

4

Nyabira-Mazowe War Veterans' Association: A Microcosm of the National Land Occupation Movement

Louis Masuko

Introduction

Land reforms have taken shape in many countries of the world, across all continents and at different stages of their respective development. In Zimbabwe, the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP), an outcome of invasions and subsequent occupations of Large Scale Commercial Farms (LSCF), shook the Zimbabwean and Western aristocrats' establishment in 2000 and has been characterised as the 'first radical shift in agrarian property rights in the post Cold War world' (Moyo and Yeros 2005). The FTLRP radically changed, not only the unequal and inequitable land distribution in Zimbabwe, but insecurity of land tenure and unsustainable and suboptimal land use as well. It ended the hegemony of the minority whites on land and in the agriculture sector (Masuko 2004), empowered the landless black majority and set a solid pathway for solving the long standing land question in Zimbabwe.

Opinion surrounding the causes of Zimbabwe's land reform, the forces behind it, its timing, its outcome and its legitimacy differs, largely along lines of the diverse interests of the different contenders and/or their ideological inclinations. The overall controversy on the route taken by Zimbabwe's land reform is whether it was indeed a part of a broader development strategy to propel the country to a sustainable social and economic growth path

(see Chambati and Moyo 2007), or meant to serve immediate political ends. The first perspective views land occupation and the FTLRP as a strategy to address the land question (Masuko 2004, 2008; Moyo and Yeros 2005; Moyo, Murisa and Helliker 2008). Central to this opinion is the understanding that the occupations were a culmination of a process that had been unfolding under the surface, to address a national question, since 1980 (Masuko 2004; Moyo and Yeros 2005; Sadomba 2008). The occupations, according to this view, were a protest by the landless against the ZANU-PF government (Masuko 2004; Moyo and Yeros 2005) for not utilising the two-thirds majority that it enjoyed in the 1990s to speed up the land acquisition and redistribution process. Indeed, this was a direct challenge to the neoliberal state, capital and the laws that protected the system (Masuko 2008).

Conversely, an opinion is advanced that the occupations and the FTLRP were a political gimmick meant to bolster the waning support for the ruling ZANU-PF party (Raftopoulos 2003; Hammar 2003; Sachikonye 2003). They highlight the strong hand of the state in the process, including the violation of the rule of law, human rights and good governance. Indeed the 'beleaguered' state had to create a crisis in order to sustain itself in power. Land occupations are viewed as an event that was only triggered by the rejection of the draft constitution of 2000 (Masiwa and Chipungu 2004; Raftopoulos and Phimister 2004; Hammar 2003). Sustainability of the programme was brought into question as the land occupation movement was reduced to a single-issue partisan strategy focusing exclusively on the immediate question of land repossession, its distribution to Mugabe's cronies and not meant to address long-term political, social and economic questions.

Without losing focus on the substance at the core of these two contending opinions, this chapter explores the sustainability of Zimbabwe's land reform from a social movement perspective. As a case study, it uses the Nyabira-Mazowe War Veterans Association (NMWVA), one of the many micro-organisations that led the invasions and occupations of Large Scale Commercial Farms (LSCF) in Zimbabwe. Two issues come to the fore. First, this chapter considers whether what some observers have seen as one movement or a top down state intervention was indeed a national movement made up of small groups of people controlled and led at the micro level, employing different strategies and tactics to achieve the same objective. Second, the chapter illuminates how new social and political structures, networks and institutions, that never existed before the land occupations, developed in the occupied areas. Such networks and institutions, it is argued, provide the necessary social capital and social structure conducive for future movement activity to take land reform beyond the single issue of land repossession.

Three questions are raised here to provide the theoretical framework within which the issues raised above are examined and analyzed. The central questions asked include: (i) what is the process that results in individuals engaging in occupations?; (ii) how and why did people come together to challenge the existing land distribution regime and the legal system that supported it?; and (iii) were there structures and networks that existed before, during and after the occupations? Any theory that adequately addresses these questions must, first, account for an individual's willingness to expose himself or herself to exceptional physical danger, explain how individuals come together to form rebellious groups and reveal why groups of citizens are able to militantly challenge a state and its coercive apparatus and the force and strength of capital.

A framework that embraces the 'micro-mobilization process' (Snow et al 1986) that links Tilly's (1978) and Freeman's (1983) discussion of categories, networks and group mobilisation and Gurr's (1970) discussion of relative deprivation is used for this study. To provide a comprehensive context to the discussion, Gurr's (1970) notion of the 'coercive balance' between rebels and states and Tilly's (1978) discussion of state-challenger conflict is informed by Skocpol's state-centred analysis of the structural conditions which weaken a state's ability to employ its coercive capacity.

Various instruments were used to collect both primary and secondary data and information. Participatory observations were undertaken during the period between 2000 and 2003 and provided most of the baseline information used alongside a structured questionnaire administered to 24 former members of the NMWVA, focusing on those who had been allocated land, rather than on those who dropped out of the occupation and those who did not acquire land through occupation. Interviews were also carried out with the members of the executive of the association. Minutes of the NMWVA association recorded between the year 2000 and 2003 and some from the District Land Committee meetings were analyzed. Lastly, data from the baseline study conducted particularly in Zvimba District by the African Institute of Agrarian Studies (AIAS) in 2005 was also used.

Seven sections make up this chapter, including this introduction. A brief background of the Nyabira-Mazowe War Veterans Association, the origin and class structure of its members, are explained in section two. Section three describes the organisational and leadership structure of the NMWVA. In section four, an analysis is developed of the importance of groups and networks in organising people into social movements with the capacity to demand reforms that change the status of their members; and section five shows that collective action is a function of the existence of relative individual deprivation. Section six shows that

by developing new institutions, networks and relations, social movements mutate, reproduce and define new demands and ways of achieving them.

This chapter highlights how land occupation and reform in Zimbabwe is a contested terrain. This is so regardless of the observations that from the second half of the 1990s into the 2000s, the balance of class forces within ZANU-PF and society in general was tipped in favour of radical nationalist solutions (see Moyo and Yeros 2005; Masuko forthcoming). The journey to explore the contestations commences with section two below. In this section, the social fabric of NMWVA, one of the micro-organisms that actively executed the occupations that led to the FTLRP, is examined.

Origin and class composition of the NMWVA membership

A social movement is defined by Garreton as a collective action with some stability over time and some degree of organisation and oriented towards change or conservation of society or some sphere of it (1997). The land occupation social movement in Zimbabwe was an outcome of the integration of small and manageable units at the local level (see also Sadomba 2008). The Nyabira-Mazowe War Veterans Association (NMWVA) was one of these small micro-organisations whose origins, membership and class composition was diverse.

The NMWVA derived its name from the districts that it occupied during the land occupations and the group of people who led the process, the veterans of the war of liberation struggle. Nyabira is an area within Zvimba District in the Mashonaland West Province and shares boundaries with Mazowe District in the Mashonaland Central Province. The NMWVA as an organisation occupied 10 farms in Mashonaland West Province and 12 farms in Mashonaland Central Province, covering an area of plus or minus 44 thousand hectares. The organisation was formed in February 2000, immediately after the first occupations by the war veterans from the City of Harare that saw most farms surrounding the city being occupied.

With a robust membership base of more than 200 paid-up members (excluding spouses and siblings) by mid 2000 (NMWVA Membership Register 2000), the NMWVA took the occupations further, deeper into the districts adjacent to the City of Harare and as far as the Great Dyke to the north-west. In Mashonaland West, the NMWVA collaborated and networked with the Hunyani War Veterans Association and individual spiritual leaders such as Sekuru Mushowe of Hunyani Hills, to the west and south, respectively, while in Mashonaland Central, they collaborated with two more small movements led by war veterans Cde. Urimbo and Cde. Zimbabwe, respectively, who occupied southern parts of Mazowe District.

The Nyabira-Mazowe War Veteran Association was formed by war veterans of the Second Chimurenga, at the onset of the land occupations, to organise the occupation process and was integrated into the national land occupation movement, not necessarily along vertical structures, but horizontally through networking with other occupying groups. In other areas, however, there were no such organisations as the occupiers rallied behind a particular war veteran or a group of war veterans (e.g., South-west Mazowe and South-east Mazowe), the area Member of Parliament and traditional leaders (e.g., Hunyani Hills area occupations led by Sekuru Mushowe), who in turn sought to formalise their occupations by appealing to war veterans (see Moyo and Yeros 2005).

Zvimba District (in which the Nyabira area falls) and Mazowe District are much closer to Harare (they share boundaries) than to communal areas (which were the centre of many occupation groups and initiatives) (see Sadomba 2008) and the need for such organised occupation was critical to minimise vandalism and conflict between occupiers themselves, who tended to concentrate on fewer farms closer to town. These areas had no formal political party or Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veteran Association (ZNLWVA) structures, except for the Nyawo dance groups and pretty little or no initiative to occupy farms was likely to come from within the LSCFs themselves (i.e. from farm workers). Such Large Scale Commercial Farming areas could be described as 'liberated zones' for the white farmers and the sanctity of private property ruled supreme. These were areas where only the laws of the white farmers were observed.

Although the name suggests that the movement comprised war veterans only, membership included members of ZANU-PF, the landless residents and the youth, who resided mainly, but not exclusively, in the high-density suburbs of Warren Park, Kuwadzana and Dzivarasekwa and the low-density suburbs of Mabelreign, Marlborough and Mount Hampden. The six suburbs are on the western and north-western side of the City of Harare and adjacent to the two districts of Zvimba and Mazowe. NMWVA membership cut across class lines to include industrial and farm workers, managers and directors, academics, self employed-indigenous people and the unemployed (see Table 4.1). Two groups were dominant: the retired professionals in the private sector and those who were self-employed. Data from an AIAS baseline study show that in Zvimba District, in general, the dominant groups were the private sector unskilled employees and uniformed personnel (Table 4.1). The difference basically reflects the urban-rural settings of the survey areas. The number of farm workers in both cases is not very significant.

Table 4.1: Class structure of the NMWVA farm occupiers and land beneficiaries

NMWVA																
Category	Private Sector		Private Sector Unskilled		Self-employed		Civil Servants Managers /Skilled		Civil Servants Unskilled		Uniformed		Farm Workers		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Employed	1	8			8	62			2	15	1	8	1	8	13	100
Unemployed (former professional)	7	63	1	9			2	18			1	9	1	8	13	100
Total	8	33	1	4	8	33	2	8	2	8	2	8	1	4	24	100
Land Beneficiaries													N/A			
Employed	86	10.8	200	25	53	6.5	65	8.1	41	2			4	5	235	29.4
Unemployed (former professional)	84	6.9	413	34.5	101	8.4	41	3.4	85	7.1	221	18.5	20	1.7	221	18.5
Total	170	9	613	30	154	7.5	106	6.5	126	5	221	18.5	24	2.2	456	24

Source: Masuko 2008 and AIAS Baseline Study (2005): Zvimba District

The urban character of the membership of the NMWVA was strong with 54 per cent of the respondents originating from both the high and low density suburbs of Harare (Table 4.2). About 4 per cent came from the large-scale farming areas within the occupied farms. Forty-two per cent originated from communal areas within the respective provinces of Mashonaland West and Central. Even those that came from communal areas knew of the occupation from their Harare connections. In contrast, 62.5 per cent of the occupiers in the AIAS Baseline Survey originated from the communal areas and only 22 per cent from urban areas.¹ Those from the Diaspora and other farming schemes (*e.g.* LSCF areas) accounted for 8 per cent of the total sample. What stood out from this data is that urban industrial workers and the urban unemployed, contrary to the belief held by the opposition political parties, saw an opportunity to extricate themselves from urban poverty and a chance to own a piece of land. The strength of the NMWVA resided in their diversity in terms of class, social background and skills possessed.²

Table 4.2: Origin of land occupiers: NMWVA and national

Area of Origin	NMWVA		National (AIAS sample)	
	No of people	%	No of people	%
Urban Areas	13	54	452	22.9
LSCF Areas	1	4	159	8.1
Communal Areas	10	42	1227	62.1
Other			131	6.9
Total	24	100	1969	100

Source: Masuko 2008 and AIAS Baseline Study 2005

Membership at the inception of the association stretched across all the individual categories outlined by Snow (1986), that is: adherents, those individuals who identified with the occupying organisation and were willing to act on that identification; free riders, a pool of potentials who identified but did not contribute; and those who did not identify with the organisation and by default were unwilling to act. However, the majority of the latter two groups of individuals who could be referred to as the Potential Organisation Members (POMS) did not, in the case of the NMWVA, last the distance as the land occupation process intensified.

Starting in June 2000, new criteria to qualify for membership³ in the association were outlined to screen the POMS from those who identified with and participated in the activities of the association. These included consistent

physical participation and contributions in cash and in kind to support the day-to-day operations of the occupying movement. The former involved attending meetings held every Saturday, carrying out the actual invasions according to the strategy mapped out for the particular farm and putting up temporary shelter and tilling at least a hectare of land on the occupied farm, themselves a sign of the transformation from land invasion to land occupation (see Moyo 2001). Cash contributions took the form of a joining fee and a monthly subscription, as determined by the leadership and approved by the Saturday general meetings. Any other commitments in the form of vehicles for transporting the members during invasions and occupations, fuel, stationery, etc. were voluntary.

With these changes in the recruitment criteria, the NMWVA transformed itself between February and June 2000, from what Truman (1951) identified as a latent organisation or the un-mobilised sentiment pool (McCarthy 1987) to an organisation with potential for collective action and later to a full Social Movement Organisation (SMOs) (Garreton 1997). The former two stages of development of an organisation have only the potential to act, because they lack the requisite number and/or types of resources (i.e. ideological cohesion, material resources, human participation and communal structures/organisation) necessary to act.

To signal its transformation from a land invasion movement to an occupation movement, the NMWVA's strategy changed from simply stationing youths and war veterans on compounds and holding bases to establishing permanent bases (command structures) on each of the farms they occupied. Members committed themselves to constructing temporary shelters on the occupied farms; a register of paid up members was compiled and the association mobilised enough human power, financial means and transport to implement its programme (NMWVA Executive Committee Meeting Minutes 2000). In other words, it had already acquired both the numbers and types of resources necessary to act. The numbers were made up of around two hundred members, their spouses and the youths. It is important to mention that, before the changes in recruitment criteria, the participants under the NMWVA's command were plus or minus one thousand.

What emerges is that indeed there were many micro-organisations that executed the invasions and occupations and operated independently of the state. The urban element and the class diversity of the members of the NMWVA confirm that even the urbanites felt deprived of a resource that was by birth theirs and that land was not an issue only for the rural peasants. The capacity to mobilise

people and resources and to execute the occupation without assistance from the state or any other external influences, was clearly demonstrated in the manner the NMWVA transformed from a latent organisation to an organisation with potential for collective action and later to a full Social Movement Organisation (SMOs). Section three below describes how the association managed the people and resources and the occupation process itself.

Organisational and leadership structure of the NMWVA

This section briefly discusses the hierarchical structure of the NMWVA. It then outlines how the different posts within the hierarchy were occupied and who was eligible to occupy which posts, discussing the responsibilities of the different functionaries. The section also seeks to show that while the NMWVA was a micro-organisation, it had far-reaching links that made it part of the much larger national invasion and occupation movement.

The NMWVA, like many rebellious organisations had both administrative and operational structures. Administratively, a chairperson occupied the top post and was supported by a deputy chairperson and functionary departments which were headed by experts; these included the secretariat, treasury, security and planning. Being the overall leader of the association, the chairperson was the undisputed custodian of the association and was appointed by a caucus of war veterans. She or he was the link between the association and the state, politicians, donors, public enterprises and other occupation groups. Over and above, the chairperson was responsible for maintaining the members' interest in the activities and their coherence as an association

The operations of the association were the direct responsibility of the deputy chairperson, popularly known as the Zone Commander, who reported directly to the chairperson. The title of Zone Commander owes its origin to the fact that Mazowe District was divided into six zones for the purpose of coordination (see Sadomba 2008) and each zone was to be led by a war veteran. The seventh zone which was grudgingly 'recognized' by the District Land Committee in 2000 fell in the area occupied by the NMWVA and was part of the Mazowe West constituency. Operations involved farm invasions and occupations, evictions, demonstrations, security and surveillance, organising Saturday general meetings, etc. While deputising the chairperson came with the title, the Deputy Chairperson also acted in the absence of the chairperson. But more importantly, each of the two top most leaders of the association would not act unilaterally without consulting the other or, if need be, a caucus of war veterans within the operation zone.

Each occupied farm was referred to as a base and had its own structure that resembled that at the zone level, headed by a 'base commander'. However, during the invasion stage (first three months from February 2000), only one farm would be used as a holding base. Such a farm, generally strategically located, was used as the launch pad from which more farms would be invaded. At the end of each day, the invaders would retreat to the holding base where tactics for the next assignments would be discussed. 'Base commanders', who were appointees of the executive of the association and were, in all cases, war veterans, were the link between the executive committee and the membership between meetings. Although base commanders were not part of the executive of the association, they attended weekly executive meetings held once every week in Harare. Agenda items at these meetings included problems encountered at the occupied farms, concerns of the membership, new farms to be occupied, planned meetings with different stakeholders and resource and membership mobilisation. Strategies and tactics were also reviewed during the same meetings (see NMWVA Executive Committee Meeting Minutes 2000-2003).

General meetings were held every Saturday at a central place in the occupied districts or at an identified farm, particularly where problems that required the attention of the executive would have been reported. Grievances from the membership were discussed and solutions reached unanimously or by majority vote by show of hands. These were also report-back meetings, where the executive was expected to provide answers to questions and problems raised during the previous general meetings. These meetings, in a very big way, kept the interest of the membership in the business of the association very strong. They were basically designed to consolidate the ideological position by galvanising individual deprivation into collective deprivation and continuously reminding the membership of the source of their deprivation. Although tactics to occupy new farms or to consolidate the position on the occupied farms were discussed, this was done only if the tactics were to be implemented on that day, straight from the meeting, for security reasons. Such strategies and/or tactics proved to be the most effective and popular tactics, as the strength that lay in numbers was easily put to effective use.

Although democratic practices were evident in the way the association conducted its business, its leaders were not elected by the majority of its members. Leaders were chosen from among war veterans by war veterans. This approach to leadership applied to both the structures at the association level and the farm or base level. Non-war veteran members of the association

were also handicapped by the war veterans on the basis of trust. This approach was primarily to keep strategies and tactics closely guarded, as it was difficult to trust non-war veterans with issues involving tactics and strategies.⁴

As trust was built over time, non-war veterans were co-opted into the executive, but such co-options were restricted to areas that needed expertise. This was necessitated by the paucity of war veterans in the structures or war veterans with expertise in a particular area. The planning department, for example, was staffed by retired AREX personnel who were familiar with the occupied areas and, in the majority of cases, with the farmers too and possessed skills in land surveying; secretarial work within the secretariat department was done by experienced personnel, some with shorthand skills to record the minutes of the meetings; and, while the treasury department was led by a war veteran, trained bookkeepers recorded the transactions. The same approach to leadership applied at the farm level. Up to today, these non-war veteran office bearers are recognised by the generality of the membership and farm workers in the areas of resettlement as war veterans.

From the description above, the leadership of the association was not democratically elected, but appointed. This approach to leadership survived the test of time because members of the association held the belief that war veterans had the keys to many doors and had the stamina to stand up to politicians and farmers and indeed had direct links to Officers-in-Charge at the different police stations who were themselves, in the majority of cases, also war veterans. However, evidence from Saturday meetings suggest that democratic practices determined the outcome at these meetings, either through consensus or voting by show of hands. The latter tenet of democracy has its critics, but it served the association well under the circumstances. This is shown by the successes recorded by the association in occupying farms and in resettling its members on these farms (and on some farms as far as Glendale) between 2000 and 2004. The association's leadership and organisational structure coordinated the mobilisation, management and deployment of members and resources, while simultaneously networking with the world outside of the association. Section four below articulates some of the strategies and tactics used during the lifespan of the association.

Micro-mobilisation of land movements and relations with the state

Few studies provide empirical evidence on how and why people came together to form the land occupation movement to challenge the existing land distribution regime and the legal system that supported it. Few studies

account for the individuals' willingness to expose themselves to exceptional physical danger, or for how groups of citizens are able to militantly challenge a state and its coercive apparatus and the force and strength of capital. A critical explanatory variable in any theory of rebellion is the mobilisation of individuals into organised groups of people (SMOs), including the interaction between individuals and groups in terms of recruitment and maintaining commitment of resources to build capacity for collective action. This section seeks to show that salient shared traits and strong networking (frequent interaction) must both be present or forged for an organisation to act collectively.

Both the critical shared traits and frequent interaction among members of the NMWVA existed before the formation of the NMWVA. Documented evidence shows that Zimbabweans, from time immemorial, have formed groups and associations through which they share, not only their problems and achievements, but express their anger and dislike of the system. These include burial societies, boxing clubs, trade unions, savings clubs, cooking and sewing clubs, housing cooperatives, formal and informal business associations, *etc.* In the case of the NMWVA, two organisations that provided the platform for frequent interaction were the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) and ZANU-PF. Most of the occupiers were either members of ZANU-PF or ZNLWVA. They were also members of indigenous business groups, localised savings clubs, housing cooperatives, or burial societies. Moreover, the majority were also related to each other, either because they came from the same rural areas (through homeboy drinking clubs) or were blood relatives.

Of the NMWVA members and would-be land occupiers interviewed, 96 per cent got their information on the land reform either through their political party structure or from war veterans, or both (Table 4.3). Yet the AIAS baseline survey shows that over 57 per cent of the wider land beneficiaries got to know of the land reform through their political party structures. Otherwise such information got to settlers (read as occupiers) through the media (accounting for 19.6 per cent), other villagers (7.3 per cent) and Agriculture Extension Officers AREX (5.1 per cent). Chiefs accounted for less than 5 per cent of the sources of information and, ironically, the war veterans, who were the organisers and leaders of the occupation, were cited by only 0.4 per cent of the respondents as their source.

Table 4.3: WVA and national sample

Source of Information	NMWVA		National Sample	
	No of respondents	%	No of respondents	%
Chief			93	4.8
Media	1	4	377	19.6
Other Villagers			141	7.3
RDC			78	4.1
AREX			98	5.1
Political Party	12	50	1111	57.9
DA			13	0.7
Political Party/War Vets	5	21		
War Veterans	6	25	8	0.4
Total	24	100	1919	100

Source: Masuko 2008 and AIAS Baseline Study 2005

The ruling political party, ZANU-PF, had widespread structures that started from the cell level, to ward, district and province, feeding into the national level with members at all these levels. These consistently met and interacted well before 2000. However, from the onset of the land reform, the information on the opportunity to own a piece of land was shared between ZANU-PF activists and their relatives or friends who were not active party members. Most could not afford to miss the unique opportunity to own a piece of land and joining the NMWVA was simply based on their willingness to commit themselves to the cause of the organisation. There was no vetting to flush out non- ZANU-PF occupiers.

War veterans generated and processed information on occupations and opportunities to own a piece of farming land without formally applying for it through the official channels. They disseminated information on their achievements, how they were 'taming' the white farmers and even what rich pickings were to be found within the occupied farms (such as scrap metal, cheap beef from farm butcheries, etc). This information would be transmitted to the ZANU-PF members through the party structures (see also Sadomba 2008). While the war veteran structures also filtered down to ward level, they were basically at the service of war veterans. But the symbiotic⁵ relations that existed between the ZNLWVA and the ruling party made it easy for the war veterans to use and channel information through the structures of the ZANU-PF.

The majority of those who got information through this channel participated in the initial occupations and were founder members of the NMWVA. Most of those that got information through the party structures were individuals who identified with the occupying organisation and were willing to become adherents of the cause. The same applies to the other 20 per cent that got the information through other villagers, chiefs and agricultural extension officers. These sources of information are within the sphere of influence of ZANU-PF structures to the extent that even information on agriculture field days is announced at ZANU-PF meetings.

The late-comers to the occupations were basically those who reacted to media information. This group comprises those who joined the land occupations three to four months after the initial occupations. Although late occupiers could be among those associated with the NMWVA, the majority of them fell into the group of persons with the potential to identify with the land reform cause, but did not contribute resources or were free riders. Many did not identify with the NMWVA organisation and by default were unwilling to act on the ground, although some were willing to provide resources and let the movement work for them. The initial goal was to get their share of the land and then reduce their role in collective action. Expectations were that the process was short and swift and not protracted and not a transformative struggle of the opposites that required physical participation and contribution of resources to sustain it. Some did not want to be identified with the ruling party, the war veterans and the perceived lawlessness, in spite of their desire to own a piece of land. In this group, urban upper-middle and high-income class, were some members of the opposition party (MDC) who feared reprisals from their leadership, those in the NGO sector and, surprisingly, some of the senior members of the ruling party itself who equated occupations to lawlessness and therefore a liability to their political ambitions.

The large scale-land invasions that commenced in February 2000 took both the state and agrarian capital by surprise. Even the very few, such as senior ZANU-PF officials who had some information about the impending land occupations, did not believe that any such nationwide protests would actually happen. This scepticism derived from the coercive force at the disposal of the state, the laws protecting private property and the strong networks, arms and ammunition registered in the names of the Large Scale Commercial Farmers. They believed that the strong ties that had been developed over the years between the white farmers and the senior politicians within ZANU-PF and the state managers were insurmountable! The latter two had acquired

farms through purchases on the open market, through different land reform programmes such as the Tenant Farmer Scheme of the mid 1990s. Being the new landlords, the two were reading from the same script as the Large Scale Commercial Farmers and had developed personal and working relations with the latter. Senior politicians and state managers would protect their interests and by design those of the Large Scale Commercial Farmers. Calls by responsible ministers and technocrats to send the police and army to flush out the invaders, besides the true intentions to safeguard the rule of law, showed the class instincts of the propertied class of politicians. Potentially embarrassing clashes between classes were avoided following the call by the President not to pit 'war veterans against war veterans' (Masuko 2004).

However, the land invasions and later the land occupations demonstrated the relative autonomy of the state in Zimbabwe, as conceptualised elsewhere (see Bonano 1988) and that the class contradictions that are inscribed in the very nature of the state (Poulantzas 1975) can enable radical reform. The NMWVA therefore took advantage of the technical paralysis caused by the class contradictions within the state after the invasions to compete for legitimacy with the state (see 'multiple sovereignty' by Tilly 1978). While the state could not be seen to be protecting the white farmer (by enforcing the laws and flexing its coercive power), it equally and at the same time could not lose legitimacy by going against equitable land redistribution, itself the ultimate objective of the occupations.

Taking advantage of this technical paralysis, the NMWVA, through the District Administrator's office, demanded to be part of the District Land Committee, a government institution for land identification and resettlement representing Mazowe West Ward 23 which fell within Zone 7 of the movement's spatial structure. This denial was in spite of the presence of a war veteran district representative, as prescribed within the official documentation, on the composition of the committee. As most of the members of the NMWVA were not from the communal areas of Chiweshe or Mashonaland Central Province, there was strong suspicion that their demands could not be well represented by those whose interests were influenced by the power balance in Chiweshe communal lands. This mistrust did not go down well with the local politicians, the war veteran representative and the Zone 6 commander under whose command Zone 7 fell and remained a source of friction throughout the land occupations.

However, a compromise was reached and the NMWVA was only grudgingly accepted into the District Land Committee. This acceptance was

in acknowledgement of the capacity of the association to influence political outcomes within the area they had occupied and the networks that had evolved between the NMWVA and other occupying groups in Mazowe District. More importantly, occupations were still at their peak, the political situation was volatile and the area was under the control of the NMWVA, which had for the first time established ZANU-PF and war veteran structures within the area. Mazowe District War Veterans Association structures only served war veterans that were concentrated in the Chiweshe communal farming area. The compromise showed the state's concern for stability, hence its desire to create 'proper channels' within which to bargain. Indeed, the state and politicians from ZANU-PF sought to engage the leaders of the NMWVA through their representation in the land committee in order to extract political mileage from the structures and the vote of the masses of farm workers that the association had established and mobilised, respectively, in Ward 23 of Mazowe West constituency.

Because of the temporary technical paralysis in local governance in 2000, the state opted to rule primarily through consensus, rather than coercion as highlighted above. It tended to 'care' about representation of the major constituencies in Mazowe District. Major constituencies ultimately meant those groups with some capacity to disrupt the established order, be it through a capital or labour strike, electoral abstention or challenge, or more overt forms of mass defiance. The NMWVA had its strength in numbers and capacity to influence the politics of Mazowe West Ward 23 and Zvimba constituency, particularly between 2000 and 2001 as it, besides establishing structures, had developed strong linkages with other occupying groups in the two districts and with spirit mediums such as Sekuru Mushowe of the Hunyani Hills.

Relations changed after July 2001 with the intervention of the state through legislative mechanisms, particularly the launch of the FTLRP in 2000. The Land Occupiers Act 2001 and the Abuja Agreement of 2001 signalled the official commencement of the Fast Track Land Reform. These developments allowed the politicians and the bureaucrats to develop hegemony over land occupations and ultimately to own the land revolution. The state started to encourage alternative representatives to compete for the allegiance of the land movement's mass base. The offices of the Provincial Governor and District Administrator became very visible in Mazowe West, communicating the message that they were the only authority responsible for land allocation and therefore all those who wanted land should register with them. To drive the point home, the farm occupied by the Chairperson of the NMWVA

and his deputy was officially allocated to the Chair and Secretary General of the ZNLWVA. It only came to the attention of the latter that actually the Provincial and District leadership had used divide and rule tactics when the NMWVA had moved in to evict the national leadership. They had been informed by the officials that the farm had not yet been allocated, which indeed was the official position. What they were not told was that it had been occupied by some of their own. The situation was only diffused after ZANU-PF intervened and assured the NMWVA that their leaders would be settled on any other farm of their choice.

The displacement of the leadership of the NMWVA was the culmination of a concerted strategy by senior provincial politicians that included the unwarranted arrests of the war veterans and protection of the white farmers in the area. The NMWVA was perceived as unwilling to negotiate on the local government's terms, because it exposed the corrupt and anti-reform relationships that existed between senior politicians and state bureaucrats on the one hand and the white farmers on the other. Those relationships entailed the delisting on technical grounds of farms owned by 'friendly whites' that had been designated for distribution, providing security to white farmers against land occupation by the police on instruction from politicians in the District (see District Land Committee Minutes 2003). Although there were no party structures in the LSCF areas, politicians and state managers had long established relationships with white farmers based on mutual interests. The white farmers made huge donations during functions such as political rallies, birthday parties, ZANU-PF victory celebrations and occasionally directly to individual senior politicians and state managers. District and provincial officials involved in farm designation and allocation took advantage of their positions to also extract rents from the white farmers in exchange for protection of their farms from occupiers and from designation.

Networking and establishing good working relations with the local police saved the NMWVA members, in particular war veterans, from imminent arrest. For example, instructions from some senior ZANU-PF officials to arrest all war veterans in order to paralyze the association were given to the Officer in Charge at Nyabira Police Station in 2002. Instead of implementing the instructions, police alerted the association of the instruction to forcefully evict them. And, true to their anti-corruption position, the association tracked down the official through ZANU-PF structures and confronted him at his home in Concession. It emerged that the culprit, a central committee member, had actually bypassed ZANU-PF structures and acted unilaterally.

This action compromised the structures and procedures of ZANU-PF and the party official was made to acknowledge this and offered apologies both to the war veterans and his subordinates in the District Coordination Committee (DCC) of ZANU-PF.

The strength and legitimacy of the NMWVA was under scrutiny and threatened by both the technocrats and politicians at the district level, although it enjoyed support from uniformed forces (police and the army). Eventually in 2001, the NMWVA was pushed out of the land committee, leaving it only one representative. The state argued that the law recognised only one representative of war veterans in the land committee at any level (see Masiyiwa and Chapungu 2004). This was at the crucial time when land allocation decisions were being taken in the context in which the need to alleviate overcrowding in Chiweze Communal areas was pressing. Members of the NMWVA were seen as aliens to the district. They were referred to in the land committee meetings as '*Vanhu veku Harare*' (people from Harare). On the other hand, the 'geese' that laid the 'golden eggs' for politicians and district lands officials were concentrated in the farms that the NMWVA occupied, as indicated above.

The official Fast Track Land Reform Programme land allocation began in 2001 although it was launched in July 2000. This programme was intended to relieve tensions⁶ arising over co-habitation between white farmers and occupiers, especially over agricultural production on the farms and to end the technical paralysis that the state unceremoniously found itself in. Ideally, the first phase of land allocations (during 2001-2002) could have been to legally resettle the land occupiers in line with the A1 and A2 schemes designated by government. Instead, the first phase of allocations went according to the script of those who were now in charge, i.e. the land committees. Frustrating as the move was to the NMWVA, the struggle continued as shown in section five below and the important lesson to draw from these developments is that 'no matter how a typical participant describes his/her reasons for joining the movement, or what motives may be suggested by a social scientist on the basis of deprivation, it is clear that the original decision to join required some contact with the movement' (see Freeman 1983).

Crystallising individual actions into collective actions

A number of processes generated by the occupation and the subsequent Fast Track Land Reform had an impact on transforming individual actions into collective action on one hand and the weakening of the appeal of the

NMWVA to its membership on the other hand. Snow et al (1986) refers to such a process as 'micro-mobilization' and suggests that groups must convince their members that the group's 'world-view' is worth adopting. There is little explicit elaboration of the process by which groups 'convince' people, but Gurr (1970) had earlier elaborated on the concept of appeals. He suggested that by issuing appeals, groups are able to 'convince' people to adopt the group's 'world-view' and thus mobilise them. Gurr (1970) outlined a five-point typology of appeals used to mobilise individual discontent into rebel movements. These are identified as: (i) appeals to corporate identity; (ii) appeals to an individual's sense of relative deprivation; (iii) appeals that identify the existing regime as the source of that discontent; (iv) appeals to normative justifications for taking violent action; and (v) appeals promoting the utilitarian value of rebellion.

The NMWVA effectively challenged the existing land ownership regime, by issuing two categories of appeals. One was directed at mobilising those who had not decided to risk their lives for risky collective action and the other focused on preventing the active members from leaving the movement by focusing on real issues that provided answers to the state of deprivation faced by individual members. The appeals used by the NMWVA included real issues such as the (i) shortage of land (ii) the displacement of members by non-members who were officially allocated land on the occupied farms ahead of occupiers, (iii) preferential treatment of some white farmers at the expense of occupiers by the District Land Committee, (iv) selective allocation of land to members of the association by the official land committee and (v) access to external assistance to those who were officially allocated land vis-à-vis the landless members of the same association and (vi) the preference given to A1 occupiers vis-à-vis A2 occupying members of the NMWVA. Evidence of the NMWVA's capacity to draw concessions from the District Land Committee and benefits for its members from donors, government and public enterprises buttressed the organisation's appeal to its members.

Appeals on the shortage of land

That the individuals' sense of relative deprivation in relation to land ownership was the main cause for the land occupations has never been in doubt. The same can be said about the identity of the source of that deprivation which in the Zimbabwean case was the Large Scale Commercial Farmers and the property rights laws that ring-fenced them. Table 4.4 below shows the level of deprivation. About 83 per cent of the NMWVA members, compared to

86 per cent in the AIAS baseline study, had no access to land at all. Of the four respondents who already had pieces of land, three had less than one hectare each. This compared unfavourably with the average of 2,000 hectares that each of the white Large Scale Commercial Farm owners had at their disposal. The translation of this level of individual deprivation into a sense of collective relative deprivation through micro-mobilisation by the association enabled the individual members of the NMWVA to articulate their frustrations in rebellious action and to identify with the world view expressed by the NMWVA.

Table 4.4: Land ownership prior to occupation

Ownership Status	Number	Percentage
Had a Piece of Land	4	17
Did not have Land	20	83
Total	24	100

Source: Masuko 2008

According to the sociological analysis of M. Sayles,

Unlike individual deprivations, collective deprivation exists only among individuals who have a collective consciousness. Collective deprivation therefore describes group deprivation sensed through comparisons made between those in the group and other groups in the society in this case between the occupiers who had nothing and the large-scale commercial farmers who on average owned 2000 hectares each. There is, however, no sense of deprivation concerning one's position within the in-group itself (Sayles 1984).

There was no sense of deprivation within the group because most NMWVA members were landless.

Selective allocation of land as a source of deprivation

Official land allocations commenced in earnest in 2001 and 8 per cent of the interviewed members of the NMWVA were allocated pieces of land at this time. The bulk of the allocations, however, took place between 2002 and 2004 (Table 4.5) at a time when the NMWVA representatives had been pushed out of the District Land Committee and no longer had a direct influence on the deliberations of the land committee.

Table 4.5: Selective allocation of land by the District Land Committee

Year of allocation	Number	Percentage
2001	2	8
2002	9	38
2003	7	29
2004	6	25
Total	24	100

The leadership of the NMWVA had swiftly and deliberately been displaced from the farm they had occupied and were replaced officially by the national leadership of the ZNLWVA in a cunning move by the bureaucrats and senior politicians in Mashonaland Central aimed at paralyzing the NMWVA. Desperate times called for desperate measures. A number of embarrassing demonstrations were staged by the association at the Governor and District Land Committee offices to put pressure on the land committees (both at district and provincial levels). At this point, these committees were identified as the new source of deprivation, in their method of prioritising the occupiers when allocating land. It was during one of these demonstrations in 2002, that the Member of Parliament for Mazowe West was forced to emerge from a District Land Committee meeting; he promptly offered three 'holding' farms for allocation to the members of the association who qualified for A1 (common property) scheme plots. While there were no concessions made to A2s, the offer was enough to temporarily pacify the membership.

However, the land committee's decision to allocate land to A1 members of the association marked the beginning of the selective allocation strategy and emergence of divisions within the ranks of the association. In a way, bureaucrats and politicians were using their hegemony and newly-found ownership of the land reform to get back at the association. While the selective allocations were positive news to the membership, they had the effect of weakening the association because more than 60 per cent of the association membership was made up of the occupiers whose only wish was to own no more than an A1 plot. With the allocation of land, came the threats of land withdrawal from those who continued to engage in collective activities such as demonstrations, evictions of white farmers and Saturday meetings. A few identified NMWVA members also received offer letters for A2 farms during the course of 2001 and these members

were exclusively those who originated from Mashonaland Central Province.

The NMWVA had to redesign its strategies and tactics in the face of these new challenges. The first tactic was to appeal to the A1 members, who had been provisionally allocated land by the officials, but had not received letters conferring ownership of the land to them individually. Threats of eviction by the land committee were a real possibility to the A1 members (see Abuja Agreement 2001 to evict invaders) and the association used this card to its advantage. The fact that the holding farms⁷ had not been surveyed and pegged into individual plots gave the leadership of the association ammunition to appeal to the prospective A1 members to safeguard themselves against evictions by maintaining their membership with the association. Information about evictions that had taken place on some farms and how they were returned to former owners on technical grounds were used as examples. To leverage against the possible evictions, the A1 members of the association decided to stick with the association and participate in its struggles.

Displacement, preferential treatment of white farmers and lack of access to resources

Prospective A2 farm beneficiaries who had not been allocated land had a strong reason to continue with the land struggle through the NMWVA. The practice where the Provincial Land Committee issued offer letters to non-members, who in turn went on to displace NMWVA member occupiers, at the recommendation of the District Land Committee bound them together. Several factors did not make the task of the association any easier. These included: preferential treatment by the land committee of some white farmers at the expense of occupiers; the lack of access to cheap inputs from the Grain Marketing Board and the Ministry of Energy; and the lack of access to loans from AGRIBANK by the members of the association who had no offer letters. The association, between 2002 and 2004, had to respond in ways that would increase its appeals to the members who by now had a choice: either to follow the District Land Committee's promises or to continue struggling from within the ranks of the association.

New strategies that were more action-oriented, accompanied by varied tactics, were employed by the NMWVA to pre-empt those of the land committees. It went about destroying properties belonging to those farmers who would have been officially allocated land on occupied farms ahead of the occupiers⁸ and confiscated their offer letters. Mackay Farm near Nyabira is a case in point. White farmers who enjoyed the protection of the committee and

senior politicians had their farms raided and looted and they were forced to pack and leave the occupied farms.⁹ Both the prospective A1 and A2 members executed these new tactics with a lot of enthusiasm and zeal.

Besides sending a clear message to the authorities that the occupiers were there to stay, the new tactics had concrete material benefits for the participants in the form of access to diesel, chickens and other small items that they secured during the forced evictions of the white farmers. The association refused to protect the farmers where the land committee would have shown bias, such as in the case of Saint Hurst Farm. To further legitimatise itself in the eyes of its membership, the association managed to negotiate with AGRIBANK and GMB for special facilities for loans and inputs, respectively, through group lending schemes, which is a form of collective responsibility and was accepted as collateral. The association acted as guarantor against default by the members in their loan repayments. Members started receiving inputs and loans without producing offer letters for the 2001-2002 farming season and this relationship continued until 2004, when all occupiers had officially been allocated their pieces of land.

The above actions were meant to provoke reaction from the Provincial and District Land Committees, as much as they were meant to consolidate group cohesion. The reaction from these committees was swift. Joint teams comprising the provincial and district committees, ZANU-PF structures (province and district), war veterans, security organs and uniformed forces visited the occupied areas to identify plots that were vacant and to recommend their allocation to the NMWVA occupiers. The association coordinated the visits and organised its members to be present on each and every farm that was being assessed. The handover of offer letters to the A1 farmers was followed by the movement of these farmers to four farms, namely Adhora Farm, Kruger Farm, etc., that had been officially demarcated. An olive branch was extended to the association's leadership, who had been displaced by the land committee. An alternative farm of their choice was identified and allocated to them. As events unfolded, one of the two leaders ended up being resettled on the same farm and only one was moved to the other farm of his choice.

The attention to the land allocation grievances by the land committee drained life out of the association. Upon receiving offer letters for their plots, A1 members of the association were advised by the District Land Committee and local politicians not to engage in demonstrations or any other activities of protest. Over and above the land, A1 farmers could now use the offer letters to access inputs (fertilizers, seed, chemicals, etc) from the GMB depots

closest to them. They also qualified for loans from AGRIBANK and/or their individual banks. The same applied to the A2 beneficiaries. The resultant effect was non-attendance of Saturday meetings and contributions to the coffers of the association dwindled drastically (see Table 4.6). Over 71 per cent of the members last attended the associations' meetings in 2003. By this year, 75 per cent of the members of the NMWVA had legally acquired land.

Table 4.6: Year when last meeting of the association was attended

Year	Numbers	Percentage
2001		
2002	1	4
2003	17	71
2004	5	21
Other	1	4
Total	24	100

Source: Masuko 2008

The association's Mazowe wing collapsed, leaving only the Nyabira wing active. This was simply because land was not delivered at the same pace in Mazowe ((Mashonaland Central) and in Nyabira ((Mashonaland West). Nyabira lagged behind to the extent that the only active members left in the association were those from Mashonaland West Province. As a result, the NMWVA merged with another occupiers' organisation from Mashonaland West to form a new organisation called Gwebi-Hunyani War Veterans Association. The chair of the NMWVA continued to lead the new organisation.

The point, advanced by Masiwa and Chipungu (2004), Raftopoulos and Phimister (2004) and Hammar (2003), that the land movement was focused on a single issue was indeed relevant at this juncture. What the argument missed is that the social capital realised through the formation of groups and networks developed during the land invasions and land occupation process laid the foundation for future development not of the same organisation, but of new organisations with new objectives and abilities. Section six below focuses on the development of this social capital and what it meant for the continuation of the transformation of the reform agenda beyond the single- issue discourse.

The development of new social networks in farming areas

It can be argued that a given group's level of mobilisation is not simply a function of the cat-net structures¹⁰ of society, but a function of that group's ability to exploit the cat-net structures present in society and to forge new ones (Moore and Jagers 1990). With this realisation in mind and operating in an area where structures had not existed, the NMWVA had started from scratch. The areas that were occupied by the NMWVA were basically Large Scale Commercial Farming areas, where trespassing attracted prosecution. Farm workers were the 'property' of the farmer just like the land and other immovables and movables. These were 'liberated zones' for white farmers who had unbridled authority over everything within them. Active politics was non-existent, except at the behest of the white farmers. In other words, not even ZANU-PF or the ZNLWVA had structures in these areas.

But this is in no way to suggest that both the farmers and the workers lived in isolation. The farmers had their clubs where they would meet and share farming ideas, talk politics and socialise. They had a very strong mobile radio communication system, so effective that they were just one call away from each other. Over and above these, the white farmers had the Commercial Farmers' Union that represented them at national level. More importantly, they had established very strong networks with senior politicians, who had, over the years, acquired land and shared the same interests of protecting the Large Scale Commercial Farms as discussed earlier in this chapter. On the other hand, farm workers had their own networks within compounds and between compounds. These were basically kinship relations that kept their world rotating. Although independence had sought to democratise the work place through workers' committees at the farm level, the attitude of farmers frustrated any development towards this direction (Loewenson 1992; Amanor-Wilks 1995; Kanyenze 2001; Chambati and Moyo 2004). The NMWVA, like other groups elsewhere around the country, had to contend with these networks: networks that could be turned against them and their objective of land redistribution.

It, therefore, became prudent that the survival of the NMWVA depended on its ability to at least tap into the network of the farm workers (who had their grievances against the white farmers) and to create new networks with other groups that shared the same objectives. Its first strategy was to establish ZANU-PF cell and ward structures within the farm compounds. This was a new and exciting development to the farm workers, who felt useful and recognised at the same time. All positions at the cell level were filled by farm workers,

who were voted in by their own and the same was encouraged at ward level. Fear of reprisal from the 'Boss' was a major block for many farm workers, who thought the arrival of war veterans was temporary and likely to upset the applecart. Temporary structures that were put up at the occupied farms and the permanent presence of the youth at the farms played a very important role in assuring the farm workers that the white farmers' reign at the farms was under check.

The gospel of appeal was focused on issues that most concerned farm workers. The first was on what would be their fate in the event that the farmer left, which by then looked inevitable. Second, farm workers were worried about their compound houses, employment and whether they would be resettled close to their work places in the event that some wanted their own pieces of land. During the mobilisation meetings which were also attended by the farmer at their respective farms, war veterans would assure the farm workers that their terminal packages would be settled before the farmer removed his/her moveable property and they would continue to reside in their houses and new farmers would provide them with jobs. While war veterans assured farm workers of pieces of land, the decision on the location lay with the land committees. Sandringham Farm is a living example of the success of this approach to winning the farm workers' support.

The setting up of district-level ZANU-PF and NMWVA structures had a direct appeal to politicians and war veterans in the Districts of Mazowe and Zvimba. They viewed these as providing an opportunity to penetrate what had been the white farmers' fortress. In the process, the new district was integrated into the District Coordination Committees (DCC) of the respective districts. Senior provincial party officials were invited to address the workers and occupiers, legitimatising the structure and presence of the occupiers in the areas in the process.

To survive future onslaught, the NMWVA strengthened its relationships and networks with the other groups occupying farms adjacent to their area. All but one (which was led by a spirit medium) of these groups were led by war veterans. However, competition for membership always existed among the occupying groups, depending on the benefits that each group extracted from the politicians and land committees for its membership, such as recognition, land allocation and support, whether in cash or kind. The NMWVA lost some of its members to one neighbouring group that had, through its chairperson (who was wife to a national hero), used influence to good effect to get A2 official allocations for their members ahead of the other groups. However, the working relations were not affected by these defections as the objective of the

groups was the same and they collaborated during demonstrations at the land committee offices and even in the evictions of white farmers.

More critical for the future sustainable reform programme are the social networks that had already been developed between the occupiers themselves and between the occupiers and the farm workers. All occupiers who qualified for A2 were resettled on the farms they occupied, depending, of course, on the holding capacity of the farm. What this means is that all 'base commanders' were resettled on the farms they commanded. Besides the ZANU-PF and war veteran structures, new production-focused organisations also emerged in the post-FTLRP period. These included farmers' clubs, input group support schemes, input collection groups, irrigation syndicates, etc. Murisa (Chapter 7) supports and elaborates on this point. The organisation's ability to mutate was clearly demonstrated when, in 2004, the NMWVA was reconstituted as the Gwebi-Hunyani Farmers' Association, involving members from Mashonaland West Province. The consistent interaction of people who share the same traits is assured within these new categories (groups/organisations) and networks.

War veterans continue to channel information through the new organisations that have and continue to emerge, through their own structures and through those of ZANU-PF. Indeed, a new community of people with important shared traits who interact frequently now characterises the social, economic and political environment in the resettled areas. Such qualities are a prerequisite to the formation of social movements and show the existence of a latent capacity to take collective action. More importantly, war veterans and former members of the NMWVA have shown their ability to exploit the cat-net structures that existed before and during occupation and to forge new ones with different objectives to their predecessors. This ability is indeed the social capital that would take land reform to its higher and transformative stage of agrarian reform and, with it, to long-term political, social and economic development of the area and the nation at large.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the sustainability of Zimbabwe's land reform from a social movement perspective, using the Nyabira-Mazowe War Veterans Association (NMWVA) as a case study. Two issues were examined. First is the allegation that the occupation movement was a top-down movement conceived of and directed by a beleaguered state to spruce up the image of ZANU-PF. Second is the idea that the occupation movement was a one-issue movement, not interested in long-term social, political and economic development.

After a critical examination of the NMWVA's evolution, activities and networks, it is clear that land occupations and reform in Zimbabwe will remain a contested terrain, much more so if productivity levels in resettled farms remain subdued. However, the discussion throughout this chapter should put to rest the notion of a top down movement which in the main was a creation of the state. It has been demonstrated that not one, but many micro-organisations executed the invasions and occupations, operated independently of the state and which, in many cases, were in conflict with the state. By way of networking, they were woven into a national movement that saw through a national programme that has been characterised as the 'first radical shift in agrarian property rights in the post Cold War world' (Moyo and Yeros 2005).

While the top-down approach precludes active and voluntary participation by the generality of the aggrieved, evidence throughout the chapter shows that, whenever there is relative individual deprivation and there are groups of people with shared traits who interact consistently, a movement will thrive. If the movement does not emerge, it is because the political establishment provides adequate channels to pursue solutions. This truism that the NMWVA and other occupation movements have amply demonstrated has escaped many Zimbabwe crisis theorists. It has been shown that the original decision by an individual to join a movement does not come from the state or political party that seeks to enhance its waning popularity, but that this action requires some contact with the movement.

This chapter has shown that a number of actors with different interests were either passive or active participants during the invasions and occupations and subsequent resettlement programme. These included the white farmers themselves, the occupation movements, the state and ZANU-PF as institutions, politicians and state managers as interested parties, the opposition party MDC and NGOs. While the state and ZANU-PF as institutions might have had common objectives with the occupation movements, class interest and contradictions within these institutions led some bureaucrats and politicians, white farmers and those who sympathised with them, to go against the tide. But because the balance of class forces within ZANU-PF and society in general was tipped in favour of radical nationalist solutions, the objective of reforming the skewed land ownership, itself part of the broader land question, was realised, such that by 2003, households numbering 134,452 had accessed land (Presidential Land Review Committee 2003).

Ownership on its own does not guarantee the sustainability of the land reform. However, emerging new social structures conducive for movement

activity are defined in the new groups and networks that are developing in all resettled areas. These new structures are capable of demanding solutions to the other outstanding components of the land question, including insecure land tenure and unsustainable and sub-optimal land use. The fact that the land occupation movements' composition was diverse in terms of class composition, gender and age makes the new communities much stronger than the occupation movements before them. They are, therefore, organised to deal with the last two issues of the land question. The NMWVA movement received strong community support, redefining their constituencies to include the broader working class (including the farm workers), the youth, the intellectual, the petty bourgeois, etc, into a broader movement for fundamental social and economic change. The emphasis on the intentions and ideologies of revolutionaries in explaining the cause and energy of the revolution tend to be overstated; if ways to maintain constant sound interaction exist, there is always potential for revolution.

Notes

1. Urban workers, youth and women saw an opportunity to extricate themselves from poverty, social prejudices, etc., by owning their own piece of land. In other words, the participation of these urban groups is an indication that land reform should go beyond decongestion of communal areas and satisfying only rural peasant demands.
2. Class diversity shows the national character of the grievance and the nationalist character of the movement.
3. War veterans were a very small component of the total membership. The majority of the members of the NMWVA was made up of non-war veterans of all ages. However, it should be made clear that the youth (anyone below the age of 21 years) were not required to pay joining and subscription fees to be members because they were the foot soldiers of the organization.
4. Strategies included how to occupy farms with minimum violence or injury to both the farmers and the occupiers; how to deal with those that were issued with offer letters ahead of occupiers; how to extract benefits from responsible offices (e.g., the District Administrator, District and Provincial Lands Committees) and from politicians and law enforcement agents (e.g., the police); and how to keep the membership interested and involved. Tactics changed depending on the situation at hand, but the

basket of tactics included rallies; erections of temporary shelters, tilling of land and planting of crops on the occupied farms; evictions; micro-mobilization; and demonstrations, particularly against politicians and office holders, etc.

5. Relations between ZANU-PF and the war veterans during the struggle for independence were that of mother and child and such has been the case in the post- independence era. Now, war veterans have their own agendas, different from those of ZANU-PF, although overlapping in the main.
6. Production activities were disrupted during invasions and occupations. Occupiers would plant where the white farmer would have prepared without agreement, forcing complete or partial work stoppages.
7. Holding farms were farms where occupiers were accommodated temporarily before they were officially allocated lands by the land committee. From the point of view of the war veterans, holding farms were strategically placed as launch pads for invading other farms.
8. A number of people were officially given offer letters ahead of the occupiers. To put pressure on the official structures, these were confiscated by war veterans who instructed the offer letter holders to go and collect those for the occupiers before they could be allowed to settle. In the event that they put up structures, these were razed by the group to emphasize the point.
9. Evictions were spontaneous, fast and did not give the farmer time to organize; farmers were only allowed to take with them the household goods. For assistance, many farmers would either go the ZNLWVA or the presidium, where they would also receive some political orientation and lessons on co-existence. Farmers were only allowed back if they were accompanied by the leaders of the association or the police.
10. Cat-net structures refer to categories (groups) and the networks they establish over time.

References

- AIAS, 2005, Baseline Study, Harare: AIAS.
AIAS, 2007, Baseline Study, Harare: AIAS.
Amanor-Wilks, D., 1995, *In Search of Hope for Zimbabwe's Farm Workers*, Harare: Panos Institute.

- Bonano, A., 1988, 'Theories of the State: The Case of Land Reform in Italy, 1944-61', *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 131-147.
- Chambati, W. and Moyo, S., 2004, *Impacts of Land Reform on Farm Workers and Farm Labour Processes*, Harare: AIAS.
- Chambati, W. and Moyo, S., 2007, *Key Debates on Zimbabwe's Contemporary Land Reform*, Harare: AIAS.
- Freeman, J., 1983, *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies*, New York: Longman.
- Garreton, A.M., 1997, 'Social Movements and Democratization', in S. Lindberg and A. Sverrisson, eds, *Social Movements and Development: The Challenge of Globalization and Democratization*, New York: McMillan Press Ltd.
- GoZ, 2001, Rural Land Occupiers (Protection from Eviction) Act, 2001.
- GoZ, 2001, Abuja Agreement of 2001, A Commonwealth Initiative to solve the land impasse.
- GoZ, 2003, Mazowe District Land Committee Minutes 2003, Mazowe Rural District Council District Administrator's Office.
- GoZ, 2003, Presidential Land Review Committee, Harare.
- Gurr, T.R., 1970, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hammar, A., B. Raftopoulos and S. Jensen, eds, 2003, *Zimbabwe's Unfinished Business: Rethinking Land, State and Nation in the Context of Crisis*, Harare: Weaver Press.
- Kanyenze, G., 2001, 'Zimbabwe's labour relations policies and implication for workers', in F. Banda, C. Gavi, eds, *Zimbabwe's Farm Workers: Policy Dimension*, Harare: Panos Southern Africa.
- Loewenson, R., 1992, *Modern Plantation Agriculture: Corporate Wealth and Labour Squalor*, London: Zed Books.
- McCarthy, J. D., 1987, 'Pro-Life and Pro-Choice Mobilisation: Infrastructure Deficits and New Technologies', in *Social Movements in an Organisational Society*, M.N. Zald and J.D. McCarthy, eds, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.
- Masuko, L., 2004, *The Role of the State in Land Reform: The Case of Land Reform in Zimbabwe, 1998-2002*, Dakar: CODESRIA.
- Masuko, L., 2008, 'War Veterans and the Re-emergence of Housing Cooperatives', in S. Moyo, K. Helliker, T. Murisa, eds., *Contested Terrain: Land Reform and Civil Society in Contemporary Zimbabwe*, Pietermaritzburg: S&S Publishing.
- Masuko, L., forthcoming, 'China in Africa: Case of Zimbabwe's Extractive Industry', OSISA, RSA.

- Masiwa, M. and Chipungu, L. 2004, 'Land reform Programme in Zimbabwe: Disparity between Policy Design and Implementation', in M. Masiwa, ed, *Post Independence Land Reform in Zimbabwe: Controversies and Impact on the Economy*, Harare: FES and IDS-University of Zimbabwe.
- Masuko, L., 2008, NMWVA Fieldwork Interviews, IDS-UZ.
- Moore, H.W. and K. Jagers, 1990, 'Deprivation, Mobilisation and the State: A Synthetic Model of Rebellion', *Journal of Developing Societies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 17-36.
- Moyo, S., 2001, 'The land occupation movement and democratisation in Zimbabwe: contradictions of neoliberalism', *Millennium Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2.
- Moyo, S. and P. Yeros, 2005, 'Land occupations and land reform in Zimbabwe: towards the National Democratic Revolution', in S. Moyo, P. Yeros, eds., *Reclaiming the land: the resurgence of rural movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America*, London: Zed Books, pp. 165–208.
- Moyo, S. and Yeros, P. 2005a, 'The Resurgence of Rural Movements under Neoliberalism', in S. Moyo, P. Yeros, eds., *Reclaiming the land: the resurgence of rural movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America*, London: Zed Books, pp. 165–208.
- Moyo, S., Murisa T. and Helliker, K. eds, 2008, *Contested Terrain: Land Reform and Civil Society in Contemporary Zimbabwe*, Pietermaritzburg: S&S Publishing.
- NMWVA, 2000, Membership Register.
- NMWVA, 2000-2003, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes.
- NMWVA, 2000-2004, Minutes of the NMWVA general meetings.
- Poulantzas, N, 1975, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, London: New Left Books.
- Raftopoulos, B., 2003, 'The State in Crisis: Authoritarian Nationalism, Selective Citizenship and Distortions of Democracy in Zimbabwe', in Hammar, A. Raftopoulos, B. Jensen, S. eds, *Zimbabwe's Unfinished Business: Rethinking Land, State and Nation in the Context of Crisis*, Harare: Weaver Press.
- Raftopoulos, B. and Phimister, I., 2004, 'Zimbabwe now: the political economy of crisis and coercion', *Historical Materialism*, Vol. 12, pp. 355–82.
- Tilly, C., 1978, *From Mobilisation to Revolution*, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Sachikonye, L., 2003, 'From Growth with Equity to Fast Track Reform: Zimbabwe's Land Question', *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 30, No. 96, pp. 227–240.

- Sadomba, W., 2008, 'Movements within a Movement: Complexities within the Land Occupations', in S. Moyo, Helliker, K. Murisa, T., eds, *Contested Terrain: Land Reform and Civil Society in Contemporary Zimbabwe*, Pietermaritzburg: S&S Publishing.
- Sayles, M., 1984, 'Relative Deprivation and Collective Protest: An Impoverished Theory?', *Sociological Inquiry*, Vol. 54, No. 4, pp. 449-465.
- Skocpol, T., 1979, *States and Social Revolutions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Snow, D.A., R.B. Rochford, Jr., S.K. Worden and R.D. Benford, 1986, 'Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization and Movement Participation', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 51: pp. 464-481.
- Truman, D., 1951, *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion*, New York: Knopf.

