FARMER EMPOWERMENT THROUGH LAND RESETTLEMENT: A CASE OF BLUEGRASS ESTATE, KADOMA, ZIMBABWE

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Abstract

Poverty in rural Zimbabwe was rampant during colonial and post independence times. Poverty creation by colonial authorities through legislation that deprived the indigenous people of their fatherland was meant to create labour for the ruling whites while making sure the indigenous Zimbabweans would never aspire to be equal to their colonizers. It was poverty through landlessness that drove many rural youths into joining the Second Chimurenga en masse. After independence, the land resettlement programme saw many rural Zimbabweans move from their impoverished communal lands onto the fertile lands owned by white farmers. The white farmers resisted the move. The black farmers were each allocated approximately six hectares of land and additional communal land for cattle grazing. Resettled farmers were given seed, fertilizers and tillage inputs by Government and some donors. The A1 farmers on Bluegrass Estate, Sanyati Rural District, were amongst the beneficiaries of this programme. After ten years on the resettlement, it is not clear whether this programme economically empowered the people to live better lives.

This study sought to establish the authenticity of the assertion of the Rukuni Commission that giving a single commercial farm to many people would result in better production from the land and hence improve the lives of the people who were resettled there.

A case study approach was used following the work done by Mtapuri (2009) on the Mhondoro Communal Lands. Inventories of equipment and inputs at points of resettlement and ten years later was completed and compared. Items forming a bundle that determined whether the people perceived themselves as poor or not poor were established. A questionnaire was administered and this was followed by interviews with some selected people to delve deeper into issues raised. Descriptive statistics using percentages and deviations in accordance with Mack and Lansley’s (1985) model were used to establish the conditions indicating poverty in resettlement areas. The World Bank approach to determining poverty was compared with other approaches and shown that it was not considered appropriate if the views of the people were taken into account in determining whether they were poor or not.
Key words: agriculture, land reform and resettlement, assets, poverty.

Background

The Zimbabwean has always considered ownership of fertile land as extremely important. From the First Chimurenga (1896-97), to the Second Chimurenga (1966-79), the fight for land taken away from the Black majority by the invading white minority feature more than other issues on the freedoms and rights of the Black majority in Zimbabwe. The cry *Mwana Wevhu* was heard at every meeting since the National Democratic Party days in the early 1960s until the COPAC campaign for the new constitution in 2011, when resettled farmers wanted security of tenure on the land given them in 2002 by Government. While the Lancaster House Constitutional Conference (1979) was not conclusive on the land issue, events since 2000 changed the landownership landscape in Zimbabwe. The Black majority invaded white owned farms and this invasion was later endorsed by Government through the Land Acquisition Act/Programmes. By 2011, many Indigenous Black families lived on what formerly was white-owned land for more than a century.

It had always been argued that land should be given to Black people for poverty alleviation. The arguments always given by the White farmers who wanted to retain the land bequeathed to them by their colonizing fathers were that African people were happy to work for the white people on the farms and they were not happy to be land owners as they did not have the skills to use the land. As such, these people would not derive any benefit from land ownership.

Poverty Alleviation

One of the reasons for supporting the land invasions and subsequent propping up of the land acquisition by the Black farmers was to alleviate poverty among the indigenous people who had for most of the time, lived in communal lands. These lands were characterized by poor, sandy soils, over population due to depletion of resources and incapable of supporting the masses of the people who were always on the increase, but still remained eking a precarious living on the desolate land. About the resettlement areas, many people left their traditional areas to farm on former white-owned farms as a way of escaping from poverty imposed on them by the colonial powers. What is poverty that these people wanted to escape from? Poverty is a state of not having enough to support one’s life in the environment one finds oneself. Wikipedia (2011) defined poverty as the state of one who lacks a certain amount of material possessions or money, while absolute poverty or destitution refers to being unable to afford basic human needs. In defining poverty, this paper agrees with Mtapuri (2009) that assets, to a large extent, mattered in the measurement of poverty. Brady (2003) argued that the definition of poverty must be widened to encompass essentially culturally specific and historically contextualized phenomena. This paper further agrees with the shift by researchers from using income and capabilities towards other measures such as assets to measure poverty. Wikipedia (2011) stated that there
were many definitions of poverty depending on the context of the situation and the views of the person giving them. The United Nations defined poverty as denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity, a lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society, not having enough food and clothes for the family, no school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow crops and a job to earn a living. According to the World Bank (2004), poverty is pronounced deprivation, which includes low income, inability to acquire basic goods and services necessary for survival with dignity. It encompasses low levels of health and education, poor access to clean water and sanitation, lack of voice, physical security and opportunity to improve one’s life.

Assets, as a measure of poverty, are relevant in the African rural setting where a self-definition of poverty is based on local norms and traditions (Mtapuri, 2009). Graaf (2003) recommends that the measurement of absolute poverty should take into account expectations, norms, values and customs of particular communities in which the people live. Sanders (2004) reinforces this argument by stating that needs can be defined relative to prevailing community perceptions, attitudes and standards. Poverty is also found to be about self-perceptions within a given context (Mtapuri, 2009).

It is under these circumstances that resettlement was instituted to alleviate poverty. The World Bank believes that the majority of resettled farmers are poor, despite all they have. Writing in 2011, it concluded that, “The overwhelming majority of Zimbabwe’s poor live in the semi-arid communal and resettlement areas, but there has been very little economic growth in these areas since the mid 1980s.” What is of importance is how people perceive poverty. This paper views poverty from more angles than the cash income point of view, according to the definition given by the person as she perceives her poverty or wealth status Mack and Lansley (1985).

**Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of the study was to establish the extent to which the people had benefitted from the Land Resettlement Scheme after 2000 and to determine whether they considered themselves poor, according to their own definition of poverty. While other definitions of poverty have been given, this study based its definition on Mack and Lansley (1985) quoted by Mtapuri’s (2009) in which assets mattered in the measurement and definition of poverty. The problem was to establish whether the people resettled on Bluegrass Estate never benefitted from land acquisition, as determined by the assets they hold and hence their own perceptions of being poor would not have changed since they started living in the Resettlement in 2002. The problem of whether or not the resettled people are poor arises from the fact that there are two views that resettled farmers are still poor (World Bank, 2011) and that given by Mack and Lansley (1985) and Mtapuri (2009) that people who have materials assets would not define themselves as poor and rural Zimbabweans have a culture of living “comfortably” without the need to spend cash on a daily basis.
In an attempt to establish the perceptions of the resettled people on Bluegrass Estate about how poor or not poor they are, answers to the questions below were sought.

- Do the people of Bluegrass Resettlement view lack of cash as a measure of poverty?
- What assets did they acquire since coming to Bluegrass that would be used to determine the threshold of poverty on the resettlement?
- How did these assets acquired after coming to Bluegrass compare with those they had prior to resettlement on Bluegrass Estate?
- Do the people of Bluegrass Resettlement consider themselves poor?
- What measures have been used to gauge whether the people were poor or not?

**Importance of the Study**

The current study was significant in that it aimed to establish the parameters of poverty as viewed by the people settled on the land. This was significant because it determined whether or not the people remained on the land because they would view land ownership as a benefit from the resettlement programme. It was also significant because it clearly defined poverty, not from the point of view of European people who used definitions of poverty applicable to their own situations: The definitions from the study reflected the views of those experiencing the situation. This was important because it determined whether rural programmes and projects could continue to be offered with the full support of the people. It was how people perceived themselves in a situation that supported or wrecked the implementation of Government policies and programmes.

**Literature Review**

The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems (1994:108) states that, “The communal lands were created as reserves not meant to be agriculturally or economically viable and sustainable then or now, but rather a labour pool for the modern sector dominated by [white] settlers. This area had the lowest degree of needs satisfaction related to increasing land shortage as land use pressure increased over time.” Such a policy then created a large portion of the country’s population who were poor.

Poverty (Free Online Dictionary (downloaded 11/07/12) (static.flipora.com/) defines poverty as the lack of means of providing material needs or comfort. During colonial times, the black Zimbabwean population, the majority of who eked a precarious living in the communal lands were condemned to be poor by design as they were required to live below the poverty datum line. In the European Union, the poverty datum line is the relative poverty measure based on economic distance. The economic distance is a level of income usually set at 60% of the median household income (en.wikipedia.org/wp/p/Poverty.htm). Absolute poverty (www.wordiq.com/
Absolute poverty is the level of poverty at which certain minimum standards of living for example nutrition, health and shelter, cannot be met. The World Bank defines poverty as living on less than US$1.25 per day. Moderate poverty, from the World Bank point of view, is when one lives on US$2.00 per day. In 2008, the World Bank concluded that 1.4 billion people had consumption levels below US$1.25 per day making them absolutely poor while 2.7 billion were moderately poor. (http://www.worldbank.org/research/peg/wps11/)

There exist also non-monetary indicators of poverty (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/measuring_poverty). Guy Pfeffermann singles out life expectancy which has greatly improved in the developing world since the end of the Second World War (WWII) and is closing the gap between the developing world and the developed world. In Sub-Saharan Africa, life expectancy has increased from 30 years to 50 years. After HIV came, this has gone down to 47 years. Child mortality has declined. Literacy, especially that of women, is an indicator of poverty. In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) literacy has increased from 52 to 80% and in Zimbabwe, it has risen to 98% (UNICEF, downloaded 09/07/12). Female literacy as a percentage of male literacy rose from 59% in 1970 to 80% in 2000 (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/measuring_poverty). In Zimbabwe adult literacy rate of females is 94% that of men (UNICEF Zimbabwe, 2012). According to UNDP (downloaded 09/07/12), Zimbabwe has a literacy rate of 92% while that of Tunisia has remained at 87%, making Zimbabwe the most literate country in Africa today. UNDP comments that, “The achievement is despite the country’s education sector suffering brain drain and lack of resources over the past decade.” Xinhua Staff Reporter (www.zimeye.org/?p=19562) stated on the 15th July 2010 that Zimbabwe shone with the World’s Best Literacy Rate in Africa. Using this non-monetary measure, Zimbabwe cannot, therefore, be categorised as poor. The same argument goes for the determination that spending US$1.25 per day mean one is poor, cannot be used as a measure of poverty in rural Zimbabwe due to dependence on home produced foods.

Basing on the non-monetary measures of poverty and the specific case of Zimbabwean literacy, it has, therefore, been found necessary to use Mack and Lansley’s (1985) parameters to determine the gains made by resettled farmers over a decade of farm occupancy and then determine whether or not the resettled people are poor.

Land Policy

Land policy in Zimbabwe has always caused controversy resulting in the 1896-1897 War of Liberation and the Second War of Liberation (1966-1979). During colonial times, the problem continued more severely with the passing of laws (Land Apportionment Act, 1930; Land Husbandry Act, 1951; Land Tenure Act, 1965) that deprived the Africans of their traditional lands as these were forcibly taken for white settlers. After the Land Acquisition Act of 2000, it is still believed in some quarters that the implementation of this policy led to ruin (www.inkundla.net/indaba/2006/Nkwenkwezi/, May 2005, downloaded 09/07/12). Information given at this website articulates the belief that the land policy spectacularly and tragically failed
because Zimbabwe, according to this website, has transformed from one of Africa’s rare success stories into one of its worst economic and humanitarian disasters (Inkundla, 2005). Inkundla goes further to argue that “the damage done to property rights by the land reforms caused a series of ripple effects throughout the economic sectors.” This view appears totally oblivious of the fact that those given land after the land acquisition programme in 2000 had been denied their birthright since 1890 and with it had gone the right to participate in the other economic activities.

Countering the arguments by Inkundla, Endy Mhlanga, quoted by Dan Isaacs (2010), states, “As War Veterans, we are satisfied that the programme of land reform has succeeded... It might not be 100%, but now the land is with the people of Zimbabwe. I don’t have any regrets. Had they [white farmers] agreed to share nicely, none of these troubles would have happened.”


It is this controversy that this paper tries to address by investigating the viability of settling farmers on Bluegrass Estate in the Sanyati District in Mashonaland West Province.

The status of Communal and Resettled Farmers

Chiremba and Masters in *African Studies Quarterly*, downloaded 10/07/12, [www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v7/v7i2a5.htm](http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v7/v7i2a5.htm) state that the agriculture inherited from the colonial system divided farming activities into large scale commercial sector dominated by white farmers and small scale sector, which was mainly subsistent and mixed, which catered for black farmers. In the latter system, cattle provided draught power for tillage and transport, manure for the field, milk for the family, occasionally meat and some cash after a sale, which was not regular. The cattle were also a symbol of wealth. Cropping provided household food in addition to being sold occasionally for cash. Some farmers grew cash crops like cotton and maize for sale and some even owned tractors for tillage, but these were very few in number.

At independence in 1980, land distribution by Natural Region was in favour of white farmers and this disadvantaged black farmers. Chiremba and Masters (downloaded 10/07/12) quoting Bratton (1994) give the following comparisons of land distribution by Natural Region and allocation to farmers by race.
Table 1: Agricultural Land Allocation by Natural Region and by Race in Colonial Rhodesia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural Region</th>
<th>Mean annual rainfall in mm</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>Communal Lands %</th>
<th>White commercial %</th>
<th>State %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>&gt;1000</td>
<td>7050</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>19 (1)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>750-1000</td>
<td>58750</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21 (8)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>650-750</td>
<td>72900</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>39 (17)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>450-650</td>
<td>147700</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>50 (45)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>&lt;450</td>
<td>104500</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>46 (29)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(Average 650)</td>
<td>390900</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>42 (100)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table, it is clear that as environmental conditions become less favourable for farming the land allocation to black farmers increases. The black farmers had very little land in the high rainfall, agriculturally most suitable Regions. With time, the number of indigenous farmers increased and so did their activities which created serious pressure on the unsuitable land. No indigenous farmer was allowed to own land in the areas allocated to white farmers in terms of the Land Tenure Act of 1965 and the Land Apportionment Act of 1930.

In 2000, the land redistribution programme afforded black people access to the best agricultural land in Zimbabwe en masse. From a human rights point of view, the action was applauded as it established equal and equitable land distribution among the races in Zimbabwe.

The UNDP reported that despite problems many resettled farmers produced high value crops such as tobacco, cotton, paprika and maize in combination with cattle, goats and chickens. The income per family had become higher than what the people earned in the traditional communal lands or as farm workers on white-owned commercial farms. Kinsey (1999) quoted by Chiremba and Masters (ibid) showed that land reform beneficiaries cultivated 50% more land than non-beneficiaries, obtained four times as much crop revenues, owned more livestock and had higher expenditure by 50%, proving that land reform was necessary.

Aspirations of Resettled Farmers
In a study carried out in Laos by Alex Duval Smith (2010) it was concluded that resettled farmers do not have aspirations for a better life. However, the same author (Alex Duval Smith), writing in the Guardian (4\textsuperscript{th} May 2012) states that in Zimbabwe, resettled people want to belong to their roots. Many go beyond this social aspiration and strive to be modern people. For example Zimbabwean who have been resettled struggle to educate their children. The author adds that every Black person who has been resettled aspires to have a piece of the fatherland (www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2012/may/04/aid-zimbabwe-resettled-farmers-contested-land). Smith estimates that 150000 black families were resettled on land previously occupied by 4500 white farmers and their families.

Giving the view of the resettled farmers, Smith (ibid) talked to Mandikisi, a war veteran who was resettled in the Goromonzi area. Mandikisi stated that he was grateful for receiving a piece of land and was quite happy that he had land which he called his own and on which he could grow food crops and had created for himself the much needed employment opportunities. Before resettlement, he was unemployed and living under hardship in an urban area. Resettlement had removed all his anguish (Smith, 2012).

The Zimbabwean resettled people view the future as bright since they have what they need to move ahead, in addition to the sentimental values of owning land inherited from their ancestors.

**Reason for Resettling People in Zimbabwe**

Amnesty International (http://www.amnesty.org/ downloaded 10/07/12) states that agriculture plays a pivotal role in the lives of Zimbabweans. More than 75% of the people derive at least part of their livelihood from agriculture. With the cost of food production going up after the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), it was logical that people should take an active role in producing their own food so that they could circumvent the high production costs as well as prepare to join the cash economy. The resettlement came after the 4500 white farmers owning 11 million hectares of the most fertile farmland had resisted land redistribution in the referendum of 2000. While the 4500 white farmers owned the most and the best farmland, more than one million Black farmers eked a precarious existence on fast deteriorating, naturally impoverished, environmentally dry and unreliable lands in Region IV and V where most of the communal lands had been located by the colonial governments through the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, the Land Husbandry Act of 1951 and the Land Tenure Act of 1965. One major reason for the Second Chimurenga (War of Liberation) from 1966 to 1979 was the aspiration to repossess land usurped by the colonial powers. After independence in 1980, the process of land repossession was regulated by the Lancaster House Agreement. The Labour Government in the UK worsened the situation by reneging on their responsibility to fund the land redistribution. The Government of Zimbabwe then decided to repossess the land without compensation. It was able to do this by passing the Constitutional Amendment No.16 Act, 2000. Soon after, the fast track repossession of land or the land invasions started in July 2000.
Land redistribution, in a way, would ensure the availability and accessibility to adequate food through the farmers’ own production. As Smith (2012) states, food aid through Non-Governmental Organizations, which are funded by the British Government, never reach the resettled farmers by design. Yet these farmers have continued to survive without these donations. All the people of Zimbabwe, like all other people in the world, should enjoy the right to adequate food in terms of the UN Charter for Human Rights (1948). This argument, according to Amnesty International, “…strengthens people’s access to resources (such as land) and means to ensure their livelihoods, including food security.”

**Expected Benefits from Resettlements**

In 1980, the Government of Zimbabwe adopted the policy of “growth with equity”. This policy was directed at reducing the inequality on racial lines, in land holdings and access to resources by the majority of the people. According to Chiremba and Masters, the initial programme failed to have an impact on agricultural productivity and rural incomes because this initial programme was slow. They, however, say by historical standards, the programme was remarkably successful because according to the Ministry of Agriculture, some of the settlers were achieving the recommended income targets, but a group of farmers was emerging for whom the benefits of being settled were very marginal (Chiremba and Masters, downloaded 10/07/12).

To gauge the extent resettled farmers have benefitted, Chiremba and Masters cite the use of the Zimbabwe Rural Household Dynamics project (Kinsey data) in addressing productivity, asset accumulation, diversification, consumption smoothing, welfare indicators, development assistance, gender dimensions, role of government services and access to resources. This however, was not followed in this study.

**Objective of the Study**

The study sought to identify the items that resettled farmers had and whether they valued these as important or not both at the time of starting to occupy the resettled land in 2002 and ten years later in 2012 and whether the value to the farmer of the items had changed with time. It also sought to find out whether the resettled farmers considered themselves as poor even though they have land and what they saw as poverty themselves. The definitions of poverty given by the World Bank (2008) that if a person lives on US$1,25 per day was put to the test and so was Mutapuri’s (2009) definition that people who did not have cash, but had other assets that sustained them, did not consider themselves poor. The study also sought to identify whether there had been any improvement in the lives of the people since settling on the land by checking whether there had been an increase in the number of assets they viewed as important in their lives.
Statement of the Problem

Land Reform in Zimbabwe was carried out to improve the lives of the people through affording them the opportunity to acquire the best lands formerly owned by White farmers only. The programme was meant to correct the anomaly created by colonial forces that took away the fertile lands from the Indigenous African and rendered them totally incapable of producing enough for themselves. It was envisaged, therefore, that this land redistribution process would make the people who had spearheaded the land invasions happy and that they would feel better off than they had been before the Land Reform, in addition to enabling them to join the cash economy and become free from poverty. The land redistribution exercise had taken place in an environment in which those who lost the land argued that this was a futile exercise that would lead to greater poverty. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) wrote (08/08/2002) that, “There is concern that taking large sophisticated farms and then sub-dividing them into plots to give to people without the means to manage them properly could spell disaster for Zimbabwe’s agricultural economy.” It went on to state that the steep fall in agricultural production from 2000 to 2002 was due to land redistribution, not drought.

The Research Questions

The study was directed at addressing the following questions:

1. Have the farmers resettled on Bluegrass Estate become economically better than they were prior to resettlement?

2. Have the farmers acquired assets they consider valuable for their day-to-day service?

3. What assets do the farmers consider as important in their lives and which they view as necessary if they are not to consider themselves poor?

4. Do the farmers perceive themselves as better off in 2012 than they were in 2002 before being resettled?

Importance of the Study

This study was meant to inform those who controlled land redistribution on whether the programme was achieving the stated goals. The perceptions of the resettled people indicated whether programmes of this nature could be supported in future. This study was also meant to help redirect effort of Government in areas identified by the farmers as not useful in maximizing the use of the land given them.
Research Design

A case study approach was used (Mouton, 2002) in order to do an in-depth description of a small number of resettled farmers of up to 50 subjects. This was a hybrid approach in which both interviews and descriptive statistics were used. The focus was on households that had been given land and had been on Bluegrass Estate for about ten years. The research was guided by what was expected of resettled people and their behaviours.

The researcher spent two weeks on Bluegrass Estate collecting data and carrying out semi-structured interviews with respondents who had indicated willingness to contribute to the study. The issues covered included matters that had been raised and that needed deeper explanations than given.

The respondents completed an inventory of equipment and inputs at point of resettlement (2002) which were compared with the assets they had ten years later in 2012. The farmers at each point were required to indicate whether they valued the assets listed or they did not in determining and supporting their daily needs. Those assets that did not support their daily needs were not considered as important in determining whether the farmers were poor or not, whether the farmers had them or not. The more the families who supported an asset as necessary in their daily lives the more the asset was considered as a determinant of wealth. The variances in the ownership of such resources in 2002 and 2012 showed whether or not there was an improvement in the quality of life of the resettled people. This approach was based on the work by Mtapuri (2009) when he was a studying the people in the Mhondoro Communal Lands. The difference came in that in this study, there was a comparison between the assets the farmers had in 2002 and then in 2012. The comparison was based on the assumption that if resettlement had been beneficial, the farmers should have more assets ten years after resettlement.

Defining Poverty

There is need to define poverty in the context of this study. According to Brady (2003), there is need to widen the definition of poverty to assess what are culturally specific and historically contextualized phenomena. As a result, this study used assets to define the poverty instead of income and capabilities. In agreement with Mtapuri (2009), this study argues that “assets matter most in an African rural setting where a self-definition of poverty based on local norms and traditions prevail.” According to Graaff (2003), quoted by Mtapuri, (2009), measures of absolute poverty as those used by the World Bank “do not take into account the expectations, norms, values and customs of particular communities in which people live.” This is supported by Saunders who argues that needs can only be defined relative to prevailing community perceptions, attitudes and standards (Mtapuri, 2009). As Mtapuri (ibid) found out, one person in a village in Mhondoro said, “I have 5 cattle, 3 wives, 5 hoes and plough, a scotch cart and, therefore, I am rich.” Poverty is, therefore, also about perception of self within a given context.
Money alone or lack of it may not be sufficient as a measure of poverty. In rural Zimbabwe money is not always relevant as a measure of poverty because families supplement their food supply through home-grown produce and they use barter trade of the produce to get what they need from those who have.

This study, while focusing on assets, argues that yardsticks of poverty in resettlement areas must have corresponding interventions. In a situation where people lack assets, they can be given assets and where they lack cash income, they can be given cash (Mtapuri, 2009). The assets threshold should differentiate the poor from the non-poor.

Collection of Data

Data was collected from Bluegrass Estate, a resettled farm in the Sanyati District of Mashonaland West. The farm is situated only eight kilometres west of Kadoma town. According to the resident Agricultural Extension Officer, there are 130 families that were settled on Bluegrass Estate in 2002. They came from several parts of Zimbabwe to occupy the land they had been given following a lottery approach in which people picked tickets indicating the A1 plots they had been allocated.

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. A similar instrument had been used by Mtapuri (2009) in a study of asset threshold using the consensus approach. The same asset list was used except that in this study the assets were for two periods separated from each by a decade long period. The questionnaire was preferred because it was cheaper to use and administer as well as being anonymous. It also enabled the researcher to follow up with several open-ended questions when a subject proffered ideas of interest not covered in the questionnaire. The processing and analysis of data is not complex (Hopkins, 1989). The study wanted 50 responses. 60 questionnaires were distributed at the end of Bluegrass School Development Committee meeting. Nineteen questionnaires were declared defunct after they were either not returned or returned without being filled with the subjects declaring lack of interest to be involved in the study. Forty-one questionnaires were completed and returned and some of these (10) were followed by in-depth interviews on selected subjects on areas of special interest arising from the comments made.

Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

The sample was not specially selected as it comprised people who had turned up at the Bluegrass School Development Committee meeting. The only criteria used for selection was that they were resettled owners of pieces of land and came from the three villages established on Bluegrass Estate in 2002. These landowners were randomly given the questionnaires and asked to complete them. Although there were 41 respondents, only 29 gave their bio data. Of these, there were 16 women and 13 men. All female were less than 40 years old except one who was 47 years old. There were 8 men who were more than 50 years old, the oldest of whom was 70
years old. 23 out of 41 stated that they were married, two were single and one female was divorced. All the 29 respondents who gave their bio data had children ranging in number from 1 to 10.

The resettled people had come mainly from the Sanyati Communal Lands (16). Seven had come from Gokwe Communal Lands, two came from Mberengwa while one came from Chivhu. Only three lived in town before relocating to the resettlement area. Only one was a former farm worker.

All the 41 respondents were bona fide settlers, according to the area AREX Officer.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics using percentages and variances were used to analyse data. Qualitative data were analysed for patterns, content and categories forming the basis for drawing logical patterns underlying the responses.

Standard of Living Setting Assets

From data collected, a clear view emerged showing the importance of cattle, hoe, chicken, hut, land, shovel, garden, wheel barrow, goat, scotch cart and plough, which made up the top eleven on the list of standard of living items for 2012. The top eleven items on the list for 2002 were shovel, axe, bicycle, hoe, chicken, garden, wheelbarrow, hut, goat, cattle and television. The top eleven items for 2012 showed the desire to be sedentary and operate from fixed aboard. Cattle hut and land were among the top five items of value to the farmers. All the top eleven items had to do with work on the land allocated to the farmers. This scenario slightly differed from the one for 2002 in which items like bicycle and television found themselves in the top eleven items, revealing the unsettled nature of the people at the time of occupation of the land. One farmer said, “We were not sure that we would stay as there was serious opposition to our coming here. But now, we realize that we have come to stay and should, therefore, make serious effort to make resettlement a success.” All the items that were identified do support farming activities and life in rural farming environments in Zimbabwe. They also indicate the norms and customs of the people (Mtapuri, 2009). What is clear is that they support the farming activities of the people, especially that reflected for 2012. For 2002, the television would not have direct relevance to farming. However, the bicycle would be needed making the journeys into town for settlement of land ownership with the Ministry of Local Government. Those without the means of transport would find it hard to find a quick settlement and might lose the land.
Table 2: Assets in rank order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axe</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>Hoe</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoe</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>Hut</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheel barrow</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hut</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>Wheel barrow</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>Scotch Cart</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofa</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>Plough</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donkey</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotch cart</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>Solar Panel</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>Cultivator</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivator</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellery</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Sofa</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bow and arrow</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Jewellery</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Car</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satellite Dish</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>Donkey</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most respondents seemed to place great importance on cattle. In agreement with Mtapuri’s (2009) finding that cattle in rural areas where farming is the major economic activity, the 70 year-old man said that cattle were very important to all the people because it was they provided traction power, were a source of fertilizers, milk and meat in times of need and they were their bank on the hoof – when they needed money, they just sold one beast.

Table 3: Top eleven items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Sewing Machine</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Bow &amp; arrow</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerator</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>Tractor</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar panel</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tractor</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>Satellite Dish</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor bike</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>Motor bike</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing Machine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Refrigerator</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2012       2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoe</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>Axe</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hut</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>Hoe</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>Wheel barrow</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>Hut</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axe</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was also the view of the resettled people that farming tools were important because they determined how one would prepare the land. Since a number had to clear land for their fields, the axe was highly valued, although it also found its way into deforestation as people cut trees for firewood which they sold to people in Kadoma.

The position of cattle, goats and chicken was maintained over the ten years the farmers had been on Bluegrass Estate. This may be a result of the fact that since cash was lowly rated, these farmers supply their own meat and did not have to buy from butcheries. There was no butchery on Bluegrass Estate. Meat was bought from Kadoma, 8 kilometres away.

The bottom ten items in 2012 were inclined towards luxury goods that did not seem to contribute much to supporting the settlers’ livelihood as farmers. As such these were not given as much consideration as the top ten. These items were refrigerator, motor bike, satellite dish, bicycle, electricity, tractor, bow and arrow, sewing machine, donkey and car. The tractor was viewed as unimportant because it was beyond the capacity of the farmers to buy one and the work it would do was already being done by cattle. Moreover, they had small pieces of land that would not justify having a tractor. Very few farmers used donkeys for draft while the rest saw these as inefficient for the purpose.

The ten bottom items for 2002 were solar panels, electricity, satellite dish, bow and arrow, jewelry, cultivator, land, telephone, scotch cart, donkey and sofa. The farmers then appeared unclear about their perception on the land as they ranked it very low. They also ranked as low scotch cart and cultivator which are important for farming, yet ten years later these feature prominently as useful farming items. This shows that the farmers had refined their perceptions of farming and being on the land over the decade from 2002 to 2012.

Using the Mack and Lansley approach (Mtapuri, 2009) all items voted 50% or more by the majority of the people were identified as necessities. Using this 50% threshold, the following items were identified as making up the list of necessary assets for the farmer.
Table 4: Asset threshold using Mack and Lansley 50 percent cut off (2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoe</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hut</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wheel barrow</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axe</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotch cart</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plough</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar panel</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 13 items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Asset threshold using Mack and Lansley 50 percent cut-off (2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axe</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoe</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheel barrow</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total items 8</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was a shift in the farmers’ perception over items that were considered as necessary between 2002 and 2012. For example cattle did not qualify as necessary assets in 2002 and yet in 2012, they are ranked as the top asset. Land did not feature much as it fell below 50% threshold (land was 37%) in 2002, yet in 2012 it was given a ranking of 81%. There appeared to be a concretization of attitudes towards farming as people stayed longer on the resettlement. 13 items were ranked above 50% in 2012 while only 8 had been ranked above 50% in 2002. The more the people lived as resettled farmers, the more they identified useful assets to farming, which bought.

From this list, there is nothing that shows that people intend to live in luxury and pleasure as defined by the World Bank. It can be argued that these people derive their pleasure and comfort from those items ranked 50% and more. By other standards, the items the farmers value most are not classified as luxury goods. But the farmers themselves derive pleasure from having and using them. This might mean that there is a need to redefine luxury and pleasure in the context of resettled farmers. The farmers’ ambition was to farm so that they could have more cattle, decent houses in which to sleep, enough food, sufficient clothing and sending their children to school.
Does money matter as an indicator of being wealthy in the resettlement area?

Cash was ranked 14th with 66% ranking (2012) and 21st with 21% ranking in 2002. One farmer who was asked about whether cash is a necessity in his life responded thus:

I need cash for paying my children’s fees, buying clothes and other few things which I cannot have without cash. However, as a farmer, I can survive without it because all my inputs are paid when I sell my commodities. For example, when I sell my cotton, the contractor deducts the cotton in payment for the chemicals, seed, and fertilizers that I have used in producing it. As for food, when I need groundnuts I can exchange with people who need maize. Cash does not come in.

This is the reason for lowly ranking cash as a necessary asset.

Defining who is poor on Bluegrass Resettlement Farm

Using the list identified in Table 2 above and a mixed FGD which uses the Mack and Lansley 50% cut off, the assets required for a farmer on a rural resettlement in Mashonaland West Province was established along lines followed by Mtapuri (2009). The assets below were all considered as necessary by the participants (2012). Land and garden were included because they were viewed by the farmers as core to their being in a resettlement, although these were provided by the Government of Zimbabwe and the Catholic Relief Services (CRS). These according to the farmers were the foundation of their livelihood and they would defend it if need be.

Table 6: Conversion of Assets to Cash Value Basis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Number required</th>
<th>Unit Value in US Dollars</th>
<th>Total Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cattle</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hoe</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chicken</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hut</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>land</td>
<td>15 ha</td>
<td>Freely provided by Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shovel</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garden</td>
<td>10 sq metres</td>
<td>Freely supported by Government &amp; CRS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Price (ea)</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goat</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>axe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bicycle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plough</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cash</td>
<td></td>
<td>When cotton is sold</td>
<td>5 bales @ 130 ea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar panel</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Purchase &amp; use: 80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total value</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2519</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data above shows that for a household to escape poverty on a resettlement area, it must have 4 head of cattle, 4 hoes, 10 chickens, 5 huts, 15 ha land (which Government has provided), 1 shovel, 4 goats, 1 axe, 1 bicycle, 1 plough, harvest 5 bales (one bale weighs 200 kg) of cotton and to be sold at 85cents/kg, 1 solar panel and 1 telephone. This shows that the assets of a resettled farmer were more than those for a communal farmer and their levels of perceived poverty would also be different. For example, resettled farmers would feel poor if they did not sell their cotton, whereas communal farmers in Mhondoro would not even consider that as an important asset.

According to Mack and Lansley (1985:178, in Mtapuri, 2009), we would take all those who could not afford three or more necessities as an indication of the numbers in poverty…on the basis that the effect of a lack of one or two necessities is in the main relatively marginal, simply because people’s lives are inevitably touched in at most one or two areas. By contrast those who lacked three or more necessities would generally cut back in a range of ways…that affected a number of areas of their lives and not just one.

While, according to Mack and Lansley (1985) a farmer who lacked three or more of the standard of living setting assets on Bluegrass Resettlement would be considered poor, those people who lack three or more of these assets in their bundle of assets should be considered poor.

The actual number of people and their assets was not established, but what emerged was that the people were able sustain a more satisfying existence than in their previous places of residence and work as stated by themselves in interviews. One man said he was very poor before coming to Bluegrass. Now he was counted among other men.
One indicator that the farmers were doing better than people in a number of communal lands was the distribution aid from NGOs. Many of them did not receive any aid from western sponsored donors as stated by Smith (2012) and yet they had survived with few resources from the Government, the CRS and their own resources. They displayed a measure of confidence in their own existence which impressed Duval Smith (2012).

**Areas in which resettled farmers expect help**

Other problems which the resettled farmers had faced were that fertilizers meant for them from the President’s donations in December 2011 never reached them as these were diverted to Karoi. In spite of all this lack of support, the people have shown that they have acquired a number of life supporting assets since coming to the resettlement. They have gone about their lives well until March 2012 when the price of cotton plummeted from 85c /kg to 30c/kg. The farmers, by growing cotton on the resettled land, have shown that they are poised to join the cash economy of this country if only there can be a level playing field in the provision of inputs and payment of living prices for their produce.

**Conclusion and Implications**

The study was not able to establish whether or not the resettled farmers on Bluegrass Estate were poor or not because to do this, parameters for gauging this had to be established. This study, by identifying the assets above the threshold of 50% by consensus laid the basis for a further study to establish the level of poverty on Bluegrass Resettlement Estate. While the farmers had identified the assets they needed to be viable as farmers, this study was not able to conclude whether they had enough of those assets according to Mack and Lansley (1985). This again calls foe further studies to be done. The farmers identified the assets they considered important and the reasons why they need these assets.

The farmers perceived themselves as better off in 2012 than they were in 2002, showing that resettlement process was perceived as benefit to the landless people of Zimbabwe. The farmers were, therefore, prepared to support the effort by Government to give them land and they viewed the future as bright. They said that they were prepared to defend the right to land because it gives them greater freedom and better chances of generating their own wealth than ever before. Zimbabwean settlers were, therefore, very different from the Asian settlers whom Smith (2012) found to be unsure of their future.

The settlers did not consider cash as the only measure of wealth or poverty, but this was one of the parameters that could be used to determine their degree of being poor or not being poor.

The study also found out that the farmers had areas they considered important for policy makers to investigate and help them. They think that if agricultural inputs could be given on time (July to September) and distributed equally and equitably, they would have all the chance to move into
the cash economy as they have become noticeable as cotton growers who contribute through contract farming. They were unhappy with the distribution of inputs in December and January, long after the farming season has started in September. They say that this shortens their farming season and renders them incapable of producing good results. The other problem they need help on is the low price of cotton and the high input costs for producing the same, which have daunted their effort to make the land more productive and go commercial in that area. They think that if farmers could be given pre-planting prices of commodities and the prices of inputs could be gazette, then they would be greatly motivated to farm and produce especially the crops that sell at good prices.

The farmers were also unhappy about the illegal occupation of farmland allocated to them and designated as their pastureland in 2002 as this threatened their livestock ventures because the newly and illegally resettled people build their homes on pastureland and clear the vegetation for their fields there. This had negatively affected the effort to build their herds to a level where these herds could improve the lives of settlers to better levels than they were (2012) and eventually be turned into commercial ventures. They viewed the illegal resettlements by invaders taking over their pastures as violations of their rights given them in 2002.
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