

**Current and Emerging Youth Policies and
Initiatives with a Special Focus on Link to
Agriculture**

Zimbabwe Case Study Draft Report

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Disclaimer

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1- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The agricultural environment in Zimbabwe over the past decade has allowed for a unique and interesting case study regarding the evolving relationship between youth and agriculture. This paper found that perceptions of agriculture held by young people are not static, but differ according to their contexts and immediate environments. The general perceptions held by young people however is that agriculture is for the uneducated or retirees, and find white collar employment more appealing. Given the 'de-agrarianisation' of African youth, what are the needs, requirements and opportunities that governments and non-state actors can use to engage young people to see the positive benefits of agriculture? In the Zimbabwean case we found that the institutional and policy frameworks relating to youth and agriculture were too broadly defined, and did not intersect in a distinct and sector specific way. What was revealed in the literature is that young people are tending towards proactively creating their own 'spaces of participation' in the agro-economy rather than rely on or wait for specific government programs and incentives. There are also a number of reasons for the reduced interest in agriculture by young people, and these present opportunities for the policy-makers to re-evaluate their strategies. Agriculture as a whole needs to be 're-branded to appeal to young people, to make them see it as an avenue of wealth-creation rather than a subsistence mechanism. The existing agricultural policies for example do not differentiate between the different regional agricultural priorities. In regions with high rainfall and agricultural productivity, young people are more willing to engage and create opportunities for themselves along the agricultural value-chain. In regions with lower rainfall and agricultural output, young people tend to seek alternative economic avenues (such as small scale mining etc), although they will seasonally partake in subsistence agriculture. The difficulty in accessing credit facilities in the country means that young people have to find creative ways to finance their agricultural projects, or to start up a business further down the agricultural value-chain. This is also exacerbated by poor coordination and organisation among young people in the different regions. Issues of climate change remain reserved as a specialist researcher area and a concerted effort to raise awareness of climate change among farmers, with an emphasis on its implications for their choice of farming methods, timing, and crop and seed varieties

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3- ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS

Scope of Assignment

- *Zimbabwean case study on current and emerging youth policies and initiatives with a special focus on agriculture*
- *Identify space and opportunities for developing national youth and agricultural policies within national agricultural policies and make policy recommendations*

Expected Outputs:

- *Detailed report highlighting: agricultural perceptions of youth vis a vis current changes e.g. food crisis, renewed policy attention to the sector, opportunities.*
- *Coverage of rural youth under current youth and agriculture policies*
- *Institutions, mechanisms and tools for engaging youth in policy processes: strengths/weaknesses?*
- *Opportunities for streamlining youth and agriculture in line with current policies.*

Issues to be Covered:

- *Regarding **perceptions of agriculture** among southern African youth:*
 - (1) *Perceptions of changing realities by youth*
 - (2) *Sources of information on agriculture used by young people*
 - (3) *Needs and requirements for engaging youth in agriculture and agricultural processes.*
- *Regarding coverage of rural youth and agriculture under **current national youth policies and other policies and initiatives** assessed:*
 - (1) *Quick review of national policies to see how youth are incorporated*
 - (2) *Key drivers of agriculture and youth policies*
 - (3) *Youth dimensions and components under formal public agricultural policies*
 - (4) *Incentives in place to attract particularly educated youth*
 - (5) *Achievements and failures of past efforts to engage young people in agriculture*
- ***Key institutions, mechanisms and tools** for the engagement of youth in policy processes:*
 - (1) *Government institutions (ministries, institutes, research and academic organisations dealing with youth policy issues)*
 - (2) *Parliamentary groups*
 - (3) *Major youth organisations, networks, associations, groups etc. with interventions in agriculture (processing, services, trade) in rural and urban areas.*
 - (4) *Youth representatives in policy debates and processes*

Methodology

- *Desk study, electronic documents and supporting FANRPAN documents (national nodes)*
- *Interviews: key leaders and representatives of youth organisations in rural and urban areas*
- *Preparation and submission of individual draft study reports*
- *Preparation and presentation of the case study findings and recommendations (PowerPoint) at a workshop during the FANRPAN 2012 regional policy dialogue.*

4- METHODOLOGY and LIMITATIONS

As a desk study, a multi-faceted approach was adopted to identify relevant literature. A web- and email-based search for documentation and a desktop review of printed literature were used to enable analysis of secondary data on youth perceptions and agricultural production policies in Zimbabwe. Sources consulted included government and international reports, state and non-state agency development plans, public research organisations' reports, and academic and scientific literature, and online forum discussions with other young consultants involved in the country-case study project. The overriding limitation in this study was that findings were solely based on information that is documented and publicly available. Although a limited number of interviews were done, they were mostly to gain an overall appreciation of youth perspectives and their correlation to the data. Certain current government-led processes in youth development and indigenisation policy development have also not been well documented due to a lack of resources, thereby barring them from being reported adequately.

5- BACKGROUND and PURPOSE OF STUDY

The demographic profile of Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) presents a unique framework through which a number of pressing issues can be analysed. Africa has the youngest population in the globe, comprising of over 200 million young people, and 44% of its population being under the age of 15 in 2006. Of these, a vast majority are engaged in agriculture, accounting for 65 per cent of total employment. With 65 per cent of Africa's population, on average, living and working in rural areas, two-thirds of whom work in agriculture mainly as family farmers, agriculture and the rural economy play a substantive role in the lives of many millions of young people. Even when young people urbanise the vast majority retain close ties with their rural 'sending' communities. As a primary source of employment, the role that youth play in agriculture remains a particularly pertinent one. According to the United Nations, "young people represent agents, beneficiaries and victims of major societal changes and are generally confronted by a paradox: to seek to be integrated into an existing order, or to serve as a force to transform that order."¹

¹ Quoted in Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment. National Youth Policy 2011 (revised). Government of Zimbabwe Printers.

Youth provide the driving force behind the implementation of many political, social and economic prerogatives in African countries. The negative aspects are seen through the way in which the combination of youth bulges and widespread unemployment are often associated with insecurity, urban social unrest and political instability.² The motivating role that the under-35 demographic played in the mobilisation of the protest movements in North Africa provides the most recent example of this fact. It is important to note that social movements need not however be purely political in nature. Many governments have acknowledged the need and urgency of getting young people involved in development initiatives such as government led Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Alongside the HIV/AIDS pandemic, economic insecurity, lack of education, poverty and inadequate healthcare and infrastructure, food insecurity has increasingly come to the fore as an urgent issue that needs addressing. The involvement of youth³ in agricultural production is significant not only because of the need to feed the countries in the region, but most importantly because it offers options for wealth creation and financial security. Whilst many countries are cognisant of this, what remains lacking in the public sphere are clear and robust policies that are directly aimed at young people. The increasing pace of globalisation and advances in communication and transportation has seen a rise in urbanisation and cross-border migration. Many of the pull factors that attract young people to the cities and towns rather than the communal areas relate to the search for alternative economic opportunities. This means that although from a theoretical perspective, youth ought to be the driving force behind agricultural production particularly in communal areas, the reality on the ground sees them moving en masse to urban areas.

Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa represents more than just the ability to grow food. It sustains livelihoods through employment and wealth creation, and also becomes the locus of new social organisations (growers associations etc). It is important therefore to differentiate between **two facets of agriculture**: the formal-commercial, and the primary-subsistence type. Farming, as a primary subsistence activity, takes much longer to bear

² Te Lintelo, D. 2001. *Youth and Policy Processes*. Future Agricultures, Working Paper 025. [online- www.future-agricultures.org]

³ For purposes of our research, 'youth' refers to people, male and female, between the ages of 15 and 35, based on the African Youth Charter.

financial dividends, if at all. In general, the lack of adequate education in many countries in the region means that although many young people cannot gain formal employment, migration to the cities to partake in informal small scale enterprises (such as selling imported clothes, cheap electronics etc) remains preferable to farming. As a formal-commercial enterprise, farming is labour intensive and takes an element of financial and technical expertise. It is also not limited to the primary growing of produce, but includes the value-chain and downstream industries such as processing and marketing. It is in these areas that policy and educational support by the state, and technical or logistical support from non-state actors becomes pertinent.

These issues raise interesting questions pertaining to the role occupied by youth in agricultural policy formulation and implementation. What are the perceptions held by young people regarding agriculture? As an economic activity, are governments doing enough to co-opt and incentivise youth involvement in all aspects of agricultural production (including manufacturing, processing, marketing, service provision etc.)? How have the youth organised themselves in the agricultural sector? What are the dynamics colouring the relationship between rural and urban youth within this context? What is the extent of institutional and organisational support available to young people? Do any symbiotic synergies exist between youth in agriculture and other spheres of the economy?

In answering these questions, Zimbabwe presents a unique and interesting case study regarding the evolving relationship between youth and agriculture. Significantly, the land reform program of the past decade has created new opportunities for young people and changed the established pattern of the dominance of large-scale, estate-type commercial farming enterprises as seen in other countries in the region. Much analysis has gone into the political and socio-economic results of the land redistribution process, and these are beyond the scope of this paper.⁴ It is significant however to highlight that a gap that has been revealed in the literature is the inadequate clarity on the specific role played by youth in agriculture. Many of the agricultural policies in the country are macro and national in scope, making it difficult to narrowly analyse them in a sector/demographic specific manner. The aim of this research is thus to highlight the general **youth perceptions** on agriculture, as

⁴See Nyoni, T.S. 2010. The Foreign Policy of a Radicalised State: The Two-Level Games of Zimbabwe's Relations with the IMF (2000-2007). University of Cape Town. Masters Dissertation.

contextualised within agricultural policy. It will identify their limited ability to organise themselves through institutions that have enough lobbying power to impact agricultural policy. We will review the current state of the **national youth and agricultural policies** respectively, and their relationship to each other. Furthermore it will assess the role of **key institutions, mechanisms and tools** through which these policies are implemented and relate to young people. In doing so we will also review the challenges and opportunities arising from youth engagement in agriculture.

5.1- Zimbabwe's demographic and agricultural profile

The agricultural sector in Zimbabwe provides employment and income for 60-70 percent of the population, supplies 60 percent of the raw materials required by the industrial sector and contributes 40 percent of total export earnings. Despite the high level of employment in the sector, it directly contributes only 15-19 percent to annual GDP, depending on the rainfall pattern, and this is a statistic that understates the true importance and dominance of the agricultural industry. It is generally accepted that when agriculture performs poorly, the rest of the economy suffers.⁵ The main major crops are tobacco, maize, soybeans, cotton, sugar cane, wheat, citrus fruits, tea and coffee. On average, one to three droughts occur every ten years, largely due to changes in the phases of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon and periodic sea surface temperature changes.⁶ Sixty-five percent of the inhabitants live in rural areas, mainly as peasant farmers, and the rest live in urban areas. With the majority of the population thus living in the rural areas they are therefore directly or indirectly dependent on agriculture for employment and food security. Increasingly, urban populations have also been dependent on agriculture for their survival as most sectors of Zimbabwe's economy tumbled: an estimated 56 percent of urban households reported having grown their own staple, maize, during the 2008–09 agricultural season.⁷

⁵ FAO. 2010. *WTO Agreement on Agriculture: The Implementation Experience*. FAO CORPORATE DOCUMENT REPOSITORY. [online- <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/005/Y4632E/y4632e0y.htm>]

⁶ Chagutah, T 2011. *Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation Preparedness in Southern Africa: Zimbabwe Country Report*. Heinrich Boll Stiftung. Pp. 5

⁷ *ibid*

Regarding the social demographic profile of the country we see the following⁸:

Social demographic indicators		
Population growth rate (average annual %)	2010-2015	2.1
Urban population growth rate (average annual %)	2010-2015	3.4
Rural population growth rate (average annual %)	2010-2015	1.2
Urban population (%)	2010	38.3
Population aged 0-14 years (%)	2010	39.5
Population aged 60+ years (females and males, % of total)	2010	6.5/5.0
Sex ratio (males per 100 females)	2010	93.7
Life expectancy at birth (females and males, years)	2010-2015	49.8/50.4

Any review of the agricultural policies or the socio-economic dynamics of youth in Zimbabwe would be analytically deficient without a brief insight into the land reform and redistribution program (LRRP) that occurred in the country in the past decade. Formally, the land reform program allocated land to new or resettled farmers under two schemes: A1, under which households would be given at least three hectares of arable land with shared grazing, and A2 – commercial farms on 99-year leases (**see Figures 1 and 2**). The Self – Contained Units of the A1 Model provide consolidated farm units for individual families. The objectives and target groups of this land-use model are similar to the villagised model. However, in this scheme, only basic services and infrastructure are provided. The Livestock-Based A1 Model, on the other hand, is a Three Tier Land Use Model designed for the drier parts of the country where there is no irrigation. The objective in this variant is to provide commercial grazing with the long-term aim of increasing the communal herd. The target group are people in the overcrowded communal areas adjacent to acquired farms in drier natural regions of the country. The A2 model is a commercial farming land-use model meant to empower the black indigenous farmers. While the approach enables easy access to land

⁸ Source: United Nations Database. [Online- <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Zimbabwe>]

by all citizens of Zimbabwe, the whole model is based on full-cost recovery with the beneficiaries having an option to purchase the land within the 99-year lease period they are given. Hence the beneficiaries should show evidence of experience and availability of resources as to be allocated land in this scheme.

The agricultural sector in Zimbabwe is highly dualistic. In the commercial sector, land is privately owned, production is for the market and farms are run as commercial profit-seeking enterprises. By contrast, in the smallholder sector, households do not have title to the land they farm, much of the production activity is family-based and subsistence production remains an important part of livelihood strategies.⁹ This dualism not only affects income distribution within the sector but also has important consequences for the rest of the economy, particularly through its impact on the labour market¹⁰. The political cleavages and subsequent repercussions that resulted from fast track land reform in the country have been well documented and reviewed elsewhere.¹¹ It suffices to acknowledge a seminal work published by Ian Scoones and his associates at the Institute of Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) in Cape Town. These studies have shown that land reform has been broad-based and largely egalitarian. It has directly benefited 140,000 families, mainly among the rural poor, but also among their urban counterparts, who on average have acquired 20 hectares of land, constituting 70% of the land acquired. The remaining land has benefited

⁹ The commercial sector can be disaggregated into large-scale and small-scale. The smallholder sector comprises communal and resettlement farms. As in much of the rest of SSA, the rights of individual households within communal areas to the arable land they farm have been strengthening over time. Grazing land remains in communal ownership and is steadily being encroached by the expanding number of cultivators. Although subsistence production remains important in these areas, population growth and the monetisation of the rest of the economy mean that virtually all households regularly sell some of their agricultural produce.

¹⁰ Poulton, C. Davies, R. Matshe, I. & Urey, I. 2002. *A Review of Zimbabwe's Agricultural Economic Policies: 1980-2000*. Imperial College Wye- ADU Working Paper 02/01. Department of Agricultural Sciences, imperial College at Wye. Department of Economics, University of Zimbabwe.

¹¹ See- Raftopoulos, B. 2009. *The Crisis in Zimbabwe*, in *Becoming Zimbabwe: A historic from the Pre-Colonial Period to 1998*. Mlambo, A and Raftopolous, B (eds.) Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. Weaver Press. Cape Town.

~ Moyo, S. 2004. *The Land and Agrarian Question in Zimbabwe*. Paper presented at the conference on 'Agrarian Constraint and Poverty Reduction: Macroeconomic lessons for Africa', Addis Ababa. 17-18 December 2004.

18,000 new small- to medium-scale capitalists with an average of 100 hectares.¹² This mass transfer of arable land directly meant that in the past decade thousands of young people have received land for both commercial and subsistence agriculture.

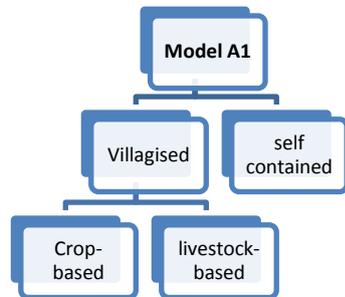


Figure 1: Model A1 farms

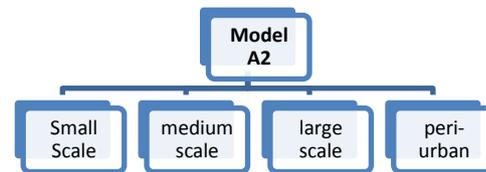


Figure 2: Model A2 farm

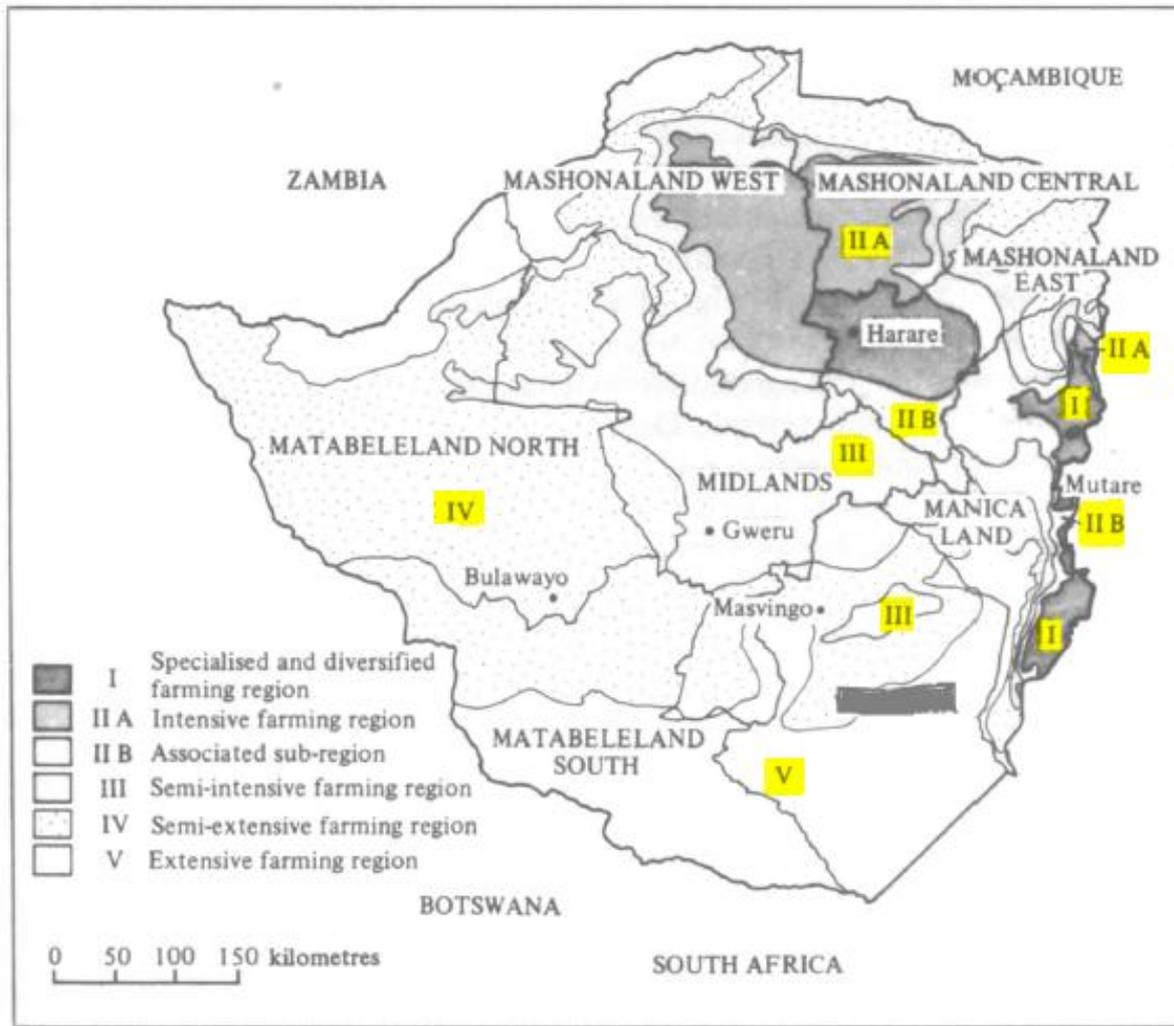
Zimbabwe can be sub-divided into 5 main agro-ecological zones¹³ in which different economic activities occur. Based primarily on average quantities of rainfall and their variability, these ‘natural regions’ provide a broad framework for evaluating whether the difference in agricultural activity affects youth perspectives, organisation and policy implementation. [See Map 1] To illustrate, the most productive (in terms of tilled hectareage) agricultural land lies in Mashonaland East, West, Central and Manicaland. Subsequently, these regions are the most labour intensive and display higher levels of youth

¹² Scoones, I. Marongwe, N. Mavedzenge, B. Mahenehene, J. Murimbarimba, F & Sukume, C. 2010. *Zimbabwe’s Land Reform: Myths and Realities*. Weaver Press. Harare.

¹³ These regions are: **I. Specialised and diversified farming region.** This is confined to the Eastern Highlands Districts and has annual rainfall amounts of over 900 mm, with some areas receiving over 1,500 mm annually. Because of the high elevation (above 1,700 metres) and lack of frost, the area is well suited to tea, coffee, and forest crops, as well as intensive livestock production. **II. Intensive farming region.** This is situated in the Mashonaland highveld around Harare, with a summer rainfall of 750-1,000 mm that tends to be reliable. Maize, the country’s staple crop, is well suited to these conditions, as is tobacco, cotton, wheat, other grains, and intensive livestock production. **III. Semi-intensive farming region.** This is best suited for semi-intensive crop and livestock production, with rainfall that totals 650-800 mm annually, although intensity and variability increase substantially. Hence, cropping is risky, particularly for maize which requires large quantities of moisture at specific periods for plant development. **IV. Semi-extensive farming region.** Livestock is the only sound basis of the farming system in this region, which receives 450-650 mm of rainfall annually, although drought-resistant crops can be grown successfully. Any form of dry-land cropping is risky because of the frequency of mid-season dry spells. **V. Extensive farming region.** This includes the hot and dry lowveld of the Zambezi and Save-Limpopo valleys, but because the rainfall is low and erratic, extensive livestock production is the only possible farming system without irrigation.

~See Weiner, D. Moyo, S. Munslow, B and O’Keefe, P. 1985. *Land Use and Productivity in Zimbabwe*, in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2 Pp. 253-256

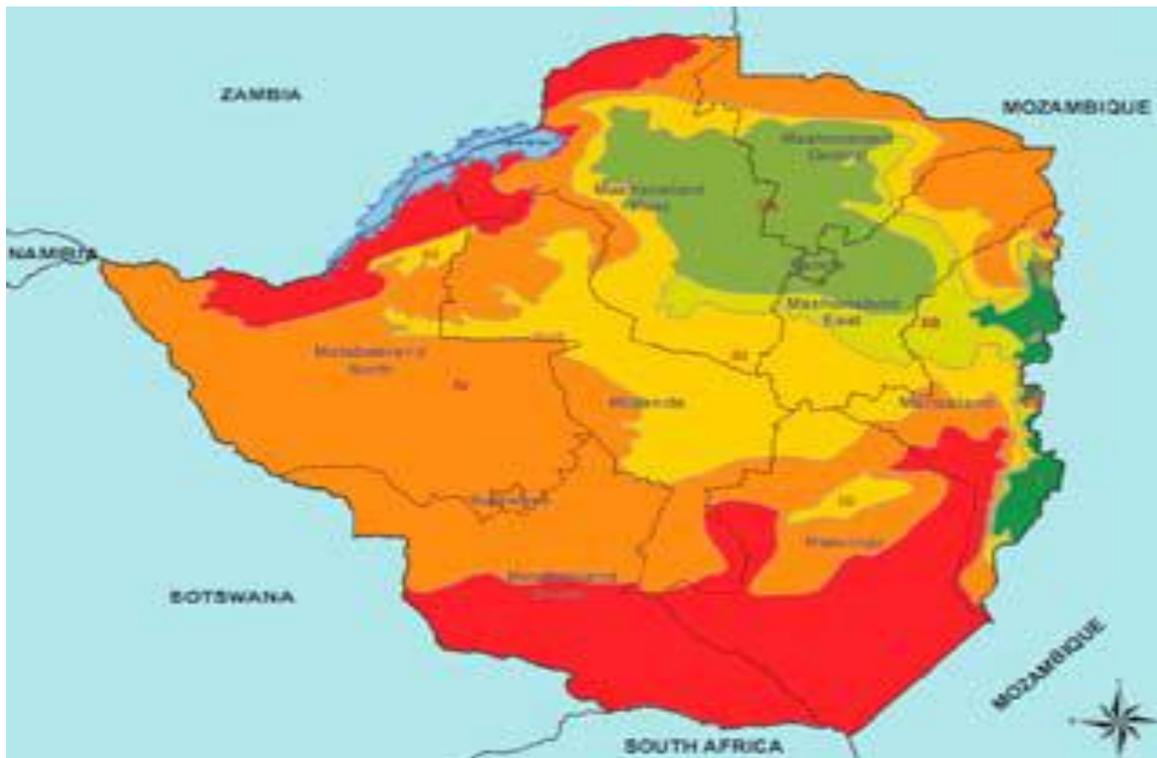
and farmer organisation than other provinces in the country. Because of the different types of agricultural production, we found that young people engage with the government on agricultural policies in a different ways across the country. It is therefore not useful to assume that youth perspectives on agriculture are static and can be generalised countrywide.



MAP 1

Zimbabwe: Distribution of Natural Regions by Province¹⁴

¹⁴ Source: Surveyor-General, Harare. Adapted from *ibid.* **Note:** two new provinces were created in the early '90s, Bulawayo metropolitan and Harare metropolitan. The province demarcated in the South-East (with the shaded strip) is Masvingo Province.



MAP 2

Zimbabwe: Overview of the Natural Regions¹⁵

6- YOUTH PERCEPTIONS ON AGRICULTURE

With the majority of Zimbabweans living in the rural areas, and the land reform program, agriculture has always played a role in young people’s lives. Whether it was due to its indispensability in the latter, or the economic collapse precipitated by the latter, agriculture has created unique opportunities and challenges for young people. However, as we have noted, the differing levels of agricultural production and type in the different provinces essentially leads to differentiated views on agriculture across the youth divide.

To illustrate, Juru Growth Point is a settlement area in Goromonzi, Mashonaland East. The main agricultural activities in the district are soya beans, seed maize, market gardening such as cabbages and garlic. We interviewed a successful local young (27 year old) farmer who is representative of youth in the district, Mr Kudzai Muchena. As the president of the Garlic Growers Association and a founding director of a soya beans outgrower scheme, he

¹⁵ Source- <http://www.reliefweb.int>

provides an example of a successful young farmer in Mashonaland East. Although many of the farms in the region are comparatively smaller than in other provinces, they are highly productive. According to Mr Muchena, the close proximity of the farms and the similarity in produce farmed means there are many areas of cooperation between the young farmers in the area. The high rainfall and fertile soils of the region makes commercial farming a highly profitable enterprise. He gave the example of soya bean farming, in which the local farmers pooled together resources such as use of the local combine harvester, exchanged notes and information among themselves and helped each other with the planting and reaping of the produce. He also highlighted the importance of cooperation between the farmers. *“Because we all farm more or less the same thing, we’ve become friends and business partners. It makes sense for us to work together. By organising ourselves into associations, as local young farmers we are able to financially and technically share resources increasing our chances of success. For me, cooperation makes more money than competition.”*

When contrasted to Matabeleland South province however, we see the difference in the levels of youth cooperation. The main commercial agricultural activity in the drier and more arid zones of the country (Region IV and V) is livestock rearing. Unlike horticulture or market gardening, animal husbandry does not require the same levels of labour or technical expertise. The exception to this general assumption is specialist ranchers who pen-feed on a specific (normally 90 days) rotation, or are professional breeders. For many farmers in the semi-extensive farming region, livestock is the only sound basis of the farming system in this region, which receives 450-650 mm of rainfall annually, although drought-resistant crops can be grown successfully. Any form of dry-land cropping is risky because of the frequency of mid-season dry spells. In some parts of natural region V for example it is estimated that households may only have a reasonable harvest once every five years. In such areas crop agriculture is unlikely to provide a significant engine for poverty reducing growth. Being ranches, many of the farms in Matabeleland South, Midlands and Masvingo are comparatively larger than their Mashonaland counterparts¹⁶. Crop farming in these regions is also highly labour intensive. The inconsistency and small quantity of the rainfall it received

¹⁶ To illustrate the ORAP Zenzele Farm in Matabeleland South is just under 1,700 hectares, whereas Mr Muchena’s farm in Mashonaland East just over 300 hectares.

makes irrigation an integral part of agricultural activity. The high labour and input costs involved are thus beyond the reach of many young farmers in the region.

The absence of differentiated youth policies in agriculture (by province or regional zone) has led to divergent perceptions of agriculture as a main option of wealth creation. An essential aspect of African agrarian relations is the need to have a diversified income structure. In other words, although agriculture may be the mainstay rural economic activity, it is not the only option. According to Scoones *et al* (2010), “given the vagaries of climate, agroecology, prices, markets and policy, spreading risk, smoothing income streams, balancing options and having a diverse portfolio of livelihood options is vital, especially when agriculture is so risky and uncertain.”¹⁷ It is precisely because of this need for a diverse portfolio of livelihood options that we see different perceptions of agriculture not only within the rural-urban nexus, but also in the different natural regions in the country. Younger people, particularly in the drier southern regions of the country have focused much of their energies on alternative economic activities to farming. The existent trend has been that of focusing on activities requiring harder labour with higher rates of return or where risks are higher such as gold panning, poaching or border jumping. Border jumping in particular has become a profitable strategy for many, particularly the youth, and involves the illegal crossing of the border to South Africa to take up employment on the farms of Limpopo province or to do menial work further afield. Those with better educational qualifications may be able to gain meaningful types of employment or migration options.

De-agrarianisation on the continent in general has been linked to a number of causes. These include the environmental degradation and reduced availability of land, economic pressures which have undermined peasant agriculture, and a realignment of rural populations’ livelihood activities in response to new economic and political opportunities. Additionally we also noted before that the role of globalised factors such as fast-evolving communication and media technology, which allow young people in remote areas to become ever more aware of urban-rural inequalities and thus aspire to achieve a standard of living not typically associated with agricultural livelihoods. An often underrated factor that impacts on young people’s perceptions of agriculture relates to the status and prestige that they attach to it. According to Leavy and Smith (2010) the importance of prestige in the formation and

¹⁷ Scoones, et al (2010). Pp. 167

fulfilment of aspirations is illustrated very well with respect to migration where, along with economic security and social mobility, the potential for status enhancement via occupation and income can be considerable. This provides compelling reasons why agriculture, for example, may be unappealing as it may not bring status regardless of the economic outcomes.¹⁸ Policy frameworks on agriculture necessarily need to remain cognisant of this if meaningful incentivisation of youth is to occur. For example, a ‘rebranding’ of agriculture would be a useful step in attracting young people, reemphasising the wealth-creation aspects of agriculture rather than the subsistence elements.

7- YOUTH AND AGRICULTURE: Review of National Policies and Initiatives

Policy	Mention of youth	Opportunities for youth	Implemented/ not implemented	Purpose of policy	Year
1. Productive Sector Facility (PSF)	no	yes	Partial implementation	Provision of financial assistance to productive sectors	2004
2. Agricultural Sector Productive Enhancement Facility (ASPEF)	yes	yes	Limited benefit to youth	Provision of finance to large-scale productive farms	2005
3. National Youth Policy	yes	yes	Ongoing, but broadly defined thus difficult to assess implementation	To empower youth through land provision, facilitate access to credit, training, inter alia.	2000-

¹⁸ Leavy, J and Smith, S. 2010. *Future farmers: Youth Aspirations, Expectations and Life Choices*. Discussion Paper 013. www.future-agricultures.org

7.1- Summary of National Agricultural Policies (post- LRRP)

The government has made agriculture a very central aspect of economic recovery in the wake of the economic downturn that directly resulted from fast track land reform. Between 2004 and 2009 the government undertook a number of interventions in agriculture, spending up to 16% of the government budget on equipment and consumables, including a purported 124 combine harvesters, 3,217 tractors and 1,517 disc-ploughs during its farm mechanisation programme in 2009 alone.¹⁹ A number of policy options have been identified as essential for an effective agricultural contribution to economic growth. Ben Cousins has pointed out²⁰ that peasant production should be made the pillar of the economic recovery, through subsidized inputs, fair prices, and secure tenure (which does not mean freehold). Second, economic recovery requires a comprehensive framework for achieving food sovereignty for the country as a whole, not only for the rural producers on a “subsistence” basis. This requires the technical upgrading of agriculture under the control of an organised rural population and the revival of agro-industries. It also requires the resolution of the farm-worker question, who in many instances are made up of a large swathe of uneducated youth providing cheap labour. Migrant labour can also be seen as part of the individual and household lifecycles, for example a study of rural non-household wage labour in Zimbabwe showed that 90 per cent of farm labourers on contracts were men under the age of 30 working as wage labourers, prior to the man being allocated his own land.²¹ These young people would be best served by incorporating into co-operative systems. Third, trade and industrial policy should be reformulated to secure the recovery of strategic industries and their reorientation to wage goods and to the technical upgrading of agriculture. In the following sections we will analyse the contradictory extent to which these have been achieved, in line with existing agricultural and youth policies.

¹⁹ Figures cited in the 2009 mid-year fiscal review as presented by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. See- pp. 19–20, [http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/jul17_2009.html.]

²⁰ In Moyo, S & Yeros, P. 2009. *Zimbabwe Ten Years On: Results and Prospects*, in Concerned Africa Scholars, Bulletin No. 82, Summer 2009. Pp. 30-32

²¹ Adams, J.1991. The Rural Labour Market in Zimbabwe. Development and Change 22: 297-320.

It is significant to note that although the government recognises that under the right conditions, small scale farming can be a motor for wider economic growth, the policy environment for much of the period since land reform and resettlement has not been supportive. The agricultural policy environment until 2009 was characterised by heavy state intervention funded through quasi-fiscal means which in turn distorted markets and incentives and undermined the economy. Although the new resettlement areas were notionally favoured by government agricultural policies to boost production, the distribution of inputs for example was highly skewed with little of it filtering down to new farmers. This period was also characterised by a number of schemes led by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. Most significant were the Productive Sector Facility (PSF) in 2004 which aimed to provide financial resources to productive sectors in the face of dwindling private bank finance and the Agricultural Sector Productivity Enhancement Facility (ASPEF) in 2005 which sought to provide financing to large-scale productive farms. Significantly however, only 4% of total distributed funds under these schemes went to youth and women.²² There were improvements between 2009-2010 with the arrival of the inclusive government, dollarization, and subsequent stability of the economy. Because of these “a new agricultural policy regime seems to be slowly emerging, involving a re-liberalisation of markets, and the removal of price controls. At the same time, agricultural policy is once again controlled through the Ministry of Agriculture; the RBZ and the security forces have been removed as the main financiers and policy makers.”²³

7.2- The National Youth Policy

The recognition of the active role played by young people in the development objectives of the country has led to the formation of a number of policy and institutional instruments. In 2000 the Zimbabwean government, with specific relation to youth, developed the National Youth Policy. This policy seeks to empower youth in a comprehensive, coordinated multi-sectoral manner, by “creating an enabling environment and marshalling the resources necessary for undertaking programmes to fully develop the youth’s mental, moral, social, economic, political, cultural and physical potential in order to improve their quality of life.”²⁴ Since 2000 it has been revised to keep in line with new developments and changing socio-

²² Scoones et al, 2010. Pp. 99

²³ Scoones et al, 2010. Pp.126

²⁴ Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment. National youth Policy 2011 (revised). Government of Zimbabwe Printers.

political priorities evident in the country. In doing so it has been informed by three processes- the African Youth Charter (AYC) which was developed under the auspices of the African Union, the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) developed by the United Nations, and the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in Zimbabwe. This has led to a policy which in form has been largely broad and general rather than sector specific. It is guided by 11 main principles:

- ✚ The enhancement of peace and national unity
- ✚ Equity and Diversity
- ✚ Cultural and spiritual diversity
- ✚ Gender equality
- ✚ Youth empowerment for sustainable development
- ✚ Youth participation in national development and decision making processes
- ✚ Youth driven and centred development services and programmes
- ✚ Mainstreaming and prioritising youth issues
- ✚ Sustainable development
- ✚ Transparency and accessibility of youth institutions and organisations.²⁵

In addition, the policy seeks to achieve four main goals and objectives:

Goal 1: To empower young men and women to participate and contribute to the social, economic and political development of the nation by eradicating all forms of social, economic and political exclusion.

Goal 2: To develop a coordinated response and participation by all stakeholders including government, non-government and private organisations for the development of the young women and men of the country

Goal 3: To instil in youth an awareness of, respect for and active commitment to the principles and values enshrined in the Constitution and a clear sense of national identity.

²⁵ National Youth Policy document

Goal 4: To promote healthy lifestyles and personal wellbeing with particular emphasis on the prevention of HIV/AIDS and promotion of reproductive health and care.

Although the policy purports to be multi-sectoral, there are few areas in which specific sectors are incorporated. The importance of agriculture however is alluded to as an essential element in the strategies for poverty eradication and economic integration. The policy, spearheaded by the Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment (MYDIE), details a number of options for implementation. The first is the importance of **training** youth in agricultural production using contemporary systems and modern information and communications technology to gain access to existing and new markets, paying special attention to young women and people with disabilities. The second is the need to provide **land** and mining rights to youth and youth organisations to encourage socio-economic development. The third pertains to the facilitation of **access to credit** to promote youth participation in agricultural projects. The fourth relates to the centrality of **education and skills development** programmes, geared towards wealth creation, socio-economic integration and empowerment. Lastly, the policy seeks to enhance the **attractiveness of rural areas** to young people by improving socio-economic infrastructure and access to services.

Evaluating the extent to which these policies have been successful is a difficult task due to the differences in levels of agricultural support and production across the country. However, regarding training, education and skills development, there are 13²⁶ agricultural colleges located in all the provinces of Zimbabwe (except Matabeleland North), six of which offer Diplomas in agriculture namely Chivero, Gwebi, Mazowe, Rio Tinto, Mlezu and Esigodini while the rest offer certificates. The Government has fine tuned the curricula in order to produce a graduate who can be able to go into farming directly or be employed at a farm or in Government as extension officers. In addition to these agricultural colleges, all provinces have Agritex (agricultural extension) officers, who are the link between the government and local farmers, providing technical expertise and support.

²⁶ These are Gwebi, Chivero and Mashayamombe in Mashonaland West. Kushinga in Mashonaland East. Mazowe Veterinary and Chaminuka in Mashonaland Central. Rio Tinto, Mlezu and Kaguvi in Midlands. Esigodini in Matabeleland South. Mushagashe and Rupangwana in Masvingo. Magamba in Manicaland.

A major problem faced by youth in agriculture pertains to access to capital. Although banks such as Agribank and CABS²⁷ (Central African Building Society) and Stanbic have offered loans directed specifically at young people with reasonable terms, the facilities are mostly applied for by urban youth. They have easier access to information regarding these loans, are better suited to drawing up business plans and providing other pertinent information (such as security and so on) than their rural counterparts. In addition, the majority of recipients of land under the land reform program have yet to receive title deeds to their land, meaning banks are reluctant to provide lines of credit to untenured farmers, particularly the youth. Thus although many young people now have access to land, much still remains to be done to reach sustainable and effective support from the government. In general, much of the positive achievements of young people in agriculture have resulted not from specific government policies, but rather from their own entrepreneurship and finding angles through which to empower themselves. As we shall see in the next section, the formation of growers associations for example has shown itself to be an effective means of mobilizing funds and resources and logistical support amongst members of the association.

8- SOME KEY INSTITUTIONS, MECHANISMS AND TOOLS

²⁷ These comprise of loans of up to \$5,000 to be paid back after 5 years at a 10% interest rate. Although this sounds very reasonable, our research found that only a very small number of youth actually got access to these loans. The terms and conditions of this scheme note that the bank is responsible for the purchasing of any capital equipment that is needed by the applicant. This in turn means that the actual cash handed out is less than the total amount. Under current market conditions, we have found that only urban market-gardening and poultry are the most undertaken activities by successful applicants focused on agriculture, and they make up a small percentage of the total.

Who?	Why?	How?	Strengths	Weaknesses
Ministries of : Agriculture. Youth, Indigenization and Economic Empowerment. Small and Medium Enterprise Development. Education	They are the key ministries charged with formulating and implementing agricultural and youth policy, and facilitating small businesses.	Through parliament	They have all increasingly started focusing on youth and their role in economic development.	Lack of inter-ministerial coordination, policy frameworks too broad.
International institutions FAO, World Bank, AfDB, AU, NEPAD, CAADP implementation programs.	Through setting the framework for research into youth involvement in agriculture	Various mechanisms		
Academic/Research/Training Institutions Agricultural colleges, AGRITEX	Provision of agricultural research and support services to farmers			They lack adequate financial resources, affected by the loss of key specialist personnel.
NGOs ORAP	The implementation of programs through community cooperatives and villagised agriculture.	Through community development centers and multi-stakeholder coordination and consultation.	Raising awareness to young people about agriculture as a form of self-sufficient wealth creation and development	Because most programs are donor-funded, their implementation is sometimes delayed due to bureaucratic delays.
Farmer Organizations Commercial Farmers Union, Zimbabwe Commercial Farmers Union, various Growers and agricultural associations.	Lobby government for favorable agricultural policy.			Duplication of roles, politicization of some organizations has made them inefficient.
District Development Fund (DDF), Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA)	Leasing out of agricultural equipment and machinery.	Through district and provincial branches	Gives farmers access to otherwise expensive capital equipment	Lack of adequate resources

Under the Land Reform and Redistribution Program (LRRP) there was poor ministerial co-ordination. Too many ministries and government departments were involved without clear roles and mandates. For instance there was lack of institutional clarity and division of labour

between central government and Rural District Councils (RDCs) as well as between the RDC and the communities as represented by traditional authority (chiefs and headmen and *osabuku*) that make up the RDC. The process was highly technocratic, centralised and was concerned more about numbers of people given land rather than the empowerment process. Although government centrally drove the programme, the implementation responsibilities were fragmented among government agencies with inadequate co-ordination. During the LRRP for example, land identification was ZANU (PF) driven; land acquisition was done by the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture ; land use planning was done by the Agricultural, Technical and Extension Service (Agritex); settler selection was done by the Ministry of Local Government and settler placement was done by the Ministry of Rural Resettlement. This fragmentation created problems of synchronisation and co-ordination. Further, the institutions did not create space to tap ideas from intended beneficiaries, which are the rural poor and the landless. As a result, a coherent vision of the programme that would move the resettled farmers out of subsistence into commercial activities failed to emerge as intended²⁸.

This lack of institutional coordination meant that the agricultural policy formulation and implementation remained highly uneven with different ministries pulling in different directions. Prior to 2009 there were attempts by the government to directly intervene in the distribution of inputs to farmers through the various schemes detailed earlier. In addition, it also supplied subsidised tractor and mechanisation tools to farmers. Through the District Development Fund (DDF) and the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) the government leases out agricultural equipment and machinery, but the services have been limited and inadequate. The weak institutional capacity of the government to implement policies and strategies in an organised and systematic inclusion of youth in the agricultural sector has resulted in many youth preferring to 'go-it-alone'. Essentially, many young people engaged in small to medium scale commercial agricultural projects tend to rely more on their entrepreneurial skills rather than waiting for the government to create the space for them to actively participate in agriculture.

²⁸ Masiwa, M. 2004. *Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe: Disparity Between Policy Design and Implementation*, in Land Reform in Zimbabwe. Institute of Development Studies, University of Zimbabwe. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Harare).

Another interesting factor refers to the relationship between aid agencies and NGOs and the rural populations that they provide with relief and humanitarian food aid. Communities in the drier regions of the country (Regions IV and V) make up the largest recipients of aid. What we have found is that food aid has in itself created a system of localised dependency, with local communities preferring to wait for humanitarian assistance rather than partake in procreative agricultural activities. Additionally, in areas such as Tsholotsho in Matabeleland South for instance, young people in particular have taken to alternative economic activities such as gold panning. There has been a failure by government and other private enterprises to creatively marry the necessity of drought relief and sustainable agricultural enterprise. Emphasis, training and support for the growing of drought-resistant crops like sorghum and millet on a commercial, wealth creation scale rather than a subsistence one have been lacking.

9- NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES AND REQUIREMENTS: Engaging Youth in Agricultural Policies

The importance of young people in the socio-economic development of Zimbabwe and Africa as a whole is irrevocable. Because young people make up the majority of the people in the developing world, they are the driving force of the *demographic dividend*: “where a larger workforce with fewer dependents can generate strong economic growth.”²⁹ The tendency in many developing countries has been to dictate to youth the policies that affect them, rather than involve them as agents of their own development. As the UN acknowledged, young people are social actors with skills, capabilities and the willingness to bring about constructive resolutions to problems, drawing on a unique body of experience.³⁰ In the Zimbabwean case therefore, what are the spaces of participation in which youth can be involved? What can the government and non-state actors do to facilitate and attract youth participation in the agro-economy?

In assessing these it helps to summarise the main challenges faced by young people and the issues that disincentivise their participation in agriculture in a way that breaks the traditional mould in Zimbabwe.

²⁹ Lintelo, 2011. Pp. 3

³⁰ *ibid*

Regional agricultural differentiation- the diversity in topography and rainfall patterns between the different provinces of the country means there are different agricultural cultures that require different levels of specialisation. A 'one-size-fits-all' approach is inadequate. It must be acknowledged that diverse agro-ecological zones are neither unique to Zimbabwe, nor are they a negative occurrence. However, it is significant to note that the different areas require differentiated approaches to agriculture and different models of support. To illustrate, in the drier, more arid areas in the south-west of the country it is infinitely more beneficial for the government and private sector to teach and promote the benefits of planting drought-resistant small grain crops, to introduce modern animal husbandry and ranching techniques and to provide the necessary value-chain support mechanisms. As young people see the successes of agriculture where they have a comparative advantage rather than trying to replicate models from higher rainfall regions, then the basis for agricultural entrepreneurship and wealth creation will become more attractive and entrenched.

Limited access to credit facilities- since the inception of the multi-currency monetary regime in the country in 2008, there has been an acute liquidity crisis. Partially as a result of the economic crises in Europe and the United States, banks have had limited access to international lines of credit. This in turn has meant that the availability of on-lending finance has been very limited for all sectors of the economy. Additionally, young people rank very low on the priority of credit recipients from the limited pool of finance that the financial institutions have. Young people tend to have little or no collateral, and are have high risk profiles in the eyes of banks. A number of financial institutions have noted this gap and have recently (since February 2012) started specifically targeting the youth demographic. Under the Stanbic Wealth Creation Fund for example, those between 21 and 35yrs partaking inter alia in "mining finance, agricultural outgrower schemes and small scale export" are eligible for loans ranging from U\$5,000 to U\$20,000 at an interest rate of 14percent per annum. Because the initiative is still young, we are still to see whether it would be successful or not. On the whole therefore, without access to capital, they find it harder to start or run a business, access inputs and so on. Opportunities for innovative micro-financing are thus evident.

‘Brand Agriculture’- as one colleague, a 28 year old Malawian named Calvin Kamchacha³¹ noted, “there is a misconception in African society that agriculture is an activity that should be done after retirement from a white-collar career. In order to get young people into agriculture, the sector needs to be re-branded and seen in its totality.”³² The perception that farming is an activity for poor people of limited to a few skilled commercial farmers must be challenged. There are unlimited numbers of areas of engagement throughout the agricultural value-chain where young people can thrive and get involved. These include marketing, equipment supply, transportation, processing and export. Governments must approach these various sectors as significance elements of agriculture and means to wealth creation. As noted earlier, young people’s activity in many economic spheres is influenced by their perception of status and financial benefit. Agriculture is therefore be addressed and branded as being more than just farming. Training, education, information dissemination of relevant information regarding the opportunities along the value-chain are therefore a paramount factor of youth engagement in agriculture.

Diminished government support and capacity- As with other sectors of government, skills flight and inadequate funding mechanisms have impacted heavily on the capacity of various institutions to implement policies, plans and strategies relating to agriculture in Zimbabwe. Although as a sector it is recognised as vital, without adequate funding to research institutions and agricultural extension services, the modernisation of agriculture remains a stunted project. However, this opens up the space for cooperation through Private-Public Partnerships (PPP) for example, whereby the private sector adds value and expertise to various regions where government resources may be inadequate. Infrastructure development is one area where PPPs have proven mutually beneficial.

Poor collective youth coordination and organisation- an opportunity which young people have failed to adequately take advantage of relates to the benefits of collective bargaining and organisation in accessing credit, forming cooperatives to build capacity and sharing information. To illustrate, given the high risk profile of young people with financial institutions, young people can organise themselves into groups for particular programs.

³¹ He is the Executive Director of the Farmers Forum for Trade and Social Justice (FAFOTRAJ)

³² Quoted in Sibanda, L.M. 2011. *Climate Conversations- Enticing Africa’s youth to Agriculture*. alertNet. [online- www.trust.org/blogs/climate-converstaions/enticing-africas-youth-to-agriculture/]

Banks are more willing to on-lend to cooperatives than to individuals. Regarding the collective bargaining element, when young people institutionalise their projects they are better able to negotiate for better terms of engagement across the board (whether with banks, the government or established bodies like the Commercial Farmers Union for example).

Information and Communication Technology- the under-35 demographic is the most technologically connected group in society today. Advances in media technology have made the dissemination of information, innovative ideas and skills much easier. A significant example of the benefits of technology is the United Nations World Youth Report of 2011 titled “Youth Employment: Youth Perspectives on the Pursuit of Decent Work in Changing Times.” This report resulted from e-discussions with young people and representatives of youth-led organizations on the transition from schools and training institutions into the world of work. The online consultations took place from 11 October to 7 November 2011 using the IntenseDebate commenting platform on the website of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). It showed the possibilities of holding conversations and understanding perspectives of different groups of people across the world. This report merely illustrates the possibilities of ICTs and the impact they can have as research tools. Smaller models can be replicated to coordinate efforts of young people and groups in Zimbabwe to share stories, advice and innovations.

Climate change- according to Chagutah (2010) rain-fed agriculture forms the basis of the agricultural sector of Zimbabwe. Water-demanding and drought-susceptible maize is the dominant and preferred staple food in Zimbabwe. The lack of diversity and the minor role played by drought-tolerant staples such as sorghum, millet and cassava increase the vulnerability of food systems to the effects of climate change. Zimbabwe currently has no specific policy response to climate change. Instead, fragmented responses are implied in a battery of sectoral policies, including those relating to environment and natural resources management, water resources management, agriculture and food security, and disaster management. There exists a need for the definition of a specific policy response to climate change. “Many farmers are aware of climate change, although many still view its effects in the light of normal seasonal climatic variability. There is need for a concerted effort to raise

awareness of climate change among farmers, with an emphasis on its implications for their choice of farming methods, timing, and crop and seed varieties.”³³

10- CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Youth in Zimbabwe have a very limited impact on the policy formulation of agriculture in the country. This has been due to the very strict top-down approach utilised by the government, their own lack of institutional organisation and the differentiated nature of agricultural production in the country.
- Agricultural and youth policies in the country are mainly broad in scope and are not specific. This in turn leads to duplication of mandates and a lack of clarity of which institutions of government departments are in charge of policy implementation.
- Regarding youth perceptions on agriculture, we found that the differentiated nature of agricultural production across the various provinces in the country has led to uneven levels of participation in agriculture. Although the aspirations of rural and urban youth are converging because of advances in technology and so on, the main difference in the way they view agriculture relate to the wealth-creation vs. subsistence outcomes of agriculture. Rural youth have limited access to information, resources and technical expertise and so perceive and partake in farming mainly as a subsistence activity, whereas their urban counterparts have wider scope to commercialise their agricultural endeavours.
- Status and prestige play pivotal role in the way young people form their aspirations and perceive agriculture. Agriculture in general needs to be ‘re-branded’ to young people to change the perception that it is a ‘last resort’ activity for the formally unemployed. There must be an emphasis on the wealth-creation aspects of agriculture and potential for entrepreneurial creativity by young people given the right support systems and organisation.
- Humanitarian and aid agencies need to emphasise programs that are empowering and lead to self reliant and sustaining agricultural models. Although it is an essential

³³ Chagutah, 37

part of drought relief, merely handing out food potentially creates dependent relationships which disincentivise young people from agriculture.

- Government needs to find creating ways to remove impediments to access to finance and inputs, perhaps through public-private partnerships (PPP)

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12- ANNEXES

LIST OF ACRONYMS:

ARDA- Agriculture and Rural Development Agency

ASPEF- Agricultural Sector Productivity Enhancement Facility

AYC- African Youth Charter

DDF- District Development Fund

GPA- Global Political Agreement

LRRP- Land Reform and Redistribution Program

MDGs- Millennium Development Goals

MYDIE- Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment

PLAAS- Institute of Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies

PPP-Public-Private Partnerships

PSF- Productive Sector Facility

RBZ- Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe

RDC- Rural District Council

SSA-Sub Saharan Africa

MSMED- Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprise Development

UN- United Nations

WPAY- World Program of Action for Youth

MAPS AND FIGURE:

Figures 1 and 2- structure of A1 and A2 model farms

Maps 1 and 2- Distribution (by province) and overview of agro-ecological regions