Original Research Article

An evaluation of the extent of compliance of the Zimbabwean land governance system with the agricultural land rental requirements of temporary migrants: Pilot case study of Esigodini Agricultural College in Matabeleland South Province

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Migration of the productive age group within the country coupled with regionalism in land allocation demands an adjustment to the existing land tenure structure to cater for temporary land requirements of the migrants. A cross-sectional survey to gather perspectives and factors influencing one’s participation in land rental markets was conducted in order to evaluate the compliance of land governance with land rental requirements of temporary migrants. Survey responses were benchmarked against best practices criteria eight (8) international land governance guidelines. Results show that Land rental markets are active as people recognise their role in addressing land hunger of temporary residents. However, absence of binding contracts in land rental arrangement creates open access land use rights, resulting in environment degradation. Communities are thus more interested in legally binding land rental contracts as these are perceived secure in safeguarding their investment. The research showed that five (5) of the best practices were partially met while three (3) others were not met at all. Neither distance from one’s home area did have a significant statistical influence on the respondents’ wish for the government to legalise agricultural land rental (P-value = 0.775 > α) nor was the association between residence status and ability to pay for rented land significant (P-value = 0.571 > α). However, there was a significant statistical association between willingness to rent farm land and ability to pay for the rented land (P-value = 0.015 < α). We thus recommend a participatory approach to reform the restrictions of the colonial system on land rental in communal and resettlement areas to meet the agricultural land demands of temporary migrants in accordance with the provisions of global land governance best practices.

Key words: Land Governance, Agriculture land rental, migration and communal and resettlement area.

INTRODUCTION

Issues of land governance have recently gained prominence for two reasons. First, many African countries are seen as not having realized their agricultural potential. Input use remains low and, even in relatively land abundant countries, rural households seem to cluster in areas with high population density or infrastructure access and
perceive land availability to be a key constraint for expansion (Headey and Jayne, 2014) cited by (Deininger et al., 2014). While large parts of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) can be characterized as land abundant, scarcity of farmland is becoming an issue in a larger proportion of the continent as populations grow (Headey and Jayne, 2014). The problem is exacerbated by the presence of poor land governance in many African countries concurrent with corrupt practices. The economic theory of demand, supply and price in such scenario come into play. Land rental prices become very high due to low availability of land, under high demand thereof. In Southern Africa, rental markets are less developed because of colonialism (Deininger and Jin, 2003) in (DFID, 2004). Sub-leasing face threats of dispossession if land is not owner-operated (Boucher et al., 2009). In Malawi, renting out land signals that the owner does not need the land (Smette, 2003). Similarly, the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) tolerates either joint ventures and/or contract farming not sub-leasing (Chronicle Newspaper, 2014). In both resettlement and communal areas, land sales and rentals are illegal (Mutema, 2012). Conversely, Botswana encourages the rental of agricultural land (DFID, 2004) while Asian countries lifted most of the restrictions on land lease arrangements (EAPRD, 2004). Ideally, policies should be based on extensive public consultations, discussions and debates to ensure relevancy of the policies to the local context (Zarin and Bujang, 1994). A growth in population tapers the per capita land area (EAPRD, 2004). (Cousins and Scoones, 2009) argue that “access to relatively small amounts of land …… can provide significant welfare benefits.” Policy reforms in property rights and tenure security could facilitate long-term rental instead of land redistribution.

Traditionally, a key role of land rental markets has been to transfer land from large owners to landless workers or small landowners, often in settings where land and power were distributed in a highly unequal fashion(Klaus and Songqing, 2006). Klaus and Songqing (2006) used a simple household model to capture factors affecting household’s land rental participation developed by Carter and Yao (2002). In the model, households allocate their labor between farming on own or leased land and off-farm employment at an exogenously given wage, say w. Thus Klaus and Songqing (2006) abstracted from credit market imperfections, noting that these can be overcome through appropriately structured land rental contracts. The rights of land holders in communal and resettlement areas are none transferable because land sales and land rentals are considered an illegal land practice. Probably, the government prohibits random land sales in order to protect the vulnerable members of a household. However, a common trend affecting most of the productive age group is working very far away from their home areas, only to return at a retirement age of 60 years. Off the record, land committees compound the problem by using regionalism as a key criterion in the land allocation process thereby making it very difficult to own land outside one’s Province of origin. A large proportion of these temporary migrants do not have access to agricultural land. This deprives them of opportunities in the agricultural sector, a scenario which is clearly against the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (Zim Asset). The rights of land holders in communal and resettlement areas are none transferable because land sales and land rentals are considered an illegal land practice. Probably, the government prohibits random land sales in order to protect the vulnerable members of a household. However, a common trend affecting most of the productive age group is working very far away from their home areas, only to return at a retirement age of 60 years. Off the record, land committees compound the problem by using regionalism as a key criterion in the land allocation process thereby making it very difficult to own land outside one’s Province of origin. A large proportion of these temporary migrants do not have access to agricultural land. This deprives them of opportunities in the agricultural sector, a scenario which is clearly against the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (Zim Asset).The rights of land holders in communal and resettlement areas are none transferable because land sales and land rentals are considered an illegal land practice. Probably, the government prohibits random land sales in order to protect the vulnerable members of a household. However, a common trend affecting most of the productive age group is working very far away from their home areas, only to return at a retirement age of 60 years. Off the record, land committees compound the problem by using regionalism as a key criterion in the land allocation process thereby making it very difficult to own land outside one’s Province of origin.

To determine the impact of distance from home area on one’s attitude on land rental;

To investigate if staff and students are willing to rent in agricultural land;

To establish the terms and conditions under which respondents would be willing to rent in/out land;

To investigate the main challenges faced by land owners renting out agricultural land.

To evaluate the extent of compliance of the current land governance system with the agricultural land rental requirements of temporary migrants.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

According to the (AUC-ECA-AFDB Consortium, 2010), a framework for analyzing particular land governance aspects should include details on the past and present political, ecological and socio-economic factors. The ecological theory postulates that most of the land in Africa is marginally suitable for arable agriculture. This predisposes land to environmental degradation. Depending on the power relations of an individual, there is a disparity in land allocation which confines the increasing small farmer populations to unsuitable land. The pre-independence land tenure structure created a dual land governance system. At independence, urgent reforms were required in order to address this injustice. However, the reforms were staggered as land for redistribution to the land hungry majority was done sparingly through land
market. Unfortunately, the land alienation through individual titling was resisted because of social and cultural attachment to land, contestation and conflict (Mutema, 2003). This constrained the restructuring of the dual land tenure system and has stalled government efforts to improve land tenure. Political tolerance allows a contestation of state ownership of land as civil society organization, public and administrative challenge participation and public participation in agrarian reforms. A relevant land policy would restore land equity, peace and security. Land is perceived as a socio-cultural asset for social identity and cultural preservation. Thus land is inherited and considered to be the defender of a people’s spiritual values. Gender relations still play a key role in influencing access to land, with patriarchy favouring men in the inheritance of family land at the expense of women though women are the prime users of agricultural land (Childress, 2004).

Also, class, ethnic and race belonging cause discrepancies (Mutema, 2012). These are sources of conflict, which necessitate adoption of good governance. Population growth and migration create a need to adjust the land tenure structure especially for agricultural land per capita. Migration, especially in search of economic opportunities, accounts for a larger portion of the urbanization in Africa. Women’s access to land based livelihoods is restrained in by migration. The effects of climate change such as recurrent droughts, water shortages, high temperatures, land cover changes and biodiversity loss will further reduce land productivity and accelerate poverty. To escape from these negative impacts, sustainable agrarian reforms should be formulated to create capacity for mitigation and adaptation. Otherwise, there will be migration to urban area, land conflicts and illegal land grabs (AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium, 2010).

Role of land in development

In all societies, the land is a finite resource. Nevertheless, it is the building block of social and economic development (Burns and Dalrymple, 2008); (UNESCO, 1979). According to (Masaka, 2014), a decline in the per capita land area is marked by a sharp rise in the relative value of land. He argues that the land increasingly becomes a source of conflict in the community. The value of the land reflects its scarcity, which in a market economy usually depends on the ratio between the area of usable land and the size of that area’s population (Masaka, 2014). The suitability of a land mapping unit for a particular land use depends on the interaction of its various land qualities (FAO, 1976).

Land Rental Markets and Land Rights

Land rental is a mechanism for temporary transfers of land use rights to the most efficient (Ciamarra, 2003); (Boucher, Barham and Carter, 2009) or aspiring farmers unlike land sales which encourage land disparity and fragmentation (APO, 2003). Land rights entail (1) use rights; (2) transfer rights; (3) exclusion rights and (4) enforcement rights (Rukuni, 1999). Most of the resettled populations are worried because of the lack of land property rights (Mutema, 2003). However, if the “... land cannot be bought and sold,” it cannot be used as collateral for credit (World Bank, 1994). In Africa, between 1960 and 2000, the amount of arable land under cultivation rose while the population involved in agriculture tripled thereby reducing the land-to-population-ratio (Haralambous et al., 2009). State policies stimulate land rental markets by giving legal protection to the landowner otherwise the land may lie idle because land rights holders are reluctant to enter leasing agreements for fear of losing the land permanently (DFID, 2004).

Land Rights and Land Tenure Categories in Zimbabwe

Communal tenure

According to Mutema (2003), the total land area under the traditional tenure is 41% with nearly 74% of the area located in Natural Farming Regions 4 and 5. Their governance is under authority of a Chief, assisted by a council of elders. Traditional tenure lacks a mechanism to increase the land area per household (Zimbabwe Institute, 2007).

Resettlement tenure

This scheme came into existence after independence. This policy initiative was intended to decongest communal areas from pressure by human and livestock populations. In total, this development represents 9% of the total land area in Zimbabwe. Landholders enjoy perpetual land use rights as long as they do not violate the conditions of the permit (Mutema, 2003).

Small-scale commercial

During the colonial era, the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 initiated the African Purchase Area scheme to enable capable black farmers to buy farms averaging 124 hectares under a leasehold agreement from the government. The conditions of the lease included residing on the farm permanently, farming to exclusively benefit the farmer and his family, not to subdivide the farm or enter into any form of farming partnership and practising good husbandry. They represent 3.5 per cent of the total land area with 35.4% and 38.2% located in Natural Farming Regions 3 and 4 respectively. Small-scale commercial farm landowners enjoy some extent of rights to sell and rent land (Mutema, 2003).

Tenure insecurity

Across all the three land tenure categories, secondary (temporary) land right holders feel insecure. Resettlement area permits contain a section which states that land rights
can be withdrawn anytime without compensation. A lack of a clear legal framework makes it so uncertain for communal and resettlement landholders to engage in land markets that they consider land a non-tradable commodity (DFID, 2004). Landholders perceived that alienation (transfer of land) between members of the community was not permissible, and with mortgaging of land permitted, but strictly controlled (Mutema, 2012; Zimbabwe Institute, 2007).

**Origins of the governance concept**

The past two decades have been marked by an evolution of good governance as both a measure and objective of socio-economic development (Thomas, 2006). According to (Wold Bank, 1994), the guiding principles in good governance are participation; fairness; decency; accountability; transparency and efficiency.

**Role of land Governance**

Land governance is the manner in which communities express their interests, their input is absorbed, decisions are made and implemented while decision makers account for the administration, development and management of land rights and resources and the delivery of land services. The systems of land administration and land management determine tenure security and accessibility to land for all. Together, these two systems distribute land resources equitably in order to alleviate poverty and even out skewed ownership of land resources thereby leading to sustainable development through operational longevity, equitable stakeholder participation and benefits, and consistency in law and policy implementation. Land administration is often perceived as one of the most corrupt sectors in public administration. Land itself, considered a primary source of wealth, often becomes the trading medium and motivation for political issues, economic and power gains, and self-fulfilling interests. The need to ensure there is good governance in land administration is thus very important. A key theme in the land sector among development professionals, policy makers and academics, is how to address governance within land administration.

**Negative impacts of poor land governance**

An ineffective, inequitable and weakly performing land administration system leads to unofficial styles of service delivery, corruption, illiquidity of assets, limited land markets, tenure insecurity, inaccurate and unreliable records, informal settlements, unrealised investment potential in property, speculative land seizure and encroachment, idle and unproductive use of land, inequitable land distribution, social unrest and inadequate provisions of infrastructure(Zimbabwe Institute, 2012; Knoll and Zloczysti, 2011).

**Standards for land governance**

According to (Burns and Dalrymple, 2008), good governance in land administration occurs where:

- Land policy is in line with principles of fairness and equity
- A variety of accepted and socially legitimate rights are legally recognized and can be recorded
- Land management and associated instruments (zoning and development control plans, conservation plans, etc.) are justified by externalities and undertaken in an efficient, transparent manner.
- Land administration institutions have clear mandates and operate transparently, cost effectively and sustainably.
- Information provided by the land administration system is reliable, sufficient, and accessible at reasonable cost.
- Management, acquisition and disposal of public land follow clear procedures and are applied transparently.
- Property valuation serves public and market needs and property taxation is clear and efficient in support of policy.
- Judicial and non-judicial institutions are accessible with clear mandates and resolve disputes fairly and expeditiously.

**Factors affecting land tenure**

Land tenure systems and arrangements evolve in response to such factors as population density, social relations and trust between renter and owner, options for other sources of livelihoods and options for different production systems in agriculture. Ideally, an increase in the demand for land leads to an adaptation or mitigation of tenure arrangements. Population growth is not the only factor leading to land markets (Smette, 2003).

**Land information system**

According to (Burns and Dalrymple, 2008), an access to information is critical for policy making. Computerization improves storage, access, retrieval and sharing of both spatial and textual data plus web-based access. The first registration, during the early stages of computerization and publicly accessible data, costs should be minimized to encourage participation and increase demand for the formal system and services provided.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Research Design**

Data was collected by querying using a set of pre-formulated questions in a predetermined sequence in a structured questionnaire to a sample of individuals drawn from a defined population. Inferences were also made about population. The survey method enabled the
A researcher collected data to test various hypotheses and deduce information on respondents' attitudes, behavior, and characteristics. The analysis of data was based on the theoretical framework of factors influencing participation in land rental markets. Farmers' perceptions of land rental governance were used to measure the performance of the land governance system (Mutema, 2003). The evaluation was informed by governance literature, which set out statements measuring good governance objectives in land administration (Burns and Dalrymple, 2008).

**Sources of data**

This research used both primary and secondary data.

**Primary data**

Primary data was collected directly from the respondents using a self-administered questionnaire. This enabled the researcher to gather the facts, attitudes, and opinions of the respondents (AREU, 2006). The responses from each questionnaire were kept anonymous in order to ensure that the responses could not be traced back to the respondent.

**Secondary data**

The major source of secondary data was information from published journals from electronic sources. These included government reports, newspapers, and the internet and published research reports. This was used to build a comprehensive background of the study.

**Data collection instrument**

Informed by governance literature, various sets of statements specifying the objectives for good governance in land administration were developed (Burns and Dalrymple, 2008). Questionnaires were administered to a sample representing the population. The survey used a common questionnaire; with the same set of questions and measurement scale for responses to gather data from the two categories of respondents (Thomas, 2006). The questionnaires were filled in simultaneously and separately, so that data could be gathered from independent sources (AREU, 2006). The two basic components of the questionnaire survey were questions and responses for both close-ended and open-ended questions. Some land policy questions were asked using statements with five categories of responses ranging from 5 for strong agreement; 4 for agreement; 3 for neither agreement nor disagreement; 2 for disagreement and finally 1 for strong disagreement. As such, the close-ended questions required the respondents to select an answer from a set of predetermined answers on a Likert scale of 1 to 5. In other instances, the statements were followed up by an explanation (open-ended questions) in order to clarify on issues not covered by the simple response to allow respondents to express their own opinions (Burns and Dalrymple, 2008). However, open-ended were difficult to code and required more time and resources to handle than close-ended questions. This research instrument relied totally on the honesty and accuracy of participants' responses. The questions were examined for ambiguity through testing the clarity and quality of the responses. Data was collected using probability sampling to infer on the population.

**Sampling and questionnaire validation**

Of the entire student population of 109, 22.2% (24) were asked to fill in questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered and completed in class. Stratified sampling (based on sex) was employed to ensure that the sample would be representative of male and female students; those who are enrolled using ordinary level; advanced level or National Certificate in Agriculture. Again, out of the 72 staff members, 25% (18) were included with an equal number of male and female respondents. The questionnaires were given to those who were willing to provide information for the study. As such, a total of 42 questionnaires were administered to respondents: strata containing 6 male and 6 female National Certificate (NC) holders, strata consisting of 6 male and 6 female non-NC holders for both first and final year students and strata containing 8 male and 8 female staff members. Respondents were not forced to answer all the questionnaire items, but those questions left out and the quality of the answer were used to determine the ambiguity of the question items so that alterations were done in order to improve the quality of the research instrument. The same sets of questions were used to gather data from both the staff and students. The response rate for the questionnaires was 100% as all the questionnaires administered were returned.

**Measured Variables**

The following data were obtained from respondents through questionnaires: Gender; Highest education level; age ranges; Marital status; Number of dependents; Province of origin, Present province of residence; Public consultation; Legalize rentals; Comparison; land subdivision; Test farming commitment; Cash rental; Share cropping; Rental shareholding; Explanation 1; Renting out; Renting out challenges; Land ownership; Land redistribution; Land acquisition; Very small-scale rentals; Set land rental rates; Land rental mechanism; Access to land; Rentals versus dispossession; Rental versus sales; Willingness to rent; Rental contract; Rental risk; Explanation 2; Rental versus gains of fast track land reform (FTLR); Explanation 3; Involve World Bank; Explanation 4; Sufficient land redistribution; Explanation 5; Land redistribution criteria Land redistribution versus corruption; Distance from home; Corruption in land redistribution; Land ceiling; Explanation 6; Utilities
payments; Unlimited desire for land; Ability to meet renting obligation; Renting in terms and conditions.

Data coding and capturing

Data was coded and captured into a template created using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 16 of 2007.

Hypotheses testing

Cross-tabulations were performed in SPSS in order to probe the interaction between row and column variables of interest. Hypotheses testing for the relationship between factor variables were conducted using the Chi-square test of association at the 5% significance level in order to address the study objectives.

Criterion for evaluation of land governance

The methodology used to assess the quality of the current land governance was based on a comparison of responses against best practices criteria as suggested from a review of literature (Van Hinte et al., 2007; Burns and Dalrymple, 2008). The criteria were as follows:

1) Fully met no deficiencies
2) Largely met no major deficiencies
3) Partially met at least one major deficiency
4) Not met two or more major deficiencies

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Demographical Distribution of respondents

The sample frame consisted of 42 respondents of which 57.1% (24 were female and male) students while 42.9% (18 were male and female staff members) at Esigodini Agricultural College. The highest level of education of the respondents was a BSc degree while the lowest was “O” level. The marital status of the respondents was as follows: 61.8% were married, 28.6% were single, and 2.4% were either divorced or separated while 4.8% were widowed. The study revealed that 61.9% of the respondents no longer lived in their Provinces of origin. This was verified through a follow up question which revealed that 71.4% of the respondents lived more than 100 kilometres away from their home areas, followed by 14.3% living 50 to 100 kilometres away and lastly only 4.8% living less than 10 kilometres away from their home areas. This confirms that temporary migration is taking place within the country especially by the economically active group (AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium, 2010; Deininger and Jin, 2003).

Perspectives on public consultation

A large number of the respondents (66.7%) strongly agreed that the government should consult the public in making amendments to the land policy. This was followed by a 28.6% which agreed on public consultation. Only 2.4% were either in strong disagreement or in disagreement to the need for public consultations. It was not clear why some respondents did not prefer a situation where the government would consult on land policy amendment. This conforms to standard that land policies should be formulated after extensive consultations with the land beneficiaries (Deininger and Jin, 2003).

Perspectives on land rental

Of the respondents, 54.8% (23) agreed that the government should legalise agricultural land rental in both communal and resettlement areas. However, 38% disagreed to this idea whereas 7.1% neither agreed nor disagreed to this proposition (Figure 1-4). This finding serves to communicate the seriousness of land hunger by the general population of Zimbabwe. Similar findings were made by (Mutema, 2003) when he observed that there is need for the government to reform the land policy in order to enable resettled farmers to enjoy a full range of land rights. The granting of land use and disposal rights unlocks the full value of land as an economic resource to the land holders (Mutema, 2003). However, land sales should not be allowed unless transfer is the form of rentals. Land rent-in would, if legalised, protect members of a family against dispossession. The issuance of a time specific, long-term land use contract would increase the sustainable management of the land (Mutema, 2003). It could be a form of exchange which will balance out one’s need for land when living outside one’s area of origin for economic reasons (Deininger and Jin, 2003). This is very common in Zimbabwe where the productive age groups leave their rural homes to work very far away from their home areas only to return at retirement age.

Perspectives on land subdivision among family members

The research findings emphasized that land subdivision among family members could create boundary disputes. In total, 76.2% concurred to this with 33.3% and 42.9% strongly agreeing and agreeing respectively. Only 4.8% and 7.1% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. However, 11.9% of the respondents were in neither agreement nor disagreement. Based on these results, land is a potential source of armed conflict in societies including Zimbabwe. As such there is need for clear framework which settles and conflicts (APO, 2003; Mutema, 2003).

Importance of land rental in agriculture

On the issue of land rental being more important than land redistribution in some cases, 45.2% supported the idea with 26.2% and 19% in strong agreement and agreement respectively. This confirms the observations of (Deininger...
that participation in renting in are stimulated by higher levels of productivity and land scarcity. They observed that land rental promotes equitable distribution of land as a productive asset. This is especially the case in the economically active age groups up to an age of 48 years. In contrast, 38.1% were in disagreement to the idea. In fact, 14.3% strongly disagreed while 23.8% were in disagreement. Against these findings, 16.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. The low proportion (38.1%) could mean that people want permanent land transfers instead land rental. The 45.2% see the benefit of temporary land transfers in terms of potential cash inflow from renting out and in terms of opportunities to start agro-projects for aspiring entrepreneurs. Rent-in is most likely to pass on land to those who can make a productive use of the land (Deininger and Jin, 2003). (Ciamarra, 2003) observed that land market arrangements like rentals could provide an efficient and low cost mechanism for poor rural residents.
This is in the context of potential revenue generation from rent-out and rent-in.

This pilot study revealed that 90.4% of the respondents (45.2% each) either strongly agreed or agreed that land rental allows one to test their commitment to farming without buying a farm. Opposed to this was 7.2% with strong disagreement contributing 2.4% while those who disagreed contributed 4.8%. A total of 45.2% accepted that agricultural land rental should be encouraged even for small-scale poultry projects as opposed to 42.8% who
rejected this idea. Of the respondents, 69 % expressed that the government should set the rates for agricultural land rentals whilst 21.4 % were opposed to this proposition. This indeed implies that the government plays a pivotal role in regulating land rental markets through the formulation of suitable land policies (Mutema, 2003).

Only 9.5 % neither agreed nor disagreed. It was observed that whilst 45.3 % disagreed that renting out agricultural land signals that one does not need the land and should be dispossessed, 42.8 % agreed it shows that one does not need the land while a proportion of 9.5 % neither agreed nor disagreed to this. This finding highlights that communities are aware of the need for temporary land transfers in the event that the owner of the land is unable to operate the land due to either shocks like old age, sickness or off-farm employment (Deininger and Jin, 2003).

Perspectives of shareholding in rented land

A shareholding structure of 60 % and 40 % for the land owner and tenant respectively was opposed by 54.8 %. This proportion was made up of the strong disagreement category of 28.6 % and the disagreement category totalling 26.2 %. This idea was only supported by 33.3 % of the respondents with 9.5 % and 23.8 % in strong agreement and agreement respectively. Asked to present a plan for the shareholding, the respondents presented an arrangement shown in Figure 2 above.

Challenges faced by landowners with tenants

The main challenges faced by land owners allowing tenants on their land ranged from natural resources depletion, erosion and pollution (33.6 %), losing land to tenant (12 %), lack of capital, no contract or breach of contract by tenant (4.8 %), illegal land practice (2.4 %) and constrained development (2.4 %). These bottleneck in the operations of land markets show that there is room for betrayal to both the one renting-out and the other renting-in when the participation in such arrangements are informal. This discourages open participation in land rental markets (DFID, 2004).

Perspectives on landownership

In total 47.6 % opposed the proposition that all the land should belong to the state and not individuals. There was no significant statistical difference between the male and female on this view (based on Chi-squared test of association). This proportion was composed of 28.6 % who strongly disagreed and 19 % disagreed. However, 42.9 % supported the idea of state land ownership with 33.3 % in strong agreement and 9.5 % in agreement, but 7.1 % neither agreed nor disagreed. This implies that Zimbabweans enjoy private ownership to properties including land. No wonder, Mutema (2003) observed that married sons in the Manicaland province aspired to own pieces of land over which they have independent control though they still lived with parents.

Perspectives on fairness of landownership

A majority of the respondents (69 %) registered strong opposition to a comment that fair agricultural land redistribution is going on right now, with no variation on this view based on gender. This was shared as 45.2 % for strong disagreement and 23.8 % for disagreement. Despite these, 11.9 % concurred that land redistribution was fair with 4.8 % and 7.1 % for agreement and strong agreement respectively. These findings could indicate that indeed there is segregation in land allocation based on social class (Cousins and Scoones, 2009).

Importance of agricultural land

Moving on, a total of 80.9 % accepted that access to agricultural land creates opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs/lowly paid workers. In contrast, some 9.5 % found this idea unacceptable while the other 9.5 % neither agreed nor disagreed. This confirms that agricultural land is recognized as a key input in any form of land to socio-economic development especially in developing countries (Ciamarra, 2003; Cousins and Scoones, 2009).

Perspectives on value of land

On the potential of agricultural land rental to protect the vulnerable and/or distant land owners from dispossession, 66.6 % concurred on this while only 19 % rejected the idea. This implies that the communities recognize the need to maintain social networks as they want to participate in land rental instead of permanent land transfers which could tear social and cultural values of a community (AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium, 2010). Thus temporary land transfers by land rental could play a vital role in meeting the short term land requirements of temporary migrants.

Terms and conditions for farming rented land

It was observed that 85.7 % of the respondents reiterated that agricultural land rental should be done through a signed contract in order to protect both the land owner and the tenant with only 7.1 % disagreeing. These results indicate that the general population is enlightened enough to trust a legally binding land rental contract (Deininger and Jin, 2003). As observed by the AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium (2010), current issues influence the behaviour of a land policy.

Negative impact of renting land

On the potential of legalizing farmland rental to give the land back to colonials, 54.8 % disagreed to this. Of those who disagreed, 38.1 % argued that renting does not mean a permanent transfer of ownership of the land as the indigenous Zimbabweans retain ownership of the land.
Besides, if the land rental is done under the provisions of a clear policy, both the land owner and the tenant will be protected. This implies that government intervention in land policy reforms creates confidence in operationalizing the policy. This is a basic requirement of good governance (Mutema, 2003).

**Perspectives on involving international organizations in land reform**

On the need for the government to involve international organizations like the World Bank in land reform, 52.4 % supported the idea though opposed by 26.2 %. Those for the idea argued that international organizations could assist in funding the infrastructure development on the farm and empower indigenous people by providing loans. Furthermore, the respondents argued that sharing of ideas with organizations that have international exposure was also going to be possible. Important to note was the fact that the respondents also pointed out the need to compensate farmers. Unfortunately some respondents argued that there is no need for money to implement a land reform program. Those against the inclusion of international organizations argued that the government should fund its land reform program without explaining where the government would get the funds for the agrarian reform. This could simply mean that some people think that giving out land is a cost-free exercise. In actual fact, land parceling is a costly process which requires adequate sponsorship in the form of technical expertise, funds for purchasing identified land and deploys sufficient staff for monitoring and verification in order to ensure that the process is transparent. The need for a regular evaluation for the purpose of checking progress requires funding too. The public’s desire to involve the international community indicates that people understand that the involvement of such organisations ensures that the formulated policy take into consideration all the key pillars of good governance. This includes drawing lessons from regional and international countries on similar programmes as is recommended by the AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium (2010).

**Perspectives on public’s access to land**

A follow up question on whether or not a large population of Zimbabweans possess farmland, showed that 68.3 % doubted this. They argued that only a few have access to own land because only a few elite have most of the farmland whilst most of the people are in communal areas farming on poor soils. Empirical evidence points out that land has always been parcelled out to those endowed with social and economic capital in Zimbabwe dating back to as far as the period just after the attainment of independence (Cousins and Scoones, 2009). They further argued that political affiliation is currently the land allocation criteria. Some people live in overcrowded squatter camps, some do not own any land while others have more than one farm. Others live in crowded communal lands. One respondent argued that the general Zimbabwean have no land as it is clandestinely given to people of high esteem. It is important to remember that the process of land distribution was transparent, but most would be beneficiaries were not willing to give up their communal land because of fear of the unknown. Some preferred to preserve their social networks and socio-cultural heritage like burial sites. Others used a wait and see approach and only tried to get the land when it was already exhausted. This latter is typical of the fast track land reform period of 2000. This empirical evidence confirms the theoretical guidelines passed by the AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium (2010) which stated that there is a social and cultural attachment to land, which could make people resist a proposed development initiative like moving to better and fertile lands. The respondent further says that there are too many peasants than intellectuals who do not even know how to go about getting land thus the majority is landless. Another respondent argued that very few own land whereas most of the land is owned by politicians because, as the other one said, there was unfair land distribution. As such, the other respondent argued that a few influential persons own vast tracts of land at the expense of the majority. No wonder one respondent argued that only the top class has farmland because they have money.

Another respondent argues that as long as one is an unknown somebody it is hard to have farmland hence there are few citizens known in Zimbabwe because the land is distributed due to connective power depending on who you know on the land board. Based on the evidence of this research, it would seem as if the current land holding structure has perpetuated the colonial period dual tenure structure despite the fact that there is land hunger in Zimbabwe. Individual land titling might not necessarily be the only solution, but for communal and resettlement areas, the granting of a full package of land use rights exclusive of disposal rights would avail more land to aspiring farmers (Rukuni, 1999; Mutema, 2003). This will safeguard land so that it can be reserved for the children of the beneficiaries. The study showed that a minority (19 %) believed that agricultural land redistribution is transparent and benefits most of the deserving applicants in Zimbabwe while a majority (69.1 %) doubted this. There was no statistical difference between the two gender categories on this view.

Another follow up question on transparency suggested possible ways of resolving the issue of corruption in land redistribution. One individual argued that the differences in size of the farmland do not allow us to categorize them equally thus land distribution is still not equitable as land is owned by few individuals. Another respondent said that few people benefitted because they, as an individual, do not have land. Instead, a fact that a large population resides in urban areas proves that they do not own farmland because in urban areas there is no agricultural land. Moreover, most of the redistributed land is not arable for family sustenance as opposed to commercial farming areas. This could mean that there is a decline in the per capita
agricultural land area due to growth of the human population (EAPRD, 2004; Masaka, 2014). No wonder, more and more people are located on marginal land (AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium, 2010). Of the 19% who perceived that a large population benefitted, they believed that every rural resident has farmland while urban residents own big farms. Furthermore, they argued that the existence of large resettlements and villages proved that many people got land. Some argued that Zimbabweans are able to produce their own produce for consumption because after land redistribution almost everyone has land for farming through the land reform exercise. Others argue that those who are into mining also hold land while large populations in urban areas left their farmland lying idle to look for employment in town. The fact that some people need land for mining implies that demands for land are not only for agricultural purposes. This empirical evidence supports the work of the on diversity of purposes for land is sought (AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium, 2010). Others argued that though a minimum population got land, millions are benefitting.

**Proposed criteria for land redistribution**

**Perspectives on land ceiling**

On the concept of limiting the land size per individual farmer, 73.8% supported the idea while 21.4% opposed the idea. However, it is important to note that land rental transfers are do not restrict the quantity of land that can be availed for temporary land users (Ciamarra, 2003). Despite agreeing on the concept of land ceiling, the respondents expressed different opinions for and against this. Some respondents argued that putting a land ceiling promotes fairness because some powerful politicians possess vast tracts of land and others are multiple farm owners with most of the land lying idle. Other respondents argued that the size of the landholding should be based on the farmer’s potential, capital, agro-ecological region and type of enterprise. Generally, those practicing horticulture should have smaller landholdings compared to those doing ranching. One on very productive soils should own a smaller piece of land for intensive farming, but those on marginal land should enjoy extensive farming on large farms. It was also argued that limiting the land size maximizes the production by utilizing all the land. At the same time, it was argued that some people will remain landless unless the land size is fixed. This confirms that people have knowledge that land is a finite resource which needs to be shared equitably. Besides, land must be utilized according land suitability classification (FAO, 1976; Moyo, 2011).

**Strategy for paying utilities in rented agricultural land**

Respondents cited that agreements should be signed between the tenant and the land owner concerning the payment for water and electricity on a monthly basis. These results imply that modern communities want legally binding contracts in order to safeguard their investments (Cousins and Scoones, 2009). The payments should be based on the actual consumption using the wattmeter and water meter respectively not estimations. Some suggested the use of a prepaid system in order to consume what has already been paid for. Others suggested the use of agreed ratios between the whole farm and rented portion’s use of water and electricity.

Furthermore, one respondent suggested that the water authority should decentralize water resource management and bill directly to the tenant so that billing is made in the tenant’s account and payments are made straight to the water authority. Another respondent suggested the drilling of boreholes and the use of solar energy in meeting the power requirements of the farm operations. One respondent cited that there is need for a review of tariff charges for water and electricity in order to stimulate agricultural production while another respondent suggested that the State should consider subsidizing electrical charges. These recommendations mean that communities are interested in the adoption of sustainable management practices which foster good governance over natural resources management.

**Perspectives on risk distribution between tenant and land owner**

A proportion of 69% of the respondents concurred that an agricultural land tenant faces more risk than the land owner while 11.9% opposed this belief. They argued that land owner still expected payment even if the tenant fails to produce due to risks and uncertainties like drought, floods, pests, diseases, high rental charges, low soil productivity, changes in input and market prices. They further argued that lack of a clear land rental policy exposes tenants to exploitation by land owners. These findings agree with the work of Deininger and Jin (2003); Mutema (2003) which specify that the activation of land rental markets is encouraged by secure land rights. The tenants have less space for bargaining and they can be evicted from the land without notice. Others highlighted that both the tenant and land owner are exposed to some risks like. If authorities find out that a land owner is renting out land they will dispossess him or her because the state owns most of the land and it considers subletting an illegal land practice. No wonder most the respondents are afraid of participating in land rental because this arrangement is informal in both communal and resettlement areas of Zimbabwe. In the event of unforeseeable eventualities like death of the land owner, the tenant might be cheated by the remaining family members or the tenant himself or herself might claim to stay on the farm until all debts are paid without having to pay rentals. This means that if land rental is informal there is a one renting in incurs a higher transaction cost (Deininger and Jin, 2003). At one hand, in case of mortgaged farms, failure to honour the contracts could lead to the sale of the farm thereby disturbing the tenant’s activities (see
Table 1. Distribution of respondents by perception on proposed criteria on land redistribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria number</th>
<th>Land distribution criteria</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Agricultural training</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Fairness (no nepotism, non-partisan)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Capital (resource endowment)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Farming experience</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Passion for farming</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Citizenry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Those in need</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Repossess all underutilized farms</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>All adults (18 plus) except 80 years plus</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>First come first serve</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Land ceiling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Public consultation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Domicile</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Able bodied</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Household farms</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Ownership for production not speculation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>One man one farm policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Independent land audit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Agro-ecological regions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>No renting or land sale</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>57</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Terms and conditions for land rental

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Terms and conditions for land rental</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Contract underwritten by government</td>
<td>19.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Production based rental charges</td>
<td>19.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Long term lease (5 years)</td>
<td>16.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td>9.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Policy on land rental and security of tenure</td>
<td>9.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Pay rentals at end of season</td>
<td>7.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Negotiable/reasonable rental fees</td>
<td>7.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Fenced off land with water and electricity</td>
<td>2.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Rent to buy</td>
<td>2.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4) above

**Terms and conditions for land rental**

As asked of the terms and conditions the respondents would be willing to rent agricultural land, the following suggestions were given (see Table 1 and 2 above). From the empirical evidence in the table above, there are three key requirements for an establishment of an irresistable land rental contract namely a contract regulated by the government, production based charges and a long-term lease of at least five years. All these terms and conditions agree with the findings of Mutema (2003). However, when these provisions are made there should be a system of ensuring that there is impartiality for the one renting-in and the other renting-out.

**Influence of residence status on willingness to pay land rent: Chi-squared test of association**

A Chi-square test of association between the variables “Willingness to rent agriculture land” and “Ability to pay for the rented land” reveals a significant statistical association with. This implies that those who were willing to rent agricultural land were subject to the individual’s ability to part with specified amounts of money for a hectare of rented land. These people so much valued land that they were willing to treat rented land as a means of production regardless of the scale of their farm operations. However, there was no significant statistical association between residence status and ability to pay for rented land (. This could mean that those who resided close to their
homelands sympathised with those who come from faraway places on the issue of agricultural land. Moreover this could also mean that those who stay close to their home areas specified the rates for rented land because they were hopeful of the cash flow benefits such an arrangement could bring to their households and communities.

Evaluation of Zimbabwe's land governance

Based on the findings of the survey and the conceptual framework, the following observations are made:

- Land policy is in line with principles of fairness and equity: **Not met**
- A variety of accepted and socially legitimate rights are legally recognized and can be recorded: **Partially met**
- Land management and associated instruments (zoning and development control plans, conservation plans, etc.) are justified by externalities and undertaken in an efficient, transparent manner: **Partially met**
- Land administration institutions have clear mandates and operate transparently, cost effectively and sustainably: **Not met**
- Information provided by the land administration system is reliable, sufficient, and accessible at reasonable cost: **Partially met**
- Management, acquisition and disposal of public land follow clear procedures and are applied transparently: **Partially met**
- Property valuation serves public and market needs and property taxation is clear and efficient in support of policy: **Partially met**
- Judicial and non-judicial institutions are accessible with clear mandates and resolve disputes fairly and expeditiously: **Not met**

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is coherence between theoretical and empirical evidence that the legalization of land rental is a viable option for ensuring that migrants have temporary access to land. This way they will go back home at the end of their productive life thereby safeguarding cultural values and social networks. This also enables them to refine their farming skills throughout the productive age instead of trying farming at an old age after retirement. The current land policy is not optimal as it completely excludes communal and resettlement farmers to engage in land markets. Based on these findings, we recommend that the research be conducted throughout all the agricultural colleges in Zimbabwe. From the above findings we make the following conclusions and recommendations:

- Residents of communal and resettlement areas aspire for a full range of land rights which would enable them to either rent in or rent out their agricultural land without any fear of victimisation by fellow community members and risk of dispossession by the local leadership. The system of land governance should be adjusted in order to comply with international resolutions to allow migrant labour to participate in the country’s agrarian programmes. A review of customary land rights has to be done through countrywide public consultations. This will help to incorporate the views of different stakeholders so as to strengthen this category of land tenure.
- Equal opportunities should be created for all the citizens of Zimbabwe regardless of their employment status. Temporarily displaced citizens should be allowed to access land in their respective work places. State land in different provinces of the country could be leased to surrounding government workers. For example, Agricultural Colleges could rent out their land to willing entrepreneurs. Such an arrangement could also be done through partnership arrangements so that both the state and individuals benefit from the initiative.
- The employed group has access to most of the non-performing loans, which if they could invest into short-term agro-based projects like poultry they would grow the economy of Zimbabwe as well as create employment for the unemployed. Currently, most of those people in civil service borrow funds from banks to consumption instead of investment. For small-scale projects like broiler and egg production, bans should be lifted in order to stimulate those who reside in government properties to invest their meagre salaries. Agriculture projects are risky thereby demanding that the owners of the project has to be close in order to monitor the progress of the production activities otherwise they will suffer serious losses through by being Christmas farmers, especially they work far away from their homelands.
- Most of the land redistribution is done on an insignificant scale and hesitantly. As such, the demand for land will never be satisfied. Under such circumstances, desperate attempts to own land will prompt the landless to buy their access to this precious resource through bribing whoever they think has connections in the land allocation network. This could mean that land rental would help aspiring farmers will be able to test their commitment and ability in farming without a large capital outlay. If this arrangement is developed, it could help those who are holding onto the land to share some of their land with others without necessarily losing the land to the tenant.
- There is an urgent need to resolve the skewed land holdings and distribution in Zimbabwe because land is one of the major limitations to entrepreneurship especially with most of the migrant workers on being the land poor group in their respective work places despite the fact that a sizeable number of this workforce is the countryside. If willing, the employed could be offered opportunities to transfer to work in places closer to their homelands so that they will at least be able to be weekend farmers bearing in mind that farming is the mainstay of the Zimbabwean economy.
- The country’s land ownership record needs to be
decentralised and accessible to the public. A computer based land information database needs to be established using best practices criteria in order to promote transparency, compliance and reveal multiple or extensive farm owners. Ideally, the model database should be established by an interdisciplinary team of experts through stakeholder consultation and active research in order to come up a database which closes all the information gaps in the current land record. Stocks of land and levels of utilisation should be indicated online so that monitoring and evaluations can be made on the land use intensity. Information on the land acquisition process and should be accessible on the land database. Thereafter, there should be an allowance for the landless to apply for land online with the progress of their applications reviewed online by a reputable team of experts. The cost of land redistribution should be recoverable from land tax as well as nominal payments for initial land registration and subsequent maintenance of the land information database.

- The country requires alienable titling to land because Zimbabweans are generally aspiring private property owners. Since land is a capital resource it really has to have a value such that it can be used as collateral for securing working capital from banks. The government should capacitate the judiciary system in order promote transparency and work ethics. This will facilitate a market driven land redistribution exercise which is regulated by the government.

**Competing interests**

The authors declare that they have no competing interests

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