

**University of the Western Cape**

School of Government

*Food Security in Zimbabwe: the impact of Structural  
Adjustment Programmes, 1980-2000*

*By*



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## Abstract

This study takes a critical political-economy approach to the analysis of food security in Zimbabwe against the backdrop of Structural Adjustment Programmes implemented between 1980 and 2000. It provides a comparative analysis of the pre-and-post adjustment periods in Zimbabwe in order to illustrate the changes in the industrial and agricultural sectors and the concomitant patterns in the availability and access to food.

It also explores the link between the implementation of market-based economic reform and the erosion of purchasing power and the attendant decline of the legitimacy of the Zimbabwean state that manifested in the form of popular resistance. Moreover, the link between SAPs and the intensification of class relations/inequality at national level and the perpetuation of a relationship of dependency between the developed and developing world is explored.

Chapter two outlines the most relevant debates and analytical constructs pertaining to security issues and, more specifically, food security. It also endeavors to portray the link between dominant knowledge in International Relations (IR) theory and the concomitant policy decisions that impact on development in Southern Africa. Chapter three provides an analysis of the changes in the macroeconomic indicators such as investment, economic growth, inflation and interest rates under adjustment in order to elucidate the impact on access to basic commodities and the purchasing power of individuals. Chapter four highlights the changes in agricultural output and consumption levels by comparing the pre-and-post adjustment agricultural landscape and the policy implications associated with economic liberalization.

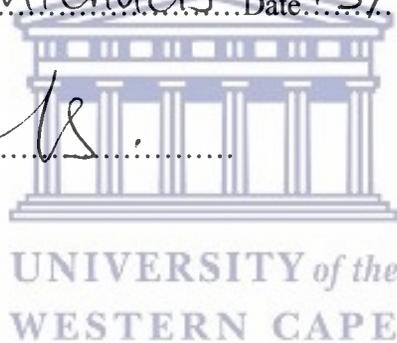
The study concludes, in chapter five, that the goal of development under structural adjustment can, at best, be described as a mirage that eludes the majority of the inhabitants of recipient countries. The proposed neo-liberal logic that underpins structural adjustment proved to be insufficient and exposed an approach that is characterized by the symptomatic treatment of developmental problems in the developing world.

## Declaration

I declare that *Food Security in Zimbabwe: the impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes, 1980-2000* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name..... Zurena Michaels ..... Date..... 13/09/06 .....

Signed.....  .....



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## List of Abbreviations

<b>AFC</b>	Agricultural Finance Corporation
<b>AGRITEX</b>	Agricultural Extension and Technical Services
<b>AMA</b>	Agricultural Marketing Authority
<b>CFA(s)</b>	Communal Farming Areas
<b>CFU</b>	Commercial Farmers Union
<b>CMB</b>	Cotton Marketing Board
<b>CSC</b>	Cold Storage Commission
<b>CZI</b>	Confederation of Zimbabwean Industries
<b>DMB</b>	Diary Marketing Board
<b>ESAP</b>	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FER</b>	Framework for Economic Reform (1991-1995)
<b>FFYDP</b>	First Five-Year Development Plan (1986-1990)
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GMB</b>	Grain Marketing Board
<b>IFI(s)</b>	International Financial Institutions
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IR</b>	International Relations
<b>LSCF(s)</b>	Large Scale Commercial Farms/ers
<b>NFAZ</b>	National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe
<b>OGIL</b>	Open Guaranteed Import Licence
<b>RA(s)</b>	Resettlement Areas
<b>R&amp;SS</b>	Research and Specialist Services
<b>SAP(s)</b>	Structural Adjustment Programmes
<b>SDA</b>	Social Dimensions of Adjustment
<b>SSCF(s)</b>	Small Scale Commercial Farms
<b>TNDP</b>	Transitional National Development Plan (1980-1985)
<b>UDI</b>	United Declaration of Independence (1965-1979)
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organisation
<b>ZANU-PF</b>	Zimbabwean African National Union (Patriotic Front)
<b>ZAPU</b>	Zimbabwean African Peoples' Union
<b>ZCTU</b>	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
<b>ZIMPREST</b>	Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (1996-2000)
<b>ZNFU</b>	Zimbabwe National Farmers' Union

# Chapter one

## Research aims and design

### 1.1 Introduction

Global food production has grown faster than world population growth rates and yet, food insecurity seems to have reached crisis proportions in the developing countries (Clover; 2003; Berg & Bigman; 1993). Furthermore, it is estimated that 840 million people suffered from malnourishment between 1998-2000 of which 799 million (of the total) were situated in the developing world. Reactions to the problem of food insecurity have not only been slow, but it has also often been misguided by the indiscreet application of dominant knowledge or conventional wisdom<sup>1</sup> in alien territories (Riddell; 1992).

Poverty and hunger are global phenomena embedded within the confines of underdevelopment<sup>2</sup>. The skewed power dynamics between the developed and the developing countries of the world perpetuates the emergence and manifestation of poverty in developing countries<sup>3</sup>. This is underpinned by stagnant or non-existent economic growth in developing countries that serves as a catalyst for a growing dependency on developed countries for assistance and aid (Maclean & Mangum; 2001).

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have introduced Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which are premised on the ideological

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the International Financial Institutions' (IFIs) relentless pursuit of orthodox neo-liberal economic policies without any regard for local circumstances. Chapter 2 will elaborate on the effects of the application of 'dominant knowledge/wisdom' in policy formulation.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'underdevelopment' has to be distinguished from the term 'undeveloped', the latter simply refers to a situation in which ample resources are available but are not utilised whereas, the former indicates the active use of resources in a way that benefits dominant states as opposed to the poorer states in which those resources were found.

<sup>3</sup> This inequality that characterises the international system, manifests and is propelled through the application of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). SAPs can thus be viewed as a tool used by the IFIs to entrench the gap between developed and developing countries and thereby, constraining developing countries' ability to achieve and sustain food security.

assumptions of ‘neo-liberalism’<sup>4</sup>, as the panacea for the economic ills afflicting developing countries (Williams; 1994; Andreasson; 2003). Economic growth generated through the economic reform process is presumed to translate into development and the alleviation of poverty. Unfortunately the results of the implementation of SAPs have been disappointing and hungry mouths continue to grow (Mosley, Subasat & Weeks; 1995).

Zimbabwe is one of several countries in Sub-Saharan Africa that has adopted and implemented SAPs and, as a result, experienced detrimental consequences. There are various underlying factors which contribute to the food insecurity in Zimbabwe such as; drought, the uneven distribution of land and agro-ecological assets, technological difficulties, political strife, lack of producer incentives, access to agricultural inputs (such as fertiliser, seeds and capital) ect., therefore the problem cannot solely be attributed to SAPs. The fact remains, however, that SAPs have emerged as a major obstacle in the way of alleviating poverty and tending to the basic needs of people. There is thus a need to analyse food security against the backdrop of SAPs in order to illustrate the prevailing insecurity of the developing world towards the dominant developed world. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the food security situation since independence (1980) in Zimbabwe and to illustrate the impact that the structural adjustment programmes adopted between 1980-2000 had on the access and availability of food in the country.

This study will be restricted to the 1980-2000 timeframe. However, the author is aware of the fact that the land invasions (that started in 2000) and the concomitant deterioration of the ‘rule of law’ had a profound effect on the food security situation in Zimbabwe but, due to the limitations of the scope of this research, it is not intended, here, to pursue this angle of the debate.

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<sup>4</sup> Also associated with the neo-classical model of economic growth. This model pays little attention to the question of distribution of wealth and instead emphasizes production and the ‘free market’ and assumes that, left to its own devices, the market would allocate the rewards of production in an equal fashion and this is known as the ‘trickle down’ approach.

## 1.2 Research objectives

This study primarily aims at evaluating the food security situation in Zimbabwe against the backdrop of the Structural Adjustment Programmes.

Secondly, a comparative analysis of both the economic structure and the state of agriculture in the pre-and-post structural adjustment periods is undertaken in order to elucidate the changes in the availability and access to food that have occurred between 1980-2000

Thirdly, this study also aims at illustrating how the implementation of market based economic reform has eroded the purchasing power of some (those who do not produce food for consumption) and subsequently contributed to the declining legitimacy of the Zimbabwean government that manifested in the form of popular resistance.

Fourthly, the link between SAPs and the intensification of class relations/inequality (at national level) will also be explored and more specifically, how agrarian reform under ESAP have affected the position of communal farmers vis-à-vis commercial farmers

Lastly, this study aims to make recommendations with the intention of improving the food security situation in Zimbabwe and decreasing dependence on the International Financial Institutions.

## 1.3 Assumptions

The main assumption guiding this study would be that, "...development [based on neo-liberal economic principles] privileges the interests of those close to power" and food insecurity is manifested in the soil of those without power (Thompson & Swatuk; 2000; Kaur; 2001).<sup>5</sup> Power, in this sense, pertains to the means a state has to secure itself and its citizens against the hazards of the world. This could include military, political or economic power.

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<sup>5</sup> Thompson & Swatuk (2000) "Gender and Ecosystems: Reframing Southern African 'Security,'" as part of a working paper series: *Security, Ecology and Community*. CSAS, the School of Government: University of the Western Cape. Bellville.

For the purpose of this study, the main focus would be on the economic power the developed countries and the IFIs<sup>6</sup> have over the developing countries, and how this power is often manipulated to achieve the political ends of those who hold the economic means, even outside their own borders. Evidently, this study aims to illustrate how economic power underscores political power and erodes the decision making power (and influences key developmental policy decisions) of those with less power whilst simultaneously bringing into question the sovereignty of the developing state<sup>7</sup> (Macleans & Mangum; 2001).

The Zimbabwean state and its decision to follow the developmental approach attached to the SAP would be used illustrate the uneven power dynamics and the structural imbalances embedded in them that characterises the international political arena. More specifically, the utilisation of this power to meet the interests of the developed whilst maintaining a relationship of dependency of the developing countries on the developed countries is attempted here<sup>8</sup>.

The prevailing power dynamics emanates from the state of insecurity in a country like Zimbabwe. Food insecurity is a symptom of the general incapacity of the state to secure itself and its citizens that arises from the fact that its decision making power is relinquished to those actors with economic power. It should be noted, however, that historical factors such as colonialism and local dynamics of governance also contributed to food insecurity. This study would therefore, also attempt to illustrate the impact of structural impediments that prevail at the national level on the food security problem.

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<sup>6</sup> The International Financial Institutions (IFIs) comprise the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Only the former two actors needs to be considered for the purposes of this research when further reference to the IFIs are made as, they were the most instrumental in the formulation and implementation of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs).

<sup>7</sup> UNECA (1991) acknowledges that adjustment programmes undercut the development of national leadership and indigenous management cababilities.

<sup>8</sup> James O'Connor (1971:40-41) in "The meaning of Economic Imperialism", refers to this phenomenon as 'economic imperialism', which he defines as, "the economic domination of one region/country over another-specifically, the formal or informal control over local economic resources in a manner advantageous to the metropolitan power, and at the expense of the local economy".

The gradual erosion of the state's sovereignty and the concomitant 'governance from afar' incapacitates the state and, more often than not, bring the legitimacy of a government into question (Andreasson; 2003;Riddell; 1992). A lack of economic power induces the stagnation of development and economic growth and leads to the scarcity of resources and hence, a lack of supply. As a result, food becomes less available and when it is available the pricing mechanisms (and currency devaluations) imposed by the IMF and the World Bank makes it hardly accessible (Williams; 1994).

#### **1.4 Statement of the problem**

The right to food is one of those most consistently mentioned in international human rights documents, but it is the one most frequently violated in recent times (Clover; 2003)

In 1980 more than 40% of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa suffered from calorie deficiencies, which is an acute symptom of food insecurity. During this period Zimbabwe was flourishing in the agricultural sector and was often referred to as the 'bread basket of Southern Africa'. As time lapsed, however, this rosy picture of prosperity soon turned into a nightmare not only for the Zimbabweans, but also for the neighbouring countries. Zimbabwe went from having an abundance of food to having to rely on imports to feed its nation and found itself facing (two decades later) "...the worst food security conditions since 1980"<sup>9</sup>(Raath, 2002). Evidently, a lack of supply has manifested since the advent of independence. The question then arises, why is there a lack of supply? The answer lies partially in the Zimbabwean government's decision to adopt the macro-economic strategy towards development when it implemented the SAP/Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP)<sup>10</sup> of the World Bank in 1991(Ndimande; 1992).

The ESAP was geared towards increasing the production of cash crops in order to earn the necessary foreign exchange needed to repay the debt and also to increase exports. Furthermore, it required that the government cut back on social expenditures and development. The inherent contradiction that surfaces when a closer look is taken

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<sup>9</sup> Raath (2002) "Mugabe facing unrest over food shortages" in *The Times*, available online at <http://ecohostvgw20.epnet.com>

<sup>10</sup> The Zimbabwean structural adjustment programme is known as the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP).

at this approach is that a weak and malnourished society is hardly capable of being productive. Or, as UNECA (1991: 8) puts it, "...we all know that anybody on an empty stomach cannot be happy or productive".

It must, however, be acknowledged that there are other factors such as; financial and technical assistance, weather conditions, irrigation and political stability that impact on productivity, other than access and availability of food. However, the scope of this research does not allow for the complete exploration of these factors and therefore would be limited to the establishment of a link between the ESAP in Zimbabwe and the food insecurity. In other words, we would be assessing agricultural production whilst using the economic dynamics brought about by the ESAP and the concomitant neo-liberal approach to development as a backdrop. The fact that an abundance of food or prosperous agricultural production does not necessarily translate into equal access to food for all should also be kept in mind. Therefore, the distribution of land and other input mechanisms for successful production and its link to access will also be explored.

Food security is not only a problem of availability but also a problem of access (by means of income and purchasing power)<sup>11</sup>. The economic reforms implemented under the auspices of structural adjustment has had detrimental effects on the availability and creation of employment and income and has therefore diminished the purchasing power of certain groups of individuals in Zimbabwe (Gibbon; 1995; Sachikonye; 1995; Sachikonye; 1999; Bond; 1998). Access is also directly linked to the distribution of agricultural incentives for production, pricing mechanisms and marketing outlets for producers. A holistic view of the problem therefore requires both the analysis of supply and demand factors.

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<sup>11</sup> Food security was initially viewed in terms of the availability or aggregate output of agricultural production relative to the population growth figures. This is known as the *Malthusian* approach. This approach has come to be viewed as too restrictive as an abundance of food at the national level does not automatically translate into access at the household level. Factors such as income, distribution of land, availability and quality of land and access to agricultural inputs all impact on access to food at household level and should therefore be taken into account. For further discussion see Chattopadhyay, (2000) "Zimbabwe: Structural Adjustment, Destitution & Food Insecurity" in *Review of Political Economy*. Vol. 27. Issue 84.

There has been no significant turnaround in the Zimbabwean economy since the adoption of ESAP, in fact it has gone from bad to worse, and the debt burden still lurks among the myriad of other issues facing the country. Food security is one such an issue and is especially of importance since the bulk of its population is dependant upon agriculture for their livelihoods (Mumbengegwi; 2002). Hence, the well being of the society at large hinges on the question of food security and the developmental approach employed to ensure, not only food security, but also sustainable food security. Therefore, an in depth analysis of quick solutions vs. sustainable solutions is needed and this requires not only creosoting the symptoms, but delving to root of the problem and dealing directly with that which causes the symptoms of stunted development.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

This study aims to make a meaningful contribution towards existing literature and research about security and developmental issues whilst specifically looking at the ‘new security’ debates and the shift from the realist emphasis on state security to that of human security. Food security, falls within the ambit of human security and would be used to illuminate the immense socio-economic insecurity that exists not only in Zimbabwe but also in the developing world at large.

The academic debate around the relations of the developing *vis-à-vis* the developed countries is an ongoing one and this study aims to add to it by specifically focussing on Zimbabwe’s relations with the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the powerful developed countries and influential international actors.

As a researcher this has been an appealing topic as it allows the exploration of the existing disparate distribution of power in the international arena and how this impacts on development and policy objectives in the developing (specifically Zimbabwe) countries. Furthermore, the question of security has been addressed by an array of academics and scholars but the recent debates around security sheds light on an angle of analysis (socio-economic) that has not been fully explored. Therefore, this study aims, not only to add to the existing literature, but also to illustrate (by using food security) the developmental constraints placed upon developing countries that

accept aid (in the form of SAPs) from the IFIs and the implications of the conditionalities attached to the aid. Hence, this study will be elucidating the conditionalities attached to SAPs and how it impacts on socio-economic development whilst specifically focusing on food security.

This has important implications for both foreign and national policy decision-making, as it would highlight the existent inability of policy makers (both at the national and global level) to take the socio-economic ramifications of economic liberalisation into account. The methods and instruments applied to eradicate poverty in the developing world by the IFIs needs to be reassessed with respect to contextual relevance, national capacity (in terms of human and financial resources and infrastructure) and its implications for the most vulnerable groups in a given society.

Zimbabwe presents a very fascinating case study as it inherited a relatively stable and diverse economy with the advent of independence in 1980. The Mugabe-government has been widely credited with achieving tremendous success in the improvement of the quality of life of the rural masses by increasing social expenditure on health and education (Bond; 1998; Gibbon; 1996; Mumbengegwi & Magubu; 2002). Furthermore, the decision to undertake economic liberalisation was only taken a decade after independence and therefore provides the researcher with a good analytical base for comparative analysis of the pre-and-post structural adjustment periods (Peas; 1999).

## **1.6 Methodology and Organisation**

The study takes a critical political-economy approach and is situated within the International Relations (IR) paradigm. It is, therefore, predicated on various theories of security, dependency and structuralism. Chapter two highlights the most relevant debates around the subject matter and explores the analytical constructs pertaining to the food security problem in Zimbabwe. Therefore books and academic journals are of paramount importance to gain insight into the various debates around the subject matter. Journals can also be a helpful source from which to obtain data and the most current and salient issues surrounding the topic. Major journals that have been

identified for usage are the *Review of African Political Economy*, *African Economist*, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, *The Journal of Modern African Studies* and *Development Southern Africa*.

This study takes the form of a qualitative analysis and would be dependent on primary and secondary documentary sources. Although the study is primarily qualitative in nature, the macroeconomic impact on food security warrants the illustration of the quantitative manifestation of poverty, underdevelopment and inequality in the form of macroeconomic indicators such as investment, economic growth, inflation and interest rates. Statistical data obtained from literary sources will be employed to demonstrate the changes of the abovementioned macroeconomic indicators under economic liberalisation. Chapter three provides an analysis of the changes in the macroeconomic indicators under structural adjustment and how this impacted on access to basic commodities (and food) and the purchasing power of individuals.

Furthermore, changes in agricultural output and consumption levels will also be illustrated by means of statistics obtained from literary sources. Chapter four highlights the changes in agricultural output and consumption levels by comparing the pre-and-post adjustment agricultural landscape and the policy implications associated with economic liberalisation.

This study focuses mainly on the interaction of actors in the international political sphere such as the state, the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and, more specifically, the World Bank and the IMF. However, such macro-level analysis will be complemented by the micro-level analysis of the complex interaction of global economic dynamics and local political imperatives and how this impacts on the livelihoods of individuals.

Various policy documents and discussion papers of the IMF and World Bank as well as those of Zimbabwe will also be reviewed. This is necessary in terms of sketching the developmental trajectory that emerged out of the adoption of the SAP in Zimbabwe and how this path to development was guided by the economic principles on which the IMF and the World Bank is premised. Chapter five will give an

overview of the general findings of the study and will delineate relevant policy recommendations for more sustainable solutions to the food security problem. Lastly, in this age of technology the internet and databases for online academic journals has almost become an indispensable aid for researchers. Taking into consideration that not all internet sources are equally reliable, it will be consulted for the latest statistical updates and to maintain checks on the food security debate world wide.

### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

Taking into consideration the fact that this study would use only literary (primary and secondary) sources to obtain information, it has to be acknowledged as a limitation. Furthermore, no interviews will be conducted for the purpose of this study and it must be acknowledged that this would have added significantly to the authenticity of the study. This was, however, not possible (due to various constraints) and is therefore considered as another limitation. This study is also limited in terms of the factors it chooses to analyse in terms of the food security problem Zimbabwe is facing. Notwithstanding the fact that there are various other factors (drought, agricultural incentives, land, capital) that impact on the food insecurity in Zimbabwe, the scope of this research only allows for an in depth analysis of one such a factor, that is the adoption and implementation of the ESAP in Zimbabwe.

Chapter one has outlined the research aims and design of this study. We will now turn to chapter two to explore the most relevant debates pertaining to the subject matter. Furthermore, chapter two will also delineate the theoretical perspectives and analytical constructs that will be employed to illustrate the food security problem in Zimbabwe.

# Chapter two

## Theoretical underpinnings

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims at exploring the contours of the theoretical underpinnings that buttress the analysis of security and security issues. Furthermore, it also endeavours to portray the link between dominant knowledge in IR theory and the concomitant policy decisions that impact on development in Southern Africa. Therefore, it is imperative to demonstrate the link between the dominant knowledge and its implications for optimal policy decisions. Since the broader part of this research focuses on security, it would only be logical to start by delineating the concept of security from the IR perspective and its rhetorical trajectory that has evolved over time.

### 2.2 Conceptualisation of 'Security': from state security to human security

It is common knowledge that theories inform the framework and implementation of policy decisions that affect the quality life of people. This is not only applicable at the national, but also the international level of policymaking and implementation. On the international level it is the 'dominant knowledge',<sup>12</sup> or mainstream theories that, more often than not, decides the fate of the developing countries, as it influences the direction and shape that aid should take and the spending priorities of developed countries (Thompson; 1995; Thompson; 2000). Hence, the development and socio-economic progress of developing countries often hinges on the policy decisions of the developed countries. At the heart of this issue is the ongoing lack of power on the part of the developing south that reinforces the dependence on the developed north (Waever; 1999; Smith; 2000).

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<sup>12</sup> Various IR scholars refer to 'dominant knowledge' when attempting to describe the most widely accepted theories in the field and (as the name suggests) the most dominant. This often has disastrous consequences for decision makers in the developing world who makes use of such theories without taking the environmental and contextual differences into account. See also; Thompson (2000) *Theoretical Approaches to Security and Development* and Weaver (2003) *Securitisation: Taking stock of a research programme in Security Studies*

The Realist perspective<sup>13</sup> was and still is the most dominant in the field of international relations and constitutes one of the ‘grand debates’ in the field of IR. The academic discourse on security has its roots in the realist perspective that focuses on the military aspect of security. In other words, it deals with the state’s protection from external military threats. This is a state-centric approach that emphasizes the security of the state as priority over all other aspects (Niarguinen<sup>14</sup>; 2001; Smith; 2000; du Plessis; 2001).

Although this notion of security is still dominant in IR theory, the strength of the core argument has waned over time and created an opportunity to start looking at security from a different angle and to encompass a wider variety of dimensions under the philosophical umbrella of ‘human security’ (Van Nieuwkerk; 1999). ‘Human security’ has been defined as, “...the absence of threat to human life, lifestyle and culture through the fulfillment of basic needs” (UNDP; 1993: 21). This points to a shift of focus from the military aspect of security to the developmental aspect and specifically the underdevelopment of the so-called ‘third world’.

This shift in ideology also meant a break with the state-centric approach that, in turn, injected a humane aspect into the concept of security as it became more and more difficult to ignore the plight of human beings across the globe. In essence, security became entangled with survival, not only of the state, but also of the people that inhabit the state. It became evident that there are other existential threats that impact on human security that requires acknowledgement and attention. The expansion of the conceptual framework of security meant that the prioritization of military security waned and, in turn, security was viewed in a more holistic manner (Thompson & Swatuk; 2000).

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<sup>13</sup> The Realist paradigm is predicated on the assumption that the international system is anarchic and uses states as its main unit of analysis. It also emphasizes states’ military capabilities and their potential to use it against one another therefore; it urges states not to trust one another as, states are viewed as primarily being rational, atomistic and self-interest actors, and are by and large characterized by scepticism and pessimism. States are perceived as rational actors that make strategic decisions in terms of their survival and are encouraged to be independent and to fight their own battles. The ‘SSS’ model is most commonly associated with it and respectively stands for: Statism, Self-help and Survival.

<sup>14</sup> Niarguinen (2001) “Transforming Realism: Irreducible Core Gives Life to New Interpretations and Flexible Incarnations in *RUBIKON* (E-Journal) available online at <http://venus.ci.uw.edu.pl/~rubikon/forum/dmitri.htm>

But in order for any analyst to make sense of the concept ‘security’ and in order to understand the need for securitisation, the aforementioned concept needs to be juxtaposed against ‘insecurity’. Weaver (2003: 15) very aptly illustrates the need for this dichotomy in his analysis of ‘securitisation’. He posits that insecurity is the situation where a threat is present but there is no defense against it whereas, security is “a situation with a threat and a defense against it”<sup>15</sup>. It is therefore important to view security in relation to the respective threat in order to make sense of the reason for securitisation.

### *2.2.1 New Security and the relevance of food security*

Evidently a need arises to look at the concept of security and to unpack its analytical expediency before attempting to marry it to ‘food’. We are here specifically looking at the trajectory of ‘security’ from the traditional realist perspective to the more modern ‘new security’ approaches that emerged over time. Over time the focus around the issue of security has shifted from the security of the state and freedom from the threat of force or violence to that of human security. It became evident that the constraint of the concept and its restricted use did not allow for the holistic approach needed to address the array of socio-economic challenges facing the world today.

Environmental, social, cultural, political and economic factors had to be taken into consideration as the ‘new security’ debates surfaced and reinforced the notion that an exclusive focus on military security is inadequate and could have disastrous repercussions for especially (but not exclusively) the inhabitants of the developing world. It also meant, not only considering the security of the state, but also that of the individual, community and the environment<sup>16</sup>. Furthermore, it became vital to move away from the ‘either/ or’ dichotomy that often characterizes the perceptions of security to an ‘and/both’ understanding of security issues. This would pre-empt the spill-over effects of insecurity of one region, community or society to another and

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<sup>15</sup> See: Weaver (2003) “Securitisation: Taking stock of a research programme in Security Studies” available online at <http://zope.p04orsk1.dk/securitytheory/oletext/htm>

<sup>16</sup> See: Kai Frithjof Brand-Jacobsen-Dir & Satyagrahi, ICL/Praxis for Peace, “Beyond Security, New Approaches, New Perspectives, New Actors” available online at <http://www.russfound.org/consult1/papers1/Brand-Jacobsen.htm>

makes it clear that even if the developed countries feel no immediate pressing urge to focus on human security, if ignored, it would not only become a problem, but they would be forced to prioritise it. This is simply true due to the fact that the developed countries, in this age of globalisation, need to cooperate with the developing countries and they ought to exist in a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship. If the developed countries continue to choose to ignore the plight of the developing countries, the devastation of hunger and poverty would soon be on their own doorsteps.

Security means different things to different people and are often construed according to their immediate needs and desires and is therefore assessed against an 'existential threat' that is perceived as having an impact on the survival of human beings. The broader theoretical framework that informs the decision to view security in a certain light also determines the perception of survival. For realists survival is inextricably tied to the state, as state survival is its main concern, but for the 'new security' analysts survival is a socio-economic issue directly linked to the well-being and security of people. Hence, the development of the state, its economy and its capacity to provide basic services to its citizens became important.

The new security analysts brings us a little closer to the essence of this research as it addresses the question; what does survival mean to an ordinary citizen who's primary concern is getting by and feeding himself and his family? Just as the 'grand narratives' have usurped security, the concept of development is also often defined in a certain way that bears witness to the external influences of dominant knowledge. Most commonly development is, "...taken to mean development towards a 'western' capitalist, market and consumption based economy...."(Kai Frithjof Brand-Jacobsen-Dir & Satyagrahi (n.d)). This is, of course, presumptuous and leaves no room for any alternative conceptions and it is precisely this kind of capitalization on dominant knowledge that leads to the perpetuation of structural inequalities within societies and between them.

In the case of food security the 'threat' or that which it is measured against, is the absence of food. Therefore, it is important to address the following questions put

forward by Kai Frithjof Brand-Jacobsen (n.d); Security from whom/what?, Security by whom/what? and Security for whom/what?

When considering the abovementioned questions it becomes evident that the dichotomy between the haves and the have nots is a glaring reality that has almost become convention or the norm because people have come to accept the notion that some have and others don't. Therefore, security is perceived as something that cannot be shared simply because of the pessimistic veil that clouds human nature from trusting in the good nature of mankind. Hence, the only way to ensure one's own security is by limiting or threatening another's. Evidently, security for one could mean insecurity for another.

*Food security* falls within the ambit of the broader 'human security' paradigm and also emerged as a result of the 'new security' debates. The World Bank defines food security as "Secure access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life" (World Bank, 1986:1)<sup>17</sup>. Therefore, *food insecurity* exists where there is a lack of access by all people to enough food to maintain a healthy nutritional diet. The concept comprises both references to *food self-sufficiency* and *food self-reliance*. The former refers to the quantity of production relative to domestic consumption requirements whereas the latter refers to domestic availability. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has narrowed the definition of food self-reliance down to the "adequate supply of imported food to member states" (Chisvo; 2000: 10).

Food self-sufficiency eliminates food imports as a major source of supply whereas food self-reliance doesn't have this limitation. The interpretation of the concept by the WTO suggests that countries should focus on producing sufficient capacity to generate the needed foreign exchange in order to import the amount of produce that exceeds the perceived efficient amount of production. In other words, countries should focus on producing enough food relative to the notion of 'economic

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<sup>17</sup>See also: Clover, J (2003) food security is not only a problem of availability (production), but also a problem of access (distribution and purchasing power) and it should therefore, be noted that excessive productive capacity (at national level) does not necessarily translate into access for all at household level. This approach to food security is embedded in the *Food Entitlement* approach pioneered by Amartya Sen in the early 1980s.

efficiency'<sup>18</sup> and not their inherent consumption needs. This notion is inherently linked to a country's independence, as the encouragement of food imports implicitly espouses dependence and therefore, brings the relevance of the semantic implications of the concept *self-reliance* into question. Not only doesn't it make sense in the African context, where agriculture plays such a vital role, but it is also an insult to any country that strives toward self-autonomy and independence from the western developing world. It is also this aspect that comes into play in the analysis of the liberalisation of trade in agriculture and its impact on food security.

### 2.3 Dependency theory

Dependency theorists posit that a relationship of dependency was borne out of the legacy of slavery, colonialism and imperialism and these were the historical factors that cemented the roots of inequality in the world system. Dos Santos (1971) very aptly illustrates the historical genesis of the relationship of dependency in his definition:

[Dependency is]...an historical condition which shapes a certain structure of the world economy such that it favors some countries to the detriment of others and limits the development possibilities of the subordinate economics...a situation in which the economy of a certain group of countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy, to which their own is subjected (Dos Santos; 1971:226).

Dependency theorists attribute the poverty that has become synonymous with the so-called third world<sup>19</sup> to colonialism and forced integration into the world economy by 'expansionist' first world powers<sup>20</sup>. Furthermore, they argue that the economic development of the developing countries was structured in such a way as to serve the needs and purposes of the developed countries that, for the most part, were their former colonial masters<sup>21</sup> (Weeks; 1996; Reed; 1997; Tsie; 1996). The World Bank

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<sup>18</sup> See Bratton (1987) Economic efficiency refers to a positive ratio of expected benefits to known costs in the short term.

<sup>19</sup> The term 'third world' is often associated with the time frame around the Cold War. It is not only outdated but also derogatory in the sense that it referred to the least developed countries and hence resembled not even a glimmer of hope for the south. For the purpose of this research this term would be replaced with, what is thought of as more appropriate, the term 'developing countries'.

<sup>20</sup> The relationship of dependency is inextricably linked to the skewed power relations between developing and developed countries that emerged as a result of the economic prosperity of the developed countries. The developing countries therefore, constitute the 'peripheral' states whose economic development are predicated on the external influences of the 'core' (developed) states and the IFIs.

<sup>21</sup> See: The IR theory knowledge base found at <http://www.irtheory.com/know.htm>

and the IMF, who represent and act in the interests of the developed countries, facilitated the manipulation of the international economic relations through the application of SAPs.

Many colonised countries had to apply for the assistance of their colonisers (through the IFIs) after independence in order to follow their proposed *capitalist* steps toward development. This, in turn, perpetuated and intensified an unequal distribution of wealth in the world economy and deepened the gap between the developed north and developing south (Dos Santos; 1971). The problem of food insecurity is depicted within the dependency framework as a situation where the developed countries constitute

...a world in which people are born to live upon the earth, whereas the poor countries are the kingdom of starvation and misery, a world in which people are born only to ascend to the heavens like angels...[creating] a new geography in which not the earth feeds man but man feeds the earth with his body (De Castro; 1971:197).

Dependency theory brings to the fore the implications of colonialism and the entrenchment of colonial practices at independence. Moreover, it elucidates the link between historical developmental trajectories and the inequality that characterises the present international system. The unequal nature of the structure of the world economic system that is portrayed by dependency theorists also resonates in structuralism. These two paradigms converge at that juncture where the unequal power relations that characterise the international system and the subsequent constraints placed on the developing countries to ensure human and, more specifically, food security are analysed (albeit from different angles at times).

#### **2.4 Suzan Strange: a structuralist approach**

International relations as a discipline retains, at its very core, the complex interaction of political, social and economic dynamics that shape and influence the systems of production, exchange and distribution that play itself out both at the national and the global level. It is at this critical juncture that political and economic imperatives interact, compete and are weighed against each other to eventually determine policy outcomes that follow the 'cost and benefits' analysis. However, decision-making processes, both at national and international levels are, more often than not, informed

by underlying and existing norms, ideas and values (Strange, S; 1991). In the international arena it has often been found that the ideas and values of the developed world carries with it a sense of dominance that often resonates at the national level of decision making in the developing world.

It is common knowledge that the western developed countries' economic policies are imbued with neo-liberal notions of macroeconomic policy-making. The prevalence of these notions combined with the economic dominance of the developed world makes for the compelling and often seemingly indisputable strength of the knowledge flowing from the north. Perceptions of social and economic development and the means to achieve it are inherently linked to the neo-liberal discourse entrenched in the knowledge structure of the developed world. The World Bank and the IMF can, in this instance, be considered to be the actors that facilitate the distribution and entrenchment of such perceptions by acting as conduits through which this knowledge flows from the developed to the developing world in the form of policy prescriptions. The knowledge structure is susceptible to manipulation and selective application, as applied knowledge and 'wisdom' is often consciously selected whilst opposing or challenging views are ignored or simply dismissed in order to facilitate the pursuit of preferred outcomes (Strange; 1991). Moreover, the knowledge structure is fraught with subjective value judgements that are based on specific historical and contextual experiences.

The implications for states in the developing world are that they are subjected to submit to the overwhelming and generally accepted 'wisdom' of the west and thereby formulate their policies in such a way as to incorporate this 'wisdom' in their policy decision-making processes. This is a function of the power relations between the developed and the developing countries that compels developing countries to 'do the right thing' or at least what is perceived to be 'right' by the west (Thompson; 2000). Decision-making that is based on these value-laden normative judgements affects and often alters the socio-economic position of the individual (within a given developing country) and therefore affects his/her ability to extricate him/herself from the clutches of poverty and underdevelopment. Ultimately, the preservation of 'human security' and accordingly, 'food security' hinges on the uncritical application of this western wisdom in a context far removed from the western reality and distinct in cultural and

social make-up. It also disregards the importance of entrenched indigenous knowledge systems.

Strange (1988: 15-17) rightly observes, "...politics in the liberal Western tradition recognises a trade-off between order and liberty and between security and justice"<sup>22</sup>. In any event, policy outcomes are determined by the prioritisation of one over the other and therefore imply, for example, that the attainment of a sense of security might entail the partial or full abdication of sovereignty. It is essentially a zero-sum game. In a sense, "all societies need to produce food, shelter and other material goods; but some will give the production of wealth in material form the highest priority".

The structuralists perceive power to be an inherent function of the interplay of the market and authority. The context within which the market operates is therefore also important and is a reflection of the distribution of power. Strange (1988:25) points out two types of power namely: *structural power* and *relational power*. The latter refers to one actor's ability to influence the actions of another actor in the international realm. Structural power has been defined by Strange as "...the power to shape and determine the structures of the global political economy within which other states, their political institutions [and] their economic enterprises...have to operate". In other words, structural power sets the rules of the game and demarcates the parameters within which it is to be played. It encompasses four individual structures, the security structure, the production structure and the financial structure and the knowledge structure. These four structures interact at the global level to shape and determine policy outcomes at the international sphere. It is this power and, more specifically, the *production structure*<sup>23</sup> that this research would be most concerned with as it is most

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<sup>22</sup> The 'order and liberty' she refers to pertains (at the global dimension) to the state's access to self-preservation, autonomy and its claim to sovereignty whereas, the 'security and justice' aspect pertains to the means at the states disposal to ensure relative protection from perceived threats to either its military or human security and its ability to maintain justice in the international system of global relations.

<sup>23</sup> See Strange (1988) The 'Production structure' can be defined as the sum of all the arrangements determining what is produced, by whom and for whom, by what method and on what terms. It is the structure that creates wealth in the political economy and is inextricably linked to the power relations both within and across societies. Strange, highlights the two fundamental changes that occurred in the production structure over time as; 1) the shift to a capitalist market oriented mode of production in which, "markets for goods and services allow the forces of demand to influence what is produced" (p65) and 2) the internationalization of the production structure, geared towards serving the interests of

relevant for the analysis of the power relations between the developing and developed world.

The production structure has been adversely affected by the prioritisation of the security structure (in the form of elaborate defence and armament expenses) and has also been undermined by the collapse of the global credit systems that suspended the capital needed for production. The production structure is therefore, inextricably tied to autonomy of states, as the SAPs has shaped the production structure in such a way as to serve the needs of the developed countries.

Ample food is being produced and there are large food surpluses globally, however, it is not reaching those who need it most (Berk & Bigman; 1993; Rukuni & Eicher; 1988). The World Bank asserts that the lack of *purchasing power* perpetuates the hunger and food insecurity problem. This is true to a certain extent and it is therefore imperative to examine the reason behind the lack of purchasing power.

Power is used in such a way as to manipulate the establishment and maintenance of the international order that is underpinned by the norms and standards of the most powerful. The unequal distribution of economic power between the developed and the developing countries also elucidates the lack of purchasing power on the part of the developing countries. This creates a structural dependency of the developing countries on the developed countries that is further cemented by skewed trade relations that emerge as a result of the dominant knowledge that inform policy formulation<sup>24</sup>. This unequal nature of the international trade regime resonates locally by reinforcing existing or creating new class relations and thereby deepens inequality at the national/state level. In order to fully comprehend the impact that SAPs have on the attainment of food security and its implications for the purchasing power of individuals, a delineation of SAPs and the conditionalities attached to it, is warranted.

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the world market. This second change gave rise to the severe criticism against the policy of 'import substitution' prevalent in many developing countries.

<sup>24</sup> The World Bank (1994b: 11) for example, encourages developing countries to continue exports of primary products and goes as far as stating that the production of, "even those that face limited world demand" should be expanded.

## 2.5 Structural Adjustment and Aid conditionality

Structural Adjustment Programmes was introduced as the instant cure to the debt burden afflicting the developing world and have been imposed under certain prerequisite conditions. These conditions include among others; cutting down on social welfare, currency devaluations, reduction of government subsidies to consumers on staples ect. (Thompson; 1991;Thompson; 2001). The extractive nature of the adjustment programmes demonstrates the ideological underpinning of ‘market liberalisation’. The sole focus of this approach is to generate economic development by increasing production (of especially export crops), decreasing producer prices and increasing consumer prices (Ndimande; 1992). The question then arises, what about the poor who cannot afford to buy even the most basic foodstuff?

It is widely acknowledged that economic policies should generate income to the poor in order to improve food security (Armani, Kapunda, Lipumba & Ndulu; 1988). It is also evident that SAPs have not been very successful and have left some countries worse off than before (Ndimande; 1992; Thompson; 1991; Tsie, 1996). It has not only had an adverse effect on the poor but also exacerbated the food insecurity in developing countries and, more specifically, in Zimbabwe.

Structural adjustment hinges on the policy shift from an interventionist, state regulated stance towards neo-liberal position that espouses market allocated resources and minimal state intervention (Muuka; 1998; Paes; 1999). It essentially aims at rectifying the ‘economic and social imbalances’ in a country’s economy that is, more often than not, blamed for the lack of development or underdevelopment and is directed at establishing ‘economic efficiency’<sup>25</sup>. The IFIs consider market distortions, created by state-intervention, as the main ‘structural’ problem whilst ignoring the historical impact of colonialism and the uneven integration into the world economy of developing countries. Hence, the need for economic reform arose in order to eliminate such ‘imbalances’ and to facilitate development.

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<sup>25</sup> ‘Economic efficiency’ refers to a positive ratio of expected benefits to known costs in the short term. For further explanation see Bratton (1987)

Like many other African and developing countries, Zimbabwe experienced a shortage of foreign exchange that hampered the execution of development programmes and stifled the imports of necessary inputs for manufacturing and agricultural development and production. This created a demand for financial aid and assistance that delivered these governments into the hands of the IFIs and created a conducive climate for the systematic exploitation of the developing world through the imposition of conditionalities attached to such financial aid packages.

The process that follows the diagnosis of the economic ills that afflict developing countries is preceded by the initial 'stabilisation' of a country's economy and is followed by 'structural adjustment'<sup>26</sup> (Stiglitz; 1999). Both the World Bank and the IMF perceives the only role of the state, in the adjustment process, to be that of creating optimal conditions for market and private sector-led growth. It should be noted at this juncture, that the sequencing of the economic reform process described above is often very problematic as stabilisation measures are, more often than not, imposed against a backdrop of poor infrastructural capacity and a concomitant lack of bureaucratic capacity to carry such reforms out.

The discourse of the IFIs is fraught with notions of 'stability' and 'balance' in terms of the economic structure of a given country and how it pertains to the larger macroeconomic environment. However, notwithstanding the fact that no country ever achieves a complete balance between exports and imports or between government revenue and expenditure, these notions of balance and stability are based on the subjective interpretation of the IFIs. It is therefore ironic that a country's economy would be deemed to be more 'stable' and 'balanced' (according to the IMF and the World Bank) after adjustment even though the proportion of debt to GDP and the debt-service ratio to exports increased (as in most cases).

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<sup>26</sup> 'Stabilisation' is the responsibility of the IMF and is associated with short-term correctional measures such as reducing public expenditure, foreign exchange deficits and raising interest rates that have to precede the implementation or adoption of 'structural adjustment' policies (which is the responsibility of the World Bank). Structural adjustment pertains to longer-term correctional measures such as civil service reform, investment in human capital and the provision of an environment where the private sector can flourish. *See also:* Mosley, Subasat & Weeks (1995) they posit that 'stabilisation' seeks to control the demand side of the economy with the purpose of reducing inflation and to achieve a sustainable balance of payments position whereas, 'structural adjustment' is directed towards the supply side of the economy with the focus being on removing 'market imperfections' in order to promote growth.

The question of conditionality is often implicated in the moral obligation of donors to the developing countries when the socio-economic ramifications of it is analysed. Most of the arguments against conditionality are based on the fact that "...[it] turns aid from a gift into a contract-based bargain"(Engberg-Pedersen; Gibbon; Raikes & Udsholt; 1996:18). This 'bargain' is in actual fact masked by a thin veil of deceit that hides the unfairness of agreements entered into by the recipient countries (and the donors) and serves to shift the attention away from the fact that the polarised parties who enter into agreement come from vastly different positions of economic (and hence political) power. Evidently, the 'bargain' is rendered null and void, as it is in reality nothing more than the forced hand of the west cloaked by the perceived notion of choice and participation. The recipient country is therefore indirectly obligated to renounce its sovereignty, as its policy formulation and decision-making power is revoked.

The counter-argument often used to justify such actions is that the developed countries are allowed to call the shots seeing that they are the ones who contribute the most to the IFIs and therefore have the right to decide how and where their money should be spent (Stiglitz; 1999; Helleiner; 1983). Fair enough, but don't the developing countries also contribute (most of the time against their will) toward the further enrichment of the developed north through the systematic extraction of Africa's natural resources and uneven terms of trade and hasn't this been the case since the exploitative legacy of colonialism? On the other hand, it has also been proven that conditionality has intensified "...pre-existing tendencies of non-accountability and non-transparency, further overstretched an already diminishing state capacity..." and successfully isolated the objectives of the economic reform process from the object of reform itself (Engberg-Pedersen; Gibbon; Raikes & Udsholt; 1996:22).

Africa is rife with examples of state-led economic intervention that followed the attainment of political independence and Zimbabwe is no exception. The history of colonialism and the economic inequality and social injustices associated with it created a need for a strong state to steer and coordinate the process of development in order to create a sense of retribution for those who bore the brunt of political

imperialism<sup>27</sup>(Riddell; 1992). Therefore, most African states dramatically increased state-spending on education, health, development of export agriculture (in order to earn foreign exchange), industrial investment and infrastructure in the years directly following independence. As a result, employment in the public sector expanded very rapidly, imposing further pressure on the public wage bill. In most cases such increases in state expenditure was unsustainable and incompatible with national budget capacities. Hence, budgets became overstretched and the need for foreign exchange to pay for inputs needed for industrial development became more nuanced (Macleans & Mangum; 2001).

Furthermore, the expansion of investment, increased incomes and demand and thereby, imposed further pressures on public expenditure whilst foreign trade deficits enlarged, creating an endless cycle of foreign indebtedness. The lack of foreign exchange was aggravated by significant reductions in foreign aid mostly as a result of disagreements over conditionalities between the donors and the recipient countries. This illustrates the ‘carrot-and-stick’ method employed by the IFIs to bring the recipient countries into order and to keep them under their control. As a result, consumer goods became increasingly unavailable as, capacity utilisation in local manufacturing dropped to extremely low levels.

One of the most common criticisms against structural adjustment is that it makes the poor poorer and that it decreases their standard of living and that “...the notion of a free market in Africa or anywhere else is a misleading chimera and a more solid basis for African development would involve acknowledging a significant though limited role for the state, with all its faults”(Engberg-Pedersen; Gibbon; Raikes & Udsholt; 1996: 8). The IFIs often respond to this by stating that the freeing of markets increased the income of the poor<sup>28</sup> and therefore bettered their social standing and they (the IFIs) are also prone to asking what would have happened in those countries had they not received financial aid (Muuka; 1998).

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<sup>27</sup> The development and expansion of peasant production in the agricultural sector is also heavily reliant on state-protection and state-led marketing processes.

<sup>28</sup> The World Bank’s vehement defense of the notion that structural adjustment makes the poor poorer is emphatically expressed in *Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, Results and the Road ahead (1994b)* as, “the majority of the poor are probably better off and certainly no worse off” (p70). The use of the word *probably* exposes the cunning use of discourse to evade the question of empirical evidence.

On the other hand, others deem the structural adjustment not as much problematic as such but rather needing to be applied in a more sensitive way that takes cognisance of local circumstances. The IFIs often claim that they were not fully prepared for the structural imbalances created by SAPs and attribute the failure of such programmes to the lack of implementation of structural adjustment conditionalities and the subsequent crowding out of private investment (World Bank, 1994b). Stiglitz (1999: 584) eloquently captures the evasiveness of the IFIs and their reluctance to take responsibility for the failure of their policy prescriptions by stating, "...when a particular prescription fails, the doctor always has an incentive to suggest that it was the patients' fault for not following the prescription precisely".

On that note, it should be elucidated that ownership of structural adjustment programmes by recipient governments has been a major problem<sup>29</sup>. The recipient governments are supposed to (at least in theory) formulate development priorities after consultation with its line ministries before seeking funding from donors but this does not happen in practice. Quite contrary to this, the donors often end up driving recipient governments' development budgets and prefer to manage development projects themselves as they "... insist on donor-and project-specific planning, implementation and review procedures" (Engberg-Pedersen; Gibbon; Raikes & Udsholt; 1996:19). Recipients are required to implement a range of policy changes before even receiving the first instalment and instalments that follow are based on the assessment of the timeous implementation of further changes agreed upon. The main problem with such an arrangement is the fact that the implementation of (often drastic) policy changes requires the necessary human and financial capital and infrastructure to carry it out, which makes the request for advance policy changes illogical (Helleiner; 1983).

Despite the apparent lack of ownership of adjustment where it has been implemented, a glaring lack of significant or effective opposition begs the question as to why these governments resigned themselves to a position of submission and elucidates the

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<sup>29</sup> See: Cornia (2001), this is especially the case for the poor inhabiting the recipient countries as they have limited capacity to organize and to articulate their demands effectively and are therefore, deprived of a sense of ownership of such programmes. However, the fact that selective consultation takes place invariably leaves the poor in the dark about the content of adjustment policy proposals and therefore eliminates them as possible pockets of resistance to economic reform.

ongoing 'were they pushed or did they jump' debate. Indeed, the inherently skewed power relations operating at the global level and the aid/debt trap that most developing countries found themselves in left them with little or no alternative. The immense emphasis placed on 'pace' and 'speed' of implementation by the IFIs explains the lack of consultation with recipient governments. Where consultation did take place only a small group of elite government officials were included in discussions and the focus was (mostly) shifted away from the content of the programme and centred on the speed of implementation. This illustrates the cunning strategy (on the part of the IFIs) to win over sceptical key players whilst neutralising or sidelining explicit opponents.

Agriculture accounts for up to or even half of the GDP of most African countries and is therefore fundamental to the growth of GDP figures. It is difficult to assess the direct impact of SAPs on the development process in developing countries, as both internal and external factors need to be taken into account. The extreme dependence of African countries on agriculture makes them vulnerable in cases of bad weather as a bad harvest plunges the whole economy into a downward spiral. Drought is therefore often sighted as one of the most common contributing factors to economic and social decline and most conveniently used to divert the attention away from the blunders made by the IFIs<sup>30</sup> (Engberg-Pedersen; Gibbon; Raikes & Udsholt; 1996:16).

Most of Africa's export crops are subject to inelastic demand and is therefore severely affected by any change in output as it leads to large price changes (Paes; 1999). In other words, the exporting country would receive lower returns for a product with which the international market is already flooded as prices are pushed downward by this phenomenon. Evidently, not enough foreign exchange flows into the country and this impedes the process of importing the necessary equipment for production in the manufacturing sector. This situation is further compounded by the depreciation of a country's currency, which is so often associated with structural adjustment, as the

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<sup>30</sup> Admittedly, bad weather and severe drought seriously impact on agricultural production but it is important not to lose sight of the external shocks that the local market experiences as a result of increased international competition and unfair terms of trade under conditions of structural adjustment.

adjusting country would have to pay more for expensive imports whilst incurring more debt (Riddell; 1992).

## 2.6 Conclusion

Development in the developing countries, more often than not, hinges on the dominant knowledge that prevails at the global sphere of political and economic relations. Hence, policy decisions in these countries are informed by this dominant knowledge.

The theoretical approach to 'security' has changed over time from a state-centric, militaristic (realist) approach to a more encompassing humanistic approach that takes cognisance of the socio-economic issues that affect the individual. This gave rise to the 'human security' and 'new security' debates in which food security is located. Food security pertains to both the access and availability of food. It is a multidimensional problem, as it is influenced by an array of factors such as land, capital, inputs, information and access to markets.

The dependency theory brings to the fore the implications of historical developmental trajectories and, more specifically, the implications of colonialism and its link to the present inequalities that characterises the power relations in the international system. This theory is complemented by structuralism in that, the latter sheds light on the specific structural impediments inherent in the international system that hinders development in developing countries.

Furthermore, the use of dominant knowledge by the World Bank and the IMF and its influence on the production structure is of particular importance to the food security problem. The conditionalities attached to SAPs have an adverse effect on development and the elimination of poverty. The underlying logic (neo-liberal) of the IFIs have found inhospitable territory in the developing world in the form of weak infrastructural capacity, a lack of human and financial capital and a populace eagerly awaiting the redistribution of goods and services that they were deprived of before independence.

The following chapter, chapter three, will provide an analysis of the changes of the macroeconomic indicators (inflation, interest rates, growth rates and employment) during the pre-and-post adjustment periods in Zimbabwe and how this impacted on access to basic commodities and the purchasing power of individuals. It will also explore the impact economic reform has on the state's sovereignty (global) and legitimacy (national) by examining the emergence of political resistance (as a result of structural adjustment) and its threat to democratic governance.



# Chapter three

## Aid in Zimbabwe

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to address the structural impediments to economic growth that prevailed both before and after the adoption of ESAP in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, it aims to explore the effects of the macroeconomic policy shifts on the labour force, the public service and the attendant implications that the erosion of purchasing power (in the form of decreased wages, retrenchments and the withdrawal of subsidies) had for the poor and vulnerable sectors of the Zimbabwean society. A comparison will therefore be drawn between the pre-and-post adjustment periods in order to highlight the changes in terms of both macroeconomic and social indicators. It is, however, important to take the economic policy environment inherited at independence into account as this not only laid the foundation within which the new government had to operate but also, in many respects, set the precedent for the economic policy considerations of the Mugabe-government.

### 3.2 Zimbabwe's inheritance

Ian Smith had adopted inward-looking, import-substituting policies during the United Declaration of Independence (UDI) period (1965-1979) in response to the international sanctions and in an attempt to protect the local economy<sup>31</sup>. The government set out to improve the manufacturing sector and to achieve self-sufficiency in most consumer goods during the UDI period. Evidently, economy-wide controls on wages, interest rates and prices and in the foreign exchange market became the order of the day. The adoption of an elaborate foreign exchange control system and import rationing was intended to offset lurking balance of payment problems. This strategy worked for a while and yielded impressive growth rate figures until around 1974 when the intensification of the liberation war, world recession and oil price increases induced negative growth.

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<sup>31</sup> See: "Economic Policies and Policies since Independence" available online at <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/abstract/128/rr128ch03.pdf>

The Zimbabwean government inherited one of the most diversified and strongest, albeit highly unequal, economies in Africa at independence. Ironically, this was partly due to the sanctions imposed against the Rhodesian regime that were intended to bring it to its knees. These sanctions served as a protective barrier behind which the settler regime was able to develop "...a reasonably efficient and well integrated modern agricultural, industrial and service sector" (Engberg-Pedersen; Gibbon; Raikes & Udsholt; 1996:14).

The Lancaster House Agreement<sup>32</sup> of 1979 comprised a settlement between the local settler colonialists and the armed liberation movements (ZANU and ZAPU) that outlined the regulatory framework within which the new government was to operate for the next decade. It guaranteed the provision of 20 parliamentary seats for white settlers in the 100-member House of Assembly and a further 10 seats in the Senate. In a sense, it provided the white populace with a sense of security by ensuring their representation in these key state structures. Moreover, the agreement had very detrimental implications for land reform as it limited the redistribution of land to a "willing seller, willing buyer" arrangement and it entrenched the property rights of white settlers, thereby "...preserv[ing] capitalist property relations"(Stoneman & Cliffe; 1989:30). Evidently, the structural constraints in the form of the unequal distribution of wealth, power and resources became institutionalised by this agreement.

The economic policy stance of the Mugabe-regime had its roots in the benchmark that was set by the previously manifested economic order. As a result, it inherited many of the features of the macroeconomic environment that characterised the Smith-regime at independence. Furthermore, advent of African majority rule in Zimbabwe (in 1980)

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<sup>32</sup> The Lancaster House Agreement was negotiated at a constitutional conference in London (Lancaster House) 1979. The British government, who set out to protect the interests of the white settler colonialists in Zimbabwe, formulated it. It also marked the process of 'transition' from white minority rule to African majority rule in 1980 and the end of the protracted national liberation war. It was essentially a provisional constitution valid for the first 10 years after independence after which it could be amended. Sibanda (1991:3) argues in *The Lancaster House Agreement and the post-independence state in Zimbabwe* that this agreement laid the foundation for neo-colonialism and the reproduction of the system of imperialist-dominated capitalism. He qualifies this by referring to the "recognition of the sanctity of the institution of private property in the means of production" enshrined in this document. See also: Stoneman & Cliffe (1989) *Zimbabwe: Politics, Economics and Society*, Jenkins (1997) "The Politics of Economic Policy-Making in Zimbabwe" in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 35. No. 4 and Bratton (1981) "Development in Zimbabwe: Strategy and Tactics" in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 19 No. 3.

brought with it a shift in the balance of parliamentary and executive power from white settler colonialists to black nationalists. The new regime owed much to the peasantry, as they comprised the mobilised political power base of ZANU-PF during the liberation struggle. This elicited a sense of obligation on the part of the government and incited them to (by all means) recompense the peasantry for their loyalty and support during the war, whilst simultaneously consolidating ZANU-PF's political strength and autonomy.

The first economic policy statement presented after independence was entitled *Growth with Equity*<sup>33</sup> (contained within the Transitional National Development Plan, 1980-1985). New regulations regarding higher minimum wages and more stringent laws pertaining to hiring and firing were put in place in order to protect the workers and to redress racial discrimination in the workplace (Takavarasha; 1992). Foreign exchange controls, import licensing and restrictions on capital mobility remained in place to protect the domestic industry from foreign competition and to ensure job security. This was all done under the banner of the 'socialist transformation'<sup>34</sup> agenda that the new government was pushing in the name of redistribution.

The need for redistribution was addressed by increasing government expenditure and deficit financing. This led to the rapid expansion of the public sector in order to aid the materialisation of the government's redistributive objectives. Increased government expenditure on health, education and social services yielded a marked improvement in the standard of living for many, especially the rural sections of the population. Unfortunately this noble gesture brought with it some negative spin-offs

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<sup>33</sup> See: Takavarasha (1992) this document depicts the Zimbabwean government's desire to pursue and implement policies based on socialist, egalitarian and democratic conditions of economic growth. Furthermore, it highlights the attainment of employment, price stability, efficiency in resource allocation and equitable distribution of benefits obtained to all, as the major goals (at the time) to be achieved.

<sup>34</sup> The socialist rhetoric that characterised the initial stages of political consolidation has been the topic of much debate elsewhere. It is not the intention to participate, at this stage, in this debate but it is worthy to note that the unequal division of resources (economic and social) inherited at independence was hardly attended to. In fact, the emergence of the new black petty bourgeoisie merely transferred the means of accumulation from one minority to another whilst leaving the peasants and the working class to continue to bear the label of 'the dispossessed masses'. Stoneman (1988) notes that 5% of the population commanded about half of the economy while the other 95% had little to show in terms of the government's socialist rhetoric.

in the form of unsustainably high budget deficits that was masked by the plethora of economic controls (Kanyenze; 1996; Muzulu; 1996).

The institutional context of the government ensured that both political interests (as represented by organised interest groups) and economic considerations could be factored into the policy-making process. It appears, however, as if ‘political rationality’<sup>35</sup> overrode economic imperatives in the policy-making processes before the adoption of ESAP (Burgess; 1997). The burgeoning of the bureaucracy<sup>36</sup> and the concomitant rise of the black petty bourgeoisie after independence exemplifies this. Bratton (1987:179) concedes that this phenomenon “...represent[ed] a common situation in which the distribution of patronage appointments overrides a more economically efficient public employment policy”. The expansion of the bureaucracy was necessitated by the need to keep good on government’s electoral promises and in this respect, facilitated the delivery and expansion of services to the rural populace. As a result, the public sector wage bill escalated by 66% between 1981 and 1984.

### **3.3 Zimbabwe’s economic structure prior to ESAP: 1980-1990**

Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980 and many critics and academics concur that it was during the first decade since independence that its economy was characterised as fairly stable and coherent until the decision, in 1990, to liberalise its economy by adopting the controversial Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). It was from this point onwards that the traditional import substitution industrialisation was replaced with manufacturing-based export led orientation (Bond & Manyanya; 2003).

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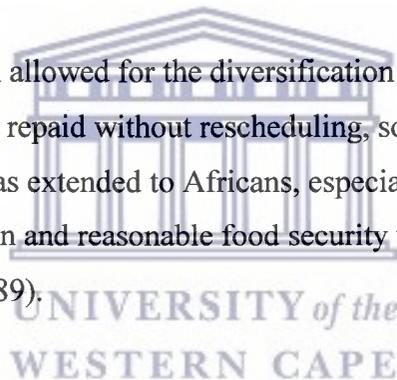
<sup>35</sup> See Burgess (1997) Political rationality hinges on the maintenance of power, only when power is assured can other utility-maximising activities be undertaken.

<sup>36</sup> The bureaucracy of post-independent Zimbabwe comprised a mixture of old guard bureaucrats from the colonial regime and newly elected officials. Bratton (1987:177) describes the purpose of this new bureaucracy as having to act as, “a conduit through which considerations of cost-benefit calculation were brought to the surface within government”.

Although ESAP was deemed a “home-grown” economic reform policy, it was in actual fact little more than a carbon copy of the SAPs that was being implemented elsewhere on the continent and the IMF and World Bank heavily guided its design<sup>37</sup>. It should be noted, however, that whether ESAP was in actual fact ‘home-grown’ or imposed by the Bretton Woods institutions is of no consequence to the poor and vulnerable groups who invariably suffer the consequences since the repercussions are the same and the programme only different in name.

Although critics like Stoneman (1988), Bond (1998) and Paes (1999) concur that Zimbabwe’s economic performance during the 1980s was strong, the neo-liberals along with the World Bank argue that the government failed to successfully utilise the economic opportunities presented during this period. Zimbabwe’s economic performance eclipsed most of the other African countries’ performance and economic growth is said to have averaged at 4% per annum during the 1980s<sup>38</sup>.

Furthermore, industrialisation allowed for the diversification of exports, the debt incurred at independence was repaid without rescheduling, social expenditure increased significantly and was extended to Africans, especially the previously disadvantaged rural population and reasonable food security was fostered (Stoneman; 1988; Stoneman & Cliffe; 1989).



### *3.3.1 The need for aid*

The need for economic reform and the eventual adoption of ESAP was a consequence of both local and international dynamics. Local economic stagnation and the local

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<sup>37</sup> The debate around whether Zimbabwe was ‘pushed or whether they jumped’ is firmly situated within the issue of the authenticity of the ‘home-grown’ programme. It is a rather contentious issue and various views have emerged relating to it. Bond (1998) for example, notes that the ESAP document is written in American English, Mumbengegwi & Mabugu (2002) asserts that it was World Bank/IMF supported but differed in many respects and Carmody (2001) cautions against the unconditional acceptance of ESAP as ‘home-grown’ by reiterating Bonds referral to the use of American English and the World Bank typeface.

<sup>38</sup> Bond (1998) posits that the subtraction of the initial boom years, 1980-81, reduces the average growth rate for the decade to just below 3%. This implies that the average population growth rate, estimated at 3.2% per annum, surpassed the average economic growth rates. However, Mumbengegwi & Mabugu (2002) state that the average growth rate between 1980-85 was 4.1% whilst the average growth recorded between 1986-90 stood at 4.6%, bringing the average for the decade to 4.3%. Albeit, this was still lower than the 8% growth target envisaged in the Transitional National Development Plan (TNDP).

class-forming process is considered by Bond (1998:341) as national ‘push factors’ that prompted the adoption of ESAP and the concomitant yield to the economic dictates of the IFIs. In similar vein, Sibanda (1990) notes that the imperialist-sponsored unequal class relations intensified during the immediate aftermath of independence. This saw the rise of the new black petty bourgeoisie, from within the ranks of the state apparatus (public officials, ministers and civil servants), acquiring property and aspiring to a lifestyle that resembled that of the white capitalist class. The state became the ‘primary locus of accumulation’ for politically connected blacks that used their positions to further their own interests by, for example, acquiring large commercial farms (Jenkins; 1997).

A pervasive ‘third world’ debt crisis emerged throughout the post-independence era. Many developing countries were subjected to the pressures of globalisation that required embracing the international financial markets whilst abandoning protectionist economic policies. Zimbabwe was no exception and had to, amongst other requirements listed under the Washington Consensus, liberalise trade and deregulate finance (Bond & Manyanya; 2003).

The 1980s started on a very positive note for Zimbabwe with growth figures recorded in 1980 and 1981 averaging at 10.7% and 9.7% respectively. These exceptional growth rates were facilitated by “...favourable exogenous growth conditions such as the end of the liberation war, the lifting of economic sanctions, favourable world market conditions and two consecutive and exceptionally good rainfall seasons”(Mumbengegwi & Mabugu; 2002: 5).

On the other hand, a series of negative tendencies during this period has been identified of which among the most significant are; “...serious over-borrowing in the early 1980s, a failure to create more jobs, a failure to implement a racial redistribution of assets (especially land) ...and a failure to respond sufficiently to exogenous shocks”(Gibbon; 1996:349).

Soon after independence, after experiencing some budgetary problems, the Zimbabwean government managed to obtain an eighteen month Standby Credit from

the IMF (then worth US\$390 million) in 1983 after agreeing to devaluation, cuts in development programmes and subsidies and the restoration of internal and external balances (Gibbon; 1996; 1995). However, it was suspended as early 1984. The reasons given for the suspension are diverse and varied<sup>39</sup>. When tracing Zimbabwe's economic path of development since independence, it becomes evident that signals of a debt crisis loomed as early as 1984.

Although exports were above the average growth rate for 1980-1990, imports stagnated as a result of the inward-looking economic policy the Zimbabwean government espoused. The subsequent lack of foreign exchange made debt servicing increasingly difficult. The foreign exchange shortage also hampered the development of the industrial sector, as the imports of necessary inputs became increasingly difficult (Stoneman; 1988).

The noble gesture of extending educational, health and agricultural marketing board-services to Africans had a negative spin-off as it resulted in mounting internal borrowing (Bond; 1998). This, in turn, led to extremely high fiscal deficits in the range of 8.9% between 1985-90 and the 'crowding out' of private investors from the local credit market. Inflation also averaged at around 13% throughout the decade and most of the national savings were accounted for by the restrictions on imported consumer goods.

Job scarcity was one of the most important structural economic problems as less than 30,000 jobs were created while more than 200,000 school leavers were entering the labour market annually. Bond (1998) attributes the low levels of private investment that averaged at 10% between 1985-1990 to this problem. However, Stoneman (1988) singled out the "...retention of inflated salaries to an elite" as being responsible for the lack of employment. Clearly, the government was torn between the interests of the peasants vis-à-vis the interests of the petty bourgeoisie.

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<sup>39</sup> Stoneman & Cliffe (1989) attributes this to the government's inability to control the budget deficit while Carmody (2001) emphasises the introduction of tighter controls on imports in 1984 and the government's reluctance to abolish the foreign exchange control system.

The relaxation of import and foreign exchange controls in the second half of the 80s (under the *First Five Year Development Plan* (FFYDP), 1986-1990) seem to have brought about some economic recovery, albeit minuscule, in the form of increased capacity utilisation in the manufacturing industry. The need and inclination of the Zimbabwean government to redistribute wealth and national resources in a more equitable way is well acknowledged but the means with which to achieve these goals seems to have eluded the government in most instances. Stoneman (1988: 53) for example, observes, "...the plans amounted to not much more than elaborations of how the paths to the desired ends would look *if* they occurred, but offered little help with *making* them occur". A holistic view of the overall performance of the Zimbabwean economy during the 1980s brings about a pattern of erratic growth patterns and extreme fluctuations.

### *3.3.2 Internal vs. External pressures for economic liberalisation*

Political expediency plays a formative role in policy choice, with leaders using the distribution of resources as a device to attract political support, nullify opposition, and remain in control (Bratton; 1987:175).

Policy choices thus become the product of the interaction between economic principles and political costs. When such policy choices are buttressed by the support of organised interests (such as unions) it acquires an artificial aura of legitimacy as it makes for a compelling logic that is difficult to contest in the absence of overt resistance from other (potential) clusters of popular resistance.

Before independence the African communal lands didn't benefit from agricultural services and were barred from access to most infrastructure and social services. During the 1980s the barriers to African crop sales to the parastatals were lowered and their buying networks were extended. This saw the African share of maize sales increase (during the 1980s) from 1 percent to almost 50 percent. The costs of this and the expansion of social services to Africans led to a string of complaints from the private sector represented by the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) related to the 'crowding out' of private capital and excessive taxation on private business. Although the CZI was always (or for the most part) in favour of protectionism, their grievances were related to some of the controls it implied such as price-controls and

the restriction of access to foreign exchange. This was further compounded by complaints from agricultural producers related to "...shortage of foreign exchange [and] disruptions in the availability of fertilizer and diesel fuel"(Bratton; 1987:186). As time passed they became more and more disillusioned by the 'negative' effects of protectionism and this eventually led to them to begin pressing for 'gradual' trade liberalisation in the late 1980s. The World Bank capitalised on this opportunity and aligned themselves with the CZI (Carmody; 2001)<sup>40</sup>. Although the Zimbabwean president, Robert Mugabe, was opposed to trade liberalisation for the most part of the eighties and political support for it seemed to be limited to the Minister of finance, Bernard Chidzero, trade liberalisation triumphed at the end of the day. This is said to have happened as a result of the monopoly the CZI had in the area of economic policy making as "...the CZI had exerted a considerable influence on economic questions throughout the 1980s and was now given representation on a series of committees...in 1989 to recommend concrete trade liberalisation measures"(Gibbon; 1996: 351).

Moreover, the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979 reflected the perception that Zimbabwe's reintegration into the international economic system was vital and needed to be prioritised. Not long after gaining independence, six months to be exact, Zimbabwe joined the IMF and the World Bank. By mid 1982 the then-minister of Planning and Economic Development, Bernard Chidzero, divulged plans for an IMF loan but insisted that it would not require devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar and denied the existence of any conditionalities (Bratton; 1987; Bond; 1998).

However, less than three months later he announced a 20% decline in the currency and within the following eighteen months the devaluation reached nearly 40% that saw a subsequent reduction in the maize subsidy. The effects of this was soon felt by the poor and working-class sections of the population as, "...the price of staple maize increased by 100% from 1982-83, bread 30%, and cooking oil 25%". Similarly the public health programme suffered a 9% decline in spending between 1982-83 after the initial boost of 27.5% and 47% respectively since independence (Bond; 1998: 344).

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<sup>40</sup> Carmody (2001) also alludes to the influence that the power of the World Bank's discourse had in this regard and he further asserts that the CZI's conversion to neo-liberalism was underpinned by the World Bank's strategy to deliberately target key figures in the organisation.

The benefits of the devaluation were disproportionately accrued by the agricultural and mineral exporters. Furthermore, most of the means of production was still firmly situated in the hands of 'private capital' (Bratton; 1981). Stoneman (1988: 48) thus observed, "Zimbabwean capitalism is thus alive and well, although in a rather tight state corset". The government's servicing of foreign debt became increasingly difficult but the World Bank reassured them that debt service ratios would decline after 1984. This spawned the adoption of more loans that saw the debt servicing ratio spiralling upwards to 37% of export earnings by 1987. As 'cost-recovery' in the form of continued cuts to public expenditure took its toll, food subsidies that rose from 5.2% of total government expenditure at independence to 7.7% in 1981 dropped to 5.3% by 1985-86 (Bond; 1998: 346). Hence, Zimbabwe became systematically entangled in the web of the IFIs while that latter gained increasing leverage in terms of the conditionalities attached to aid and the economic policy implications thereof.

For some the solution suggested to the economic dilemma the Zimbabwean government was experiencing were further resource distribution and some form of state economic intervention while the neo-liberals and more specifically, the World Bank had one and only one simple remedy: freeing the markets, as it was said to give greater access to foreign exchange and credit. Bratton (1987:175) describes the prescriptions recommended by the IFIs for the economic ills that plague African agriculture as a "...purgative dose of market liberalisation". His description rightly encapsulates the impractical and unrealistic notions of 'economic rationality'<sup>41</sup> as a panacea for all Africa's developmental, social and economic problems as it, more often than not, doesn't take account of the contextual relevance of the settings in which it is implemented.

The 1980s saw the interests of the IFIs, the petty bourgeoisie, organised business interests (in industrial, mining and large-scale agricultural sectors) and the state converge. Consequently and at the behest of the IFIs (and their dominant knowledge), structural adjustment was introduced in 1990 as a five-year economic liberalisation reform plan. Although traces of economic liberalisation can be found in the pre-adjustment period, this all intensified with the adoption of ESAP.

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<sup>41</sup> See Bratton (1987) Economic rationality is the approach of the economic planner who applies standardised tests to determine the maximum output for least cost.

### 3.4 Zimbabwe's dance with the IFIs: macroeconomic reform and the economic climate for agricultural performance

The fact that the first year of structural adjustment coincided with the onslaught of a vicious drought in 1991-2 makes it very difficult to assess the direct impact of the ESAP<sup>42</sup>. However, it is clear that the shift from an inward-looking economic policy to an outward-looking one left a huge part of the local industrial sector vulnerable as foreign competition intensified while demand declined as a result of the drought. Mlambo (1995: 8) confirms, "The IMF/World Bank's insistence on promoting free competition in the local market is based on a patent fallacy that domestic producers can compete equally with well-heeled and more efficient multinational producers".

Finance minister Bernard Chidzero first introduced ESAP in 1990 but its policy content and objectives/predictions were only revealed in the January 1991, *Framework for Economic Reform (FER)*, 1991-1995. Some of the more significant objectives of this programme, amongst others, were; reaching 5% growth annually, shrinking the budget deficit to 5% of the GDP, reducing inflation from 20% in 1991 to 10% by 1994 and the growth of exports by one third from the late 1980s levels and more specifically, it predicted that agricultural exports (that suffered a steady decline since 1988) would grow steadily to 1995. It also included an annex entitled the 'Social Dimensions of Adjustment' (SDA)<sup>43</sup> that sought to cushion the poor and vulnerable from the effects of adjustment. More importantly was the announcement that the import control/forex allocation system would be replaced by tariffs and the

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<sup>42</sup> Sachikonye (1995) highlights the fact that ESAP didn't contain any contingency measures to address periodical outbreaks of drought as a serious shortfall of the programme. Furthermore, the government's decision to decrease parastatal stocks (just before the outbreak of the 1992 drought) in an effort to reduce government expenditure, certainly had an impact on the need to import food and increased consumer costs for foodstuff.

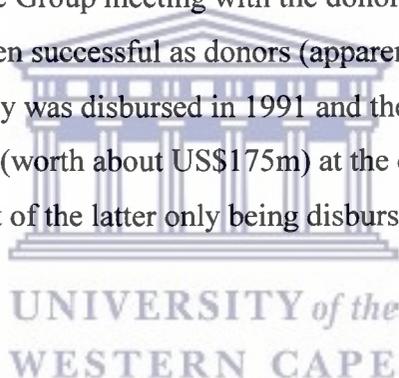
<sup>43</sup> Wilde (1994) outlined the objectives of the SDA in a World Bank Report entitled *Africa's Experience with Adjustment: Proceeding from the Harare Seminar, May 23-24*. The objectives included training of the temporarily unemployed through retrenchments and to provide financial support for social services such as educational fees, hospital fees, feeding schemes and subsidised mortgage interest rates for low income groups. However a study conducted by Bilmakers, Basset & Sanders (1995) found that the implementation of the programme has been hampered by several factors such as; inadequate funding, cumbersome application procedures and bureaucratic red tape, over-centralisation in the processing of payments and unclear division of responsibilities between the departments involved in SDA. See also: Drakakis-Smith (1994) "Food Systems and the Poor in Harare under Conditions of Structural Adjustment" in *Human Geology*, Vol. 76, No. 1.

introduction of an Open Guaranteed Import Licence (OGIL) that was to be phased in over a five year period (Gibbon; 1996).

The following years left these optimistic predictions wanting as growth only reached 5% in one year (1994) and averaged at 1.2% from 1991-1994. Furthermore, inflation averaged 29% from 1991-1994 and the budget deficit averaged just below 9% during the same period, a far cry from the 5% envisioned (Bond; 1998: 380-381).

Mumbengegwi and Mabugu (2002) ascribe the high budget deficit to delays in public sector and public enterprise reform. They also argue that the concurrent pursuit of 'incompatible' elements of the reform programme such as, vigorous trade liberalisation juxtaposed against sluggish public sector reform and huge budget deficits are to blame for many of the difficulties that Zimbabwe's economy endured during ESAP.

Zimbabwe's first Consultative Group meeting with the donors was held in March 1991 and was said to have been successful as donors (apparently) pledged more than US\$700m. None of this money was disbursed in 1991 and the World Bank only formally ratified its own loan (worth about US\$175m) at the end of December 1991, which saw the first instalment of the latter only being disbursed in March 1992 (Gibbon; 1996).



Delays on the part of the donors to disburse funds caused severe liquidity problems. Transfers of funds that were due for 1990-1991 only took place in May 1992 and this was as a result of distrust (on the part of the donors) that the programme would really be implemented and their need to maintain leverage over Zimbabwe's budget. It, therefore, becomes evident that the IFIs used their financial leverage to, "promote an extensive policy agenda and short-circuiting decision-making processes" (Thoka; 2002). Mblambo (1995: 3) echoes this sentiment:

Like the proverbial "wolves in sheep's clothing", the multilateral organisations claim to be one thing while under the façade of benevolence they actually represent a clearly calculated agenda designed to impose a particular world economic order on developing countries; one that will work to the benefit of the industrialised countries whose interests the IMF and the World Bank represent.

The World Bank maintained that the lowering of real wages would reinforce the expansion of exports. However, the reality that emerged painted a grim picture of soaring inflation coupled with chronic job losses and inadequate opportunities to create employment for those already unemployed (Brown; 1999).

#### *3.4.1 Declining real income and consumption*

Employees in the manufacturing sector witnessed a substantial decline in real wages after the implementation of economic reform policies under ESAP. Contrary to neo-liberal logic, the decline in real wages did not yield increased job opportunities. Accordingly, their purchasing power was reduced and this, in turn, affected their quality of life and their consumption levels. This necessitated the reduction of the consumption of certain goods (in order to have others) and the search for alternative means of income to buttress their diminutive wages. Coping mechanisms included, inter alia, remunerative work on a commission basis, self-employment in informal activities and subsistence farming (Drakakis-Smith; 1994; Bond & Manyanya; 2003).

The removal of subsidies and the decline in real wages of workers had the combined effect of engendering a substantial decline in social consumption. Sachikonye (1999:74), confirms that between 1993 and 1995 “all the basic consumer commodities underwent price mark-ups; some, like milk, beef and bread, even doubled in price”. The fact that basic commodities became increasingly unaffordable was further compounded by the steady erosion of the purchasing power of those groups affected by retrenchments, unemployment, the removal of the ‘minimum wage’ and other cost-recovery measures. To exemplify the extent of the impact Sachikonye further states that in 1995 only 21 percent of the participants in a survey conducted by him reported that they were able to purchase bread before the next pay cheque as opposed to 65 percent in 1993. Furthermore, those who were able to afford milk had decreased from 52 percent in 1993 to 15 percent in 1995.

Brand, Mupedziswa & Gambo (1995) reported in a survey entitled *Structural Adjustment, Women and Informal Trade in Harare* that the changes in consumption patterns affected the nutritional status of many low income families as the deterioration of the quality of food intake and the composition of the basic food

basket manifested. Some of the female respondents in this study conveyed their perception of ESAP as:

ESAP means suffering, hunger and increases in prices. It is especially hard for us women who have to provide food for children (p206).

ESAP is supposed to make the country prosper and become a rich nation, but to me it means decrease in business and hunger for my family...(p207).

Another respondent elucidated the plight of women, especially those in single-headed households:

Life has become hard ever since my husband died. The little we had saved was spent on visiting doctors and on his medication. All my children are out of school, -but now I have to support and send to school my four grandchildren (p188).

A community woman who participated in a study entitled *Health and Structural Adjustment in Rural and Urban Settings* conducted by Bijlmakers, Basset & Sanders, (1995: 265) expressed her views in relation to the 'health for all by the year 2000' goal of the government as:

'Health for all by the year 2000' is not going to be achieved. Instead, because of ESAP, it is going to be 'Death for all by the year 2000'. The elite will not die, but they will be very lonely. There will be no one to live with them

An overall view the issue around purchasing power further reveals the deterioration of social services particularly concerning access to health and education. Fees charged for health and education services increased markedly under the auspices of ESAP. The erosion of state subsidies in these areas meant that consumers were required to fork out extra money to pay for such services therefore leaving them, more often than not, in a position where they had to compromise around the prioritisation of acquiring basic services. The question can therefore be raised: is it fair for an ordinary citizen to be put in a position where he/she has to decide on whether to withdraw his/her children from school (as has been the case in many instances) or to pay for the necessary medical care that, more often than not, didn't guarantee the provision of prescribed medicine (as the availability of medicine has also been compromised)? It is also imperative to note at this stage that the steady reduction of people's access to food is intrinsically bound up with the issue of the availability of health care, as a

balanced and nutritious diet would invariably minimise the manifestation and exacerbation of various health complications.

Furthermore, the inherent tension between the government's socialist ideology (and its associated attempts at redistribution) and the implementation of neo-liberal economic reform measures presented a contradiction that pushed the Zimbabwean government into corner as far as priorities were concerned. Therefore, the request for (upfront) fiscal stabilisation on the part of IFIs was weakly and reluctantly attempted as such a move was contingent on serious political costs.

#### *3.4.2 Trade reform and the relaxation of import controls*

The introduction of the 1991 Open Guaranteed Import Licence (OGIL) that was said to facilitate the expansion of imports brought about an unprecedented flow of luxury goods such as expensive German cars, French brandy and South African wine to satisfy the opulent desires of the new elite. As the economic benefits flowed into the pockets of the emerging bourgeoisie and the prevalent economic inequality deepened, the poor were left at the periphery begging, trading and selling their labour cheaply as a means of survival. The rapid increase in imports saw the trade deficit widening whilst instead of increasing, exports dropped by 17% between 1990 and 1992. This portrayed a stark contrast to the pre-ESAP days when for example, exports increased by 9% annually between 1985 and 1990 (Bond; 1998).

Despite the dismal performance of the 'economic reform process' and the devastating 1992 drought, the Zimbabwean government remained adamant in its commitment to economic liberalisation and was consequently rewarded with the "best possible grade for the fist stage of the utterly failed programme: "highly satisfactory", by the World Bank (Bond; 1998: 390-394).

#### *3.4.3 Implementation*

Despite the World Bank and many critics' claims that the 'lack of implementation' was to blame for the failure of the liberalisation process, evidence points to the contrary. Hawkins (1994) reported in a compilation of World Bank discussion papers

that followed a seminar entitled *Africa's Experience with Adjustment* that 'uneven' implementation created uncertainty and that Zimbabwe's 'less than whole-hearted' commitment to the reform process had a detrimental effect on private sector investment. With the exception of fiscal discipline, slow privatisation of parastatals and the Social Dimensions of Adjustment (SDA) strategy, Bond (1998: 414) highlighted the following 'accomplishments' (in this respect) that were achieved by mid-1994:

- 18 000 government jobs were abolished and the civil service wage bill was reduced to 11.3% in 1994 from 15.3% in 1990
- the foreign exchange control system was dismantled
- tariffs were lowered to the 15-25% range (for most products)
- there was extensive liberalisation of foreign investment regulations
- price controls were eliminated
- many local zoning and training restrictions were abolished and
- labour markets were largely deregulated



The diligent implementation of the proposed economic reforms that underpinned ESAP didn't yield the expected results nor did it stimulate the desired supply response. Hence, growth figures achieved after 1991 compared dismally against those in the previous decade. The average real GDP growth for the period 1991-1995 was an abysmal 0.8%. The share of wages/ GDP decreased from 57% during the 1980s to 45% in 1995. A comparison between the objectives of the economic reform process and the real outcomes reveals a huge paradox and brings the internal logic of neo-liberal economic policies into question.

### 3.5 ZIMPREST: The second phase of economic reform, 1996-2000

The second phase of economic reforms implemented in Zimbabwe was known as the Zimbabwe Program for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST, 1996-2000). It was essentially intended to complete the unfinished reforms of ESAP and more specifically the reduction of the budget deficit, public sector reform and financial liberalisation. Unlike its predecessor it highlighted issues of black economic empowerment, land reform and poverty reduction and therefore had a more encompassing social and political focus.

Although ZIMPREST started off on a very positive note with an overall GDP growth of 7% in 1996, it soon started showing signs of trouble in terms of the anticipated objectives. Mumbengegwi and Magubu (2002:8-9) attribute this to the government's 'fiscal imprudence' and claim "persistent revenue and expenditure mismatches made the budget deficit *the* cause of Zimbabwe's macroeconomic instability since the start of economic reforms".

The government's decision to switch from financing the budget deficit through borrowing from 'non-banking' sector (during ESAP) to financing it from the 'banking' and 'financial' (at interest rates more than 60-70%) sectors is also said to have aggravated the rise of inflation and interest rates with inflation reaching an all-time high of 70% by the end of 1999. Weak supply response for exports and the associated lack of foreign exchange also added to balance of payment problems. An overarching view of the macroeconomic situation that prevailed during ZIMPREST exposes the manifestation of "...low overall economic growth, high budget deficits, high inflation, low foreign exchange reserves...and a weak balance of payments position".

Furthermore, a range of political activities that emanated towards the end of the 90s served to exacerbate the economic situation. Among these was the government's involvement in the Congolese war, the appalling way in which land reform was conducted and the government's failure to meet reform targets that lead to the suspension of support for the reform programme from IMF.

Moreover, the World Bank and the IMF achieved increasing hegemony in terms of aid coordination (with other donors) from the mid-80s to such a degree that "...the IMF's key role has become that its presence is the toughest seal of approval available for continuation of disbursements of all kinds, while its absence casts a doubt on the 'reliability' of a government as a partner"(Engberg-Pedersen, Gibbon, Raikes & Udsholt; 1996:16).

The magnitude of the IMF's monopoly among international donors saw other potential donors treating the Zimbabwean situation with caution. Support from the EU, for example, was contingent on Zimbabwe's continual adjustment with the support of the IFIs (Brown; 1999). As a result, the government's capacity to repay foreign debt was severely constrained. The debt to GDP ratio stood at 82% by the end of 1999 and its external debt-servicing ratio was well above the targeted 20%. The credit worthiness of the government was brought into question and subsequently saw some of the credit lines being suspended.

### **3.6 Popular resistance vs. the strong-arm of ZANU-PF**

Although president Mugabe and his ministers often expressed resentment towards the interference of the IFIs and the consequent loss of sovereignty, concrete opposition and concerted efforts to extricate itself from the clutches of these institutions were lacking. ESAP intensified the country's health problems and it became particularly difficult to deal with the intractable problem of AIDS as income-generation diminished and budget cuts to health increased. ESAP therefore became colloquially interpreted as "Eternal Suffering for the African People"(Bond; 1998: 379).

Almost all the gains made during the first decade of independence were systematically eroded after the implementation of ESAP. As the effects of this programme began to be felt by the majority of the population, unemployment stood out as "...the most glaring reflection of ESAP's failure"(Bond; 1998: 407). The restructuring of the public sector and the concomitant retrenchments by the private sector painted a bleak picture of more and more people being pushed into destitution as the standards of living dropped dramatically for some while others lost their means of income completely.

Furthermore, the lethal combination of chronic unemployment and sharp price increases of basic necessities (as a result of the removal of subsidies and the currency devaluation) lead to the rapid spread and intensification of poverty. As a result, popular discontent grew and the government felt pressures from the disillusioned masses and the unions. Sachikonye (1995:39) concurs, "...far from contributing to political and economic stability SAPs have provoked domestic struggles".

As dissatisfaction with ESAP mounted among both the general public and the workers, the trade unions attempted to mobilise against it. The government responded with draconian measures such as detentions without trial of leaders and the prohibition of rallies and demonstrations (Gibon; 1996). It should be noted, however, that the unions were dissatisfied with the government long before the introduction of ESAP, albeit this exacerbated the situation. The government used divide-and-rule tactics to diffuse the bottom-up pressures from the unions, especially that of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU). The Ministry of Labour announced its intention to do away with the 'one industry, one union' policy that accounted for the strength and dominant representation of ZCTU in mid-1991. Alongside the unions, students and groups from within churches were also powerful sources of public criticism of ESAP. ZANU-PF's systematic estrangement from its once close allies, during its more radical days, led to the search for new allies with a similar ideological orientation (neo-liberal) and interests to compliment the pursuit of economic liberalisation.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has illustrated that both local and international pressures contributed to the implementation of ESAP. Furthermore, the increasing leverage of the IFIs over decision-making powers of the Zimbabwean government has eroded their ownership and control over the programme and diminished the state's sovereignty in the process. This, in turn, has left the state to compromise between political rationality, on the one hand, and economic rationality, on the other. The effect was the depletion of

legitimacy among an increasingly dissatisfied and disillusioned populace who felt the effects of ESAP in the form of unemployment, retrenchments, decreased incomes and living standards and the systematic erosion of their purchasing power. The government responded with repressive measures that ultimately signified the demise of democracy and the concomitant emergence of an autocratic state that fumbled under the contradictions inherent in the need to contain political support whilst dancing to the tunes of the IFIs. Chapter four will highlight the changes the agricultural output and consumption levels by comparing the pre-and-post adjustment agricultural landscape and the policy implications associated with economic liberalisation.



# Chapter four

## Agriculture in Zimbabwe

### 4.1 Introduction

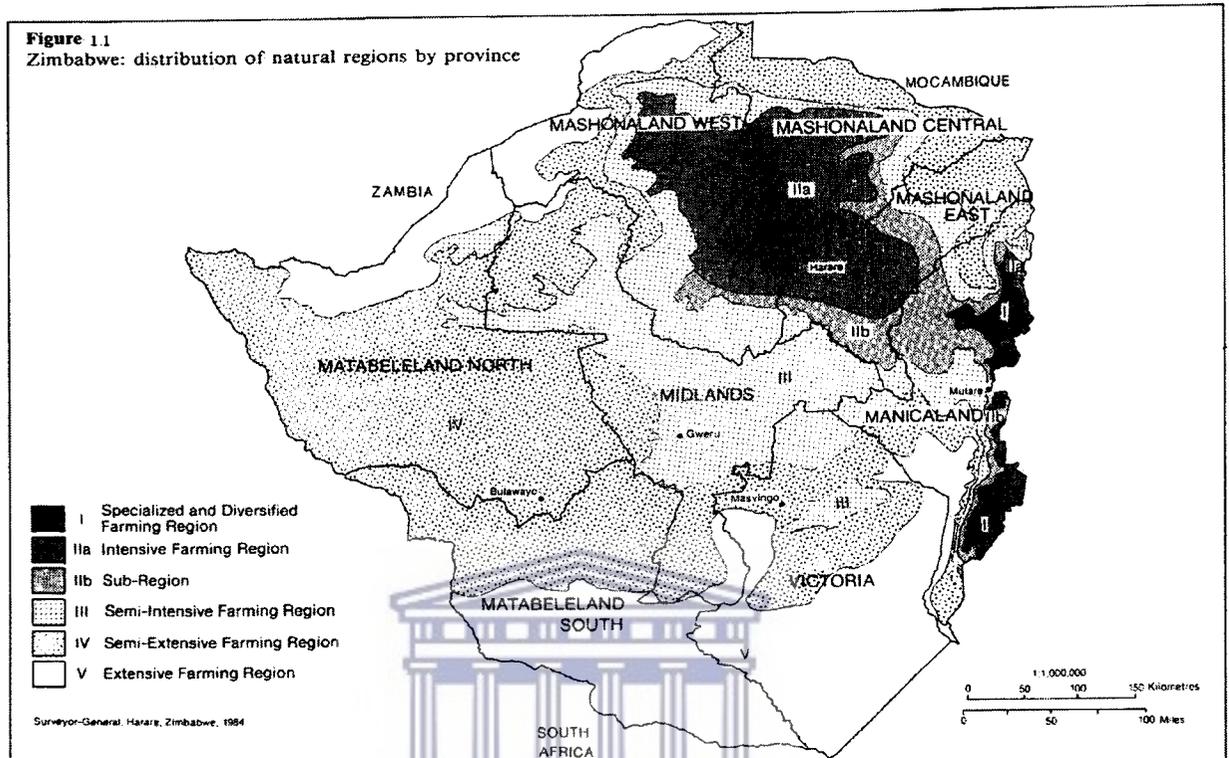
This chapter aims at exploring the developments in the agricultural sector in Zimbabwe both before and after ESAP. Furthermore, an analysis will be drawn between the state of agriculture before ESAP and the implications that the latter had on food security, especially for farmers in the communal areas. This will be attempted by focusing on the pricing and marketing policy changes that emerged as a result of ESAP. Moreover, the availability and access of peasants' to agricultural inputs will be evaluated against the production and consumption levels relative to the pre-and-post ESAP periods. The importance of land, in this regard, cannot be overestimated, as this was the single most important factor driving the liberation struggle. Access to land is not only an important factor of production but it is also, especially in Zimbabwe, tied to a sense of ownership, a sense of belonging and a complex history of the trajectory African culture and identification with the 'soil'. The distribution and redistribution of land (after independence) and the underlying political imperatives will therefore be explored in order to elucidate the government's manipulation of the land issue and the important implications this had for agricultural production and output.

### 4.2 The agrarian structure

Gibbon (1996) and Mumbengegwi (2002) and Zipperer (1987) all describe Zimbabwe's agricultural structure as 'dualistic' as it is characterised by the polarisation of a group of (mostly white-owned) Large Scale Commercial Farms (LSCFs) against a concentration of Communal Farming Areas (CFAs). These are the two main categories of farming systems, with the exception of the Resettlement Areas (RAs) and the Small Scale Commercial Farms (SSCFs), and are considered to be the most appropriate for the analysis of the agrarian structure. This research would,

therefore, only allude to these two farming systems. The bulk of the Zimbabwean population, about 55%, reside in the communal areas<sup>44</sup>.

**Figure 1.1** Zimbabwe: distribution of natural regions by province



Source: Weiner (1988) in Stoneman *et al.*

The agrarian structure inherited at independence was characterised by the vastly skewed distribution of land and agricultural resources in favour of the large-scale commercial farmers (Rutherford; 2004). This was as a result of the agro-ecological zoning (done according to rainfall patterns and soil quality) that emerged during the colonial period. Figure 1.1 illustrates the agro-ecological zones or natural regions into which Zimbabwe is divided. Natural region I is situated in the East Highlands. This area enjoys good annual rainfall. The combination of good rainfall and low temperatures makes this region ‘highly effective for agriculture’. Natural region II accounts for 15% of the total land area and comprises the most intensive-farming area. It enjoys relatively good rainfall during summer and is especially suitable for the

<sup>44</sup> Although the term ‘communal’ implies that the land belonged to the community as a whole, each household operated an individual arable holding.

production of maize, tobacco, cotton and wheat. Furthermore, it is also well suited for intensive livestock production (Weiner; 1988).

Natural region III is best suited for semi-intensive crop and livestock production as rainfall in this area is subject to variability. This region is also characterised by higher temperatures during summer and therefore has higher water requirements. Cropping in this region is rather risky especially for crops, such as maize, that require durable rainfall. Natural region IV receives even less rain and is only suitable for drought-resistant crop varieties and semi-intensive livestock production.

Lastly, natural region V is situated in the 'hot and dry lowveld' and rainfall in this area is erratic and scarce. This area is therefore best suited only for extensive livestock production without irrigation. Most of the prime agricultural land is situated in the north-eastern Mashonaland provinces and it is in these provinces that most of the LSCFs are located<sup>45</sup>. On the other hand, most peasants, about two thirds, occupy the low-potential areas of regions IV and V<sup>46</sup>. The effects of droughts are therefore, also disproportionately felt by the communal farmers. The confinement of peasants to these marginal areas does not only impact on their productive capacity, but it also affects the levels of malnutrition in these areas. Furthermore, the combination of low-potential soils and frequent droughts requires heavy inputs of fertiliser in order to sustain good crop growth (Page & Page; 1992).

The agro-ecological differentiation not only established the unequal framework within which the peasants vis-à-vis the commercial farmers had to operate but it also ensured the latter's comparative advantage in terms of production and consumption. Stoneman

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<sup>45</sup> A study conducted by Thirtle, Atkins, Bottomly, Gonesse, Govereh, and Khatri (1993) entitled "Agricultural Productivity in Zimbabwe, 1970-1990" in *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 103 No. 417, reports that commercial farms produce almost 70% of the total agricultural output and contribute about 80% in sales to the share of agriculture relative to the GDP. This illustrates the importance of the LSCFs to the Zimbabwean economy and the dilemma the government faced in having to accommodate them.

<sup>46</sup> Rukuni & Jayne (1995) exemplify the plight of the communal farmers in regions III, IV and V in their study, *Alleviating Hunger in Zimbabwe: Towards a National Food Security Strategy*. They assert that farmers in these areas do not produce enough grain to meet their annual requirements and are therefore compelled to buy up to 50percent of their grain consumption requirements before the next season. This also explains their reliance and need for drought relief.

& Cliffe (1989: 129) describes the emergence of this comparative advantage as follows:

The large white farms thus came to occupy a high proportion of the better-watered and high potential land in the east and north-east, as well as some mixed farms more dependent on ranching in the less reliably watered central areas....

Thus, colonialism and the post-independent agrarian policy framework had effectively ensured the development of oligopolistic agricultural markets. The macro-economic framework that characterised the 1980s worked in favour of farmers "...with long-standing historical performances as opposed to smaller farmers" (Moyo; 2000:53).

**Table 1.1** Food scarcity and drought vulnerability in the Communal Areas by natural region

<i>Natural Region</i>	<i>'Food is scarce in most years' %</i>	<i>Received drought relief food in 1983 %</i>
II	13.9	1.0
III	16.0	41.0
IV	20.4	67.4
V	57.1	89.5

Source: Weiner 1986, in Stoneman *et al.* (1988)



Table 1.1 illustrates the availability of food as influenced by agro-ecological location. Evidently, communal farmers situated in regions II and III experienced far less food shortages, 13.9% and 16% respectively, compared to those in regions IV and V, 20.4% and 57.1% respectively<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> The figures in Table 1.1 does not only pertain to food availability as, food scarcity invariably impacts on the spread and intensity of malnutrition. Rukuni, M & Jayne (1995: 6) confirm that the largest number of malnourished people reside in the semi-arid communal areas.

**Table 1.2** Communal Area maize deliveries to the Grain Marketing Board by natural region, 1983-4 crop season

	<i>Natural regions I and II</i>	<i>Natural region III</i>	<i>Natural region IV</i>	<i>Total</i>
Tonnes	187 189	58 142	51 363	296 694
Per cent	63.1	19.6	17.3	100.0

*Note:* These figures are estimates from partial data, as the final quantity of communal area maize delivered to the GMB that year is not known.

*Source:* Moyo, S in Mandaza (1986), in Stoneman, C *et al.* (1988)

Table 1.2 illustrates the effect that agro-ecological differentiation had on the productive capacity of communal farmers. Clearly, those situated in the well-watered natural regions with high-potential soil (natural regions I and II) were able to produce significantly more than those situated in natural regions III and IV. Notably, the communal farmers in regions I and II delivered 63% of the total deliveries to the GMB as opposed to the 19.6% and 17.3% for regions III and IV, respectively.

This situation was further compounded by the disproportionate allocation of agricultural inputs. Before independence peasants were barred from access to the state-regulated marketing boards, extension and research services and received no financial support, except for a small group of black commercial farmers. As a result, yields in the LSCFs were often larger than those in peasant areas. After independence the LSCFs retained access, albeit decreased, to most agricultural incentives provided by the state. This was largely due to the leverage they maintained in the areas of food security, export earnings and employment and also the constraints placed on the government by the Lancaster House Agreement (Stoneman & Cliffe; 1989).

In comparison, the communal areas are characterised by overpopulated land areas coupled with low quality soil in arid and semi-arid zones. Although agricultural services was extended to the bulk of the rural population after independence, most of them still lacked draft power and had to supplement their incomes with off-farm

employment. This was particularly the case for women-headed households (Stoneman & Cliffe; 1989).

Zimbabwe's economy is heavily dependent on the performance of the agricultural sector as it contributes about 16% to the GDP and makes up 40% of foreign exchange revenues. Furthermore, it accounts for about one-third of formal sector employment. Accordingly, 70 percent of the population obtain their livelihoods either directly or indirectly from this sector (Bratton; 1987; Mumbengegwi; 2002). The livelihoods of those employed, for example, in the manufacturing sector are affected in that agriculture provides 60% of the industrial raw materials. The agricultural sector is inextricably linked to the manufacturing sector (and therefore also to the economy at large). Thus, the failure of the agricultural sector would have economy-wide ramifications.

The agricultural sector produces an array of exportable commodities such as tobacco, cotton, coffee, tea, horticulture and livestock products. As in many other African countries, maize is the staple food crop. Maize and wheat fall under the 'tradable' import competing food crops that are produced whilst sorghum and millet fall under the 'non-tradable' crops produced. Agriculture accounts for 40% of the country's export earnings, with tobacco and cotton taking up 75% of the total agricultural exports and contributing 30% to the total export earnings<sup>48</sup>, (Mumbengegwi; 2002; Zipperer; 1987).

#### **4.2 Agriculture at independence**

The government's agricultural policy that followed independence was strongly influenced by the agricultural structure it inherited from the colonial period. The latter comprised a highly controlled pricing and marketing policy framework that became entrenched over a long period of time.

Zimbabwe's economy, being agriculture-driven, is highly dependant on good rainfall seasons. The latter combined with high producer prices presented positive incentives

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<sup>48</sup> Takavarasha (1992) concedes that tobacco is the single most important export crop (followed by cotton) produced in Zimbabwe and that it accounted for 50% of agricultural exports in 1992.

to farmers and as a result, agricultural output increased markedly during the immediate aftermath of independence. In turn, higher agricultural incomes and minimal industrial wages stimulated consumer demand which, in turn, propelled the expansion of the manufacturing sector. This phenomenal performance of the economy was short lived, as the favourable exogenous conditions that spurred the initial economic boom dissipated.

Two consecutive droughts during the 1983-84 and 1984-85 harvest seasons and falling demand in world markets served to compound this situation and saw Zimbabwe's economy being plunged into a deep recession. The regions hardest hit by these droughts were Masvingo, the Midlands and Matabeleland and these were also the areas where most of the peasant- farming areas were located. As a result, agricultural output fell by almost 20 percent. Subsequently, incomes were reduced and demand for manufacturing diminished. Waning exports were accompanied by balance of payment problems that, in turn, evoked tighter foreign exchange controls on imports.

#### *4.2.1 Land reform*

Zimbabwe inherited an economy (and agricultural sector) dominated by large, mostly white-owned farms and corporations when it gained independence in 1980. Ravaged by ten years of civil war and political unrest, as a result of the limited transferral of land to Africans, the new ZANU-PF government was faced with the monumental task of kick-starting land reform whilst simultaneously improving the lives of the rural masses.

Lahiff (2003:79) eloquently captures the political and symbolic significance attached to land, especially for the rural masses, in Zimbabwe:

Land is not just a place to reside and secure a livelihood, but also a place to die, a place to commune with the ancestors, and a place that is central to the definition of a people.

Although an explosion of land transfers followed the immediate period after independence, the fervour soon subsided as the ruling government turned their

attention to other issues and hence, transferred far less land than would have been possible<sup>49</sup>(Rutherford; 2004).

Representation of peasant interests was hampered by a number of structural factors. Organisation of the resettlement constituency was weak and they lacked the necessary financial and technical resources to wage an effective national campaign for redistribution. Furthermore, redistribution lobby groups that existed were either too atomised or they represented the particularistic interests of the black petty bourgeoisie referred to in Chapter 3. Moyo (2000: 18-19) shares this sentiment and describes the Zimbabwean state as "...characterised as hiding behind populist rhetoric or nationalist ideology of promising land redistribution while serving the narrow and monopolistic economic interests of domestic ruling cliques".

Hence, demand for land reform after independence appeared to be less pronounced than anticipated and therefore reduced the political rationale for land reform. Furthermore, research conducted by state bureaucrats supported the notion that the resettlement programme should be halted, as it was considered too costly and not economically viable. The combination of the absence of both a viable economic and a compelling political rationale for land reform serves to explain the quick demise of the project. Bratton (1987) argues that the government shifted its focus away from land reform on the assumption that its constituents were more concerned with access to social services and paid employment than in careers in agriculture. On the other hand this strategy can also be interpreted as a deterring mechanism used to appease the land-hungry masses<sup>50</sup>.

Moyo, S (2000) argues that the disproportionate access to large tracts of the best land afforded large-scale white farmers the opportunity to benefit from the ESAP, as export-oriented production came to dominate agricultural scene. The pre-ESAP import substitution policy also hinged on the productive capacity of the LSCFs and

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<sup>49</sup> Although the initial land reform process facilitated the reduction of the vastly skewed distribution of land between white and African farmers (inherited at independence), the LSCFs still dominated a significant proportion (almost 30%) of the total land area in 1990. As a result, an overwhelming majority of African farmers were still condensed on the overpopulated CFAs.

<sup>50</sup> Burgess (1997) argues that the provision of services was a 'quicker and more cost-effective' way of dealing with rural demands.

land-use patterns were thus structured accordingly. Consequently, most forex was allocated to large-scale farmers to enable them to purchase imported farm machinery. Farmers in the resettlement areas were also perceived to be a liability rather than an asset because of a lack of production<sup>51</sup>. The government should carry some of the blame for this as the capital grants promised by them failed to materialise during the first, and in some cases the second, season. Furthermore, categories of people who were highlighted as most eligible for resettlement (the displaced, the landless and the poor) manifested a glaring void of management skills that further encroached on their productive capacity and capabilities. Evidently, land is not the only inhibiting factor in peasant production as access to capital, technology and labour also impacts significantly (Zipperer; 1987).

The lack of title deeds and cumbersome bureaucratic procedures related to the transfer of land also served to discourage peasants from resettling. “Although many proficient farmers want more land, they also want firmer property guarantees than the government is willing to provide” (Bratton; 1987: 191). This relates to the issue of security of tenure, which ultimately dissuaded many peasants from participating in the process.

#### **4.2.2 System of incentives for production**

##### *4.2.2.1 Pricing policy and the Marketing system*

Farmers in Africa are responsive to incentive structures and therefore the efficiency of markets affects them directly. A lack of access to information, inputs, technology, poor infrastructure and price distortions, all work to the detriment of the poor (Sahn, D. E; Dorosh, P. A. & Younger, S. D; 1997). Commercial farmers enjoyed access to the bulk of agricultural services before independence. The colonial regime afforded them preferential treatment in as far as research, advice, credit and transport facilities were concerned. The new government sought to attain food ‘self-sufficiency’ whilst rectifying the discriminative allocation of agricultural resources by extending the provision of services to the rural peasantry. The extension of marketing services to

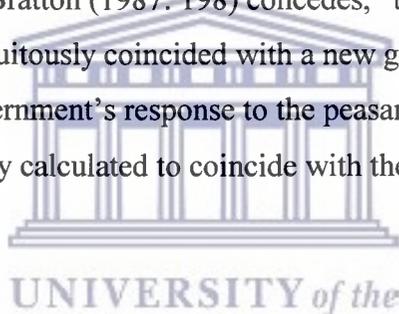
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<sup>51</sup> Lahiff (2003) refers to the ‘myth of large-scale agriculture’. In essence, it pertains to the misconceptions or disinformation around peasants’ productive capabilities that filtered into the policy decision-making process and ultimately entrenched the inequality of the dual structure inherited at independence.

Africans in the communal areas and the increase of crop collection points in the 1980s, saw the contribution of the production of marketed maize by Africans increase to roughly half of the national total by 1988-90 whilst a large majority of marketed cotton was also produced by the communal farmers<sup>52</sup> (Gibbon; 1996; Herbst; 1988; Burgess; 1997).

This process was facilitated by the search for bigger and better avenues of increasing financial returns, by the LSCF sector, as these farmers became more concerned with increasing international competition and sought to diversify towards crops that were considered more profitable. Hence, the decrease of maize production (by the LSCFs) and the subsequent focus on cash crops like tobacco, wheat and horticulture.

The ZANU-PF government systematically manipulated the provision of agricultural services to the peasants in such a way as to strengthen and consolidate electoral support from these factions. Bratton (1987: 198) concedes, “the demands by smallholders for services fortuitously coincided with a new government’s need to consolidate power”. The government’s response to the peasant’s need for draft power, for example, was meticulously calculated to coincide with the pre-1985 election period.



The restriction placed on the free trade in maize had the effect of confining large-scale millers to purchasing directly from the GMB<sup>53</sup>. As commercial sector maize production declined towards the mid-1980s and large-scale commercial farmers started focusing on more profitable crops such as tobacco, the price of maize (in relation to tobacco) fell and the returns were consequently also lower. As a result, the number of large-scale tobacco growers increased from 1475 in 1991 to 3687 in 1993 (Gibbon; 1996:368).

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<sup>52</sup> It should be noted that the ‘dual’ structure of the agrarian system is not only tied to distinctive land-use patterns but it also intensified the division of labour among different groups of farmers. Therefore, most communal farmers continued ‘labour-intensive’ farming whilst commercial farmers moved toward ‘capital intensive’ farming. In other words, although the communal farmers were afforded the opportunity to move into a once (white) large-scale farming area, they were still constrained to producing labour intensive/low technology (i.e. cotton) exports.

<sup>53</sup> The maize pricing policy was of particular importance due to its importance in consumer expenditure and the high proportion of land and other productive resources dedicated to it.

A positive spin-off of the extension of agricultural services to communal farmers was an immense increase in the production of maize and cotton (by them) coupled with very good supply response over a short period of time. It should be noted, however, that the most significant yields, in this respect, were concentrated in "...the best fields of the best farmers in the most favourable agricultural zones" (Bratton; 1987:195). Evidently, the controlled agricultural system served the interests of producers (or at least some) benevolently and afforded Zimbabwe, albeit for a short lived period, the reputation of 'Africa's agricultural success story' (Mumbengegwi; 2002; Weiner; 1988).

Agricultural commodities were classified as either being 'controlled' or 'uncontrolled'. The government fixed producer prices for the 'controlled' products and these products were required by law to be marketed through the various state-controlled marketing boards<sup>54</sup>. However, prices were only announced after lengthy negotiations between government representatives, farmers' organisations and the Agricultural Marketing Authority (AMA, the composite body of the marketing boards)<sup>55</sup>. The fact that farmers were so extensively involved in the setting of producer prices is quite a unique feature of Zimbabwean system and was intended to support the incomes of farmers. Producer prices are estimated to have been subsidised by an average of 34% between 1981 and 1989 while consumer prices are said to have been subsidised by 41% over the same period.

The political imperative of the Lancaster House Agreement and to some extent, the government's need to keep white farmers on the land, and hence provide them with incentives, resulted in prices often being fixed above world market prices. High producer prices is a positive incentive for agricultural producers that encourages the planting of another crop during the next season and spurs an increase in output<sup>56</sup> (Herbst; 1988; Jayne & Chisvo; 1992). The commercial farmers invariably won out in

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<sup>54</sup> These were the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), the Cotton Marketing Board (CMB), the Dairy Marketing Board (DMB) and the Cold Storage Commission (CSC)(for beef and livestock products.

<sup>55</sup> See: Herbst (1988) The AMA was mandated, during the pre-independence period, to buy all the 'controlled' crops from white farmers. This ensured a market for their produce regardless of the amount produced.

<sup>56</sup> Farmers benefit through the proportional relation of agricultural output to the amount of marketed produce. In other words, the more produce marketed, the higher the returns.

this respect<sup>57</sup>. The strength of its foothold in the state apparatus was, for example, underscored by the fact that the minister of agriculture was a former president of the CFU. The Zimbabwe National Farmers Union (ZNFU) and the National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe (NFAZ) attended to the interests of the black majority<sup>58</sup>. As a result, the government transferred the costs of the pricing policy onto the private sector by means of regular minimum wage increases (Bratton; 1987).

On the other hand, consumer subsidies also ensured cheap food for consumers and affordable raw material prices for the domestic agro-industrial sector<sup>59</sup>. Bratton (1987) and Herbst (1988) concur that these consumer subsidies formed a part of the government's strategy to cultivate political support in the urban areas after the support of the rural peasantry was established. However, this policy was gradually eradicated as economic policy considerations started to take precedence over political imperatives.

An unintended consequence, however, of the expanded 'positive pricing and controlled marketing policy framework' was that the budgetary resources needed to support this venture implicitly constrained the further development of agriculture. This is explained by the marketing board trade deficit financing that required huge subsidies and, accordingly contributed substantially to the unsustainable budget deficit problem<sup>60</sup>. These pricing policies are said to have induced "...massive losses on marketing boards' trading accounts, which were met by direct subsidies from the fiscus" (Mumbengegwi; 2002:239). It is, therefore, argued that the losses incurred as

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<sup>57</sup> See: Herbst (1988), The commercial farmers' political clout was underscored by their direct link to the state apparatus by means of, for example, the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU), who enjoyed a considerable amount of political influence through parliamentary representation and the presence of farmer leaders on the state agricultural marketing boards

<sup>58</sup> Herbst (1988) also notes the constraints placed on the black farmers' unions due to limited research capability, weak organisation and remote locations.

<sup>59</sup> Rukuni & Jayne (1995) assert that most of the communal areas in regions IV and V consist of grain-deficit households who sell very little or no grain at all. Their immediate food needs take priority and the consumer price is therefore more important than the GMB producer price. Furthermore, smallholders tend to respond poorly to producer price incentives as they are often faced with other productive constraints such as a lack of draft power, access or willingness to accept credit, poor and overworked soil and erratic rainfall.

<sup>60</sup> See: Herbst (1988) The AMA was mandated to, for example, purchase 'mhunga' and 'rapoko' (largely produced by peasants) in an effort to prove the government's unwavering support for peasant production. As a result, peasants delivered huge amounts of these crops to the AMA but the fact that the demand for it was low resulted in increasing stockpiles and huge financial losses.

a result of the unsustainable nature of perpetual food and parastatal subsidies laid the foundation for the agricultural reform policies adopted in the 1990s.

#### *4.2.2.2 Financial and technical assistance*

Other features of Zimbabwe's agricultural structure at independence were well-developed research institutions and extension services and the liberal provision of inputs (such as seed packs and fertiliser) and credit. Credit was provided through the Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) whilst the Agricultural Extension and Technical Services (AGRITEX) saw to the provision, as the name suggests, of extension services and the Research and Specialist Services (R&SS) attended to research services. Although the communal farmers now also benefited from the provision of these services, it was disproportionately allocated in favour of the (mostly) white-owned LSCFs.

### **4.3 Emptying the food basket: Agriculture under ESAP**

The policy objectives for agriculture since independence have included; increasing the rate of growth in aggregate output, diversifying the composition of output, to maintain food security and self-sufficiency, to raise farm incomes and employment, to increase the role of agriculture in the provision of raw materials and to raise foreign exchange (Mumbengegwi; 2002:237-238). The minister of agriculture illuminated the government's objectives in this respect as "... first to ensure that the country remains adequately fed at all times; and, second, to maintain the maximum farmers on the land" (GOZ quoted in Bratton; 1987: 181).

Although Zimbabwe seem to have been food self-sufficient in most years, food security came under threat from time to time especially during periods of drought. Export performance has also been weak and engendered "... chronic foreign exchange shortages" (Mumbengegwi; 2002:238). Moreover, employment in the agricultural sector actually declined and saw the rural population being plunged deeper into abject poverty. Although ESAP was essentially a framework for economy-wide reforms, it entailed some sector-specific reforms that pertained to agriculture. The fact that many of these objectives are still wanting, more than two decades later, notwithstanding the governments generally positive sectoral policies

with regard to agricultural pricing, marketing, credit, input supply and infrastructural provision, presents a paradox that warrants investigation.

Zimbabwe's fiscal policy stance has been described as 'expansionary' both before and after adjustment. In other words, it has been characterised by high government expenditures that were not matched by fiscal revenues (fiscal deficits averaged at 8%/GDP throughout the 80s) and resulted in unsustainable budget deficits. The macroeconomic policy framework that prevailed during the 1980s was characterised by strict controls on prices, exchange rates, foreign trade and the allocation of foreign exchange.

The objective of these measures was to protect the domestic industry from foreign competition. Mumbengegwi (2002: 242-243) argues that this created "an artificial semblance of macroeconomic stability" that masked the latent macroeconomic imbalances and subsequently distorted incentives to agriculture. These 'imbalances' became more nuanced under the auspices of structural adjustment and were therefore deemed to be 'corrected'. However, the adoption of ESAP had no significant effect on either the 'expansionary' fiscal or the 'contractionary' monetary policies of the government and had quite contradictory results as "...the budget deficit continued to grow, inflation escalated and interest rates soared". In essence, it worsened the macroeconomic imbalances it sought to correct and therefore stymied agricultural performance. Although macroeconomic policies are rarely aimed directly at agricultural performance, it does influence this sector indirectly through its impact on the structure of incentives for producers. Indeed, the adoption of market-based reforms counterbalanced the continuation of positive sectoral policies in agriculture as the macroeconomic effects of liberalisation created an increasingly volatile environment in which to operate for producers.

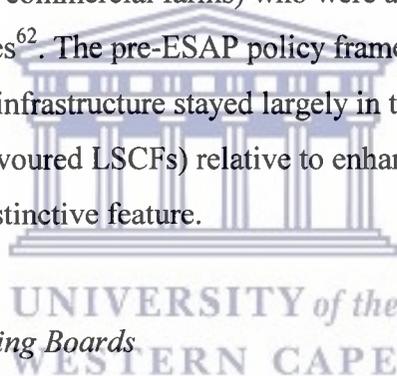
#### *4.3.1 Land reform under ESAP*

According to ESAP, agricultural production was expected to grow beyond 5 percent per annum. The common 'wisdom' of the IFIs, in this respect, professed a positive correlation between the concentration of agricultural production or land use on non-traditional exports such as horticulture, wild life and related tourism land uses on the

one hand, and unprecedented environmental and socio-economic benefits, on the other (Moyo; 2000). In other words, the Zimbabwean government would be ushered out of its economic malaise by means of domestic market liberalisation and export-oriented production. Similarly, the land issue was left to the markets to resolve<sup>61</sup>.

This type of reasoning reveals the great importance attached to ‘profit’ and leaves little room for the consideration of the plight of the rural masses in the CFAs who, because of their disadvantaged position, can’t compete on equal footing with LSCFs and, if granted the chance, would most probably prioritise feeding their families in the midst of declining real income.

Furthermore, ESAP didn’t provide any substantial support in terms of resources for the development of export-led growth amongst the peasantry as agricultural incentives were all biased in favour of LSCFs. Evidently, it was only LSCFs (and the new black petty bourgeoisie who owned commercial farms) who were able to respond favourably to ESAP incentives<sup>62</sup>. The pre-ESAP policy framework concerning the allocation of land, water and infrastructure stayed largely in tact with, the change in land-use patterns (that still favoured LSCFs) relative to enhancing the new export-orientation, being the only distinctive feature.



#### 4.3.2 Privatisation of Marketing Boards

The World Bank considers state-regulated marketing boards as “...so inefficient that producers actually receive less than they would if market forces operated freely” (World Bank; 1994a: 10)<sup>63</sup>. Market reforms were intended to enhance the

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<sup>61</sup> See: Moyo (2000) Although the Land Acquisition Bill of 1992 (that provided for compulsory land acquisition) was passed after the adoption of ESAP, it was not an integral part of ESAP-strategy and had remained a *potential* rather than *real* instrument of change until the end of 1997.

<sup>62</sup> Policy incentives for agricultural exports included foreign currency allocations, financial and transport subsidies and greater institutional support towards the agricultural sector’s integration into the world market.

<sup>63</sup> The World Bank’s argument is premised on the assumption that the taxes that farmers are subjected to (due to overvalued exchange rates, revenue and state-regulated marketing boards) reduce farmers’ incomes and is therefore, a disincentive for production. In other words, higher agricultural prices will stimulate production and increase profitability. They also assert that the position of the poor is improved in those instances where they engage in ‘labour intensive’ export production or where they sell their labour to other export-producing farmers. However, Herbst (1988) states that the World Bank viewed government intervention in producer prices as ‘generally favourable or not seriously unfavourable to agricultural production’. See also: Mwanza. “Theory and Practice of Structural Adjustment Programmes” in *SAPEM*, February 1991.

effectiveness of the price reforms, as it was perceived as a 'complement' to the latter<sup>64</sup>. It entailed the liberalisation of agricultural marketing avenues and the elimination of controls on 'controlled' commodities. Restrictions on the movement of produce between non-contiguous areas were also removed. The 'single channel marketing and pan-territorial pricing system' was eradicated and in turn private agents were allowed to enter the market through buying produce from producers and then selling it directly to consumers. Furthermore, the monopoly parastatals had over pricing and marketing of agricultural products was discarded as a measure to improve incentives for farmers and thus promote production, marketing and exports (Chisvo; 2000).

The only real attention paid to agriculture through ESAP proposals was the ongoing articulation of the deep concern about the huge financial losses the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) was incurring. The state expenditure, in the form of subsidies, on the GMB is said to have accounted for the greater part of the overall budget deficit during the 1980s. The GMB had increased its number of depots from 38 in 1980 to 78 in 1990 and erected 121 additional crop-buying points in the communal areas.

This all changed under the impetus of structural adjustment. The number of crop collection points fell to only 9 by the end of 1991 and it was announced, in 1992, that 57 of the remaining depots (which was 74 at that time) would be closed for most part of each year. This was intended to reduce GMB stock levels whilst simultaneously cutting staff costs. However, the savings on storage cost were offset by losses incurred on export sales due to producer prices being considerably higher than export parity prices. The crop failure during the 1991-92 crop season compelled the GMB to commence huge imports during the 1992-93 marketing season. A fear of the repetition of such a situation elicited a decision by the government to import more stock in 1993. This move was vehemently criticised by the World Bank who perceived it to be excessively costly. Furthermore, the consumption of fertiliser also decreased during this period. Although the use of fertiliser by communal farmers increased from 8% (of the national level) at independence to 34% in 1985-86, it

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<sup>64</sup> See: Moyo (2000) The commercialisation and then privatisation of marketing boards and state credit, the liberalisation of commodity pricing and the acceptance of private agents into the marketing structure all had the combined effect of reinforcing the devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar and therefore, had specific effects on agricultural change and land policy.

dropped to 26% by the end of the decade and disintegrated with the onslaught of the 1991-92 drought.

#### *4.3.3 The removal of agricultural producer and consumer subsidies*

Controls on agricultural product pricing were gradually phased out as they were seen as being inconsistent with macroeconomic reforms that were taking place elsewhere in the economy. However, the government continued to announce producer prices albeit, legislation no longer obligated its adherence. So, prices announced by the government essentially became 'suggestive' and took on an 'indicative' function. In some cases it served as the 'floor price' but market forces were then allowed to determine the real levels.

Subsidies on foodgrains were initially diminished and later completely abrogated in an effort to ease budgetary constraints. Marketing boards such as the DMB and CMB were privatised, while the GMB and the CSC were commercialised although, also earmarked for eventual privatisation. The privatisation of the latter two parastatals was quite controversial as they were of particular political significance and the government displayed a desire to (continually) "...use them for achieving other social objectives"(Mumbengegwi; 2002:242).

Contrary to the World Bank's (1994:12) belief that the removal of consumer food subsidies and the liberalisation of input (such as fertiliser) prices, "...did little to hurt the poor, because they weren't benefiting very much in the pre-adjustment period"<sup>65</sup>, it has been proven that consumers did in fact bear the brunt of the removal of the subsidy of (for example) Z\$562/tonne on white maize to large-scale millers in June 1993, as the retail price subsequently increased by 50 percent. The demand for bread also dropped as a result of the removal of the wheat meal subsidy three months earlier and the concomitant rise of the retail price by 120 percent. Although the 1991-92

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<sup>65</sup> The World Bank's adamant stance in this regard has not only been disproved but it has also left the efficiency of market-related pricing mechanisms open to question. However, despite evidence to the contrary, the World Bank (1994: 12) maintained, "there is little evidence of widespread substantial increases in real food prices compared to parallel market prices". Whether this is an indication of them turning a blind eye to the reality of the situation in the developing countries or whether it was just a case of distorting, once again, the dominant knowledge at their disposal to their own benefit is a matter for serious contemplation. Cornia (2001) in "Social Funds in Stabilisation and Adjustment Programmes: A Critique", for example, agrees that consumer subsidies benefited the poor.

drought had an obvious impact on the 1992-93 figures, the 1993-94 rainy season was fine but brought about no significant change in the planted areas or production. Moreover, the use of the input package dropped as peasants were discouraged by the 31% interest rate attached to it<sup>66</sup>. In essence this reinforces the assertion that,

The World Bank and the IMF have access to more and better information...yet, sadly this information is either withheld or positively distorted as part of broader strategy, such as securing donor support or hoodwinking the local electorate (Hawkins; 1994:51).

Bond (1998) reported that a third of Zimbabweans were unable to afford a basic food basket that took up 60% of household expenditure. Furthermore, price increases over the five-year period from 1990-1994 “amounted to 137% for all goods, but 237% for food and 316% for medical care”(Bond; 1998: 407). The top 10% of the population who consumed 34% of all goods whilst the bottom decile only consumed 3%, illustrates the pathological entrenchment of inequality that further compounded this problem. The rapid rise in consumer prices (as a result of increased inflation) also depressed domestic demand that, in turn, limited the prospects for investment.

All the GMB collection points had been phased out by the end of 1996. This effectively eliminated the previously ‘guaranteed’ market access and also reduced access to information significantly. As marketing through the GMB became more and more difficult for communal farmers, they became compelled to sell directly to small-scale private traders. The private traders had a reputation for cheating and exploitation (through evasion of official margins for purchases) and therefore the idea of selling to them did not sit very well with the peasants (Chisvo; 2000; Gibbon; 1995). Furthermore, the maintenance of the strategic grain reserve and disposing of excess stock during boom years was considered to be very costly and drew a considerable amount of critique from the neo-liberal circles. The centralised system of shipping maize from the remote depots to a few urban-based mills and then shipping it back (in the form of meal) to those same remote areas was also seen as a hindrance to

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<sup>66</sup> Chisvo (2000) provides evidence that the increase in producer prices did, in fact, lead to a decline in output in production of about 2percent per annum since the adoption of ESAP. The drop in agricultural production was further compounded by the increase of input prices (especially for hybrid seeds, fertiliser and pesticides), which further deterred farmers from expanding their output capacity. However, commercial farmers were, in this instance, able to respond better to the price reforms whilst the communal farmers became more and more marginalized.

economic productivity and perceived as engendering food insecurity<sup>67</sup>. However, the emphasis on the marketing network was much greater than that of the maize price, which can be considered as more imperative if placed in relation to peoples basic needs around food security.

Economy-wide macroeconomic reforms invariably also affected the provision of credit, research, extension and infrastructural services. Institutions such as the AFC (credit), R&SS (research) and AGRITEX (extension services) suffered severe cuts to their respective budgetary allocations (Chisvo; 2000). Consequently, their 'delivery capacity' became compromised and this had an adverse effect on the productivity and output of farmers. As a result, many of the advancements made during the 1980s due to the expanded financial support for these institutions, were eroded.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

Zimbabwe inherited a very unequal agrarian structure at independence that was geared towards serving the interests of LSCFs. The decision to extend agricultural incentives to the rural population had both positive, in the form of increased output, and negative, in the form of widening budget deficits, spin-offs.

The land issue waxed and waned according to the government's political vis-à-vis economic imperatives. The immediate aftermath of independence saw the Zimbabwean government torn between loyalties owed to the rural population and constraints, in terms of land reform, laid out in the Lancaster House constitution. The reconciliatory stance the government took towards the white commercial farmers was predicated on both economic and political interests.

However, the decision to drag the land reform process and to appease the rural masses with habitual promises of resettlement that, more often than not, coincided with pre-electoral periods, had detrimental effects. It could also be argued that the lack of land reform both before and after ESAP, contributed to food insecurity in Zimbabwe. This

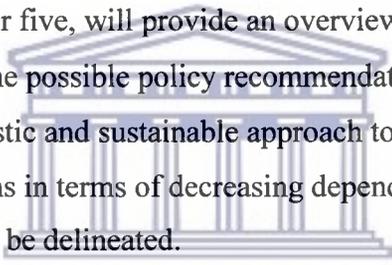
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<sup>67</sup> The reasons put forward by neo-liberals are that; such a system places too much pressure on the peasant (as opposed to LSCFs) farmers, it drains local supplies and thereby, exerts upward pressure on local prices and it also limits the potential for diversification of smallholder production by overemphasising the importance of maize self-sufficiency to local farmers.

surfaced in the form of soil erosion, land degradation, shrinking yields from the communal areas and a mass of dissatisfied land-hungry peasants who became increasingly disillusioned with the government. This was compounded by the removal of consumer subsidies and the privatisation of state marketing boards that further diminished access to food. As a result, food prices soared and communal farmers found it increasingly difficult to respond to the external shocks prompted by the opening up of the Zimbabwean market.

The adoption of the ESAP served to exacerbate the plight of the communal farmers, as the increased access to inputs, extension services and credit (at independence), dissipated in the wake of a range of agricultural reform policies. The strides made in terms of the upliftment of the rural population were, therefore, also systematically eroded.

The following chapter, chapter five, will provide an overview of the general findings of the study. It will also outline possible policy recommendations aimed at improving food security and a more holistic and sustainable approach to the problem. Furthermore, some suggestions in terms of decreasing dependency of developing countries on the IFIs will also be delineated.



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# Chapter five

## Conclusion and recommendations

The developing world's, and more specifically, Zimbabwe's problems pertaining to poverty and underdevelopment are structural in nature and therefore needs to be addressed accordingly. The proposed neo-liberal logic that profess reduced state-intervention, decreased government expenditure and the balancing of budgets as the panacea for developmental problems proved to be insufficient and exposed an approach that is characterised by the symptomatic treatment of developmental problems in the developing world.

The goal of development under structural adjustment can, at best, be described as a mirage that eludes the majority of the inhabitants of recipient countries. This speaks to the underlying issue of human, and more specifically, food security. Chapter two illustrated the multidimensional nature of the food security problem and identified the two most important analytical constructs pertaining to the concepts as availability (production and distribution) and access (purchasing power, inputs, land). It also portrayed the significance of the dominant knowledge (that buttresses the conditionalities attached to SAPs) that permeates relations at the global sphere and how this influences policy decision-making and state autonomy. Furthermore, the dependency theory was employed to elucidate the implications of historical developmental trajectories and, more specifically, the impact of colonialism on the inequalities that characterises the present international system. This theory was complemented by the structuralist analysis presented by Susan Strange that shed light on the structural impediments, inherent in the international system, that hinders development in developing countries.

The IFIs common wisdom failed to take account of Zimbabwe's historical developmental trajectory and the contextual relevance of its policy content. This is especially true in terms of the omission of contingency measures for the possible impact on communal farmers. The Social Dimensions of Adjustment appendage to the

ESAP, as discussed in chapter three, has proved to be little more than a token measure of rhetorical pronouncements of the regard for the painful short-term effects of adjustment.

The government's adamant commitment to economic reform and the World Bank's intermittent promises of growth, despite evidence to the contrary, provided fertile ground for the incapacitation of the Zimbabwean state and its ability to manage and direct national development. Food security is a problem that concerns the well being and living standards of human beings. Moreover, it has (as proven in chapter three) the potential of destabilising the government under conditions of severe reductions in income and rising prices for basic services, as associated with ESAP in Zimbabwe. State sovereignty fractured and popular resistance manifested, as Zimbabwe became more and more entangled in the clutches of the IFIs. This was further compounded by the increasing leverage that the IFIs gained in terms of its position among the international donor community.

The IFIs adamant stance in terms of the state's retreat revealed their inability to grasp the importance of the state (in developing countries) in the of goods and services. In Zimbabwe this resulted in the removal of subsidies and pricing mechanisms that, in turn, saw food and agricultural input prices soar. This was compounded by regular currency devaluations and the concomitant rise in inflation. Rising interest rates also deterred many communal farmers from seeking financial assistance.

Food security requires (at national level) the political will to address the problem by governments of developing countries first and foremostly, devising ways of extricating themselves from the debt trap and the leverage that this affords the IFIs in terms of the direction and shape of agricultural and economic policies of developing countries.

Chapter three also depicted the role of structural adjustment in the entrenchment of inequality (national) and the reinforcement of class relations by illustrating the transfer of the means of production to the black petty bourgeoisie and the systematic marginalisation of the rural masses. This is mirrored by the rules that govern international trade. These rules are subject to double standards that is exposed by the

persistent prohibition of developing countries from subsidising their agricultural sectors whilst developed countries do not only subsidise their agricultural sectors, but they also erect trade barriers to the products of developing countries. This entrenches the unequal power relations and dependency on the part of developing countries.

Given the importance of agriculture to the Zimbabwean economy at large (as discussed in chapter four) and the indispensability of communal farmers, the IFIs disregard for the impact of agrarian reform on peasant production reveals their insensitivity in terms of African agriculture. This insensitivity is heightened by their overt focus on export crops in the pursuit of profit. The extension of agricultural incentives to peasants after independence dispelled notions of the 'myth of large-scale agriculture' that Lahiff (2003) refers to and proved that communal farmers can be just as productive, if not more, than commercial farmers, if they are provided with positive productive incentives.

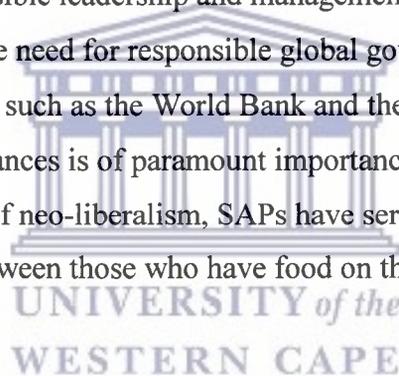
There is thus a need to improve communal farmers' linkages to markets, their access to research and extension services and capital. This would not only stimulate communal farmers' production, but it would also provide an opportunity for the much needed diversification of production amongst communal farmers. The need for land reform, in this respect, cannot be overestimated. It can be argued that the fact that land reform was not seriously attempted before or after ESAP, contributed to food insecurity. The importance of land has been addressed in chapter four. It demonstrated the significance of land in terms of agricultural production and the importance of the redistribution of land in terms of equitable access to good quality soil in reasonably watered areas for communal farmers.

Improvement in rural production should be complemented by the reconstruction of storage facilities in rural areas. This might be perceived as a costly endeavour but the 1992 drought, for example, proved the need for contingency measures that takes erratic weather patterns into account. This would also have the inadvertent effect of reducing the need for imports during transitory food shortages and thereby stimulate or encourage food self-sufficiency. ESAP didn't provide any contingency measures climatic complications such as drought or floods.

At national level a glaring void in terms of strategies aimed at food security the regard for food security at household level became evident. There is thus a need to focus not only on production at national level, but also to ensure the equitable distribution of production to grain-deficit areas and the most vulnerable sectors of society.

Food insecurity is situated within the confines of poverty and underdevelopment. It is therefore imperative to improve opportunities for off-farm employment and to enhance the informal sector. Furthermore, the improvement of rural industrialisation would also prove helpful in this respect. The growth of income combined with low inflation seems to be more viable options in terms of securing purchasing power.

In retrospect, the analysis of food security elucidates it as a multidimensional problem that requires a multifaceted approach that takes political, economic, social and environmental factors into account. This requires the necessary political will coupled with accountable and responsible leadership and management at all levels of government. Furthermore, the need for responsible global governance and tentative action, on the part of the IFIs such as the World Bank and the IMF that takes cognisance of local circumstances is of paramount importance. However, mired in the dominant knowledge frame of neo-liberalism, SAPs have served to maintain the status quo and to widen the gap between those who have food on the table and those who don't.



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