State-led Agricultural Reform and Food Security in Zimbabwe: Command Agriculture and Food Production in Makoni Rural District, Manicaland.

By

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ABSTRACT

State-directed agricultural policy is an essential aspect of promoting agricultural production to achieve food security in the contemporary development discourse and practice. While it featured in the economic growth and development of the industrialized economies and in recent decades, East Asian and Latin American economies, agricultural policy has had little to no impact on agricultural growth in Africa generally but more specifically in Zimbabwe. In this thesis I track the state of agricultural production from 1980 to 2019, demonstrating how land reform policy during this period has negatively impacted the agricultural sector and examine the impact of the command agriculture policy (2016 – 2019) on food production focusing on the Makoni rural district in Manicaland. Utilizing empirical research and findings on production output and the role of the state, I argue that agricultural policy in the country has negative impacts on food production and by extension food security given the command agriculture programme's failure to deliver on its promise of increased food production, reduced imports and agrarian transformation.

DECLARATION

I Tawanda Matema (Student number: 1560554) am a student registered for the Master of Arts Degree in Development Studies in the year 2020. I declare this thesis to be my unaided work. I am aware that plagiarism is a serious academic offence and therefore confirm that citations and references have been acknowledged using the standard conventions of academic referencing. I confirm that this thesis is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the Development Studies Programme, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa and no similar work has been submitted previously for any degree qualification in this or any other University.

Student signature

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List of Acronyms

ADLI - Agriculture-Led Industrialisation Model

AGRITEX – Agricultural Extension Services

Command Agriculture - Target Command Agricultural Programme or Zimbabwe's Special Maize Programme for Import Substitution

EFA – Education for All

ESAP – Economic Structural Adjustment Programme

FTLRP – Fast Track Land Reform Programme

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GMB - Grain Marketing Board

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MDC – Movement for Democratic Change

MLAR – Market-Led Agricultural Reform

SADC – Southern African Development Community

WB – World Bank

ZANU-PF – Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front

ZimASSET - Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation

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"… dedicated to the necessity of dedication," Robert Ludlum

Chapter One: Zimbabwe's Agricultural Policy Landscape

"The real cause of hunger is the powerlessness of the poor to gain access to the resources they need to feed themselves." –

Frances Moore Lappé, 2016[1]

Introduction

In a matter of four decades, post-independence Zimbabwe went from being a major exporter of food crops and agricultural goods in the 1980s to an importer of staple foods needed to feed the country's inhabitants by the early 2000s. This was in large part due to various state policies that detrimentally affected the agricultural sector. Like in many countries, agricultural policy is integrally tied to the achievement of food security in Zimbabwe. In the ideal world, agricultural policy enables farmers to have adequate access to agricultural inputs and resources in order to help them increase their productive output, feed themselves and ensure food security for the country. As such, farmers' productive capacity and the concomitant production output is linked to access to adequate agricultural resources. This tends to be truer for the rural poor practising subsistence farming because they usually require assistance and access to agricultural inputs (Schultz, 1964).

Given the importance of agricultural policy for food production, the Zimbabwean state has adopted several different policies in an effort to redirect the country's agricultural production. These agricultural interventions include, but are not limited to the maize-based Green Revolution of the 1980s to the 1990s, land reform and land redistribution from 1980 to 2002 – specifically Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) 2000, Operation Maguta/Sisuthi in the 2005/2006 agricultural year, and more recently, the 2016-2019 Target Command Agricultural Programme, formally known as Zimbabwe's Special Maize Programme for Import Substitution or more commonly referred to as command agriculture. This research looks at the recent command agriculture program and its impact on food security using Makoni rural district in Manicaland as the case study. As a result of the consequences of the aforementioned policy initiatives, particularly FTLRP, the current state of agriculture

[1] The quote is referenced in Anish Chandran. 2018. "Farmers suicide in India: a neglected reality." *International Journal of Current Research,* 10 (12): 76675-76677,

production has never been worse. Command agriculture was implemented against the backdrop of a severe food insecurity situation.

The Integrated Food Insecurity Phase Classification - Acute Food Insecurity (IPC AFI) analysis report for June – September 2019 showed that the case study Makoni rural district was classified under a crisis of food insecurity in the Manicaland area (IPC, 2019)[2]. In fact, almost the whole country was classified under the crisis phase with small parts being classified under the stressed phase. Additionally, almost two decades after the implementation of the radical[3] land reform, eight million Zimbabweans were estimated to be food insecure by 2020 (World Food Program 'WFP', 2019). This estimate comes after the implementation of the command agricultural program and this begs the questions, why has maize production continued to drop even though the government has implemented agricultural interventions? What factors account for the achievement of food security in Zimbabwe? Do state-led agricultural interventions have any impact on food production in Zimbabwe? What is the role of the state in promoting food security in Zimbabwe? Therefore, to address these questions I argue that the state is an important factor in agricultural development however, state-led agricultural policy has not had any real positive impact on agricultural production in the country by (1) tracking the state of agricultural production from 1980 to 2019, (2) demonstrating how policies during this period have negatively impacted the agricultural sector and (3) examining the impact command agriculture has had on food production to achieve food security in the country. I argue that overall, the command agriculture programme failed to deliver on its promise of increasing food production and reducing imports as a consequence of poor policy formulation and implementation (that is a conflation of poor government capacity to implement the policy, a lack of developmental outlook in implementing the policy and corruption) on one hand and the authoritarian character of the state on the other,

Research Questions

The objective of this research is to understand the role of state-led agricultural reform in achieving food security. I utilize the Makoni rural district in the Manicaland province of

[2] Reliefweb and its IPC Reports 'typically covers severe disasters in countries with high vulnerability, and/or issue a call for international assistance. One of the main objectives of our platform is to provide information on humanitarian crises to raise awareness and mobilize resources for relief activities.' https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-integrated-food-security-phase-classification-snapshot-february-june-2020

[3] I use the word 'radical' in addition to land reform to refer specifically to the Fast Track Land Reform of 2000. In some cases I use it in relation to the negative implications of FTLRP of 2000

Zimbabwe as a case study, to measure the impact of the command agriculture programme on smallholder food production. Therefore, my guiding research question is:

What was the impact of command agriculture on food production in the Makoni rural district?

To answer this research question, the research considered the following sub-questions:

(a) Has there been a change in the agricultural output of maize in Makoni rural district farms since the implementation of command agriculture? If so, what accounts for such changes in agricultural production?
(b) What role has the Zimbabwean state played towards food security since the implementation of command agriculture?

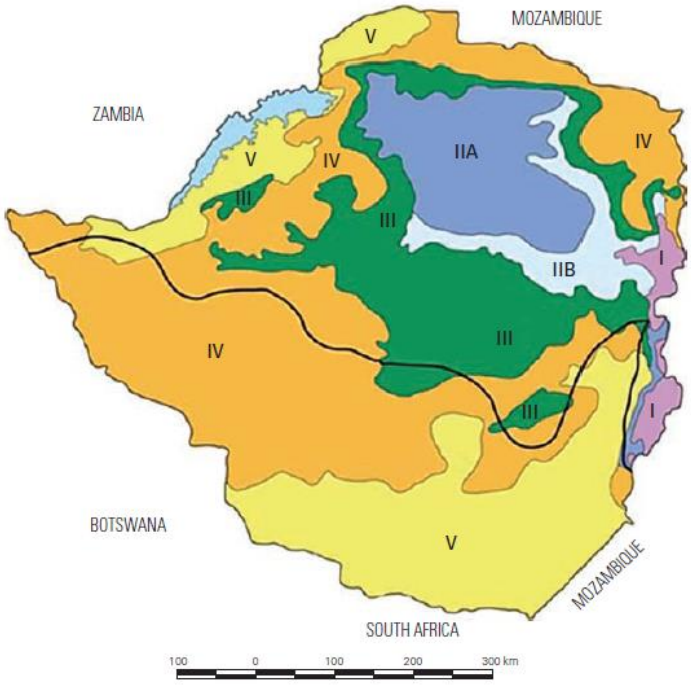
This research is timely considering the importance of smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe and the crisis level of food insecurity faced by the country. Smallholder farmers became increasingly important as sources and agents of food security with the emergence of the country's maize-based green revolution in the 1980s and 1990s. The maize-based green revolution was a host of programs introduced by the government to assist small-scale farmers in resource-poor areas to increase food production – the government introduced maize hybrid seeds, gave farmers access to credit and subsidized as well as guaranteed the price of maize the government would purchase grain with from farmers among others (Eicher, 1995). The restructuring of land through the land reform program of 2000 created more smallholder farmers in the country. Food insecurity is a key concern in post-independent Zimbabwe given the country's history of droughts in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, the 2007/2008 food insecurity crisis and the El Nino induced drought of 2015. Additionally, 2014 was declared the international year of small-scale farmers by the United Nations. It is therefore important to constantly engage in research to improve government agricultural programs and smallholder agricultural capacity to ensure increased production output. This research builds upon recent literature on command agriculture to produce more current data on the program. By so doing, this research adds to the existing literature on the development of agricultural policy in Zimbabwe. The angle the research takes to examine the role of the state offers insights on the operations of government and the motivations of the introduction of the command agricultural policy.

Background: The History of Agricultural Production in Context 1980 - 2000

Zimbabwe's economy is predominantly agro-based and the majority of the population, well above 70 per cent, is based in the rural areas (Moyo, 2005: 3; Food and Agricultural Organization 'FAO', 2018), while about 67 per cent rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, sustenance, employment and income generation (World Bank, 2019: 21). Agriculture in Zimbabwe utilizes about 33.3 million out of a total of 39 million hectares of land. There is a dualism of smallholder farmers and communal farmers occupying 7.1 million hectares and 21 million hectares respectively (Tekere, 2003), large-scale commercial farmers occupy 3.4 million hectares. The country, therefore, has three categories of farmers namely largescale commercial farmers, smallholder commercial farmers and communal area farmers (Woodend, 1995). The country inherited a bi-modal agrarian structure comprised of white largescale commercial farmers; and black smallholder commercial, peasant and communal farmers (Moyo, 2011 and Mkodzongi and Lawrence, 2019). However, this bi-modal system was restructured by the radical land reform of 2000. Before 2000, the agrarian structure was organized based on race with the minority whites owning the most arable land. Largescale commercial farms still exist but they are not as racially organized as they used to be.

The country has five ecological regions of farming based on annual rainfall, soil quality and vegetation as shown in Map 1 below (World Bank, 2019). Region I lies in the east with an annual rainfall of over 1.000 millimetres and is characterized by specialized farming producing bananas, potatoes and vegetables among other things. Region II lies in the middle and northern areas with an annual rainfall ranging from 750 to 1 000 millimetres characterized by intensive cropping tobacco, maize, cotton and wheat sorghum to name a few - and livestock production of beef, dairy, pig, and poultry. Irrigated crops are also produced in the drier months (May-September). Region III is characterized by semi-intensive farming with an annual rainfall of 500-750 millimetres. This region produces maize, cotton and groundnuts as well as livestock production. Region IV lies in the low-lying areas receiving an annual rainfall between 450–650 millimetres. The region is characterized by frequent seasonal droughts, farmers grow drought-tolerant varieties of maize, sorghum and millet. Region V receives annual rainfall below 650mm and covers the lowland areas of the country. The region is reserved for tourism and wildlife but also engages in extensive farming (United Nations, 2009; World Bank, 2019).

Map 1.1: Agro-ecological Regions of Zimbabwe



Source: World Bank (2019a: 14)

Since independence, the country used to be food sovereign[4], having control over the choice of crop production, high production output and food security in general. Zimbabwe was the breadbasket of southern Africa (Sachikonye, 2005 and Brownell, 2004). The country "succeeded in producing food surpluses" in the first ten years of self-rule post-independence from 1980 to 1990 and black smallholder farmers increased their contribution to crop production that was marketed in the country (Cliffe, 1988: 4). Agriculture contributed between 13 and 19 per cent to gross domestic product (GDP) during the 1980s and the 1990s respectively (Paulton et al., 2002: 20). Maize grain is the staple and a crucial cereal for overall domestic consumption and food security in the country. A total of 1,8 to two million tonnes of maize grain is required by the population per annum of which over 75 per cent of this is for domestic consumption while the remainder is used in livestock production as feed (Odunze and Uwizeyimana, 2019). In the 1980s, maize was mainly produced by about 6700 white-owned largescale commercial farms for trade, domestic consumption and national reserves, as well as cattle feed purposes on one hand and on the other, it was produced by small-scale farmers for

[4] The term food sovereign is used to describe the high productive yields and level of food security during this period. It should not be taken to have the same meaning as 'food sovereignty', a concept that emerged with the *La via Compesina* in the 1990s. Food sovereignty as a concept is explored in Chapter 6.

home consumption particularly in the rural areas (Woodend, 1995; World Bank Zimbabwe Climate Smart Agriculture, 2019). Through the export of maize, agriculture contributed around 40 per cent to foreign currency earnings in the country during the 1990s (Muir-Leresche, 2002; FAO, 2003 and Mushakavanhu, 2015) and approximately 60 - 63 per cent of raw materials for agro-industries (The African Centre for Biodiversity, 2015, World Bank Zimbabwe Climate Smart Agriculture, 2019). The agricultural policy framework set out by the Lancaster House constitution was the key ingredient to this successfully sustained agricultural performance.

Drawing from the liberal paradigm, the Lancaster House-induced land reform in the 1980s, was market-led (Dorner, 1992; Lahiff, Borras and Kay, 2007) and land redistribution was on a willing-buyer, willing-seller basis. This provision protected the agricultural sector from domestic market risks such as the acquisition of farms by the state without the consent of the farm owner or due compensation. Since the majority of the land was white-owned, white capital retained the privileges inherited from the colonial era (Shumba, 2016). From a policy point of view, the structure of agricultural production did not drastically change meaning production remained relatively stable. This is not to say, the productive structure was not affected by land reform. According to Jansen and Rukovo (1992: 18), "At independence, agricultural sector policy in Zimbabwe also focused on equity goals: to achieve a more equitable distribution of land and a broader participation in marketed production". During the initial implementation of land reform in the 1980s, the government redistributed land from largescale commercial farms and targeted the poor and marginalized sections of the black population as beneficiaries so that they could engage in subsistence farming to feed themselves. Although the agricultural policy agenda post-independence was allegedly developmental, the pro-poor orientation of land reform meant that the government was prioritizing subsistence farming and racial equity over commercially oriented agricultural production which contributed to economic wellbeing.

Post-independence land reform from 1980 to 1985 aimed at addressing transitional issues inherited from the settler-colonial system and from 1986 to 1990 was influenced by the Land Acquisition Act of 1985 aimed to intensify the resettlement programme (Poulton et.al, 2002). The production of food increased in the first five years of independence but slowly dropped from 1985 onwards. The dominant rhetoric attributed this increase to the Zimbabwean governments direct involvement in the development of the country's agricultural sector which was carried out through the redistributive land reform process which resettled farmers, offered farmers extension services, agricultural training, provision of agricultural inputs and open

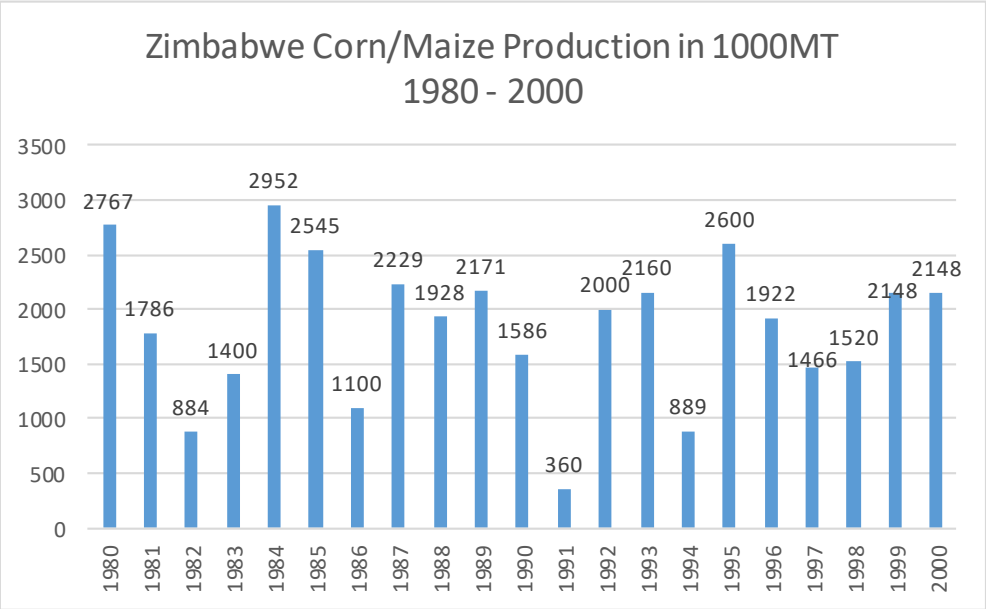
access to credit among others (Karumbidza, 2004). In 1980, Zimbabwe had a total of 33 million hectares of arable land – 45 per cent of the most arable land was occupied by about 6 000 white commercial farmers, 5 per cent was controlled by around 8 500 small-scale black commercial farmers and 50 per cent of the remaining land which was mainly poor and unfertile was occupied by 700 000 communal black families (Mabaye, 2005).

Apart from food production, and redressing racial inequalities on land one of the major aims of the government was to resettle 162 000 farmers by 1990 on a willing buyer willing seller basis but had failed to reach half of this target by 1990 (Mabaye, 2005). According to Kurumbidza (2004), the government resettled 40 000 families on 2.2 million hectares by 1985 and from 1986 to 1990 managed to resettle only 8000 households. Based on the Land Acquisition Act of 1985, land resettlement was intensified by allowing compulsory acquisition of land that was either underutilised or abandoned with compensation. Coupled with the Five Year Development Plan from 1986 to 1990, 15 000 families were targeted for resettlement annually but the government did not manage to achieve this target (Poulton, 2002; 29). Kinsey (1999) asserts that despite the government's failure to meeting its targets, land reform in Zimbabwe was by far the largest and most successful in Africa. This is comparison with land reform in Kenya and currently in South Africa based on amount of land redistributed.

The failure of the 1980s land reform to achieve its resettlement targets was due to a variety of reasons. First, there was a lack of funding to purchase land for resettlement caused by the dollar-for-dollar deal on 'market-related land reform. The costs of purchase of land under the willing-buyer willing-seller basis were to be shared between the British government and the Zimbabwean government a dollar for a dollar. The British government only donated US$47 million by 1990 which was not even half of what they were supposed to donate (Mabaye, 2005). Second, the government was so corrupt that resettlement benefitted the ZANU-PF members who had fought the liberation struggle as compensation and patronage. The WB and IMF suspended financial aid that was going to land in 1989 due to corruption and by extension failure of the government to reach half of its target for resettlement – this resulted in the introduction of ESAPs which did not include a budget on land reform (Mabaye, 2005). According to Kurumbidza (2004), the declining production in the 1990s was mainly attributed to the introduction of ESAP by the WB and the IMF. Third, land reform and resettlement were characterized by a poor policy framework that did not ensure the willing-buyer willing-seller agreement was honoured. According to Poulton et.al (2002), if the government had introduced a land tax, this could have increased the chances of largescale white commercial farmers to

willingly sell land they were underutilising. The government did not introduce the land tax. Additionally, the resettlement of land to farmers without agricultural skills resulted in lowered agricultural production. Stricter and harsher land reform was then implemented in the 1990s. Despite this, agricultural production was sustained as only so much land had been redistributed as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Zimbabwe's Maize Production Trend from 1980 - 2000



Source: Zimbabwe's corn production by year, Indexmundi, https://www.indexmundi.com/agriculture/?country=zw&commodity=corn&graph=production

Furthermore, agricultural production varied every year depending on rainfall, the country experienced four significant droughts in 1982-1983, 1986-1987, 1991-1992 and 1994-1995; 1991-1992 being the most severe (Paulton et al., 2002 and Mashingaidze, 2006) and this resulted in drops in production. Figure 1.1 above shows the agricultural production trend in Zimbabwe from 1980 – 2000 highlighting the drought periods. Effective and efficient agricultural policy frameworks must be resilient to production risks (climate change and droughts among others) since agriculture production is, in large part, dependent on climate conditions and a natural resource base (farming land or fertile soil).[5] Although maize production dropped during these droughts, agricultural production overall was sustained for three reasons. 1) The constitution's overarching agricultural policy framework did not allow

[5] The OECD discuss the importance of resilient agricultural policy frameworks for better risk management on their website available here, https://www.oecd.org/agriculture/topics/risk-management-and-resilience/

changes to the productive structure of agriculture for the first ten years of self-rule. The Zimbabwean government went along with this because, similar to Kenya, land reform was designed to progressively transfer the land back to the black population without disturbing the productive efficiency of the country in the agricultural sector (Bandyopadhyay, 1996). 2) The government was partially invested in developing the agricultural sector because it was politically driven by the need to redress racial land inequalities for instance, during the 1991-1992 drought, the government implemented an expensive largescale food supplementary program that mainly targeted the rural poor (Muir-Leresche, 1998). 3) The post-independent government was reliant on the expertise of the white farmers that the majority of black farmers did not have.

The Lancaster House land reform bill expired in 1992 and this was when the government began to formulate and later implement poor agricultural policy interventions starting with the implementation of compulsory land acquisition targeting mainly unoccupied land. This policy move marked the beginning of large scale accumulation of land by the state. Agricultural policy in Zimbabwe has not always been examined in relation to its explicit impact on food security given the heavy politicization of land and any activity related to it. Indeed, it is often examined as a means of maintaining political power. The white settler community always regarded the land question[6] as a crucial axis of political and economic power similarly for the Africans who lost their land during colonialism, the land question has always been a significant political and economic factor (Hitchens, 1981). These sentiments continued in the 1990s and have now come to characterize the source and structure of governmental power in the country. Muir-Leresche, (1998) argues that when the Lancaster House land reform bill expired, power was transferred to the new elite (Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front 'ZANU-PF' party-led government) who in addition to trying to achieve racial equity, used the land to foster patronage at the expense of reform (Shumba, 2016). As a consequence, land, as a key agricultural resource was rendered less productive and underutilized because the process of resettlement was slow. Leasing out the land to new farmers took a very long time so much so that land was laying uncultivated. For instance, in 1994, the government had ownership of 345 farms – "29 were vacant, 64 were on offer for lease, and of the remainder,

[6] The land question is a central part of the politics in sub-Saharan African countries. Most struggles for independence in these countries (Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe among others) were driven by the need to claim the land they had lost during the era of colonialism. These three countries experienced settler colonialism which distinguished them from the rest of Africa. This is apparent in contemporary SADC politics and more so in Zimbabwe considering the significance of land reform and the history of the national liberation struggles the country went through.

71 farms (97,000 ha.) had been specifically acquired for resettlement but were leased out" (Muir-Leresche, 1998; 33). The land that was leased out went to party loyalists instead of resettled farmers based on party affiliation, a small portion of the land was leased out to aspiring black commercial farmers. The result has been a general decline in agricultural production and food insecurity resulting in widespread hunger effectively leaving the economy as a net importer of grain (Sachikonye, 2005). Perhaps, the most significant expression of power by the ZANU-PF-led government was the implementation of the radical land reform program in 2000 whereby the acquisition of land from white-owned largescale commercial farms was carried out violently and without compensation.

Before the implementation of radical land reform in 2000, the government implemented a host of policies that were not particularly oriented towards economic reform but rather reactionary and aimed at maintaining state power through patronage. In 1991 the government implemented the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) which had detrimental effects on the economy as a whole because it was characterised by a wave of deindustrialization that contributed to increased unemployment and poverty (Shumba, 2016). ESAP liberalized the agricultural market without protecting the emerging group of black small-scale farmers who could not compete on the international scene. Domestically, the closure of industries meant agricultural inputs had to be sought elsewhere. In the face of the declining economic conditions and hyperinflation, protests erupted, particularly in the agricultural sector, war veterans demanded compensation from the government (Shumba, 2016, 71).

To appease the war veterans and secure the support of the military, the government expended much of its financial resources to compensate war veterans. According to Shumba (2016; 71), "the regime rewarded the war veterans with unbudgeted bailout packages in 1997." The government also made key army officials beneficiaries of the land reform program (Shumba, 2016; Sachikonye, 2003). The bailout packages for war veterans were a direct result of the ZANU-PF government's corruption scandals in the misuse of the war veterans' compensation fund. According to Meldrum (1997), more than half of the war veterans fund amounting to Z$22.5 million was looted by political leaders in government who were close to the late former President Robert Mugabe. An inquiry in the misuse of these funds by the government was carried out by an independent member of parliament named Margaret Dongo who allegedly found that about 46 government officials in senior positions were recipients of large government pay-outs that could not be explained – these pay-outs amounted to about Z$850 000 per individual (which at that time was the equivalent of R327 343) (Meldrum, ibid).

Furthermore, an estimated 35 000 fighters or war veterans had been registered in 1980 yet over 70 000 people applied for the war veterans' compensation fund of which some of them were very young to qualify as war veterans. Yet this was not the only way the government was losing financial resources.

Adding to the government's financial strain was the Education for All policy (EFA) (Kanyenze et al., 2011). Since most of the fiscal spending was directed towards EFA, this meant that other sectors like the agricultural sector were neglected. The resources expended in the EFA program produced uneven development that denied other programs, like agriculture, sufficient financial support (Zhou and Zvoushe, 2012; 215). Moreso, the involvement of Zimbabwe in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1998 is said to have cost at least US$200 million according to, at the time, Minister Simba Makoni – and one of the more severe implications for this was the move by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to freeze US$193 million in aid to Zimbabwe (News24, 2000). Additionally, the aforementioned misuse of the war veterans' funds together with the financial spending on the DRC war also contributed to the failure of the 1998 donor conference on land. The donor conference on land in 1998 was a conference hosted by the Zimbabwean government to raise funding for the land reform program – these funds were to be used to purchase land and compensate white farmers who willingly sold off their land for resettlement (Machipisa, 1998). In the late 1990s, a movement of sporadic farm invasions by ordinary landless citizens and some war veterans began in most rural areas as a response to the government's failure to compensate the war veterans, it was this movement that was high jacked by the ZANU-PF government together with the military, and institutionalized as the radical land reform of 2000 (Chitiyo and Rupiya, 2005; Shumba, 2016)

Past the Point of No Return: Radical Land Reform and the Restructuring of Agriculture in Zimbabwe post-2000

The FTLRP or more commonly radical land reform of 2000 is the single most important agricultural policy with a profound impact on agricultural production. The impact of FTLRP occurred in three major ways namely 1) it permanently restructured land holding patterns, taking land from the dominance of largescale farms that were commercially oriented and redistributing it to small-scale farms focusing on subsistence farming; 2) it entrenched the dominance of the ZANU-PF led government and boosted their patronage system as most of the land was accumulated by the state, party loyalists and the military (Shumba, 2016) and; 3) the radical land reform program also benefitted black citizens who were not entirely interested in

agriculture (most of these people were landless and poor - for those who were interested they were affected by the declining economic conditions). This resulted in 1) a decline in agricultural production, 2) entrenched ZANU-PF power and patronage networks and 3) severe food insecurity challenge.

Agricultural production has declined and this has been attributed to a myriad of factors ranging from a declining economy as a consequence of ESAPs of the early 1990s to climate change among others but it was poor agricultural policies, particularly the "acquisition of large-scale commercial farms for resettlement" (Mashingaidze, 2006; 373), that heavily impacted the decline in production. The violent radical land reform saw the expropriation of land from white commercial farmers who directly contributed to the wellbeing of the economy (Chilunjika and Uwizeyimana, 2015; Shumba, 2016; Mkodzongi and Lawrence, 2019, Mazwi et al, 2019; and Odunze and Uwizeyimana, 2019) and by extension food security. The pattern of land holdings was drastically transformed by the program because before the year 2000, a small minority of about 6,700 white farmers owned approximately 15.5 million hectares of 33 million hectares arable land under largescale commercially oriented farms, but by 2002, a total of 14,5 million hectares had been broken down into small-scale farms oriented towards subsistence farming and redistributed to black Zimbabweans (Sachikonye, 2003: 227) with more than 150,000 black farmers benefitting from the FTLRP (Mkodzongi and Lawrence, 2019). To date, less than 300 white commercial farmers remain in the country (Mushakavanhu, 2015) compared to the 6700 white farmers that owned land in 1980.

The land was redistributed under the A1 and A2 models of land resettlement. The A1 model created smallholder farms and the A2 model created medium to largescale farms as well as peri-urban plots of farming land (Cousins and Scoones, 2009; Chavhunduka, 2016; Mkodzongi and Lawrence, 2019; and Scoones, 2021). Under the A1 Model, the government allocated land to those without land and the poor farmers based on subsistence, and under the A2 Model, the government redistributed land to aspiring black commercial farmers with the resources to sustain agricultural investment and increase agricultural productivity (Mkodzongi and Lawrence, 2019). A2 farmers were to be the emerging black capitalist class. Because of this, A2 farms are closely related to food production on a national level. However, ZANU-PF party loyalists and war veterans were also the major beneficiaries of the land reform program (Shumba, 2016). The FTLRP entrenched the political power and patronage system of the ZANU-PF government by benefitting the party loyalists, military and political elites. Table

1.1 below shows a list of some of the ZANU-PF party loyalists and military personnel who benefitted from the FTLRP of 2000:

Table 1.1: List of ZANU-PF loyalists and political elites who benefitted from the FTLRP

Name	**Farm**	**Size**	**Area**
Security Services			
Solomon Mujuru	Alamein Farm	1300ha	Beatrice
Constantine Chiwenga	Chakoma Estates	1276ha	Goromonzi
Perrance Shiri	Eirin Farm	1460ha	Marondera
Judges			
Mafios Cheda	Block 37	3039ha	Bulilamangwe
Ben Hlatshwayo	Kent Estate	800ha	Norton
Charles Hungwe	Little England	6956ha	Makonde
Chitakunye Alfias	The Grange	1300ha	Chegutu
The Executive (President, Vice Presidents and Cabinet Ministers)			
Robert Mugabe	Gushungo Estates	4046ha	Darwendale
	Gushungo Dairies	1000ha	Mazowe
	Gwina Farm	1445ha	Banket
ZANU-PF Politicians			
Reward Marufu	Leopards Vlei	1294ha	Glendale
	Kachere Farm	880ha	Mazowe
Sabina Mugabe	Mlembwe Farm	1037ha	Makonde
	Longwood Farm	924ha	Makonde
	Gowrie Farm	430ha	Norton

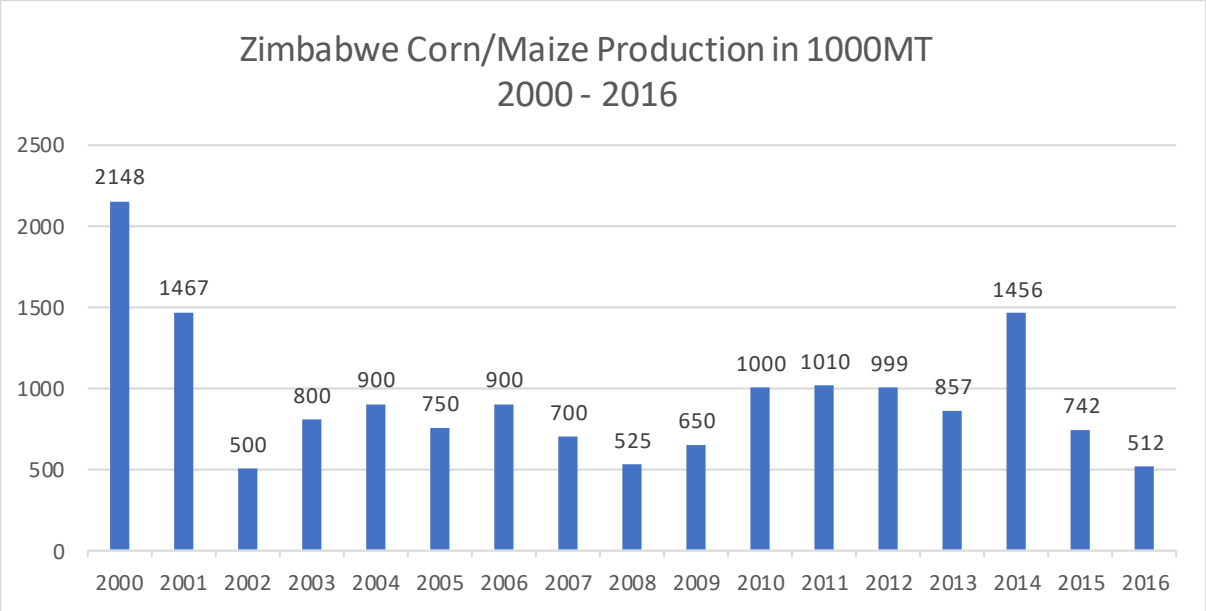
Source: ZimOnline, 2010 in Jabusile Shumba 2016[7]

The most severe impact was on agricultural productive output. According to Sachikonye (2005: 35), FTLRP resulted in a declining agricultural trend as maize production dropped, "from an average annual output of about 1.7 million tonnes in the mid-1990s to between 0.9 million and 1 million tonnes in 2000-2004… From being a regional breadbasket, Zimbabwe has become a food importer." Ever since the implementation of radical land reform,

[7] This is not the full list of beneficiaries - the full list is available in Jabusile Shumba's 2016 work, 'Zimbabwe's Predatory State: Party, Military and Business Complex,' where he discusses how the ZANU-PF party distributed this land to party loyalists and military elite through patronage networks. The list is based on the ZimOnline report of 2010

the agricultural sector has not been able to reach the production level of 1,8 million tonnes required by the population. Figure 1.2 below shows the maize production trend from 2000 to 2016 highlighting the drop in agricultural production coinciding with the implementation of land reform in 2000.

Figure 1.2: Zimbabwe's Maize Production Trend from 2000 - 2016



Source: Zimbabwe's corn production by year, Indexmundi, https://www.indexmundi.com/agriculture/?country=zw&commodity=corn&graph=production

There is no doubt that white-owned largescale farms had a high production capacity and production output when compared to the small-scale farmers who were beneficiaries of the land redistribution process of 2000. Before 2000, Zimbabwe had a strong economy characterized by diversified agro-industrial sectors and an "extensive agro-processing industry" in the SADC region (World Bank Zimbabwe Climate Smart Agriculture, 2019: 1). Mushakavanhu (2015) asserted that land reform was chaos that severely affected the economy which shrank to half its size at independence. This meant that whatever share of maize contribution that came from these largescale commercial farms was halted permanently resulting in a reduction in overall agricultural production. The 2000 radical land reform disrupted the productive efficiency of the country and also restructured the pattern of land holdings by breaking down most largescale farms owned by a small group of white settlers and redistributing the land to black Zimbabweans mostly in the rural areas as well as the incumbent

governments' party loyalists. The argument was that small-scale or smallholder farms had the potential to produce more than largescale commercial farms.

Political Economy Developments Leading up to Command Agriculture

Post-2000, the government implemented various interventions aimed at reducing poverty, supporting farmers especially after the implementation of the radical land reform program and ensuring food security. However, these policy interventions had no real impact as food insecurity worsened, imports increased and agricultural production declined. The problem was that these interventions had the same approach of input provision without necessarily reforming the agricultural sector (infrastructure, road networks and skills training for farmers among others). In 2000, the government introduced the Government Input Scheme (GIS), which sought to provide communal farmers in particular, with loans in the form of agricultural production inputs like maize seeds, fertilizers and fuel (MAMID, 2012; The African Centre for Biodiversity, 2015). Farmers would repay these loans after their crop harvests either with maize grain or cash accompanied by an interest of 50 per cent to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB). The scheme only lasted for three years due to a lack of funding but was later resuscitated as a political campaign in the 2006 elections.

The government introduced Operation Maguta/Sisuthi in 2005 also known as the command agriculture of 2005. The intervention was dubbed 'command agriculture' because it was run by the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) with the support of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ). The objective of the Maguta program was to fill up the national grain reserves in a bid to achieve food security (Munyuki-Hungwe and Matondi, 2006). The program targeted wheat and maize grain in the A2 resettled farms and those under rural development schemes. The farmers in these regions were given the hybrid seeds as inputs for their farms. Following the failure of the Maguta programme, the government introduced the Crop Pack Input Scheme targeting 800,000 vulnerable small-scale farmers through the AGRITEX in the 2009/2010 agricultural year (MAMID, 2012; The African Centre for Biodiversity, 2015). Under this scheme, farmers were beneficiaries of maize grain seeds and fertilizers. However, these initiatives fell through because of inadequate funding. Nevertheless, government efforts continued.

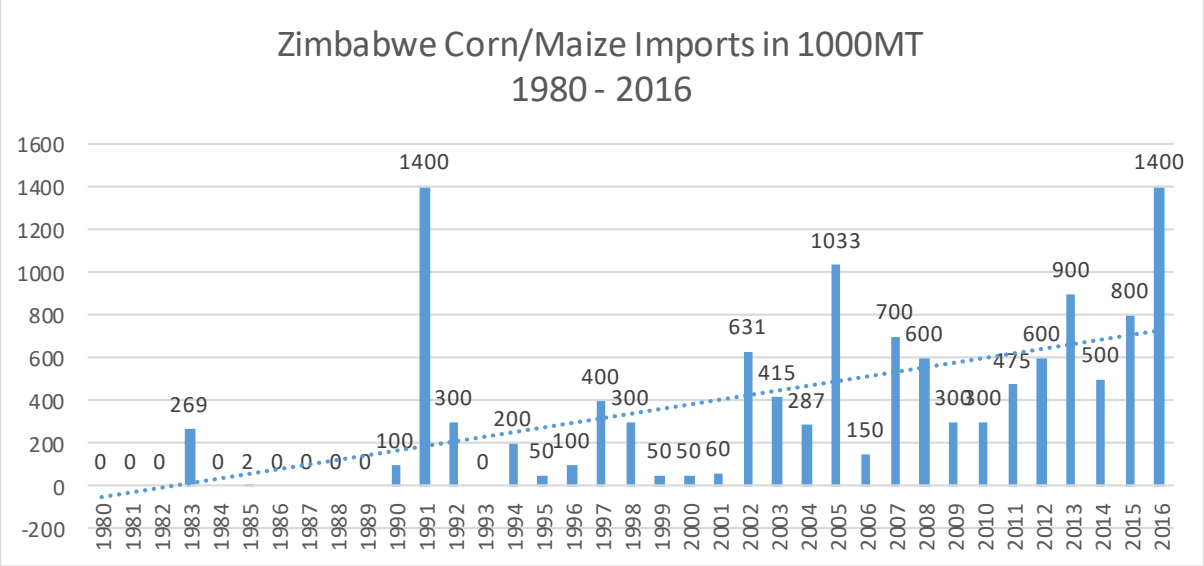
Perhaps the most enduring government intervention leading up to the introduction of command agriculture has been the presidential inputs support scheme (PIS) which was first introduced in 2011. The PIS did not stop during the lifespan of the command agricultural

program from 2016 to 2019. According to the Zimbabwe public Expenditure Report of 2019, this programme was informed by the lessons from past government interventions and was aimed at providing sustainable means of supporting food-insecure households, it was not enough to provide these vulnerable households with food but what they needed was the means to provide for themselves (World Bank, 2019). This input scheme targeted small-scale and subsistence farmers, those affected by extreme poverty and households that were food insecure. It is evident therefore that the state-led agricultural intervention aimed to provide access to agricultural inputs so that farmers could feed themselves and by extension if they had surpluses, contribute to national food security. Although the scheme continued it was mainly affected by inadequate financial support from the government as well as the severe droughts that have affected the country since the 2015 agricultural year.

Deconstructing Command Agriculture

The policy was implemented in the wake of an increasing food insecurity challenge that was characterized by large government expenditure on food imports, poor harvests and low agricultural productivity due to persistent droughts, an increasingly deteriorating economy and a poor agricultural policy framework used by the state to entrench political power rather than development. Zimbabwe's maize production decreased from 1,192,399 tonnes in 2010 to 511,816 tonnes in 2016, recording an almost 50 per cent drop in six years (United Nations International Trade Statistics Database UN COMTRADE, 2017; Knoema, 2020). Since independence, the country's maize production trend maintained an average of over two million tonnes of grain until the year 2000 when production constantly and consistently dropped, and started to average below one million tonnes until 2016. This drop in production output coincided with the radical land reform of 2000 (Odunze and Uwizeyimana, 2019). With the decline in production since the early 1990s, the country has increased its quantity of maize imports (Knoema, 2020). Aside from the spikes in imports from the 1980s to the 1990s due to the droughts that affected the country, maize imports have generally been increasing especially after the implementation of radical land reform in 2000. Figure 1.3 below shows the general trend of increasing imports.

Figure 1.3: Zimbabwe's maize imports from 1980 to 2016



Source: Knoema (2021) Production, Supply and Distribution of Agricultural Commodities by Market Year, Mar 2021: Zimbabwe - Corn Imports

Significantly, the quantity of Zimbabwe's maize imports rose from 300 thousand tonnes in 2010 to approximately 1,4 million tonnes in 2016 (US Department of Agriculture, 2021) recording close to a five times increase. Currently, agriculture accounts for 11 per cent of GDP (World Bank, Zimbabwe Public Expenditure Report, 2019; 5) but ten years ago, it accounted for 20 per cent. This made it extremely difficult for farmers, especially the majority of them who were poor and relied on subsistence farming, to have access to productive resources such as financial assistance, crop seeds, fertilizer, and equipment.

The command agriculture program was a three-year, state-led agricultural reform and import-substitution program implemented by the government at the beginning of the 2016/2017 agricultural year and ended in 2019. The policy program was implemented under the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimASSET) policy framework for food security which sought to encourage and develop sustainable local food production and supply. The policy attempted to boost agricultural output of maize and wheat grain, and achieve food security by providing farmers with access to state support in the form of an input loan including financial loans, agrochemicals, crop seeds and even farming equipment. The command agriculture program commenced with a budget totalling US$500 million (Pindula, 2017). These funds were secured through a public-private partnership (PPP)

between the government and Sakunda Holdings.[8] The aim of successfully increasing the agricultural output of grain (maize and wheat) domestically had the potential of offsetting the high imports of maize into the country. According to the former Minister of Finance, Mr Patrick Chinamasa,

> *"the command agriculture programme was designed to solve a fundamental problem facing the country in the aftermath of the land reform; that of mobilizing sustainable and affordable funding for our agriculture so as to ensure food security, eliminate imports of food, increase exports from this sector and reduce poverty" (Chisoko and Zharara, 2017; 4).*

Command agriculture sought to bring 400 thousand hectares of land under cultivation. Of this total, 264,000 hectares were to be farmed under irrigation and 136,000 hectares were to be cultivated under rain-fed production. The scheme targeted 2,000 farmers to benefit and these farmers either had to have mechanised farms of at least 200 hectares with irrigation facilities or they had to live near water bodies (Odunze and Uwizeyimana, 2019). The command agriculture scheme also had a contractual farming stipulation that bound the beneficiaries of the program. Farmers would then receive agricultural production inputs and advance loans in the form of maize seed, agrochemicals and fertilisers, mechanised farming equipment, electricity charges and cash among others for the duration of the command agriculture scheme. To that end, each farmer's agricultural input package totalled US$250,000 on the program for the three-year duration of the program. In exchange, each farmer had to produce and commit five tonnes of maize grain per hectare in repayment of the government inputs the farmer received. This number multiplied by the total hectares of land owned by a farmer on the program would mean that each farmer had to produce 1,000 tonnes of maize grain for the government per annum (The Periscope Report, 2017). The government hoped to produce two million tonnes of grain from the scheme per annum. I make the calculations that the government was working with to achieve food security in the country.

[8] Sakunda Holdings is privately owned Zimbabwean company engaged in energy, logistics and trading. It operates fuel stations and trades in various commodities such as minerals and agricultural products to name a few. The company has come under scrutiny both domestically and internationally for money-laundering and corruption charges but it remained a partner of government during the implementation of the command agriculture program due to the business relationship between the president Emmerson Mnangagwa and the CEO of Sakunda Holding Kudakwashe Tagwireyi. see, https://www.weforum.org/organizations/sakunda-holdings, https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1082 and https://www.pindula.co.zw/Sakunda_Holdings for more information.

Table 1.2: Command Agriculture Plan to Produce Two Million Tonnes of Maize

Targeted Number of Farmers	Unit of land to be Farmed	Expected Output	Total Land to be Farmed	Total Expected Output
1 Farmer	1 Hectares	5 Tonnes	200 Hectares	1,000 Tonnes
2,000 Farmers	2000 Hectares	10,000 Tonnes	400,000 Hectares	2,000,000 Tonnes

To reach this target of 2 million tonnes, the government hoped to target 2000 farmers, each farmer with 200 hectares of arable land. Each farmer having a total of 200 hectares of land, had to produce 5 tonnes of grain per hectare they farmed and submit it to the government. This means that a farmer who cultivated 200 hectares had to produce a total of 1000 tonnes (this is calculated by multiplying the total number of land under cultivation (200 hectares) with the required output of tonnes per hectare (5 tonnes)). If all of the targeted 2000 farmers produced 1000 tonnes, then they would achieve the national grain requirement of 2 million tonnes (this is calculated by multiplying the total output produced by each farmer (1000 tonnes) with the total number of farmers under command agriculture (2000 farmers).

From the above, the Zimbabwean agricultural policy landscape has significantly contributed to the challenges that the country has been and are still trying to curb - from the low agricultural output, an enduring food insecurity situation to poor agricultural policies. Kapuya summarises the policy landscape by combining Rukuni (2006) and Moyo's (2009) work as follows.

Table 1.3: Breakdown of land, agriculture and food security policies, 1980–2010

Period	Sector	Policy	Description
1980– 1990	Land	Willing buyer, willing seller resettlement programme	Government bound by the Lancaster House Agreement. Distributed 2.46 million ha in first five years to model 12-acre schemes, which became successful.
	Agriculture	High regulation and control policies	Maintaining the dual agricultural system. Continuation of the pre-independence government controls, with a heavy bias towards black small-scale and communal farmers, who receive subsidised inputs and protected marketing. National food security is a priority.

1991– 1998	Land	Compulsory land acquisition	Legislation to acquire land compulsorily passed. Was meant to receive donor support but the support was not forthcoming. Resettlement programme was, hence, very slow and far off target.
	Agriculture	Liberalised policies	Trade liberalisation begins, founded in the macroeconomic reforms' proposed market-based economy. Cancellation of controls and subsidies, although the grain sector remains partially controlled. The start of efforts to write national agricultural policies.
	Food security	No official policy	Government prioritises food security by controlling trade in grains and funding relief aid (with help of NGOs) in years of drought.
2000– 2008	Land	FTLRP	Politically motivated land invasions see 7.3 million ha taken by blacks in two years alone. The programme attracts negative media attention the world over for its criminal elements.
	Agriculture	Return of regularisation	Production nosedives after the FTLRP. All efforts to craft national policy fail and the government becomes highly involved in trade regulation again. The central bank bankrolls national agricultural projects, and marketing of most produce, especially grain, is tightly controlled.
	Food security	No official policy	Severely reduced agricultural production and lack of funds dampen national food security programmes. Government relies on the World Food Programme (WFP) and CSAFE for household food security.
2009+	Agriculture	Mixed approach	Unity government partly liberalises agricultural trade again. Grain trade uncontrolled for the first time. Government and NGOs fund input projects to communal and resettled farmers.

Source: Kapuya (2012; 20), Zimbabwe's agricultural reconstruction: Present state, ongoing projects and prospects for reinvestment.

Structure of the Research Thesis

Chapter two explores the rich literature that shapes the command agriculture discourse. I engage three bodies of literature covering the role of the state in development thinking, land reform, agrarian transformation and agriculture's role in development discourses, and food security. Through the literature, I demonstrate that the role of the state has always been and remains central in any discussion on development although it somewhat diminished during the 1980s and 1990s when the role of the market gained prominence. Drawing from the literature, I argue that agricultural policy has not been successful because of the weak state-led policies

coupled with the authoritarian character of the state in post-independent Africa. Drawing from classical economic theory I demonstrate the significance of agricultural production to economic growth in post-colonial and low-income states (Africa, Asia and Latin America). Furthermore, I interrogate the concepts of land reform and agrarian transformation together with smallholder and largescale farm size. The literature explores the approaches to food security in Zimbabwe and the implication thereof.

Chapter three details the methodology employed in this research thesis and how I conducted research virtually as opposed to traditional physical data collection. This chapter describes the process of data collection from the sampling to the tools used for data collection. The methodology chapter details the type of data I was looking for and demonstrates the types of questions I was asking to gain such data. It describes the research area where data was collected both physical and virtual and a breakdown of the research participants and their significance to the study. This chapter also gives the criteria for assessment of the impact of command agriculture on food production. Lastly, limitations and challenges faced during data collection and how they were overcome will be detailed.

Chapter four looks broadly at the role of the state in agriculture. This chapter opens with an examination of state-led agricultural interventions and agricultural policy focusing on the command agriculture policy formulation and implementation structure. I argue that land reform and agricultural policy not only shape the current structure of agricultural production but also that, it has harmed food production in Zimbabwe resulting in the proliferation of poverty and food insecurity. I interrogate the formulation and implementation of command agriculture and argue that the policy is marred in widespread state politics and characterized by rampant corruption – the state is predatory and authoritarian as a result its policies have negative rather than positive long-term impacts.

Chapter five presents the discussion on food production in Zimbabwe. The chapter looks at the impact of the state-led command agricultural program (from 2016 to 2019) on food production in Zimbabwe. I engage three dimensions of measuring this impact, 1) the general access to and availability of farming inputs provided under the programme, 2) the impact the programme had on food production from a national to a local smallholder level and 3) I measure the impact command agriculture had on food imports. These dimensions speak to the major objective of command agriculture which was to provide farmers with farming inputs to boost

their agricultural production for food security and to reduce food imports. By answering these questions, I answer the research question of this study.

Finally, Chapter Six gives a summative appreciation of the major findings of the study linking to my argument that overall, agricultural policy harms food production in the country. The chapter also draws lessons learned from the impact of state-led agricultural reform on food production.

Chapter Two: Development, Agrarian Transformation and Food Security

Introduction

Over the years, there has been extensive literature on agricultural policy, agricultural production and development as well as the state's role in agriculture, especially in post-colonial development discourses. There are three main bodies of literature that I engage namely the notion of the state in development thinking, land reform, agrarian transformation and agriculture in development discourses, and food security. The role of the state has always been central in any discussion on development as illustrated by the development of the advanced economies as well as the miracle of the East Asian Tigers' rapid economic development. However, this success has proven difficult to replicate in the context of Africa.

Development and the Role of the State

'Development' is a fluid concept and a source of contestation in academic discourses. The term has always been defined by different overarching development discourses throughout history. But in these discourses, the role of the State has come up in one form or the other as central to development. Development has always been a fundamental human practice rooted in the positive transformation or improvement of conditions (Thomas, 2000) but this research traces development literature to the post-World War II reconstruction era. The post-WW-II period marked the beginning of the development agenda as a deliberate national attempt to reconstruct war-torn Europe and the West. Since this reconstruction initiative was directed by the national elite in the US and Europe, the state's developmental role was cemented as the central agent of development.

In the mid-1990s, Kuznets introduced the concept of gross domestic product (GDP) to measure the economic growth of these reconstruction efforts which later translated to development (Fioramonti, 2014). On the other end of the global spectrum, Africa, Asia and Latin American economies were predominantly agro-based and did not have similar economic structures to Europe and the West whose economies were driven by industry – GDP is only applicable to the formalized economic transactions (Kuznets, 1946). As a result, Europe and the West were defined as developed or high-income economies because they had higher GDP and the rest of the world came to be known as either low-income countries, the third world and

less developed countries or developing economies because of low GDP. According to Cooper and Packard (1996; 1), "the last fifty years have witnessed the transformation of the political geography of the globe, as vast areas that were once known as 'colonies' because 'less developed countries or the 'third world'". Nevertheless, low-income economies were characterised by a wave of decolonisation and nation-building but they also put the state at the centre of the development agenda in the 1960s.

For these low-income countries to develop, that is, to reach similar levels of GDP and per capita income of the European and Western economies, it was conceived that they required aid and credit to jump-start their economies (Rostow, 1960). With the influence of classical economic theory (Lewis, 1954 and Rostow, 1960 among others), development was constructed as a process of 'backwardness and catch-up'. Rostow (1960) propounded the modernization theory and presented development as a linear process whereby low-income economies characterized by agro-based economies and the predominance of rural settlements could transform into modern economies characterized by industrial economies and urban settlements using the blueprint of Western and European industrial economies (Chirot and Hall, 1982; Escobar, 1995; Shrum, 2000). Development, therefore, became synonymous with economic growth as the end goal of going through the stages of development was high consumption driven by a market-based economy.

In contrast, in the 1970s, development was seen as a neo-colonial project to entrench global inequalities and maintain the control of the developed economies over less developed ones (Kothari, 2005) by creating a dependency on foreign aid. Dependency theorists argued that the development agenda advocated by modernization theorists was only development according to GDP. Escobar (1995) argued that the development discourse was centred around a false notion of underdevelopment that served as the basis for dominance over third world countries. Rodney (1972) asserted that the underdevelopment of the third world was the direct result of the development of Europe because industrialization in the latter was propelled by the exploitation of labour and natural resources in the former (Ikechukwu, 2013). Dependency was defined as the condition in which capital accumulation is conditioned externally (Evans, 1979 and Cardoso and Faletto, 1979). Dependency scholars concluded that for low-income countries to develop and industrialize, an interventionist state was needed to detach these economies from the global capitalist system dominated by Europe and the West. The state, therefore, remained at the core of development discourses.

Neoliberalism gained ascendancy in the 1980s and 1990s. According to Clune (2013), neoliberalism refers economic ideas that favour a free market system characterized by privatization state assets and deregulation of markets. With the broadening scope of development in the 1980s (now beginning to branch into environmental sustainability concerns, ecological linkages, the human development component focusing on human rights and gender dynamics among others), the emergence of neoliberalism at the end of the cold war lessened the state's interventionist role and encouraged the state to be more of a facilitator of laissez-faire market policies (Shumba, 2016). The role of the state was heavily constrained and diminished. This helps to understand the dominance of the market-led growth approach post-independence in Zimbabwe particularly in the Lancaster house constitution (the 1980s -1990s) and adoption of ESAP 1992. Trade liberalisation and privatization efforts aimed at creating a global market had far-reaching impacts such as aggravated poverty and increased national debts and this development approach ultimately failed.

After the failure of market-led growth, the development discourse shifted to the miracle of the Asian economies and with the over-arching developmental state paradigm, the state's role was resuscitated (Williams, 2014). With the state demonstrating the potential to contribute to development again, Williams (2014) asserts that the developmental state approach presented itself as a vital scheme to realise development and this strategy is still relevant in the contemporary world. She also asserts that the development landscape has become more broad and complex given the wave of democratization, environmental and ecological concerns, human dimensions of development and the sustainability of development outcomes. This is the current global landscape in which the state has the potential to achieve developmental goals.

Developmental State in the Context of the East Asian Miracle

The concept of a 'developmental state' gained prominence with the success stories of rapid economic growth exhibited by the East Asian countries (Johnson, 1982; Evans, 1995) as such the East Asian economies are central to literature on the development state. A developmental state is conceptualized as a state with an orientation towards and capacity to achieve development – the state utilizes this capacity to attain development outcomes (Musamba, 2010; Routley, 2012; Fritz and Menocal, 2007 and Vu, 2007). In some cases, developmental states are defined solely on the basis that they have attained economic growth. However, although a developmental state needs to exhibit economic growth not all countries with economic growth can be defined as developmental states. Mkandawire (2001), argued that a development state

should not only be identified by its status of achieving economic growth because it can also fail to achieve development. What qualifies a developmental state is its commitment to achieving development (Woo-Cummings, 1999). The development state, therefore, has two characteristics namely capacity and political will to attain development. The concept is relevant to this study because it exposes the significance of state-led agricultural development and agricultural growth (This will be explored in the following section). These are the two aspects this research is focusing on (state-led agricultural policy intervention and its impact on food production in the context of maize cropping).

Drawing from the experience of the East Asian countries, the concept has four major characteristics namely an autonomous bureaucracy, a strong interventionist state committed to achieving development, a relationship of mutual benefits between the state and capitalists in the industry that produces policy interventions that promote growth (Johnson, 1982; Evans, 1995 and Fritz and Menocal 2007). The model of the East Asian economies has sparked debate over the successful replication of these economies' success to Africa. Mkandawire (2001) asserts that African states have the potential and capability to be developmental and there have been illustrations of these countries post-colonialism. The most prominent developmental state on the African continent being Botswana.

Routley (2012) contents that the industrial development of the East Asian states has been attributed to land reform and agricultural production as powerful precursors. van Donge, Henley, and Lewis (2009) compared East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa and contend that agrarian reform is an important step before states begin industrializing because, in the former, agricultural reform increased rural incomes and the level of well-being which had the effect of massively reducing poverty. Henley (2010) goes a step further and highlights that the success of agricultural reform in East Asia was because agricultural reform was broad-based reaching the majority of the population as opposed to the case in Kenya where land reform was elitist. Land reform in Zimbabwe was manipulated by the ruling ZANU-PF party and its loyalists yet it still managed to be broad-based by benefitting the greater part of the country's population. However, the people that benefitted were unable to utilize the land leading to reduced incomes, lower productivity and development failure.

The Role of Agriculture in Development

The role of agriculture in development has generated rich literature. Development literature has pointed to the significance of agricultural production for economic transformation from the

1950s to the 1970s. However, agriculture lost its prominence in the 1980s and 1990s but soon regained it in the new millennium (Dethier and Effenberger, 2011). Agricultural developmental literature is divided into two schools of thought namely - agriculture-first approaches on one hand and agro-pessimism views on the other. The former emphasizes agriculture as a key economic sector contributing to economic growth through food provision from a poverty eradication and food security perspective, labour absorption through employment and labour surplus creation in low-income countries. The latter argues that agriculture is not necessarily an important precursor to economic growth as increasing agricultural production can be replaced by food imports.

Agriculture-First Approach

Agricultural production is the centrepiece of the expansion of capital and industrialization (World Bank, 2008). In classical economic theory, agriculture plays a significant role in the early stages of the economic development of low-income countries whereby it contributes to national income, provides employment to the majority of the labour force and reduces poverty through the production of food (Mellor, 2001; Diao et al., 2006; Dethier and Effenberger, 2011). Economic development was considered to be a process of transforming from a traditional primary sector to a modern industrial sector (Adelman 2001). As a result, developing countries have dual economies meaning they possess a traditional agricultural- and a modern industrial sector (Signer, 1979; Adelman, 1984 and Diao et al., 2006). This transformation from a primary sector to a modern sector occurred in two major ways. Lewis (1954) and later, Ranis and Fei (1961) argued that there is surplus labour that is produced in the primary agricultural sector and this surplus is forced to move into the industrial sector due to lowered agricultural production and the incentive of higher wages in the modern sector – this movement generates economic development. Schultz (1953) asserted the importance of food supply for economic growth by arguing that agriculture provides subsistence for the population at large and more specifically the labour force. In support of this Lewis (1954) and Hayami (2001) asserted that successful industrialization goes hand in hand with increased food production. For economies to adopt a development trajectory they have to first secure high food production and access to the adequate food supply for non-agricultural sectors thereby resulting in poverty reduction.

Johnston and Mellor (1961) and Singer (1979) argue that beyond the provision of labour and food, agriculture creates production and consumption linkages critical for economic growth. First, agriculture is one of the major sources of raw materials in non-agricultural

production or the manufacturing industry aside from mining. Second, agricultural goods can be exported in exchange for capital goods and foreign earnings. Third, through increased production, farmers can general income, particularly in the rural areas. In Africa, agriculture contributes about 70 to 80 per cent of employment, about 40 per cent of export earnings, 30 per cent of GDP and about 30 per cent of foreign exchange earnings (Commission for Africa, 2005). Adelman (1984) argued that it is small-to-medium-size farmers that create these production and consumption linkages because they have a higher likelihood of utilizing domestic goods contributing to the domestic economy as opposed to largescale farmers who are prone to importing machinery and inputs internationally at the detriment of the local economy.

Diao et al. (2006) contend that agricultural growth accounted for the successful transformation of Asian and American countries economic development – similarly for African economies to transform into modern economies they must develop the agricultural sector and reduce poverty first. Although agriculture played an important role in the economic growth of Asian and Latin American economies, attempts by African economies to replicate this success have largely failed prompting concerns over the efficacy of agriculture as a primary driver of development. It is from this thinking that the agro-pessimism approach emerged. development.

Agro-Pessimism Approach

Agro-pessimism emerged with the advocates of liberalization and neo-populists in the 1970s who saw excessive state intervention and weak agricultural policies as the sources of the agrarian crisis that was being faced at the time (Sender and Smith 1984). Neo-populism went a step further and argued that food security at a household level had been undermined by the discrimination of smallholders by agricultural policies that were more export-oriented (World Bank 2007; Hyden 2006). Most significantly, a disjuncture from the traditional agriculture-led growth emerged in the global landscape where agriculture played an important role in the development of Asian and Latin American economies yet attempts by African economies to replicate this success largely failed.

Gardner (2005) researched 52 developing economies from 1980 to 2000 and found that agriculture is not a primary driver of growth in terms of GDP per capita. However, Oyi (2010) argues that the agro-pessimism approach is founded on a fallacy if rigorous consideration is made to the quality of agricultural data and statistics of food production. By invoking the work of Sender (1999), proves that annual agricultural growth rates in low-income economies

between 1965 and 1995 were 2.4 per cent in comparison to the now developed capitalist economies who recorded an annual growth rate of 1.5 per cent at the outset of their industrialization. This complements Self and Grabowski (2007) who established that from 1960 to 1995, agricultural productivity had a positive impact on GDP per capita. To resolve the matter, The World Bank (2008) published a report that drew on the literature (Adelman, 1984, 2001 and Eswaran and Kotwal, 1993 among others) and suggest that since the global economy is made of both developed and less developed economies, agriculture plays a lesser role in the economic activity of the former but for the latter, agriculture has the potential to drive economic growth. This conclusion reinforces the potential for agriculture as an engine for development through poverty reduction, employment creation and food security provision.

Contextualising Land Reform and Agrarian Transformation

The concept of land reform has gone through many changes in history. Given it serves as an instrument of state in the agricultural sector, land reform plays a significant role in the development discourses in the context of power politics. Land reform is defined differently by scholars but it is essentially about redistributing or reallocating land ownership and or rights - who the reallocation benefits is usually what distinguishes the many definitions of the concept (White, Borras Jr. and Hall, 2014)

White, Borras Jr. and Hall (2014) defined land reform as an effort to redress historical imbalances in the allocation, ownership and utilization of land – and these imbalances may be caused by land dispossession as a consequence of colonialism, system of landlords or earlier land reform. As a result, different national land policies are shaped by the unique experiences of each country. The authors argue that land reform also aims to enhance farm productivity and its contribution to economic growth; and reform tenure structures as a means of fostering agrarian transitions from primary largescale production to either capitalist, modernized, smallholder or collective systems. This view is supported by Griffin, Khan, and Ickowitz (2002: 280) who specifically define redistributive land reform as, "programmes that redistribute land ownership from large private landowners to small peasant farmers and landless agricultural workers . . . [and] are thus concerned with a redistribution of wealth". Given that land redistribution or reform is a largescale enterprise that is difficult to carry out without the influence of the state, land reform is undeniably a political question (Warriener, 1969).

However, land reform is often used synonymously with agrarian transformation and it is difficult to make a distinction between the two (Jacoby and Jacoby 1971). Nevertheless, White, Borras Jr. and Hall (2014) espouse that agrarian reform is a more comprehensive concept that, in addition to land reform, encourages access to technical knowledge and expertise, credit facilities and viable markets among others, that capacitate landowners to boost productivity and improve the sustainability of livelihoods.

Since the emergence of the development discourse post-WWII, the state was the primary agent of development meaning the state was the key implementer of many land reforms (China, the former Soviet Union and East Asian countries inter alia) rendering land reform to be conceptualised as state-led. Additionally, in the post-colonial space, land was declared the sovereign property of the state in the context of nation-building and state-making (Wily, 2012). Therefore, state-led land reform was carried out globally and was particularly successful in East Asia (Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and China) as it created a large peasantry that was oriented towards the market and committed to producing surpluses (Lipton, 2010). This resulted in the diminishing role of the state in favour of the market especially considering that during the cold war, land reform was a political arsenal in the ideological war between the liberal USA and the Soviet Union (Warriner, 1969 and Sobhan, 1993). The state-led approach was abandoned after the triumph of the USA, land reform became privatized with the introduction of neoliberal policies, deregulation and the implementation of ESAPs. There was a significant shift from state-led to market-led land reform (MLAR). However, the MLAR approach was short-lived as it resulted in growing national debt, challenges in land tenure structures and rising food insecurity and unemployment.

In 2002, Griffin, Khan, and Ickowitz (2002) published their study on land reform making a case for 'radical' land reform as a viable replacement for market-led land reform. They argued that the MLAR had failed to transform the structure (land holdings) and power of landownership. The system of land control that is the 'willing-buyer willing-seller conditionality, was and still is inimical to pro-poor development – as a result, the redistribution of landholding will be limited. However, the state has the power to arbitrarily confiscate land and redistribute it accordingly. This signalled the resurgence of the state as a central actor in land reform.

Land reforms have been implemented globally with varied results. Although radical, Zimbabwe's land reform program has been the most comprehensive in the context of total land

holdings redistributed and the number of beneficiaries. Similarly, land reform in the Philippines also boasts significantly successful results, while in countries like South Africa and Brazil, it has not been as successful (White, Borras Jr. and Hall, 2014). Land reform and agrarian reform discourses reiterate the importance of land in the context of development. However, they also point to the inadequacy of current land reform policies. For instance, according to Lipton (2010), land reform has benefitted about 1.5 billion people with farmland and alleviated their poverty status yet land inequalities remain in the third world countries. From this perspective, I argue that the command agricultural policy framework adopted in Zimbabwe 2016 – 2019 was not an appropriate policy response and as a result, it has had negative rather than positive implications on food production.

Land Reform and Agriculture in Zimbabwe

From 1995 to 2020, Zimbabwe's expenditure in the agricultural sector was not informed by any active agricultural policy framework. The country has had two policy frameworks in agriculture namely the Zimbabwe Agricultural Policy Framework from 1995 to 2012 and the Comprehensive Agricultural Policy Framework which was drafted in 2012 (The World Bank Zimbabwe Public Expenditure Report, 2019; Draft National Agriculture Policy Framework, 2018). This explains the country's trend of implementing seemingly impromptu policy interventions in the agricultural sector particularly, the topical land reform program.

In Zimbabwean agrarian development discourses, land reform occurred within two major phases namely the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme and the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme Phase II, also referred to as radical land reform (Thomas, 2003; Centre for Public Impact; World Bank, 2019). The former was an outcome of the Lancaster House discussions in 1980 and ran until 1998. This land reform was more market-oriented with more engagement from private actors than the government. The latter was implemented in 2000 and it was more state-centred and more radical.

Literature shows that radical land reform is intricately tied to any discussion on the state or agriculture in Zimbabwe (Moyo, 2011; Sachikonye, 2003, 2005). It triggered the shift from market-led back to state-led land reform. FTLRP offers a framework for understanding and analyzing state-directed agricultural reform in the country. Helliker (2011: 349) points out that there are two polarized positions on land reform in Zimbabwe. The first position asserts that the state-directed intervention caused a decline in agricultural output, redistributed land benefitted the political black elites (ZANU-PF cronies) and it marked the radicalization of the

Zimbabwean state resulting in severe food shortages (Raftopoulos and Phimister 2004; Sachikonye, 2005).

More recently, the second position points to the complexities in and some successes of state-led agricultural reform in the country, particularly, its redistributive nature (Moyo and Yeros, 2007; Mamdani, 2008; Moyo, 2011; Scoones et al., 2011) and how that, "opened up opportunities for black small-scale farmers" (Southall, 2011: 83). This research aims to analyze the impact of command agriculture on some of these black small-scale farmers that were beneficiaries of FTLRP in 2000. It also aims to assess the impact of one particular state-led agricultural intervention, command agriculture, on food production. The literature points out that the challenge of food shortages is a direct consequence of the radical land reform programme of 2000. There is, therefore, a strong link between this research on command agriculture with land reform because this research is dealing with food insecurity, a challenge that is in great part, shaped by the land reform programme.

Agrarian reform involves the transformation of the structure and relations of production as well as inputs such as working capital, investment capital, technical expertise and market facilities (Bandyopadhyay, 1996: 679). The FTLRP in Zimbabwe radically transformed the structure and relations of agriculture on a large scale. The current landscape of agriculture in which 'command agriculture' is analyzed is shaped by the radical land reform of 2000. For instance, the Land Tenure Act of 1969 allocated 15.5 million hectares of the most arable land to about six thousand white minority commercial farmers, 16.4 million hectares to about 700 thousand black families and 1.4 million hectares to black smallholder commercial farmers and by 1980, the white minority-owned 42 per cent of the country's total agricultural land (de Villiers, 2003: 13). For Moyo (1995) and Shumba (2016), 6 700 white farmers controlled approximately 47 per cent of the land (including the most fertile land) and 700 000 native farmers occupied the marginal land usually in reserves. Zimbabwe's radical land reform between 2000 and 2002 was on a large scale, so much so that 11 million hectares were redistributed from approximately 4 000 largescale white farmers to around 300 thousand smallholder farmers bringing the total redistributed land to 14,5 million hectares (Sachikonye, 2003: 227).

However, although land reform was redistributive, it had major implications on agricultural labour. According to Chambati (2013) and Degeorgies and Reilly, (2007: 576), 75 per cent of the total black labour force in agriculture were Zimbabweans and the remaining 25

per cent was made up of migrant labour by 2000; 200 000 out of an estimated total of 320 000 agricultural labourers in farms together with their households were displaced as a result of FTLRP in 2000. By 2005, close to 90 000 former farmworker families did not enjoy 'secure tenure' in the rural areas (Moyo, 2005: 14). This change in labour had implications on agriculture and food production.

The literature also comparatively examines market-led and state-led land reform. The Zimbabwean experience showed that the former was not capable of changing and improving the economic and political structure of relations between large white landowners and black poor small-scale farmers from the 1980s to the 1990s. For instance, the 1982 target for resettlements was 162 000 households yet only 60 000 were resettled by 1995 and only around 3.4 million hectares were redistributed (de Villiers, 2003: 18-19). According to Lahiff, Borras, and Kay (2007: 15), 16.6 per cent of the total agricultural land was redistributed to only 5.83 per cent of the total number of households that stood as potential beneficiaries from 1980-96. Compared to the radical state-led agricultural reform of 2000, this was a far cry as illustrated above. The key takeaway from this section is that the current landscape of command agriculture is shaped by radical land reform.

Contextualising Smallholder Farming

The land reform discourse exposes the debate on farm size and its centrality to state-led agrarian transformation, agricultural production and sustainable food provision. This debate essentially focuses on the merits and demerits of both largescale and smallholder agriculture productions respectively but more in favour of smallholder or small-scale agriculture. This research targets smallholder farmers also known as small-scale farmers. These farmers can be either commercial or subsistent. Small-scale producers are defined in various terms in literature, however, they are usually characterized based on three factors namely the size of the farm, purpose and level of commodity production and the level of reliance on family labour (FAO, 2013). This research study uses the terms small-scale, smallholder and subsistence farmer interchangeably and defines small-scale base on FAO's (2013) conceptualization that is, a small-scale farm occupies an area of land that is smaller than a normal farm for production purposes, utilizes little to no mechanization during farming and mainly depends on family labour for production.

Adelman (1984) propounded the agriculture-led industrialization (ADLI) and argued that small-to-medium-size farmers have a higher likelihood of utilizing domestic goods

contributing to the domestic economy as opposed to largescale farmers who are prone to importing machinery and inputs internationally as the detriment of the local economy. Similar sentiments were echoed in the new millennium by the La Via Campesina. According to La Via Campesina (2009), small-scale farmers can provide food to feed the world in environmentally friendly ways. Additionally, in 2009 the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), produced a report that was informed by four hundred experts. The research found that small-scale mixed farming improves the livelihoods of the poor particularly in rural areas, preserves the biodiversity of agro-ecological systems as opposed to largescale monoculture which is unsustainable. (IAASTD, 2009). There has therefore been a large call for embracing smallholder farming as opposed to largescale farming. This research targets smallholder farmers under the command agricultural scheme for analyzing production trends

Smallholder Farming in Zimbabwe

Based on the FTLRP, large commercial forms were restructured and replaced with rural and communal farmers. Under the A1 farming model, smallholders occupied land less than 10 hectares and under the A2 farming model, farmers occupied arable land more than 10 hectares which was grouped into small, medium and large smallholder farms (Cliffe et. al 2014; Mugabe et. al, 2014; Mugabe and Etienne, 2016). The main distinction between small-scale farmers under A1 and A2 farming models is that the latter was intended to be an emerging capitalist class of elite black farmers with commercial viability while the former was simply meant to be subsistence farmers. According to ZIMSTATS (2019), the average size of small-scale commercial farms in Zimbabwe is 148 hectares. In addition, some of these farms are even less than 50 hectares and with the existence of subsistence, actual land cultivated by small scale farmers is even lower than 10 hectares. This study, therefore, defines a smallholder or small-scale farm as a farm that is between one and 148 hectares that can be utilized for commercial production under the A2 farming model and subsistence farming under the A1 farming model. These smallholder farms also have very little to no farm mechanization especially for those resettled farmers cultivating land for subsistence. The above will be used as the parameters for a small-scale farm in this study. Small-scale farmers are important in Zimbabwe's food system because small-scale agricultural producers have the largest share of the country's agricultural land, human population and agricultural yields. According to FAO (2012), an estimated 98 per cent of the farmers in the country are small-scale and they occupy and cultivate some 73 per cent of the land. They are also responsible for 80 per cent of the total production of maize

(CAPF, 2012; McKeon, 2015; Echanove, 2017). With such a large group of small-scale farmers, the question of land tenure emerges.

According to Scoones (2020), the land tenure system in Zimbabwe is essentially 'multi-form' meaning, the country has different legal provisions and arrangements that cater to the diverse population of land users in the country who occupy the land for different purposes. From farmers, miners to those in search of land for housing. When it comes to agriculture, the Zimbabwean land tenure system is designed around A1 and A2 farms. The beneficiaries of land under A1 farms are given permits that are vague but obtain land free of charge whilst beneficiaries under A2 farms are given long lease contracts (usually 99-year leases) of which they are required to pay fees for renting their land (Moyo, 2011). There is therefore no tenure security for the majority of A1 and A2 farmers who gained their land under the land reform program because rather than privately owning their land, they are in actuality being rented the land they have. This explains the policy provision under command agriculture that those who misused their input packages stood the risk of having their farmland repossessed by the government. However, Scoones (2020) argues that private ownership of land does not necessarily mean there is land tenure security rather, the stability of the political system is a critical factor to ensure land tenure security. In Zimbabwe, the source of land tenure insecurity is the absence of a definitive political settlement on the land. Land is still a politicized issue in the country.

However, these farmers face a myriad of challenges despite producing the largest share of agricultural output. Small-scale farmers are predominantly located in the rural areas and the farmers are poor, they have little to no competition. They have little to no access to markets and financial support structures, most of them are not integrated into commercial production activities, they face adverse weather conditions like droughts caused by climate change and are usually prone to land dispossessions due to insecure land tenure rights (FAO, 2014; World Bank, 2016; Echanove, 2017). The command agriculture program was implemented to increase food production to ensure food security therefore this research examined the impact of command agriculture on these challenges faced by small-scale farmers since solving these challenges is likely to ensure the aim of increasing food production. Additionally, small-scale farmers have gained a reputation for problematizing agrarian policies and providing solutions for global food systems (McMichael 2014).

Food Security, Technology Adoption and the Green Revolution

The conceptualization of the term food security emerged at the 1974 World Food Conference however, the contemporary definition of the concept was adopted at the World Food Summit in 1996 and it reads, "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO, 2006: 1). This means that to achieve food security, a country usually has to fulfil the prerequisite of four universally acknowledged conditions.

These conditions include first, having a high level of production that ensures that food is constantly available. Second, ensuring that a country has sustainable access to food that can be gained through production, social and economic means. Third, ensuring that food can be utilized through diversification of diets, and fourth, a guarantee of a certain level of stability or simply, ensuring that the aforementioned three conditions are achieved at all times (Busch and Lacy, 1984; FAO, 2008). Therefore, this definition demonstrates that there are multiple dimensions to food security, however, what is most important is how to achieve food security and this is in part dependent on the frames of the concept (Wittman et al., 2010; McMichael and Schneider, 2011).

Food security has three framings namely hunger, risk and community (Mooney and Hunt, 2009). When conceptualized from the perspective of hunger, the problem of food security is taken to mean that there is a lack of production and poor trade leading to hunger. To solve this problem from the hunger perspective it is important to increase production and improve trade. When conceptualized from the perspective of risk, the problem of food security is taken as a consequence of climate variables, poor and usually unsafe food. To solve this challenge, there is a need to adopt genetically modified food seeds, climate-smart technologies in food production and accessing clean water. Lastly, when conceptualized from the community perspective, the food security challenge has more to do with enhancing local food systems, sustainable utilization of ecological resources and improving the wellbeing of the community rather than preventing or ending hunger (Mooney and Hunt, ibid).

Food security measures in Zimbabwe seek to end hunger and mitigate the risk of food insecurity to evolve into a famine. Command agriculture was implemented to increase production and limit the import of maize grain. This research recognises the applicability of

the two approaches as Zimbabwe has been predominantly influenced by the African green revolution approach from independence to the late 1990s.

Additionally, these two approaches coincide with two dominant food regimes that characterize food security discourses namely, post-colonial development through foreign aid under US hegemony and the neoliberal market supremacy under the World Trade Organization (WTO) (McMichael, 2015: 308) respectively. Current Zimbabwean agrarian food production is shaped by these food regimes.

The African Green Revolution: Zimbabwe's Maize-based Revolution

There have been two agricultural revolutions in Zimbabwe, the first one began in the 1950s and ran until the 1980s and the second began in the 1980s and ended in the mid-1990s. The former was an initiative by the settler colonialists who controlled white-owned largescale commercial farms while the latter was driven by the increasing number of small-scale farmers (Eicher, Tawonezvi and Rikuni, 2006). The maize-based revolution of Zimbabwe was characterised by the adoption of technological improvements to small-scale agricultural production, for instance, the Zimbabwean government switched from using traditional maize seed to hybrid maize production, which directly increased the average production of maize in smallholder farms (Alumira and Rusike, 2005). Under this scheme, small-scale farmers were provided with maize input seeds to improve food security so much so that agricultural production peaked in 1979 and 1986 as a direct result.

However, the success of the maize-based revolution in Zimbabwe can best be attributed to a host of aspects that worked closely together. These aspects include a mix of government policies, agricultural institutions, political support to the agricultural sector, the availability and adoption of relevant technologies and the development of human capital and infrastructure (transport roads, irrigation facilities and markets among others). However, this revolution ended up failing in the 1990s. The Zimbabwe maize-based revolution failed due to negligence in developing the productive capacity of the scheme especially in the area of sustainable financial institutions with access to credit that was open to smallholder farmers, poor research and marketing strategies. These challenges were coupled with improper maize pricing policies. Command agriculture shares many similarities with the Zimbabwe maize-based revolution such as the insistence on the improvement of smallholder farmers, the objective of increasing grain output and the provision of inputs packaged in the form of hybrid maize seed. The

research examined whether the command agriculture scheme's objective of achieving food security was affected by the challenges that dismantled the maize-based revolution.

Conclusion

The literature review above contextualizes the major discussions on state-led agriculture development. By engaging literature from the perspective of the state's role in development thinking, land reform, agrarian transformation and agriculture's role in development discourses, and food security, I argue that role of the state has always been central in any discussion on development. This literature review indicates the relevance of this research. The following section will discuss and explain the methodology process utilized in this study.

Chapter Three: Conducting Research on Agriculture Virtually

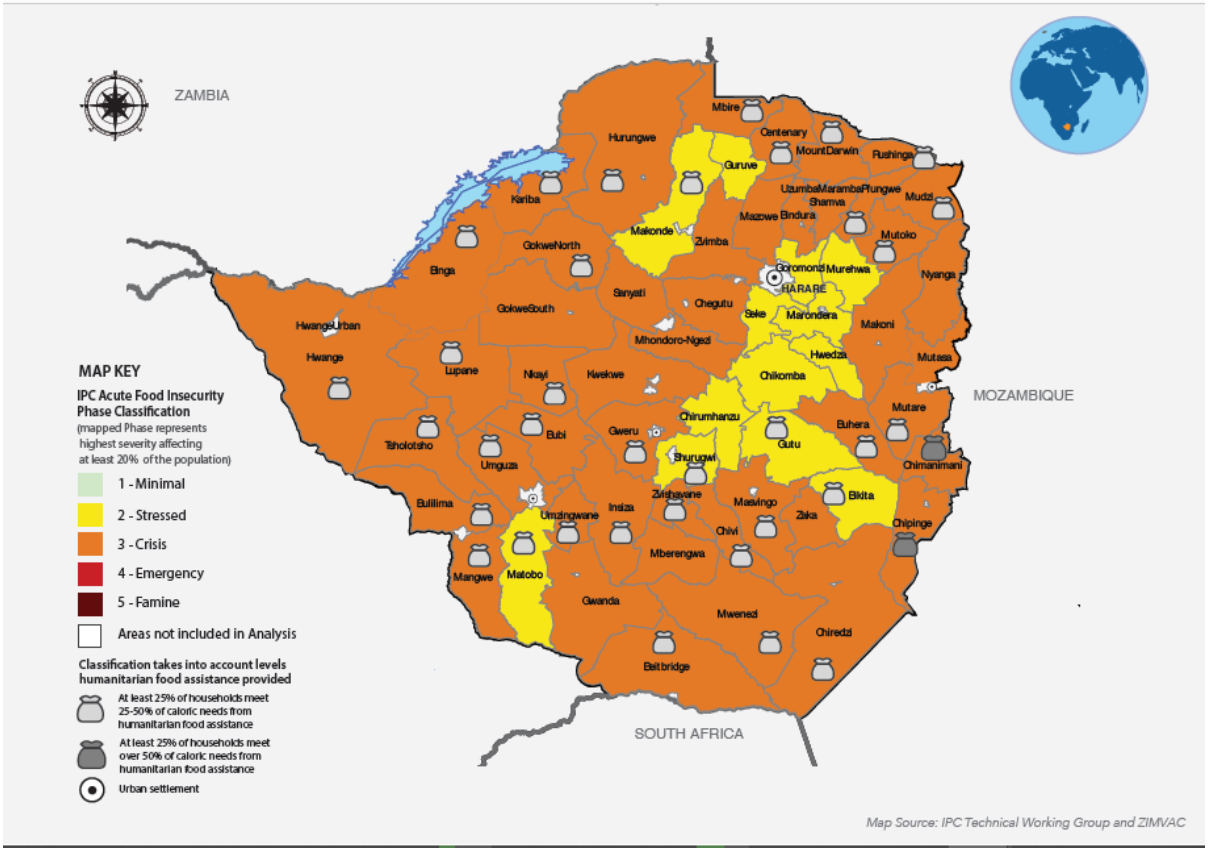
Introduction

The study focuses on the Makoni rural district in the Manicaland province as the research case study. Makoni rural district falls within region IIB agricultural zone of Zimbabwe which engages in maize agricultural production, was a beneficiary of the command agriculture program and the area was identified as food insecure. This chapter details the context of the research study area and goes on to explain the research methods of data collection that were utilized in this study.

Understanding the Research Area

Zimbabwe is divided into five agricultural zones and the case study, Makoni rural district falls within region II which specializes in intensive maize cultivation. Region II is divided into two namely IIA and IIB which both lie in the middle and northern areas of Zimbabwe with an annual rainfall ranging from 750 to 1 000 millimetres (United Nations, 2009; World Bank, 2019). The region is agriculturally diverse as it is characterized by activities such as cotton, tobacco and maize farming together with livestock production to name a few. The region also represents a considerable amount of smallholder farms as most largescale farms were converted into smallholder farms by the FTLRP in 2000. In recent years, the region has been affected by droughts making it prone to food insecurity. As a result, farmers have been dependent on the market to supply their food. Additionally, a growing number of smallholder farmers have been engaging in tobacco farming at the expense of maize cultivation since the former has higher profit margins, further contributing to the food insecurity challenge (MacNairn, 2014). The research is conducted in the Makoni rural district which was facing a crisis of food insecurity based on the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) (IPC, 2020). This is illustrated below.

Map 3.1: Current IPC acute food insecurity for June – September 2019 (Zimbabwe)



Source: Zimbabwe IPC acute food insecurity analysis (2019)

Methodology

Sampling

Ethics are standards that govern human interaction to ensure mutual respect and considerations for the needs of people involved in that interaction (Singer, 2000). The researcher applied for ethics clearance and research approval from the university before conducting the research. The research targeted 10 expert respondents for interviews and 10 farmers to answer a mini-survey. The selection of research participants was done using purposive and convenience sampling. The former was used to identify and select experts and convenience were used for respondents who were willing and able to take part in the research. For instance, farmers who were beneficiaries of command agriculture. The samples of farmers and experts were drawn from a pool of political economy analysts, smallholder farms, government officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Rural Development, Grain Marketing Board, and private sector stakeholders in command agriculture, academics as well as NGO's concerned with food production and agricultural development. I identified the

potential respondents through government ministry websites, academic experts from university websites, professional social networking applications such as Twitter and LinkedIn, and the local press. The contact details of the respondents were easily available on the above platform which made it easy for me to approach them. Upon reaching out to this pool of participants, they referred me to other potential participants until I had reached the total number of respondents I required.

The data collection process was conducted virtually and the respondents were approached for participation in the study through telephonic means. I initially phoned the potential respondents and introduced myself, explained to them the research I was working on and asked if they were willing and available to take part in the study. After this, I provided the participants with a participant information sheet that clearly described the aim of the research and a consent form to confirm their participation. Respondents who agreed to participate in the research were asked to give their consent to which some gave written consent and others verbal consent. The respondents that consented to the research study were informed about the politicization of the command agricultural program in light of sensitive information and advised that they can withdraw at any time from participating in the research if they wished to. The researcher offered the respondents confidentiality; the researcher did not indicate what one respondent said to another or other respondents. The researcher also offered the respondents the option to remain anonymous in the research write-up through the use of pseudonyms. The respondents' names have been replaced with pseudonyms as indicated in the breakdown of the respondents' participation information below for data storage purposes.

Data Collection Methods

To answer the research question, the study utilized both primary and secondary data. A mini-survey, in-depth interviews and archival data collection methods were used to collect as much data from as many sources as possible. Document research of archival data was utilized as a foundation for the research study including data from the Grain Marketing Board of Zimbabwe on the productive output of grain, the department of Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services (AGRITEX) on rural development issues in light of the implementation of command agriculture and the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Rural Development on implementation processes, and Zimbabwe National Statistics (Zimstats) on beneficiaries and agricultural production statistics. Additionally, document research included data from the World Food Program (WFP) and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) on food insecurity trends in the research area. The local and international press was also included to

source information on the impact of and politics around command agriculture and the role of the Zimbabwean government in agriculture. Document research was carried out online given the persistence of the current lockdowns in place as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic that prohibits travelling.

A mini-survey of ten smallholder farms in the Makoni district was carried out to follow up on document research. The mini-survey aims were to identify if all farmers benefitted from the program, how much they benefitted and how much they produced from 2016 to 2019. The mini-survey helped the researcher to form an understanding of the farmers and other issues that will give context to the area of focus which may be critical when analysing data. Given the continued national lockdowns as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic, this mini-survey was also carried out online using social media, WhatsApp and telephone communication, WhatsApp and telephony being the most accessible forms of communication. Like all the participants in this study, I initially approached them via telephone as noted above however, for the survey exercise I sent the survey questionnaire via WhatsApp as six of them had indicated that it was their preferred mode of communication. The other four participants preferred to use electronic mail. To answer the research question, I asked the farmers questions on their productive output before the command agriculture program was introduced and after it had been introduced. The data I was looking for was statistical so that I could examine changes in productive output levels. To determine the extent of the impact the program had, I asked the respondents questions about access to farming inputs and they noted some challenges and opportunities for improvement. The survey could have been more in-depth and rich had it been administered in person. Nevertheless, I was also looking for data on how the respondents perceived the role of the government in agriculture to draw out the impact the policy and program had on an individual level. Below is a breakdown of the farmers who participated in the research. It is important to note that I failed to pursue the issue of tenure during data collection which I conducted virtually as a result, the terms 'own' and 'renting' are used loosely to describe the occupation of land and do not necessarily reflect the type of tenure these farmers have on the land that they are cultivating. Additionally, I failed to make a distinction between farming models of A1 and A2 when characterizing the farmers who participated in the research as broken down below.

Table 3.1: Break-down of Participant Farmers

Farmer participant	**Position**	**Significance / Comment**	**Mode of Interviewing**	**Means of verification**

Farmer One	Farmer / Owner / Male / 42 years	Owns 200 hectares	E-mail	Referral
Farmer Two	Farmer / Agricultural Extension Worker / Female / 51 years	Owns 6 hectares	WhatsApp	Referral
Farmer Three	Farmer / Male / 40 years	Owns 60 hectares	E-mail	Referral
Farmer Four	Farmer / Production Manager/ Male / 50 years	Owns 520 hectares	WhatsApp	Referral / Google / Twitter
Farmer Five	Farmer / Male / 36 years	Owns 300 hectares	WhatsApp	Referral
Farmer Six	Farmer / Male / 35 years	Owns 30 hectares	WhatsApp	Referral
Farmer Seven	Farmer / Entrepreneur / Male / 28 years	Leased 50 hectares	WhatsApp	Referral
Farmer Eight	Farmer / Accountant / Male / 35	Owns 176 hectares	WhatsApp / e-mail	Referral / Local Press / Twitter
Farmer Nine	Farmer	Renting	WhatsApp	Referral
Farmer Ten	Farmer	Renting	WhatsApp	Referral

To supplement data from both document research and the mini-survey, the researcher carried out in-depth interviews targeting ten expert respondents. These interviews were drawn from a pool of respondents that included academics, agricultural policy analysts, journalists reporting on command agriculture key informants from non-governmental organizations concerned with food security and agricultural development in Zimbabwe. Formal requests for these interviews was carried out online via e-mail and telephonic clearly explaining the aim of the research. The interviews were carried out online through Zoom and WhatsApp.

The Zoom application was the most used platform during data collection followed by the WhatsApp application and lastly e-mails. Since the research was conducted online, Twitter and LinkedIn as well as professional references were used to identify and confirm the professions of the potential research respondents to ensure the authenticity of the respondents. I used government websites to verify the professions and expertise of the respondents from government, university websites served as a means of verification for academic experts and I the local news press verify one of the respondents who is a journalist. The data I was looking for was more in-depth focusing on; (1) unpacking the strength, weaknesses and feasibility of the command agriculture program from a policy formulation, implementation and management point of view. (2) understanding the government's nature and role in agriculture from a development point of view and also unpacking the likely motivations for the introduction of command agriculture and; (3) the impact this program has had on food security. Below is a breakdown of the interview respondents who took part in the research.

Table 3.2: Break-down of Participant Interviews

Interview participant	**Organisation**	**Position**	**Significance**	**Mode of Interviewing**	**Means of Verification**
Agricresp One	Government	Agricultural Practitioner / Government Official	Provides a governmental perspective	Zoom	Linkedin and referral.
Agricresp Two	Independent	Zimbabwean Entrepreneur in Agriculture, Mining and Timber Processing	Provides a non-governmental perspective	Zoom	Linkedin and referral.
Agricresp Three	Department of Mechanizatio n	Accountant / Farmer	Provides a practical perspective	Zoom	Referral
Agricresp Four	AGRITEX	Agricultural Extension Worker	Provides a practical perspective on operations Provides an academic and	WhatsApp	Referral and google

Agricresp Five	University of Johannesburg	Agricultural Researcher / Activist / Scholar	activist perspective	Zoom	Referral, Literature and Linkedin
Agricresp Six	University of Zimbabwe	Public Policy Expert / Lecturer	Provides a policy analysis perspective	WhatsApp / Zoom	Referral, personal network and television
Agricresp Seven	The Herald newspaper	Journalist – Senior Reporter	Provides a journalistic perspective and social commentary	WhatsApp	Referral, The Herald and Linkedin
Agricresp Eight	Sovereign Wealth Funds Africa / UJ	Principle Investigator	Provides perspectives on government investments and funding	Zoom	Referral / Email
Agricresp Nine	Midlands State University	Accountant	Academic and youth perspectives Offered experiences of engaging in command agriculture	Zoom	Referral
Agricresp Ten	PHI Commodities / Inscor Group	Operations Officer		Zoom	Referral

To measure the impact of command agriculture on food security broadly and food production more specifically, I considered four factors, the criteria of assessment and the indicator of the impact. This is detailed in the table below. The data collected from both interviews and the small sample of farmers in the Makoni rural district was analysed thematically.

Table 3.3: Breakdown of the Criteria for Assessment – Impact on Food Production

Factor Under Consideration	**Criteria**	**Indicator**
Production	Has the levels of maize production maintained, increased or decreased after	Farmers' production output of maize. Quality of maize produced

	the implementation of command agriculture to ensure food security.	(Quantity versus quality)
Role of the State (Governance)	Has the government managed to provide agricultural support to farmers	Access to agricultural production inputs from the government
Imports (Economics)	Has the levels of agricultural imports maintained, increased or decreased after the implementation of command agriculture.	Maize production surplus from production output
Environmental considerations	What factors might have affected the production of maize under the command agriculture program from 2016 - 2019	Climate change, rainfall patterns. Politics and or corruption.

Limitations and Challenges

The study has contextual constraints that limited the implementation of the data collection process. Due to COVID-19 related restrictions, data collection was carried out virtually. The identification and selection of respondents were also carried out online and although the criteria for selection tried to be objective as possible, I recognize the existence of a sampling bias as one of the major limitations that resulted from the contextual constraints. To limit this bias, I depended on references to verify the potential respondents' qualifications to participate in the research. This applied to both farmers and experts.

Secondly, the farmers' sample size (amounting to ten respondents) was too small to be considered a standard survey whereby the generated statistics are just a fraction of the entire population in the Makoni rural district. Therefore, the evidence presented in this research study is not adequate for generalizations as this requires a broader and more representative sample population that incorporates variables like gender, productive capacity and sparse geographical aggregation to name a few. To overcome, this challenge, the researcher supplemented this evidence with data from documentary research, that is, statistical data from newspapers and non-governmental organizations.

Thirdly, the subject of command agriculture itself posed a limitation to the study. Command agriculture is a highly politicized issue considering the importance of land in Zimbabwe but more importantly the fact that it was a ZANU-PF government-led agricultural intervention and the issue of corruption related to the program. This was experienced during

data collection whereby most respondents were reluctant to take part in the research or answer interview questions adequately with elaborations. This resulted in poor data. Some of the respondents who had consented to participate in the research ended up withdrawing their participation due to the nature of the research study. This resulted in one of the major challenges this research study has faced which is a protracted period of data collection. The researcher mitigated this limitation and challenge by identifying and selecting more respondents to the research study so much so that I continued data collection until late February and continued to incorporate better quality interviews into the research study, replacing ones with poor quality in terms of data.

Lastly, one of the enduring challenges in collecting data was the limited access to bandwidth and a steady internet connection on the part of the respondents. Although the research for interviews required between 30 - 60 minutes and less than 30 minutes for surveys most people could not stay online for longer. Because of the lack of bandwidth and inability of some respondents (both interviewee's and survey participants) to use zoom call, data collection was very difficult. I overcame this problem by collecting data over a protracted period and some interviews had to be conducted on the WhatsApp platform using text format. For instance, there is an interview that was conducted from the 17th to the 25th of August and another that was conducted from the 22nd to the 29th of September using the WhatsApp text format. These limitations and challenges made it difficult to adequately evaluate the impact of command agriculture on food production in the Makoni rural district. Nevertheless, this study managed to mitigate these challenges and overcome these limitations to generate reasonable findings on the impact of command agriculture on food production in Zimbabwe. These findings are presented in the following two chapters.

Chapter Four: The Zimbabwean State's Role in Agricultural Development

"*The exceptionally poor performance of Zimbabwe's maize sector implies the existence of (...) policies and institutions that work against progress (...) and diminishing agricultural performance relative to other countries."*

Maize Production and Marketing in Zimbabwe USAID (2016; 2)

Introduction

This chapter examines the state's role in agriculture and specifically, its role in promoting food security under its command agricultural program. I examine the command agriculture policy framework – exploring contract farming provisions of the policy. Additionally, I examine the implementation of command agriculture and argue that the programme failed to achieve its objectives due to its weak policy framework. I also demonstrate that the state also contributed to the failure of the programme due to persistent state politics and corruption.

The Nature of the Zimbabwean State - State Politics in Agriculture

The character of the Zimbabwean state in this study is important because the state is made up of various actors that exercise the state's power for their interests. These actors include but are not limited to the person of president Emmerson Mnangagwa who supposedly came up with the command agriculture program, the military who have a vested interest in the ownership of land in the country but often clash with the police although both are state apparatus pointing to the persistence of factions within the ZANU-PF party-led government. Weber (1991; 78) describes a state as a human community with a monopoly over the use of violence within a bounded location. Factionalism in the ZANU-PF party-state exposes the issue of power struggles that ultimately influence land policy. For instance, the power struggle between the G40 faction led by former first lady Grace Mugabe against the current president's 'Lacoste' faction before the soft coup in 2017 that established the latter as the president of Zimbabwe (Mail&Guardian, 2018). The command agricultural program is highly politicized because the ZANU-PF ruling political party and its military dominance characterized the formulation and implementation of the policy intervention. Shumba (2016) argued that Zimbabwe is a predatory state that is defined by the dominance of the ruling party and support of the military, state-business and societal relations based on capture, patronage and violence.

The programme was critiqued as a poorly thought-out ZANU-PF government programme by the opposition party MDC and a source of accumulation for President Emmerson Mnangagwa and his cartel network in the agricultural sector (Sharara, 2016 and Maverick Citizen, 2021). This raises the question of the genuineness of the State to reform and develop agriculture within this study.

Zimbabwe is a dominant-party regime (Masunugure, 2011: 47) and since its independence, the country has failed to transform into a democratic state (Makumbe, 2006: 60). The ZANU-PF party has been in power for the past four decades. According to Moyo and Yeros (2007) and Moyo (2007), the adoption of radical land reform in the 1990s by the ZANU-PF led government, the political contestations with the opposition MDC in the late 1990s and the intensification of these contestations resulted in the emergence of a 'radicalised or authoritarian state' to describe Zimbabwe. According to Masunugure (2011: 48), dictators manipulate liberal democratic processes. The ZANU-PF party and former president, Robert Mugabe, radicalized land reform as a means of staying in power (Degeorges and Reilly, 2007) in the run-up to the 2000 elections contesting with the MDC opposition party. "Mugabe's ZANU-PF ran the election based on 'Land is the economy, the economy is the land' and thereby won the most 'violence-ridden' election in Zimbabwe's history" (de Villiers, 2003: 21). Similarly, the command agriculture policy was implemented just 2 years before the 2018 elections. This raises the question of whether the agricultural policy was used as political currency to extend the incumbent's stay in power.

One of the consequences of the radical land reform was the militarization of the Zimbabwean state considering the land reform aimed to appease war veterans. The military began to increasingly participate in and implement domestic operations namely "Operation Murambatsvina", "Operation Garikai" and "Operation Taguta/Sisuthi" (Solidarity Peace Trust, 2006). The extended role of the military in domestic affairs and operations resulted in widespread fear of the military. Under Operation Murambatsvina, the state-security organs including the police (Shale, 2006) destroyed all illegal infrastructure in residential areas leaving many people homeless. For instance, Mpofu (2010) researched the impact of the military programmes in Bulawayo and found that there were discrepancies in the delivery of public services and housing. According to Mpofu (2010;15), "While council (Bulawayo) records showed that 74,165 low-income earners lost their accommodation in the city due to OM (Operation Murambatsvina), there were only 600 names of the victims of OM on the waiting list…" Under Operation Garikai, the military managed the scheme of newly rebuilt houses

aimed at resettling people without houses but most of the military ended up being beneficiaries.[9] Under Operation Taguta/Sisuthi also known as the first command agriculture, the military managed the programme and provided labour to some of the farms. However, it was found that the army forced farmers to give up their maize surplus (Majoni, 2017). This reinforced the negative atmosphere of fear and intimidation associated with the presence of the military in any social operation.

This research found that the military played an intimidation role in the implementation of the 2016 command agricultural programme. One of the respondents asserted that "the military came in to coordinate the program. This has to be taken within the context where you have an increasingly authoritarian government" (interview with an academic researcher, 29 August 2020). Farmers were constantly harassed - the respondents from the survey pointed out that most agricultural extension workers and military personnel who came to inspect their farms had little to no knowledge of farming practices that made the cultivation process unbearable. The programme itself ignited fear and intimidation in the hearts of farmers so much so that most farmers withdrew from the programme in fear of the term 'command' and the possibility that if they did not deliver on their expectations, they will be dealt with in military fashion (IRIN Association, 2017; Majoni, 2017). Additionally, it is important to appreciate that the programme was not broad-based –it was never meant to benefit every farmer in the country since the government had mobilized $500 million targeting 2000 farms to be part of the programme (*The Herald*, 2017; Moyo, 2017; Chikowore and Banda, 2018). Command agriculture initially targeted A2 farmers however, as a result of several reasons such as poor policy framework, corruption and party loyalty some of the respondents who benefited from CA were also A1 farmers.

The introduction of the radical land expropriation process in 2000, signalled the development of a state that was repressive and concerned with accumulations tendencies to retain the power of the ZANU-PF government and distribute rents (Mawowa, 2007) (in this regard land) to party loyalists. Instead of focusing on developing the agricultural sector, improve maize productivity and address the growing challenge of food shortages, the government resorted to a process of accumulation (Moyo, 2011; Mbiba, 2017; Madimu, 2020). The country had no other option but to rely on food imports mainly from South Africa however,

[9] Data from an interview by Mpofu with Charlton Ngcebetsha Jnr, Bulawayo Tower Block, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, 7 January 2009.

most of the population could not afford imported mealie-meal except for a select few further causing widespread hunger (Madimu, 2020).

Command Agriculture Policy Framework

Command Agriculture was an import substitution scheme aimed at reviving agricultural production. At its core was the 'Special Maize Production Programme', aimed at providing inputs and mechanized agricultural equipment to farmers (World Bank, 2019b). Command agriculture also had a contract farming component that was introduced by the Zimbabwean government. Under contract farming, the government provided agricultural inputs to farmers and financed their production of grain and in exchange, the farmer had to pay back the government by producing five tonnes of maize grain for each hectare of land that they farmed as indicated in the introduction. The program initially targeted farmers with 200 ha of farmland to gain support from the government through the grain marketing board (GMB) and in exchange, each farmer had to give back five tonnes of grain for every hectare farmed amounting to a total of 1000 tonnes. Additionally, the GMB of Zimbabwe would set a guaranteed price for buying grain from the farmers and this was set at $390 per tonne of maize (Dzirutwe and Brock, 2017; Pindula, 2017; Odunze and Uwizeyimana, 2019). Contract farming was an agreement made between buyers (government represented by the GMB) and farmers, specifically smallholder farmers, in an agricultural production system aimed at establishing production conditions to ensure food security (FAO, 2012; Mazwi et al, 2019). Contract farming is practised globally with a combination of the state and the private sector. In Zimbabwe, contract farming support is domestically financed by the state and private sector actors (Sachikonye, 2016 and Mazwi et al., 2019).

According to Statutory Instrument 79 of 2017, the abuse of farming inputs from the government was criminalized and could attract imprisonment for not more than 5 years and loss of the farm if it was gained through the land reform program (Chisoro-Dube, Dube and Matsika, 2019). Given the predatory nature of the Zimbabwean state under the ZANU-PF government, such a provision points to a potential corruption issue. There is a tendency of government programmes to benefit party loyalists particularly government programmes on land. Command agriculture brought together government through the Ministry of agriculture, the ZNA, the GMB, companies trading in agrochemicals as well as private sponsors such as Sakunda Holdings, which is a petroleum company.

Additionally, what is interesting to note is that maize is so significant in Zimbabwe that it is classified as a controlled product meaning the government has a monopoly on the sale and purchase of the grain. According to Statutory Instrument 145 of 2019, section 5(1), "No person or statutory body or company or entity shall sell or otherwise dispose of any maize except to a contractor or the Grain Marketing Board." Such a policy provision on staple food points to the centrality of the state in the economic structure of Zimbabwe. As the sole procurement agent, the government set a regulated price for maize grain. The set price specified for the farmers' earnings was US$390 and the government would pay this price for each tonne of maize presented to the GMB, (Scoones, 2017; Chikwati, 2018; Mazwi et al, 2019). However, previous contract farming experiences have shown that farmers usually get poor prices, the government takes longer to pay the farmers and in some cases, the government does not purchase the farmers' produce when farmers reach their production targets (Martiniello, 2016; Mazwi et al, 2019). Ndebele (2020) contends that under command agriculture the government through its purchasing arm the GMB failed to pay farmers the gazetted price on time

However, during the implementation of the command agriculture programme, the respondents were torn in between. Some note that the government took longer to pay and others said the government paid in a timely fashion. Farmers still experienced financial challenges, for instance, five out of the 10 respondents who were under command agriculture noted that the government was slow in paying them for their products. This is despite the $390 purchase price per tonne of maize announced by the government which was the highest price being offered on the market with private buyers offering between $280 to $310 per tonne (Pindula, 2017).

All agreements under contract farming have clauses for breaches and the penalties due thereof. The command agricultural scheme had clauses that penalized, including imprisonment, farmers for certain breaches of the contract. Under command agriculture, each farmer's agricultural input package amounted to approximately $250,000 (Odunze and Uwizeyimana, 2019). The government had mobilized $500 million targeting 2000 farms to be part of the scheme (*The Herald*, 2017; Moyo, 2017; Chikowore and Banda, 2018). According to Statutory Instrument 79 of 2017, the abuse of farming inputs from the government was criminalized and could attract imprisonment for not more than five years and loss of the farm if it was gained through the land reform program (Chisoro-Dube, Dube and Matsika, 2019). This effectively gave the government through the Ministry of agriculture, considerable control over the farmers. This is because of the large presence of agricultural extension workers from the government

and the Zimbabwe Defence Forces personnel who managed the implementation of the scheme. According to Mazwi et al (2019), the contract specifically stated that the instructions and guidance provided by inspectors, that is members of the defence forces or agricultural extension workers, was absolute.

The Implementation Structure and Process of Command Agriculture

Command agriculture was implemented in the context of a public-private partnership (PPP) mainly between state institutions and Sakunda Holdings. However, this PPP framework was characterized by predatory state politics as well as state and private business relations marred by corruption. This implementation structure was flawed in 4 regards; 1) the price of inputs was not specified when the government contracted Sakunda Holdings to procure inputs which opened up room for overpricing (Debt Management Office. 2017), 2) Sakunda Holdings enjoyed preferential trade rates when it was paid back by the government (Maverick Citizen, 2021), 3) the companies that were brought on board to supply agricultural inputs were all politically linked either to the military, the political elite, Sakunda holding or a combination of two or all of them; and 4) the policy was implemented in the context of a weak institutional framework. The history of state-led agricultural reform points to the longstanding ZANU-PF government practice of patronage that has mostly benefitted party loyalists (Raftopoulos and Phimister 2004; Sachikonye, 2005; Magure, 2013, Agricultural Policy Research in Africa 'APRA', 2018).

According to the Maverick Citizen Report (2021), command agriculture was implemented by an agricultural cartel whose actors included President E.D. Mnangagwa, the military, Kudakwashe Tagwirei and his company Sakunda Holdings *inter alia*. The report contends that command agriculture was driven by Sakunda Holdings which was tasked by the state to provide farming inputs for maize and wheat production on behalf of the government. The report also argues that Sakunda Holdings procured these farming inputs from a network of companies with strong ties to the military, the political elite and Kudakwashe Tagwirei – some of these entities are listed in Table 4.1, indicating what they supplied and their links to the military, political elite and Sakunda Holdings.

Table 4.1: The 'Agriculture Cartels' Implementing Command Agriculture

Agricultural Inputs / Agricultural Services and Agricultural Products	**Supplier**	**Affiliation to President Mnangagwa, Kudakwashe**

		Tagwirei and/or Sakunda Holdings
Fuel – Agro-Inputs	1. **Puma** 2. **Trek** 3. **Zuva**	Sakunda Holdings has a share in these two companies President Mnangagwa is said to have 'beneficial ownership' in this company.
Fertiliser - Agro-Inputs	1. **Fertiliser, Seed and Grain (Pvt) Ltd (FSG),** 2. **Sable Chemicals** 3. **ZFC Limited.**	The company was registered in 2010, it had a negligible market share until it became a supplier under command agriculture programme. Both these companies are jointly owned by SOE **Industrial Development Corporation** (IDC) and **TA Holdings.**
Agrochemicals – Agro-Inputs	1. **Fossil Agro**	This is a subsidiary of Sakunda Holdings.
Process Maize and other grains – they bought maize produced from the command agriculture programme.	1. **Grain Millers Association of Zimbabwe (GMAZ), headed by Tafadzwa Musarara.198**	Tafadzwa Musarara is alleged to be under Vice-President Chiwenga's patronage networks,

Source: Maverick Citizen (2021; 25), Report on Cartel Power Dynamics in Zimbabwe

The Big Saturday Read (2019) report, asserted that Sakunda Holdings was simply a conduit of illicit transactions that moved public funds from the government to private elite coffers. The report gives an example of Solutions Motors, a company that was paid more than one million dollars by the Department of Irrigation to supply equipment for irrigation and vehicles and the company failed to deliver even half of the equipment and the vehicles. When the Public Accounts Committee inquired into this and other payments to suppliers, senior officials in the Ministry of Finance feigned ignorance. As a result, it is corruption like this that characterized Mnangagwa's government and contributed to the economy's failed development (The Big Saturday Read (2019). The Finance Minister echoed similar sentiments in the 2019/2020 budget statement noting that:

> *"The current financing model for agriculture places an unfair share of the burden on Government ... The model has created opportunities for arbitrage, leakages and corruption, presenting a risk to macro-stability and the Budget" (Maverick Citizen, 2021; 25 and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 2019)*

The Newsday of August 9, asserts that the Public Accounts Committee led by the MDC Minister Tendai Biti found that US$1,5 billion was transacted as part of the command agriculture programme but could not find where the money trail went to in 2017 (Almambo, 2019). Additionally, in 2018, a sum of $1,7 billion was also transacted under command agriculture but the committee could not trace where the money went to leading them to conclude that over US$3 billion had been allegedly misused through the conflation of government, private companies and the military involvement in command agriculture (Almambo, 2019; Scoones, 2020; Dore, 2018 and Langa, 2019). However, the Zimbabwe Democracy Institute (2019) argued that over 23 thousand farmers out of the 50 thousand who benefited under the command agricultural scheme did not pay back their government loans resulting in the loss of over US$3 billion (Ndoro, 2020). This points to a corruption problem especially considering the role of the military in a domestic programme. The main aim of including the military was to secure and maintain power over the population through intimidation and corruption.

> *"Its main aim is to foster a post-Mugabe authoritarian consolidation and augment State capacities for the same through coercion of rivals, extraction of revenue, registration of citizens and cultivation of dependency"* (*Zimbabwe Democracy Institute, 2019; 19).*

Experts from the interviews assert that the military did not play any decisive role except for the fact that they themselves benefitted from the scheme. They were not much help and were overbearing on farmers who complained that some of the military personnel inspecting their farms did not have any knowledge of farming and were overbearing on their farms. Instead of trying to offer support, they were more intimidating (Interview with policy analyst, January 2021; interview with an academic researcher, September 2020). One respondent went on to question why the army was brought on to manage the monetary affairs of the state and stating that, "I think it was a deliberate move to capture the army and bring it under the influence of the ruling power at that time" (interview with an academic researcher, October 2020).

Agricultural expenditure in Zimbabwe has never been informed by an active policy framework since 1995 (Mawere et al, 2015; *Newday*, 2018). The reality is that most agricultural spending is not well thought out resulting in abuse of finances. As a result, most agricultural programmes in the country failed due to a lack of sufficient funding. For instance, the command

agricultural programme was funded from a partnership between the ZANU-PF led government and Sakunda Holdings. One of the financial weaknesses of the command agriculture programme was the imbalance between the price that the government bought grain from farmers and the price that it sold the same grain to the millers contracted under command agriculture who numbered around 100 under the Grain Millers Association of Zimbabwe and other independent private millers. The government bought a tonne of maize from farmers for a set fee of $390 through the GMB and sold the same tonne of maize to grain millers for $242,50 (Pindula, 2017; Kuwadza, 2017; World Bank, 2019). The aim was to support the farmers, but this ended up being a loophole for corrupt transactions.

Essentially, the difference between these two figures meant that maize grain sold to and bought by the GMB had a subsidy of $147,50 for every tonne of maize the government procured. Taking the example of the Grain Millers Association which had committed to purchase from the state 800 thousand tonnes of maize, the total amount the state got would be $194 million as opposed to the $312 million government used to procure the maize grain (Pindula, 2017). As a result, the state incurred a budget deficit of $118 million (Pindula, 2017; Mashaya, 2018).

Additionally, no measures were put in place to stop other private players from reselling their grain back to the government creating a loop that fostered corruption. According to the international monetary fund, maize could therefore be acquired from other countries and sold to the government for a higher price (*DailyNews*, 2017). According to three expert respondents in the study, instead of people buying maize and selling to the government, it was the government that bought maize grain from neighbouring countries that it used to augment its maize grain amount so that it would seem as if the country had a bountiful harvest. One respondent noted that "If you dig deeper into how the funds for the whole scheme were going about, you actually find that there is a group of private sector or private capital, private capitalists that then reaped off real money from the deal" (interview with academic researcher respondent, August 2020). There is therefore a strong possibility that the government bought more maize grain than it had initially intended making the monitoring of grain sources and purchases difficult to ascertain. Or rather, the government was simply rebuying maize that it had already accounted for.

When these people liquidated their treasury bills with the reserve bank, they got a preferential exchange rate because they were politically connected individuals. Sakunda

Holdings is another example of a company that was central to the funding of the command agricultural program and it is estimated to have pumped out about 300 million US dollars which translated to about 3 billion dollars in Zimbabwean value. Sakunda had strong ties with the government and Kuda Tagwirei is the President's nephew (Mhlanga, 2017; Chikowore and Banda, 2018; Africa Confidential, 2019; Pindula, 2020). This coincides with a total sum of around $3 billion that was allegedly misplaced or misused by the government but was not accounted for (Chikohomero, 2020). One responded described the relationship between Sakunda Holdings and the ZANU-PF party as well as the state as incestuous in the sense that part of the people within the state were playing as capitalists (interview with a policy expert respondent, September 2020). The Maverick Citizen Report summarizes the issue of treasury bills and how Kuda Tagwireyi benefitted as follows:

> *"Sakunda received a preferential revaluation of its repayment and received over ZW$3 billion, instead of the ZW$330 million due to it. This money was created by the RBZ and led to a significant further devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar, by 23%. For its role in CAP, Sakunda was slapped with U.S. sanctions in August 2020." (Maverick Citizen, 2021; 26)*

The command agriculture programme's recruitment of farmers saw 79 per cent of farmers under the programme were recruited through state agencies, 17 per cent were recruited through social media and four per cent were recruited through referrals by neighbours (Mazwi et al, 2019). Potential beneficiaries of the command agriculture program were required to fill out four key documents to complete the farmer assessment process namely, an asset checklist, addendum, farming contract and a stop order. Agricultural extension officers were in charge of ascertaining the suitability of the farmers based on the assets they declared ownership of, the farmer's history of production and proof of ownership of land. Proof that a farmer had ownership of land was the major prerequisite. If a farmer did not have proof of ownership or in some cases did not have land of their own, the government accepted land permits, the 99-year lease, freehold titles and agreements of land ventures. However, some farmers did not qualify for the programme for one reason or the other as mentioned above.

Mazwi et al (2019) found that sometimes, farmers with political and economic connections who had been disqualified from the scheme ended up being beneficiaries directly from the grain marketing board. Some of the beneficiaries were high-level officials in the ZANU-PF government for instance former Minister Professor Jonathan Moyo (Murwira, 2017;

Moyo, 2017; *The Herald*, 2017). This proves the existence of a patronage network because when professor Moyo criticized the command agriculture scheme, he was reprimanded by the current President Emmerson Mnangagwa and this resulted in him (Professor Moyo), retracting his earlier statements on Twitter and in local newspapers. On beneficiaries, according to Dore (2018) farmers who had party membership cards found it considerably easier to gain access to farm inputs through these patronage networks.

Eight out of the 10 expert respondents who participated in the research alluded to the problem of patronage affecting the implementation of command agriculture with one respondent stating that there was a disconnect between people's capacity to farm and the benefits they got on one hand and those people's social class. The distribution of inputs under the scheme was mainly done along patronage lines in the context of a corrupt administration (interview with an academic researcher, 27 August 2020). The respondents also alluded to the exclusion of members of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). However, one respondent who benefitted from the command agriculture programme noted that they were an MDC loyalist.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the state's role in agricultural policy implementation is central, however, in Zimbabwe, the state interventions are marred by corruption as evidenced by the state-business relations between the ZANU-PF government and the Sakunda Holdings company. The following chapter focuses on the impact of command agriculture related to food production and security.

Chapter Five: The Impact of Command Agriculture: Access to Inputs, Food Production and Imports

"It is time to change the way we think. Farmers are not the cause of Africa's poverty; they are a potential solution. They are key to creating the future envisioned by the SDGs." —

Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General, (2015; online)[10]

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this study on the impact command agriculture has had on food production. I present the findings from three dimensions namely, impact on maize production, impact on food particularly maize imports and impact on providing poor smallholder farmers access to production inputs. As argued in the literature review, smallholder farmers have the potential to achieve food self-sufficiency for the nation given they have access to agricultural inputs. I demonstrate that by the completion of command agriculture in 2019, the programme has had a negative rather than positive impact on food production. When analyzing the impact the programme has had on maize production I draw the foundation of my argument from comparing two datasets that are the US Department of Agriculture database and the UN FAO Statistics. I also consider production on a local level drawing from the Manicaland case study as well as from a national level.

Impact of Command Agriculture on Maize Production

The impact of command agriculture is an issue of much contention – there is a clear distinction between perception and reality, an expected outcome and an actual benefit (Mazwi et al, 2019). The command agriculture scheme's central objective was to increase maize production after the country had recorded a continuous decreasing trend in maize production from 2,148 million tonnes in 2000 to 512 thousand tonnes in 2016 (US Department of Agriculture, 2021). The target was to produce the national grain requirement of between 1,800 – 2,000 million tonnes (FAOSTAT, 2016). To reach this target, 400 thousand hectares were targeted for cultivation under the command agriculture program (Kanengoni, 2017; Majoni, 2017) but only about 160 to 170 thousand hectares of maize were planted in the 2016/2017 agricultural year (Majoni,

[10] Koffi Annan, 2015, Food and the Transformation of Africa Getting Smallholders Connected, Foreign Affairs, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/africa/2015-10-16/food-and-transformation-africa?campaign=food&gpp=7MhTdWTu7dvFF48IeEB1qjo0NFRTVVdQUEF3T0xOVUFCUFVDaUJBQzlGQmxjbHpRVy9YRWFJRkFpS3FnK1R6RmtCZlErWnhFVC9HeUpyNU5HOjJjMWM3ZTEwZGQ3OGI4MTk2OTVkODUzNTQ1ZDI5NTVlNzM1MDUyMWM5OTAyMWY2MTdmY2YyNDNmZTBhYThlMjU%3D

2017; Mutenga, 2017 and Mazwi et al., 2019) which is less than half of the intended total planting area. Despite this, overall agricultural production in 2017 increased however, there is a disagreement on the actual level of increase.

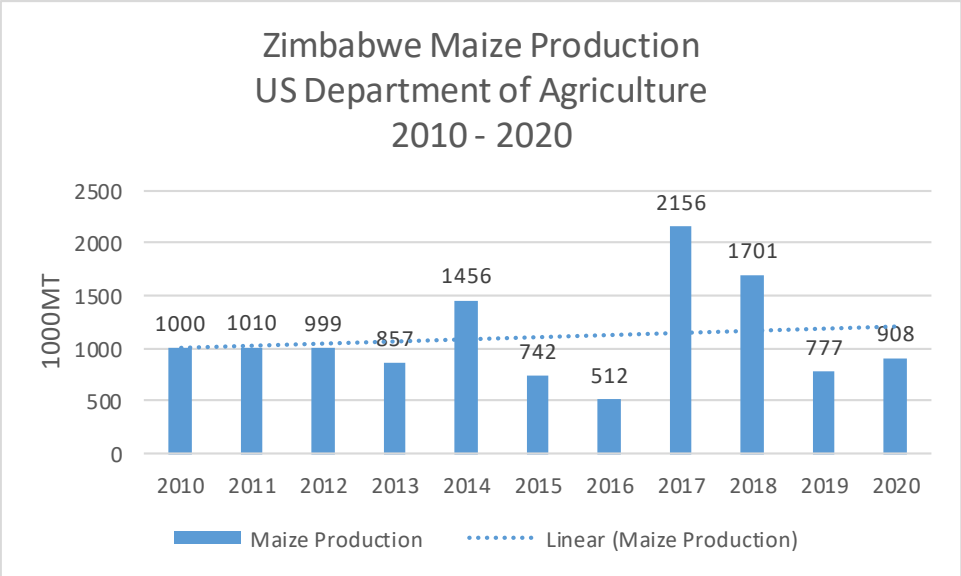
This increased agricultural production is usually in reference to the bumper harvest of the 2016/2017 agricultural year which marked the first year of command agriculture. Command agriculture is said to have produced 2.8 million tonnes of crops (Kuhudzayi and Mattos, 2018; Mazwi et al, 2019 and Ministry of Lands, Agriculture & Rural Resettlement, Government of Zimbabwe, 2020). According to FAO (2017), Zimbabwe produced 2.7 million tonnes including wheat, sorghum and maize of which maize had a significant increase. According to Mazwi et al. (2019; 247), Ministry of Lands, Agriculture & Rural Resettlement, Government of Zimbabwe (2020) and the US Department of Agriculture (2021) dataset, the actual total of maize produced in 2017 was about 2.156 million tonnes against a government projection of 2.2 million tonnes. This was more than the 1.8 million tonnes required for consumption by the country and such a high production output was last recorded in 2000.

However, this number is contested by the FAO (2020) dataset that recorded the overall national production output at 1,532 million tonnes. Datasets are confined to approximations and are known to have slightly different estimations within the bounds of reason. Comparing the US Department of Agriculture dataset in Figure 5.1 below and the FAO dataset in Figure 5.2, reasonably distinct approximations of agriculture production are illustrated in almost every year from 2010 to 2019 except for 2014 and 2017. In other years (2010-2019) agricultural estimates from both datasets are within about 100 thousand tonnes range of each other which is reasonable given they are approximations. However, in 2014 the estimates have a discrepancy of over 400 thousand tonnes – most significantly in 2017, the discrepancy of maize production between the two datasets is over 500 thousand tonnes. While it is commonly acknowledged that agriculture production increased from about 512 thousand tonnes in 2016 to about 2,1 million tonnes in 2017 (*Xinhua*, 2017; Mazwi et al., 2019; Odunze and Uwizeyimana, 2019 and FAO/GIEWS, 2017[11] among others). I argue that it is very hard to ascertain the actual production output from the perceived one given the wide discrepancy of recorded production figures between the US Department of Agriculture and the FAO datasets.

[11] The term 'bumper harvest' is used with caution in the thesis. Although, it is widely used to describe the so called high maize production of 2017, this number is contested. The FAO/GIEWS (2017) Report did not record 2.1 million tonnes as the actual production output of Zimbabwe in 2017. Rather, the report made an "official forecast" of the likely maize agricultural output. The report is available here, https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/giews-country-brief-zimbabwe-27-june-2017

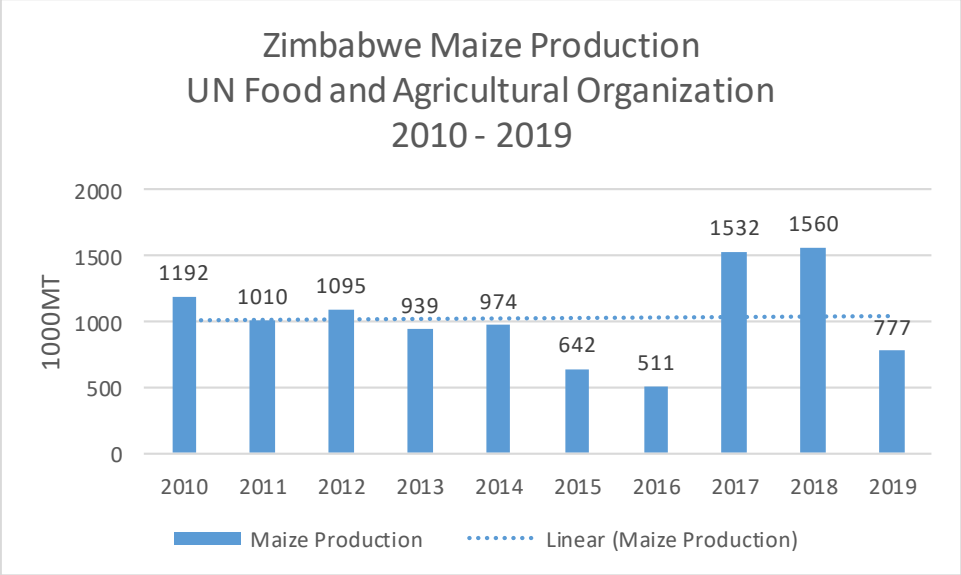
From the interviews, over 50 per cent of the expert respondents expressed doubt over the estimated maize production of just over 2.1 million tonnes citing the countries continued importing of maize from neighbouring countries (I discuss the impact of imports in the following section). Below, are a comparison of Figure 5.1 and 5.2 measuring the country's agricultural production according to the US Department of Agriculture and FAO respectively.

Figure 5.1: Zimbabwe's Maize Production from 2010 – 2020 According to the US Department of Agriculture



U.S. Department of Agriculture (2021), http://knoema.com/USDAPSD2021Jan/production-supply-and-distribution-of-agricultural-commodities-by-market-year-jan-2021

Figure 5.2: Zimbabwe's Maize Production from 2010 – 2020 According to the UN FAO



Food and Agriculture Organization (2020), http://knoema.com/FAOPRDSC2020/production-statistics-crops-crops-processed

Apart from the contentious 2.1 million tonnes produced in 2017, I argue that command agriculture failed to deliver on its objective of producing the target of two million tonnes of maize required by the country per year during and after its life span in 2019 due to poor implementation of the programme. The US Department of Agriculture (2021) data above, demonstrates a decreasing trend in maize production from 2.156 million tonnes in 2017 to 1,701 million tonnes in 2018, 777 thousand tonnes in 2019 and 908 thousand tonnes in 2020. This declining trend is echoed by the FAO (2020) recording maize production at 1,536 million tonnes in 2017, 1,560 million tonnes in 2018 and 777 thousand tonnes in 2019. The declining agricultural trend is attributed to various factors including adverse weather conditions in the 2018/19 cropping season coupled with extreme rainfall deficits and the consequences of Cyclone Idai according to FAO (2019; 1).

Contrary to this logic, it was the poor implementation framework of command agriculture especially the lack of insurance that all farmers under command agriculture submitted their contractually required maize grain to the GMB. For instance, Zimbabwe has a total of 1,534,396 smallholder farmers alone (Kuhudzayi and Mattos, 2018). In the 2016/2017 agricultural year, the command agriculture contracted 50 thousand farmers (both large-scale and small-scale farmers) and of those 50 thousand farmers, 33 per cent had repaid their loans and 22 per cent were still in the process of doing so (Scoones, 2017). Expert interview respondents asserted that the government had trouble recovering the contractual obligation of grain from the farmers under command agriculture – which translated to low stores of grain due to shortage in supply. This means that any production output recorded would mirror these 50 thousand contract farmers and not necessarily represent all the farmers in the nation.

The above has been the experience on a national level. On a more local level, farmers in provinces have recorded different maize production outputs because the command agriculture programme did not benefit all the farmers in the country. As stated in the methodology chapter, the findings from the survey conducted under this research are not comprehensive enough (considering spatial aggregation of the respondents as well as methods of sampling and composition of the sample among other factors) to be generalized, nevertheless, the survey showed mixed agricultural production figures that do not show clearly, an increase in agricultural production across the board. Overall agricultural production in Zimbabwe has been experiencing a downward trend from 1980 to 2019 (FAO, 2020; Knoema,

2020 and US Department of Agriculture, 2021). The survey shows a linear production trend pointing out that command agriculture had no real impact on food production (see Table 5.1 below). From this data, it is evident that the command agricultural policy did not achieve its targeted production output of 2 million tonnes despite large expenditure in the agricultural sector. According to the World Bank (2019; 21-23) Zimbabwe Public Expenditure Review with a Focus on Agriculture report, expenditure on agriculture, particularly maize production accounted for about 10 per cent of GDP, rising from US$173 million in 2011 to US$1.2 billion in 2017 – the state also expended US$391 million on command agriculture with GMB subsidies receiving US$513 million and US$125 million being spent on the Presidential Input Scheme. Tracking the impact of agricultural policy in Zimbabwe, Hobdari, Lessard, and Frederico Lima (2020; 24) conclude that,

> *"Despite their large fiscal cost, government programs have had limited impact on agricultural output and no discernible impact on productivity. Comparing three-year averages before and after the Command Agriculture program was started shows little to no change in maize output or yield per hectare."*

In Table 5.1, the absence of data in some years is explained by the farmers' exclusion from command agriculture (this applies mainly to farmers 9 and 10) and a lack of effective management on the part of the farmer to keep track of the production process. In the following section, I explore the impact of command agriculture on reducing food imports as the second objective of the policy.

Table 5.1: Survey Results of Farmers' Actual Agricultural Production against Farmed Land and Expected Output

	Agricultural Year	Farmed Land (in Hectares)	Expected Output (in Tonnes)	Actual Output (in Tonnes)	Benefit / Loss
Farmer 1	2016-2017	5	25	15	**No**
	2017-2018	10	50	50	**Break Even**
	2018-2019	25	125	125	**Break Even**
Farmer 2	2016-2017	-	-	-	**N/A**
	2017-2018	-	-	-	**N/A**
	2018-2019	20	100	180	**Yes**
Farmer 3	2016-2017	305	1525	2745	**Yes**
	2017-2018	250	1250	2375	**Yes**

	2018-2019	297	1485	2435	**Yes**
Farmer 4	2016-2017	1	5	7	**Yes**
	2017-2018	2	10	1	**No**
	2018-2019	-	-	-	**N/A**
Farmer 5	2016-2017	20	100	200	**Yes**
	2017-2018	30	150	300	**Yes**
	2018-2019	-	-	-	
Farmer 6	2016-2017	5	25	25	**Break Even**
	2017-2018	6	30	35	**Yes**
	2018-2019	8	40	35	**No**
Farmer 7	2016-2017	10	50	30	**No**
	2017-2018	15	75	60	**No**
	2018-2019	30	150	130	**No**
Farmer 8	2016-2017	60	300	365	**Yes**
	2017-2018	60	300	380	**Yes**
	2018-2019	60	300	382	**Yes**
Farmer 9	2016-2017	3	-	-	**N/A**
	2017-2018	3	-	-	**N/A**
	2018-2019	3	-	-	**N/A**
Farmer 10	2016-2017	15	-	-	**N/A**
	2017-2018	20	-	-	**N/A**
	2018-2019	-	-	-	**N/A**

Source: Research Survey of Farmers in Makoni Rural District 2020-2021.

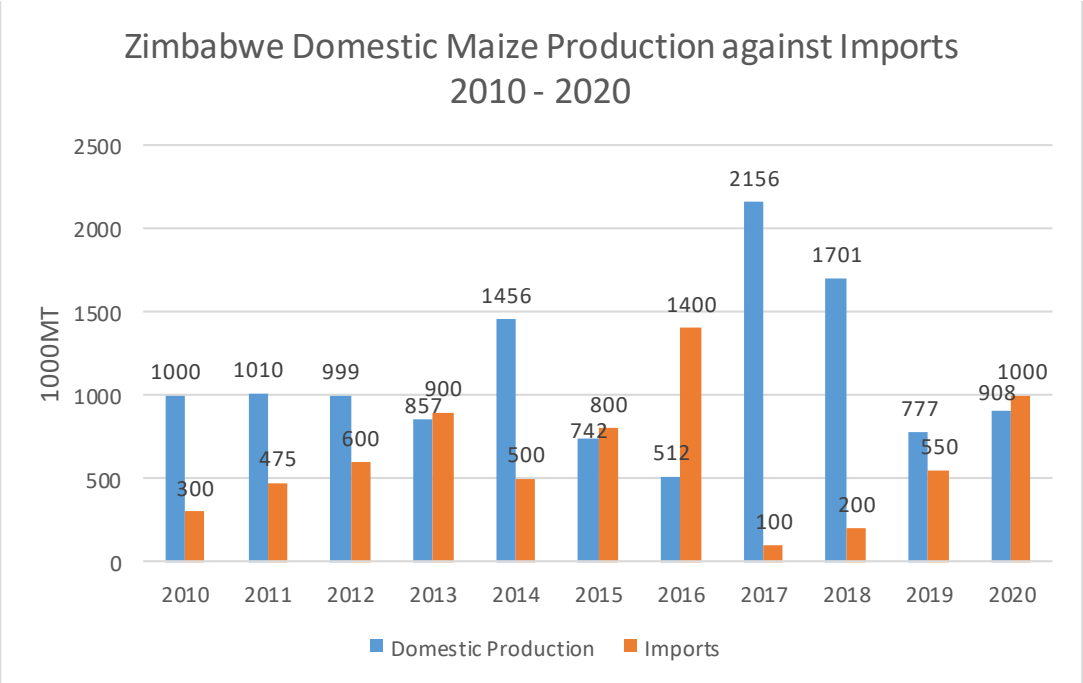
The Impact of Command Agriculture on Maize Imports

Zimbabwe has been an importer of grain since the 1990s on a very small scale (mainly in response to the droughts that affected agricultural production as discussed in Chapter One), however, the imports began increasing significantly in the aftermath of radical land reform in 2000. This coincided with the restructuring of farms by the radical land reform that resulted in the growing challenge of food insecurity and large expenditure on imports in the country. As indicated in the introduction, maize imports have been increasing from 1980 to 2019 but most significantly, in the last decade, maize import quantity increased from 300 thousand tonnes in 2010 to about 1,400 million tonnes in 2016 (FAO, 2020; Knoema, 2020 and US Department of Agriculture, 2021). After the implementation of command agriculture, maize imports

dropped from 1,400 million tonnes in 2016 to around 100 thousand tonnes in 2017 (US Department of Agriculture, 2021). According to FAOSTATS (2020), the number of maize imports dropped to around 300 thousand tonnes. Additionally, government import expenditure dropped by approximately 93 per cent and the government saved over US$200 million (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2017) – from around US$296,686 million in 2016 to US$116,737 million in 2017. Following these developments government declared the command agriculture programme a success and suspended issuing orders for import permits (Nyoni, 2018).

However, this so-called success was short-lived considering the overall impact of command agriculture in its three-year life span. Although the government proclaimed the programme a success after the 2016/2017 season harvest, grain imports were still received into the country with most imports coming from Zambia and South Africa and mostly importing maize and wheat (Nyoni, 2018). The FAO (2019) asserts that from 2010 to 2015 import requirements for the country averaged at 500 thousand tonnes – however, the import requirements have been forecast at 600 - 700 thousand tonnes in 2019. By the end of the three-year lifespan of command agriculture, more maize was acquired through imports (one million tonnes) than domestic production (900 thousand tonnes) in 2020 shown in Figure 5.3 below.

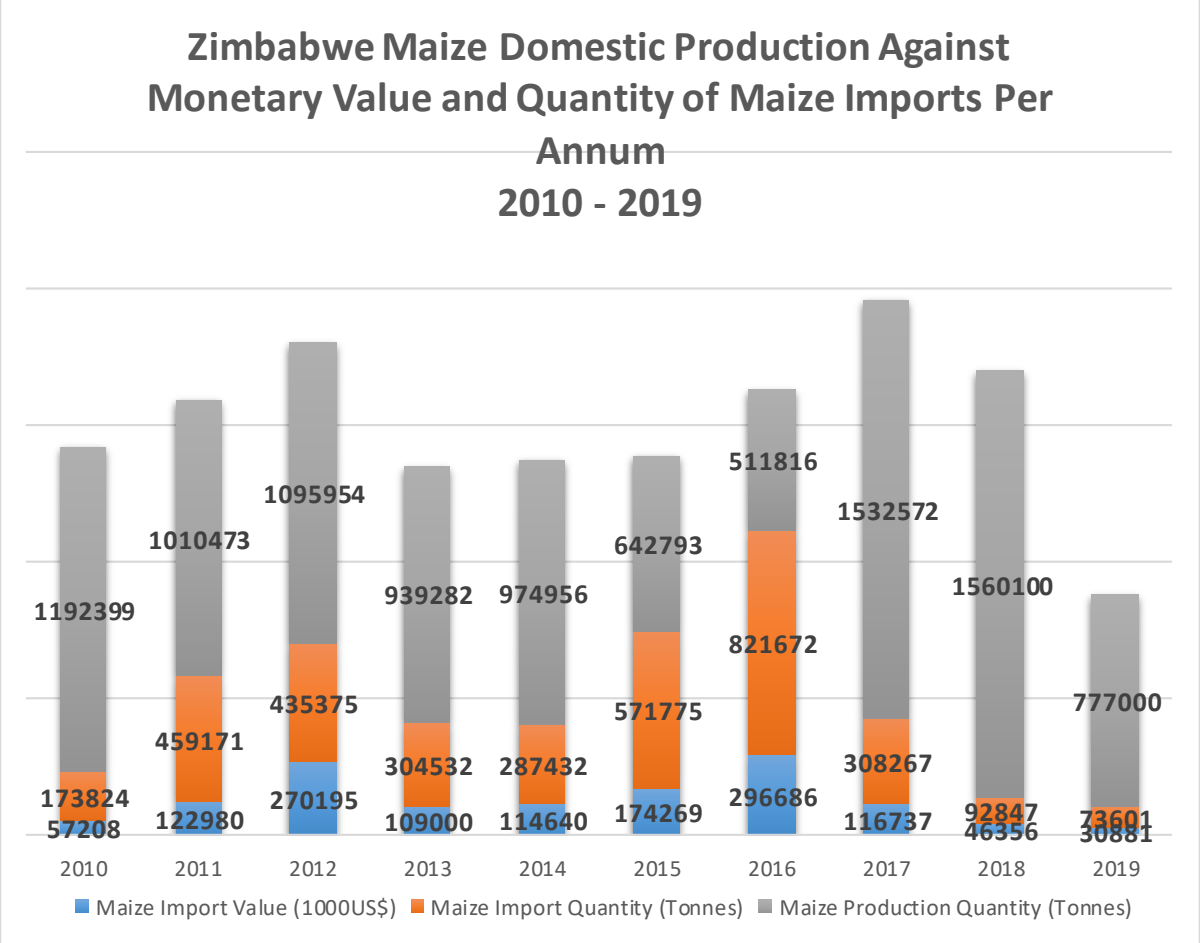
Figure 5.3: Zimbabwe's Maize Production against Maize Imports from 2010 – 2020



U.S. Department of Agriculture (2021), http://knoema.com/USDAPSD2021Jan/production-supply-and-distribution-of-agricultural-commodities-by-market-year-jan-2021

Furthermore, I invoke a collation of maize national production, imports and monetary value of said imports from 2010 to 2019 produced by FAOSTATS (2019) and argue that command agriculture did not only fail to achieve its targets but, it harmed the economy. Success under command agriculture equalled a high productive output of maize grain domestically, leading to reduced imports and by extension reduced government expenditure on imports. According to FAOSTATS (2020), the first thing that happened was that expenditure of maize dropped from about US$296 million in 2016 to around US$30 million in 2019. Second, the quantity of imported maize dropped from around 821 thousand tonnes in 2016 to about 73 thousand in 2019. However, instead of increasing, maize production also decreases from a recorded 1,5 million tonnes in 2017 to about 777 thousand tonnes in 2019 as recorded in Figure 5.4 below. Taking the statistics by the US Department of Agriculture 2021, maize dropped from around 2.156 million tonnes in 2017 to 777 thousand tonnes in 2019 (as shown above in Figure 5.3). This decrease in import expenditure when domestic agricultural production is also decreasing indicates a potential case of shrinking fiscal space on the part of the governments. However, The FAO (2019) report suggested that the low imports of 2018 and 2019 were mainly to supplement carryover stocks from the bumper harvest of the 2016/2017 agricultural year (FAO, 2019). This is highly unlikely as the country did not manage to achieve its domestic production of 1.8 - 2 million tonnes as explained above. Overall, the programme had no real sustainable impact on 1) domestic maize production which was recorded at 908 thousand tonnes in 2020 and 2) maize imports which were recorded at 1 million tonnes, exceeding domestic production in 2020 (US Department of Agriculture, 2021).

Figure 5.4: Zimbabwe's Overall Outlook – Domestic Maize Production against Monetary Value and Quantity of Maize Imports per annum from 2010 - 2019



Authors collation of data from FAOSTATS (2020), Food and Agriculture Organization, http://knoema.com/FAOTSJUL2016/trade-statistics-crops-livestock-products-live-animal, https://knoema.com/FAOTSJUL2016/trade-statistics-crops-livestock-products-live-animal

Access to and Quality of Agricultural Inputs and their Impact on Production

Smallholder farmers are affected by lack of access to lending schemes in banks; have little to no access to irrigation and farm mechanization leaving them to depend on family labour and in need of state-provided farming inputs (Moyo, 2004; Van der Ploeg, 2008; World Bank Climate Smart Agriculture, 2019; Mazwi et al, 2019). The state in Zimbabwe has a track record of implementing agriculture policy intervention in the country that focuses heavily on providing farmers with inputs therefore, access to quality adequate and appropriate agricultural inputs is a key discussion point in the implementation of policy in the country. The effective and

efficient supply of agricultural inputs promptly is key to ensuring the success of contract farming programmes and by extension the objective of high productive yields (Mazwi et al, 2019). The Zimbabwean state has implemented various agricultural input packages ever since the year 2000. Most of these programs have been criticized because inputs were not delivered on time for the planting season thereby disrupting the cultivation process. Indeed, many recipients of the input package complained they received inputs like sees and fertiliser late, the inputs were insufficient meaning they had to plant on fewer hectares (Scoones, 2021). Most of the farmers mentioned that their production years were greatly affected because the government was late in providing them with farm inputs.

More important than access is the appropriateness of the input package. A nation-wide survey of the agricultural landscape compared to the input package provided under the command agriculture shows that about 89 per cent of farmers in Zimbabwe are small-scale farmers and less than one per cent have access to irrigation meaning these farmers depend on rain-fed agricultural production (World Bank Climate Smart Agriculture, 2019). The command agriculture programme initially targeted farms with irrigation mechanisms near water bodies, and commercial farms in nature. However, the scheme was extended to small-scale farmers and an approximation of about 7 per cent of small-scale farms were under irrigation in 2016 (Echanove, 2016). This showed the inadequacy of the input package because it was provided to smallholder farmers when it was initially meant for small to largescale commercial farmer-beneficiaries. The command agriculture initiative initially targeted farmers with irrigation capacity, with 200 hectares and situated in higher potential areas as opposed to smallholder farmers because the government had production growth in mind (Scoones 2017; Kuhudzayi and Mattos, 2018).

Also, the survey I conducted in Makoni rural district shows that some of the respondents who benefitted from the command agricultural program were not just farmers but have/had other professions. Some are accountants, some agricultural extension officers, government official, a leader in a political party and an entrepreneur. The people do not only depend on agriculture for sustenance and in some cases use their additional vocations to fund their agricultural endeavours. Furthermore, some farmers from the survey expressed satisfaction with the command agricultural scheme. One farmer noted that “maize production improved by almost 40 per cent. We won the national 1st price for Seedco competition after producing 21.2 tonnes per hectare of maize.” Another one noted that “command agriculture improved our cash flows and productivity as we received cheaper inputs and early payments of our grain from

GMB." Lastly, another farmer said, "We have increased area of planting and also on yields, the program helped me get affordable inputs and expand my business. Best funder ever." However, one farmer expressed dissatisfaction with the program noting that "the aim was to boost food security and export surplus but I am not satisfied. The producer price was not favourable but it had the disadvantage of increased imports and lowered food security."

Studies on Command Agriculture

The research by Fortune Chisango (2018) sought to examine the challenges that the command agriculture initiative faced in curbing poverty and food security in marginalized farming communities in Bindura on one hand. On the other, the research sought to examine the prospects of the command agricultural initiative in achieving the same objectives aforementioned. This was a genuine attempt to review the implementation of the command agricultural program. The research found that command agriculture faced a host of challenges that impeded the program's capacity to be a panacea for food insecurity (Chisango, 2018). The research found that these challenges were rooted in the disparity of outcomes perceived on one hand by the farming community and on the other hand by the state that implemented the program. One of the interesting findings of the research was the definition of the Zimbabwean state as an authoritarian implementer of the command agriculture program. Additionally, the research also found that for the program to be fruitful, the government must integrate all stakeholders including the poor farmers in the decision-making structures of the implementing process.

However, the research does not specifically focus on the impact of command agriculture on the production of grain; it only refers to the structural makeup of the command agricultural program and how it can be improved. My research complemented Chisango's research by examining the impact of command agriculture on food production in small-scale farms in the Makoni rural district. Furthermore, the research is best described as a mid-term review, it only sought to review the command agriculture program during its implementation in the second agricultural year. This research, by contrast, examined the command agriculture initiative after its three-year implementation period from 2016 to 2019.

The research by Odunze and Uwizevima (2019) approached the problem of food security in Zimbabwe from a hunger and risk perspective, noting food security, large expenditure of maize grain and climate change which resulted in the El Nino induced drought of 2015 as major concerns for the government. The command agriculture scheme was instituted

as the solution to curb these challenges by increasing domestic maize production and reducing government expenditure on grain imports (Odunze and Uwizeyimana, 2019). The research focused on the impact of the special maize programme component of command agriculture on maize production and maize importation in the country. The research also examined the losses as well as the gains the command agriculture program has had for both the 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 agricultural years. The research was published during the implementation phase of the 2018/2019 year and therefore it is incomplete. However, the research found that command agriculture has the potential to increase the domestic production of grain if the scheme receives adequate financial support and the implementation of the scheme is characterized by the timely delivery of inputs to farmers coupled with adequate rainfall. This shows that climate change is another factor that affected the production of grain output under command agriculture. This finding is made after the success of the 2016/2017 command agriculture year. However, this is contested as the bumper harvests are attributed to the abundant rainfall during that year and not necessarily to the command agriculture scheme. Interestingly, the research acknowledges the fact that Zimbabwe has been unable to produce enough food ever since the implementation of the FTLRP back in 2000.

My research study builds upon the above research by Odunze and Owizeyimana because it looks at the complete lifespan of the command agriculture scheme, unlike the above research study that was published during the implementation of the third year of command agriculture. The research as explained above focuses on imports and maize production but does not consider the role of the Zimbabwean state which my research examines by exploring the role of the state in agriculture to achieve food production and import substitution.

The research by Mazwi et al (2019), presents an in-depth appreciation of the command agriculture initiative in its entirety. The research focused on the evolution of command agriculture as a state-led agricultural intervention, it examines the actors involved in the operation of command agriculture (from conception to implementation) and also considered the benefits and the challenges faced by the scheme. The research examines the power relations between farmers and the state under command agriculture, the national production outputs of the command agriculture scheme, the motivations of the farmers in joining the scheme, the access that farmers had to the input packages and the impact the scheme had on the profitability of maize production are some of the major aspects explored in detail. However, the research was limited because it draws data from the case study of the Zvimba district in the Mashonaland province.

My research draws heavily on this research and builds upon it by examining the same issues examined in the study above, however, focusing on the case study of the Makoni rural district, Manicaland province. The above research is also limited because it was published before the command agriculture was completed. This research fills this gap by examining command agriculture after its completion.

State of Agriculture Post - Command Agriculture

The command agriculture scheme was implemented in the context of widespread hunger, and had three overarching goals, to improve the domestic production of maize, to reduce the large expenditure on imports and to reduce imports. The end goal was to reduce poverty and reach a level of national food self-sufficiency. The impact the programme has had on production and imports is discussed above. Overall, command agriculture has not been able to mitigate the food insecurity challenge in Zimbabwe. The statistics on the actual level of food insecurity vary but it is well appreciated that they are high. Since the completion of command agriculture in 2019, the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee ZimVAC projected around 3.4 million people to face a food crisis or emergency (based on the IPC Phase three and four categorisations) in rural areas and about 2.3 million people in urban areas during the 2020/2021 season (ZimVAC, 2020; Masara, 2021). This brings the total number of people projected to be food insecure is approximately 5.7 million. The number shows a considerable reduction of over 15 per cent compared to the World Food Programme's projection of eight million people being food insecure in 2020 (World Food Program 'WFP', 2019). The WFP's projection of eight million food insecure people is complemented by the UN fact sheet recorded in *The Times Live* of September 2023. 7.5 million people in the urban and rural areas of Zimbabwe were said to be food insecure in 2020 with a required 100 thousand tonnes of maize grain per month (Ndebele, 2020).

Conclusion

The agricultural sector in Zimbabwe since 2015 has been recording declining production. The sector has been severely affected by frequent droughts, climate change and unpredictable rainfall patterns in the country (World Bank Climate Smart Agriculture, 2019). The majority of the population (practising communal and subsistence farming), who live in the rural areas have been the most affected. In March of 2019, Cyclone Idai affected Manicaland and Masvingo provinces resulting in many casualties, massive displacements and destruction of crops so much so that the 2018/2019 agricultural seasons harvest was written off. However,

weak agricultural policy has had the most impact on the sector and this resulted in the persistence of food insecurity in the country (World Vision, 2020). The declining agricultural production continues because the command agriculture was also a weak policy as argued above.

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Chapter Six: Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the impact of state-led agricultural reform on food security – particularly the impact of the command agricultural policy intervention on food production using the case study of the Makoni rural district smallholder farms in Zimbabwe. I argued that the agricultural policy failed to achieve its targets therefore, agricultural policy has negative rather than positive impacts on agricultural production in the country. This chapter succinctly summarizes the key findings of this research which are centred around the role of the state in agriculture, the formulation and implementation mechanism of command agriculture and the impact of the policy on maize production and maize imports.

Research Findings and Lessons Learnt

The state is the primary actor in the development and implementation of agricultural policy interventions. However, the role of the state in the development of the agricultural sector in Zimbabwe is influenced, to a great deal, by state politics, predatory tendencies in state-business relations manifesting as corruption and a political landscape that is highly militarized leading to fear and intimidation of the populace. State business relations were politically motivated and marred in corruption as discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis.

Consequently, because state-business relations are corrupted, 'agricultural cartels' end up at the forefront of the policy formulation and implementation process. Command agriculture had a poor policy framework that afforded private partners (particularly Sakunda Holdings) preferential trading rates that resulted in the loss of over US$ 3 billion. Additionally, the policy did not specify the price for the purchase of agricultural inputs which created an avenue for overpricing. Agricultural policy interventions cannot be successful in such a landscape where financial resources are not utilized effectively to achieve the goals of the intervention – similarly, the command agriculture scheme failed because the policy framework was poorly formulated by a political elite interested in the accumulation of wealth at the expense of agricultural development.

The command agriculture programme failed to achieve its goal of producing 2 million tonnes of maize grain overall. As discussed in Chapter Five, the programme is said to have produced a bumper harvest of about 2.1 million tonnes in the harvest of the 2016/17 agricultural season. However, this number is contested by agricultural experts as well as the FAO. FAO

records that maize production did in fact increase from about 500 thousand tonnes in 2016 to about 1.5 million tonnes – this was still not enough to reach the threshold of 2 million tonnes which is the national requirement. Additionally, from 2018 going forward, maize production registered a declining trend resulting in a record of approximately 900 thousand tonnes of maize produced in 2020. Command agriculture, therefore, had no positive impact on agricultural production.

Command agriculture also sought to reduce import expenditure as well as maize imports. This thesis found that from 2016 to 2019 expenditure on maize imports dropped and so did maize imports, however, these drops coincided with a declining trend of maize production as opposed to an increasing trend. Rather than feigning progress, a declining trend in maize production, imports and expenditure point to a fiscal deficit challenge. As demonstrated in Chapter Four, the programme misplaced funds amounting to the tune of over US$ 3 billion. The loss of public funds could be a contributing factor to the government's constrained budgets. The research also found that the state business relationship between the government and Sakunda Holdings was designed to extract public funds from government reserves to private coffers. Financing is critical in agricultural production and its use must be centred around strong reporting structures for accountability purposes.

Furthermore, the research found that access to agricultural inputs also affected the production of maize. Most of the respondents in the study stated that agricultural production inputs were not delivered on time (particularly maize seed and fertilizer which has to be applied at certain critical points of cultivation) and in some cases they were not adequate for production. Most importantly, not all farmers were beneficiaries of this programme. Agricultural inputs are very important when taken in the context of the production process of corn or maize. Seeds are always required just before the agricultural season begins, fertilizer is required at a significant point of cropping – fuel is required in mechanized farms for irrigation and vehicle utilization. On provision of inputs and as argued in the literature review, agricultural interventions must be broad-based to benefit a great number of the farming population if not its entirety. This strategy of broad-based agricultural reform contributed to the successful growth of the agricultural sector and by extension acted as a precursor to industrialization in the East Asian Economies.

Areas for Further Exploration

Agricultural policy should take a more bottom-up rather than a top-down approach. Drawing from the food sovereignty approach, popularized in 1996 by the international farmers' movement 'La Via Campesina (Wittman et al., 2010, McMichael, 2004: 14). The Nyéléni Declaration in 2007 defines and frames the key tenets of food sovereignty as,

> *"... the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agricultural systems... food sovereignty is only possible if it takes place at the same time as political sovereignty of peoples" (Nyeleni, 2007; 9).*

Food sovereignty involves the praxis of people, power and change that is, a focus on the food producers (farmers), localization of food systems, equal power relations that places control of productive resources (land, water, natural resources) directly in the hands of the food producers (McMichael, 2004; Levkoe, Brem-Wilson and Anderson, 2018; Patel, 2009). This has great potential for a large number of smallholder farmers in the country.

Agricultural policy interventions must be more broad-based and benefitting all farmers coupled with a greater uptake of technology to improve agricultural production processes. There is a need for an African Green Revolution similar to the Asian Green Revolution. However, Zimbabwe and broadly Africa require an approach of agricultural transformation that is distinct to cater for the different farming systems that exist on the continent.

Most studies focus on production output but say little about the quality of maize output in the country. For instance, it is widely acknowledged that post-harvest experiences are marred with difficulties that directly result in significant food losses with an approximation of 60 per cent of rural households storing their harvested crops in poor facilities (ZimVAC, 2013; Echanove, 2017) such as house granaries locally known as 'hozi' or 'dura'. An improvement of both local and national silos could be beneficial for food retention.

The research found that the shortfalls of command agriculture that affected food production are not limited to its limited resources, which speaks to the poor formulation and implementation of the program but, also included unskilled technical staff. For instance, the

research findings show that extension services workers were not qualified to the modern standards of agriculture. Learning from the aftermath of the command agriculture scheme, the government overhauled the scheme and introduced the Pfumvudza program, a more well thought out agricultural intervention that educates actors (farmers, agricultural extension services and agricultural practitioners among others) within the local production agricultural value chain. Respondents from the interview praised the program as a positive step of development. The government also introduced the Transitional Stabilization Program (TSP) and the Budget Statements for 2019. The government changed the financing model of command agriculture into a public-private partnership (PPP) with commercial banks and more private sector actors. The management of recruitment and selection of beneficiaries for government inputs was deferred to banks (Gerede, 2019; Chikwati, 2019).

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