productivity rates. Cattle ranching was improved by bringing in new breeds which were cross-bred so as to produce strong and resistant breeds, which paid well at the markets. Breeds like the Simentawa, Brahman etc. were introduced and some breeds were imported from various parts of the world. Genetic breeding of cattle was introduced and was done by the most qualified veterinary experts. Genetic breeding is a good strategy as it managed to create and breed even much stronger breeds that are resistant to any form of local infection or disease. By mixing breeds, De Beers and his neighbour Mr J R Goddard are arguably the best breeders of cattle in the region. These two white farmers continue to supply both local and international markets with quality cattle for beef and milk (Interview, 15/12/13).

Figure 4.3 A crossbred bull owned by De Beers (photograph by author, 2013)



²⁰ Metal detectors are machines which are used by *Amakorokoza* to detect minerals underground; they are effective only when they are used on a cleared surface.

²¹ www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=146

Even though paddocking was practised even before the FTLRP at Debshan, after the FTLRP it was practised intensively. Since the herds owned by De Beers were at risk of contracting diseases and infections, mating with the poor breed cattle and sharing the same grazing areas and water sources, it was decided that for De Beers to maintain a healthy and good breed, the interaction of their livestock with the new farmers' was to be controlled so paddocking system was the most effective strategy. By paddocking the cattle, De Beers managed also to control the grazing areas thus reducing overgrazing that was on the rise. The paddocking system was a strategy which managed to yield positive results as the farmer ended up maintaining their production of quality breeds which were in demand at the markets.

In order for De Beers herds to acquire enough grazing grass at the same time maintaining the natural base it was strategized that additional foddors must be introduced to feed the cattle since the sweet velds were being shared with new farmers and destroyed by the poachers and the *Amakorokoza*. Additional food was made from crops which were planted at the ranch mainly maize and other edible grains. The additional feeds also promoted good growth of the cattle; these feeds were also genetically modified so as to enrich the cattle with feeders that enabled them to grow healthy and fit. Using these feeders De Beers has managed to maintain his reputation of being the number one supplier of good breed cattle to the markets (Interview, 14/12/13).

Irrigation systems were improved and drip irrigation was used to water crops such as maize, sugar beans and sunflowers. These crops were mainly produced for the market as well as a buffer to offset grazing shortages for the cattle. The region is often hit by little or no rainfall and lengthy dry spells, which sometimes limits growth of adequate grazing grass for the cattle. As a strategic move inspired by climate changes in the region, crop cultivation was necessary but with a constant source of water as a pre-requirement for this move. With the capital owned by De Beers it was not much of a problem as he had enough funds to set up the irrigation system, pay up bills at the ZESA as well as maintaining and servicing the irrigation system (Interview, 13/12/13).

After losing large numbers of livestock to fire, ranch conservation practices were employed and this saw the setting up of fire guards in and around the ranch. The fire guards were to act as a cover that would not allow fires to spread and move from one area of the ranch to another. Up to date there has not been a record of an uncontained veld fire at Debshan. However this does not mean the illegal miners have stopped setting the ranch on fire but it means that the De Beers fire guards are effectively working as they help contain all the veld fires. The positive impact of the fire guards has enabled the growth of the conservancies as wildlife is no longer affected greatly by these fires (Interview, 18/12/13).

The relationship between agriculture and the newly resettled farmers at Debshan

The new farmers who were resettled at Debshan came from various backgrounds. Beneficiaries of land reform at Debshan included war veterans, civil servants, politicians and ordinary urban dwellers and communal farmers. As noted by one participant these people were involved and benefitted from the land reform because they wanted to own land as a way to feel independent from the former white colonialists (Interview, 9/12/13). Even though there were land reform models with A1 for small scale farm units and A2 for large scale farms the beneficiaries benefitted from any of these models even if they did not qualify due to socio-political factors that were at play. Most of these people had a subsistence farming background as they have once practised subsistence agriculture at their rural homes. With their knowledge of subsistence agriculture these were suitable for the A1 model which was for self-contained resettlement and was approximately 50 to 60 hectares of land designed to decongest communal areas (Chiremba and Masters, n.d)²².

From my observations, the relationship between the new farmers and agriculture had an impact on their production levels. When responding to my interview questions, a respondent noted that he is now a farmer not because of his wish but because of the hardships which makes one to engage in a multiple livelihoods activities for survival (Interview, 11/12/13). As he spoke I noticed that the farmer lacked that profound interest in his involvement in agriculture. Another respondent also brought out that in this era

²² Available at: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v7/v7i2a5.htm>

agriculture is not an activity to rely on but is used as an livelihoods enhancement activity which complement the main activity which is the white collar formal job (Interview, 10/12/13).

In an interview with the councillor of Ward 13, Mrs Felence Sikhosana (10/12/13) noted that most of the new farmers in her ward do not reside at their farms but they have people who work and watch over their farms. She added that;

“Abalimi abanengi kabahlali emaplot abo, abanye bayasebenza eGweru abanye koBulawayo. Balabo abantu obasebenzela bona bayapongu ukufona bebanikwa amainstructions”

“Most farmers do not reside at their plots. Some of them stay in Gweru while others live in Bulawayo. They have people who work for them but these people work on instructions”.

Such a situation brings out how these new farmers view agriculture, to most of them it is a fall back plan or activity they can do to complement their income from their formal jobs, this is evidenced by their absence at the farms and how they supervise their workers. Agriculture as an economic activity has been overshadowed as its benefits and profits are realized once a year unlike formal employment and have been made a safety net in case the formal employment does not provide remuneration. Mr Hospital Nkomo, a farmer who is also the chairman of Populars Resettlement Area Ward Development Committee also noted that as a worker at the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) he has relied on the income from agriculture during the period of economic hardships as NRZ was not paying employees on time. He added on that if NRZ was paying them on time he would not have engaged on agriculture as much as he is right now because you only get to enjoy your profits after harvesting (Interview, 11/12/13).

People like Gogo Mpofu, a District Central Committee member of ZANU PF in Insiza engages in agriculture only because she gets all the inputs, technical services and machinery because she holds a top echelon in the district structures of the party. She owns an A2 farm which is almost over 120 hectares but she is only using a small portion which I estimated to be less than 10 hectares. The other part of the farm had not been used and remains virgin

land. The 10 hectares she was using was part of the land that had been previously used by the white farmer. That piece of land had a water pump which was said to have been destroyed by thieves who wanted to steal it the previous 2012/2013 season. Her nephew Thandolwenkosi Moyo who came from Nkayi in 2006 to assist her noted that she is at an advantage to access ZANU-PF services and programs as she is the one who co-ordinates them (Interview, 15/12/13). He added saying 2009 she is one of the beneficiaries of the Farm Implementation and Mechanization program and is one of the few people who got tractors from the government program (Interview, 15/12/13). This however brings out the socio-political environment in which distribution of services and state support is administered in Shangani. When I asked him why they had not started planting he divulged that his aunt (Gogo Mpfu) has not been around as she was attending party meetings. He disclosed that,

*“ugogo nguyeye yedwa okwanisa ukusinika amainstructions ukuti silime
, maangekho siyamumelela ukuti apenduke”*

“Gogo Mpfu is the only person who gives them instructions when and where to cultivate and in her absence they cannot make any decisions”.

In response to a question which asked if agriculture was their main source of income and livelihood the majority clearly enlightened me that they relied on their formal jobs which provided them with remuneration on a monthly basis. One respondent notified that for income and livelihoods in her household she relied on her husband’s salary and proceeds from their illegal mining activities (interview, 10/12/13). She pointed out that agriculture also contributed to the household’s income and livelihoods but was not the main source. This parallels the responses by Gogo Mpfu who noted that she relied on grants and allowances she got from ZANU-PF.

In an interview with Casper Funyana and Siboneni Chikide of plot 14, I got a different perspective as they noted that they relied on agriculture for survival. These respondents highlighted the reality that despite the fact that agriculture was not thriving, they continued to engage in it since it was where they got food, money for school fees for their five children and money for medication for their old mother who lived with them. Facing challenges with low production, shortages of funds, lack of machinery amongst other

factors they persevered as they had no other source of income and livelihoods. This however brings out an image that some households relied on agriculture even though it was not paying off hence making it a main source of income and livelihoods.

Challenges faced by the new farmers after the FTLRP at Debshan

The new farmers at Debshan have faced a myriad of challenges in their endeavours to increase their agricultural production. Shangani has a rocky soil type which receives little rainfall ranging between 450mm-650mm per annum, high temperatures and frequent dry spells (Interview, 12/12/13). These conditions have impeded productive agriculture as the new farmers level of understanding agriculture are limited to small grain crops such as maize, peanuts, groundnuts, sugar beans, sunflower to mention but a few. Types of agriculture such as cattle ranching and wildlife rearing are not known to them. After the FTLRP at Debshan, these new farmers having faced some challenges in farming adopted new farming strategies as a way to counter the obstacles that obstructed them from realising the highest potential of their farming.

With the little knowledge they had, the new farmers went on to pursue simple subsistence farming of rain-fed small grain crops such as maize, groundnuts, peanuts, green beans etc. Despite the fact that subsistence farming was not suitable for the region and that if it was to be practiced it had to be under irrigation, the new farmers were euphoric and overzealous, and went on to practice farming of small grain crops. My study shows that farmers' experience and skills is a strong predictor of good performance. From my observations I noticed that they did not have much say on the issue as the state provided them with inputs such as seeds, fertilizer and pesticides. In their engagement in farming rain-fed small grain crops they faced hardships with shortages of water as the rainfall is often unreliable and could not introduce irrigation due to financial challenges. With the soil type which does not store water for a long time, the seeds were often wasted as the conditions were not favourable for germination (Interview, 13/12/13). The use of fertilizers would have improved their production levels. Most of the new farmers have complained that from using fertilizers they have often destroyed their crops as they noted that fertilizers 'burn' the

crops. They further explain that in the absence of rainfall most of their crops will get dehydrated as a result of the use of fertilizers (Interview, 11/12/13). Most farmers have been discouraged to use fertilizers as it continually burns their crops at budding stage.

Increased agricultural production is also hindered by the lack of machinery amongst the new farmers. Unlike the old farmers who were financially well-off and could afford to install irrigation schemes, the new farmers had to suffer from the fate of their financial capabilities. With the simple ox-drawn ploughs they used, they could not expand their farm. In this light you find out that out of at least 60 hectares, a farmer could use not more than 10 hectares. By not fully utilising the land they owned, the farmers failed to achieve the maximum potential of the land hence failing to improve their production levels. This supports Zikhali (2008) who posited that the new farmers' production was challenged by their lack of machinery which reduced the size of their cultivated areas.

In as much as they wanted to follow their predecessor, the white farmers who mainly specialized in livestock rearing and wildlife husbandry, the new farmers lacked the financial backing as well as the technical know-how in such types of agriculture. In a bid to increase their production in the livestock sector, they went on to practice simple livestock husbandry focusing on small quantities of cattle. Despite the fact that they owned low quality breeds, the farmers faced challenges such as water sources and dip tanks for treating their cattle so as to produce quality cattle for the markets mainly the Cold Storage Commission (CSC). A respondent noted that they engaged in livestock production because everyone was now rearing animals (Interview, 18/12/13). Most of these farmers kept livestock as a way to show that they are wealthy. Cattle in the history of Zimbabwe have been used as a store of wealth and status display, so that the farmers enjoy rearing cattle beyond their cash value (Chawatama et al, 2005). Cattle as an investment could be used as a buffer when facing challenges like inputs shortages; the farmers could sell one or two beasts to finance the purchase of inputs. However the farmers faced challenges with ticks and diseases like foot and mouth sickness which attacked and weakened their livestock. With the unavailability of dip tanks and veterinary services they often lost much more than they got from rearing cattle.

The new farmers farming strategies and practices after FTLRP at Debshan

At Debshan, agricultural production is still at critical levels as the farmers' have not yet attained their highest potential. These newly resettled black farmers at Debshan are not fully utilizing their land as most of them are only cultivating less than a quarter of their total land. This has been attributed to by an assortment of factors which include unreliable rainfall, hostile soil types, agro-ecological conditions, financial challenges, lack of machinery as well as shortages in farming skills and techniques. In response to such challenges, the farmers with advice from extension officers have come up with various strategies which include conservation farming, dry planting, use of hand sprays, use of fertilizers, irrigation schemes, use of tractors, growing of small grain drought resistant crops. The list is endless. These new farming practices and strategies have impacted differently on agricultural production rates of the region. As noted by Chamunorwa (2010) the strategies and farming practices adopted in region four and five have dismally failed to succeed due to the climatic conditions and soil types. This has been contested to by the findings of this study as it tell a different story that makes some of the strategies employed successful and productive. These successful strategies include use of fertilizers, farming machinery and irrigation schemes.

With the already mentioned climatic conditions, the farmers had to adopt conservation farming techniques and strategies which would lead to an increased production while preserving the natural resource base. Informed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization and Irrigation Development and the extension officers, the farmers adopted conservation agriculture popularly known as the *Gatshopo*²³. *Gatshopo* is a special strategy that is suitable in areas of low rainfall and high temperatures; this resource-saving crop production technique preserved soil moisture by reducing disturbances which would lead to loss of soil moisture (Interview, 11/12/13). This water management practise discouraged the use of ploughs as they would disturb the soil and result in massive loss of soil moisture.

This strategy saw farmers digging holes in the field where they would cultivate their seeds without disturbing areas where seeds will not be cultivated. These holes would then be fertilized with manure to increase fertility of the soil so as to increase land production. This strategy could be used in dry planting or even when relying with rainfall. With *Gatshopo*,

²³ Gatshopo is a farming strategy designed to reduce soil moisture loss. The farmer only dig holes where he/she intends to cultivate seeds and leaves the rest of the soil undisturbed.

the farmers would reduce the use of inputs such as seeds and fertilizers as they would only target on the holes dug. Wastage of seeds was reduced and a 22.5kg bag of seeds would cover up to one hectare which was far more conserving than using ploughs and tractors (Interview, 13/12/13).

Gatshopo also known as “*dhiga udye*” which means dig holes to produce enough food produce, the new farmers managed to increase their production as soil moisture and fertility was not disturbed. This strategy also affected production levels as it saw the reduction of cultivated areas. One of the farmers noted that:

“*Gatshopo* is now similar to dig and die because most farmers are dying after working tirelessly in the fields. Most farmers are suffering from ailments such as HIV, heart diseases, sugar diabetes and such ailments do not allow them to engage in strenuous manual labour”.

“*Gatshopo iyi yakutoita kunge dhiga ufe nokuti varimi vazhinji varikufa mushure mekupera kwechirimo. Varimi vazhinji vanorwara nezvigwere zvakaita semukondombera, chirwere chemoyo neshuga saka kuti varime nzvimbo refu nebadza zvinovauraya*”.

What they argued is that *Gatshopo* is stressful as one has to dig holes with hoes on a large area; it is most stressful in this era of numerous diseases like HIV/AIDS, diabetes, tuberculosis and heart problem. It is claimed that most of the *Gatshopo* farmers who die just after the farming season are hurt by hard labour, which gives this illness a favourable condition to become hostile to the body (Interview, 22/12/13). From their responses I noticed that this conservatory strategy was not fully accepted by the new farmers hence leading to cultivation of smaller portions of land. The side effects of practising *Gatshopo* has affected production levels as the farmers at Debshan are now cultivating small portions of land hence harvesting less yields. With the unavailability of proper health delivery services, the farmers were highly affected by the implications of *Gatshopo* on the new farmers.

In the region, the main challenge that has hindered agricultural production has been unreliable rainfall. To counter this challenge, the new farmers at Debshan engaged in dry

planting. Dry planting is a farming practise which saw farmers cultivating their seeds before the rain fall. This farming strategy must be done strategically as miscalculations would lead to wastage of inputs and labour, noted an extension officer (Interview, 15/12/13). The farmers would cultivate their seeds at least two or three weeks before the dates they expected rain to fall. If/when the rain fell, it would find the seeds almost germinating and the rainfall will help and nurture the seeds at germination stage and provide a necessary and conducive environment for crop growth. Dry planting also allowed farmers to cultivate without being rushed and challenged by rainfall.

Dry planting is a risky strategy that can positively and negatively affect production levels of the new farmers. 'In cases where there are shortages of inputs it is not advised to implement dry planting as the chances of receiving rainfall in Shangani are erratic', noted an extension officer (Interview, 14/12/13). With the water challenges faced by the farmers, dry planting could lead to wasting seeds and labour at the same time (Interview, 13/12/13). However, it was noted that in seasons when rain falls on the predicted time-frames, dry planting has improved the yields of the new farmers (Interview, 12/12/13). With this practise the application of fertilizers will not destroy the crops as they will apply them after the rains when the soils are still watery. Basing on the responses given by the extension officers, dry planting is a good practise which can lead to increased yields but the farmers tend to ignore the advice from the young and knowledgeable extension officers. I would like to believe that if the farmers relied on the extension officers for advice pertaining when to dry-plant they would harvest more than they are at the present.

The new farmers also embraced new technologies such as the correct and consistent use of fertilizers as a way to increase their production. As noted by Manjengwa et al (2013) the maize yield is directly proportional to the fertilizers used and this goes in tandem with the sustainable agriculture conceptual framework which encourages the use of practices and technologies that do not have undue harm to the environment. The new farmers used fertilizers to increase their yields mainly on maize which demanded fertilizers more than the other crops. Even though the farmers faced challenges with accessing the fertilizers due to the way state support, in the form of inputs, were distributed favouring the top ranked ZANU-PF farmers and their connections, they made their effort to get enough for their crops. A respondent stated that during the economic crisis they had to buy fertilizers from

the black market²⁴ as the state parastatal Grain Marketing Board (GMB) could not provide them (Interview, 13/12/13). The prices were exorbitant and saw farmers selling part of their livestock so as to raise money to purchase these necessary inputs.

The use of fertilizers received stiff opposition as some farmers argued that since the period 2003 and 2006 it has been burning²⁵ their crops. In situations of rainfall shortages, the use of fertilisers was not advisable as it resulted in burnt crops. It was said that fertilizers would in a way dehydrate the crops as it needed water or a moist environment to work; it went on to hijack the water from the crop thus leaving it with no water for its own survival. Fertilized crops would turn yellowish and would wilt till they dry hence resulting in reduced production. In response to such a challenge, the new farmers adopted soil fertility farming practices and agreed not to use fertilizers as a way to reduce the inputs uptake by cutting down their fertilizers quantities. Even though it is a proven fact that fertilizers increases the maize yields, without the advice from the extension officer the new farmers went on to stop using fertilizers which they saw as an impediment to their increased agricultural production. Even though FAO (2006) has noted that lands in Zimbabwe are infertile and require regular fertilizer application, Chamunorwa (2010) advised the reduction of fertiliser uptake. Zikhali (2010) also pointed out that most newly resettled farmers resorted to using manure as it is organic and causes no harm in the ecosystem. This parallel with the conceptual framework which pushed for strategies which do not in any way destroy the soil fertility as well as cause undue harm to the environment.

Reduction of fertilizer uptake and going organic was deemed a good strategy which conserves the soil but it has no suitability with the soil types in Shangani. The soil types in Shangani are not fertile enough to increase crop production. Mrs Banda, one of the successful farmers at Debshan however advised the use of fertilizers is needed to improve the soil fertility (Interview, 13/12/13). These notions move in the same direction with FAO (2006) which noted that the soil types in Zimbabwe are infertile and the use of fertilizers is highly encouraged so as to improve the agricultural production levels. Thus the strategies of reducing the uptake of fertilizers at Debshan had a negative impact on the production levels

²⁴ Black markets are an informal and illegal market which sells goods at a very exorbitant price taking advantage of the unavailability or high demand of the goods.

²⁵ Use of fertilizer in the times of rain shortages often led to the crops wilting, turning yellowish and eventually drying.

of the new farmers. The option of using manure in the form of cow dung instead of fertilizers has reduced the new farmers' yields by half and with the deteriorating soil fertility it can be predicted that in 5 years' time the yields will have decreased with a very significant percentage (Manjengwa et al, 2013; Interview, 18/12/13).

This strategy can be argued to have been inspired by economic as well as political factors in Shangani as most farmers could not afford to buy fertilizer and the state sponsored inputs were only benefited by a few. This takes us back to the theoretical framework of political ecology which notes that political factors can affect agricultural production. However farmers who increased their fertilizer usage manage to triple their production when compared to those who reduced their fertilizer uptake. This however concurs with a Nigerian study by Liverpool-Tassie et al (2011) which posits that levels of education and knowledge of the farmers have inspired them to choose practices that have constrained agricultural production.

By embracing new technologies the farmers also went on to adopt the use of machinery like tractors and combine harvesters. Since only a few farmers at Debshan owned tractors and other farming machinery the majority had to hire tractors for farming. As mentioned before, the farmers were not fully utilizing their land because they had challenges with acquiring machineries which would increase the hectares they cultivated. In this light the low production levels were amounted to their use of simple and traditional farming techniques and tools. Moyo and Nyoni (2013) believe that agricultural production in the new farms is constrained by low levels of technology and machinery uptake as 49% of the FTLRP beneficiaries in Zimbabwe rely on ox-drawn traction and hand weeding.

The farmers at Debshan opted for hiring tractors as a way of increasing their acreage, which would lead to increased production. The farmers noted that to hire a tractor they had to pay US\$80/day on top of 25 litres of diesel per hectare. As expensive as it may be, the farmers spent a fortune in a bid to increase their production which had been free-falling since 2003. Using tractors and farm machinery the new farmers have managed to reach out up to 20 or 30 hectares of land (Interview, 13/12/13). Utilization of a large portion of land has enabled the farmers to increase their production levels.

However not all the farmers adopted this strategy some continued using their traditional farming techniques such as ox-drawn ploughing. These farmers could not afford to hire or purchase farm machinery; they also failed to benefit from the Farm Implementation and Mechanization Program of 2009. In an interview with an Ndebele, non-ZANU-PF farmer I was convinced that the political environment in Shangani had an influence on the well-being of the farmers (Interview, 22/12/13). Most of the struggling farmers were Ndebele-speaking and were not ZANU-PF supporters. One respondent noted that they are now forced by circumstances to support ZANU-PF so that they can benefit from the programs that have in the past only benefit ZANU-PF supporters (Interview, 15/12/13).

The use of tractors and other heavy machinery has paid off especially at farms where irrigation has been implemented. The farmers with irrigation are able to use tractors as they have adequate watering facilities unlike the majority of the farmers at Debshan. However some farmers have lamented that they are not financially secure enough to own or even to hire a tractor to use in their fields. Casper Fuyana noted;

‘abalimi abanengi bayaswela imali eyekhuti baboleke amatractors ekusebenzisa. Inkulumende ayiniki abalimi laba uncedo ngematractors okusebenzisa noma imali yekutenga izilimiso’.

Casper Fuyani lamented that most of the new farmers do not have money to hire tractor as they are working in the civil service and the government does not help them in any way. Suffering from the same fate is Hospital Nkomo who emphasized that the few farmers who benefited from the Farm Implementation and Mechanization Program of 2009 are not helping the other farmers in the area. In the light of these responses it simply shows that most of the farmers rely on ox-drawn traction which limits them coverage of large portions of land hence limiting them. This however concurs with Mbereko (2010) who argued that lack of farming equipment was a setback to agricultural production.

What hindered the new farmers to succeed in the livestock sector was their lack of dip tanks for treating their cattle. The infrastructural developments in the area has been lagging behind since independence as the area is socially disadvantaged and is suffering from

internal colonization from the Shona-led government (Mabhena, 2010). The new farmers adopted a number of strategies including the use of hand sprays to treat their livestock. Hand sprays for cattle treatment were introduced in response to the challenges the farmers have been facing as a result of shortages of dip tank services. In a 30-40 km radius, only one dysfunctional dip tank was located at the Populans Resettlement Area. It was said that it ceased to operate after the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority turned off the power that was used for water pumping due to debts and arrears. This however shows how the government neglected and marginalised the Matebeleland provinces due to political reasons as the province has become an opposition province in Zimbabwe. This is supported by Mabhena (2010) who posits that Matebeleland has experienced little sustained agricultural developments. The farmers could not afford payment of the debt which was estimated to be around US\$3,700, so they improvised and resorted to the use of hand sprays as a technique and strategy to protect their livestock from ticks and parasites as well as improving the qualities of their livestock.

Using the Shangani river as a water source for their livestock was a necessary strategy adopted by the new farmers, but however a hectic and costly process. The farmers now had a constant source of water for their livestock but the long distances the cattle had to travel estimated to be over 28 km a day were hectic for both the livestock and the farmers. Even though the livestock got enough water to drink, the long distances affected the quality of their livestock (Interview, 13/12/13). Especially for those who sold their cattle to CSC for beef, the quality of the meat would not attract many customers as the quality would be sub-grade because of the strained muscles due to long distances. The long distances as noted were not safe as the farmer would meet some challenges and dangers such as attacks from lions, hyenas, and other wild animals such as snakes (Interview, 13/12/13). The cattle were also prone to theft or general loss along the long trips to the water sources.

To suit the climatic conditions and soil types, the extension officers advised the new farmers to practice crop production of small grain drought tolerant crops like sorghum, millet and rapoko. These drought tolerant crops would thrive in the area as they demanded little rain for growth; even with the hostile soil types it was positive that the farmers would harvest better than they did on maize. This strategy was not adopted by all farmers at Debshan as there is no other market for these crops except the GMB, which was having

challenges with paying the farmers on time. Others argued that since they were producing for consumption and not the market, it made no sense for them to produce millet and rapoko whilst they eat *sadza* from maize and not rapoko and millet. Hence this strategy has been implemented by a few farmers and as noted by the extension officers, the farmers are harvesting better tonnages as compared to those engaging in maize production (Interview, 13/12/13).

Cultivation of drought resistant crops at Debshan has increased production of the few farmers implementing it. These farmers are producing sorghum, millet and rapoko which are easy to grow and maintain. These crops do not require much effort of the farmer as they can grow naturally requiring little weeding and tendering. Farmers who cultivated these drought tolerant crops have managed to produce much and their involvement in this farming system has turned to be profitable and sustainable. However this crop is not the farmers' favourite as the farmers are producing for their consumption and not for sale.

'Sadza remapfunde haringotiitire saka mhunga, zviyo nemapfunde zvatinenge tarima tinotengesa kuGMB uko kwatinowanawo chimari'

'Meal made from sorghum and millet is not their favourite, they only produce it to sell it at the GMB'

Premised on this assertion most farmers decided not to cultivate the most suitable crops due to their obsession with maize cultivation. The farmers fear that if they do not produce the staple meal they will end up having their families go to bed hungry. With a government that does not provide them with food, they have learnt to rely on their production for food security in their households. Hence this has limited their growth and agricultural production in the semi-arid region of Shangani as they continue to cultivate maize which is not suitable for the climatic condition.

Water and rainfall challenges were addressed by introducing irrigation systems to water the crops, mainly maize, sugar beans and sunflowers. Drip irrigation was developed by the farmers as it was seen to be the most suitable and cheap irrigation system. The drip irrigation would cover up to an area of 20 hectares and was most ideal for the A2 farmers who owned over 100 hectares of land. This practise in conjunction with the use of fertilizers

would enable the farmers to harvest more yield than ever as the soils will be fertilized and moistened by the water. Drip irrigation allowed an all year round cultivation of cash crops like tomatoes, green beans, onions, carrots amongst others. All year round cultivation would increase the new farmers' production levels when compared to the rainfall relying practice. This strategy was however only implemented by those who received government support and the well-off farmers who could afford to build irrigation structures and to buy water pumps as well as a transformer which was needed to power the water pumps. Financial incapacity discouraged the rest of the poverty-stricken farmers from using irrigation as a strategy to increase their agricultural production and sustainability. The above-mentioned statement shows how socio-political factors differentiate the farmers, their farming practices as well as their production levels.

State support and agricultural production at Debshan

After halting the land invasions in 2003, the state promised people that it was going to support and create a conducive environment for increased agricultural production. As a way to empower its newly resettled masses the state was obliged to avail resources and services that would help and nurture the new farmers to become successful commercial farmers. The former 'food basket' was to resuscitate its agricultural sector and reclaim its position in the region. All this was only possible if the relationship between the state which is the number one stakeholder and the new farmers was like the mutual interdependence of fish and water. The farmers would be nothing without the state's support and at the same time the state would rely on the farmers who would produce for the nation as well as the export market.

The situation on the ground at Debshan tells a different story all together. During the early stages of the FTLRP, the new farmers were promised milk and honey but in reality they were dumped in an alien land and forsaken. To the new farmers, increased agricultural production in the new farms as the claimed prognosis by the state soon became a half-truth statement. The current situation at the new farms can be attributed to the relationship these new farmers have with the state. Socio-political factors in the area also bring out the relationship between the state and the farmers in Shangani.

As they were new farmers, who did not have any expertise in agriculture on a large piece of land they had to rely on the state to help them during their budding stage. As expected by

the farmers, the state was to provide the following support and services namely information and education, technical services and advice, inputs, machinery, credit facilities, secured tenures, improved infrastructure, markets, enabling environment in the form of supporting laws and agricultural policies to mention but a few. In discussions with the new farmers it came out that the absence of these essentials has extremely affected the production levels in Shangani and elsewhere. The farmers admitted that their relationship with the state was souring and such was not good as it affected their access to services and their production levels.

At Debshan, as pointed out by the new farmers; information and education services have not been provided by the state. The new farmers are often misinformed about the climatic changes, weather forecasts, farming skills and strategies amongst other factors (Interview, 18/12/13). As noted in the agricultural sustainability conceptual framework guiding this study, education of the farmers is an important aspect. Farmers must be educated so as to attain new knowledge which will help them in choosing the most sustainable and profitable skills and strategies that would help in increasing their production (Pretty, 2008). As noted by the majority of the farmers, most of them did not have any knowledge whatsoever in relation to agriculture. It was cemented by Zikhali (2008) who notes that public extension services agents were not able to supply extension services like farmer education and training. At Debshan the majority of farmers were starting from scratch and it was problematic for them to be fully involved in agriculture without being trained by experts. This goes back to the socio-political setting in the area, as an opposition province with a large number of Ndebele speaking people; it has been marginalised to the extent of being denied to access services like education and training.

Without receiving proper education from experts it led the farmers into misdiagnosing the problems they faced in as far as agriculture was concerned. From my observation the lack of education and information affected to a greater extent the levels of production of the new farmers. In an interview with Mrs Angeline Dube I got to see how lack of information and education was affecting production rates of the new farmers. She noted with annoyance that she no longer used fertilizer because it is in many cases burning their crops especially in time when there is no rain (Interview, 23/12/13). In this light their lack of knowledge in farming systems has resorted to their eliminating one of the most essential inputs. Their

diagnosis has resulted in harvesting less than they should have if they had used fertilizers. Jeanette Manjengwa et.al (2006) pointed out that maize yields are directly proportional to fertilizer used, thus not buying a US\$35 bag of fertilizer would reduce your production by 500kg. The lack of capacity to educate the new farmers in Shangani on the part of the government has led to the choosing of strategies and practices that hinder growth and improvement in agricultural production.

An interview with Miss Chiseko, an AGRITEX officer insisted that the state has provided the new farmers with information, education and training. Through the AGRITEX which is a state wing which focuses on training and assisting farmers with information and education, the state has shown its political will in supporting the new farmers. She went on to say;

“Before the FTLRP at Debshan, the farmer (Mr Oppenheimer) employed his own agriculture technical advisors who advised him on farming strategies and practices that were suitable with the weather conditions. After 2003, AGRITEX officers were deployed to cover the new resettlement areas so as to give contact assistance to the newly resettled farmers”

She noted that the problem is with the new farmers especially the war veterans who seem to be above the law. In her conception I found out that the farmers themselves are not willing to be informed and educated by most AGRITEX officers due to their age groups as most of them were still in their mid-thirty as well as the socio-political environment that has brought about power dynamics whereby these ZANU-PF militants see themselves as more important than the government experts. As alluded to in Chapter two, Mbereko (2010) notes that government departments like AGRITEX and AREX are conducting training sessions. However, the only weakness is that there is no policy which makes the classes compulsory for all farmers. This explains why some farmers like war veterans have often refused to attend such training sessions.

Mr Nxaba, another young vibrant AGRITEX officer who was formerly employed by De Beers before the FTLRP gave the author a brief introduction on AGRITEX. AGRITEX as a wing of the government works under the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization, Irrigation and Development. Its major role is to disseminate information and agricultural technology

to both commercial and communal farmers. AGRITEX was later divided into four wings namely, i) Mechanization, ii) Livestock Production, iii) Irrigation and iv) Crop production. These four wings are working with the new farmers supporting them so as to realise an increase in agricultural production. He noted that departments like the District Development Fund (DDF) are also supporting the farmers with technical support in the form of education and information.

The new farmers however complained that the state is not giving them any training and information on agriculture. They noted that the knowledge they used was the little knowledge they had learnt from their subsistence experiences and are improvising when they meet challenges in their pursuit to improved production. They however acknowledged the presence of AGRITEX, AREX and DDF officers about whose job purpose they had a reasonable idea. They argued that the extension officers have been letting them down as they are not committed to their job. One of the impoverished household who chose to remain anonymous lamented that they only got contact with these AGRITEX officers once a year (Interview, 16/12/13). They believed that the reason why they never get to see these officers at their households is that they are poor and won't have a bribe to give them as a token of appreciation. It was noted that people of top echelons in the ward were graced with numerous visits from these extension officers. They lamented that assistance is given to those who are well-off while the needy and poor were deprived from accessing these government support services and programs (Interview, 16/12/13).

In so far as state support on educating and informing the new farmers is concerned the state as the number stakeholder has been and is still playing a pivotal role. The stagnancy and drop in agricultural production can be attributed to both the new farmers and the agricultural extension officers who are blaming each other. While the new farmers blamed the AGRITEX officer for being lazy and lacking commitment in their job, the extension officers are blaming the farmer for refusing to listen to them. It was argued by the extension officers that since we started working with 'these people' they have underestimated our knowledge because we are younger than them. It makes it so hard for them to take advice from someone young enough to be their grandchildren.

A Shona idiom says, *Mazano marairanwa* meaning that advice is something you can get from anyone despite of their age or qualification, noted Mr Lloyd Jinjika a researcher at AGRITEX (Interview, 16/12/13). From my observation I also noted that language barriers might be the root cause of the farmer-extension officer disputes. Three out of four of these extension officers were Shona speaking people who did not even attempt to learn Ndebele the common language in the area. It seems likely that there was a conflict of interest in the way they advised, assisted and serviced the Ndebele-speaking new farmers at Debshan. Hence in the debate on state's support systems on training and information to the new farmers, I would argue that the state has played its part to show its commitment to support the new farmers even though there are a few hiccups encountered along the process.

With the size of the Debshan resettlement, four extension service officers would not have been enough to give the new farmers full support. If the state was fully committed to support the new farmers would have increased the number of officers working in the area. It however goes back to the land reform program which was driven by an ideological vision that is much more difficult to implement on the ground. Education and training services have not been universally accessed or given to the farmers by the state and if it was given it was rendered in an uneven socio-political environment which benefitted only a few.

In a number of studies by Mbereko (2010), Zikhali (2008) and Matunhu (2011) the newly resettled farmers received inputs from the state departments like AGRITEX and GMB amongst others. This is an epitome of what happened at Debshan after the FTLRP, the state played a very crucial role in availing farming inputs to the farmers as most of the beneficiaries were civil servants who could not save up money to buy inputs, the state had to support them with inputs. The farmers noted that inputs like maize seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc. were provided to the new farmers by the state even though in small quantities. The farmers have received at least a 20 kg bag of seeds on a 'one size fits all' model ignoring the land sizes the farmers owned. Complaints were made that even though inputs were availed, the first batch was always accessed by the well-off positioned members of the community (Interview, 13/12/13). This links with the clientillistic networks that were argued to have been rampant in the land allocation and resource distribution (Hammer, 2005; Marongwe, 2008; Zamchiya, 2011).

Some unfortunate farmers grieved that they did not benefit much from these initiatives. All they got was a 20kg bag of maize seeds which could only be used for less than a hectare when using conservation farming techniques (Interview, 18/12/13). Mr Nxaba, explained that using conservation farming techniques like *Gatshopo*, a hectare demands something like 22.5kg of maize seed. In this regard the support rendered by the state was minimal and did not meet the needs of the farmers (Interview, 11/12/13). Since most of the farmers both A1 and A2 owned up to 60 hectares and 150 hectares respectively, the inputs provided by the state limited them to utilizing a small piece of land. Other farmers had to complement what they received from the government with maize seeds from their granaries to reach out up to at least 5 to 10 hectares noted Mr Nxaba. The lack of substantial support from the government also had an effect on their production levels. Most farmers produced little as they were utilizing a few hectares based on the input support the state was providing.

Marwei Mafirakureva, an extension officer argued that there was nepotism in the distribution of inputs (Interview, 15/12/13). Cronies and their supporters benefitted more than the ordinary people in Shangani and specifically at Debshan. It is argued that even the land redistribution process itself was characterized with rampant patronage as most influential war veterans, District Administrators; top echelon ZANU-PF cronies, got white owned farm houses and fully mechanized A2 farms. At Debshan since all farming input programs were ushered in by ZANU-PF, people who were at the top of the list were mainly people with high ranks in the party structures (Interview, 12/12/13). These highly ranked ZANU-PF supporters benefitted more than their counterparts who were often complaining about the inputs distribution criteria.

The program for distribution of inputs at Debshan is often hijacked by the political big-wigs who will use it to gain political patronage. Despite the fact that it should be spearheaded by the extension officers who know who is in need and who is not at Debshan, ZANU-PF big-wigs hijack this government initiative aiming at supporting everyone at Debshan and ends up being a crony accumulation initiative. From interviews I conducted, I have scaled responses from the extension officers and the farmers and have noticed that it is indeed true to say that there was cronyism and nepotism in the distribution of inputs. It can be evidenced from a statement that was given by a respondent that the highly ranked are at an advantage to access services and resources from the state as all the programs come through

their hands (Interview, 11/12/13). Another extension officer further noted that whoever was distributing inputs had a long list with ZANU-PF top members at the top while the majority of the people would follow at the bottom. These findings concurs with Marongwe (2008; 2011) and Zamchiya (2011) who have argued that the land reform program and process has been carried out through clientilistics networks superintended by ZANU-PF for its political survival.

From ground level, the state is impressed that it is supporting the farmers with inputs to improve their production levels. But from bottom up view the newly resettled farmers are pointing fingers at the state claiming that the state has forsaken them. In this light, between the state and the ordinary masses there is an informal politics at play that has ushered in corruption and rent-seeking tendencies that undermines the efforts of the state. State initiatives are often hijacked to ZANU-PF projects which end up reaching only those affiliated and with high ranks in the party (Hammer, 2005; Marongwe, 2011), the evidence is given by one respondent who has noted that all agricultural programs come through ZANU-PF and often benefits ZANU-PF supporters (Interview, 23/12/13). These not-so-developmental tendencies have affected the new farmers as they are not receiving the resources and services offered by the state. In turn, it reduces the viability and production of these farmers as they are stuck on the few hectares year in year out.

The 2009 Farm Implementation and Mechanization Program implemented nationwide by the state under the Ministry of Agriculture Mechanization Irrigation and Development also benefitted the new farmers at Debshan. This program was designed as a solution to the nation's agricultural production challenges. At Debshan the new farmers received tractors, ox-drawn ploughs, harrows and planters. As noted by Pretty (2008) sustainable agriculture can be achieved by using technologies and machinery with undue damage to the environment. The state sought to support its farmers by upgrading their levels of production. It was noted by a respondent that before the state supported them with ploughs they faced challenges every planting season (Interview, 12/12/13; 18/12/13).

It was after conducting research that the state soon realised that the biggest challenge hindering the farmers was the lack of farm machinery. As noted by Vheremu et al (n.d) since 2000 the production levels of Zimbabwe have been on a downward trend due to the

levels of agricultural mechanization that were unsatisfactory. As a diagnosis the state in a bid to support its farmers to increase their production went on to show the budgetary will by setting aside millions of dollars towards agricultural mechanization. In line with these efforts it is clear that the efforts made by the state indeed were to support the new farmers. However, as noted by the new farmers as well as the extension officers, not all people benefitted from this initiative. This brings us back to the clientilistic network alluded before, where it is noted that only the big-wigs benefitted more. Only a few farmers received tractors of which they were said to be war veterans and political cronies. The councillor of Ward 13, Mrs Fellenze Sikhosana, received an ox-drawn plough which she has capitalised on to improve her production at her plot. It is safe to conclude that those farmers who received farming machinery from the state have improved in terms of their production. As noted by councillor Sikhosana, before the mechanization program she used only 3 and a half hectares and getting at least 3 tonnes of maize but now she is capable of covering up to 15 hectares and producing up to 18 tonnes of maize. In this regard the beneficiaries of the mechanization program have increased their production levels as a result of the new machinery they are using.

The new farmers have also acknowledged receipt of state support in the form of market facilities. The state has created GMB depots at least in every district in Zimbabwe, the GMB has monopolised grain buying in Zimbabwe with a uniform price to regulate the market. Most of the farmers faced challenges with markets if they had excess agricultural products they wanted to sell. The GMB has also been providing the farmers with inputs like maize seed and fertilizers. The inputs provided by the GMB were only available to farmers who sold their produce to the GMB. These inputs were sold at a subsidised price to the farmer so as to buffer the harshness of the market. Farmers actually saw the sustainability and profitability of undertaking agriculture and selling farm produce to the GMB where they got incentives. Indeed this was a noble initiative which attempted to nurture the new farmer as they did not have stresses on where to get inputs and where to sell their produce.

At Debshan the new farmers however noted that the effort made by the state in supporting them with markets is of great significance but the farmers are facing a myriad of challenges in working with the GMB departments. One farmer noted out that selling his produce to GMB was easy as they would send trucks to collect our produce at key central places but

the problem was with collecting payment (Interview, 13/12/13). It was said most of the GMB cheques were three to six months late causing the new farmers inconveniences. In an interview (11/12/13) I was told that if one had borrowed money to purchase inputs, one would end up paying a lot of interest as the pay cheques were delayed. It ended up making the farmers not to see the potential profitability of agriculture. Mr Hospital Nkomo noted that at the height of the Zimbabwean crisis²⁶, money would lose value before they would receive it from the GMB. He gave an instance of what happened in 2007/2008, when he sold something like six tonnes of maize and the GMB owed him Z\$12 374 500 which was equivalent to US\$655 on the foreign exchange market. He received the amount 4 months later and surprisingly the money was now equivalent to US\$2.25 on the foreign exchange market. This made people to opt for the black market which paid on time hence most farmers lost their privileges to get subsidized inputs from the GMB. These findings match those by Chamunorwa (2010) who noted that the GMB paid late and it ended up affecting the farmers as they could not enjoy their profits from agriculture due inflation.

Not only did the GMB delay with pay cheques, it also delayed in supplying the farmers with the subsidized inputs. Farmers complained that the GMB would delay with three months hence most inputs could not arrive in time for planting before the rain (Interview, 13/12/13). Since most farmers practiced dry-planting, they were always behind time and in most cases would plant a month after the fall of the rains. This would result in poor growth leading to poor harvests. An FAO (2006) also reported that fertilizers were distributed way after peak application time. There was little further explanation required as to why the production levels in the new farmers slumped. It was noted by some farmers that the GMB bosses would provide the black markets with these inputs which were sold at exorbitant prices so as to enrich themselves (Interview, 15/12/13). These delays can however be accounted for by the external sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe which with other factors crippled the economy as some political delegates from the ZANU-PF government including the then Minister of Agriculture, Joseph Made were banned from entering European countries where some of the inputs are imported from.

²⁶ The period 2000 to 2009 saw the Zimbabwean economy shrinking by as much as 40%. Inflation sprung to over 66,000% and the Zimbabwean dollar fell at foreign exchange markets to Z\$550, 000 per US\$1 in 2006 compared to the 1996 Z\$9.13 per US\$1.

Transport and communication infrastructure was developed by the state; the period at the height of the FTLRP can be characterized as destructive as the beneficiaries used force to resettle themselves. Along the line infrastructure like road, telephone lines, electricity lines, boreholes, dip-tanks amongst others were destroyed. After the resettlement program the government attempted to resuscitate these facilities that had been destroyed but little progress was made. In Shangani infrastructural development is still weak as in other towns in Matebeleland province. This is supported by Mabhena (2010) who argues that Matebeleland provinces have been neglected when it comes to development projects implemented by the government. Transportation of inputs and outputs to and from Shangani is not satisfactory as it is lengthy despite the fact that it is linked to a major road. The roads and communication systems also hinders the movement of extension officers hence prejudicing the farmers in the area. The state has not fully supported the farmers and this has affected the production levels as the farmers could not access inputs, services and other government programs hassle-free.

Most of the farmers were generally civil servants who at the height of the Zimbabwean crisis could not afford to purchase or acquire any services due to their financial circumstances. In agriculture, their financial incapacity denied them any possibility of producing more. They had to rely on state sponsored inputs and services which limited their production. In case that they had funds at their disposal they could buy extra inputs to complement to what the state offered them instead of using granary maize as seed and substituting fertilizer with organic manure mainly cow dung. In response to these challenges the state has supported with setting aside a significant amount towards agricultural loans. The loans were administered under facilities like Agribank, CBZ and the Ministry of Small-Medium Enterprise. These loans were given to farmers who had proof that they are farming and are in need of the funding. Most farmers were asked to collect quotations of what they intended to use the money for and the facilities availing the funds would pay for them.

It was argued by one political leader that the new farmers after receiving the aid in the form of inputs or cash went on to use the money as well as the inputs for wrongful purposes. This created distrust between the state and the new farmers, and even made the state to prioritize other support services to the new farmers. Corruption also prejudiced the state support to its

farmers as the intended beneficiaries did not benefit from state programs such as inputs, machinery, loans etc. The local political leadership also were blamed for projecting a false picture of the state. It was said due to greed, state programs were introduced as ZANU-PF programs as a way to limit the benefits to the known ZANU-PF supporters excluding other non-ZANU-PF and non-partisan farmers around Shangani.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the findings from the interviews I conducted at Debshan ranch in Shangani. The information from the respondents' show that agricultural production of the new farmers at Debshan is highly affected by the farming strategies they have employed in response to challenges like climatic conditions and soil types. However not all the strategies have a negative impact on their production levels but some practices have paid off and increased the production levels of these farmers. Some of these strategies include irrigation, cultivation of drought resistant crops and use of machinery like tractors have managed to increase the farmers' production. The data also showed that the state support to the farmers is not adequate and sometimes inappropriate. The majority of the farmers lamented that due to corruption and clientilistic networks, the state assistance is only benefiting a few political cronies and their networks. The socio-political environment in Shangani is an impeding factor which is affecting the farmers' production as well as their choice of farming strategies. Agricultural projects are highly politicised and they only benefit the pro-ZANU-PF farmers while dissidents are deprived from benefitting from such projects.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

Introduction

This is the last chapter of this dissertation and it summarises the entire research proceedings of this research and gives out the conclusion of the study. This chapter discusses the new farming practices and strategies that have been employed by the new farmers and enlightens how these new farming strategies and practices employed by the new farmers at Debshan are impacting on the production levels of agriculture in Shangani. It ascertains that some of the strategies and practices employed by the new farmers have contributed to the agricultural production slump. The socio-political aspect of the study will be discussed and the findings will show that the environment in Shangani is socially and politically uneven. The state-farmer relations in Shangani were not sound and have impacted on the choice of farming strategies hence prejudicing the production of the farmers. Lastly this research will also identify knowledge gaps that can be researched on to fully document information on agricultural production in Shangani after the FTLRP.

Summary of research

The problem that necessitated this study to be carried out started soon after the close of the FTLRP in Zimbabwe in general and Shangani in particular. Literature has argued that production levels declined and the slump was accounted for by various factors which include farming practices and strategies which are not explicitly identified and explained. This motivated me in a quest to understand what these strategies were and how they may have prejudiced the production levels of the new farmers. I selected De Beers Shangani ranch to be my case study as it gave an example of land reform processes and also offered an interesting aspect in its geographical and climatic condition exception as well as its socio-political aspect.

The objective of this study was to identify and assess the farming strategies employed by the new farmers so as to ascertain how their activities may have helped to cause the production slump. This study sought to determine the levels of success or failure of the

various farming strategies used by the new farmers in dry areas of Shangani. The study examined the socio-political environment in Shangani and used it with the strategies employed to ascertain how socio-political factors influenced the farmers' choice. In addition the study explores the relationship between the state and the new farmers as a way to assess the support it gave to the farmers and how the support impacted on the agricultural production levels of the farmers. To achieve this I used case study research design and conducted in-depth interviews with my respondents from Debshan ranch resettlements. Out of 184 households at the Debshan resettlement I used a sample of 20 participants who were selected using the purposive judgemental sampling technique due to time and financial constraints. Snowballing sampling was used to get additional data from the knowledgeable participants I was referred to by other participants.

My data was grouped, analysed and discussed thematically, answering my research objectives. All the data from the interviews conducted was transcribed in verbatim and coded. Pieces of data were categorized by related concepts and were interpreted separately. Tables with statistics and pictures with illustrations were used to present explicitly the research finding for the study. Ethical issues were considered throughout the research as this study sought to understand aspects on such a sensitive topic. Informed consent of the respondents was sought and some respondents chose pseudonyms or to remain anonymous to protect their identities from victimization as the area studied is politically polarized.

Conclusions/results in the research

The results of the study indicate that the newly resettled farmers at Debshan see agriculture as a complementary livelihood which cannot be relied on due to the challenges it faces as a sector in a struggling economy. Following the economic hardships in Zimbabwe, agriculture has been relegated to the periphery of the economy by the farmers themselves. The farmers' relationship with agriculture has changed as not much production and income has been derived from it in the past decade. It has been noted that the profit of agriculture are seen once a year hence it makes it difficult to call it the main source of income and livelihood. Other livelihood strategies such as formal employment, illegal mining, cross-border trading and vending have replaced the position of agriculture in Shangani

The research findings have identified conservation farming, irrigation schemes, fertilizer uptake reduction, livestock rearing, use of machinery, use of hand sprays, dry planting, cultivation of drought resistant crops and nomadic grazing as the strategies that have been employed by the new farmers at Debshan after the FTLRP. Farmers who have managed to cultivate drought tolerant crops like millet, sorghum and rapoko have managed to be productive. Production levels of farmers who produced maize were lower in farms where they heavily relied on rainfall while it was high where irrigation schemes were employed. Farmers who chose to reduce their uptake of fertilizers had a lower production rate when compared to their counterparts who regularly used fertilizers.

Conservation farming strategies like *Gatshopo* and dry planting are sound when rainfall is adequate. *Gatshopo* reduced moisture loss hence it was ideal in the region as it could manage and conserve underground water which was needed when dry planting. It increased the acreage of the cultivated area hence increasing the yields harvested. *Gatshopo* faced a fair share of challenges as it was a painful strategy, most farmers ended up discontinuing the practice of the strategy. Hence the mishaps of these conservation farming strategies have reduced the production levels of the farmers at Debshan.

Use of machinery as a strategy to increase acreage was sound but the farmers were too poor to buy or hire a tractor to use. The state support they received was minimal hence most farmers resorted to the use of ox-drawn traction which covered only a few hectares. This went on to prejudice the production levels of the new farmers making them produce less as they cultivated a small portion of their big farms.

Engagement in livestock rearing ought to have led to a higher level of production as the farming system was ideal for the area. Challenges like shortages of grazing areas, water sources and dip tanks and treatment services hamstrung increased production of the new farmers. Even though strategies like the use of hand sprays to treat cattle and the use of Shangani River as a water source, the quality of the livestock was compromised. What discouraged them were the prices the CSC paid them for their cattle and this led to them practising simple livestock rearing which did not reproduce much. Thus their engagement in livestock rearing, the most ideal farming system, did not produce positive results on their production levels.

The levels of the new farmers' production were highly influenced by the strategies they employed. The findings of this study see eye to eye with Drinkwater (1991) who notes that practice of unimproved traditional farming practices leads to a progressive decline in agricultural production. The few farmers who used irrigation schemes, cultivated drought resistant crops and regularly used fertilizers had a higher production rate. This concurs with need for agricultural sustainability whereby good farming practices have a positive impact on agricultural production (Gerber, 1990). On the other hand farmers using strategies like reduced fertilizer uptake, simple machinery like ox-drawn ploughs, cultivation of rain-fed crops such as maize without irrigation, reliance on dry planting amongst others produced less. The majority of the farmers were not well-off and used the strategies which did not require them to spend much, had a low production rate when compared to the minority of the farmers who were financially stable to hire or own tractors, install irrigation schemes as well as purchase fertilizers and inputs.

The findings also led to the understanding that Shangani has an uneven socio-political environment as all economic life is politicized. Politics is affecting the day to day lives of the residents as resources and services are used to benefit the ZANU-PF leaders and their supporters. Ordinary and non-partisan members of the community are excluded from benefitting from any development projects and programs. ZANU-PF cronies in Shangani often hijack all programs that come from the government and put ZANU-PF members at the top of the beneficiaries' list. In this light it can also observe how land was allocated during the FTLRP. Networks were used to redistribute land in favour of the ZANU-PF supporters (Marongwe, 2008; Zamchiya, 2011). The findings have also concluded that the presence of informal politics in Shangani has affected and influenced the new farmers' choice of farming strategies. Hence the socio-political environment in Shangani can be argued to have contributed to the choosing of strategies that have hamstrung increased production in Shangani.

The relationship between the state and the new farmers is not sound as the farmers are not satisfied with it. The state as a number one stakeholder provided the new farmers with support in the form of inputs, machinery, markets, extension services, credit and policies. From the data collected the majority of the farmers did not receive much from the state sponsored services due to the clientilistic network, corruption and nepotism. The state

programs only benefited the top economic echelon of farmers in the area and the majority of the farmers were excluded. In line with production the state-farmer relation has greatly affected the farmers' production and resulted in lower agricultural production. The new farmers do not receive enough support from the state which limited their cultivation acreage and production levels. The state, as noted by an extension officer has perpetuated employment of wrong strategies that have contributed to lower agricultural production in Shangani.

Possible areas for future research

Possible gaps identified by this research which future research could research on are as follows:

- Impact of HIV/AIDS on agricultural production rates of the newly resettled farmers.
- Gender and livelihoods in FTLRP resettlements in Shangani during the Zimbabwean crisis period.
- Role played by the state in promoting agricultural production in Zimbabwe.

Conclusion

This study sought to identify and assess the new farming strategies that have been employed by the new farmers at the Debshan ranch resettlement of Shangani. The study examined the socio-political environment in Shangani to ascertain how it influences the new farmers' choice of farming strategies. State-farmer relations were explored to establish how the relationship has contributed to the slump in agricultural production. Data for this study was collected using in-depth interviews to deliberately selected participants from the Debshan resettlement. The data was analysed and presented answering the research questions of the study. The study concluded that the new farmer adopted the following strategies namely conservation farming, irrigation schemes, fertilizer uptake reduction, fertilizer use, livestock rearing, use of machinery, use of hand sprays, dry planting, cultivation of drought resistant crops and nomadic grazing. It concluded that strategies like

use of irrigation, tractors, use of fertilizers and cultivation of drought tolerant crops has increased the new farmers' production levels. However use of strategies like conservation farming, reduced fertilizer uptake, livestock rearing, relying on rainfall has yielded low production in Shangani. These strategies are highly affected by financial capacities as the well-off political cronies could employ strategies like irrigation, use of machinery and fertilizers. On the other hand the poor farmers could not employ these strategies. The study also established that the political environment in Shangani is a factor that is hindering progress as development programs are politicized and benefit ZANU-PF supporters. (S)tate-farmer relations have also contributed to the low production levels as the state support is inadequate for the farmers and tend to limit their cultivated area and yields altogether.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Informed Consent

Dear Participant,

My name is Shepherd Chikowore (213571375). I am a Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College. The title of my research is: **The State, Land reform, Old Farmers and New Farmers: An assessment of farming in the Shangani area (Zimbabwe)**. The aim of the study is to have an in-depth understanding on farming practices and strategies employed by the new farmers in the Shangani area and give further insight on how they contribute to agricultural production decline. I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your views in this interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The interview will take about 45minutes.
- The record as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to me and my supervisors. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.
- If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, / Howard College Campus, Durban. Email: schikowore2010@gmail.com

Cell: 0027738471373

My supervisor is Mr Gordon Fakude who is located at the School of Social Sciences,

Howard College Campus, Durban of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details:
email fakude@ukzn.ac.za Phone number: 0027733230327

My co-supervisor is Dr. Michael Francis who is located at the School of Social Sciences,
Howard College Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email :
francism@ukzn.ac.za

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as
follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email:
ximbap@ukzn.ac.za, Phone number +27312603587.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... (*full names of participant*) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.
I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

Appendix 2: Interview schedule for participant

Questions

1. How long have you been a resident in Shangani?
2. What activities do you do for a living?
3. Is agriculture your main source of income and livelihood?
4. What type of agriculture do you undertake?
5. What strategies and practices do you employ and how did you choose them?
6. What inspired you to employ those strategies?
7. How are these strategies impacting on agricultural productivity?
8. Do you face any challenges with the climatic conditions and how do you respond to them?
9. What are some of the challenges you face in improving agricultural productivity?
10. How can these barriers be mitigated?
11. Do you receive any form of technical services or support from state institutions?
12. What is your relationship with the state like, and how does it contribute to your agricultural production?