A Review on Land Restitution for improved rural livelihoods of farm beneficiaries

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Abstract

Land restitution is one of the three sub-programmes of land reform implemented by governments to deal with challenges that include unemployment, poverty, lack of sustainable livelihoods, and food insecurity within households particularly of rural communities. Land restitution is the provision of land equivalent or financial compensation to individuals or communities that have been dispossessed of their land. In South Africa land of some people or communities was dispossessed by the Natives Land Act of 1913 which employed racial discriminatory laws or practices. Several land reform policies of countries such as Ukraine, the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), China, India, and Brazil, including countries in Africa such as Namibia, Burundi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa were implemented but their goals were not sufficiently realized. Like in many other countries, land reform, in particular land restitution has been a dismal failure in South Africa. Several challenges have been encountered compared to successes. Little/no transformation has been made to lives of the restituted farm beneficiaries. Thus, the review intends to understand the question like; why farm beneficiaries are not benefiting from the restituted farms in South Africa? Land restitution strategies that the government put in place to ensure that livelihoods of farm beneficiaries are improved were reviewed. Possible intervention strategies that could be implemented for improving livelihoods of land restituted farm beneficiaries or ways of revamping the existing strategies were discussed. One of these ways is to strengthen and provide continuous capacity building to the farm beneficiaries and agricultural extension advisors to enable them to assist the restituted farm beneficiaries with much needed essential agricultural skills to run their farms effectively and efficiently.

Key words: Farm benefits, intervention strategies, land reform, land restitution.

Introduction

Land reform programmes have been implemented in many countries (Lipton, 2012). One of the main aims of implementing land reform programmes in developing countries was to reduce poverty by increasing the proportion of farmland controlled by the poor who depend on land as the main source of livelihoods (Lipton, 2012). It also aims to provide the disadvantaged people with important socio-economic opportunities such as livestock rearing, crop production and game farming; thereby increasing income and power or status (Lipton, 2012). Also, land reform is often implemented to maintain rural reality and protect poor people from the threatening aspects of urbanisation, displacement of markets and modernization (Schirmer, 2009). The Africa’s land question of whether there is extensive unequal land distributions derived from land alienation founded in social formations or colonial practice has been debated, and that has led to the classic problems of landlessness and...
captive agrarian labour (Moyo, 2008). It has been argued that in sub-Saharan Africa where natives are in effective on occupying the land, and where land rights are generally generated through customary tenure, land is abundantly available for the native to occupy (Moyo, 2008). According to Lipton (2012), successful land reform has the potential to change the socio-economic situation in which the poor community members operate. The three strategic sub-programmes of land reform are Land Tenure, Land Redistribution and Land Restitution. This review focused on land restitution, mainly using South Africa as a case study.

Land tenure is governed by states Tenure Acts and it aims at restructuring the administrative and political framework of land adjudication (Logan, Tengbeh & Petja, 2012). The most important objective of land tenure is to provide security of tenure to land obtained through land redistribution, land restitution and land under communal land tenure patterns. Anseeuw & Mathebula (2008) reported that the Land Tenure Reform shows least progress in most African countries because of uncertain land tenure for the black population that still do not have land. According to Kloppers & Pienaar (2014) land redistribution refers to the sub-programme that complements the tenure and land restitution by strengthening the property rights of communities already occupying the land. However, there is little progress with regards to land redistribution as asserted by Moyo (2013) that land owners and landless people observed that land redistribution and transformation of land ownership patterns were progressing at a slow pace. According to Zenker (2014), Land restitution of Land Rights Acts provide for individuals or communities that have been dispossessed of their land by the Natives Land Acts to apply for the restitution of land equivalent, or financial compensation. The Restitution Acts further provide for the restitution of rights in land to persons or communities dispossessed of land as a result of the past racially discriminatory laws or practices.

**Global perspectives on land reform**

Around the world, millions of people have either been pushed out of their land or out of their chosen livelihoods as a result of conservation programs, dams, power plants or other projects sponsored by the World Bank (Holt-Gimenez, Williams & Hachmyer, 2015). All over the world, it was claimed that ownership existed only with proper title deeds, yet in the South African restitution, people could claim a right in land simply because they had lived on the land for longer than ten years (Zenker, 2014). This debate was mainly centred on the need to correct the past imbalances in access and ownership of land by disadvantaged members of the society (Moyo, 2013). The importance of land based livelihoods explains why colonial settlers had to put a number of repressive laws that enabled them to dispossess blacks of their prime land and place them into areas that were not suitable for human habitation. The fact that land still forms the basis of many people's livelihoods in Southern Africa today renders land reform relevant and a necessity in the region in general and Zimbabwe in particular (Gudhlanga & Chimimuta, 2012).

At the end of the World War II in May 1945, well-known land reform programmes and strategies were implemented in countries such as Ukraine as in Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) reform, China, Brazil and India. In Ukraine, the most part of land reform was minimised to agrarian, and initially land assigned for agricultural purposes was transferred into ownership of farfetched collective property. Later on, the sharing of the fertile land was accelerated to transform collective agricultural enterprises that were more efficient market-oriented farms.
In Classic Land Reform (CLR), the view is that CLR sets land ownership ceilings and redistributes land in excess of the ceilings to the poor farmers (Lipton, 2012). For land to become a genuine resource, its ownership has to be amenable to market forces (Ruhiiga, 2011). In Ukraine as in Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), land reform was implemented as desired by the government to justify some economic aspects under the conditions of Ukraine realities and call to globalisation (Kovaliv & Aleknavicius, 2013). Land for agricultural purposes was transferred into the ownership of collective property that gave attention to the more efficient market-oriented farms which was found to be unrealisable (Kovaliv & Aleknavicius, 2013). The authors further highlighted that the integral effective economic units has failed to develop and solve problems related to land such as soil fertility and land use. According to Kovaliv & Aleknavicius (2013), 43,000 farms that consisted of 4.3 million hectares were given to big cooperatives, joint stock companies and private individual farms for land use, than to the poor people who do not have land. Moreover, the optimal use of land in rural areas has the potential to reduce poverty and attain rural economic development (Senyolo, Chaminuka & Belete, 2015). The lesson learned from Ukraine that will help other countries is that land should not be privatized and owned by few individuals who are rich, because they will neglect the poor landless people who want to own the land. However, land should be given to all who were previously dispossessed of their original land. In China, the land reform system that was implemented in the rural areas since 1978 was called “household contract responsibility system” that was not effective, and that made it difficult for farmers to increase their income (Jiming, 2013). This Commune System with a two-layer management system, household contract responsibility system and granting farmers self-management rights replaced monopoly over purchase and marketing, allowing farmers the right to exchange farm produce freely (Erlank, 2014). On the other hand, local government has over-relied on funding land reform projects to protect farmland while farmers’ rights were seriously destroyed by small-scale land management that fail to increase income within the farms (Jiming, 2013). Furthermore, Jiming (2013) suggested the multiple ownerships of land and gradual reform based on principle of public and non-public interest, while the state-owned land should be multiple owned by central and local government. Privatisation of land is also not favoured by China, it preferred to keep household responsibility system in order to avoid privatisation of land. The meaning behind this is privatized land will benefit few instead of majority of people who want to use the land to improve their livelihoods. In Latin America, Brazil has embarked on selective expropriation with compensation; viable family smallholder farms receiving government support, serving domestic market, while large-scale commercial farms serve export markets (Erlank, 2014). The only challenge in Brazil is that the strategy of family smallholder farms will not grow quickly to enhance livelihoods of the people as more attention is given to large commercial farms to serve export market. Land in African Countries such as South Africa should be given to all people who deserve it irrespective of whether they are smallholder farmers or commercial farmers. All farmers should be given an opportunity to supply all types of markets, either export or domestic markets. While in India “ceiling land reforms” was implemented as a strategy of economic growth and asset accumulation that tends to diminish over time (Deininger, Jin & Nagarajan, 2009). The same pro-free market economic reforms have made India attractive to Western capital, by privatising state enterprises including land to attract foreigners.
to invest in India (Ismi, 2012). The land reform benefitted the urban-based middle and upper classes, than landless poor people. The benefit of the middle and upper classes from land reform has increased the impoverishment of the rural population which comprises about 70% of the country’s inhabitants (Ismi, 2012). The author further reports that the problem of hunger and poverty grew as more peasants were pushed off the land by the land reform policy that contributed negatively to India becoming one of the countries with the highest malnourished children in the world (Ismi, 2012).

**African perspective on land restitution**

Land is one of the fundamental resources that is essential for the development and sustenance of people in Africa (Mafa, Gudhlanga, Manyeruke, Matavire & Mpofo, 2015). The authors further mentioned that land is very important because it is the core of agricultural production in the sub-region (Mafa et al., 2015). However, in Central Africa, some countries such as Rwanda and Burundi, there was scarcity of productive land which remained the key source of conflict (Moyo, 2008). Even in countries such as Zambia and Mozambique that were considered to be land-abundant, there was clear indication of the trend of declining farm sizes. This trend suggests that farming alone will not sustain the livelihoods of land constrained households without substantial shifts in labour from agriculture to non-farm sectors (Moyo, 2008). The government of Namibia introduced a market-led land reform informed by the ‘willing seller willing buyer’ principle (Harring et al 2002). It was agreed that historical claims were not to be entertained, and, as a result, the government started purchasing land to resettle the landless indigenous people. However, the rate of land acquisition has negatively impacted on Namibia’s land reform programme (Tapscott 1994). Exploring the consequences of the Zimbabwean land reform, Gumede (2014) highlighted how the new government set out to acquire 8.3 million hectares of land in 1980 to settle 162 000 families under phase one of its Land Reform and Resettlement Programme (LRRP). Between 1980 and 1989, the government managed to acquire only 2.6 million hectares and resettled only 52 000 families (Moyo, 2013). From the year 2000 onwards, the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) was introduced and implemented in three phases (Gumede, 2014). The LRRP’s goals were to create political stability and an acceptable property rights regime; to promote economic growth through wider equity, efficiency gains from land redistribution and to develop small farm agricultural production (Gumede, 2014), whereas the FTLRP’s overarching objective was to fast track land redistribution (Gumede, 2014). Furthermore, Matondi (2012) puts it well by saying that 'starting in 2000, farmers began a journey that was to transform their lives forever’. The main challenge was that neither the Zimbabwean government nor the banks had weighed the farming resources that are crucial for one to start a career as a farmer, mainly because most of the newly resettled people have not been given title deeds of the land they now owned, casting doubt on the sustainability of their ownership (Moyo, 2013). Subsequently, Mabhena (2014) confirmed that the FTLRP is one-size fits all model of land reform that has not improved the livelihoods of the majority of people in the region. The average of small food grains such as sorghum and millet decreased by 40% below the 1990 average (Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development, 2010). The output of wheat grown by Large Scale Farmers (LSF) after 2000 fell from an average of 58 000 hectares in the 1990s to 18 200 hectares in 2010 (Moyo & Nyoni, 2013), while unemployment rate
was estimated at 90% in Zimbabwe (Dugmore, 2012). As a result, the entire economy of Zimbabwe shrunk by approximately 40% since the year 2000 (Nyawo, 2014). The land question in Zimbabwe is not different from the land question in South Africa, actually the South African government is learning lessons of land reform from Zimbabwe to improve its current land question.

The South African land question pre-1994

The South Africa's land reform process was not different from that of other nations. According to Moyo (2013) the land question in South Africa has been a contentious issue for many decades. During pre-independence, the South African land dispossession produced negative consequences such as unproductive land, inequitable distribution of land ownership in favor of a minority racial group and dislocation of the social and economic systems of the indigenous people in relation to land use (Land Reform Policy Discussion Document, 2012). The Native Land Act, 27 of 1913 laid the foundation for territorial segregation for the first time and formalized limitations on black land ownership (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014). The Act brought territorial segregation between black and non-black landholding that a native shall not enter into any agreement or transaction for the purchase or any other acquisition of land or property from a person other than a native (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014). According to Matlala (2014), land was fundamentally used as a right to ownership, control, access and use in South Africa. On the basis of this, it was argued that South African land restitution was not based on a just process of giving land back to the rightful owners who had been dispossessed (Zenker, 2014). Hence most of the people are still in need of land to improve livelihoods. This shows that more needs to be done in ensuring that land is being effectively utilised for the socio-economic transformation of rural livelihoods.

In March 1991, the former president of South Africa, Mr. F.W De Klerk passed the Abolition of Racially Based Land Measures Act (ARBLMA), which repealed the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts (Hebinck, Fay & Kondlo, 2011). The ARBLMA regulated the ownership of land according to race pre-1994. The former government further appointed an Advisory Committee on Land Allocation (ACLA), which made recommendations on state land disposal and the restoration of land to those dispossessed of formal land rights (Hebinck et al., 2011). The Act promoted capitalist agriculture which did not improve the livelihoods of the smallholder farmers.

South African land question post-1994

Owing to the negligible amount of land that has been redistributed so far in South Africa, some people perhaps doubt the efficacy of a market-oriented land reform approach (Gumede, 2014). Hendricks, Ntsebeza & Helliker (2013) openly argue for a radical programme, making such statements as the resolution of the land question by radical land redistribution in order to dismantle the former bantustans. Indeed, it is natural that, as part of the process of decolonization, the land should be restored back to the people that occupied it before (Hendricks et al., 2013). In addition, it is also taken for granted that the process of land reform in South Africa is necessary in redressing colonialism of the past, and this should be the hallmark of land reform not only for South Africa, but for Southern Africa as a whole (Hebinck & Cousins, 2013; Hendricks et al., 2013; Moyo, 2013; Murisa, 2013). The authors further
argued that land reform in South Africa has been a dismal failure even in the post-1994. The land reform programme aimed to redistribute 30% of white-owned agricultural land to historically disadvantaged black South Africans by 2014 (Kloppers, 2014). However, the 30% target was not achieved. Adding to this, many land reform projects failed and tractors are standing still, infrastructure has collapsed (Kepe, 2013). The author highlights that land issue is still not being addressed by the South African government (Kepe, 2013), and this include, restitution land or farms.

**Land restitution in South Africa**

The significance of land restitution in South Africa serves as a powerful symbol of redressing the trauma and dispossession many Africans experienced historically. However, everyday resource constraints limit the possibilities of how restored land is used (Puttergill, Bomela, Grobbelaar & Moguerane, 2011). Furthermore, Lahiff (2014) highlighted that restitution of historical claims has been limited to land lost after 1913 and, in practice, has been affected largely through cash compensation with relatively little impact in terms of land ownership. In his state of the nation address of 13 February 2014, the President of South Africa Mr. Jacob Zuma said that ‘80 000 land claims, comprised of 3.4 million hectares have been settled and 1.8 million people have benefited (South Africa State of the Nation Address, 13 February 2014). Currently, resettled farmers are not well organized (Murisa, 2011). The failure of acquired farms to return to their productivity levels before they were transferred casts doubts as to the viability of the programme (Ruhiga, 2011). As a result of the failures of the land reform projects, it was reported that for the 2011/2012 restitution budget, an amount of R900 million (US$58 479 532-20 @ 1USD =15-39 ZAR) was diverted to recapitalizing the failing projects and settlement of restitution claims (Kloppers, 2014). The author further explained that land ownership plays a critical role in sustaining rural livelihoods. It forms the productive base for crop and livestock farming, making it probably the most important production resource. While on the other hand, state agencies responsible for facilitating land restoration, the Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights (CRLR) and its regional offices, municipal and provincial government departments often lack commitment to bring restitution projects to completion, and they also lack capacity to process claims and implement development projects (Beyers, 2013).

In South African, the agricultural landscape is still characterized by uneven land ownership, extreme rural poverty, and the unproductive use of resources (Kloppers, 2014). It is clear that the agricultural landscape is directly linked to the strategic objectives of rural development, food security and land reform as identified in the Government’s 2009-2014 Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) (Kloppers, 2014). This MTSF was aimed at ensuring a more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth, reducing poverty and unemployment by half by 2014 (Kloppers, 2014). However, the land restitution policy and the corresponding resettlement schemes have failed to increase access and ownership for historically disadvantaged communities (Ruhiga, 2011). Hence, many people who are landless still find themselves in poverty. This leaves more to be done for enabling socio-economic transformation of livelihoods of people in land restituted farms.

Furthermore, since the late nineties, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) allocated 35 restitution farms to farm beneficiaries in Waterberg District (WD) in Limpopo Province of South Africa (DRDLR, 2013). The objective was
to improve rural livelihoods and alleviate poverty but failure of the programme has compromised rural livelihoods of the restituted farm beneficiaries (Pringle, 2013). Above all, the existing land reform strategy called the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) was developed in 2006, to ensure that land and agrarian reform moves to the new trajectory that will contribute to the higher path of growth, employment and equity by 2014 (Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy, 2006). However, the strategy has not yielded good results because it focused on land reform in general, and limited attention was given to the restitution programme. Hence, the need to develop an intervention strategy to improve the livelihoods of the beneficiaries of restituted farms becomes critical.

Five-year period of land restitution in South Africa

In 1994, white farms occupied 85.8 million hectares which is about 86 % of rural land, of which 10.6 million hectares were under arable cultivation (Bernstein, 2013). In relation to land redistribution, the initial target was to redistribute 24.6 million hectares i.e. 30 % of white owned agricultural land by 1999, through both grants-based redistribution and a rights-based restitution programme (O’Laughlin, Bernstein, Cousins & Peters, 2013). This was executed through grant-based mechanisms such as Settlement Land Acquisition Grants (SLAG) and Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD). During the first phase of land reform in 1994 to 1999, the former Minister of Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), Mr. Derek Hanekom introduced SLAG to provide grants to develop subsistence farming. This phase stressed the importance of land reform and the development of small-scale Agricultural production in the socio-economic development of rural areas for ensuring food security and means of living (Anseeuw & Mathebula, 2008). An amount of R16 000 (US$1, 039-63 @1USD=15-39 ZAR) was allocated per household from 1994 to 1999 to purchase land that could be used for agricultural investment on communal land or land acquired through restitution programme (Land Reform Policy Discussion Document, 2012). Adding to this, grants were allocated mainly to focus on rural and the poorest population, whereby 13% of the farming households had commercialised part of their production. However, only 0.2% of the households could effectively make a living through farming (Anseeuw & Mathebula, 2008). Consequently, SLAG was criticized for not providing the means to change the agricultural sector in South Africa (DRDLR, 2000). By the end of 1999, less than a million hectares had been transferred (around 1.2% of white owned farm land), and the target date was revised to 2014 (O’Laughlin et al., 2013). By March 2011, only 7.2% (6.3 million hectares) had been transferred and the target date has now been set at 2025 (O’Laughlin et al., 2013). From 1994 to 2003, the farming area declined by 10% (Presidency Fifteen Year Review Project, 2010) while by 2010, less than 5 % of commercial farm land (roughly 4 million hectares) had been transferred through land reform (Bernstein, 2013).

In the second phase from 1999 to 2004, Miss Thoko Didiza took over as Minister of DRDLR. The Minister has abandoned subsistence farming and focused on the development of an emergent commercial black farming (Anseeuw & Mathebula, 2008). According to the Minister, land reform was no longer measured at transferring land to black households and promote self-sufficiency, but rather at creating a structured small-scale commercial farming to improve farm production, revitalizing the rural environment and create employment
The LRAD programme insisted that the beneficiaries contribute their own funds either actual or in-kind to the project. For contribution of R5000 (US$324.88 @ 1USD= 15.39 ZAR) to R400 000 (US$25 990.90 @ 1USD= 15.39 ZAR) per person, the LRAD subsidized with a grant of R20 000 (US$1 299.54 @ 1USD=15.39 ZAR) to R100 000 (US$6 497.72@ 1USD =15.39 ZAR) per individual based on own contribution (Land Reform Policy Discussion Document, 2012).

However, since LRAD was introduced with the aim to create 70 000 new black commercial farmers by 2017; little has been emphasized by LRAD on smallholder agriculture and poverty alleviation (Manenzhe, 2007). Critics have argued that it lacks a pro-poor approach (Manenzhe, 2007). Contrary to the above assertions, Tshuma (2012) indicated that in spite of a slow pace, there are some people who have benefited from Land Reform. However, lack of post-settlement support has made such beneficiaries to struggle to produce enough to feed themselves. Hence their livelihoods were not addressed.

A decade of land restitution and progress made on livelihoods

Debates on land reform in South Africa, particularly in the first decade of the new government of South Africa focused more on the pace of delivery of land promised in the land reform programme (Ntsebeza & Hall, 2007; Lahiff 2008; Hendricks & Ntsebeza, 2010). Almost two decades since 1994, redistributive land reforms have neither reversed this trend nor secured sustainable livelihoods for resource-poor farmers and farm workers (Aliber & Hart, 2009). This was one of the earliest challenges faced by the current elected government about how to address the unequal distribution of land in the country (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014). Lahiff (2014) suggested that smallholder agriculture is in long-term decline and access to land is not likely to transform the livelihood opportunities of the rural poor on a significant scale. According to Maponya & Mpandeli (2013), insecure land ownership arises from a number of sources, depending on the historical pattern of land acquisition and settlement. The authors further say that land ownership has the potential to increase or decrease agricultural production thus improving farmers’ livelihoods. The goal of increasing access to land and the productive use of land by 2014 was directly linked to the land reform programme, which further addresses the issue of uneven land distribution through restitution and redistribution (Kloppers, 2014). In addition, land has been redistributed over the past two decades in South Africa, and currently there is consensus that land reform has been unsuccessful (Aliber & Cousins, 2013).

The trajectory of the land restitution programme reveals a less dramatic change in approach, seemingly because there is less latitude in how to define a restitution project, the identity of the beneficiaries and the land are mainly governed by the nature of the dispossession, rather than by government’s prevailing development model (Aliber & Cousins, 2013). The authors further provided unsuccessful outcomes of the performance of the 117 land reform projects in Capricorn and Vhembe Districts in Limpopo province of South Africa, of which 81 were redistribution projects and 36 were for restitution. The authors alluded further that by 2007, only 46% of the projects were not effective, and 40% of some beneficiary activity on the land was discernible (Aliber & Cousins, 2013). The unsuccessful outcomes also appear for land restitution projects in other provinces such as Mpumalanga and KwaZulu Natal. This led
to the review of the current policies on land reform and restitution, to better integrate land reform and the use of land, agrarian reform and economic development (Matlala, 2014).

Evidence on the land restitution on rural livelihoods of the beneficiaries

Although there are challenges in most of the restituted farms to demonstrate socio-economic transformation of lives of the beneficiaries for agricultural development, Holt-Jansen & Raagmaa (2010) provided successful restituted farm called Ritsu in Estonia. According to the authors, Ritsu is a private family ownership farm with 625 hectares of arable land, plus 200 hectares of forest. The main production was grain, nature tourism (canoeing, hiking, camping, catering and forestry (Holt-Jensen & Raagmaa, 2010). The farm beneficiaries were happy about the farm because the farm managed to employ 2 workers and few extra people seasonally. Success stories on restituted farms that improve livelihoods of farm beneficiaries were also realised in Zimbabwe. According to Scoones, Marongwe, Mavendzenge, Murimbarimba, Mahenehene & Sukume (2012), out of 145 000 farm households in smallholder A1 schemes, 16 500 households occupied larger A2 farms aimed at small-scale commercial farming that was successful to produce tobacco, maize, and farm beneficiaries socio-economic status was greatly improved. The Amangcolosi in Kranskop, in KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa provided another successful land restitution that transformed socio-economic lives of restituted farm beneficiaries. The farm beneficiaries own a multimillion rand business called Ithuba Agriculture, and generate annual turnover of R38 million (US$2.469 135-80 @ 1USD=15-39 ZAR) through supply with Mondi, Gledhow Mill, forestry cooperative for sugar cane and timber (Department of Agriculture and Rural Development report, 2016). It employed 500 permanent workers and owns a holiday resort with Caravan Park (Department of Agriculture and Rural Development report, 2016).

Assessing rural livelihood realities in the low veld of Zimbabwe and South Africa after the land reform, Mutanga (2011) highlighted that comparing rural livelihoods between the two countries is not that easy. Given that the Zimbabwean case has reached an advanced stage, whereby most of the black majority who wished to get land after the fast track resettlement programme of 2000, have received it (Mutanga, 2011). On the other hand, in South Africa a few scattered households have been identified in communities of Huntington, Justicia, Belfast and Lylidale in Mpumalanga province. Majority of the families living in these communities are former labourers in the citrus Estates who are looking forward to government grants for their survival (Mutanga, 2011). In Zimbabwe, the livelihoods of the people have improved while in South Africa, Mpumalanga, there were scenarios of success and other scenarios of failure from one farm to the other (Mutanga, 2011). In an attempt to compare sugarcane production by new farmers of land reform in Malelane Estate of Mpumalanga in South Africa and Mkwasine Estate of Chiредzi district in Zimbabwe, the production levels have gone down over the years in both countries (Mutanga, 2011). Nevertheless, some ‘beneficiaries’ have experienced modest improvements in their livelihoods, often through abandoning or amending official project plans. Among farmers on the other hand, land reform beneficiaries have been able to accumulate land, livestock and some financial assets. However, this finding does not clearly demonstrate whether South
Africa’s land reform is merely boosting the fortunes of already prosperous black farmers, or turning resource-poor rural producers into accumulating farmers (Jacobs & Makaudze, 2012).

Understanding rural livelihoods does not only demand attention to the rural as livelihood in relation to urban opportunities and resources, but also as a space in which individual aspirations and collective household livelihood projects are played out (Seeking, 2008). Any description or analysis of how rural people make a living must look at these livelihoods from a logically tight conceptual perspective (Jacobs & Makaudze, 2012). Livelihood comprises of people, their capabilities, and their means of living including food, income and assets to cope with stress and shocks as well as to provide for the future generation (Gaillard, Maceda, Stasiak, Le Berre & Espaldon, 2009). Four livelihood assets essential for land restitution include human, financial, social and physical asset.

Human capital is critical when studying more on farming skills development of the farm beneficiaries while the financial capital is focusing on the funds received by the farm beneficiaries from the farms in form of grants and income from farm production. Physical capital as one of the five assets of livelihoods was used by the restituted farm beneficiaries to study aspects such as farm land allocated to them, infrastructure, agricultural implements, electricity and water provision within the farms. Finally, the social capital within the farm beneficiaries was addressed when issues such as employment, poverty and inequality among the agricultural farms are dealt with for socio-economic purposes. According to O’Laughlin et al. (2013), the link of South Africa’s dispossessed land and farming have been significantly eroded, but land remains a core focus of efforts to establish social identity. The first activity is how rural areas confer land-based endowments, second activity is rural livelihoods on small-scale survivalist informal economic activities, both farm and off-farm. Third, rural livelihoods in South Africa that are increasingly shaped by a system of state cash transfers that intersect with rural markets, agrarian activities and livelihoods (Neves & Du Toit, 2013). Furthermore, farmers who have reduced cultivation in their farms indicated that farms that are owned individually are well managed to promote livelihoods than farms that are owned by the group of farmers (Maponya & Mpandeli, 2013). The only challenge of these new farmers is that they are not in position to run their farms on a daily basis, they are taking farming as secondary business, unlike the previous land owners who took farming seriously as business and were involved in the whole farming enterprise. If the black population continue to take farming as a part time enterprise it will be very difficult for them to have surplus produce for export and earn the much needed foreign currency. Unless the new land reform beneficiaries take farming seriously and know that it is a full time business then the intended benefits of the land restitution might not be fully realised (Gudhlanga & Chirimuuta, 2012).

Contrary to various authors who mentioned that land redistribution has no impact on poverty and livelihoods of the farm beneficiaries, Chitonge & Ntsebeza (2012) focused on the question whether land transferred through land reform programme in South Africa is making a contribution to improving the livelihoods of beneficiaries in the country. The findings contradict most of the studies and other senior government officials and analysts that land transferred through land reform is not improving the livelihood of beneficiaries, that it is not being used, and that black Africans are no longer interested in land as a means of livelihood (Chitonge & Ntsebeza, 2012). They selected households from the same area where the beneficiaries resided prior to getting land, to capture even the smallest contribution to livelihood which may be missed when
evaluating impact on the project level (Chitonge & Ntsebeza, 2012). The authors argued that households of beneficiaries of land reform and those who acquired land on their own were better off than those who owned little or no agricultural land. Chitonge & Ntsebeza (2012) further argued that those who had access to land were able to improve their livelihoods despite the lack of support from the government. However, their argument focused more on the households beneficiaries of land reform, which do not provide clear answers on the productivity of the restituted land that contribute to their livelihoods. Livelihoods of farm beneficiaries from restituted farms are informed by the productive use of the land. Hence, land ownership with no production, is as good as not in possession of that land.

**Land restitution challenges**

There are many challenges experienced by restituted farm beneficiaries. Ruhiiga (2011) mentioned that lack of internal cohesion in production sectors; low levels of infrastructure, constrained access to land as a resource undermine the growth of an agrarian economy in the restitution farms. It is also clear that many of the beneficiaries of land reform are obtaining land that has effectively been abandoned by former owners, either for economic or environmental reasons that are far from favourable for new and resource-poor entrants to the sector (Lahiff, 2014). Other challenges identified by Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) are that in South Africa land reform was slow to get started after 1994 with wrong project identification, poor group dynamics, ineffective land acquisition, and inappropriate project planning (Lahiff, 2008). The projects implemented under SLAG and LRAD from 1995 to 1999 were of poor standard, and beneficiaries dropped out of the land reform projects while land projects are collapsing (Lahiff, 2008). People were also grouped to fit the land rather than land being found to fit the needs of a group or individuals (Lahiff, 2008).

In the Western Cape, other farm beneficiaries opted to go out of the restitution farms to look for alternative jobs within the labour market such as, working for Water (WfW) programme (Hough & Prozesky, 2013). The authors further indicate that farm beneficiaries who joined Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) such as, Working for Water (WfW) programme in the Western Cape were reluctant to leave the project because of income stabilization and employment security (Hough & Prozesky, 2013). However, numerous problems with productivity and community dynamics on land reform projects are reported (Walker, 2012).

The Lisbon Estate in Mpumalanga Province is another example that has proved to be a failure (Mutanga, 2011). The Estate used to export citrus fruits and mangoes as well as employing over 2000 workers (Mutanga, 2011). Currently, the entire Estate is now a grazing land with dilapidated infrastructure (Mutanga, 2011). Adding to this, an empirical study conducted in KwaZulu-Natal Province to compare the output of the sugar farmland prior and after transfer to smallholder farmers in Uthungulu and iLembe areas showed that, half of the farms have reduced productivity 'during the year of takeover' (Van Rooyen, 2008). There was under-production in the post-takeover of 23 farms which resulted in a loss of over 48 000 tons of sugarcane (Van Rooyen, 2008). The above loss in output was due to lack of experience and capacity on new owners to run the farms (Van Rooyen, 2008). Lack of infrastructure, training and capital are the significant factors that affect land reform in Southern Africa. In addition, Hart, (2013) mentioned challenges such as severe water problems and increasing tensions in groups
of beneficiaries that cannot work together. Then the question that remains is: how will the government make sure that it encourages farm beneficiaries to participate within the restitution farms, because priority seems to be given to large commercial farmers who seem to be more viable than new farm owners?

Mitigation strategies of land restitution challenges

Currently, the DRDLR has introduced Recapitalization and Development Policy (RADP POLICY) (2011-2012), to resuscitate redistributed and restituted farms that show signs of growth. This is one of the mitigation strategies that select farms based on their potential informed by the assessment. According to RADP Policy (2011-2012), all recapitalized farms should create jobs and graduate from being emerging farmers into commercial farmers. Generally, not much has been done to curb the current challenges, because the RADP Policy focuses on the potential farms instead of focusing on all farms allocated through land redistribution and land restitution. Land restitution should be aligned with all processes of agricultural reform to enhance farm production that will consequently improve the livelihoods of the farm beneficiaries. Adding to this, new farmers need to be put into projects because they need support, structure and financial responsibility in order to rise to many challenges of ownership of the farms (Dugmore, 2012). Once the new land reform beneficiaries receive land, they must be trained to assess preparedness of land recipients for commercial farming. This will be to encourage farm beneficiaries to take farming seriously as a full time business to produce more for export and earn the much needed forex in order to realize the intended benefits of the land reform programme (Gudhlanga & Chirimuuta, 2012). Restituted farm beneficiaries should be provided with skills development to improve technical knowledge of farmers as to how they can maximise production within the farms. Furthermore, the government should invest more funds into the agricultural sector to provide small-scale farmers with subsidized farming resources, to enable them to improve competitiveness through accessing markets for their products (Department of Performance Monitoring & Evaluation report, 2013). Nevertheless, this could be a useful intervention to countries facing similar land restitution challenges.

Proposed intervention strategies to enhance livelihoods of restituted farm beneficiaries

Land restitution and its impact on rural livelihoods give impetus to develop an intervention strategy for enhancing productive utilisation of the farms that leads to sustainability and improvement in the livelihood of the farm beneficiaries. There should be no tax to all restituted farms that are producing agricultural products in developing countries. This was practised in India whereby agricultural income was exempted from income taxes which make land attractive as a tax shelter (Banerjee, 1999). This will be to counter taxing of agricultural products that was practiced in countries such as Brazil, Colombia and South Africa. These countries eventually failed in taxing agriculture, and there were decreasing returns in agricultural production (Banerjee, 1999). Land reform should lead to the emergence of viable farms through provision of capital investment and inputs to new farmers to ensure optimum production...
(Mutanga, 2011). The government should also provide adequate subsidies to the new restituted farmers to enable them to operate in their farms. Finally, the government should provide advanced agricultural trainings to extension advisors, to enable them to assist the farm beneficiaries with technical skills.

## Conclusion

Despite decades of international debates, land laws and policies, resolutions, and promises geared at land reform for poverty alleviation and transforming lives of farm beneficiaries socio-economically, literature revealed that land reform beneficiaries in most regions have not benefited either from land redistributed or land restituted. In most countries across the globe, consistent inequalities in access to land by the poor people who were dispossessed by the colonial regimes still exist. Failure of land reform especially the restituted farms to transform livelihoods of the farm beneficiaries are cutting-across all countries. In countries such as Ukraine as in Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), China, India, Brazil, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa, land reform failed to significantly improve the livelihoods of farm beneficiaries. This mainly hinders most of the newly resettled farmers who have not been given title deeds for ownership and sustainability of the land they own. Redistribution of land has been very slow, food security was adversely affected among the households of the farm beneficiaries, and poverty is not alleviated due to the farms that are not effectively utilized for agricultural purposes. Hence, it is imperative to conduct studies that will develop an intervention strategy to ensure that socio-economic transformation of lives of restituted farm beneficiaries is realised.

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