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Analysis of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) contribution to access to natural, financial and physical capital in Norton, Zimbabwe

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Abstract: The study analyses the contribution of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in accessing financial, physical and natural capital by the newly resettled farmers and the implications on farmers’ livelihoods in Norton, Zimbabwe. There are no studies in Zimbabwe that interrogate how the FTLRP facilitated access to the above-referred three forms of capital and the effects on farmers’ livelihoods. To cover this gap, the study employed a qualitative approach characterised by use of in-depth interviews, documentary analysis and observation to collect data. The study found out that the FTLRP has enabled access to natural capital (land) to many families but there is inequality in terms of ownership of land by women and the youth as they are significantly disadvantaged. With time the farmers have accumulated physical assets in form of investments in irrigation equipment, ploughs, hoes, vehicles and many other assets. The early years of the newly resettled farmers were marked by declining productivity and attendant low financial income. With time farmers’ productivity has improved and consequently reaping of financial rewards has allowed the accumulation of physical assets. The farmers in Norton exist in a vulnerable context characterised by droughts, lack of government support, economic challenges and lack of timely inputs support. This has militated against success in the past and these challenges continue to affect farmers’ livelihoods. The study recommends timely government support to the farmers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

While the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) has generated significant literature, clearly there are few studies that adopt the capital approach inherent in the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) in interrogating how the FTLRP facilitated access to financial, natural and physical capital. The study discovered that the FTLRP enabled access to land (natural capital) but there was gross unequal access by women and the young people. Initially, struggling because of exogenous factors like lack of government support, droughts and economic impacts of the “Zimbabwe Crisis” period, there have been signs of improved productivity coupled by financial capital inflows. The farmers in Norton have accumulated physical assets like irrigation equipment, vehicles, built houses and many others. This has significantly altered farmers’ livelihoods for the better.
1. Introduction and background
The Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in Zimbabwe facilitated the transfer of land to nearly 170,000 households excluding the informal settlements that are largely excluded from the official “fast track” programme (Moyo, 2011). The idea of redistributing land is not only peculiar to Zimbabwe but has been practised both in developed and developing world—more so in developing world where historical inequalities in terms of access to land demanded changes in such inequalities. For Bangwayo-Skeete et al. (2010) “colonial legacy left a disproportionate distribution of fertile lands in the hands of few white settlers” showing the need to redistribute land. The liberation struggle that claimed the lives of thousands of Zimbabwe’s sons and daughters was waged to ensure that the historical dispossession was reversed and the land was returned to its rightful owners (Mangena, 2014).

The need for land redistribution was even evident at independence with “a highly skewed land distribution, with around 6,000 white-owned farms and a number of large agro-industrial estates occupying more than a third of the country’s land area, much of it areas of higher agricultural potential” (Chaumba et al., 2003). Mugabe’s remarks in London during the peace negotiation process aptly summarize the importance that the generality of Zimbabwean population attached to the land at that time and even today. He remarked that “the land issue is a crucial issue. There has to be land given to the people who have suffered in the course of colonialism.” (The Sunday Mail-25, 2012). Mayo and Chambati (2013) ranks land redistribution amongst the major reasons that underlined the nationalist movement in Rhodesia. It is an uncontested truth that the land in Zimbabwe had to be redistributed (Kabonga & Marime, 2017) given the historic imbalances.

Munemo (2016) posits that during the Lancaster house discussions Lord Carrington wittingly made sure that the clause on land redistribution only stipulated that any form of land reform had to be done 10 years after independence without the guarantee that Britain will finance the land reform programme. Lord Carrington, amidst the contestations of how to approach the complex and delicate issue, issued a confusing statement regarding British stance on the financing of the land reform. The statement issued by Carrington was hysterically followed by the Patriotic Front (PF) issuing a statement to the effect that the PF has obtained guarantees that United States of America (USA), Britain and other donor countries were going to finance the land reform programme. This author concurs that Carrington got “what he wanted out of the negotiations” in that the “patriotic leaders conceded to almost every point he laid on the table at the beginning of the conference” including nebulous land redistribution financing framework (Munemo, 2016). Thus Munemo (2016) argues that the financing framework of land reform was a gentleman agreement that had no reference in the constitution. What was clear in the constitution was the “willing seller, willing buyer” clause. It is not surprising that the Lancaster House Agreement is lambasted for guaranteeing and furthering capitalists’ interests. The winners of the Lancaster House agreement were Lord Carrington, the British and the erstwhile capitalists (Moyo & Chambati, 2013). This is so in that the willing seller, willing buyer principle stipulated that the land could only be acquired if the seller was willing it goes under the prevailing market price as well as in a currency determined by the seller. The willing seller and willing buyer arrangement failed to materialize to the extent that Zimbabwe went for more than two decades without any meaningful redistribution of the land except for the spasmodic redistributions of land from 1980 to 1984 and redistributions that favoured state elites and state functionaries towards 1990 (Moyo & Chambati, 2013).

This paper recognises the veracity of Raftopoulous (2009) argument that there is need for more research and assessment of the FTLRP in Zimbabwe. Similarly, Scoones et al. (2010) call for a more balanced...
appraisal of the FTLRP. Thus this study employs Sustainable Livelihoods Framework especially using the concept of capital in assessing and evaluating the outcomes of the land redistribution in Zimbabwe with specific reference to access to financial capital, physical capital and natural capital. This study uses the concept of capital in recognition of absences of literature and studies that employ capital as a conceptual lens for evaluating the FTLRP. It does so by critically reflecting on the nuances of the FTLRP from a preponderance of literature that has been generated from multifarious studies in Zimbabwe. More so, qualitative interviews and observations were also conducted with beneficiaries of the FTLRP in Norton area of Chegutu District for a period spanning 2 years to unravel the complexities of the FTLRP especially access to three forms of capital and resultant effect on farmers' livelihoods.

2. Statement of the problem

The study of FTLRP in Zimbabwe has generated significant literature (Bangwayo-Skeete et al., 2010; Cliffe et al., 2011) and has been a subject of interest to social workers, sociologists, economists and development scholars. While informative this literature may be, there is absence of studies that focuses on how the FTLRP facilitated access to social, natural and financial capital and how access to these forms of capitals improved the livelihoods of the farmers. The FTLRP thus far has not been subjected to a capital-based perspective study. This study used the capital perspective inherent in the SLF to unpack how the FTLRP improved the capital base of the farmers that benefited from the FTLRP.

3. Literature review on land reform in Zimbabwe and access to capital and the implications on livelihoods

3.1. Land reform in Zimbabwe and social capital

The FTLRP had significant implications on social capital. The social networks that had developed over years were destroyed as the new farmers took the land. Relationships between farm workers at the same farm and from the neighbouring farms were destroyed as jambanja occupiers took over the land and presided over structural changes. It is not backed with evidence that white farmers were all tyrannical bent on exploiting black farm workers. Mutual relationships between farm workers, their families and white farm owners sedimented over years had developed and flourished. This is supported by social events such as Christmas, Easter holidays, harvest celebrations and birthday parties that white farm owners and the black farm workers and their families celebrated together (Chaumba et al., 2003). These social events were punctuated with music, food, pomp and fanfare. In most cases, the white farm owners bore the costs of such celebrations.

The FTLRP can also be seen as an attempt to create a new forms of social coexistence for instance white landowners where expected to coexist with new black settlers (Mangena, 2014). The breakdown of social networks and relationships should not only be viewed as a phenomenon that only happened at the newly settled farms. With well over 1 million people moving to new land (Scoones, 2014) joined with families and labourers over the years one cannot underestimate the social changes that have occurred in communal areas where black farmers originated from. These black farmers were neatly articulated in social life of the communal areas, their moving away disfigured social networks and relationships sedimented over many years. Unlike the initial stages of the FTLRP, the land occupiers had limited contact with communal areas in that “If someone wanted to go to his rural area he would tell the seven member [settlers’] committee his reasons for going, how many days for and when he was likely to come back” (Chaumba et al., 2003). Evidence shows that the black farmers are articulated in multiple spaces. They have maintained solid contact with their relatives in the rural areas which they regularly visits in as much as they identify with urban spaces in which they own houses and properties. As observed by Scoones (2014) the middle class that now own land has links to the town and besides they sometimes have other jobs. Black farmers, their families and that of their workers have created communities in the new farms. Such that patterns of social networks and relationships, that used to exist during the era of white farmers are recognisable.

Chiweshe (2014) sees the emergence of social and solidarity economy (SSE) in Mazowe district characterised by trust, reciprocity and communality to cope with economic, social and political challenges in the aftermath of the resettlement. Farm-based institutions (Chiweshe, 2014) such as
the Committee of Sevens (Chaumba et al., 2003) are important forms of social capital as they not only promote social cohesion but also ensure good neighbourliness among fast track farmers. Chiweshe (2014) observed that organization into institutions has allowed greater interaction promoting togetherness of farm dwellers as they work for their collective good. He observed the bonding of farmers facilitated by working for the common good. Households that were formerly strangers have been brought together by associational activities. Given that the government was constricted to provide social services in newly resettled farms (Chiweshe, 2014) concludes that “It is through informal institutions, built up through interaction and negotiation—and founded on trust, reciprocity and unity of purpose—that these communities have sustained their existence”.

3.2. Land reform in Zimbabwe and natural capital

Bangwayo-Skeete et al. (2010) argue that land reforms are used by governments both in developed and developing societies to redress excessive inequalities in land ownership. The FTLRP is an example of a faster land reform model increasingly being used by African governments to address historical injustices given that over 60 percent of the populations derive their livelihoods from agriculture. Land redistribution conducted by the government of Zimbabwe between 1980 and 1996 under the rubric of ‘willing seller willing buyer’ saw land holding by white settlers decline from 50 percent to 29 percent with 430 000 hectares of land acquired during the period. However, many scholars (Deininger et al., 2004; Kabonga & Marime, 2017; Scoones et al., 2010) concur the process was slow and did not meet the land needs of the masses. The ‘willing seller willing buyer’ is generally problematic because of slow land acquisitions as observed in South Africa (1996–2006), Namibia (1990–present) and Kenya (1960–2006) (Bangwayo-Skeete et al., 2010). Bangwayo-Skeete et al. (2010) attest that the FTLRP facilitated access to land (physical capital) as farmers benefitted from both the A1 and A2 models of the land reform program. The A1 model sought to relieve the congested communal areas whereas the A2 model was premised on creating a cadre of African black commercial farmers (Cliffe et al., 2011; Deininger et al., 2004; Scoones et al., 2010). The FTLRP is said to have created 22 737 A2 farms (Cliffe et al., 2011).

Scoones et al. (2010) submit the radical land reform in the post-2000 period resulted in radical transformation of the agrarian structure in Zimbabwe as it resulted in transfer of land to over 170 000 households in the country. While it is true that the FTLRP was characterised by transfer of natural capital to many households in Zimbabwe, the assumption that “settlement of good quality and well-developed land would lead to immediate increases in agricultural production” (Marongwe, 2013) proved untrue as the early years of the FTLRP were characterized by low productivity for instance in provinces like Masvingo and Mashonaland Central.

3.3. Land reform in Zimbabwe and financial capital

The proponents of the land reform programs claim that besides the land reform facilitating access to land (physical capital), land reform programs also improves farm productivity and efficiency (Bangwayo-Skeete et al., 2010). This in the end improves farmers’ livelihoods and effectively contributing to economic growth. Early analysis of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe by Gunning et al. (2000) shows that the resettled farmers in the early 1980s were able to accumulate gross income from crop production. Thus land reforms programs are important in enhancing access to financial capital. The authors show general increase of income between 1983 and 1996 of 460 percent. Scoones et al. (2010) concur that the early years of the FTLRP in Zimbabwe were problematic as far as financial capital accumulation is concerned and overall impact on the economy. They argue “any radical reform will of course have a transitional phase, as production systems, markets and trading priorities readjust”. Thus, it is not surprising that the production of wheat and tobacco declined between 2000 and 2009 with severe impacts on farmers’ livelihoods. There was recovery of tobacco production between 2010 and 2012 (Scoones et al., 2010). Production of small grains witnessed significant growth surpassing the 1990s averages by 163 percentage. In the newly resettled areas, in as much as the farmers are encountering challenges, many are producing crops for selling.
The story of the FTLRP is incorrect without making references to former farm workers. Figures provided by the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) (2003) show that an estimate of 200 000 permanent workers and many unaccounted seasonal workers lost work opportunities due to agricultural disturbances caused by the FTLRP. This seriously comprised financial income for the workers and their families (Marongwe, 2013). The workers who already were vulnerable and surviving on meagre salaries prior to the commencement of the FTLRP, lost subsidized food, shelter and access to basic social services (Sachikonye, 2003).

3.4. Land reform in Zimbabwe and human capital
Access to land was not complemented with the drive to change what Chaumba et al. (2003) refer to as part timeliness of black farmers who are able to raise the ladder to full-scale commercial enterprises. Some of the FTLRP beneficiaries where not full-time farmers, they had jobs in Harare and elsewhere and they took the farms they received as their second rural homes. Thus the author concurs with the Chaumba et al. (2003) the FTLRP was marred by politicians much emphasis on the idea of land to the people “neglecting the competency of those to be settled”. While Mangena (2014) argues that after the year 2000, the government invited serious people to apply for land backed with business proposal plans for land use. In practice, evidence gathered shows those that got A2 farms never put business plans. Moreover one cannot rule out corrupt tendencies intertwined with political patronage associated with the allocation of the large A2 farms especially around 2008 election period—a period marked with ZANU PF peak in terms of deployment of political patronage (Moyo, 2011). Besides the government capacity to review such plans is seriously doubted by the author. Hitherto, the government has never taken a deliberate and robust step to capacitate the black farmers. Reference is made to Richardson (2003) who among other things argue that the FTLRP failure is as a result of the commercial farmers who “took with them the intricate knowledge needed to produce a variety of crops under arid conditions”. The preponderance of farmers who got land their experience of farming was at communal level hence they lacked requisite knowledge of producing at commercial level. No wonder vast stretches of land that continue to remain unutilised hitherto.

FTLRP has had a significant impact on human capital especially with specific reference to former farm workers. Bhatasara (2011) laments evictions and displacement suffered by former women farm workers. The aggregate effect has been deprivation of secure jobs, incomes, food and homes for their children. Thus Sachikonye (2003) concludes that former farm workers were treated as “aliens and deprived of citizenship”.

3.5. Land reform in Zimbabwe and physical capital
Resettlements conducted by the government of Zimbabwe in the early years of independence show that the resettled farmers were able to accumulate physical capital (assets) from their farming ventures (Gunning et al., 2000). Scoones et al. (2010) study of the newly resettled farmers in Masvingo showed improvement of livelihoods and accumulation of assets by the resettled farmers. Scoones et al. (2010) argue that during the FTLRP, some farmers were allocated unoccupied land which had nothing at all. In other words, the farmers had to start from scratch (Marongwe, 2013). They invested significantly in physical capital. “There was an urgency: fields had to be prepared for planting, structures had to be built for cattle to be kraaled in, granaries had to be erected for the harvests to be stored, and homes had to be put up for growing numbers of people to live in” submits Scoones et al. (2010). As the communities took shapes this was followed by establishment of physical community assets like schools, clinics and roads (Chiweshe, 2014). In most cases, labour and materials for the construction of the physical assets were mobilized without external help, showing the urgency of the newly resettled farmers.

4. Theoretical framework
This study draws heavily from the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) mainly the concept of capital. The SLF mainly prioritizes the five capitals—human, social, physical, natural and financial. These capitals are referred to as the pentagon of assets. The study focused on how the FTLRP
facilitated access to three forms of capital that is natural, physical and financial capital. There are no studies in Zimbabwe that have studied the FTLRP from the perspective of access to financial, social and physical capital and the implication on the farmers livelihoods. Therefore, the SLF offers an opportunity to study the FTLRP from a capital-based perspective.

Capital takes centre stage in the SLF because it is capital that underlines the household's livelihood strategies. It is important to bear in mind the discussion by Scoones (1998) that livelihood is a consequence of access to capital. In other words without capital there is no livelihood to talk of. Applied to the study, it is difficult to talk of any farming without access to capital. That is why it important to interrogate how access to capital underpinned farming as a livelihood. Chambers and Conway (1992) define livelihood as comprising “the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living; a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long-term”. Ellis and Allison (2004)’s argument transcends viewing livelihood as just what people do to make a living but the resources that provide them with the capability to build satisfactory living. Land as it constitutes natural capital, the government of Zimbabwe had to undertake the FTLRP as a means to prop up livelihoods of the majority of Zimbabweans who were languishing in poverty. The need to prop up livelihoods is expressed in the objectives of the FTLRP that sought to create employment and deal with raising levels of poverty (Tom & Mutsangwva, 2015).

Cahn (2006) summarises the pentagon of assets inherent in the SLF. Natural capital refers to resource stocks from which resource flows useful for livelihoods are derived. Examples are land, water, wildlife, biodiversity and environment resources. Social capital is social resources upon which people rely on in pursuit of livelihoods. Thus these resources are networks, memberships of groups, relationships of trust and access to wider institutions of society. In pursuit of livelihoods Cahn (2006) illustrates that households draw upon skills, knowledge, labour and good health. This epitomises human capital. Households and individuals also require physical capital in form of transport, shelter, energy, communication and machinery in pursuit of sustainable livelihoods. While natural, physical, human and social capitals are of paramount importance, in pursuit of livelihoods, one should not be oblivious of financial capital. Financial capital refers to savings, access to credit and remittances that households have access to. Figure 1 shows the different types of capital inherent in the SLF.

Figure 1. Showing the pentagon of assets.

Source: Scoones (1998).

Natural Capital: natural resource stocks (soil, water, air, genetic resources etc.) and environmental services (hydrological cycle, pollution sinks etc.)

Social Capital: social resources (networks, social claims, social relations, affiliations)

Financial Capital: capital base (cash, credit/debt, savings, and other)

Human Capital: skills, knowledge, labour (includes good health and physical capacity)

Physical Capital: Infrastructure (buildings, roads), production equipment and technologies.
The SLF is made up of multiple elements; livelihood assets (capital), vulnerability context, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes. The study explains how the FTLRP facilitated access to three forms of capital (financial, physical, natural) in the vulnerability context of lack of government support and drought in pursuit of livelihood strategy (farming) to improve production and standard of living (livelihood outcomes).

5. Materials and methods

5.1. The study area

Norton, location shown on figure 2, lies about 40-km west of Harare along the major highway and railway that connects Harare to Bulawayo. Norton is located in Mashonaland West province; however, administratively the area is located in Chegutu district (Swotwa et al., 2007). Norton and Chegutu are the two towns in Chegutu district. It terms of population over the years the area has witnessed a sustained population growth. In 1982 there were 12,360 people in the area raising to 20 405 people in 1992 reaching 44,054 in 2002 and 67,591 in the last census of 2012 (ZIMSTAT, 2012). Rapid urbanisation and opening up of new areas for farming purposes are two currents that are causing population growth in the area.

![Figure 2. Showing location of Norton in Zimbabwe. Source: Google Maps.](image)

In terms of economic activity, agriculture is the predominant economic activity. Interestingly, the town was named after a famous farming family, Norton family that used to farm in the area from 1890 and the family was killed in 1896 during the First Chimurenga. Good agricultural soils and abundant water resources from the “twinlakes”, Lake Chivero and Manyame Dam provide conducive prerequisites for farming (Swotwa et al., 2007). It is not surprising, the town produces a range of crops including tobacco, maize and wheat. Cattle rearing for the beef and dairy industries is also an important element of the local economy. Significant changes have occurred on the agricultural landscape of Norton following the FTLRP. Norton as a study area was chosen because it has sizeable number of farms and provided a good site to interrogate how the FTLRP facilitated access to financial, physical and natural capital.

5.2. Research approach

The study utilised qualitative research method to understand the FTLRP from a SLF perspective particularly with the regards to the concept of capital. Qualitative research method is that type of research that relies on non-numeric data usually in form of words (Jackson, Darlene & Camara, 2007). Qualitative research allowed the use of several data collection methods. As a result of adopting a qualitative approach data in this study were collected using in-depth interviews, analysis of documents and observation. Qualitative
research allowed the researcher to capture farmer’s perspectives on how the FTLRP enabled access to financial, physical and social capital.

5.3. Population and sampling
Participants in this study were selected using judgemental sampling. Judgmental sampling is that type of sampling in which the researcher has direct control over elements included in the study (Etkan & Kabiru, 2017). The selected farmers had benefitted in the early stages of FTLRP, thus had experienced changes that have occurred in the programme of land resettlement. Moreso, the key informants were knowledgeable in the discourse of land reform in Zimbabwe. In terms of the population, Norton has close to 150 newly resettled farmers (Ministry of Agriculture records) both in A1 and A2 farmers.

5.4. Data collection methods
Data in this study were collected using a number of data collection methods. Data were collected using in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and documentary analysis. These diverse methods of data collection enhanced the credibility of the study.

5.4.1. In-depth interviews
Of all other data collection methods within the qualitative research approach, interviews remain popular (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). According to Ryan et al. (2009) in-depth interviews are used to gather information, beliefs, and perspectives regarding a specific phenomenon. The greatest advantage of using in-depth interviews is that they allowed the researcher to get farmers’ perspectives on how the FTLRP has enabled access to natural, physical, and financial capital. On many cases, in-depth interviews allowed probing when farmers tendered unclear narratives. Key informants that included government officials and academics were asked to discuss the effects of FTLRP on access to capital. The interviews lasted one hour on average and they were tape recorded. A total of 20 (15 farmers and 5 key informants) interviews were conducted.

5.4.2. Documentary analysis
A lot of scholars have written a lot about Zimbabwe’s FTLRP. The researcher relied a lot on this literature to sharpen his understanding of the contribution of the FTLRP to farmers’ access to capital. Often than not the researcher relied on literature to show how the FTLRP shaped, changed and modified the three forms of capital in Norton and Zimbabwe as a whole. Documents that were analysed included journal articles, book chapters, books and conference papers on Zimbabwe FTLRP. Again official statistics were helpful in showing the significant changes that have been brought by the FTLRP. Documentary analysis complemented primary data gathered through in-depth interviews.

5.4.3. Observation
To complement in-depth interviews and documentary analysis, data were also collected using observations made on 15 farms in Norton. In observation, the researcher was interested in understanding changes that were brought by FTLRP on physical capital and natural capital. Such questions like were they any changes in terms of land use and utilisation because of FTLRP guided observation. Current land use observation was vital in answering the research questions. Various data collection methods are shown in table 1.

| Data Collection Method                  | Number of respondents |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Interview(s)                           |                       |
| In-depth interviews-Farmers            | 15                    |
| Key informants                         | 5                     |
| Observation                            | 15 farms              |
| Documentary analysis                   | Books, book chapters, journals, reports, grey literature |

Source: Fieldwork.
5.5. Data analysis
The study used thematic analysis. It allowed the identification of themes and patterns inherent in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As an advantage, thematic analysis is not tied to a particular data collection method or broadly any particular epistemological perspective (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). After the collection of raw data, the data was transcribed. After the transcription of the data, the researcher identified cross-cutting themes.

6. Presentation and discussion of findings

6.1. FTLRP and access to natural capital and implications on farmers livelihoods
A number of scholars recognise that the land reform in Zimbabwe was marked by chaotic scenes and violent takeovers of land (see Bond, 2007; Kabonga & Marime, 2017). It is the argument of this paper that the violent takeover of the farms should not only be viewed in negative terms. Chaumba et al. (2003) are of the view that “broad-brush representation of the farm invasion and fast-track resettlement process as chaotic, violent, unmodern and unplanned obfuscates two overlapping phases underpinned by the same logic”. As such the early years of the FTLRP were marked by an accelerated approach. This stage was characterised by limited planning but as the FTLRP gained momentum it was replaced with more technical approach. Evidence from Norton (the study area) shows that some of respondents got land during the violent takeovers that characterised the early stages of the movement though takeovers were regularised through issuing of 99 year leases. This was supported by an interviewed farmer who said “... we came here during the early 2000s when things were still heated. I actually participated in the takeover of the farms from white farmers”. From the argument of Sadomba (2013) it had not been the militancy of the war veterans movement and the peasants’ land redistribution would have remained an unresolved case hitherto with serious implications on access to natural capital (land). Considering the dithering approach of the Mugabe regime one has to credit the violent takeover of the farms as it initiated the distribution of the farms and the eventual access to land by former marginalised black people. That the land reform was chaotic and marked by violent scenes does not provide justification for the denigration of FTLRP. According to De Haan (2012) capital in the SLF can either be borrowed, stolen from someone else, held in common property and conquered from someone else. Moreover Morse and McNamara (2013) argue that capital need not to be owned by the household to contribute to livelihood but what is important is for the household to have access to the capital. The chaotic scenes that characterised the FTLRP are in sync with processes for obtaining access to capital according to the SLF. Therefore, the violent takeover of the farms facilitated access to land—a natural capital that is important in fostering of livelihood strategies. Scoones (2014) conclude the net effect of the “spontaneous invasions and orchestrated occupations” was making land available to 150,000 household in smallholder farms often referred as A1 farmers and 30,000 households in middle-scale farms often called A2 farms. As argued above the violent takeovers played a significant role in facilitating access to physical capital. How the farmers got access to land (natural capital) may be immaterial, but there is need to appreciate the contribution of access to land to household livelihoods.

While accepting how the FTLRP mediated access to land—natural capital—it is important to take cognisant of the inequality borne by the FTLRP. The researcher observed that beneficiaries of land in Norton were mostly men. It was common to hear during fieldwork that this farm belongs to Mr X, the next one to Mr A and that one to Mr Z. The finding of the study concurs with the findings of (Bhatasara, 2011; Scoones, 2014). These scholars lament particularly (Bhatasara, 2011) that the youth and women benefitted less from the FTLRP. Key informant interviewed aligns with the assertions of Bhatasara (2011) “… the greatest drawback of the land reform is the inequality in terms of land beneficiaries. Women and young people in my opinion did not benefit adequately from the exercise”. The preponderance of the farm owners in the research site were men giving credence to the argument of Bhatasara (2011) that the “the policy framework of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe was devoid of systematic gender considerations and it was political and exclusive, thus, the limited spaces created for women to participate in the implementation process determined the extent to which their
livelihoods were secured”. Arguments by (Jackson & Pearson, 1998; Jacob, 2003) show that land redistribution does not automatically lead to better outcomes for women as there is no correlation between land reform and empowerment. In most cases than not, land reform reproduces already existing punitive and discriminatory practices. How the FTLRP disempowered women in terms of land ownership is evident from studies that have been conducted by other scholars particularly Mphahlo (2003) who shows that in Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Matabeleland South, Masvingo and Midlands 95 percent of men own land in A2 model as compared to 4.88 percent of women. Similarly Goebel (2005) opines that women have not benefitted equally from the FTLRP in Zimbabwe because a paltry 20 percent of the 300,000 settlers are women. Bhatasara (2011) concludes that “the government designed land models that targeted different beneficiaries, however, this became a basis of exclusion”. Men own 82 percent of the land as compared to 18 percent of women in the A1 model. Men also own 88 percent of land in the A2 model whilst women own only 12 percent”. As also observed by Scoones et al. (2010) it is men’s names that appear on the offer letters that were issued by the government though women played a significant part in the land invasions. The foregoing arguments show how the FTLRP excluded women from physical capital access. The effects on women livelihoods are deleterious for many reasons. Chief among the reasons is the entrenchment of poverty as women lack assets to fight poverty.

While it is acceptable that the FTLRP enabled previously disadvantaged families to get access to land, there are claims of connected individuals who took the best-located farms. This was said by one interviewed farmer who said “…this farm was a forest when I got it. The big bosses took the good farms for themselves”. A number of studies up to now have confirmed media narratives of capture of land by cronies and figures with political connections (Cliffe et al., 2011). Zamba (2013) conspicuously shows the capture of high-value sites in Chipinge by cronies. Also Marongwe (2013) observes use of political connections to gain access to A2 farms in peri-urban Goromonzi.

6.2. The FTLRP and access to physical capital and the implication on livelihoods

The jambanja era of the land reform programme (Chaumba et al., 2003) and its resultant effect on access to land and production cannot go unnoticed. Chaumba et al. (2003) describe the jambanja era as tumultuous period that was accompanied by violence and angry augments. The period captures an era where “certain laws and norms no longer applied and enabled the creation of new identities”. With support of the government, the occupiers of the land grew in confidence and consolidated their occupation of land. The jambanja era represented an epoch that normalised illicit activities of all kinds. Explicit in the jambanja era was destruction of varied types of capital. Physical capital in the form of machineries such as irrigation equipment, tractors and harvesting equipment were looted as violent occupations were unfolding. This destruction of physical capital had implications on the successes of newly resettled farmers. Chaumba et al. (2003) observation at Fair Range farm in Chiredzi gives a glimpse of how the jambanja era of the FTLRP programme destroyed physical capital and forms of capital. They observed “cutting down trees; poaching; cattle theft and mutilation; starting fires; attacking game guards; demanding meat and mealie meal from white farmers; looting property and sugar cane; ordering farmers, farm workers and neighbouring villagers to attend political rallies”.

It was not the occupiers that only destroyed physical capital but Godwin (2003) observed the frustration of white commercial farm owners characterised by digging up and selling of irrigation pipes from commercial farms. Even in Norton, frustrated disposed white farmers vented their anger through conspicuous destruction of physical capital in form of irrigation pipes, water pumps and tractors. One farmer had this to say “…when I arrived here, everything was upside down. The irrigation pipes were dug up by the former owner. The cattle pens were destroyed. I had to start from scratch compared to other farmers. This delayed my progress. I must say”. During the jambanja era madness, some ZANU PF supporter melted irrigation pipes and sold them as coffin handlers. Some of the irrigation pipes were sold as scrap metal in nearby towns (Chaumba et al., 2003). With such kind of disturbance and destruction it is not surprising why the early 2000s were marked by poor agricultural production for some categories of crops such as maize, tobacco, and wheat. Newly resettled farmers in Norton struggled in the early years of resettlement as they
lacked various equipment that were destroyed during the transfer of land. This is supported by one farmer who said “... it was hard when we started operating here at the farm, this is because I had to replace vital machinery and equipment destroyed during violent takeovers that happened in this area”.

The researcher found out that although the early years of the FTLRP were characterised by problems and low productivity, over the years there have been changes with implications on farmers’ livelihoods. The resettled farmers due to improved financial inflows have accumulated physical assets (capital). One farmer had this to say “… though there are challenges, I must appreciate that I have made significant investments on this farm. I now have a fully functional irrigation system, tractors, personal vehicles and I have built a nice home here at the farm”. Other farmers narrated that there were improvements in terms of standard of living compared to the period before they were allocated the farms. This finding of the study concurs with Scoones (2014) findings in Masvingo of accumulation of physical capital by the newly resettled farmers and improved standard of living.

6.3. The FTLRP and implication on farmers’ access to financial capital

The land reform in Zimbabwe has also been criticised for causing the agriculture decline and attendant lack of accumulation of financial capital by farmers (Kabonga & Marime, 2017; Zikhali, 2008). Such narratives fail to appreciate the nuances of FTLRP especially when one applies the SLF. Thus it is very vital to consider the argument of (Morse & McNamara, 2013) that while all capital is important, the extent of their importance will change from household to household and over time. Some of the beneficiaries that got the land never considered farming as a business. Some got land and held hundreds of acres of land for speculative tendencies. As such remarked one respondent that “… when land was being redistributed I just got land as everyone was being given land. The idea of farming as a business was foreign to me and it’s a recent philosophy that I now valorise”. This mitigated against success and improved livelihoods for the resettled farmers. This resonates well with the argument of Raftopolous (2009) that some of those that joined land occupation movement were driven by a combination of grassroots initiatives and centralised coercion and violence without reflections on the nexus between farming and livelihoods.

Narratives that focus on declining agricultural productivity fail to acknowledge the complex trajectory of the land reform. Moyo and Nyoni (2013) brands such narratives as “empirically and analytically weak as they fail to acknowledge improved performances of late” as well as improved production of certain categories of crops. For instance Scoones et al. (2010) show while maize, wheat, tobacco and beef production have declined in the period between 2001 and 2009 recognisable is the booming of small grains (sorghum and millet) by 163 percent compared to 1990s as well as 13 percent increase on average in cotton production by 2009. The story of the FTLRP “is not simply one of collapse and catastrophe” (Scoones et al., 2010) but there are success and failures as well. Whereas Sachikonye (2003) observed declining agricultural productivity in the highveld around Harare, evidence gathered in Norton shows a picture of the huge chunk of farmers accumulating assets and making significant investments on the farms. One of the interviewed farmers had this to say “… I must reiterate that I have generated significant amount of money from farming particularly tobacco farming. I have invested financially to improve this farm”. The author concurs with Scoones et al. (2010) many of the small holders farmers are doing well regardless of the precipitous economic decline in Zimbabwe. Thus, the author concludes that there were multifarious intervening exogenous forces—droughts, lack of state support and sanctions though arguably—colluding to cause low agricultural productivity and declining financial capital generation especially in the first five years of FTLRP. For instance a key informant reiterated that “… what is militating against the success of the newly resettled farmers is lack of financial and technical support by the government”. Kinsey (2000) draws attention to the fact that any radical reform will of course have a transitional phase, as production systems, markets and trading priorities readjust. Over the years a preponderance of studies have shown accumulation of financial assets by Zimbabwean resettled black farmers (see Scoones et al, 2010; Deininger et al., 2004).
Unlike (Deininger et al., 2004; Kinsey, 2000; Scoones et al., 2010) who paints a picture of the FTLRP as eventually poised for success given such trajectories will initially encounter challenges, Richardson (2003) provides concrete evidence as to why the FTLRP was characterised by low productivity and low financial returns to the farmers. The author cites failure to efficiently use the natural capital-land. In 1999/2000 agricultural season the commercial farmers planted an astounding 200 000 hectares of farmland compared to a paltry 90 000 hectares in 2000/2001 farming season. The hectarage plummeted heavily to 50 000 hectares in the 2001/2002 farming season. No wonder why agricultural output of the following crops maize, groundnuts, cotton, wheat, soybean, sunflowers, and coffee contracted between 50 and 90 percent in the 2002/2003 agricultural farming season. This catastrophic fall in agricultural production is attributed to the FTLRP in that “the government had no plan for redistribution or access to property titles, over half of the vacated farms were left unclaimed and unused” (Richardson, 2003). During the two-year period of research in Norton, Parklands area, an observation of vast swathes of land that went year in year out unutilised was made. This gives credence to the argument of Richardson (2003) that shows low production and depressed financial returns is attributed to low hectarage being put for crop and animal production.

7. Vulnerability context and farmers livelihoods

The SLF draws attention to the vulnerability context in which livelihoods are couched. As observed by Ellis and Allison (2004) livelihoods are surrounded by risk factors. The households that got land (physical capital) during the FTLRP were compounded with multifarious risk factors that severely impacted on production and the farmers’ livelihoods. FTLRP was met with retaliation from Western powers who imposed sanctions on country. The discourse of sanctions and their role in the Zimbabwe crisis is heavily contested. Bond (2007) is of the opinion that the sanctions were targeted on certain individuals of the Mugabe government while Chiweshe (2014) sees it differently. However what is conspicuous is that the sanctions did much to affect the economy of Zimbabwe, with companies and banks being barred from accessing lines of credit to fund agricultural production.

While FTLRP enabled families to have natural capital in form of land, paradoxically natural capital in form of climate was unfavourable. “... as farmers we are trying our best. We are facing a lot of challenges that include droughts. These droughts has affected production”. From 2000 to 2011 Zimbabwe grappled with three droughts that affected production heavily. Therefore arguments of Zikhali (2008) that paints a picture of FTLRP causing agricultural decline must appreciate the droughts that coincided with the FTLRP. Droughts and sanctions cooperated to cause 30 percent drop in agricultural production thereby significantly affecting the prosperity of the newly resettled farmers. The farmers also faced lack of government support, lack of timely access to inputs and lack of credit (Cliffe et al., 2011).

With the investor flight due to a land reform that did not follow canonical rules of property transfer (Murisa, 2010) and falling agricultural production, Zimbabwe was set on inflationary pedestal of great proportion. With the economy shrinking uncontrollably estimated in the range of 30 percent between 2000 and 2010, inflation topped 231 million percent (Murisa, 2010) thus making Zimbabwe 36 percent poorer than it was in 1998 (Richardson, 2003). The attendant effect was prices increasing uncontrollably. A crippled manufacturing sector rendered shops shelves empty. Paradoxically, goods that were not found on shelves in the shops reappeared on the black market with remarkable high prices. Black farmers interviewed in Norton corroborated that it was difficult to plan as a farmer as prices could rise twice a day. Given such challenges vast tracks of land (physical capital) were not utilised and little investments were done on the farms consequently explaining declining production since 2000 for some categories of crops. It is important to point that during the period marking the 'Zimbabwean crisis' of 2000–2008 the financial sector was in quandary marred by liquidity challenges—accessing cash from the banks was a colossal task. Thus the economic crisis occasioned in part by the FTLRP destroyed macro and micro-financial capital affecting livelihoods at household level. Gukurume (2015) summarizes challenges experienced by Zimbabweans including black farmers during the economic meltdown era as “monumental livelihood hardships”. A2 farm owners interviewed reiterated that they had to diversify their livelihood strategies to survive the scathing economic
downfall of the period 2000 to 2008. Of note is the subletting of land despite government incessant warnings (Marongwe, 2013). Stories of farmers who abandoned their farms in Parklands area of Norton (research site) are replete joining the great trek to South Africa in search of enhanced livelihood opportunities. “... around 2004 things became increasingly difficult for me as a new farmer. I abandoned farming completely and went to South Africa but my family remained on the farm” reiterated a new farmer who was interviewed. Some farmers had to deploy their social capital to survive the biting economic collapse. Blacks farmers in Norton who had networks claimed that they had to rely on their networks in order to get inputs from South Africa and Botswana in order to ensure that production continues on their farms especially during the height of the ‘Zimbabwean Crisis’. When human beings are compounded with a crisis that destroys certain types of capital they also use available capital to circumvent the crisis. Thus the Zimbabwean Crisis as it destroyed financial capital in so far as the implosion of the financial markets is concerned, resettled black farmers had to resort to social capital in form of networks to navigate the tumultuous Zimbabwean Crisis.

8. Conclusion and recommendations
Using the concept of capital inherent in the SLF, the study analyses the contribution of the FTLRP to farmers’ access to physical, natural and financial capital. The study is important given the scantiness of studies that interrogates the FTLRP from a capital-based perspective. In order to capture the farmers' lived realities and experiences data in the study were collected using in-depth interviews, observation and documentary analysis. The study found out the FTLRP facilitated access to natural capital (land) to previously disadvantaged black farmers. However, there is disproportionate access by women and the youth. With the improved production witnessed over the years, the newly settled farmers have witnessed-enhanced financial income from agriculture allowing them to accumulate physical assets like building decent homes, investing in irrigation, ploughs and vehicles. The studied farmers in Norton are existing in a vulnerability context of droughts at times, economic problems, lack of government support and shortage of inputs. In order to create a cadre of successful black farmers, the study recommends timely government support to the farmers. The support includes provision of credit, human capital training, improved roads to access markets and timely provision of inputs.

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