

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND CONSTRAINTS ON CROP
PRODUCTION WITHIN ZIMBABWE'S FAST-TRACK
RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME**
**A Case Study of Fair Range Estate, Chiredzi District, South Eastern
Zimbabwe**

**A mini-thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of Masters of Philosophy in Land and Agrarian Studies**



**University of Western Cape
Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS)**

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DECLARATION

I, Joseph Chaumba, declare that “Opportunities for and Constraints on Crop production within Zimbabwe’s Fast Track Resettlement Programme, A case study of Fair Range Estate, Chiredzi District South Eastern Zimbabwe”, is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references and that this work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other University.

Joseph A Chaumba

May 2006



DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my lovely wife Tariro, daughter Charmaine and son Kupakwashe Joseph Jr for the love and support during my studies.

May God bless you all.



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My sincere gratitude goes to the following people who made this work possible. Without their cooperation this work would not have been complete.

First and foremost I would like to thank my Supervisor Professor Ben Cousins for the incisive supervision he rendered to me. I am most grateful to the constructive comments that I continuously received from him even though when hope seemed lost.

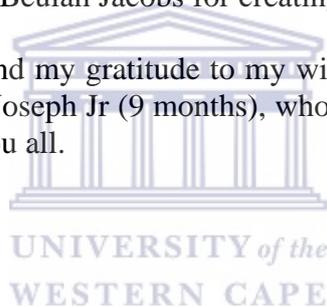
Secondly I am grateful to my village based research assistant Toziva Tinofireyi for the sterling work he did in the study area. This should not be the end to our four-year working relationship and I hope we will continue working together in the future.

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ABSTRACT

The government of Zimbabwe started implementing its fast track resettlement programme in July 2000, the objective being to accelerate both land acquisition and land redistribution. This programme witnessed a massive movement of people from various localities into mainly large-scale commercial farms in search of agricultural land. Under this programme, people were settled under the A1 model (which involves villages and land use pattern similar to those found in communal areas) as well as the A2 model, which involves commercial farming. This study investigates, documents and analyses the opportunities and constraints currently being faced by newly resettled crop production farmers in one example of an A1 model resettlement project (Fair Ranch Estate in Masvingo Province). A questionnaire was used to gather data on livelihood sources, income, assets and also aspects of the associational life of crop production farmers. Seventy households were interviewed, and a number of key informant interviews were undertaken with both government officials and the local leadership. The greatest opportunity that A1 crop production farmers in Fair Range Estate experienced was the fact that they now have access to land that they can call their own, without having to go through the market to try to acquire such land. In terms of crop production, however, farmers in Fair Range Estate face a number of challenges and constraints: they lack adequate access to tillage and livestock; the supply of inputs is inadequate; generally negative socio economic conditions prevailing in the country have led to sharp increases in prices of all basic commodities, including inputs such as fertilisers and seeds; they lack tenure security; the amount of rainfall received in the area is generally not sufficient for crop production; and many lack crop production skills. Measures to reverse this decline must include the availability of foreign currency to buy spare parts for tractors, rebuilding of the national herd, which was greatly affected by both drought and the disturbance of commercial agriculture as a result of the controversial land reform programme. Fuel should also become more readily available, and urgent policy measures be put in place to revamp institutional frameworks in the agricultural sector to make them more farmer-oriented.

Keywords

Zimbabwe; Land reform; Fast track; Resettlement; Land invasions; Rural livelihoods; Agriculture; Chiredzi District; Villagisation; Crop production

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Since Independence in 1980, Zimbabwe experienced three distinct phases of land reform. The first phase occurred between 1980 and 1997 (UNDP 2002), and was based on the notions of 'willing seller, willing buyer' (Palmer, 1990, Moyo, 1995; Marongwe, 2002, Moyana 1984). The concept of 'willing seller, willing buyer' was based on the idea that 'whites who wished to keep their farms were free to do so and only under-utilised land would be acquired by the government and would have to be paid for immediately and at full market price remittable in foreign currency' (Palmer 1990: 4).

Land resettlement was aimed at redressing colonial injustices in land distribution, which adversely affected African agricultural production, and was thus partly aimed at increasing agricultural production in this sector of the economy. The first phase of the land reform process was framed in terms of resettlement schemes, and a number of models were set up to accommodate a large number of people. These included Models A, B, C and D, which were, planned according to the agro ecological regions of the country. There were impressive results in agricultural production in various land resettlement schemes (Kinsey, 1999).

Despite the increased agricultural production in some land resettlement schemes, the land resettlement programme did not achieve much in terms of the aggregate number of people resettled. During the first phase of resettlement only 52 000 were resettled by 1989 against a target of 162 000 (Palmer 1990; Kinsey, 1984; 1999, Moyo 1996), indicating a general failure by the government to achieve its resettlement target.

The second phase of land reform and resettlement occurred in the 1997/1999 period (Moyo 2000, UNDP 2002). It is important to note that the second phase was brief and was overtaken by the Fast Track Land Resettlement Programme, which constituted the third phase of land reform and resettlement in Zimbabwe. The Fast Track Land Resettlement Programme started in June 2000 (Moyo 2000; Marongwe, 2002, 2004;

UNDP 2002) and is currently underway¹. Contrary to the first and second phases of land reform and resettlement, the Fast Track land reform programme was based on compulsory acquisition of land, largely from White commercial farming sector, private companies and absentee landlords, for resettlement purposes without paying compensation. The programme was aimed at decongesting the densely populated communal areas, and to increase agricultural production in these new schemes and thereby reduce the extent and intensity of rural poverty.

Despite the narratives of production cited in policy documents on Fast Track Land Resettlement Programme, captured by the political euphemism 'Land is the Economy and the Economy is Land', which was central to the ruling party campaign for the 2000 Parliamentary and 2002 Presidential elections, Fast Track land reform was driven largely by political and 'nationalistic' motives². It can be stated with confidence that the third phase of the land reform and resettlement programme in Zimbabwe was political in character, as well as aiming to increase agricultural production. The latter is understandably given the frequent droughts that routinely afflict Zimbabwe and the increase in rural poverty from the 1990s onwards.

On the basis of the need to increase agricultural production and to reduce the extent and intensity of rural poverty, the Fast Track Land Reform and Resettlement Programme created two models for resettlement, namely the A1 and A2 models. The A1 resettlement model is a villagised type of resettlement where peasants are allocated homestead areas, arable land and grazing areas as distinct blocks of land in a particular area. Grazing then becomes communal. The number of hectares per household depends on the agro ecological region, and varies from 3 hectares to 25 hectares per household (Mundeiri, 2003; Marongwe, 2004). Roads, water sources and natural resources are common property and therefore are to be shared by those in the scheme. The A2 model resembles a self-contained unit where an individual farmer occupies a farm and makes all decisions on the plot, like determining various projects

¹ In a speech entitled 'Plain Talk About the Zimbabwean Economy' delivered at Africa University in Mutare on 2 November, 2005, by US Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Ambassador Christopher Dell pointed out that Fast-track land reform is still underway in Manicaland.

² The term 'nationalistic' and its root 'nationalism' is used in Terence Ranger's sense of 'patriotic history'. Ranger notes that 'patriotic history' is different from and more narrow than the old nationalistic historiography, which celebrated aspiration and modernisation as well as resistance. It resents the 'disloyal' questions raised by historians of nationalism. It regards as irrelevant any history that is not political. And it is explicitly antagonistic to academic historiography (Ranger 2003:3). Similarly, the meaning of the term

to be undertaken on the farm. The farmer receives no state funding. This study explores the opportunities and constraints being faced by those farmers who were resettled under the A1 model in Fair Range Estate in Chiredzi District, Masvingo Province, in South Eastern Zimbabwe

1.2 Objectives of the study

Broadly, this study analyses the constraints and opportunities being faced by resettled A1 crop production farmers in Fair Range Estate. The specific issues that this study seeks to critical analyse are:

- The opportunities for crop production on Fair Range Estate
- The constraints on crop production on Fair Range Estate
- The viability of the government's fast track resettlement programme for crop production farmers in the case study area and how Fast Track Land Reform impacts on rural people's livelihoods
- The role being played by Government, quasi government organisations and non-government organisations in the provision of inputs, finance and marketing support to crop farmers on Fair Range Estate
- The influence of processes and patterns of social differentiation on crop production on Fair Range Estate
- The policy implications of research findings.

1.3 Key Research Questions

To meet the abovementioned objectives, the following key research questions were explored;

- What kind of crop production activities are taking place in Fair Range Estate?
- What institutional and/or organisational support systems are in place to support the new farmers in Fair Range to ensure crop production?
- What problems in crop production do farmers in Fair Range face and how do they overcome them?

'nationalistic' as used by the ruling party, in particular its use in Fast Track Land Reform and Resettlement Programme, indicates a bastardisation of the genuine meaning of nationalism.

- What strategies do crop production farmers in Fair Range engage in to secure their livelihoods?
- What are the support services of crop production farmers, which enables them to secure their livelihoods?
- How does rural social differentiation affect crop production among farmers in Fair Range?
- What are the wider policy implications of research findings on crop production on Fair Range Estate?

1.4 Research Problem and Justification of the study

Land is central to rural livelihoods, hence the need for land reform and resettlement in Southern Africa, in general and in Zimbabwe in particular. This emanates from the colonial legacy of massive land expropriation by a White settler minority which ‘resulted in widespread landlessness, semi – proletarianisation and the emergence of a fragile but resilient peasantry’ (Moyo, 2004:2) in Southern Africa. At the advent of independence, most Southern African states were confronted by the land question, particularly as it evoked struggles for reparations, and demands to resolve the national question of popular sovereign right over land as well as to redress racial imbalances in property and economic relations, and particularly to improve agricultural production and rural livelihoods among indigenous Black populations. The importance of land resettlement to rural livelihoods is heightened in cases where highly a skewed pattern of land ownership exists, and more so, where the majority of fertile land is owned by a racial minority.

Zimbabwe fits squarely into the above description, since at independence in 1980 it inherited a racially skewed land distribution pattern, whereby

Approximately 6 700 settler farmers owned 15.5 million hectares or 47 percent of total farm land under free hold tenure, 8 000 black petty bourgeois farmers owned or leased 1.4 million hectares or 4 percent of the total farm land, while 700 000 peasant households occupied 16.4 million hectares of land or 49 percent of farm land under communal tenure (Government of Zimbabwe 1989 cited in Tshuma, 1997:30).

In addition, settlers occupied most of the land in the zones of high agricultural potential while the 'natives' were confined to less fertile and unproductive communal areas (Palmer 1990; Weiner 1988; Chaumba *et al* 2003). Masst (1994) also pointed out that three quarters of all land suitable for rain-fed agriculture was situated in the 'European Areas' (Stoneman 1981; Moyo 1986).

As a result, there were large disparities in crop production between White settler farmers and indigenous Black population. Production was high in White commercial farming areas as compared to lands where indigenous people were forcibly resettled by the colonial government. Low levels of agricultural production among African populations can be largely attributed to 'adverse ecological conditions, and to the shortage of space for both cultivation and grazing which resulted in over-crowding and overstocking' (Moyana 1984:83).

After independence in 1980 land redistribution was viewed as essential for improving agricultural production among rural people in Zimbabwe. This study concurs with the view that land redistribution constitutes an important and critical element in improving rural people's livelihoods in communal areas of Zimbabwe. While many studies exist that have sought to explore the link between agriculture and poverty reduction, and in particular on communal agriculture and poverty (Cousins *et al* 1990), there is little or no data on how the Fast Track Land Reform and Resettlement Programme has contributed to crop production and securing rural people's livelihoods. Kinsey's (1984; 1997; 1999) studies on land resettlement and agricultural production, food security and poverty reduction focus on the first phase of post-colonial land reform in Zimbabwe, and thus do not provide data on these in relation to the Fast Track programme.

Recent events in Zimbabwe, where people have occupied large scale commercial farmland with the state's blessings, have attracted a great deal of media and academic attention throughout the world (Marongwe 2003, Lahiff 2003, Chaumba *et al* 2003). Zimbabwe's Fast Track resettlement programme has created new debates internationally, with some people criticising its timing, scale and intensity of the invasions (eg. Marongwe 2003) while other scholars, such as Moyo (2004) have argued that the programme was inevitable considering the slow pace of land reform which was going on in Zimbabwe before 2000. Some have cast doubts on the viability

of the programme considering the large number of people allocated land and the demands this places on available support services. In addition many have also argued that while there has been considerable focus on the political crisis and the damage the programme has caused to the national economy, the livelihoods of the resettled farmers on the schemes has received much less attention. This study aspires to help fill this gap.

1.5 Research Methodology

In attempting to meet the objectives of the study various research methods and techniques were employed. The nature of the issues to be investigated required the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. Following consultations with the local leadership of Fair Range Estate, it was agreed that the researcher would work with a local village based research assistant who would help the researcher to select a sample of households of those who had occupied land and farmed at Fair Range Estate from 2000. A total of 70 households were randomly selected from the list. It was also necessary to include in the sample both cattle and non-cattle owners, in order to assess the potential impact of the availability of draught power on crop production.

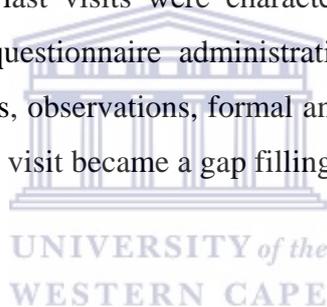
Quantitative data was necessitated by the need to capture data on crop production and livelihoods. A quantitative approach to research mainly focuses on quantifiable data in terms of numbers and measures that can be analysed statistically. In quantitative research validity is concerned with whether or not the study indeed measures what it is concerned with whether or not the study measures that which it is intended to measure and reliability with whether the study can be replicated by another researcher in the same context (Allan, 1991). In contrast, a qualitative approach to research, in collecting the appropriate data, is not interested only in numerical data that can be used for statistical analysis but also interested in telling the story that the numbers suggest.

This study was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The study used two main categories of data collection methods. The first involved the collection, analysis and presentation of secondary materials drawn from existing documents, both published and unpublished. The second method involved the collection, processing, analysis and presentation of primary materials derived largely from field research by the researcher

and his village based research assistant. The main output of primary data collection was an understanding of livelihood activities as well as some of the opportunities for and constraints on crop production in Fair Range.

1.6 Data Gathering Techniques

In order to get an insight on the opportunities and constraints faced by newly resettled crop production farmers in Fair Range, a number of research techniques were employed in the study. These included interviews, observations, focus group discussions, life histories, formal and informal interviews and conversations. Field trips to Fair Range were undertaken in June, August and September 2004 for a total of 5 weeks. This was done to allow farmers time to harvest, sell and buy inputs for the following year. The first visit was more like a reconnaissance trip, home coming visit observing patterns of changes in the leadership structure of the community while also recruiting a village based research assistant to help me with some of the interviews. The second and last visits were characterised by intensive fieldwork, which involved household questionnaire administration, focus group discussions, documentation of life histories, observations, formal and informal interviews and key informant interviews. The last visit became a gap filling exercise.



Key informant interviews

During primary data collection, a number of techniques were employed to elicit information from respondents, and these included key informant interviews with local leaders who included war veterans, agricultural research and extension services officers and village heads, representatives of the chief and staff members of organisations working in the area. The key informant interview technique was used to cross check the reliability of data gathered using other methods, and facilitated an in-depth understanding of the functions and performance of service providers to crop farmers in Fair Range. Key informant interviews were conducted with personnel from the Agricultural Research and Extension Services (AREX), District Development Fund (DDF), Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Department of Veterinary Services. Other key informants interviewed included members of the seven-member committee, which is tasked with all developmental issues in Fair Range Estate. Furthermore key informant interviews were conducted among other village heads from other villages

outside the selected five villages to get information on the whole scheme. This proved very useful in compiling some of the data on the scheme as a whole.

Semi-structured interviews

In addition to key informant interviews a detailed semi-structured questionnaire was administered to all the seventy sampled crop production farmers who had been staying in Fair Range Estate since 2000. This was done to ensure that a minimum number of questions were asked in each interview while at the same time giving room for flexibility of responses and allowing scope for supplementary questions to be asked. A total of seventy household heads were interviewed over a period of six weeks with the help of a village based research assistant.

Direct observation

In order to obtain an in depth picture of the existing and potential performance of crop production farmers in Fair Range, the researcher observed various activities, including natural resource management issues, being undertaken in the area.

Focus Group Discussions

Group discussions were carried out with participants in order to encourage a collective response and identify differences in opinion as well as consensus within the group. This method was found to be valuable in establishing a common ground, which helped to complement the household survey. Four focus group discussions were held with both male and female crop farmers to obtain divergent community views on opportunities and constraints faced by farmers in the sample.

Life Histories

Life histories were useful in establishing and analysing the origins and life trajectories of crop farmers in Fair Range with particular references to land allocation, land use, access to resources such as water, inputs, incomes and labour etc. By analysing life histories of crop farmers in Fair Range it was hoped that issues such as social inclusion and exclusion, household differentiation, land allocation and access to resources would be analysed.

Secondary data

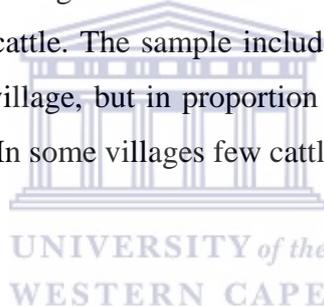
A thorough analysis of available documents at District level complemented primary data gathered from the field. These documents were gathered during visits to organisations such as AREX, DDF, the War Veterans Association and Chiredzi Rural District Council.

1.7 Sampling procedure

Respondents were sampled from five villages within Fair Range Estate, selected in numerical order, from Villages 1 up to 5, leaving out the last two of the seven villages. This was necessitated by the fact that the five selected villages run parallel to the main Chiredzi - Chipinge tarred road, with the other two villages situated some distance away from the road and close to the densely forested, undesignated part of the ranch. This made it possible for the researcher to access the five selected villages from Chiredzi. A sample of 70 respondents from five villages was selected from the list of those who had resided in Fair Range Estate since 2000. Village 1 provided the largest number of respondents with cattle. The sample included respondents with cattle and those without cattle in each village, but in proportion the number of cattle and non-cattle owners in each village. In some villages few cattle owners were identified.

1.8 Site selection

From 2000 to 2003 I was employed by the Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa (SLSA) research project as a junior researcher working in Fair Range Estate and the surrounding Sangwe communal area of Chiredzi District. I therefore carried extensive fieldwork in the area for three years, and co-authored several publications on the occupation of Fair Range Estate (eg. Chaumba et al 2003a; Chaumba et al 2003b). The Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa project coincided with the implementation of the Government's fast track resettlement programme and I witnessed the invasion and subsequent settlement of people in Fair Range Estate. Extensive data on life histories of occupants' motives of occupation, livelihood activities and local level dynamics were collected and these proved very useful for this study.



The choice of the research site was thus heavily influenced by my previous research experience in the area, as well as by the high levels of poverty that characterise the areas surrounding Fair Range. A strong bond had developed between settlers and myself to the extent that they no longer me as a visitor but a resident of Fair Range Estate despite the fact that I had travelled a distance of 500km to get to the study area. A very sound working relationship had developed with the local leadership, to the extent that they ended up calling me by my 'totem' instead of by my first name.

1.9 Limitations of the study

A major limitation on the study was the fact that research was conducted under conditions of both economic and political crisis. Since the implementation of Zimbabwe's fast track land resettlement programme in July 2000, Zimbabwe's land reform exercise has been based on party politics and patronage with the ruling party and opposition supporters clashing on several occasions. Fair Range Estate, like most other newly resettled areas, was mainly constituted of ruling Zanu PF party supporters and loyalists. Conducting fieldwork in such an environment places one's own security at great risk and danger. The researcher did not seek research clearance from relevant authorities, as is always the case in Zimbabwe for fear of being refused permission. Previous encounters of this nature did not yield positive results. The researcher used his social networks to gain access to the study area, but had to spread his visits to the area over a period of three months to avoid being detected.

Another limitation was the lack of transport and accommodation in the area resulting in the researcher staying in Chiredzi town and using public transport on a daily basis to the area, a distance of about 20km to and fro. Furthermore the high temperatures in the lowveld were also disturbing especially towards the end of the study but as a seasoned researcher I managed to pull through.

1.10 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is organised in five chapters.

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter begins with introductory remarks on the genesis of the land question in Zimbabwe and how various colonial policies forced black Africans off their land. The importance of land and land resettlement schemes in postcolonial Zimbabwe is discussed, with particular emphasis on crop production. The objectives of the study are also spelt out, as are the research problem and the justification of the research. The chapter also discusses the research design and how the case study site was chosen, and also highlights some of the limitations of the study and how these limitations were overcome.

Chapter Two: Land Reform in Zimbabwe: an Overview

This chapter discusses the wider context of this study. This is carried out in different ways, first by looking at the debates on land reform in Zimbabwe, with an emphasis on the importance of land to rural livelihoods and a particular focus on crop production during and after the colonisation of Zimbabwe. Other issues discussed include agricultural use, land acquisition during the colonial period and its implications for rural livelihoods and African agriculture. The second part deals with the need for redistribution, which partly fuelled the war of liberation, resettlement policies in the postcolonial period and the expectations of the people in relation to land and land redistribution programmes. This chapter describes the resettlement schemes of the 1980s, why they were needed and what models were put in place. It also discusses data on improved crop production in resettlement schemes.

The third part of the chapter deals with the post-2000 period of Fast-Track Resettlement and a description of the approach taken by Government in relation to Fair Range Estate. The chapter concludes by raising questions about the gap between what Government says and what actually happens in practice, in relation to land reform in Zimbabwe.

Chapter Three: Land Reform on Fair Range Estate

This chapter provides a general historical description of the case study area with special reference to its climatic conditions, soils, vegetation, rainfall patterns and the size of the population. The second part of the chapter looks at the ownership patterns of the Estate and the process of Fast Track land reform, including how the farm was divided up, who the settlers were, and where they came from

Chapter Four: Research Findings on Crop Production on Fair Range Estate

This chapter presents the research findings on crop production on the scheme and also discusses communal area production engaged by the settlers prior to their resettlement. The chapter also explores other livelihoods activities of crop farmers, including non-farming activities, both before and after resettlement.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

The chapter provides a summary of the thesis, discusses the prospects for development in Fair Range, and recommends policy options for more effective support for crop producers on resettlement schemes.



CHAPTER TWO: LAND REFORM IN ZIMBABWE – AN OVERVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter briefly summarises the genesis of the land question in Zimbabwe with a view to locate the current Fast Track Land Reform Programme within a broader historical context. It does this by exploring the colonial and post-colonial laws that provided the legal basis for land acquisition by both the colonial and post-colonial state and how these two distinct processes impacted on African agricultural production. Central to this chapter is a historical analysis of crop production patterns, in general, and communal and resettlement schemes in particular, and how these processes informed, in part, the case for Fast Track Land Reform and Resettlement Programme. This chapter also tries to bring out issues of socio-economic differentiation that characterise production in both communal and resettlement schemes. Paying particular attention to the Fast Track Land Reform and Resettlement Programme, this chapter presents the aims and objectives of Zimbabwe's land reform programme, providing a background context for the case study.

2.2 The rationale for land reform

As earlier on stated, at independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a highly skewed land redistribution pattern with the majority of land being in the hands of a few white farmers. The black indigenous population, which constituted the majority, was confined to less fertile and marginal unproductive native reserves or tribal trust lands. These were renamed communal areas in 1982 (Kinsey 1984, 1999; Palmer 1990; Moyo, 1995; Marongwe, 2002; 2003, and Chaumba *et al* 2003). One major reason why the armed struggle was fought for much of the 1960s and 1970s revolved around the imbalances in land holding patterns that existed at the time. The injustices in land holding patterns resulted in almost a century of peasant marginalisation through various legislative acts which racially divided land into three categories namely state land, African land and European land (Kinsey 1999). Europeans, who constituted far less than five percent of the population of the country, held almost the same area of land as their African counterparts but the Africans were confined to less fertile and unproductive land (Moyana 1984; Palmer 1990 and Kinsey, 1999). It was however widely expected that upon gaining independence in 1980, the question of disparities

in land holding patterns that existed between the two, be tackled once and for all (Kinsey 1984, 1999; Palmer 1990; Moyo 1995, 2004; and Marongwe 2002, 2004). Although significant progress was recorded in terms of land redistribution during the first few years of independence, little progress was witnessed for much of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Palmer (1990) and Moyo (1995) attribute this to the Lancaster House Constitution which advocated for a willing buyer willing seller arrangement for all land to be acquired while Kinsey (1999) believes that over this period there was a belief that beneficiaries of the land redistribution exercise were the least productive of the two and therefore did not deserve to be given land. However, the process of land acquisition for redistribution to indigenous black people gained momentum from the period 1998 onwards (Moyo 1998, 2000; Marongwe, 2002 and Chaumba *et al* 2003).

2.3 Land Acquisition during the Colonial Period and its Implications on Crop Production

The process of the expropriation of land belonging to indigenous people by White settlers, which date back to the colonial period, is intimately related to the decline of African crop production in Zimbabwe. Various pieces of colonial legislation were put in place to provide legal clothing for the alienation of fertile and cultivable land from Africans. For instance, the Privy Council provided the legal basis to the proposition that the Crown owned all unalienated land and that Africans had no concept of land tenure and therefore, their use and ownership of land was always at the behest of the Crown (Shivji *et al* 1998). In addition, the Land Commission Act of 1894, the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 amended in 1931, the African Native Land Husbandry Act (1951) and the Tribal Trust Lands Act (1965) were some of the pieces of colonial legislation that pushed Africans to marginal and poor soils where they eked out a living without legal rights to land as that land belonged to the state. The Native Reserves became Tribal Trust Lands held in trust by a state organ under the Tribal Trust Lands of 1965 (*Ibid.*).

Of particular importance was the notorious Land Apportionment Act of 1930, which set aside 51 percent of the land for the Europeans and in turn, prohibited Africans from holding or occupying land in the European areas (Tshuma, 1997:18). Similarly, the Land Tenure Act of 1969 further entrenched a racial division of land.

Thus, the process of land acquisition by the colonial state resulted in the racial division of land into two distinct farming areas namely the European and African. European settlers were given the best land, located in high rainfall areas or close to watersheds compared to indigenous people who 'were evicted from cultivable lands and were resettled in unproductive areas where they experienced an increasing land shortage and a rapid deterioration of the soil' (Moyana 1984:14)

Moyo (1995) further argued that the extensive land alienation that took place not only led to land deterioration in the native reserves due to population pressure but also exposed their cattle to diseases due to overstocking and shortage of grazing land. The loss of cattle, a major source of draught power for indigenous farmers, negatively affected crop production by African farmers, which in turn adversely affected their livelihoods.

Thus, White settler agriculture grew at the expense of African farming. The growth of agriculture among White settlers was also attributed to the support that they received from the colonial state, for instance, White settler farmers had easy access to technical, financial, marketing and infrastructural support necessary for engaging in effective and meaningful crop production, and such services were not provided to Africans (Moyana, 1984).

Moyana succinctly captured this process when he aptly noted that;

The implementation of the policy of land segregation in Rhodesia had serious repercussions on African agriculture, which visibly declined soon after the creation of the Reserves in 1920, and further deteriorated after the enactment of the Land Apportionment Act. The unproductivity of the land due to adverse ecological conditions, and the shortage of space for both cultivation and grazing which resulted in over-crowding and overstocking, was all factors, which contributed to diminishing agricultural returns. To an African population to whom land was traditionally the most important asset in its possession, the policy of land apportionment was clearly a source of hardship and much suffering (1984:83).

This process thus created two important categories and classification of land in contemporary Zimbabwe, namely the Large Scale Commercial Farmlands (LSCF) and the Communal Areas (CAs) (Murombedzi 1997& Kinsey 1999). The dualism was

not simply in terms of scale and intensity, but it was also spatial and racial according to the agro-ecological regions of the country, with LSCF being located in favourable natural regions³ which received the highest amount of rainfall and also rich in soil fertility. On the other hand, the indigenous black population were largely confined to natural regions IV and V, which are characterised by low rainfall and high temperatures. These regions are not suitable for crop production (Cusworth, 1990; Moyana, 1984; Moyo 1986).

Resentment of the colonial process and the associated expropriation of fertile land from Africans by White settlers was central to the war of liberation and provided the basis for arguments, whether nationalistic in character or as a rationale to improve African agriculture and livelihoods, for land reform and resettlement in post colonial Zimbabwe.

2.4 Post Colonial Period

At independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a racially skewed land ownership pattern, with large – scale commercial farmers, constituting less than one percent of the population, owning 45 percent of the land (Moyo 1995, Palmer, 1990, Kinsey, 1999, UNDP, 2002). More than fifty percent of the large-scale commercial farms were located in areas with high rainfall, where the potential for agricultural production was high. Thirty five percent of the large – scale commercial farming land was either unutilised or underutilised. In this context, indigenous populations were still largely located in marginal lands in the predominantly low-potential agricultural zones (UNDP 2002).

To quantify the land holding situation at independence, UNDP (2002) noted that,

The large-scale commercial farmers owned 15.5 million hectares while 8,500 small-scale commercial farmers, who were indigenous Zimbabweans, owned 1.4 million hectares or five per cent of the agricultural land. Furthermore, the majority of the indigenous population subsisted on 16.4 million hectares of

³ Zimbabwe is divided into five main regions based on agro-ecological potential with Region I regarded as the best while region 5 is the worst. Region 1 is suitable for specialized farming , Region II is suitable for intensive crop farming, Region III is suitable for semi-intensive mixed farming, Region IV is suitable for semi intensive livestock farming whereas Region V is suitable for extensive livestock farming with some parts of the region being unsuitable for farming

leased and congested communal lands that represent less than 50 per cent of the total agricultural land (UNDP 2002:3 cited from GoZ 2001).

In response to the historical inequities in landholding created by the colonial state and the political pressure coming from the independence euphoria, as well as the need to increase crop production with the view to secure the livelihoods of rural people, the Government of Zimbabwe, in 1980, embarked on a land reform and resettlement programme.

The Government of Zimbabwe began the first phase of the land reform and resettlement programme in September 1980 (Kinsey, 1984) with the overall objective of resettling some 18 000 families over a period of five years from the crowded communal areas (Palmer, 1990:169). In 1981, the government proposed to resettle 54 000 families and in March 1982, the number had trebled to 162 000 households (Ibid.). These figures were largely being described as ‘unrealistic’ and impracticable (Cusworth and Walker, 1988) as 52 000 families were actually resettled by 1989, constituting only a fraction of the national target of 162 000.

The failure to attain the resettlement target came largely against a backdrop of the constraints of the Lancaster House Constitution, which ruled out any wholesale land redistribution (Kinsey 1984, 1999; Palmer 1990; Moyo 1995, 2000, 2004; Tshuma 1997). According to Tshuma (1997) the Lancaster House Constitution contained a clause (Section 16) ‘which prohibited compulsory acquisition of land and required the acquiring authority to give reasonable notice of intention to acquire the property in question’ (1997:39). In instances where land had to be acquired this had to be in the interests of defence, public morality, public health, public order, and town and country planning (Tshuma, 1997: 39).

Added to legal restrictions to land acquisition, the concept of ‘willing-seller-willing-buyer’ also compounded the limitations to land reform and resettlement. Under the ‘willing-seller-willing-buyer’ arrangement, Palmer (1990:166) noted that;

Whites who wished to keep their farms were free to do so; there would be no expropriation of land. Only ‘under-utilised’ land, which was required for resettlement or other public purposes could be compulsorily acquired by the new government, but this would have to be paid for immediately and at the full market price, remittable in foreign currency.

In addition, Moyo (1998) points out that the government's land acquisition policy was contradictory and hesitant in terms of the approach and pace. There was an extremely low level of financial allocations made by the Government of Zimbabwe for the implementation of its land acquisition and resettlement programme. In addition, seventy five million pounds pledged by the British government during negotiations in the mid-1970s to buy out white farmers to give up land for resettlement was not honoured (Palmer, 1990).

Largely due to the aforementioned factors, this meant that any redistribution of land had to be slow and expensive, and it can be concluded that the hands of the new Zimbabwean Government was to a large extent, tied. Furthermore, Palmer (1990) attributes the slow down of the resettlement programme to the fact that the country's domestic budget came under great pressure, with the Zimbabwean government being urged to reduce its budget deficit by the World Bank and by the British and other Western governments. In the circumstances, it was more politic to cut back on a resettlement programme, which was still largely on the books, than to starve the newly established schools and clinics of funds (Palmer 1990:171). Furthermore a great boom in peasant agricultural production misled the government into believing that a sustainable increase in communal area production capable of meeting welfare needs was possible without extensive resettlement.

Despite the problems, it has been noted that farmers in resettlement schemes produced high-value crops such as tobacco, cotton and paprika as well as maize, in combination with livestock, earning higher incomes per family than in communal areas. Kinsey noted that;

Zimbabwe's resettlement programme resulted in both higher incomes and more equally distributed incomes. Resettled households crop twice the amount of land and earn more than three times the unit revenues of communal areas families. Values of livestock, crop production, food and non – food expenditure, and holdings of cereal stocks are all higher and more equitably distributed in resettlement areas than in the neighbouring communal areas (Kinsey 1999:194).

Kinsey's (1999) comparative study of resettlement and communal areas crop production notes that the crop output of the average resettled family was worth over

four and half times that of the average communal area household. Similarly, it is noted that the average livestock holding in resettlement areas was approximately double than that of the communal areas. Kinsey concludes that genuine poverty reduction through resettlement is possible, and Zimbabwe has the potential to channel the energies of tens of thousands of farming households into significant contributions to national development.

Against this background, another phase of land reform commenced in June 1998, where the government prepared the Land-Reform and Resettlement Programme - Phase II, where it aimed at acquiring 5 million hectares and settling 91,000 families, mainly the landless poor and overcrowded families and youths as well as graduates from agricultural colleges and others with experience in agriculture, who were to be selected in a gender-sensitive manner. Phase II was expected to bring the total redistributed area to about 8.5 million hectares (UNDP 2002) The basic objectives included reducing poverty, increasing agricultural Gross domestic Product (GDP) by increasing the number of commercialized small-scale farmers, promoting environmentally sustainable land use, and enhancing conditions for sustainable peace and social stability. Government aimed at securing funding for the Phase II of the land reform programme from donors at the Donor Conference on Land Reform. However, donors were not prepared to finance the Inception Phase and the only tangible result that emerged from the Donor Conference was a World Bank assisted pilot project (\$5 million) aimed at testing the feasibility of two possible models for land reform that were designed to be an integral part of the Inception Phase¹¹. Only 4,697 families were settled under Phase II amounting to an area of 145,000 hectares (UNDP 2002).

In short, the Donor Conference on Land Reform failed to come up with an agreed land reform and resettlement package, agreeable to the various actors with divergent interests. Commercial farmers and the donor community offered a cautious and 'piecemeal' version of land reform and resettlement, yet the government was aiming for a radical land reform programme. This signalled a failure in an inclusive process of land reform⁴. In a similar vein, Chaumba *et al* (2003) noted that the British were reticent about paying out for land acquisition on a large scale, and lobbying by commercial farmers representatives and others help delay the momentum established in previous years.

The context changed dramatically when voting in the proposed national referendum in 2000 and the subsequent 2000 parliamentary elections and 2002 presidential election placed land and land reform high on the political agenda.

While land is central to the livelihoods of rural people and to national agricultural development, the politicisation of the land question by the ruling party became the key point of difference between the people and the ruling party. The ruling ZANU (PF) party reduced land to a political item on the campaigning agenda and thus failed to capture the broad debates emanating from a wider spectrum of people. For rural people in communal areas, their need for additional land was largely based on the unproductive nature of communal area soils. This is not surprising given the historical origins of communal areas. The large-scale commercial farmers, with vested interests and the need to maintain the status quo, presented largely economic arguments in support of an evolutionary process of land reform. What the large scale commercial farmers missed was the extent and intensity of grievances shared among the landless black Zimbabweans residing in communal areas adjacent to their farms and indeed workers working on their farms. It is within this heightened need for land reform that the ruling party placed land high on its political agenda, and thus included the land issue in a controversial constitutional reform process. The ruling party-led constitutional reform process coincided with the emergence of a strong opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), led by a veteran of the labour movement, Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai. The opposition party campaigned vigorously against the ZANU (PF) draft constitution. Partly as a result of the campaign by MDC, and partly due to people's own misgivings about certain aspects contained in the proposed constitution, the majority of the Zimbabwean population rejected the constitution.

The ruling party interpreted the rejection of the Constitution as orchestrated by large scale white commercial farmers in cahoots with the opposition MDC party, which was alleged to be a front for the British government, intent on safeguarding commercial farmer interests in land. Thus the ruling party embarked on Fast Track

⁴ Personal communication with Sobona Mtisi (2004).

land resettlement programme, possibly to ‘strike fear in the hearts of white farmers’⁵ for supporting the opposition, though it was commonly stated by the ruling party that the Fast Track land resettlement programme was intended to improve the livelihoods of rural people through increased access to land and increased crop production. The rejection of the ZANU (PF) draft constitution was not focussed primarily on its provisions in relation to land, but on wider issues of governance. It is my contention that the land question is still the major developmental challenge in Zimbabwe, and land is still central to rural livelihoods and national economic development.

For the Zimbabwean peasantry, for whom land remains central to livelihoods, spontaneous settlement on commercial farms, although not new in post-colonial Zimbabwe, was significant during this period. The significance of spontaneous resettlement largely rests on the fact that it was done in defiance of the government, if not the ruling party. For instance, the Gudo people in Sangwe Communal Area in South Eastern Zimbabwe spontaneously resettled themselves on nearby Save Valley Conservancy in 2000 and 2001 (Mtisi et al 2001; Marongwe 2002). Saruchera (2002) reported on similar spontaneous resettlement among the Svosve people in Mashonaland East province.

The war veterans picked up the contentious land issue to challenge government on its commitment to improve people’s livelihoods and poverty reduction, and to press for financial compensation for their participation in the liberation war. The confrontation between the war veterans and government over land and other issues resulted in the government bowing to their pressure and announced a once-off payment of Z\$50 000 to each veteran, and Z\$2000 per month pension for life (Human Rights Watch, 2002).

Buoyed by the success, the war veterans picked the national land question, and adopted it as their own agenda to spearhead a violent campaign of land seizures and occupations. Faced with political competition within both the 2000 parliamentary election and the 2002 presidential election, the government announced the Fast Track Land Reform and Resettlement Programme in July 2000.

⁵ In a widely publicized speech addressing a ruling party gathering in 2000, the President, in reference to White Commercial Farmers, is quoted as saying that he wants to strike fear in their hearts.

According to the UNDP report the GoZ formally announced the implementation of the accelerated land reform programme (Fast-Track Resettlement Programme) in July 2000, stating that it wanted acquire more than 3000 farms for redistribution to indigenous black farmers. Between June 2000 and February 2001 a national total of 2706 farms covering more than six million hectares were gazetted for compulsory acquisition. Various reasons were given for hastening the designation and acquisition of properties and as a result the government sought to employ different controversial policy tools to justify its actions with amendments to the law (Saruchera2002). This was meant to legalise and support the government's land policy.

A number of problems were experienced with this system, which for example one farm being allocated to different people and disorderly allocations of plots (Marongwe 2002). The country's economy faced a lot of challenges in the last five years. According to the Central Statistics Office (CSO 2002), the country had a population of 11.6 million people with the bulk of them living in the rural areas, Gross Domestic Product fell by 28.7% during the period 1999 to 2003 and a projected decline of 6.5% in January 2004. Annual inflation rose consistently from 228% in April 2003 to 622.8% in January 2004, but with a fall to 500% by April 2004. Between March and December 2003 the Zimbabwe dollar lost over 360% of its value against the United States dollar, but these rates stabilised during the early months of 2004 alongside the decline in inflation and the introduction of new economic policies.

According to the Human Development Report of 2003, structural unemployment was estimated to be above 60%. Most recent estimates in Zimbabwe indicate that 1.8 million people are living with HIV/AIDS, with an adult prevalence rate of 24.6%. Zimbabwe's economy has performed poorly in the past year. The land reform exercise, coupled with violence and intimidation has managed to scare away potential investments in the country. The implementation process has been marred by irregularities such as lack of planning.

Various scholars, such as Worby (2001) and Cousins (2003), have described the occupations of mainly white owned farms as a test case on the issue of undermining property rights and rule of law. Despite numerous court judgements compelling the government to halt farm seizures, the situation on the ground remained unchanged. The process presents challenges to other countries undertaking similar exercises.

Across the Limpopo, where South Africa is undertaking land reform, Lahiff and Cousins (2001) have argued that the ANC led government has come under heavy criticism for not addressing the land issue once and for all and there are also fears that the situation in Zimbabwe might spill over to neighbouring South Africa.

Chaumba *et al* (2003) and Marongwe (2003) have tracked the land occupations in Zimbabwe both before and after 2000 and suggest different motives for both the designations and subsequent occupations of farms from 1998 up to 2000, as well as the large scale occupations of commercial farms since 2000. Some of the motives for the occupations were purely nationalistic in nature while others were merely political demonstrations. Others have documented various reasons for the invasions for example Moyo (2000), Marongwe (2002) and Chaumba *et al* (2003). The nature of the farms occupied the identity of the occupiers and the reasons for occupation of those farms are clearly spelled out by Marongwe (2002) According to Marongwe some of the occupied farms were close to the communal areas while some were occupied due to the fact that the owner refused to cooperate with the occupiers.

2.5 Objectives of Fast Track Resettlement

The objective of Fast Track Resettlement was to accelerate the process of acquiring 5 million hectares planned for Phase II of the land reform programme, completing it by December 2001. The objectives of the Fast Track programme were the same as those of Phase II. However, the targets of the programme in terms of land redistributed and beneficiaries shifted upwards to 9 million hectares, and benefit 160,000 beneficiaries from among the poor, and 51,000 small to medium-scale indigenous commercial farmers. The methods of land acquisition, settler selection and provision of settlement support were also changed to a completely government-driven approach so as to ensure the rapid completion of these three tasks while spreading infrastructure developments over 10 years (UNDP 2002).

During 2000 and 2001 there was a massive plan to designate and resettle 9,2 million hectares which was approximately 80 percent of the land in the commercial farming sector. Official government records reported that by January 2002, 7, 3 million hectares had been planned and pegged by the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement on 3,074 farms and a total of 114,830 households had been

resettled on 4.37 million hectares (UNDP 2002). Table 3 below presents a national overview of fast track resettlement by province



Table 1: Summary Status of the Fast Track Resettlement Programme

Farms acquired (or in the process of being acquired) by Province						
June 2000-20 November 2001						
Province	No. of Farms Listed	No. Double Counted	No. of farms de-listed	No. of Farms Currently Listed	Size of farms currently listed (Ha)	Average farm size (Ha)
Manicaland	640	70	49	521	548,790	1,053
Mashonaland Central	815	83	67	665	808,189	1,215
Mashonaland East	1,196	234	134	828	746,837	902
Mashonaland West	1,534	262	128	1,144	1,905,183	1,665
Masvingo	648	116	156	376	1,479,072	3,934
Matabeleland North	550	51	42	457	1,615,943	3,536
Matabeleland South	362	21	30	311	1,138,079	3,659
Midlands	736	81	83	572	991,766	1,734
Total	6,481	918	689	4,874	9,233,859	1,895

Source: Ministry of Land, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. Data as at 16 November 2001

With particular reference to Masvingo province, where Fair Range Estate is located, Marongwe (2004) notes that fast track resettlement saw the redistribution of over 1 321 130 hectares of land to over 23 772 beneficiaries. About 40 percent of this was allocated under the A1 resettlement model whereas 60 percent was for the A2 resettlement model.

Two models for resettlement were emphasised in this particular phase, even though they had been in existence since independence. These were the A1 model, which was meant to cater for the generality of the population and benefit 160000 beneficiaries from among the poor. According to a UNDP (2002) report 20 percent of land under the A1 model was reserved for War Veterans, in appreciation of the role they had

played during the liberation war. The second model was aimed at creating a group of 51000 small to medium black indigenous commercial farmers. The farm selection criteria used were based on the land policy statement of the GoZ adopted in 1990 which among others recommended the acquisition of land that is derelict, underutilised, owned by a farmer who also owned other farms close to communal areas and farms which were owned by absentee landlords. However these criteria were largely ignored in favour of others such as farm owners who ill-treated their workers and whether or not there existed conflicts between owners and surrounding communities.

A key objective of Fast Track resettlement was the need to increase crop production amongst the newly resettled farmers with a view to reduce poverty and secure people's livelihoods. This was understandable in the context of the massive retrenchments that had taken place during the structural adjustment period initiated in 1990, and of the frequent droughts that have occurred in recent years.

It is not farfetched to argue that increases in crop production achieved by resettled farmers during the first phase of land reform and resettlement in the 1980s (Kinsey 1999), partly informed the narratives of crop production that were extended to the Fast Track land reform programme. Furthermore since the vicissitudes of agriculture played a major role in determining the extent of poverty in the country, resettlement was meant to benefit rural people who had been deprived of their source of livelihood for decades, and hence resettlement areas were a manifestation of the pledge made to the people of Zimbabwe by ZANU (PF) prior to independence (Kinsey, 1984 & Palmer, 1990).

Yet, increases in crop production cannot solely be attributed to land reform and resettlement *per se*. There are indeed other intervening factors that explain improvements in crop production during the first phase of the land reform programme. Cusworth (1990) argued that there were no significant differences in crop production between resettled areas and communal areas. Where production increased in resettled areas, Cusworth attributed the increase in crop production to location, pointing out that those who were resettled in better agro ecological regions performed relatively well. Table 2 and 3 below were used to indicate the relationship between agro-ecological zones and crop production and to buttress the fact that the variation in crop

production is linked to natural regions (Cusworth, 1990). The following table shows average gross margins from crops grown in resettlement schemes.

Table 2: Average gross margins for crop production on resettlement schemes

Natural Region	1983/4	1984/5	1985/6	1986/7
11b	652	1447	1202	1735
111	607	1403	847	1927
1V	411	1078	617	2188
V	180	639	28	1054

Source: Extracted from Cusworth 1990

Sixty four percent of the country's geographical area which accounts for seventy five percent of the CAs are located in the semi-arid regions 1V and V, which receives less than 650 mm of annual rainfall. These regions face a high likelihood of severe dry spells during the rainy season and frequent droughts. These regions are primarily suitable for game and livestock production and not crop production.

While agro-ecological reasons are an important factor in explaining variation of crop production among resettlement schemes, economic, political as well as social factors also play an important role. Crop production in resettlement areas is highly differentiated because people have different resources, such as access to credit, technology and knowledge about farming. Cousins (1990, 1992) also pointed out that crop production in communal areas, and possibly in resettlement areas, are affected by social differentiation attributed to unequal access to land, livestock, technology, agricultural capital which results in widening gaps between household with differential capacities to produce an agricultural surplus. In addition, differences in farming knowledge also affect crop production among resettled farmers. Cousins (1992) also suggests that social differentiation in relation to livestock ownership is key to increased crop productivity in natural regions IV and V. Cattle are used as draught power and thus those farmers who have livestock are likely to have more hectares under cultivation as compared to those without livestock.

Many scholars, including Cousins (1990; 1992), Masst (1994) and Cusworth (1990) have concurred that the key constraint to agricultural production in the past has been

access to resources. Amin (1989, cited in Cousins 1992) classified households in CAs into three types, rich peasants, poor peasants and middle peasants according to a wide range of criteria which socially differentiate households within an area. He argued that differentiation among households, results in widening gaps between them.

Cousins (1990) argued that both historical and contemporary research has revealed that rural population in Zimbabwe is highly skewed and households engage in a variety of activities to secure a livelihood. He further argued that total household income is increased due to the diversification of sources of income and that there are many livelihood strategies that a household can pursue to earn a living. These include off-farm incomes such as remittances from migrant labour and livestock rearing. In addition to that he argued that resettlement areas (RAs) of the 1980s were similar to Communal areas (CAs) in respect to rural-urban linkages although the permit system restricted who within the household formed the linkage. There was also a strong degree of inter-dependence between CAs and RAs between livestock components of the farming methods in respect to draught power through animal traction.

Given the political nature of the fast-track land reform programme and the narratives of increased crop production and poverty reduction employed to justify the new resettlement schemes, it is thus important to explore and analyse the opportunities and constraints of crop production in fast track land reform and resettlement programme. Fair Range Estate is a case in point.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has traced the historical imbalances in land distribution in Zimbabwe and described the land reform programme initiated by the post-independence government, focusing in particular on the role of crop production in resettlement schemes. The land question has a long history in Zimbabwe and dates back to the time of the colonial period. The attainment of independence in Zimbabwe was a negotiated process, which required the new government to protect private property. However the subsequent political process led to a new momentum in terms of land redistribution. Key arguments for land reform included a need to improve crop production and thereby enhance rural people's livelihoods.

CHAPTER THREE: LAND REFORM ON FAIR RANGE ESTATE

This chapter presents a brief overview of the dynamics of Fast Track land reform in Masvingo Province and in the case study area, Fair Range Estate. Data on demography, agro-ecology and economic activities are also presented in order to provide an in-depth understanding of socio-political and economic context of the case study. Brief histories of Fair Range Estate and the Shangaan people are also provided.

3.1 Farm Occupations and Fast-Track Resettlement in Masvingo Province

There were various manifestations of the Fast Track land reform programme in Masvingo province, depending on a variety of local factors. While the farm occupations of 2000 in Masvingo province are said to have started under the leadership of war veterans (Marongwe 2004), the Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa Project found out that, for Gudo Communal Area in Chiredzi District, farm occupations were initiated by the local community on the basis of a long standing dispute between the Gudo people and a commercial farmer named Otterson. The dispute between the two centred on access to traditional sacred sites, a sacred pool and a burial site for traditional leaders. The sacred pool provided much-needed fish, as a supplementary source of food, during drought periods. These sites were fenced in, in a private wildlife conservancy. In addition, the Gudo people wanted to have more land for cultivation (Mtisi *et al* 2001).

Almost all large-scale commercial farms in Chiredzi District were occupied by war veterans during the Fast Track programme, as was the state owned Gonarezhou National Park, the second largest park in the country. Land restitution was a primary motivation in some occupations, including Gonarezhou National Park and Fair Range Estate (Marongwe 2002; Chaumba *et al* 2003). Conservancies such as Save Valley were not spared and neither were Mkwasine and Hippo Valley Sugar Estates in Chiredzi District. State land such as Buffalo Range (where Buffalo Range airport is located) was also occupied. In the communal areas of Sangwe, Tshovani irrigation scheme, under the Agricultural Rural Development Authority (ARDA) was also subject to occupations. Other properties that were not spared included Lot 5 of Buffalo Range, which houses the Chiredzi prison. Triangle Ranch, Lot 4 of Lot 3, which is also state land (Marongwe 2004).

In Chiredzi District alone a total of 6009 males or 71 percent were beneficiaries, while 21 percent (1589) were females. The area occupied by the A1 settlers covered a total area of 125009 hectares (Marongwe 2004). It is within this category that Fair Range Estate falls.

3.2 Fair Range Estate under Fast Track Land Reform Programme – A History of Occupation

More than one thousand people from surrounding communal areas and Chiredzi town occupied Fair Range Estate the 16th of February 2000. The farm was owned by Mr. Jan Naude. War veterans drawn from Chiredzi District with the assistance of mobilized Zanu PF youths from Sangwe communal area led the farm occupations. Fair Range Estate was later designated for compulsory acquisition and subsequently pegged by government officials in May 2000. Chaumba *et al*, (2003) noted that before the invasion of Fair Range Estate in 2000, the area was heavily forested resembling a true game and cattle game ranch but within a short space of time after it's invasion the fences had been pulled down, cattle had been slaughtered and trees had been chopped down. In addition Chaumba *et. al* (2003) noted that the invasion of Fair Range Estate by a group of self styled war veterans assisted by mobilised youths took place in a chaotic and disorderly manner. Many scholars (eg Lahiff, 2003) questioned the speedy and intensity of which farms such as Fair Range Estate were invaded.

Before the invasion and subsequent placement of people on Fair Range Estate, the farm was a cattle and game ranch. Three bases were quickly set up, with Base 1 and 3 in Fair Range while Base 2 was across the road close to Malilangwe Conservation Trust main entrance gate. Base 1 had one hundred and seventy six people. Base 2 had the highest number of farm occupiers with five hundred and six while Base 3 had three hundred and seventy settlers. Shortly after the invasion the occupiers decided to allocate themselves 50 hectare plots each until officials from the Agricultural Research and Extension Service (AREX) came in on the 5th of May 2001. They then allocated them six hectares arable land, seventy metres by seventy metres residential stands and eighteen hectares of communal grazing. It was also suggested that Malilangwe Conservation Trust would provide part of its land, close to Fair Range, to the new settlers for grazing purposes. But because of fear of foot and mouth disease, the area was then earmarked for a game reserve where settlers would benefit from

abundant wildlife in the area, as other communities in nearby Chitsa Communal Area are doing (Wolmer *et al* 2003).

Seven villages were subsequently set up, A Base Commander who was a liberation war hero, and reported directly to the District Administrator of Chiredzi headed the scheme as a whole. His Vice Commander, who in the case of Fair Range was a woman who had also participated in the liberation struggle, deputized the Base commander. A seven member committee was immediately set up to run the affairs of Fair Range with all the seven members being drawn from each village reporting to the Base Commander. The committee was seen as a development committee that was tasked, amongst other things, with the sourcing of inputs such as seeds and fertilizers.

Crops that were recommended for the area did not differ from those grown in the adjacent Sangwe communal area where the majority of the farmers originally came from, prior to resettlement. Crops grown in Fair Range included maize, cotton, sorghum, groundnuts, sunflowers, millet and rapoko, amongst others.

Most of the communal and resettlement areas in Chiredzi District are located in Natural Regions 1V and V. This means that these areas are generally unsuitable for dryland land cropping and are suited for game or livestock production. There are very few perennial rivers and most of domestic water supplies come from ground water. As a result of the water shortages and the lack of investment in infrastructure development small areas are irrigated. The situation is also worsened by the fact that there is high population and thus land pressure (Mtisi *et al* 2001; SAFIRE, 2004). In Sangwe Communal Area which is adjacent to Fair Range Estate. SAFIRE (2004) points out that the constraints to crop production range from poor soils, lack of access to markets due to poor roads and distance, problem animals because of the proximity of the area to wildlife conservancies, limited support from agricultural extension staff, frequent droughts due to the climatic conditions of the area and inappropriate technology.

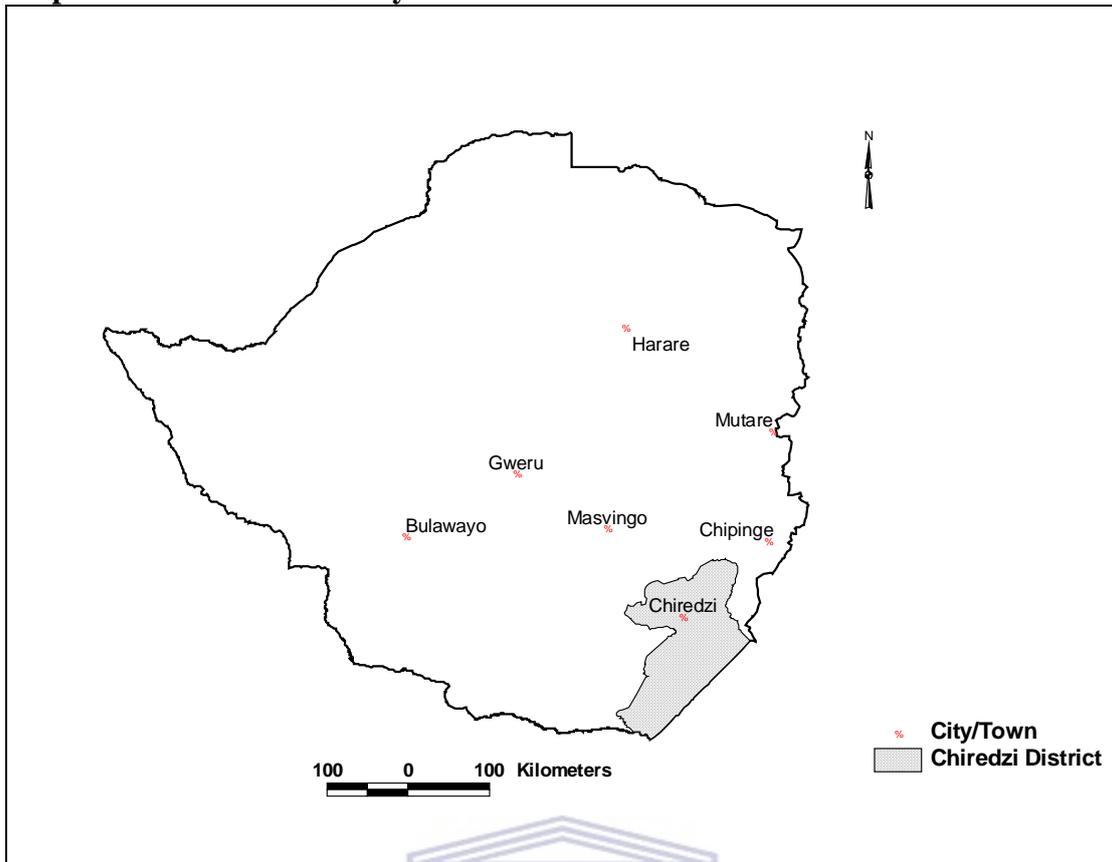
3.3 Fair Range Estate: Location and Economic Activities of the Area

Fair Range Estate is located to the south-eastern part of Zimbabwe, Chiredzi district in Masvingo Province. It is located approximately 20 kilometres from Chiredzi town

along the Chiredzi – Mutare highway road. It is bordered to the south by Malilangwe Conservation Trust, Chipimbi Ranch to the west, Mkwesine Sugar Estate to the north, Sangwe Communal area and Chizvirizvi Resettlement Scheme to the north – east. Sugar cane production on the Triangle, Hippo Valley and Mkwesine estates is a major driver of the economy of the area. Together the three estates employ a total of 18000 people (Lowveld Conservancies, undated). The only other employer, apart from a few isolated mines, is the Government. As a result, many people in this area are dependant upon agriculture for their livelihoods. Yet, high population densities and low agricultural productivity have undermined the land based livelihood activities of the people, thus making non farm activities, conducted both within and outside the district, an important aspect of people’s livelihoods. For instance, employment in the wildlife and tourism industry in Gonarezhou National Park and Malilangwe Conservation Trust, as well as in the sugar estates, provided direct and indirect employment to the local community. Below is a map showing the location of the study area.



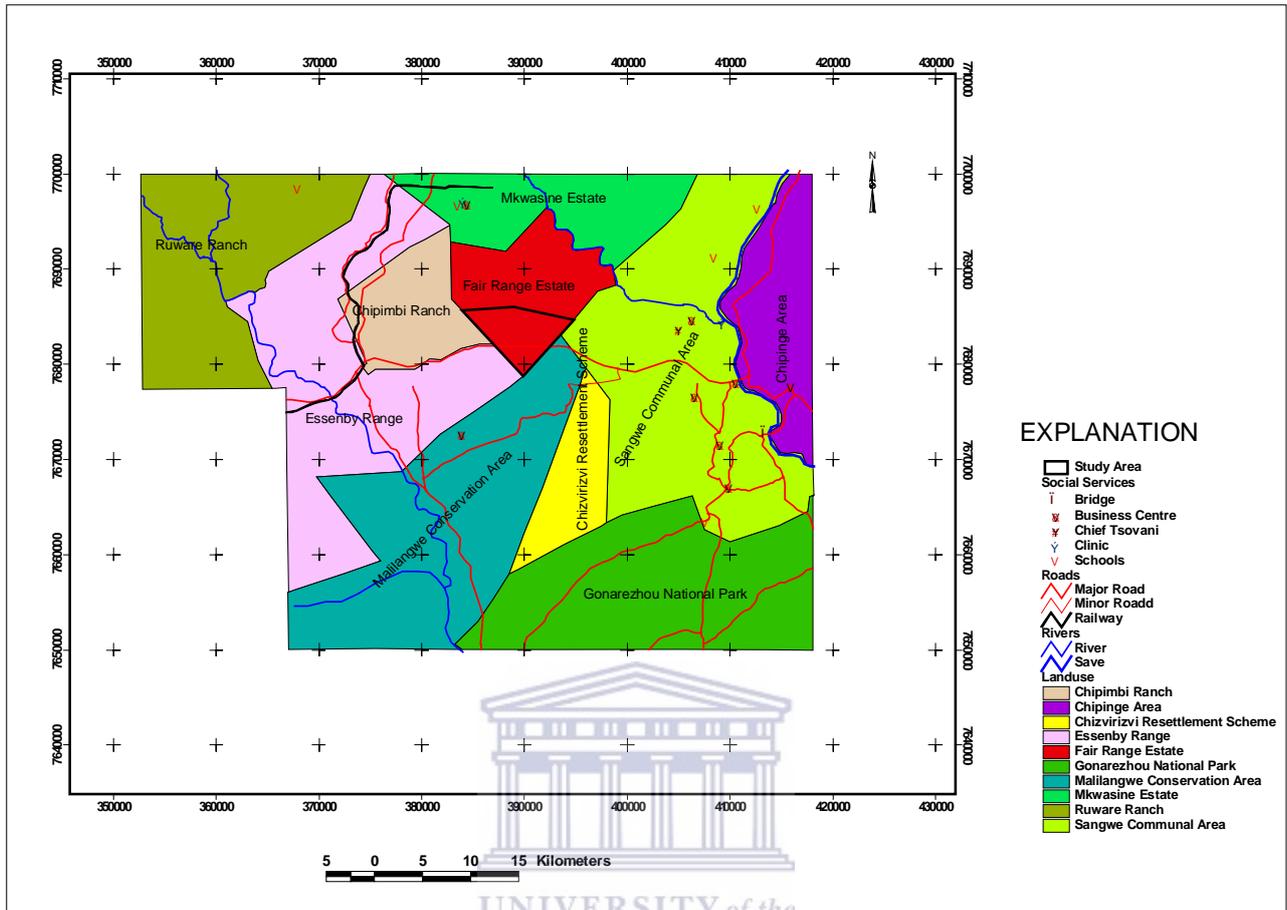
Map 1: Location of the Study Area:



Source: (Surveyor General Office 2003)



Map 2: The Study Area and Environs



3.4 Climate

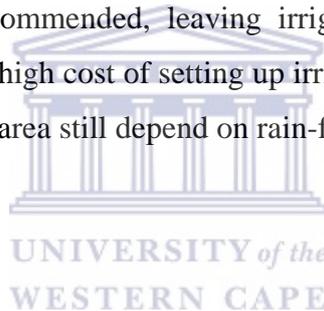
Fair Range Estate lies in agro-ecological Region V which is characterized by low rainfall, poor soils with low agricultural potential and high temperatures. Annual rainfall for the region ranges from between 450mm to 650mm per annum, while the climate is generally classified as hot and dry. The drought years of 1991/1992 and 2000/2002 were characterized by long hot and dry spells with day maximum temperatures exceeding 40 degrees Celsius (SAFIRE, 2004). Agricultural production is characterized by high risk and uncertainty.. As a result of the hot and dry conditions in the area there is no meaningful crop production in the area in the absence of irrigation development. The diversity of the rural livelihoods in this area is largely a function of the climatic conditions

3.5 Vegetation

Generally the vegetation of Fair Range is typical semi arid, with the resettled area dominated by *mopane* and *combretum* woodland. Along the Save and Chiredzi rivers dense riverine forest occurs supporting a broad range of floral and avian species. Fair Range Estate is mostly covered by stunted *mopane* due to the nature of the soils that affect the root system. The *mopane* population has greatly been affected over time by increase in population and regular fires caused by resettled farmers and illegal poachers. Before the settlement was established, communities were restricted to harvesting firewood in the area but of late indications are that the *mopane* wood has been greatly affected by the increase in population. Furthermore, the occupation of the area by close to five hundred people who solely rely on firewood for cooking greatly affected the vegetation of the area. Under the Fast Track land resettlement programme, close to three thousand hectares of the total area has been cleared of vegetation for agriculture and housing plots. At the time of the research vast tracts of land had been cleared and farmers were still busy destumping the area in preparation of the rainy season. The use of fire to destroy the long *mopane* roots was also witnessed during the time of the study. These translate to a significant reduction of the *mopane* woodland in this section of Fair Range Estate. Significant changes to the *mopane* population have also occurred over recent years with communal people from Sangwe area harvesting firewood for cooking and to sell in nearby growth points.

3.6 Soils

The soils in Fair Range Estate are of distinct types with fertile basaltic soils predominating in the resettled area. These soils are loose grained, shallow, medium to heavy texture and are dark brown in colour. They are sometimes characterized as 'cotton soils'. They contain a high proportion of clay particles that expand considerably on wetting. The other main soil types is derived from granites comprising mainly the grynophires found on higher ground to the north and south of Fair Range, and where the old farmhouse is located. The soils are lighter and reddish rather than brown in colour compared to the flat area along the major highway road to Mutare. The fluctuation in the nature of the soils affect the root trees and leading to stunted growth of *mopane*. These soils support a wide variety of crops namely cotton, sorghum and millet. However, due to the limited and erratic rainfall, dryland agriculture is not highly recommended, leaving irrigation agriculture as the only viable option in the area. The high cost of setting up irrigation schemes has meant that the majority of farmers in the area still depend on rain-fed production.



3.7 Hydrology

There are no major rivers that run through Fair Range but the area is hedged between Save River to the east, Chiredzi River to the south and Mkwazine River to the north. Small streams that pass through Fair Range drain into the Chiredzi River catchment. By the time of the study three boreholes had been sunk in the area by the District Development Fund (DDF).

3.8 Wildlife

As already stated elsewhere, prior to the resettlement of people in the area, Fair Range Estate was a cattle and game ranch. The setting up of the settlement in a game ranch meant that farmers had to stay side by side with wild animals such as buffaloes, posing a great risk of their cattle contracting the deadly foot and mouth disease. The part that was occupied is only separated from Malilangwe Conservation Trust by a major road and a fence whilst the other part of Fair Range Estate, where wild animals were pushed to, is close to farmer's fields. Because of this scenario a lot of poaching

of wild animals by new settlers and destruction of crops by these animals is rampant in the area. Co existence between the new settlers and wild animals has been a highly contentious issue in the area with reports alleging that the white estate owner is refusing to cooperate in resource sharing. Fair Range Estate has a diverse vertebrate population, including different species of birds, reptiles and mammals, including lion, impala, cheetah, giraffe, kudu, eland and warthog.

Marongwe (2004) points out that whereas the area is richly endowed with wildlife, this form of land use has generally not been able to support the livelihoods of the poor. A number of conservancies have sprung up in the area but these have been criticized for not contributing to the welfare of the generality of the population (Saruchera, 2001).

3.9 A History of the Local People

The area is dominated by the Shangaan people who migrated from South Africa during the Nguni uprising in the early 19th century, and settled along the confluence of the Save and Lundi Rivers to the east, and up to Chiredzi river and Save river to the north. The area, including Fair Range Estate, was known as Madombwe. The Shangaan ethnic group were moved out of the now Fair Range area in 1957 to pave way for the conservancy. They were settled along the Save river, close to the Gonarezhou National Park. (Chaumba *et al* 2003; Wolmer 2003).

Traditionally, the Shangaan people have been known to be pastoralists but over the years they have shifted into crop production, despite the frequent droughts and other natural shocks such as flooding associated with the area (SAFIRE 2004). Control of tsetsefly by the colonial state, which began in the 1950s, saw the forced removal of the Shangaan people from the riverine areas within the Gonarezhou National Park. Game fences were established in the park area and limited people's access to their plots in the park. During the liberation struggle, the Shangaan people were again moved into protected villages known as '*keeps*', in what is today known as Sangwe Communal Area. Sangwe communal area has five wards, which stretches from Gonarezhou National Park along the Save river to Gudo area, close to Save Valley Conservancy. This was a small stretch of land and due to population pressure Sangwe

area is now one of the densely populated areas in Chiredzi District, with population density of 45 persons per square kilometre. This is more than the 1997 national average of 30 persons per square kilometre (Wolmer, 2003; Mtisi et al 2001). There was insufficient land to meet existing cropland and grazing needs of the majority in the communal areas of Sangwe. Below is a table showing population densities of the communal areas of Chiredzi

Table 3: Population Density in Communal Areas Of Chiredzi District.

Communal Area	Total Population	Total no of households	Population Density (Persons per Square kilometre)
Sangwe	41 321	3 932	44.9
Sengwe	21 766	2 434	8.1
Matibi	19 890	6 932	23.9
Total	82 977	13 298	25.6

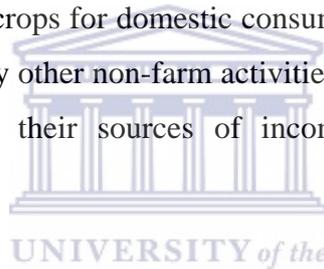
(Source: Chiredzi Agritex Office 2001)

3.10 Agricultural Activities in Fair Range Estate

Despite the low and erratic rainfall patterns the heavy basaltic soils found on Fair Range are able to support a large variety of crops such as maize, cotton, sorghum, groundnuts, millet, and *rapoko*. The soils are also good for both dry land and irrigation agriculture although the area is prone to intermittent droughts. Because of the risk and climatic uncertainties of the area crop farmers have adopted short season varieties that mature early in order to counter the unreliability of rainfall and recurrent droughts. (SAFIRE, 2004 and Mtisi et al 2001). Despite the low and erratic rainfall patterns dryland agriculture remains the mainstay of the people's livelihoods in both resettlement and the communal areas.

Crop farmers in Fair Range Estate grow a large variety of crops for their livelihood. Crops, which are grown for domestic consumption, include maize, groundnuts, sorghum, millet, pumpkins, *rapoko*, sweet potatoes, and beans while cotton, sunflowers and paprika are mainly grown for sale. Maize is grown both as a staple and a cash crop, while cotton has increasingly become popular because of the huge cash incentives such as the availability of loans and inputs.

The recommended and most suitable crops in the area vary from very early maturing varieties to drought tolerant crops. This scenario leaves irrigation as the best way of producing crops in the area but the high costs of setting up irrigation schemes have meant that farmers in the area depend largely on dry-land agriculture. Success in crop production depends on the use of agricultural techniques that conserve water. Intercropping which has been seen to be useful in the area, aims to maximise on the short wet season by growing most crops at the right time. Mtisi et al (2001) have argued that this system has a number of advantages such as nitrogen fixation and the reduction of soil erosion. Intercropping is normally carried out to enable farmers to have something to fall back on during times of drought and other natural shocks. Crop production is complemented by a wide variety of other livelihood activities like employment, remittances from family members, migration and part time work. Because of the shortage of land in the surrounding areas of Fair Range Estate, there is a high degree of retention of crops for domestic consumption and a reliance on heavy imported foodstuffs. Generally other non-farm activities that include craft, buying and selling of commodities and their sources of income are important sources of livelihoods.



Crop based agriculture in Fair Range Estate is also complemented by livestock rearing especially cattle, donkeys, sheep, goats, poultry and pigs. Illegal fishing and poaching of wildlife is also common in Fair Range Estate. Fishing is done on major rivers such as Save, Mkwazine and Chiredzi Rivers while poaching of wild animals is carried out in Malilangwe conservation area and Gonarezhou National park.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS ON CROP PRODUCTION IN FAIR RANGE

This chapter presents research findings on crop production by newly resettled farmers in Fair Range Estate. It describes the production patterns of different crops grown by the resettled farmers in 2004 and how crop production contributed to household income among the farmers. In addition, the chapter assesses the contribution of other sources of income to the livelihoods of the newly resettled farmers. The study was carried out in 2004. As stated in Chapter Three, four hundred and twenty seven farmers were officially resettled on Fair Range under the Government's Fast Track resettlement programme in May 2001. This chapter will discuss findings from interviews with a sample of 70 households drawn from Villages One to Five. Reference is also made to population data for the scheme as a whole.

4.1 Socio- Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Age

Just over half of the respondents (31, or 52 percent of the total) were aged between 40 and 49 years old, while those aged between 30 and 39 years numbered 29 (41 percent of the total). Only one farmer was below 30 years, while 7 respondents were between the ages 50 and 59 years. Only 2 farmers were above 60 years.

Gender

Of a total of 70 respondents, only 6 plot holders (or 8 percent of the total) were women. Of the total number of resettled farmers, 6.1 percent (26 new farmers) were women while the rest 93.9 percent (421 new farmers) were men.

Origin and ethnicity

The majority of respondents in the sample (42 farmers, or 60 percent) came from nearby Sangwe and Vheneka areas of Chiredzi and Chipinge respectively. Approximately twenty one percent (15 farmers) came from Chiredzi town. The rest of the sample (13 farmers, or 18.6 percent) came from the Zaka, Chivi, Bikita, Ngundu and Mwenezi areas of Masvingo Province. The Shangani and Ndau people constitute

the majority of respondents in the sample partly because of the proximity of the area to Sangwe and Ndowoyo Communal areas, home to the Shangani and Ndaui people respectively.

Level of Education of Plot Holders

Of the 70 respondents in the sample, only one person had a tertiary education qualification. He happened to be a local primary school teacher in the scheme. The majority approximately (44 new farmers, or 63 percent) completed secondary education, while 18.6 percent (13 new farmers) had primary level education. Ten percent of farmers did not have any formal education. The relatively high levels of education is largely attributed to the fact that most of the plot holders were below the ages of 50 years and had benefited from the Government's educational policy implemented soon after independence which saw many people enrolling in schools throughout the country.

In terms of agricultural training only three percent of the farmers reported having completed a Master Farmer training course. Approximately 4 percent (3 new farmers) achieved Standard 4 level of education during the colonial period.

4.2 Profile of Village Respondents

Table 5 below provides data on the social composition of the seven villages found in Fair Range Estate.

Table 4: Village Profile of New Farmers on Fast Track Scheme in Fair Range Estate:

Issues/ Items	Village 1	Village 2	Village 3	Village 4	Village 5	Village 6	Village 7	Total
Cattle ownership (n=37)	8	6	7	6	3	4	3	37
Villagers in employment (n=43)	16	5	6	4	6	3	3	43
Single woman plot holders (n=26)	6	5	4	3	2	4	2	26
War veterans (n=14)	3	3	3	3	2	0	0	14
Businessmen/ women (n=8)	2	2	1	0	0	1	2	8
Traditional Healers (n=2)	1	0	21	0	0	0	0	2
Total number of households	67	65	61	54	51	63	63	427

Source: Focus Group Discussion conducted in Fair Range:20/06/04. n=427

Thirty-seven households (8.7%) own cattle in the whole scheme. There are significant village variations, with a greater proportion (21.6 percent of the total) of those new farmers who own cattle being located in Village 1, compared to 8.1 percent in Village 5 and 7.

Overall, ten percent of new farmers (43) were engaged in off farm employment in order to complement their farming activities. The highest proportion of new farmers engaged in off farm activities, 37.2 percent, was in Village 1, with Villages 6 and 7 having the least proportion of farmers, 7 percent, engaged in off farm activities.

Three percent (14) of the new farmers in Fair Range Estate were veterans of the war of liberation and self styled pioneers of farm occupations. It is important to note that Village 6 and 7 had no war veterans among the new farmers. This might indicate the fact that the local community led some of the farm occupations. However, there were no variations in the composition of war veterans among the new farmers from Village 1 to 4. Village 5 had 14.3 percent war veterans among the new farmers.

A total of 8 people owned a business enterprise (i.e. general dealer) in Chiredzi town while only two people were traditional healers. All the 7 villages had a village chairperson.

4.3 Profile of village respondents in the sample survey

Among the 70 respondents drawn from five villages, 5 were village chairmen and two war veterans. Each village had a village chairman resident in the village. All village chairpersons owned cattle. Only 5 men out of the 70 farmers in the sample were employed in a formal sector job while six single women owned their own individual plots. A total of nineteen cattle owners including village chairmen and war veterans were interviewed while 51 non-cattle owners were also interviewed. It is worthwhile to note that cattle owners were deliberately overrepresented in the sample of 70 respondents in order to explore the contribution of draught power to household income.

A total of 17 farmers were interviewed in Village 1, while 13 farmers were interviewed in Village 2 and 5. Village 3 had the least number of respondents (12 respondents), while Village 4 had the second highest number of farmers who were interviewed (15).

Table 5: Number of Respondents in the 5 Villages

Villages	No of respondents	Proportion of Respondents (%)
1	17	24.2
2	13	18.6
3	12	17.1
4	15	21.4
5	13	18.6
Total	70	100

Life histories of respondents showed that the majority of the new farmers still maintain strong ties with their relatives in the adjacent communal areas. A majority of the new farmers (60 percent) were born and bred in Sangwe communal area, and

continue to hold rights to land in their respective communal area, which on average is between 2 to 3 hectares. The new farmers who also had land in communal area expressed strong unwillingness to abandon their plots in the communal area. Some of these new farmers still hold influential positions of authority in the rural areas and many continue to attend major social events in the communal areas. They claim to be in constant touch with their communal area relatives and both groups help each other among others with food, draught power, thatching grass, firewood and labour. Because of the short distance to the communal areas, respondents also reported that they visit the communal areas almost every week to look for beer and to see relatives among other reasons stated. The strong ties that bind communal areas and the Fast Track land resettlement areas are reflected in the fact that two traditional healers on Fair Range Estate were given permission to practice their trade by a local traditional leader, Chief Tshovani, who is based in Sangwe Communal Area.

4.4 Period of settlement

Of the 70 respondents, 65 percent of new farmers have been in the villages from the time of farm occupation in February 2000 up to the time of the fieldwork in 2004. Thus a majority of new farmers have been on the farm for more than 4 years. Thirty five percent of the new farmers settled on Fair Range Estate after the official pegging in 2001, thus they had stayed on the new settlements for less than three years. The length of stay has implications for crop production, since those that had stayed longer on the farm might have more land under cultivation as compared to relatively new farmers, who are still struggling to clear land for cultivation.

4.5 Type of buildings and storage facilities on plots

The buildings observed in all the 70 respondent's homesteads resembled that of typical Shangani thatch under pole and dagga huts. Log and pole built granaries of maize within the homestead area were a common sight. The type of materials used for grain storage structures affects the quantity and quality of grain that will be available for consumption and sale. The respondents commonly noted that the traditional granary exposes the grain stored to pests and vagaries of weather. While it is difficult to quantify the amount of grain lost to weather and pests, a respondent noted that

during the past two seasons he has lost about two tins (about 50 kg) of maize to pests and this maize fetches a low price from his customers if they identify a handful of grain attacked by pests.⁶

As for cotton, there were some bale-weighing stands built with poles at almost all the homesteads interviewed. The bale-weighing stands were constructed using locally available materials, mainly logs from *mopane* trees. A bale of cotton is tied to the four poles so that the bale does not touch the ground. Two men climb on top so that they can fill the empty bale with cotton. The men use logs to make sure that the bale is fully loaded with cotton and reaches the required weight of between 200 and 300 kilograms. Respondents commonly noted that when they use logs to pound the cotton, they damage it with the effect that the quality of the cotton is affected. Similarly, they fetch less money since the cotton would be deemed of lesser quality.

4.6 Livestock Ownership

As shown in the table above, only a few farmers (8.7 percent of the total) own cattle and the cattle ownership ranges from 8.1 percent of the total in Village 7 to 21.6 percent in Village 1. This might indicate that the new farmers are poor since cattle ownership is viewed as a sign of wealth among the Shangani people and rural areas of Zimbabwe in general. Cattle ownership among the sample was highly skewed along gender and age. There were no women who owned cattle in the sample. Furthermore a majority of cattle owners in the sample were above 40 years old, the only exceptions bring two men between the ages of 30 and 39 years old. Among households keeping cattle, the number of cattle ranged from 2 to 12 beasts. Four other farmers reported keeping cattle belonging to their relatives living in communal areas

Ownership of donkeys, which are generally key to providing draught power in the south east lowveld, was not widespread in Fair Range Estate. Only 3 people in the sample owned donkeys, which they indicated that donkeys provide them with draught power and assist with the transportation of goods and people

⁶ Interview with a new farmer in Village 1. 20/06/04.

Twenty one percent of the sample kept goats, 76 percent kept chickens, 30 percent kept turkeys and 4 percent reared pigs. These animals provide meat for the new farmers and manure for the farmers' small gardens, where vegetables are grown for domestic consumption and sale. Nearly all households have a small garden plot where vegetables were grown around borehole areas.

4.7 Farming Equipment

Respondents were asked which farming equipment they owned; 37 out of 70 (53%) owned ploughs while only 5 farmers owned harrows. A total of 21 wheelbarrows were recorded across the sample. Scotch carts were owned by 8 out of 70 farmers. Almost all the respondents owned axes and every household in the sample had at least two hoes.

4.8 Non-Farming Equipment

Out of the 70 respondents only 3 people owned motor vehicles while one local farmer owned a grinding mill in the scheme. Two of the three vehicle owners were local businessmen in Chiredzi town while one was a retired worker who also owned a house in Chiredzi. Vehicle owners were highly respected within the sample and were regarded as rich by other respondents. They also owned cell phones and kept other farmers well informed with latest information from town regarding availability of inputs and prices. They also helped to ferry the sick to hospital in cases of emergency. Ten farmers from the sample reported owning bicycles.

4.9 Institutions Supporting Crop Production

Institutions supporting crop production in Fair Range Estate include Agricultural Research and Extension Service (AREX), the District Development Fund (DDF), and the Department of Veterinary Services.

The Department of Agricultural Research and Extension Services (AREX) Respondents were asked to evaluate the services of AREX in terms of farmer training and the effectiveness of their service delivery systems. All respondents in the sample

reported that staff had individually visited them from AREX and that they had received valuable knowledge on crop production. They rated AREX services as excellent. This was mainly attributed to the fact that AREX had a resident field officer based in the scheme and was always available if farmers needed his services.

District Development Fund (DDF)

DDF is tasked with the maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure such as roads and drilling of boreholes in newly resettled areas. It is also tasked with the provision of tillage to new farmers. Out of the five villages sampled respondents in Village 4 and 5 rated DDF services as poor while those in Village 1, 2 and 3 rated their services as good. This was mainly due to the fact that DDF only drilled boreholes in areas close to villages 1 to 3. Many farmers in the sample complained about the slow pace at which DDF staff responded to frequent borehole breakdowns and poor maintenance of existing roads and boreholes.

Farmers rated DDF tillage service as very poor and complained that tillage was expensive and beyond the reach of many. In addition respondents complained that there were few DDF tractors in the district and those that were concentrated on providing tillage services to A2 farms and only a few selected farmers within Fair Range Estate.

The Department of Veterinary Services

The Department is mandated to control disease outbreaks and to vaccinate livestock. Respondents complained that the Department concentrated only on controlling foot and mouth disease in areas like game reserves and on A2 resettlement farms at the expense of A1 farms. Very few farmers rated the Department as effective.

4.10 Cultivation Methods in Fair Range

The growing season for crop farmers in Fair Range Estate starts in November/December and ends in April/May. Land preparation in Fair Range Estate starts as soon as harvesting has been completed, in May /June. This usually involves burning cotton residues and stacking maize residues for cattle to feed on during the dry summer periods of July- October. For those with draught power, this is when they do their winter ploughing. The winter break allows farmers time to sell their produce and to plan for the next season. This is the time when farmers take time off their busy schedules to visit distant relatives and organise traditional rituals such as (*Kurova makuva*) the appeasing of the ancestors. The area normally receives its first rains in November, if the rains come early or in December if the rains come late. It can also receive the first rains as late as January. Immediately after receiving the rains, ploughing and planting are undertaken simultaneously, but if the soil is still wet planting is carried out soon after ploughing. Weeding is normally begun two to three weeks after planting if the rains continue but can be suspended if the rains disappear. Weeding is a continuous process until crops are close to mature. For cotton, weeding continues until cotton bolls come out. Weeding is normally carried out by hand for those who do not own cattle, but those who own cattle use either a plough or ridger for this purpose. For crops like *mhunga*, groundnuts, sunflowers and millet, farmers use a hoe to make sure that crops are not destroyed by cattle and ploughs.

Respondents described the soils in Fair Range Estate as 'very hard'. This may be due to the fact that the farm was formerly a cattle and game ranch and had not been ploughed for many years. Farmers had to combine cattle into groups of four to form a span to enable cattle to pull a plough. Thus, ploughing demands a lot of labour. The area was also still infested with tree stumps, which made ploughing very difficult. Drivers of DDF tractors refused to plough areas where destumping had not been properly done. According to the respondents, the conflict between the farmers and DDF tractor drivers delayed the growing of crops to the extent that when the first rains came most fields were not destumped and this adversely impacted on crop production.

4. 11 Crop harvesting

Harvesting starts as soon as the first planted crops are ready, usually by the end of March or early April. This also depends on whether or not the crops were planted early. Farmers, who first harvest green mealies, conceal their harvesting process from other villages until other farmers are harvesting. This is done to avoid other farmers, whose crop is not yet ready, from stealing. Some believed that witchcraft also plays a part in concealing ripe crops from others. Usually villagers start harvesting ripe crops from the middle of the fields to avoid detection by others and this is usually done during the night and soon after harvesting, harvested maize cobs are uprooted and stacked together so that thieves fail to notice whether the crop is ready or not. Harvesting continues up to June for those who have planted late crops.

4.12 Forms of Tillage

At the time of the research there were four methods of tillage employed by farmers in Fair Range Estate. The most common form of tillage was the ox-drawn plough. The other three forms were the donkey-drawn plough, use of DDF tractor and hand cultivation. Out of a total of 70 respondents thirty-eight farmers (or 54.2%) hired other people's cattle while only five (or 7.1%) relied on other people's donkeys for draught power. Only three (4.2%) of the sample hired DDF tractors while only two (or 2.9%) cultivated their fields with hoes. The following table shows sources of draught power and the mean cost per farmer in the sample in Fair Range in 2004.

Table 6: Sources of draught power in Fair Range Estate 2004: n=70

	N	%	Mean cost to farmer
Own cattle	19	27.14%	0
Own donkeys	3	4.2%	0
Hire of others cattle	38	54.2%	Z\$150000.00per ha
Hire of others donkeys	5	7.1%	Z\$150000.00per ha
DDF tractor	3	4.2%	Z\$327000.00 ⁷ per ha
Hand cultivation	2	2.85%	0
Total	70	100	0

Source: village interviews Fair Range 2004 n=70

Crop farmers in Fair Range Estate negotiate and plan for tillage with different people prior to the onset of the rainy season and some even start working on other people's fields as early as harvesting time as a form of payment for tillage services rendered to them by cattle owners. On the other hand, other farmers arranged for tillage during the middle of the year. For those who made arrangements early, this was attributed to the poor harvests while those who made arrangements at a later stage could have underestimated their harvests. The most common form of tillage payment among respondents was cash. Those with cash did payment of tillage costs promptly, while arrangements to defer payment were also worked out by those who did not have ready cash. These arrangements often involved paying in cash and in kind. All cattle owners reported willing to be paid in cash although they sometimes accepted payment in kind depending on the social standing of an individual farmer. For example, if a farmer was a cross border trader he or she could agree with the cattle owner to bring him some clothes or groceries from South Africa as a form of payment for the tillage. Payment arrangements for cattle owners included cash of Z\$150000.00 per hectare, payment in the form of labour on agreed tasks or supply of goods such as clothes or farming inputs like seeds and fertilisers.

Tillage is a crucial component of farming in Fair Range Estate and every farmer wanted to make sure that his or her plot had been ploughed before or soon after the first rains. According to respondents ploughing was done by both male and female,

with females driving the oxen span while men held the plough in most cases. Well trained cattle required only one person to drive and hold the plough simultaneously while ploughing with untrained cattle had to involve three people with one holding the plough, another one driving the oxen and one guiding them.

Tractors from the District Development Fund (DDF) were booked and paid for in advance, and the farmer was required to provide 20 litres of diesel so that ploughing could start. For one hectare of land tilled DDF charged Z\$267 000.00 plus 20 litres of diesel. Only three farmers from the sample hired DDF tractors during the 2004-farming season. This was attributed to the fact that ox drawn tillage offered by locals was cheaper than hiring DDF tractors. Farmers only hired DDF tractors for tillage while other crop operations like planting; farmers themselves did weeding, fertilising and harvesting.

The majority of farmers in the sample depended largely on labour from household members with the exception of a few who hired labour from neighbours. In a few instances involving work parties during planting, weeding and harvesting time, labour from other households was required. Households would also help each other in certain circumstances, for example where someone was loading his produce to the market and also when someone had lost a close relative.

Application of fertiliser on crops such as maize and cotton was done during ploughing and in later stages. In areas outside Fair Range Estate this stage usually involves a great deal of labour and all sexes are involved, but there were very few who applied fertiliser in Fair Range Estate. Weeding started shortly after germination and continued up to March. Weeding was also followed by the application of ammonium nitrate fertiliser, commonly referred to as 'top dressing'. Both men and women were also involved.

Green mealies were also dried for grinding into maize meal, particularly for poor households who had ran out of the normal supply of maize meal. The amount of green mealies consumed could not be quantified in this study, but crops that matured early

⁷ This figure includes the cost of a 20 litre fuel, which is Z\$60000. The actual figure for tractor hire is Z\$267000.00 per hectare.

were those mostly consumed before actual harvesting had started. During harvesting maize was cut and stacked together for it to dry before cobs were plucked off and taken to the homestead area to dry.

Cotton was picked and packed into bales. Once a bale was filled it was immediately sold while picking of cotton still continued in the fields. The first bales to be sold provided the much needed cash for the household and the cash was normally used to buy groceries and pay off debts for school fees and other expenditures. Harvesting continued until the last crop had been cleared from the fields. Sweet potatoes were reported to be the last crop to be harvested in the July /August period.

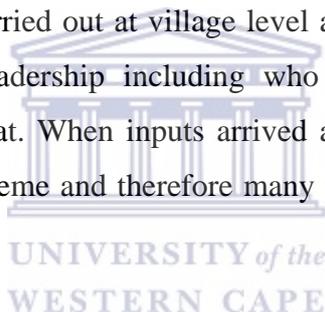
4.13 Inputs

The purchase of inputs was a major headache for crop farmers in Fair Range Estate. Because of acute shortages of inputs crop farmers spent much of their time running from one source to the other in search of inputs. Inputs were purchased at different places and prices varied from one place to the other and estimating a standard price proved extremely difficult in this study.

Inputs were purchased everywhere throughout Chiredzi district, and on the black market. The major problem was availability, with some farmers in the scheme going to areas as far away as Harare. The major source where inputs could be found at controlled, reasonable and affordable prices was at depots of the state-controlled Grain Marketing Board. It was apparently clear during the study that apart from the inputs that GMB was tasked by government to deliver free of charge to farmers, it had virtually no inputs to sell to farmers. Even the little that was meant to be distributed to farmers by Government as an incentive, GMB did not have enough of them for all the farmers but had sporadic distribution over a long period of time. The short distance from Fair Range Estate to GMB suggested that farmers from Fair Range Estate were the ones who were supposed to get inputs first and to know when inputs will be available at the local depot, but many of them did not even know when the inputs were last distributed to them and when again will they get the inputs.

As with A1 farmers elsewhere in Zimbabwe, crop farmers in Fair Range Estate received inputs from Government in the form of 10 kg maize seed, 50 kg compound D fertiliser and 50 kg ammonium nitrate. All farmers in the scheme received these inputs during the 2003 and 2004 rainy seasons with a large percentage of them (70%) reported having received them very late into the season. Some of the farmers planted untreated maize seeds.

At the time of the study the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) like other parastatals in Zimbabwe, was experiencing major financial problems and in most cases was unable to purchase maize and sorghum from farmers and to pay for them on time. This was viewed by respondents as one of the reasons why farmers were shifting from maize to cotton production in large numbers. All farmers in the sample complained that the amount of inputs they received from the GMB were not sufficient and came late into the season. In addition, they complained that the distribution of inputs was not fair. Distribution of inputs was carried out at village level after inputs had been collected from GMB by the local leadership including who included war veterans, who determined who received what. When inputs arrived at the GMB they were always insufficient for the whole scheme and therefore many people ended up not receiving what was due to them.

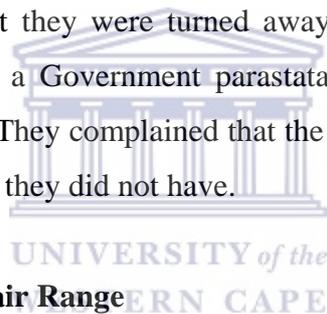


In relation to inputs for cotton production several private companies were operating in the area but the most important one was Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (COTTCO), which provided farmers with loans. Cotton growers in the sample reported that cotton did not require a great deal of labour compared to maize and sorghum. COTTCO also provided them with loans to buy seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and agricultural equipment. Besides this COTTCO provided them with a ready market and transport to ferry their cotton to the COTTCO depot located 50 kilometres away from Fair Range. It was impossible in this study to determine the prices of cotton pesticides because farmers only remembered the total loan they received from COTTCO.

At the time of the research there was a thriving black market for crop inputs caused by the shortage of inputs at the GMB depot in Chiredzi town. Inputs such as ammonium nitrate fertiliser was sold for Z\$200 000 per 50kg bag compared to the Z\$127 000 that the GMB offered for the same number of kilograms. Those who were politically well

connected like war veterans bought inputs at the official price at the GMB and then packed them into smaller packets of 5 to 10 kilograms and sold them on the parallel market at almost three times the official price. Conmen also took advantage of the shortages to steal from prospective farmers - in one such incident; a farmer in the sample bought a bag full of sand thinking that he had bought fertiliser. Although all farmers in the sample complained about the shortage of fertiliser, forty-five farmers in the sample reported that they do not apply fertiliser in their fields indicating that fertiliser allocated to them by Government might have been finding its way on the black market. Extension staff confirmed that they discourage farmers in the area from applying fertilisers partly due to the nature of the soils in the area. It is generally believed that the soils do not need any fertiliser. The main reason given by the extension staff was that applying fertiliser to the heavy basaltic soils in the area resulted in crops wilting.

Farmers also complained that they were turned away when they applied for loans from AGRIBANK, which is a Government parastatal bank tasked with providing loans to all resettled farmers. They complained that the AGRIBANK required them to have collateral security which they did not have.



4.14 Maize production on Fair Range

The most important crop grown by almost every household in the sample was maize, grown both as a staple and a cash crop. ARES staff estimate the production potential of the area to be 0.5 tonnes per hectare. According to the respondents, maize is planted first followed by other crops like millet and sorghum. This is done to make sure that it is quickly harvested before stored household maize has dwindled and exposed the household to hunger.

All respondents with the exception of one grew maize during the 2003 to 2004 season. Since the arrival of the farmers in Fair Range Estate in 2000 maize has had the highest hectareage compared to other crops, as shown in Table 7 below illustrates this. From 2001, there has been a steady increase in the number of hectares under maize. Out of the 69 farmers who grew maize in the 2003/2004 season, 41, or 60 percent, sold

maize crop to local traders. However, 16 (or 23 percent) of the farmers sold their maize to GMB.

The following table shows maize production among respondents in Fair Range from 2001 to 2004.

Table 7: Maize Production on Fair Range Estate, 2001 – 2004

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Farmers in sample producing maize	59	66	69	69
Total hectares under maize	106	132	166	188
Mean hectares under maize per farmer	1.8	2.0	2.4	2.7
Total yield of maize (kgs)	19160	18590	41650	45350
Mean yield of maize (kgs/ha)	324.75	281.67	603.62	657.25
Price of maize per 20 kg	Not known	Not Known	Z\$20000.00	Z\$250000.00
Official price of maize per tonne	Not known	Not Known	Z\$300000.00	Z\$750000.00
Mean value of maize production per farmer	Not Known	Not Known	Z\$604000.00	Z\$822500.00

Source: village interviews Fair Range 2004, n=70

Yet GMB was the sole distributor of inputs to farmers in Fair Range Estate. One respondent noted that they received better prices if they sold their crop to local traders, as compared to the GMB. GMB was said to offer new farmers producer prices that were not viable. For example, in 2003 GMB was offering Z\$300 000.00 per tonne as compared to Z\$1 320 000.00 which was being offered on the parallel market. In 2004 the Government through the GMB increased producer prices of maize to Z\$750 000.00 but still it fell far short of the black market rate of Z\$1 640 000.00 per tonne and this resulted in many farmers opting to sell their maize locally and to private millers.

The poor distribution of inputs by GMB resulted in farmers losing faith in GMB, and farmers resorted to buying their inputs from shops and the black market. Inputs were not available at the GMB and if they were available, only a handful of people were able to purchase them. Inputs arrived late into the rain season; a third of the

respondents received their maize seed well after February 2004 when it was too late to plant.

In 2001 most respondents (84.3 percent) grew maize while the rest of the farmers did not plant crops for various reasons. Of the 11 that did not cultivate, six of them were not quite sure of their tenure security considering the fact that this was their first year in the scheme while five of them cited lack of inputs and draught power as the main reason for not farming.

In 2002 there was an increase in the number of farmers who grew maize but because of drought, farmers produced less than the previous year in terms of the mean yield per farmer. A mean yield of 281.67 kilograms per hectare was recorded in 2002 compared to 324.75 kilograms in 2001. A total of 132 hectares was put under maize in 2002 by 66 out of the 70 respondents in the sample and a total yield of 18 590 kilograms was realised by all the farmers who had grown maize during the same year. The figure was low compared to the hectarage that was utilised. This was attributed to the drought that in many cases led to crop failure. In 2002 all farmers in the scheme were on the Government's grain loan scheme and the Drought Relief Programme. This indicates that farmers did not produce enough food to see them through during lean periods. Selling of maize to settle outstanding debts affected some farmers' grain reserves, which forced them to depend on drought relief from the Government.

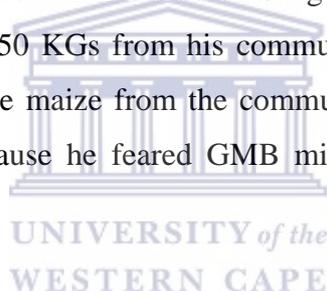
The survey revealed significant socio-economic differentiation in terms of production, often correlated with factors such as livestock ownership, age and social standing. The tables below show the production levels of two farmers, one who owned cattle and the other one who hired cattle to cultivate his fields from the first farmer. The second f

Table 8: Maize production 2001 – 2004 (respondent 13. Village 1, cattle owner)

Year	Hectares cultivated	Crops Grown	Total Yield	Bags sold to GMB	Inputs Purchased	Tillage costs	Value of production
2001	2 ha	Maize	450kgs	nil	Not known		
2002	3ha	Maize	400kgs	nil			
2003	3ha 1ha	Maize groundnuts	900kgs 200kgs	450kgs 100kgs	Z\$350000.00	Own draft power	\$900000.00
2004	3ha 1ha	Maize groundnuts	950kgs 150kgs	500kgs 100kgs	Z\$500000.00	Own draft power	\$1187500.00

Source: Village interviews Fair Range 2004

Respondent no. 13 owned 7 head of cattle and was aged 49. In addition to the 950kgs of maize he produced at Fair Range in 2004. He also produced 700 KGs of maize on his 2 ha plot in the nearby communal area of Sangwe. He sold 500kgs from his produce in Fair Range and 350 KGs from his communal area. He sold maize from Fair Range to GMB while the maize from the communal area was sold locally .He sold his maize to GMB because he feared GMB might not help him with inputs during the next rain season.



His counterpart from Village One has no cattle and is 34 years old and only had 2 acres in the communal area where he only managed to produce 250 KGs of maize in 2004. Although he purchased inputs from GMB he was not worried if GMB refused to allocate him inputs because he could not hire a vehicle to ferry only 100 KGs to the GMB. He decided to sell locally to pay off the credit he had accrued when he hired draught power.

Table 9: Maize production : 2001-2004 (respondent 7, village 1, non-cattle owner)

Year	Ha cultivated	Crops grown	Total yield	Bags sold locally /GMB/CMB	Inputs purchased	Tillage costs	Value of production
2001	1ha	Maize	200kgs	Nil			
2002	2ha	Maize	150kgs	Nil			
2003	2ha	Maize	400kgs	100kgs	\$150000.00	\$200000.00	\$400000.00
2004	2ha	Maize	350kgs	100kgs	\$250000.00	\$300000.00	\$437500.00

Source: Village interviews Fair Range: 2004

Respondent No 7 hired tillage from neighbours while respondent No 13 had his own cattle. It is therefore important to note that Respondent No 7 paid for the tillage costs well after his harvest while No 13 had no obligation to do so since he had his own cattle. Although both had communal fields, No 13 produced better yields in the communal area compared to respondent No 7. The difference in yields realised every year is quite distinct and shows the importance of owning cattle for crop production. It is also important to note that none of the above yields got anywhere near the expected yields of the area (0.5 tonnes/ha) as indicated by AREX personnel.

Box 1 contains a case study of the successful farmers in the sample and shows how he manages his livestock for draught purposes. It also illustrates the influence of cattle ownership on social differentiation.

Box 1: Cattle ownership and crop production in Fair Range Estate

Mr Mazhambe(not his real name) is aged 53, married with five children, including three boys who are all working. He came from Sangwe communal area in 2000 and was allocated 6 hectares arable land. He says he came in after realising that he needed more land which he could distribute to his three sons .He says he has already written his will and that the first and second born will share land in Fair Range while his last born will inherit his communal home with the 3 hectares there. Mr Mazhambe owns 8 head of cattle and has cleared all the 6 hectares allocated to him. He says he first of all makes sure that he finishes his fields before committing his cattle to other people's fields. He is mindful of the fact that ploughing other people's fields brings home some cash but insists that he is a pensioner and that his children give him some money, more than he gets from ploughing other people's fields. He says during the start of the season he does not even want to hear about his cattle being hired because there won't be enough grass for cattle to recover. Apart from that he says those without cattle should not plough at the same time with those with cattle but should plough later on when cattle owners have finished so that cattle owners harvest first before. He says this should help non cattle owners to work hard and purchase cattle, as cattle owners did.

Source: Interview with Mr Mazhambe 2004

Maize as a staple food was consumed by all households in the sample including those who did not grow it on their plots. A budget was done prior to selling to ascertain the number of bags to sell and also the number of bags to stock until the next harvest. In terms of maize production for the 2003/2004 seasons the following production ranges were recorded in all the five villages.

Table 13: Maize production 2004 Range of production per farmer

Name of village	Minimum Production per Farmer (Kgs)	Maximum Production per Farmer (Kgs)	Range of production per farmer (Kg) (max minus min)
Village 1	350	1000	650
Village 2	40	800	760
Village 3	400	800	400
Village 4	400	850	450
Village5	400	1050	650

Source: village interviews Fair Range 2004 (n=70)

The table above illustrates the range of production per individual farmer among respondents in Fair Range Estate. The range of production in Village 2 differed from the rest of the villages in that one of the respondents was not feeling well and had just lost his wife during the time of the study. The yields were also not reflecting communal area production for those who own land in the communal area. The differentiation in production was attributed to the highly skewed livestock ownership and access to inputs. Some farmers especially those who came from the rural areas were still growing crops in the communal areas and would divide their time between communal and resettlement area production.

It is clear that crop farming in Fair Range Estate is not economically viable. In 2004 50kg bag of fertiliser cost Z\$200 000.00 while tillage charges amounted to Z\$150 000.00. The costs of inputs have outstripped the value of outputs without even mentioning labour costs. The majority of farmers in Fair Range Estate do not have access to formal credit schemes despite having submitted their application forms to the state Agricultural Development Bank (AGRIBANK). Farmers in the sample complained that AGRIBANK preferred to give loans to A2 resettlement farmers at the expense of A1 farmers. Despite the presence of a resident qualified Agricultural

Research and Extension service officer in Fair Range, farmers reported that although they were satisfied with the work of the expert, there was no need for them to have an expert without inputs. They criticised the work of the extension officer as a ‘non-event’ unless they are supported with the necessary inputs.

4.15 Cotton Production on Fair Range Estate

Cotton is one of the major crops grown in the southeast lowveld of Zimbabwe largely because of favourable soils and climatic conditions. According to SAFIRE (2004), estimations by farmers in the Chitsa area approximately 20 km south east of Fair Range reveal that in a good rainy season one farmer can harvest a total of 60 bales (about 15 tonnes) per harvest in a communal area but indicated that most productive farmers in the area produced a maximum of 20 bales per season. According to the extension personnel, production potential for the area for cotton is 0.8 tonnes per hectare.

By 2004, twenty-four farmers in the sample were growing cotton, up from 2 farmers who grew cotton in the 2000/2001 season (see Table 10). A total of 53 hectares was already under cotton by 2004 as compared to only 4 hectares in 2001. Average yield per hectare in 2001 was 200 kilograms per hectare and went up to over 500 kilograms per hectare in 2004. The total yield grew from 400 kilograms in 2001 to 11 900 kilograms in 2004. This growth was largely attributed to the growing number of farmers who were growing cotton, but yields remained low. In 2004 there were more farmers (24 out of 70) growing cotton compared to only 2 in 2001. The mean value of production per farmer during the first two years of farming could not be established due to the fact that respondents could not remember how much they sold their cotton for. It was evident during the study that farmers were struggling to remember not only large figures but also forgot prices of major inputs and also what they got from their sales. During the 2003/2004 season a total of 24 (34.3 percent) farmers from the sample were growing cotton.

Table 10: Cotton Production on Fair Range Estate, 2001 - 2004

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Farmers producing cotton	2 (2.87%)	8 (11.4%)	21 (30%)	24 (34.3%)

Total hectare under cotton	4	21	45	53
Total yield of cotton (kgs)	400	3 600	10 200	11 900
Mean yield kgs/ha	200	450	485	495
Price of cotton per kg	Not known	Not known	Z\$1000.00	Z\$1800.00
Mean value of cotton production per farmer	Not known	Not known	Z\$485 710.00	Z\$89 2494.00

Source: Village interviews Fair Range 2004 (n=70)

Cotton Inputs

Inputs such as cotton seeds and pesticides were supplied free of charge to farmers while farmers were expected to sell their cotton to COTTCO after harvest. COTTCO was rated as the most effective input provider compared to other companies like Tarafern and Cargil. Money for inputs was loaned to farmers and deducted with interest when the farmers sell their cotton. However not all farmers in the sample sold their cotton to COTTCO even though they had been supplied with inputs. Out of the 24 farmers in the sample who grew cotton during the 2003/2004 season only 10 farmers sold their cotton to COTTCO, while the rest entered into mutual agreements with other cotton farmers to sell their cotton on their behalf.

Ten farmers reported that they did not want to pay back their COTTCO loans. They argued that as new farmers, Government was supposed to finance their farming. Two sold their cotton to other companies who were paying more per kilogram than the offer they received from COTTCO. A few farmers sold their cotton before they had even harvested it, in order to pay debts that had accumulated over the course of the year.

Farmers were also provided with pesticides and empty cotton sacks during picking time. Although COTTCO officials and other companies tried to monitor those farmers who had been given loans by continuously paying them unplanned visits, farmers always tended to lie to COTTCO about their produce. Farmers indicated to these officials that the cotton did not do well and as a result they did not produce enough

cotton for sell. This meant that if a farmer failed to sell his or her cotton to COTTCO he or she was not eligible for another loan to buy inputs during the next season.

Farmers who sold their cotton to COTTCO were unanimous in their view that COTTCO paid them their money promptly. During the 2003 season COTTCO was paying Z\$1000.00 per kilogram while in 2004 it was paying Z\$1800.00. Farmers in the sample considered these prices as too low considering the costs incurred during production.

Most farmers had an average of 2.5 hectares under cotton. Village 1 had the highest mean hectares under cotton with an average of 3 hectares per farmer during the 2003 and 2004 seasons. Village 2 had an average mean hectare of 1.3 and 2 hectares respectively while village 3 had a mean average of 2 hectares per farmer in both 2003 and 2004. Village 4 had 1.66 hectares in 2003 and 2 hectares in 2004 while village 5 had an average of 2 hectares per farmer in both 2003 and 2004. Only one farmer had all the 6 hectares allocated to him under cotton production.

Cotton yields have been generally low (less than 0.5 tonnes/ha), and this was attributed to lack of pesticides and the heavy soils that characterise the area. The heavy soils according to respondents, prevented germination of most of the seeds if the area does not receive enough rains during germination while pest control measures were hindered by lack of spraying machines and pesticides, which according to farmers were very expensive. Some of the farmers in the sample could not access loans to buy pesticides because they owed cotton companies loans from previous years and therefore could not qualify. The following table illustrates the range of total cotton production per farmer in different villages during the 2003/2004 farming season. It is important to note that village 1 had one farmer who specialised in cotton production only.

Table 11: Cotton production on Fair Range Estate, 2004 - range of production per farmer by village

Name of village	Range of total production per farmer
Village 1	300 -2700kgs
Village 2	200 -300kgs

Village 3	100 -600kgs
Village 4	300 -400kgs
Village 5	400 -400kgs

Source: village interviews Fair Range 2004 (n=70)

In Fast-Track resettlement areas the availability of labour plays a key role in crop production. Since, everyone is a farmer in a fast track resettlement area like Fair Range Estate, problems of labour shortages are abound. However, farmers reported that cotton does not require a lot of labour. Of all the cotton growers in the sample, only two reported hiring people to pick their cotton and the rest of the sample managed to do so with household labour. This could suggest low yields for the area. The majority of the respondents agreed that labour was most required during the time of picking cotton. One person can thus do spraying while the rest of the people are performing other household chores.



4.16 Minor Crops Grown on Fair Range Estate

A small number of farmers in Fair Range Estate grew a variety of other crops to supplement their food supply and income. Groundnuts, rapoko, sorghum and millet are mainly grown for domestic consumption, and to some extent for sale. Sunflowers are grown mainly for sale. Some of the crops grown by farmers during the 2003/2004 are shown in Table 11 below. The area planted in hectares could not be ascertained due to the fact that most residents indicated that they grew such crops on very small pieces of land which, usually less than a hectare. It was very difficult to establish the exact income earned through the sale of these minor crops.

Table 12: Minor crops grown on Fair Range Estate, 2004

Name of crop	Village 1	Village 2	Village 3	Village 4	Village 5	Total for 5 villages	Percentage of farmers in sample
Sorghum	2	2	0	3	1	8	11.4
Millet	2	0	0	2	0	4	5.71
Groundnuts	3	3	2	3	2	13	18.6
Rapoko	2	0	1	2	1	6	8.6
Sunflower	3	2	2	3	1	11	15.7

Source: village interviews Fair Range 2004(n=70)

Groundnuts

Groundnuts were grown mainly for domestic consumption as peanut butter while groundnuts were sold locally to local traders. Normally farmers sold their groundnuts in 20 kilogram buckets, and in 2004 each bucket of unshelled groundnuts fetched up to Z\$50 000.00. Groundnuts were usually sold to local traders who would then sell them in Chiredzi town. They would be roasted, dried with salt and then sold in small plastic packs of different sizes and different amounts. Customers referred to them as *snacks*.

Out of 70 respondents interviewed only 13 farmers (or 19% of the total) grew groundnuts in 2004 and the average area under groundnuts was around one hectare per farmer. Yields ranged from 2kgs to 20kgs of unshelled groundnuts. Farmers who

grew groundnuts reported that they were having problems with wild animals destroying their groundnuts at night.

Sorghum

Sorghum was mainly grown for domestic consumption and for brewing beer. It was mainly grown at the edge of the fields to protect such crops as maize from wild animals. Farmers who grew sorghum reported that their yields were badly affected by quelea birds from nearby Malilangwe Conservation Trust and the surrounding bush areas.

Only 8 farmers grew sorghum during the 2003/ 2004 season and none of the farmers sold their crop. Yields for the 2003/ 2004 season averaged 40 KGs per farmer while each farmer had an average of less than one hectare under sorghum

Millet

Only four farmers in the sample reported growing millet during the 2003/2004 season. The crop was grown mainly for domestic consumption. Very low yields ranging from 20kgs to 60kgs were recorded during the 2003/2004 farming season. Total hectares under millet ranged from half a hectare to one hectare per farmer.

Rapoko

Only 6 farmers in the sample grew rapoko and all of them grew it for domestic consumption. Production ranged from 70 KGs to 150 KGs per farmer while hectares under rapoko ranged from one hectare to two hectares per farmer.

Sunflower

Eleven farmers in the sample grew sunflowers during the 2003/2004 season and all of them sold their sunflowers to GMB. Production ranged from 50kgs to 200kgs per farmer while hectares under sunflower ranged from half a hectare to one hectare per individual farmer.

4.17 Other Sources of Income on Fair Range Estate

Non agricultural activities are defined as any income generating activity beyond agriculture and gardening undertaken by an individual residing in a rural area. Besides providing the much needed source of income to rural households, rural non-farm activities contribute significantly to the ‘smoothing’ of household income throughout the year. Crop farmers in Fair Range Estate engage in other diverse off-farm activities that generate income to supplement income from crop production as well as to provide an income that can be invested in using the proceeds of crop farming. The following table shows non-agricultural activities performed by crop farmers in Fair Range Estate.

Table 16: Other sources of income on Fair Range Estate, 2004

War vets pensions/remittances	sale of crafts
Businessmen/women(shopowners, shebeen and flea market operators	Prostitution, poaching
Sale of inputs such as maize seed, pesticides and fertilisers	Traditional healing
Sale of vegetables and fruits	Money changing
Sale of Marijuana	Radio repairing
Sale home brewed beer	Thatching of huts
Sale of Mopani worms	Building
Sale of firewood	Part time work

Source: village interviews Fair Range 2004 (n=70)

Almost all households in the sample were engaged in off-farm activities to supplement income from crop farming. These activities were differentiated along lines of gender and age, with middle aged men and women being involved in such work as selling of inputs, dealing in marijuana, flea market operators, foreign currency dealers and repairing radios, while old men and women were engaged in activities such as thatching other people’s huts and beer brewing respectively. War veterans in the sample earned Z\$1.5 million dollars per month as life pensions while others, especially middle aged men, were engaged in buying and selling of scarce inputs.

Although the study could not ascertain the magnitude of the sale of marijuana (commonly referred by the locals as *mbanje*) the practice was very common among

middle aged men. A twist of *mbanje* (the size of a loose cigarette) was going for \$3000.00. Marijuana sellers are referred locally as *Jazzmen*.

One of the most important sources of livelihood amongst crop farmers in Fair Range was the sale of *mopani* worms. All respondents reported having sold at least one 20kg bucket of *mopani* worms to local and international buyers. Some of the *mopani* worms found themselves being loaded into South Africa bound trucks. *Mopani* worms were dried and packed in different sizes ranging from 1kg to 20 KGs and even 50kg bags. One 20kg bucket sold for \$100000.00 and the practice was so important to the extent of villagers not allowing each other to pick *mopani* worms in someone's fields. Cases of this nature where villagers fought over *mopani* worms were recorded. There was a ready market for *mopani* worms with some customers buying and selling them in South Africa, and some villagers reported failing to meet the demand. However, due to the rapid depletion of *mopani* trees caused by villagers clearing their fields, this important resource seems to be disappearing quickly.

Of the sample of seventy respondents, twenty one brewed beer during the 2004 season, although only eight people grew sorghum during the same period. Some bought sorghum from the communal areas. Beer brewing and selling helped them to pay off debts. However the study could not ascertain how much income respondents earned from the sale of home brewed beer as this depended on the amount of beer one had brewed. The most common home brewed beer in the area was *seven days*, which took seven days to mature, and the *chi-one day*, which was brewed and consumed within a day. This type of beer is illegal because of its high alcohol content but most villagers preferred this type of beer because it was cheap and requiring less labour to brew it.

There were a number of people who took advantage of the shortages of basic commodities, including crop inputs such as maize seed and fertilisers, to hoard them in bulk and re-sell them to other farmers in the scheme at inflated prices. This practice was reported to be rampant during planting and spraying time when farmers were desperate for inputs.

Of the 70 respondents in the sample, five farmers were local businessmen and entrepreneurs. One owned a brick moulding company in Chiredzi while another had a

grinding mill operating in Fair Range. A third owned a sewing company that made overalls, work suits and school uniforms for companies and schools in and around Chiredzi respectively. The fourth preferred to call himself 'self employed' and had stalls in Chiredzi where he sold hardware and anything that was in demand, including scarce commodities such as fuel, cooking oil and sugar. One farmer operated a *shebeen* where he was selling the opaque beer popularly known as *scud*.

Two women were cross border traders, who moved between Chiredzi and South Africa to sell locally made crafts such as mats and baskets. They also bought such items as clothes for resale to other farmers and sometimes paid for the tillage with clothes. The rest of the respondents in the sample were involved in part time work like weeding and harvesting the crops of well-off farmers from Fair Range and neighbouring farms in Mkwesine. Some men renovated other people's huts and thatched them during the dry season. Two men were traditional healers who would consult for a fee. They would also help during such traditional ceremonies as rain making (*marombo*) and other traditional ceremonies where ancestors were consulted. Although it was difficult to establish the extent of prostitution among respondents it was evident during the study that most single women in the sample engaged in prostitution. Some women openly admitted that they welcome male visitors at night regardless of their marital status. Two women in the sample sold vegetables, which they bought from Chiredzi. One farmer doubled up as a radio and watch repairer in Fair Range Estate.

Although it proved difficult to get the exact income earned from these sources of income, such activities were very important in their day-to-day lives. Some used such income to pay school fees for their children and others also managed to buy farming equipment such as ploughs and scotch carts. Very few people in the sample reported receiving remittances from family members except those who were 50 years and above. Farmers in the sample reported that they were supposed to send food to relatives in towns and only received help from relatives in the event of death. Due to the prevailing economic hardships many people in formal employment were unable to remit back home. Only those with relatives outside the country were doing so. Having someone outside the country was regarded as sign of wealth, especially those with relatives in the United Kingdom who were referred to as *Vemapounds* referring to

people who receive British pounds. Only one farmer in the sample had a son in the UK, but he refused to discuss how much the son remits home every month, preferring to cite some of the projects he is undertaking such as buying a house in Chiredzi town.

Off-farm income played a major important role in improving crop production in Fair Range in that profits realised from off farm income would be channelled towards purchase of farming inputs. Respondents who received remittances from migrant labour were able to buy inputs.

4.18 Opportunities for Enhanced Crop Production on Fair Range Estate

It is undoubtedly true that land reform has opened up new opportunities for crop production by small-scale producers in the south-east lowveld. This section reports the views of the resettlement farmers on Fair Range Estate.

Ownership of Land

The greatest opportunity that was felt by all farmers in the scheme was undoubtedly ownership of land. All farmers in the scheme reported that owning a piece of land was the greatest opportunity they had heard and many praised the Government while others praised God for giving them land. In no time some of the farmers were now multiple land owners considering that the majority of them have not yet surrendered their communal land and were still productively engaged. One of the respondents had this to say upon being asked how he felt about owning a piece of land.

“Extremely happy and I only want to thank My God and the Government for giving me this piece land which I can call mine.”

Almost all the respondents in the sample expressed these and other sentiments, (although they also expressed views on the lack of tenure security on their plots). A few went on to castigate the opposition for refusing to give land to people. However some of the farmers felt that the Government should now allow them to build permanent structures and fully support them with inputs and loans so that they can be able to produce enough for the nation.

Establishment of socio-economic and political networks

For some farmers resettlement created opportunities to establish important socio-economic contacts with those who came from other areas and also to establish contacts with senior Government officials. Some were given positions in the ruling party that they used to access inputs, drought relief food and preferential treatment in relation to input purchase and tillage.

Access to grazing and other natural resources

All farmers reported that they now have enough grazing land can now concentrate on restocking their herds which were greatly reduced by the 1992 drought. Some farmers were also taking advantage of the grazing areas to bring cattle from their relatives in the communal areas to graze in Fair Range. Because of the abundant *mopani* trees still found in the area some farmers were collecting *mopani* worms for sale and also selling firewood to villagers in the communal areas and people from Chiredzi town. In addition, farmers were also selling thatching grass to residents in communal areas and some were providing relatives with thatching grass. Some farmers also benefited from the presence of stray wild animals that were in the scheme and in the nearby Malilangwe conservation area and killed them for meat, which they either ate or sold.



Employment and income-generating opportunities

Farmers in the scheme were able to gain employment in nearby Mkwesine and Malilangwe conservation areas, while others who came from town saw this as an opportunity to sell commodities like clothes and beer to plot holders and therefore generate additional income. Others ended up being employed by wealth plot holders in the scheme, or commuted from the scheme to towns and surrounding farms in search of employment.

Proximity to GMB and Chiredzi town

The location of Fair Range is ideal for farmers in the scheme to commute to the nearest GMB at the Chiredzi Depot. Fair Range is approximately 10 kilometres from the Depot and roughly 20 kilometres from town. Most farmers cycled or walked to the Depot and town by foot thereby serving on bus fares.

Communal Area Crop Production

Due to the lack of tenure security in fast track resettlement, new farmers have not yet abandoned their communal areas and they make sure that they cultivate their communal fields on a yearly basis as a way of protecting their fields from being repossessed by the chief. Thus time for crop production is split between the new plots in fast track schemes and previous fields in communal areas, which adversely impacts on crop production in fast track plots.

Farmers who came from nearby Sangwe and Ndowoyo communal lands were still actively involved in communal area production to boost their production capacities. It was clear during the study that none of the people from nearby Sangwe communal area had abandoned their communal plots. This suggested that they were still not quite sure of their security in the resettlement area and in the absence of a clear tenure security regarding dual land ownership resettled farmers many will not abandon their communal land. The possibly meant that Government's policy of decongestion of the communal areas will not work. It was apparently clear from the figures that most farmers in the scheme produced enough maize after supplementing it with communal area production for their domestic consumption throughout the year even during drought years like the 2002 season. A household of four members consumed an average of two 20 kg buckets of mealie meal every month. Although this could have had an impact on their production levels in Fair Range considering the time they spent travelling from one area to the other, many farmers farmed in both Fair Range and their communal fields from 2001. In addition to these the proximity of Fair Range to communal areas was viewed by many as a positive scenario considering the fact that many of them regularly visited their relatives in the communal areas and some of them still held influential positions in the communal areas which they were reluctant to surrender because of uncertainties pertaining to security of tenure in Fair Range.

4.19 Constraints on Crop Production on Fair Range Estate

It is evident from this study that crop farmers in Fair Range Estate endure lots of hardships in trying to farm under severe economic hardships coupled with a high inflation rate of 200% during 2004 (Consumer council of Zimbabwe; 2004). A severe shortage of inputs, draught power, poor market producer prices and unreliable rainfall patterns are major constraints to crop production in Fair Range. Thus, the section below analyses the constraints to crop production faced by new farmers in Fair Range Estate.

Geography and climatic conditions

Fair Range Estate is located in Natural Region V, which receives low rainfall, between 400- 600 mm per annum, and has high temperatures ranging from 25 degrees Celsius in winter to as high as 40 degrees Celsius in summer. This makes the area prone to droughts and only suitable for extensive livestock farming and game ranching. The numerous game parks in the area are a clear testimony to this. Commercial crop production takes place but only under irrigation. Hard and crusty basaltic soils found in the area means that there is poor drainage. The soils can easily dry up and also become very muddy due to its fine texture and shallowness. Respondents in a focus group discussion noted the lack of adequate rainfall to support rained crop production:

“Kungogara zvedu muFair Range munomu asi kurima kuti tikohwe kunonesa kana tisina irrigation. Hakuna mvura inonaya yekurimisa. Fair Range inzvimbo yagara isiri yekurima asi yemhuka”. (Translated to English this means that we are just staying here in Fair Range, but for us to grow and harvest is difficult without irrigation. There isn't enough rainfall to support rainfed agriculture. Fair Range is not a place for crop production but a place for wildlife).

Livestock and tillage

One of the major challenges faced by crop farmers in Fair Range is the shortage of draught power. As indicated earlier, very few farmers own cattle or donkeys that are commonly used as sources of draught power. Thus very few farmers fully utilised their allocated plots, which in turn, resulted in reduced crop production. The majority of the farmers in Fair Range Estate relied upon hiring of draught power. Yet, farmers who had cattle and donkeys only hired them out when they had completed their own ploughing. This meant that which meant that farmers who did not have cattle their own draught power had to cultivate and plough their fields later into the growing season and in most cases after the onset of the rainy season. This not only disturbed their farming operations but also heavily impacted negatively on their yields.

Non cattle owners complained that they receive tillage very late when cattle owners had finished ploughing with their fields and when the rains have gone and the soil will be dry. Cattle owners also demanded food when they plough other people's fields and make sure that they are present to monitor the number of hectares they have agreed; if they are not given food they can withdraw their cattle from one's field before they finish cultivating the agreed hectares. Conflicts of this nature have also resulted in strained relations between cattle owners and non cattle owners, sometimes resulting in the latter being accused of among other things beating, overworking and ill-treating cattle.

Non cattle owners have also been employed as 'herd boys' by cattle owners in Fair Range, with children of non-cattle owners herding cattle in order to secure tillage from cattle owners during the rainy season. Some residents in Fair Range have also taken it upon themselves to look after cattle from communal areas in order to secure tillage. The large number of people from communal areas who bring their cattle to graze the abundant grassland areas in Fair Range and also to harvest thatching grass and mopani worms was a clear indication that Fair Range Estate provided grazing land to nearby communal areas.

District Development Fund tillage

Those who did not have cattle had to spend much of their time negotiating for draught power with cattle owners. The District Development Fund that was tasked with the

provision of tillage to new farmers can not cope with the demands. It is also riddled with financial problems and some of its fleet of tractors was grounded due to lack of spare parts and fuel. Some of its officers receive bribes to till prominent people's farms. The high cost of DDF tillage was the major reason why farmers in Fair Range opted for local ox-drawn tillage. The Z\$367 00.00 plus a 20 litre of diesel they charged in 2004 was beyond the reach of many whereas the Z\$150000 charged by local cattle owners was seen as more affordable.

Farmers in the sample felt that DDF officials were corrupt, unreliable and only provided services to top civic and government officials in the A2 schemes at the expense of A1 schemes. One farmer stated that:

DDF is unreliable and corrupt, If you pay for tillage they don't come and the next thing you hear is that the tractor has broken down or they have no fuel but why do they accept our money in the first place We know the tractors will be busy on A2 farms owned by chiefs. They only go where their bread is buttered⁸.

Besides offering expensive tillage compared to ox drawn plough DDF has also been accused of giving flimsy excuses; as one farmer noted:

They (DDF) do not want to come here because they say your area is too rocky and has not been properly cleared which makes ploughing difficult. Besides that they also tell us that we should do with the cattle since we came from rural areas⁹

Non-cattle owners had harsh words for cattle owners. Besides demanding cash upfront, they also demanded security in cash or in kind. Some farmers were paying for tillage by any means necessary as related below;

The problem with cattle owners is that when they are short of labour they just call us even when we are busy with our

⁸ Interview with a respondent in Fair Range Estate. 04/09/2004.

⁹ Interview with a respondent in Fair Range Estate. 04/09/2004

*work. All they want is for us to work for them if we fail to pay them in time. When they demand their money they don't care whether we have harvested enough or not. In fact, when they see that we have harvested very little they even become more angry*¹⁰

Inputs

Although crop farmers in Fair Range were allocated free inputs such as maize seed (10kg) and fertiliser (50kg AN & 50kg D) by the government, many in the scheme felt that the quantity of inputs supplied was insufficient and that the inputs could not be relied upon. They felt that the inputs arrived late, and that sometimes the distribution was not fair. The major constraint to crop production cited by farmers in Fair Range was the unavailability of farming inputs. When available, the costs of the inputs were said to be beyond the reach of many. The problem was expressed in particular by maize farmers, who indicated that inputs such as maize seed were not available at the state owned GMB and that farmers had to spend much of their time and energy sourcing inputs on the parallel market at double or triple the official price.

Some of the farmers reported that they ended up planting untreated maize seed because they had failed to find treated seed. They complained about the time and money they spent queuing for inputs at various centres in and around Chiredzi. They felt that if inputs were available at the GMB only a few farmers from A1 schemes would access them while the rest were forced to source them from the parallel market where the inputs were expensive. Farmers felt that collection points for inputs were far away which meant that they needed to hire vehicles, only to collect smaller quantities which would then be shared by local leaders such as village chairmen and war veterans.

If inputs were brought to distribution points, village leaders received first preference while the rest were made to wait for the next delivery that usually came very late into the growing season. They also felt that when the inputs came ordinary farmers should be given first preference because they are not in any position of authority to ask for the next delivery.

¹⁰ Interview with a respondent in Fair Range Estate. 04/09/2004

The costs of production have gone up dramatically in recent years with input prices soaring and outstripping crop outputs. Usually crop farmers do not place a value on their own labour. Despite the rising input costs and the high rate of inflation in the country, this scenario has greatly affected crop farmers in Fair Range. The following example illustrates the costs of production from one of the most productive farmers in Fair Range, who specialises in cotton production. The farmer acknowledged that inputs prices have gone up to the extent that farming is no longer a viable business and admitted that he is only farming to protect his plot from being repossessed by the Government. The following quotation sums it all up:

It's useless to farm these days, we are only doing so because we don't want to lose these plots, they will be allocated to other people

Problem animals

One of the major problems that were felt by farmers in Fair Range was the destruction of their crops by wild animals such as warthogs from the other part of Fair Range, which still has wild animals on it. Although farmers devised methods to scare away animals they felt that wild animals were extensively damaging their crops. Some claimed that repeated efforts to seek assistance from the district council has fallen on deaf ears and as a precautionary measure they have resorted to putting snares around fields which are closer to grazing areas.

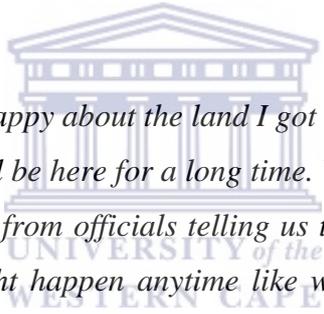
One example is that of a farmer who claims to have lost the entire maize field to problem animals during the 2004 season. The farmer noted that:

If I can be arrested for poaching I don't care because I have lost the whole field to these animals. I have told (CAMPFIRE) them but they are doing nothing about it.¹¹

¹¹ Interview with a farmer in Fair Range Estate. 20/09/2004

Security of Tenure

Four years after being allocated land farmers in Fair Range Estate still feel that their land tenure security is under threat, even though they have been on their plots for a long time. Farmers felt that the current political situation in the country did not guarantee them a permanent stay on Fair Range Estate. Some still did not believe that they would stay there forever. The uncertainty among farmers reflected lack of confidence in the current political system and the Fast-Track land reform programme in Zimbabwe. This was exacerbated by the ongoing discussion on the proposed Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park, which, if implemented, might affect their plots on Fair Range Estate. The location of Fair Range Estate makes it a prime target for reallocation to the government in that the residents of Fair Range were resettled on the corridor linking Save Valley Conservancy and Malilangwe Conservation Trust. If implemented wild animals would roam freely from Gonarezhou National Park to Save Valley conservancy via Fair Range Estate. One of the resettled farmers had this to say about this project:



Myself, I am happy about the land I got but I am not sure whether we will be here for a long time. Why is it that everyday we get assurances from officials telling us that we won't be removed, but something might happen anytime like what happened when we came here¹²

Producer market prices

Crop farmers in Fair Range were not satisfied with the producer prices which were being offered by the GMB, COTTCO and other buyers. They complained that the prices offered were not sustainable and viable. It was difficult to engage in meaningful crop production under these circumstances since it meant crop income would always be below the production costs of the crop. They also felt that farmers should be allowed to determine the market prices of crops, not buyers who had not even participated in the production process. They felt that buyers not farmers especially informal traders, were making huge profits out of their sweat but had no option but to sell their crops at the prices offered. Cotton farmers felt that since most

¹²Interview with a farmer in Fair Range Estate. 29/09/2004

of the cotton they sell to COTTCO is eventually exported they should also be paid in foreign currency, or the equivalent in Zimbabwean dollars, as happens in the case with tobacco.

Constraints Imposed by High Costs of Producing and Marketing Cotton

Mr Mustvangwa is 39 years old and married to Violet 35. They are blessed with two boys and two girls. He owns a brick moulding company in Chiredzi town which employs 6 people, a truck, a shop which sells inputs and a house in town where he stays. He is the only farmer in the sample who managed to utilise all the 6 hectares allocated to him in 2004. He grew cotton during the 2003/2004 season and produced 2700kgs of cotton and got \$4.86 million when he sold his cotton to COTTCO at \$1800 per kg. He hired a DDF tractor to till part of his plot for \$900000.00 and used local tillage at a total cost of \$450000.00. He also spent \$600000.00 on inputs such as cotton seeds and pesticides. This amount excludes his own transport from Chiredzi to Fair Range 3 times or more per week. The distance is approximately 50km to and fro. This amount also excludes approximately \$400.000.00 he spent on hired labour and he also used his own lorry to transport his cotton to COTTCO. He says he is not worried about the loss incurred but only reiterated that if things improve in the country he will be able to realise his profit. He also lamented the producer price of cotton which he said should be determined by farmers themselves and not buyers.

In addition crop farmers felt that by the time the Government announces producer prices for maize and cotton they will have already sold their produce at the old prices. They also felt that government should make prompt payments to farmers as soon as they have delivered their produce, rather than wait for a long period of time before payment is effected. This delay erodes their buying power, given the high inflation in the country. In addition farmers also complained that instead of government offering higher prices than private buyers the government was failing to compete with private buyers and millers. Some of the reasons for these views are illustrated by the case study found in Box 2.

Box 2: The high costs of producing cotton

Source: Field interviews 2004:

Institutional and organisational support

Farmers felt that government departments in the area were not doing enough to help new farmers. Although the Department of Research and Agricultural Extension (AREX) was very well known by all respondents, they felt that the Department should take a more practical role in solving their problems. The major constraint they noted was that AREX lacks Government support in terms of resources provision for its staff. They reported that staff from AREX move around with public transport and this makes their job difficult. In the end very few farmers are visited. In addition the department was criticised for being corrupt in terms of pegging and demarcation of plots. A number of complaints were raised about the manner in which AREX officials were conniving with top officials in the pegging and re-pegging of people's plots resulting in unnecessary conflicts.

Farmers viewed the District Development Fund as a department that should play a key role in transforming agricultural production levels. Farmers cited corruption within DDF as the major stumbling block to improved crop production. They felt that DDF should provide free tillage for new farmers while established farmers should only pay for tillage services after harvesting their crops rather than paying cash upfront as is now the case. Because of the proneness of the area to drought farmers felt that if they were to be provided with irrigation facilities they would improve production. They also felt that DDF should provide more tractors for tillage and if tillage is to be provided it should be affordable by all farmers. Furthermore, they felt that each scheme should be provided with at least a tractor for use by scheme plot-holders if they were to be productive rather than join the queue for tractors at the DDF offices. They also said that DDF should sink more boreholes and also resuscitate the existing boreholes to provide irrigation facilities, They were also of the view that each household should have at least 1 hectare in the irrigation scheme.

The Department of Veterinary Service was urged to speed up vaccinations of livestock against foot and mouth disease and also to make sure that dip tanks in the

area are resuscitated. Currently farmers are travelling a distance of about 10 kilometres to the nearest dip tank in the communal area.

It is clear from the crop farmers on Fair Range Estate are facing a number of challenges. Apart from the unfavourable climatic agro-ecological conditions which makes crop production in the area very difficult, farmers face a host of other problems. Including a shortage of livestock, lack of tillage, inadequate supply of inputs, poor producer market prices, and lack of support from Government. Furthermore the unstable economic climate in the country, where inflation reached 600% levels in 2004, has curtailed efforts by the farmers to remain in the farming business.



4.20 Conclusion

This chapter has reported field research findings on crop production activities among farmers in Fair Range and also highlighted some of the pertinent issues affecting production among newly resettled farmers. In order to have meaningful and rewarding crop production in Fair Range Estate it is important for the government to ensure that newly resettled farmers are provided with inputs, which should be delivered timeously to avoid panic amongst farmers. It should be the government's responsibility to ensure that newly resettled farmers access inputs before the onset of the rainy season. Furthermore, inputs should be distributed equally among all beneficiaries, without the political connections currently associated with the distribution of inputs. It is also important that GMB, as the sole distributor of inputs, be turned into a more viable entity with the aim of making sure that inputs are available on time and that farmers are also paid on time for the crops they deliver to GMB.

Droughts, especially the 1992 drought, and other natural shocks such as Cyclone Eline and Japhet that have ravaged the area, greatly reduced the number of livestock among farmers of the area. It is therefore important that tillage services to newly resettled farmers be made a top priority by the government. Many farmers in the scheme do not own cattle, but rely heavily on tillage from other farmers. There is a need for proper planning on the part of the Government to make sure that all resettled farmers have access to tillage from DDF. Tillage services should not be politicised and should be affordable to the majority. Efforts should therefore be made to rebuild the national herd destroyed by droughts and other natural disasters. Loans should also be made available to new farmers in order for them to buy cattle, and they should be given a grace period to repay the loans.

It is also important that the uncertainty regarding the tenure security of resettled farmers be resolved amicably and that new farmers in the scheme be given ample time to farm and be productive without fear of being evicted. This uncertainty results in farmers being unwilling to abandon their communal area homes and plots, and precious productive time is spent travelling between communal areas and resettlement areas, thereby undermining the crop production activities of newly resettled families.

Similarly, social services should be made available in the newly resettled areas so that farmers can concentrate on crop production.



CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main focus of this paper has been to examine some of the opportunities and constraints faced by crop production farmers who were resettled under model A1 of the Government's Fast Track land reform and resettlement programme, implemented from July 2001. This chapter summarises major findings from the study area, and presents some recommendations on how to enhance crop production in the current phase of land reform.

5.1 Objectives of the study revisited

It is important to note that the objectives of the study were to analyse:

- The opportunities for crop production on Fair Range Estate
- The constraints on crop production on Fair Range Estate
- The viability of the government's fast track resettlement programme for crop production farmers and how Fast Track Land Reform impacts on rural people's livelihoods
- The role being played by Government, quasi government organisations and non-government organisations in the provision of inputs, finance and marketing support to crop farmers on Fair Range Estate
- The influence of processes and patterns of social differentiation on crop production on Fair Range Estate
- The policy implications of research findings.

In attempting to meet these objectives both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed. Seventy households were interviewed in Fair Range Estate, and in addition a number of key informant interviews were undertaken with both government officials and the local leadership in order to get an in depth understanding of the constraints and opportunities being faced by A1 crop production farmers in the case study area.

5.2 Major findings

The study found out that A1 crop production farmers in Fair Range face more constraints than opportunities in their quest for improved crop production. The greatest opportunity that A1 crop production farmers in Fair Range Estate experienced was the fact that they now own pieces of land that they can call theirs, without having to go through the market to try to acquire such land. Ownership of land among rural people in Zimbabwe is considered highly desirable since it opens up opportunities for improved crop production and enhancing his or her own livelihood through farming.

In terms of crop production, however, farmers in Fair Range Estate face a number of challenges. The following constraints make crop production a mammoth task. not only in Fair Range but in most of Zimbabwe's A1 model resettlement schemes.

Lack of tillage and livestock

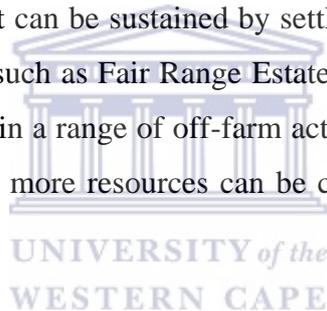
The study concurs with others (Cousins 1992; Cusworth 1990; Masst 1994) that livestock ownership plays a key role in crop production. In Fair Range only thirty-seven farmers (8.7% of the total) own cattle, and this has negative impacts since crop production in rural areas is highly dependent upon access to sufficient draught power. The majority of rural households in Zimbabwe face similar problems. The problem is being exacerbated by the fact that many rural households continue to lose their livestock due to frequent droughts and have not been able to rebuild their stocks for long periods. The majority of rural households in Zimbabwe do not own tractors and cannot afford to hire them.

The supply of agricultural equipment in Zimbabwe has of late been severely constrained by the current shortage of foreign currency to service and repair the depleted pool of DDF tractors that should provide the much needed tillage to resettled farmers countrywide. Currently DDF is operating with only less than half of its fleet of 768 tractors (Utete Report, 2003). This is set against a growing number of resettled farmers countrywide who are in desperate need of tillage in the wake of the Government's Fast Track resettlement programme. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the Zimbabwean economy is reeling under a severe recession and

therefore many farmers and agricultural companies are finding it extremely difficult to import farming equipment due to lack of foreign currency.

In addition few farmers are able to hire DDF tractors because of the high costs involved as well as the crippling shortage of fuel which of late has greatly compromised crop production among newly resettled crop farmers. Unless the foreign currency situation, as well as the general decline of the economy, is urgently addressed, the repair of existing tractors will remain a pipedream. There is therefore an urgent need for Government to acquire and service more tractors for use by both A1 and A2 farmers who were allocated land under the Fast- Track Land resettlement programme. It is also further suggested that DDF be transformed into a more competitive and viable entity that can fully service the tillage needs of new farmers.

Cusworth (1990) pointed out that in the lower potential natural regions there is no viable resettlement model that can be sustained by settlers who do not own sufficient cattle. Crop farmers in areas such as Fair Range Estate, and elsewhere where rainfall is erratic, should also engage in a range of off-farm activities to cushion them against the drought years and so that more resources can be channelled towards sustainable natural resource management.



Lack of Inputs

It is also important to note that farmers on resettlement schemes continue to experience the problem of an inadequate supply of inputs. In Fair Range all the farmers in the sample reported that lack of inputs was one the greatest challenges that they were facing. The problem was compounded by the fact that inputs were in short supply and whenever they were available, they were beyond the reach of many in the scheme. Efforts should also be made to ensure that inputs are available to all deserving farmers

The performance of the state-controlled GMB in the provision of inputs such as maize seed and fertilisers has been inadequate to date. Delays in the supply of inputs do not disturb crop production alone, but the general economy of the country cannot improve under such conditions, since Zimbabwe's economy largely revolves around agriculture. In areas where inputs are delivered on time they are sometimes in short

supply and only find their way to selected individuals, who sometimes trade inputs on the parallel market where prices are inflated. It is suggested that inputs be made available on time and efforts be made to make inputs accessible to all at an affordable price and in time for the rainy season. Furthermore inputs should be available at the nearest GMB depots throughout the country to avoid farmers spending time moving from one place to the other. The fact that inputs are in short supply has meant that farmers are spending their productive time looking for inputs and often end up buying inputs which are not suitable for their respective regions, which in turn greatly affect their yields.

Socio economic conditions

Crop farmers in Fair Range have not been spared by the generally negative socio economic conditions prevailing in the country, which have resulted in sharp increases in prices of all basic commodities, including inputs such as fertilisers and seeds. Under prevailing economic conditions it has become almost impossible to engage in economically viable crop production. Institutions which are supposed to be helping farmers to realise their full potential have also been sucked into the general malaise, as shown in recent reports of corruption which allege that personnel from the District Development Fund are receiving bribes in order for them to provide tillage services to crop farmers.

Lack of tenure security

Although the government has managed to resettle people in newly resettled areas, many feel that they feel too insecure to invest scarce resources in their respective allocated farming areas. The fact that the fast-track land reform exercise was a highly politicised issue means that many feel insecure on land that they still believe might be taken away from them. This greatly compromises their ability to engage in meaningful crop production. The mere fact that farmers in Fair Range and in Zimbabwe in general still maintain strong ties with their rural areas of origin, generally in the communal areas, is a clear testimony that many farmers are hesitant to abandon or surrender their rural homes and fields in favour of new areas. Many have opted to register their rural land in the name of their close relatives in order to secure their homes and fields, and this is a clear indication of their suspicion of the

Government's position regarding Fast Track resettlement. Furthermore, clear differences in policy between the ruling Zanu PF party and the main opposition MDC party have created confusion among farmers regarding security of tenure.

Unfavourable Agro-ecological Zone

A fundamental constraint is that Fair Range Estate lies in Natural Region V, and in the absence of irrigation crop production in is not viable. The amount of rainfall received in the area is not sufficient to sustain crops throughout the year.

Socio economic Differentiation

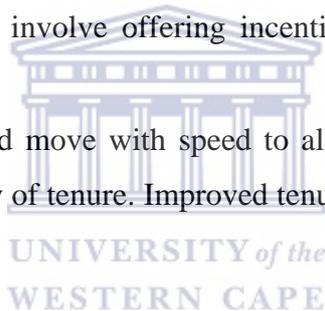
It is also evident in this study that socio economic differentiation along lines of age , gender education and access to resources plays a critical role in improved crop production. The study reveals that even though land was availed to indigenous many continue to lack the necessary skills and resources to be engaged in productive agriculture. The study also reveals that there are factors that influence production levels among framers in Fair Range Estate and in Zimbabwe in general. These include factors such as household access to resources required in the production levels, other non farm activities, labour education, age and political standing of an individual farmer. These factors are critical for a farmer who engages in meaningful crop production.

5.3 Crop Production and Prospects for Development in Newly Resettled Areas

Based on the major findings presented here, this study therefore recommends that in order to improve crop production and rural people's livelihoods:

- The government should make sure that all newly resettled crop production farmers should be provided with tillage facilities before the start of the rainy season so that they have ample time to plan and channel their resources towards the ultimate goal of crop production.
- All related crop inputs should be made available before the onset of the rainy season and they must be made available at all centres throughout the country at affordable prices. This will help to reduce farmers' dependency on the thriving parallel market rates and its exorbitant prices.

- The country's economy must be put back on track in tandem with other regional and international countries. This will allow the country's currency to trade favourably with other currencies.
- Proper planning of programmes such as the Fast-Track land resettlement programme should be carried out, taking into account the need of settlers for such important facilities as health and social service delivery systems. Planning must avoid haphazard settlement occurring within game and wildlife sanctuaries where crop production has been proven to be not viable.
- Crop farmers should be allocated land based on their level of education and experience of farming. Such essential criteria will weed out lazy and incompetent farmers.
- Government should put in place measures aimed at maximising crop production, and review the producer prices of crops grown by resettlement farmers. This will involve offering incentives for farmers who produce high yields.
- Government should move with speed to allay the fears of many farmers about their security of tenure. Improved tenure security results in increased crop production.



This study has explored the land question in Zimbabwe from a historical perspective and analysed processes of land reform in Zimbabwe leading to the Fast-Track resettlement programme. Agricultural production remains a mainstay of Zimbabwe's economy, and is a central component of rural people's livelihoods. Improved crop production in newly resettled areas under the Fast-Track land reform programme implemented by the government can improve the livelihoods of many Zimbabweans, but only if the general decline of the economy is addressed. Measures to reverse this decline must include the availability of foreign currency to buy spare parts for tractors, rebuilding of the national herd, which was greatly affected by both drought and the disturbance of commercial agriculture as a result of the controversial land reform programme. Fuel should also become more readily available, and urgent policy measures be put in place to revamp institutional frameworks in the agricultural sector to make them more farmer-oriented.



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**Questionnaire on emerging production patterns in Fair Range Estate.
Chiredzi District Zimbabwe.**

1. Demographic Data

Name of plot holder

Sex M/ F

Age

Ethnicity/Place of origin

Occupation of plot holder

Level of education of plot holder

Level of education of spouse

How long has the plot holder stayed on the plot?

What is the size of the household?

How many children M/F

How many are employed

Main types of buildings on the plot

2. Resource Base

Size of the plot

Size of land cleared so far

3. Livestock ownership

Type

Cattle

Goats

Sheep

Donkeys

Poultry

Other {specify}



Total No

4. What farming equipment do you own?

Type

Total No

Scotch cart

Plough

Harrow

Wheel barrow

Other {specify}

5. What non farming equipment do you own

Type

Total No

6. Income Profile

What are your sources of income?

Employment

Remittances from family members

Sale of cash crops

Sale of livestock

Sale of mopani worms
 Hawking
 Sale of meat
 Other {specify}

7. Crop production

How much land did you cultivate?

Year	Hectarage	Crops Grown	Crops sold
------	-----------	-------------	------------

20001

20002

20003

20004

8. How did you cultivate your fields

Hand

Draught power

Tractor

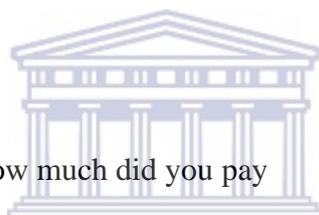
9. What was the source of draught power

Own

Hired

Work group

If hired state how much did you pay



10. What major crops did you grow

Did you ever produce any grain for sale?

Year	Quantity sold	Marketing outlet
------	---------------	------------------

20001

20002

20003

20004

11. Have you experienced food shortages

Year	Reason
------	--------

12. Have you ever received any food assistance from Government/NGO?

Year	Programme	Item	Quantity
------	-----------	------	----------

12. Have you ever received any inputs from GOVT/NGO since 20001

Year	Programme	Item	Quantity
------	-----------	------	----------

13. Have your yield changed since you received assistance

Increased by	Tonnage
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Decreased by	Tonnage
--------------	---------

14. Did you access the GMB input scheme?

If yes how much input did you get by type

Maize

1. AN Fertiliser

Compound D

14. Identify your major constraints to crop production in Fair Range

15. Do you still maintain ties with the communal area

If so, what crops did / do you grow .An average estimate of yields per year.

16. Briefly tell me about your background and how you ended up here

Summary notes on major findings.

