

The Effect of the Accelerated Land Redistribution Program on Household Income in Zimbabwe

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The study explored the longstanding debate of the accelerated land redistribution program in Zimbabwe. In this regard, it specifically sought to answer the following research questions; what is the effect of the A1 land type, allocated to beneficiaries of accelerated land redistribution program, on household income in Zimbabwe?; Does the A1 land type have lower average productivity when compared to old resettlement scheme land type. Interest in this specific study followed the widespread anecdotal belief that the accelerated land redistribution program is the root cause of a myriad of economic and social challenges currently bedeviling Zimbabwe. In this regard, it has been widely presented that the beneficiaries of the program were not issued with title deeds which are a form of security and would ordinarily enable farmers to access capital, among other things. Moreover, it has been argued that the beneficiaries lack requisite skills and farming knowledge which are critical for meaningful agricultural production. In this regard, and in order to address the study's research questions, we compared the A1 land type with old resettlement scheme land type (which is a by-product of the early land redistribution program in Zimbabwe). Specifically, we conducted median or quantile (50%) regressions at plot and household levels, respectively. Furthermore, we compared these regressions with those of quantile (75%), quantile (90%), quantile (95%) and quantile (99%). We established that after instituting full controls the median difference of A1 and old resettlement productivities is very small and insignificant. We further established that the median difference of household income for the two types of land is also very small. Thus, at the median point there is no statistically significant difference between average productivity and household income for the two types of land. Noteworthy is however, that at quantile (75%), quantile (90%), quantile (95%) and quantile (99%) the differences of average productivities and household income among the two types of land increases. This is owing to the existence of outliers within the sample which causes the A1 plot dummy (which is the main explanatory variable) to affect the right tail as opposed to the median. Guided by the results of the quantile (50%) regression, we therefore, concluded that the A1 land type is not associated with low average productivity. In addition, it has not negatively affected household income when compared to old resettlement schemes. Thus, the narrative that the accelerated land redistribution program is the root cause of the economic challenges currently faced by the country is not true.