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## **Gender, Poverty and Inequality in the Aftermath of Zimbabwe's Land Reform: A Transformative Social Policy Perspective**

By Newman Tekwa<sup>1</sup> & Jimi Adesina<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

Gender equality is re-emerging as an important global and national agenda with emphasis placed on closing the gender gap in terms of women's representation in public and private decision-making bodies. Though unrelatedly, the period had coincided with the elevation of social protection in the form of cash transfers as the magic bullet in tackling gendered poverty and inequality. Adopting a Transformative Social Policy Framework and land reform as a social policy instrument, the paper questions the efficacy of the current approaches in transforming gendered poverty and inequalities. Land reform is hardly ever assessed as a policy instrument for its redistributive, productive, social protection and social reproduction functions. This paper departs from 'classical models' of land reforms, often designed in the mould of neo-liberal discourses of individual tenure to offer an in-depth reformulation of the land question and notions of land reforms. It focuses on land reform as a relational question with potential for social transformation as social policies within the transformative social policy framework relates not only to protection from destitution, but transformation of social institutions and relations including gender. In the year 2000, the Zimbabwean government embarked on a radical land reform programme whose redistributive outcomes saw various categories of women (married, single, and widowed) comprising 12-18% of beneficiaries gaining access to land in their own right. Data gathered through a mixed methods approach combining ethnographic and survey methods and analysed using qualitative and quantitative methods, suggest that access to larger pieces of land, irrigation, credit, markets and support training services by both women and men had transformed women's social and economic situation in relation to men within the resettled areas.

*Keywords:* gender, poverty, inequality, transformative social policy, land reform.

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## **Introduction**

While progress has been made towards gender equality in much of the developing regions including sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in terms of parity in education and increased levels of economic and political participation. At the same time, however, extreme poverty and durable inequalities had persisted as defining characteristics of most developing regions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with distinct gender characteristics. This had triggered serious debates surrounding issues of women, gender, poverty and inequality, particularly now, as it had coincided with a sensitive period of Africa's development characterised by the inability of production systems, economic and social policies to deliver decent living to many is topical (Tsikata & Amanor-Wilks, 2009). The paper explores the extent to which feminist theoretical insights to the study of welfare states regimes can provide valuable insights to the study of social policy in development contexts particularly gender. As Mkandawire (2004) observed, so little of these insights have found their way in the field of social policy in development contexts. Yet the history and current use of social policy can provide useful insights in the study of social policy in developing countries, including explicating relationships between gender, poverty and inequality.

The paper is structured as follows. Conceptualisation of gender, poverty and inequality is provided in Section 2. The conceptual framework, Transformative Social Policy, informing the research is provided in Section 3. Section 4 presents the methods of data collection and analysis. Descriptive statistics showing results from the study and their discussion is presented in Section 5. Finally, Section 6 draws conclusions from the results.

## **Literature Overview**

Feminist contributions to the analysis of gender, poverty and inequality have made a distinction between vertical and horizontal inequalities and the efficacy of understanding the intersection between them in explaining persistent poverty, discrimination and social exclusion (Kabeer, 2015). The former ranks individuals/households according to their place in the income/wealth hierarchy, that is, class-based inequalities (Stewart, 2002). The latter deals with inequalities between socially defined groups that often cut across income groups attending to discriminations based on marginalized social identities such as gender, race, age, ethnicity, among others (Stewart, Brown and Mancini, 2005; Kabeer, 2015). The shift in conceptualizing poverty based on economic terms to a multi-dimensional and intersectional understanding illuminated how various kinds of inequalities, vertical as well as horizontal, overlap, reinforce, and exacerbate each other. Kabeer (2010) highlights the extent to which gender inequality- as it cuts across both vertical and other horizontal inequalities such as race and ethnicity, intersects with them to produce acute forms of disadvantage. In many instances despite poverty having a 'female' face, the face embodying lower levels of health, nutrition, education, housing, income and often suffering higher levels of violence than other women is black.

## **Conceptualizing Poverty as 'States' and 'Processes'**

The rejection of the 'unitary household model' and its assumptions on same preferences and/or pooling together of household resources, called for the deconstruction of the household to interrogate intra-household distribution of well-being leading to a gendered understanding of poverty (Quisumbing & Maluccio, 2000; Kabeer, 2015). Along with the distinction of poverty as 'states' and 'processes', where the former denotes snapshot view of basic needs deficits of the poor

at a particular time and the latter dealing with causes and mechanisms of the generation and transmission of poverty over time, the rejection revealed that women and men experience poverty differently and unequally and get impoverished through processes that at times (though not always) diverge (Kabeer, 1989). While intra-household incomes are unequally distributed, systematically disadvantaging women and girls, research had indicated empirical association between female headship with poverty leading to the conclusion that while gender inequalities were not confined to the poor, they tend to be exacerbated by poverty (Kabeer, 2015; Babatunde et al, 2008; Kassie et al, 2012; Ndobu & Sekhampu, 2013). Within (FHHs), it has been found that, female-supported households—those supported solely by women's earnings—were more associated with poverty. With the rise of FHHs across the world, their descriptor as 'the poorest of the poor' served as a marker of the perceived 'feminization of poverty' (Kabeer, 2015).

### **Poverty as a 'Process', Vertical Inequalities and Social Policies**

The conceptualization of poverty as a 'process' draws attention to the unequal distribution of means through which people in different contexts seek to meet their needs, which are most likely to vary across regions (Kabeer, 2015). Poverty as 'states' and as 'process' are closely interrelated as deficits in need at any particular point in time is both an outcome of on-going processes of poverty and a contributory factor (ibid). But it is the larger vertical inequalities in society that determine what share of resources or incomes accrue to the poor. This is where the 'Robin Hood' function of social policies- redistributing resources within society between members to promote equality and well-being comes into effect (Hills, 2014; Mkandawire, 2004).

In the Nordic context, social policies guard against 'states' of poverty in the form of social risks like unemployment and poverty, age, disability, injury and death, whereas in development contexts, such as Africa—where large sections of the populations resides in the rural areas—access to productive resources such land and other natural resources, productive equipment and credit not only help reduce persistent poverty but also attend to socio-economic inequalities (Mkandawire, 2014). At the same time, social policies need to pay attention to gendered inequalities in access to and control over means of survival and security among households, particularly, FHHs which are disadvantaged by socially constructed and enacted unequal power relations (Kabeer, 2015).

On the other hand, feminist critical insights into the gendered processes of poverty have highlighted asymmetries in the extent to which women and men are able to dispose their own labour or enjoy the command over the labour of others, given the importance of physical labour as the predominant and often the only resource at the disposal of the poor (Kabeer, 2015). Social reproduction theory brings to attention the time and money it takes to produce, maintain and invest in the labour force, a function primarily done by women, and the extent to which gendered inequalities and poverty is both a cause and consequence of these gendered social relations and institutions (Braunstein, 2015). The asymmetries in women and men's allocation of disposable labour and time between earning for living and caring for family highlights the extent to which social reproduction, gendered inequality and poverty are inextricably linked as women bear a disproportionate share of the unpaid work of caring for the family (Kabeer, 2015).

Drawing insights from Nordic countries, particularly Sweden, transformative social policies in the rubric of reconciling work and family had seen investment in social service infrastructure such as publicly-funded child and elderly care releasing many women to enter into the labour market thus producing a vastly different gender profile (Adesina, 2011). In stark contrast, the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in much of the

developing world in the 1980's, saw privatisation and cuts in social services expenditures as mechanism to stimulate economic growth. Women's time emerged as 'a crucial variable of adjustment' shouldering the burden of state cuts in expenditure on health, education and other social services (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1989). Micro-level studies revealed the 'scissors effect' of SAPs on women's time as they sought to increase their unpaid labour to compensate for cut backs in public services while at the same time increasing time into paid work to compensate for rising male unemployment by retrenchment and increasing cost of living (Kabeer, 2015) deepening gendered poverty and inequalities during that phase.

The current misplaced policies to deal with the aftermaths of SAPs—escalating inequalities, rising and persistent poverty levels and destitution, and elevated levels of domestic conflict—will not be in position to address challenges of gendered poverty and inequalities. Descriptive representations of women in national parliaments, although important from a broader gender equality perspective, provides no guarantee that it would promote the needs and interests of women from poor and marginalised groups (Celis, 2008) nor eliminate the underlying social mechanism of women's subordination. Social policies to increase the number of women entering secondary and tertiary education had produced contradictory outcomes—rise of a few incredibly prosperous multi-ethnic group of ruling class women both in the private and public spheres and the immiseration of the rest (Bhattacharya, 2013). In the domestic sphere, the rise in domestic violence associated with households struggling to make ends meet, exacerbated by unemployment; had been countered with training more police officers in dealing with domestic violence. Unless there is a shift in policy thinking, problems of gendered poverty and inequalities will remain a permanent feature of society with the potential to continue rising as foregone education, health care, chronic malnutrition among others are likely to reverberate for long time to come. In development and social policy strategies currently being recommended to less developing countries by international finance and aid agencies, the importance of social policy as an integral element of the historical development of advanced countries has often been neglected and featured far less prominently. Instead, palliative forms of social policy programmes have often been proposed as a remedial action against adverse social effects of economic policies of adjustment (Yi, 2015) with gendered poverty and inequalities as part of their unanticipated outcomes.

While much has been written on gender and land reforms mainly from livelihoods and poverty reduction perspective, scant research had analysed land reforms from a social policy perspective. Our distinct approach to social policy is framed by the Transformative Social Policy analytical framework, concerned with social policy as a device for the transformation of economy, society, social relations, and social institutions for the purpose of improving human wellbeing. In this context, we focus on the socio-economic wellbeing and lived experiences of rural women.

### **Conceptual Framework: Transformative Social Policy**

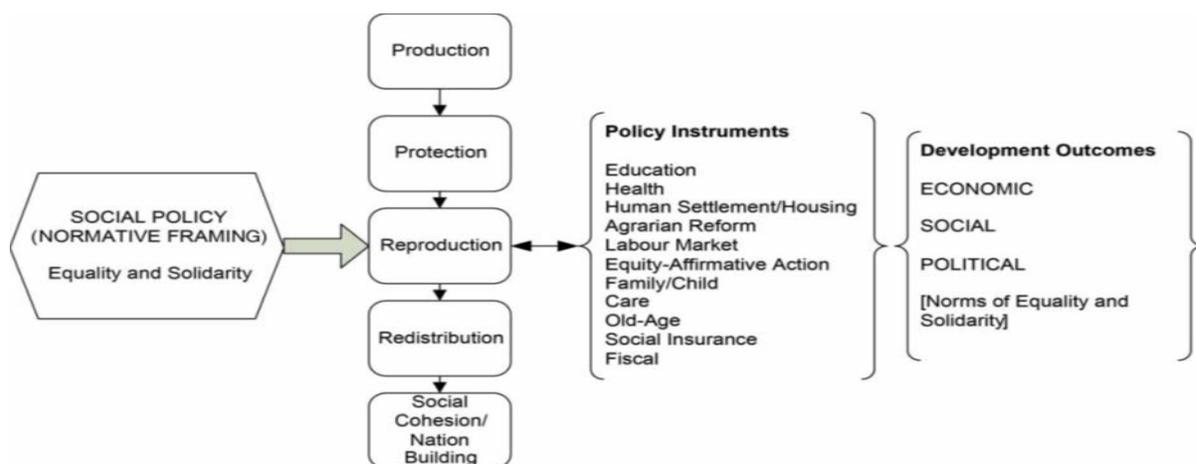
Transformative Social Policy approach defines social policy as “collective public efforts aimed at affecting and protecting the wellbeing of people in a given territory” (Adesina, 2009, p.38) or collective interventions in the economy to influence access to and the incidence of adequate and secure livelihood and income (Mkandawire, 2004). It emphasizes the inseparability of the social from the economic maintaining that the economy is embedded in society, where various social, economic and political relations and structures interact with each other through processes of exclusion and adverse incorporation preventing the poor from benefiting from

development policies and market changes (Hulmes, Moore & Shepherd, 2001; Mkandawire, 2004).

Transformative Social Policy, emanating from UNRISD flagship research, *Social Policy in Development Context*, calls for moving away from the neo-liberal approaches and a return to the wider vision of social policies with their multiple productive, redistributive, social protection, social reproduction, social cohesion and nation- building functions (Adesina, 2009; Mkandawire, 2004; Yi, 2015; Hujo, 2014). The framework (cf. Figure 1) emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to deal with the economic, social, political relations, policy linkages and the comprehensiveness of social policy interventions to transform existing unequal and unjust social, economic and political relationships to enhance the well-being of the people (Yi, 2015). Unlike the current safety-nets and social protection programmes which do not challenge the underlying structural risks and their longer-term implications for vulnerabilities, poverty and inequalities (Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux, 2008), the attraction of social policies within the Transformative Social Policy framework lies in their potential to transform gendered, racialized, ethnicized forms of inequality and poverty which are manifestations emanating from the intersection of these social identities and categories (Shields, 2008).

Intersectionality, in gender studies, is an invaluable analytical tool in explicating gender, poverty, inequalities, and diverse forms of oppression (Shields, 2008, p. 301). As Gopaldas and Fischer (2012, p.393) argued, “At base, intersectionality is the idea that each person is positioned in society at the intersection of multiple social axes.” For our study, the critical social axes would include race, class, ethnicity, marital status, and occupation among a diversity of social identities (cf. Gopaldas and Fischer, 2012; Shields, 2008). Most importantly and making them an object of transformative social policies, these intersections of multiple social identities are not timeless but rather socially and historically produced subjecting individuals to advantages/opportunities or disadvantages/oppressions depending on one’s intersectional position (Gill, 2014). A related form of intersection that we shall return to later with empirical evidence is the intersections of land, water and gender questions and how social policies can attend to them for gender-transformative change.

**Figure 1. Transformative Social Policy Framework.**



(Source: Adesina, 2011, p. 463).

### **Land Reform: A Transformative Social Policy Instrument**

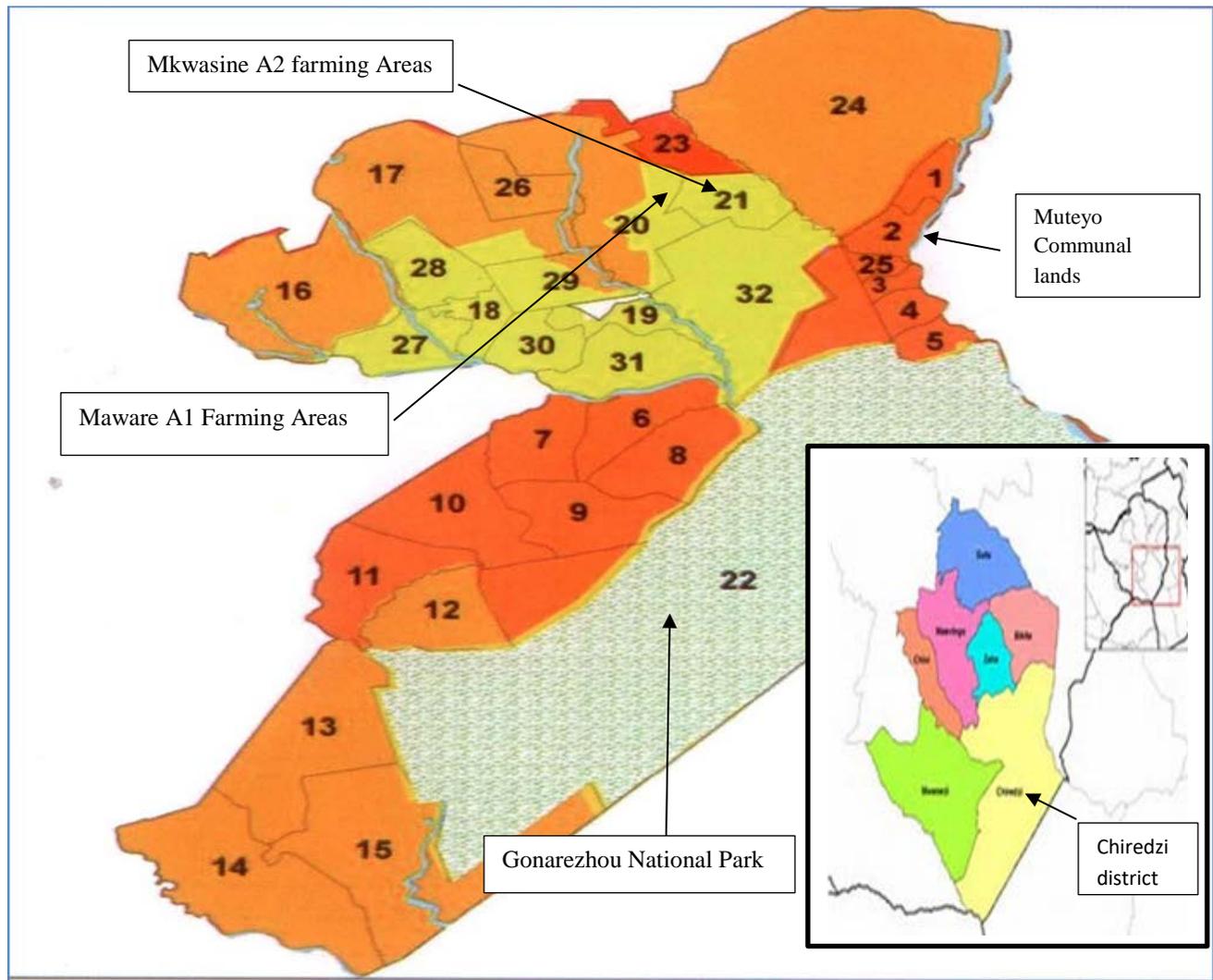
As pointed out in Figure 1 above, land reforms and agricultural policies are re-emerging as important policy agendas for development in emerging markets as well as current developing countries, in Africa and East Asia. Serious inequalities in asset distribution have been identified as critical barriers to poverty reduction accounting for poor macroeconomic performance. A closer look at the history of late industrializers in South East Asia suggest land reforms—that distributed land to cultivating farmers at the initial stages of development as crucial policy measures that assisted in wealth redistribution with consequent shifts in power relations in the industrialization process creating enabling conditions for successful industrialization—useful lessons for developing countries today (Chung, 2014).

In the early 2000, Zimbabwe embarked on a unique land reform program that was aimed at empowering the black majority with land dispossessed during a century of colonization. As a runner-up to the 2000 land reform programme, a 1998 donor's conference adopted a 20% quota for women in line with SADC recommendation that 20% of all resources should go to women (Manjengwa & Mazhawidza, "n.d."). Research had documented percentages ranging from 12-18% of women—married, widowed, single and divorced—gaining access to land in their own right. This was only 2% point below the target, in contrast to less than 4% of white farms owned by women in the previous dispensation or women benefitting as proxies of male-headed household in pre-2000 land reforms (Matondi, 2012; Hanlon, Manjengwa & Smart, 2013; Chiweshe, Chakona & Hellicker, 2014; Utete 2003; GoZ & SIRDC, 2007). Such a percentage warrants an aftermath investigation on the extent to which access to productive assets such as land had transformed gendered poverty and inequalities from a transformative social policy perspective.

### **Methodology**

This study was conducted in the Chiredzi district located south east of Zimbabwe in Masvingo province, 365 km from the capital, Harare. Chiredzi is classified under natural regions four and five characterized by aridity and erratic rainfall patterns with mean annual rainfall of 450-600 mm and mean annual evaporation exceeding 1800 mm. However, a combination of hot temperatures, plenty of sunshine and access to irrigation freshwater from Mutirikwi and other dams makes the low-veld favourable for sugarcane production at a commercial level. Prior to the FTLRP, smallholder farmers in Chiredzi derived their livelihood from the dry regions with little or no access to irrigation (Mutanga, Ramoelo & Gonah, 2013).

Data were gathered through an ethnographic field study, over a period of 8-months from the 27th of March 2016 to the 4th of November 2016, using structured questionnaires, in-depth interview, focus group discussion and key informant interview within an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design.

**Figure 2. Chiredzi District (Map of Zimbabwe Insert) and Study Sites**

Chiredzi district comprises a total of 32 wards—that is, 17 communal, 10 A1<sup>3</sup> and 5 A2<sup>4</sup> wards. The study adopted an embedded case study approach with a study unit purposively selected from each category viz. Ward 21 Mkwesine farming areas for A2 wards, Ward 20 Maware for A1 wards and Ward 25 Muteyo for communal wards. Ward 21 represent the largest block of resettled A2 sugarcane farmers in the south eastern low-veld following the acquisition of the entire former Mkwesine Sugarcane Estate and its white settler out-grower sections by the government during the FTLRP. The land was redistributed to 431 land beneficiaries of which 24.3% are females on an area covering 6 230 ha. In Ward 20, the water reforms by the government since 2000 had enabled A1 farm land beneficiaries to access to water for irrigation from the 40-kilometre canal

<sup>3</sup> Model A1 farms are the smaller farms where households were allocated 5 arable hectares in wetter regions and 10 arable hectares in drier regions. Land reserved for communal grazing is 7 hectares minimum per household

<sup>4</sup> Model A2 are the larger farms and range in size with agro-ecological regions with larger farms prescribed as one moves from Natural Region 1-5. Averages for sugarcane plots is 20 hectares (Sukume, Moyo and Matondi 2004:3-4).

which used to supply irrigation water to the former Mkwesine Estate, now supplying A2 sugarcane land beneficiaries in Mkwesine. Ward 25, a nearby communal area served as a proxy control or counterfactual group to assess the impact of the FTLRP on the gender, poverty and inequality.

A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the survey respondents for the preliminary quantitative study from the 3 study units. Ward agricultural extension registers were used as sampling frames. Study participants were further stratified according to their marital status to ensure that all categories of women—married, widowed, divorced/separated/single—were represented though not proportionately. The sample of 105 survey participants composed of 32, 33 and 40 respondents from A2, A1 land beneficiaries and communal non-land beneficiaries respectively. Since empirical evidence suggest that much of the land beneficiaries came from communal areas within the district or province the sub-sample of 40 non-land beneficiary participants were drawn from a nearby communal area and was considered large enough to provide a reliable counterfactual. To give weight to the perspectives of women they constituted 62.5%, 54.5%, and 55.1% (married, widowed, divorced/separated/single) within the A2, A1 and communal study areas respectively.

The questionnaires, which were pre-tested and modified accordingly before being administered, were used to collect information on the basic characteristics of household heads such as origin, sex, age, marital status, family size, education level, formal agricultural training, on-farm residency including measures of household wealth such as household cultivable land size, ownership of productive assets and investment, access to agricultural inputs, irrigation, labour, credit, markets, land tenure issues, household incomes, sources and expenditure, household food security, type of housing, ownership of non-productive assets, access to social services and infrastructure and time-use for women. The same questionnaire was used for both land beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in line with Jalan & Ravallion (2003) suggestion that in impact assessments it is important that the same questionnaire be administered to both experimental and control groups for comparison purposes.

Thirty follow-up qualitative study participants, equally divided between A1 and A2 study areas, were drawn from the preliminary quantitative study. To enhance validity and reliability of study findings this subsequent qualitative study shared similar research questions with the earlier one but delved deeper to capture micro-level individual lived experiences of female land beneficiaries. To give prominence to women's voices, perspectives and experiences female-headed households constituted two thirds of this purposively selected qualitative study sample in their varied marital statuses. This was complemented with 2 focus group discussions for each gender conducted within the A1 farming areas and 13 key informant interviews.

### **Analytical Methods**

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods in which the data from the two studies were analysed separately. Thematic analysis involves generation of codes, then categories, meanings and eventually themes was employed to analyse qualitative data with the aid of Atlas.ti software package. On the other hand, descriptive univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses were performed using the Spearman t-test for continuous variables and Pearson  $\chi^2$  tests for categorical variables with the aid of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for quantitative data.

## Results

The paper argues that in economies where large sections of the population still resides in the countryside, Africa included, social policies must include measures towards the rural sector of the economy (Mkandawire, 2014). In the same vein, Moyo, Jha & Yeros (2013) argues that in the global South, the land and agrarian questions remains the cornerstone of all other dimensions including gender, poverty and inequality for autonomous, democratic, equitable and sustainable development. As such to explicate gender, poverty and inequality there is need for a restructuring of the relationships and meaning of all dimensions involved and the extent to which they intersect with one another to produce acute forms of disadvantage. The results of data analysis are presented in the following sections. The next section presents descriptive statistics from both t-tests and  $\chi^2$ -square tests on how access to land had affected levels of poverty and inequality including gender.

**Table 1: Correlations of per capita Cultivable Land and Selected Poverty and Inequality Variables**

Poverty and Inequality variables	Spearman's Coefficients		Pearson $\chi^2$ -Square Coefficients	
	Value	Sig. level	Value	Sig. Level
1. Gross Household Income	.759	0.01		
2. Household Per Capita Income	.803	0.01		
3. Grain Harvested 2015/16 Season	.959	0.05		
4. Household Calorie Availability			.704	0.01
5. Farming Main Source of Food			-.419	0.01
7. Access to Irrigation	.842	0.01		
8. Access to Loans and Credit	.589	0.01		
9. Access to Agric. Training			-.058	0.05
10. Agric. Market Participation			-.789	0.01
11. Ownership Productive Assets- Tractor	.345	0.01		
12. Vehicle Ownership			-.639	0.01
13. Own Bank Account			-.616	0.01
14. Quality of Dwelling Unit			.609	0.01
15. Time Spent on House Chores	.045	0.05		
N= 105				
<b>Household per capita Land (Ha)</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	
Mkwesine A2 Farming Areas	3.36	8.60	1.38	
Maware A1 Farming Areas	2.28	8.33	0.38	
Muteyo Communal Areas	0.40	1.0	0.08	

## Land, Vertical/Horizontal Inequalities and Poverty

Serious inequalities of asset distribution—the means through which people in different contexts seek to meet their needs and goals, particularly, land and other natural resources—had often been identified as the root cause and critical barrier to poverty reduction (Chung, 2014; Burgess, 2001). These vertical or class-based inequalities in society determine what share of resources would accrue to the poor (Kabeer, 2015). If any lessons can be drawn from South East Asian experiences—South Korea, Taiwan and China—it is that land reform, that redistributed land to cultivating farmers, was a crucial policy measure in the initial stages of their development that

assisted in wealth redistribution creating favourable conditions for a more equal personal income distribution, shifts in power relations and elevated levels of human development (Chung, 2014).

A study in India by Naidu & Osome reported that 64% of rural households who owned less than 0.41 ha (less than 1 acre of land) were categorized as the 'effectively landless' (2015). Superimposing this categorization on Table 1, all households in the control group can be categorised as 'effectively landless' as the average per capita household land is 0.40 ha. This is an outcome of the continued subdivision of land within these former colonial 'native reserves' creating viability challenges, in stark contrast to large scale commercial land holdings averaging 2 400 ha before the FTLRP (Moyo & Makumbe 2000). Such wealth/asset inequalities laid at the root of persistent poverty in communal Zimbabwe, where 75% of the households were categorised as poor, hence the need to redress the structural problems of landlessness in the country (Moyo & Makumbe 2000).

Using the control group as a benchmark, the FTLRP effectively transferred massive net of wealth and power from a racial minority to the landless poor masses of peasants (Moyo, 2011a). In Table 1 above, the programme saw over 5-fold increase in per capita household cultivable land from .40ha in the control group to 2.28ha and 3.36 ha for A1 small holder and A2 medium scale farmers respectively. Scoones, Marongwe, Mavedzenge & Murimbarimba (2010) asserts that 98 percent of all farms in Zimbabwe can now be classified as smallholdings. This net transfer apart from addressing vertical inequalities in access to land had concomitant outcomes in terms of gendered poverty and inequalities.

### **Intersectionality of 'the Land, Water, and Gender Questions'**

Research had indicated that rights to water are often claimed based on land ownership with implications that where land distribution is skewed, as in most former settler colonies, against the indigenous poor, water is also likely to be inequitably distributed making land-ownership-based-rights to water even more inaccessible to them (Namara et al 2010). Compounded by a gender dimension, lack of access to land for women in relation to men mutates into lack of other productive resources including access to water for irrigation (Agarwal, 1994, 2003; Matondi, 2012). Within former settler colonies such as Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia among others within Southern Africa, arguably the 'Land Question' is a 'Water Question' and by extension a 'Gender Question' with dire implications for poverty and inequalities of female in relation to male headed households.

Progressive water reforms following the FTLRP in Zimbabwe saw abolition of water rights priority system of first come first serve to the current water permit system to accommodate resettled farmers. Prior to this democratization of access to water, in the study areas, the productive resource benefitted only 10 white commercial sugarcane out-growers, 68 black small-scale sugarcane growers and the main Mkwesine Estate on 1350ha, 1970 ha and 4880 ha respectively. The redistributive FTLRP saw a total 431 A2 permit users over and above thousands of A1 farmers, including female farmers, located along the 40-kilometre Manjirenji-Mkwesine canal now accessing productive water through the new permit system. This is indicated by a strong positive correlation existing between per capita household cultivable land and access to irrigation, Table 1 above. Access to irrigation increase with per capita household cultivable land with positive outcomes on gender, poverty and inequalities as shall be expounded below.

### Access to Land, Income Inequalities and Poverty

As been found in a study of rural households in India, Table 1 show a positive correlation value, at .01 significance level, suggesting a strong association between household gross income from farming and per capita household cultivable land. For those with lower landholding land does not constitute an accumulation strategy or even a path out of poverty (Naidu & Ossome, 2016). The FTLRP saw integration of land beneficiaries into high value agricultural commodity chains both in the A2 and A1 farming areas. Private farmer development projects partnering government, private funding institutions (local banks) and land beneficiaries have resulted in revenue of some US\$18, 5 million flowing directly to private farmers and the surrounding rural communities (Yi, 2015). This contrasts markedly with pre-2000 adverse incorporation of indigenous people as farm labourers dependent on meagre farm wages. The change illuminates the transformative aspects of social policies and their effect on vertical and horizontal inequalities and gendered poverty (see Table 2 below).

Table 2 provide a nuanced understanding of the effect of the FTLRP on gendered inequalities and poverty supporting the dominant position in the gender and land literature that in agricultural economies especially, unequal land rights are a key factor in the reproduction of gender inequalities as well as women's poverty (Wanyeki, 2003).

**Table 2. Transformative Social Policy Outcomes: Household per capita Income by Gender**

Per Capita Household Income US\$	A2 Farming Areas		A1 Farming Areas		Communal Areas	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Household per capita Mean	6072.60	8579.31	488.73	363.83	19.94	25.95
Household per capita Max.	10000.00	17000.00	1666.00	1222.00	75.00	214.00
Household per capita Min.	1538.00	1714.00	21.00	90.00	0.00	0.00
Household per capita Income by Area						
Per capita Mean US\$	8057.08		420.60		23.25	
Per capita Maximum US\$	17000.00		1666.00		214.00	
Per capita Minimum US\$	1538.00		21.00		0.00	

In the table above, FHHs have a higher mean household per capita income, with MHHs having 70.78% mean household per capita incomes to that of the former, defying their common categorisation as the 'poorest of the poor' and feminisation of poverty (Kabeer, 2015) in the A2 farming areas.

### Gender, Access to Bank Loans and Agricultural Productivity

Table 1 above indicate a positive correlation of .589 between per capita household cultivable land and access to agricultural loans and credit. In Table 3 below, Both A2 and A1 farmers report higher percentages access to inputs on credit at 65.6% and 72.7% respectively.

**Table 3. Access to Agricultural Loans and Credit**

Category	Access to Bank Loans						Accessing Inputs on Credit					
	Yes %			No %			Yes %			No %		
	M	F	Tot.	M	F	Tot.	M	F	Tot.	M	F	Tot.
A2 farmers	25.0	28.9	53.1	12.5	34.4	46.9	21.9	43.8	65.6	15.6	18.8	34.4
A1 Farmers	0.0	6.1	6.1	48.4	48.5	93.9	33.3	39.4	72.7	12.1	15.2	27.3
Communal	0.0	0.0	0.0	45.0	55.0	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	45.0	55.0	100

A higher percentage of FHHs reported accessing agricultural inputs on credit with 43.8% and 39.4% to 21.9% and 33.3% to male headed households in A2 and A1 areas respectively This has positive implications for gendered poverty and inequality as agricultural productivity is dependent on access to skills and training, credit and loans (Kabeer, 2015; Bashir et.al 2010). This contrast sharply with no households reporting access to bank loans or inputs on credit within the control group.

### Gender Inequalities and Ownership of Productive Assets

A positive correlation exists between ownership of productive assets (tractors) and per capita household cultivable land in Table 1. Linkages to lucrative domestic and global sugarcane and chilli markets has had more robust outcomes for the A1 and A2 land beneficiaries as evidenced by the accumulation of productive and other assets.

**Table 4. Ownership of Productive (tractors) and Non-productive (cars) Assets by Gender**

		Tractor Ownership by Gender of Household Head				Car Ownership by Gender of Household Head				
		Yes		No		Yes		No		
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Mkwasi Farmers	A2	Male	4	12.5	8	25.0	11	34.4	1	3.1
		Female	9	28.1	11	34.4	18	62.1	2	6.3
		<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>40.6</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>59.4</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>90.6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9.4</b>
Maware Farmers	A1	Male	1	3.0	14	42.4	7	21.2	8	24.2
		Female	3	9.1	15	54.5	3	9.1	14	63.6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>87.9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>69.7</b>
Mutoyo Communal Farmers		Male	0	0.0	18	45.5	0	0.0	18	45.0
		Female	0	0.0	22	55.0	0	0.0	22	55.0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table shows more FHHs accumulating productive assets in relation to MHHs in both A2 and A1 farming areas with 28.1% compared to 12.5% in the former owning tractors. In terms of car ownership FHHs constitute 62.1% in relation to 34.4% MHHs in the A2 areas against a counterfactual in the control group where it is non-existent, suggesting the transformative aspects of land reform as a social policy instrument on gender, poverty and inequalities. It is now being argued that the Zimbabwean case is perhaps the most relevant for consideration of the prospects

for accumulation in small-scale agriculture in South Africa (Cousins, 2012, p.8) whilst Scoones, et al also point to evidence of accumulation from below by FTLRP beneficiaries which they described as 'stepping up' (2010).

### Land reform a 'Prophylactic' Social Protection Instrument

One shortfall of the currently dominant neoliberal residualist social policy model lies in its *ex-post* approach to socio-economic vulnerability. A positive correlation exists between household food security variables- quantity of grain harvested 2015/16 season and household calorie availability and household per capita cultivable land (Table 1). This suggests an *ex ante* social protection measure against food insecurity as land not only generates income but also serve as a source of cheaper food relative to the market through the 'own price effect' (Burgess 2001:1). Research has found FHHs vulnerability to household food insecurity than MHHs due to horizontal inequalities in means of production (Babatunde et al 2008; Kassie et al 2012; Ndobu & Sekhampu, 2013) yet the empirical evidence below suggests the contrary.

**Table 5. Gender and Household Food Insecurity**

Marital Status			MCL	MCU	PLG	DSS	WD	Total
Mkwesine A2 Farms	Produced Enough Food	Yes	16.7	0.0	16.7	0.0	66.7	100
		No	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maware A1 Farms	Produced Enough Food	Yes	6.1	18.2	39.4	3.0	27.3	93.9
		No	0.0	3.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	6.1
Muteyo Communal Areas (control)	Produced Enough Food	Yes	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	5.0
		No	7.5	20.0	12.5	7.5	47.5	95.0

Key MCL- monogamous civil marriage; MCU- monogamous customary marriage; PLG- polygamous marriage; DSS- divorced, single, separated; WD- widow

Taking widowhood as test case for female-supported household vulnerability (Table 5), all widow-headed households indicated being food secure, whilst they constitute over half of the total number of food insecure households in the control group reinforcing land reform as an *ex ante* social protection instrument (Adesina, 2011; Mkandawire, 2014).

### Social Reproduction, Gender Inequality and Poverty

Asymmetries in the allocation of time between earning a living and caring for the family lie at the root of gender inequalities and poverty particularly in rural settings characterised by acute scarcity of social service provision (Kabeer, 2015). Transformative social policies, unlike the current gender-blind neoliberal social policies, apart from their productive, redistributive and protective functions, seek to reconcile and reduce the burdens of growth and reproduction on society, particularly on women (UNRISD, 2006, p.1; Hujo, 2014). The scale of the FTLRP saw the introduction of large numbers of human populations with little or no provision of physical, social and economic infrastructure (Gonese & Mukora, 2003).

A strong correlation exists between household cultivable land size and time spent on reproductive duties suggesting lack of social service provision in resettled areas (Table 1). Table 6 below, provides a nuanced understanding of gender, poverty and inequalities emanating from household gender relations. Empirical evidence suggest enduring unequal gender relations as men

are not sharing household duties, with 76.2% and 62.5% of married women in A1 and A2 farming areas, respectively, reporting an unbalanced share of reproductive work.

**Table 6. Household Social Reproductive Dynamics and Women's Poverty**

	Spouse Sharing Housework			Feel Balanced Share of Housework			Feel Time Poverty					
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Male		Female		Total	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
A2 Areas	43.8	53.3	100.0	37.5	62.5	100.0	31.3	15.6	28.1	25.0	59.4	40.6
A1 Areas	47.6	52.4	100.0	23.8	76.2	100.0	51.5	9.1	27.3	12.1	78.8	21.1
Comm. Area	52.6	47.4	100.0	52.6	47.4	100.0	35.0	17.5	35.0	12.5	70.0	30.0

Coupled with the absence of social service provision 78.8% and 59.4% women in A1 and A2 farming areas, respectively, reported time poverty reinforcing conclusions reached elsewhere that gender-blind land and agrarian reforms often increase work burdens for women (Jacobs, 1996, 2013; Cross and Hornby 2002) exacerbating gender inequalities and women's poor economic and social well-being. Images of women working in the fields with children at their backs or laps are not uncommon. These revelations suggest that within agrarian economies gender struggles and poverty lie in the distribution of social reproduction tasks between the state and the family and in the context of the latter between women and men asserting gender equity as the unresolved contemporary agrarian question.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The objective of this study was to provide an alternative approach to social policy as the current neoliberal neglect of inequality had exacerbated not only global and national inequalities but household gendered inequalities and poverty. We argue, within development context, that social policies should aim to enhance the productive capacities of individuals, groups and communities by attending to the unequal distribution of the means through which people in different contexts seek to meet their needs and goals. Analysis of study findings indicate that the latest land reform in Zimbabwe which dismantled racial inequalities in asset distribution saw majority of rural households' per capita land holdings increasing more than five-fold ameliorating the problem of landlessness. This net transfer of wealth to poor female and male households created a solid base for enhancement of productive capacity, the accumulation of productive and non-productive assets from below by both female and male headed households despite prevailing economic conditions in the country. Empirical evidence from the field point to land reform as an *ex ante* social protection instrument, protecting households from socio-economic vulnerabilities. Most land beneficiary households, including those headed by females, fared well in terms of household food security compared to those in the control group, even during drought periods.

The implications of this conclusion are that in societies where most of the population still resides in the countryside, social policy measures should be geared towards the rural economy such as land and agrarian reform. A social policy perspective on gender and land reform has critical policy implications not only for Zimbabwe but provides invaluable policy insights particularly in the former settler economies of the southern African region which are yet to implement extensive land and agrarian reform programmes like South Africa, Namibia, Angola and Kenya. However, as discussed, demands for land and agrarian reforms should address the gender inequities underlying women's invisible work as reduction in amount of time spent by women in

reproductive work must be one crucial social policy measure in the gender, poverty and inequality nexus.

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