

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ZIMBABWEAN WHITE FARMERS IN EDU LOCAL GOVERNEMENT AREA KWARA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the socio-economic impact of the Zimbabwean white farmers on the host communities; Shonga, Dumagi, and Todo in Edu Local Government Area of Kwara State. Two set of questionnaire was administered to gathered information on the socio-economic impact of the large scale commercial farming by the Zimbabwean white farmers. The first set of questionnaire was administered to the people of the three areas selected for the study, while the second set of questionnaire was administered to the Zimbabwean white farmers. A total of 385 respondent were used as the sample size, drawn from the sample frame (10,318). On the other hand, 5 white farmers were administered the second questionnaire, this was based on the number of white farms in the communities. Two hypotheses were tested in the study: the first shows that there is no significant difference in the monthly income of the people before and after the coming of the white farmers, the result shows that the calculated t value of .000 is < the P -value of 1.000 (2-tailed) under 8 degrees of freedom; the second hypothesis reveals that there is a significant relationship between the coming of the white farmers and improvement in farming skills of the host communities. The result shows that the calculated chi value is greater than P -value of 14.292 and .074 respectively. On a whole, the coming of the white farmers has brought some positive impact among the host community, however, the government need to fulfill its own part of the understanding- provision off adequate security, electricity, good roads and pipe-borne water.

Keywords: Socioeconomic, White Farmers, Displacement, Host Communities, Edu LGA

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, agriculture continues to be a fundamental instrument of sustainable development and poverty reduction, (World Bank, 2008). In most developing countries such as Nigeria, over 75% of population is involved in agricultural practices over a very small portion of land gained either by inheritance or by purchase (Adegboye, 2004). He further stressed that land acquisition in most of these countries for agricultural practices is affected by customs and traditions, which is usually referred to as “Land Tenure System”.

Similarly, Ojo & Afolabi (2003) cited in Ojo (2008) argued that, land availability for agricultural production in Nigeria involves a complexity of interacting variables such as population, land tenure system; level of technology and the stage of the country's development. All these make it impossible most especially for peasant farmers to have access to land despite its availability. These variables, especially land tenure systems as identified by Ojo (2008) put serious limitations on the amount of land that is available for both small and large scale agricultural productions because land is communally owned in the various communities and no single person has exclusive right over the piece of land he is using for agricultural purposes.

Agricultural development is the pivot of Nigeria's development strategy on poverty reduction. Though in recent time, agricultural production has risen very slowly making the policies and strategies put in place by the government inadequate to meet the need (Okunmadewa, 2004; DEVNET, 2005). It is believed that commercial agriculture project will change the low agricultural output of Nigerian economy which is a direct result of low levels of technology currently being applied in agricultural productions (Saraki, 2007).

Furthermore, the governments have made several efforts to solve the problem of land availability for agricultural production, (Ojo, 2008). Among such efforts was the establishment of the land use decree of 1978 which vested ownership of all lands in the country on the government and its agencies, such that, land acquisition by prospective farmers especially for large scale production would no longer be a problem.

The general impression is that large scale farming is the solution to the problem of Nigerian agriculture and thus national policies tend towards it, as in the cases of the river basin development authority, and the acquisition of about 73640 hectares by government for large scale production of oil palm between 1975 and 1985 in the oil palm belt states of the country (FDA, 1985), cited in Ojo (2008) has not yielded a meaningful impact.

The large scale farming policy and programmes have always taken a large proportion of the readily accessible arable land from the traditional owners without any significant positive increase in agricultural production and productivity while the small scale farmers (land owners) have always been on the receiving end. The best of their lands are taken from them by government for large scale farming.

In recent times, the World Trade Organization (WTO) has facilitated rapid agricultural trade. However, in developing countries, it is most likely with liberalization that neither the small holder farmers nor the government may benefit from this new agenda partly because the production of small-scale farmers cannot compete effectively with Large multinational corporation farms, which normally operate with economy of scale. This is probably due to high level of illiteracy, lack of capital and land tenure systems. Hence the pursuit of trade and investment Liberation is likely to increase, the social and economy problems for the rural peoples engaged in agriculture around the world (DEVNET, 2005; Burniaux *et al.*, quoted in Olomola *et al.*, 1998).

Kwara state has large expanse of land which are uncultivated. White farmers evicted from their farms in Zimbabwe as a result of the land redistribution policy were formally authorised to farm in Shonga Emirate of Edu Local Government Area. Land was acquired from the indigenous farmers in the communities and allocated to them.

These new farms are built on land leased for 25 years around Shonga emirate (Salami, 2008); an underdeveloped regions near the state's northern border. Thirteen Zimbabwean white farmers were allocated 1000 hectares of land each cutting across some of the communities in the emirate. The farmers are expected to bring in the, much desired transformation with regards to harvesting, preservation and storage facilities that the local farmers have had problems with over the years.

They are expected to invest in both livestock and crops. The best of their lands are taken from them by government for large scale farming and the people according to the Kwara State Government are to be resettled and compensated.

This paper is aimed at identifying the foreign farmers' activities and the consequent effects on the indigenous communities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

Edu Local Government Area of Kwara state is located between latitudes $4^{\circ}30'E-5^{\circ}30'E$ and longitude $8^{\circ}30'N-9^{\circ}15'N$. It has a total land area of about 2,236sq.km. It is bordered to the north by River Niger from which the local government got its name (Edu, meaning a big river in Nupe language. Ifelodun and Moro local government areas bordered it to the West, and Pategi local government area to the East. Edu local government presently has three districts which constitute the emirates in the local government area. These includes; Lafiagi, Tsaragi, and Tsonga districts or emirates (See figure 1).

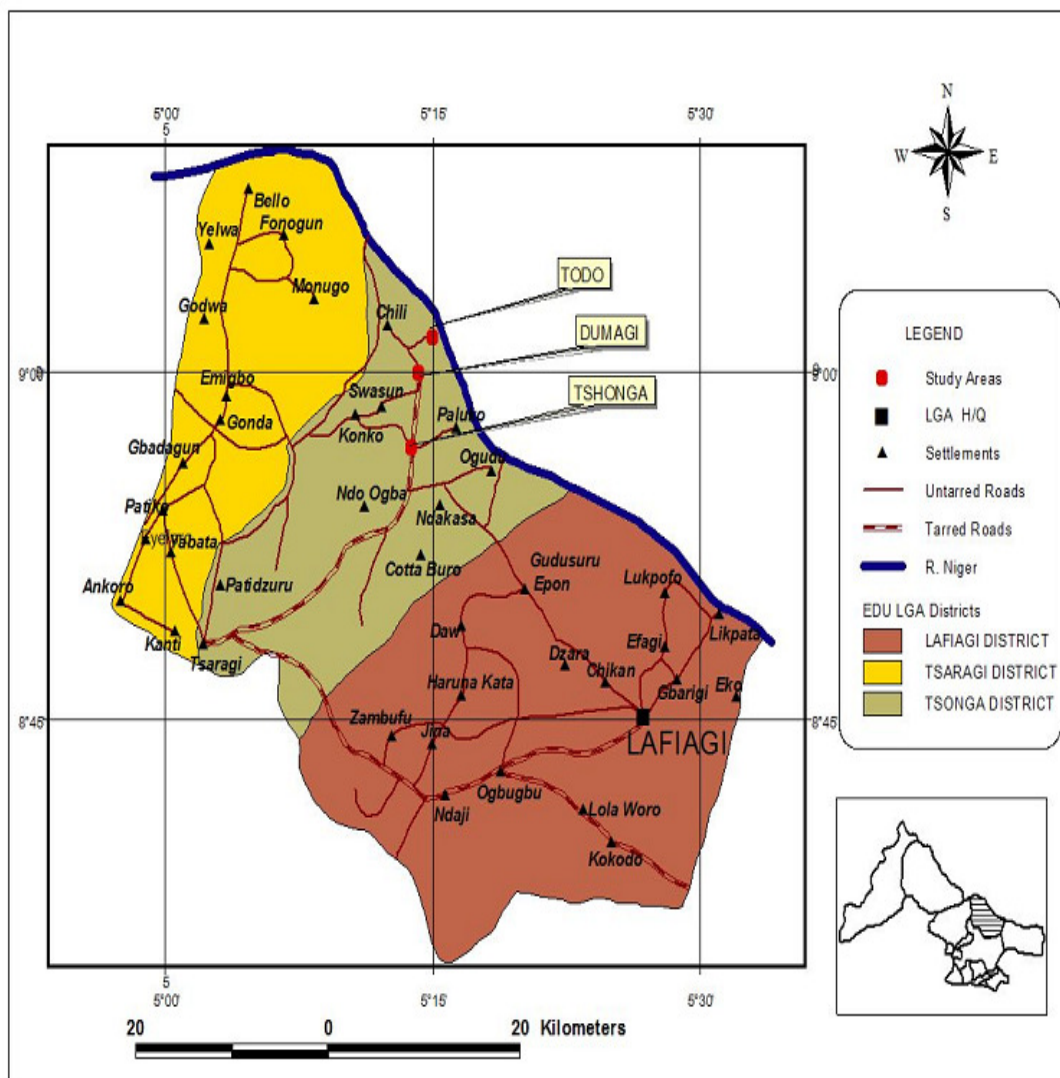


Figure 1. Map of Edu Local Government showing the Study Areas.
 Inset: Map of Kwara State

DATA COLLECTION

Two types of questionnaires were administered to collect necessary information on the large scale commercial farming activities embarked by the Zimbabwean white farmers, and its socio-economic impacts on the study area. The first questionnaire was administered to

selected stakeholders (which included female farmers, male farmers, youths, members of the cooperative society, members of the community development association, and the Fulani community). This was used to gather information on the level of income before and after the coming of the white farmers, level of social and infrastructural development before their coming and now, and technology transfer especially new farming techniques. The second questionnaire was administered to the white farmers. It was used to collect data on the size of land allocated to the farmer, number of indigenous workers employed in the farms, information transfer to the local farmers (farming techniques), healthcare and educational incentives given to their employees, and information on ways to enhance sustainable agriculture and rural development.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select three communities based on the presence of the white farmers in the selected communities. The three sampled communities were: Dumagi, Shonga, and Todo. A total of 385 respondents were administered questionnaire in the three sampled communities. This figure was arrived at using Yamane's formula cited in Glenn (1992) to compute sample size; the projected population of the three sampled communities (10,318) was used as the sample frame. Simple random sampling was used in administering the questionnaire. The second questionnaire was administered to five of the owners of the large-scale commercial farms in the communities. However, out of 385 questionnaires administered in the communities, 296 were returned. 236 were returned in Shoga, 37 in Dumagi, and 23 in Todo. This study made use of both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to transform the collected data for analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 2 shows that farming constitutes 46.3% (137), fishing constitutes 4.7% (14), herding constitute 3.7% (11), trading constitutes 17.2% (51), artisan constitutes 8.1% (24), while public/private service and others whose occupations were not mentioned constitute 18.2% (54) and 1.7% (5) respectively. It could be deduced that the people are predominantly farmers with Shonga having the highest of 32.8% (97) and Todo the least with 6.4% (19).

The educational status of respondents in three sampled communities shows that 41% (124) have no formal education, 27.7% (82) have only primary education, and 21.3% (63) have secondary education, while 9.1% (27) possess/have tertiary training. From the result, it is clear that the people are more of literates (172).

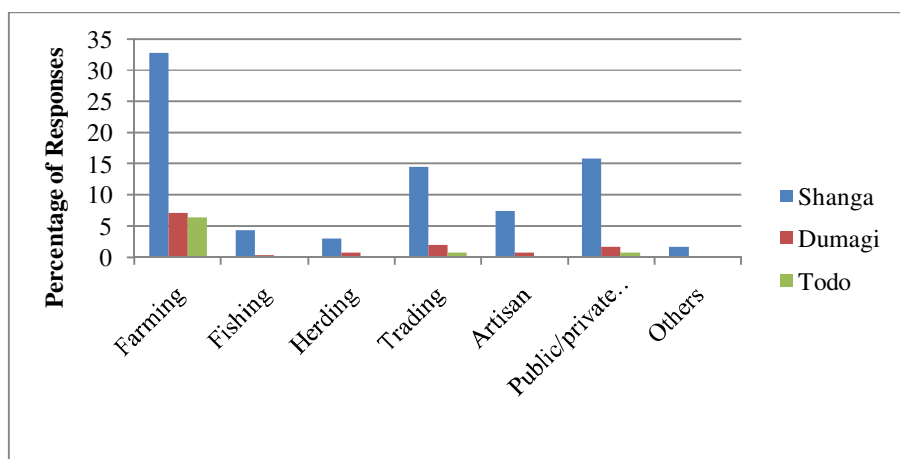


Figure 2. Occupational Status of Respondents

Table 1 shows that, 25% (74) earn <5000, 38.2% (113) earn between 5001-10,000, 22.3% (66) earn between the range of 10,000- 20,000, 9.8% (29) earn between 20,001- 30,000,

while only 4.7% (14) earn 30,000 and above. This implies that majority of the people (63.2%) are low income earners with Shonga having the highest of 51%.

Table 1. Average Income of Respondents before the Coming of the White Farmers

Communities		Average Income					Total
		<5,000	5001 - 10,000	10,001 - 20,000	20,001- 30,000	30,000 and above	
Shonga	Count	62	89	51	23	11	236
	% of Total	20.9	30.1	17.2	7.8	3.7	79.7
Dumagi	Count	9	13	9	4	2	37
	% of Total	3.0	4.4	3.0	1.4	0.7	12.5
Todo	Count	3	11	6	2	1	23
	% of Total	1.0	3.7	2.0	0.7	0.3	7.8
Total	Count	74	113	66	29	14	296
	% of Total	25.0	38.2	22.3	9.8	4.7	100

Impact of the White Farmers on the Socio-Economic and Infrastructural Facilities of the Host Communities

Here, the attendant impact of the Zimbabwean white farmers on the host communities average income, skill acquisition, confiscation of land, state of road, water supply, among others are examined as follows:

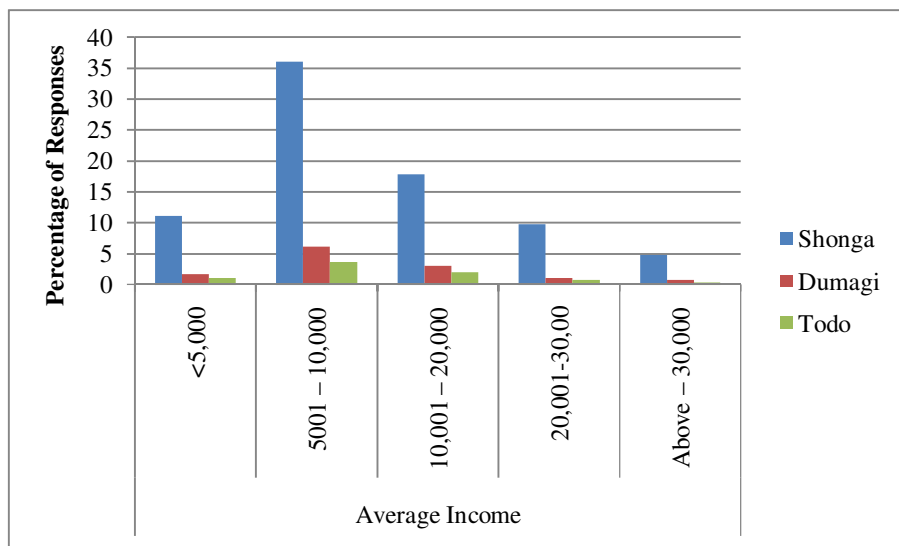


Figure 3. Average Incomes of Respondents per Month Now

Figure 3 gives information on the average income of respondents after the advent of the white farmers. It shows a 7.9% increase in income of respondents between <5000 -10,000 and a 6.9% increase in the income level of respondents between 10,000-20,000. In general, there is a 1% increase in income level in the three communities after the coming of the white farmers.

Acquisition of Farming Skills

Table 4 reveals that 26.0% (77) of the respondents assert they learnt how to apply fertilizers, 27.7% (82) allege they were taught planting techniques, 18.2% (54) said they were taught ways of storing farm produce and 10.1% (30) confirmed they benefited from the preservation techniques, while 17.9% (53) confirmed they did not benefit in any way from the white farmers.

Table 2. Farming Skills and Techniques Benefited from the White Farmers

Communities		Skills and techniques of farming benefited					Total
		Fertilizer Application	Planting Techniques	Storage Methods	Preservation Techniques	No Benefit	
Shonga	Count	59	63	43	21	50	236
	% of Total	19.9	21.3	14.5	7.1	16.9	79.7
Dumagi	Count	10	15	7	5	0	37
	% of Total	3.4	5.1	2.4	1.7	0	12.5
Todo	Count	8	4	4	4	3	23
	% of Total	2.7	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.0	7.8
Total	Count	77	82	54	30	53	296
	% of Total	26.0	27.7	18.2	10.1	17.9	100

In general, the presence of the white farmers could be said to have had a positive impact in terms of farming techniques as they are being taught and exposed to new skills and techniques of farming.

Assessment of Zimbabwean White Farmer's Activities in the Study Area

The field work analyses revealed that the areas where the Zimbabwean farmers settle namely Shonga, Dumagi, and Todo, only 1,000 hectares of land were given to each family that wished to stay in these areas. Out of these, some of the farmers have already utilized about 30% of the land allocated to them, majority have only utilized about 10% of it, while the remaining percent remains untouched.

It also revealed that many of the Zimbabwean white farmers have between 70-90 employees, most of whom are from the host communities especially Shonga.

Table 3. Employment of indigenous people by the White Farmers

Employment by the white Farmers		Communities			Total
		Shonga	Dumagi	Todo	
Farm One	Count	85	0	0	85
	% of Total	22.7	0	0	22.7
Farm Two	Count	75	0	0	75
	% of Total	20	0	0	20
Farm Three	Count	85	0	0	85
	% of Total	22.7	0	0	22.7
Farm Four	Count	0	60	0	60
	% of Total	0	16	0	16
Farm Five	Count	0	0	70	70
	% of Total	0	0	18.7	18.7
Total	Count	245	60	70	375
	% of Total	65.3	16	18.7	100

The workers include both semi-permanent and casual workers. Majority of the workers however are casual workers. The semi-permanent workers are farm managers, secretary, supervisors, foremen, security men, and accountants while, the casual workers (who are the majority) are mostly labourers on farms, ranches and in the factory.

The nature of the employment is casual, for any worker may be sacked any time his/her services is not needed, or when the worker commits the simplest offence. This has made the workers to be very scared of the white farmers. The workers receive between N7,500-N13,000 per month for the labourers and supervisors/foremen respectively. The labourers asserted that they are paid N290.00 per day which when compared to the expenses incurred, and the work they do every day is small, and hence has not really changed their standard of living, especially the labourers.

Table 4a. Average Income per month before the Coming of the White Farmers

Communities		Average Income					Total
		<5,000	5001 - 10,000	10,001 - 20,000	20,001- 30,000	30,000 and above	
Shonga	Count	62	89	51	23	11	236
	% of Total	20.9	30.1	17.2	7.8	3.7	79.7
Dumagi	Count	9	13	9	4	2	37
	% of Total	3.0	4.4	3.0	1.4	0.7	12.5
Todo	Count	3	11	6	2	1	23
	% of Total	1.0	3.7	2.0	0.7	0.3	7.8
Total	Count	74	113	66	29	14	296
	% of Total	25.0	38.2	22.3	9.8	4.7	100

Table 4b. Average Income per month now

Communities		Average Income					Total
		<5,000	5001 - 10,000	10,001 - 20,000	20,001- 30,000	30,000 and above	
Shonga	Count	33	107	53	29	14	236
	% of Total	11.1	36.1	17.9	9.8	4.7	79.7
Dumagi	Count	5	18	9	3	2	37
	% of Total	1.7	6.1	3.0	1.0	0.7	12.5
Todo	Count	3	11	6	2	1	23
	% of Total	1.0	3.7	2.0	0.7	0.3	7.8
Total	Count	41	136	68	34	17	296
	% of Total	13.9	45.9	23.0	11.5	5.7	100

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of variation		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% confidence interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Average Income Now	.075	.791	.000	8	1.000	.0000	27.2375	-62.8097	62.8097
Equal Variances assumed			.000	7.760	1.000	.000	27.2375	-63.1491	63.1491
Equal variance not assumed									

This was reflected in the result of the first hypothesis tested. The result shows that the calculated t value of .000 is < the P-value of 1.000 (2-tailed) under 8 degrees of freedom. This

therefore means that “there is no significant difference between average monthly income before and after the coming of the Zimbabwean white farmers”. Most of the workers walk on foot home after the day’s work in order to save some small amount of their monthly allowance.

Various farming techniques and practices are sometimes being demonstrated by the Zimbabwean farmers, so as to boost the rate of crop yield of the indigenous farmer among such techniques are: 1) Application of fertilizers, 2) Preparation of Animal Dung manure, 3) Techniques on how to use sophisticated machine such as planters and harvesters, 4) Techniques on how to prepare cassava flour free of ethanol, 5) Provision of hybrid seeds and how to apply them for maximum output, 6) Techniques on the best method for rearing their local cows, and 7) Techniques on how to prepare diary milk that is free from bacteria.

Most of the information above is passed to the indigenous farmers through indigenous employees, and through on-farm demonstration, sometimes through the assistance of the Emir.

In terms of techniques used to enhance sustainable agriculture, the field work revealed that though farming is mechanized, manual labour is still much employed in works which can be done mechanically. Also, animal dung from the cattle is used to complement fertilizer application; in some farms, organic farming is practiced. The positive impact the discussion reveals is in terms of skills and techniques learnt from the white farmers. Almost all the farmers learnt one or different techniques of farming from them. This is reflected in the result of the hypothesis - There is a significant relationship between the coming of the white farmers and improvement in host communities farming skills and techniques.

Table 5. Skills and techniques of farming benefitted

Communities		Skills and techniques of farming benefitted					Total
		Fertilizer Application	Planting Techniques	Storage Methods	Preservation Techniques	No Benefit	
Shonga	Count	59	63	43	21	50	236
	% of Total	19.9	21.3	14.5	7.1	16.9	79.7
Dumagi	Count	10	15	7	5	0	37
	% of Total	3.4	5.1	2.4	1.7	0	12.5
Todo	Count	8	4	4	4	3	23
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Total	Count	77	82	54	30	53	296
	% of Total	26.0	27.7	18.2	10.1	17.9	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.292 ^a	8	0.074
Likelihood Ratio	20.426	8	0.009
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.249	1	0.134
N of Valid Cases	296		

^a 4 cells(26.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.33

The result shows that the calculated chi value is greater than P-value of 14.292 and .074 respectively. This result implies that ‘‘there is a significant relationship between the coming of the white farmers and improvement in host communities farming skills and techniques.

To foster better interaction and development of the host communities, the white farmers try to give the local farmers orientation on how to practice intensive farming that will bring more yield. They also engage in the repair of some facilities in the communities like boreholes. They equally give out some of their farm produce to the host communities such as grains and milk.

Furthermore, the white farmers show concern when there is any occupational hazard or if any of their employees is reported sick; the workers are given first aid before taken to the clinic in Shonga. In terms of maternity leave, the discussion reveals that it is not given, since the nature of employment is casual not permanent. However, if the recovery is taking longer time, he is being replaced.

In addition, some of the employees are given accommodation in the farms especially in the cattle ranch. This is because the cattle have to be milked as early as possible so that the excess milk will not affect them. The accommodation when compared to that of the white farmers is like a master and slave situation. However, necessary requirements like water supply, toilets and electricity are enjoyed by the employees.

Generally, the major challenges faced presently by the Zimbabwean white farmers include theft, laziness and care-free attitude on the part of the employees. Also the Kwara State government is slow in fulfilling its promises claiming non-availability of funds. Thus, to solve these problems, more money should be budgeted for rural development, and also there should be provision of basic and needed amenities that will enhance the indigenous community to be hospitable rather than hostile as experienced in Dumagi and Todo.

CONCLUSION

The coming of the Zimbabwean white farmer has an adverse impact on the host communities. The land acquired is at the expense of the obvious danger as Wiggins (2008) puts it; ‘is that allocating land for commercial farms in large holdings would take land away from the rural poor, or block them off from land that their children may need in the future. Socially unacceptable, any such moves involve high political exposure: expropriation is easy to justify on the basis of historic wrongs. But other less obvious and more insidious risks lurk’.

However, the coming of the white farmers and their activities brought some improvement in the host communities especially in term of farming skills and techniques. The indigenous farmers have benefited in one way or the other from the modern techniques used in the white farms. It has also improved the water supply problem of the communities, as the whites take it as part of their responsibility to help in putting into good shape the boreholes in the host communities when they are broken.

Nonetheless, to enhance fast socio-economic development in the host communities, the government has to fulfill its promises made to the host communities, e.g. provision of portable water, electricity, good roads, and an enabling environment for not only for the white as contained in the memorandum of understanding, but also to the host communities. There is also the need for the government to give financial aid in form of loans to the indigenous farmers so that it will used to improve on their present state of farming.

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