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## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned Bigboy Toro, hereby declare that the dissertation is my own original work and that it has not been submitted, and will not be presented, at any other University for a similar or any other degree award. Work from literature was written with citation of the relevant authors.

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Signature

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Date

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my parents Mr Aaron Toro and Betty Toro for the role that they played in raising me since my formative years, helping me to create a vision for my future, encouraging me to learn and supporting my education.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank my Creator for his guidance, protection and inspiration. With his endless mercy and care I have managed to accomplish this stage. My heartfelt gratitude goes to Prof Aminur Rahim, my supervisor, for being an excellent, committed mentor. I am grateful for his patience, interest, guidance, constructive comments and useful suggestions and support throughout the phases of writing this thesis. I should also like to acknowledge to all my respondents in Mutasa District. I send my heartfelt gratitude for their willingness to sit for hours in answering my questions to the end. A word of appreciation also goes to my parents for their financial, social, moral and spiritual support during the course of this study.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FAO	Food Agriculture Organization
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment programme
GAD	Gender and Development
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
S.P.S.S	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WLZ	Women and Land in Zimbabwe
WID	Women in Development
WAD	Women and Development
WLLG	Women and Land Lobby Group
WFP	World Food Programme

## **ABSTRACT**

Zimbabwean rural women make significant contribution to agriculture and are the mainstay of the farm labour. Although women do the majority of agricultural work, men, for the most part continue to own the land, control women's labour and make agricultural decisions supported by patriarchal social systems. Thus, rural women faced difficulties than men in gaining access to land under Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). Women's relationship with land is therefore through husbands, fathers, brothers or sons. Therefore, this study has undertaken with the objective of assessing the impact of land distribution programme with respect to its contribution to women's empowerment in the study area. The Gender and Development approach was employed to assess women access to land under the FTLRP. Such an approach to rural development can help in reducing the gender gap between women and men in order to achieve gender-balanced development. The study used qualitative research methodology where semi-structured interviews gather data from women in Mutasa District.

Findings indicate that there are a number of challenges and constraints that are experienced by rural women under the Fast Track Land Reform Programme which include male land registration, no access to credit, inadequate government input support, lack of government laws and policies awareness on women land rights, shortage of farm implements and irrigation water supply and lack of agriculture training. On the other hand, culture and traditional practices still affect women in other cases, disadvantaging them in favour of men, as in inheritance of land and property in the household. It was generally assumed that the programme did not improve women access to land. To improve women access to land, in future, the study recommends that a serious intervention by the state should occur coupled with

the revitalization of the programme and a paradigm shift towards an effective food security programme which emphasizes women and their important role in agriculture.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter begins by giving an historical overview of land reform in Zimbabwe and women access to land under these programmes. The chapter will then proceed to give the background of the problem in this study. To get a better understanding of the research this chapter will give the objectives, significance and a snapshot of the research methodology which will be further explained in detail in chapter 3. The chapter will also give the delimitations and outline of the study. The chapter will end with a compilation of the main ideas in the conclusion. The following section thus, gives detailed historical gender perspectives on land reform and women in Zimbabwe.

#### **1.2. Background to the study**

There is a growing recognition of the centrality of land tenure among women in the sustainable development process in Zimbabwe. According to Economic Commission for Africa the centrality of land tenure to the attainment of sustainable development especially amongst the poor and vulnerable in rural settings is indeed the subject of many regional and national initiatives and meetings in Sub-Sahara Africa (Wiggins, 2003). In the continent, land distribution has been particularly skewed along gender lines, with men holding the lion's share of the ownership and other rights to it, including rights to inherit and trade (Villarreal, 2002). Land is a fundamental resource to the women in Zimbabwe and is essential for enabling them to lift themselves out

of the shackles of poverty. Land can therefore, be viewed as an intermediary in social relations, medium of production, economic activity and a political issue (Moyo, 1996).

Women's access and control of land has become more critical in developing countries like in Africa as land is a major resource for survival to the majority of the people. However, land redistribution programme in Zimbabwe did not adequately meet the needs of the poor and landless, and the needs of women in particular continue to be neglected (Mann, 2000). Zimbabwe land reform may seem ironic, especially in the light of the country's current land reform efforts, which appear to be motivated more by political considerations and less by arguments regarding gender balance, social equality, poverty reduction or economic efficiency. Lack of land rights deprive women the right to economic empowerment and their struggle for equity and equality within a patriarchal society (Wiggins, 2003). This justifies the need to pay attention to gender dimensions in rural livelihoods as an entry point to address gender differentiated opportunities in development towards alleviating poverty.

According to the Food Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2002:32), the majority of rural people in Zimbabwe depend on agriculture for their livelihood. However, inequitable distribution and uncertain land tenure security are highlighted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA, 2006) as among the major problems of land policies in Zimbabwe. Within this context and despite their central role in agriculture production across the region, women are often excluded from property and land ownership on gender grounds. They are frequently believed to only have secondary rights to land. In general women's rights to land are extremely insecure.

Furthermore women provide labour for farming under severely exploitative relations in production and reproduction.

Many women in rural areas are marginalised and do not have full control if any of land because of traditional structures of power and authority. Mostly rural women are often poor and too illiterate to deal with bureaucratic procedures that are necessary to gain access to title deeds, or fight for their rights to land in court (Mgugu, 2008). This lack of access to land threatens women's security and leaves them vulnerable to poverty. It is proven that empowering rural women, socially and economically, leads to positive effects on household and intra-household food security levels. Access and control of land can provide women with security they cannot derive from elsewhere and allows independence hence often challenging the very political or customary expediency that is responsible for women's marginalization.

The major forms and sources of this unequal land distribution and tenure problem is its derivation from the dominance of patriarchy and customary land tenure systems and local authority structures (Mpahlo, 2003). Women's rights to land are often secondary and derived from other's rights, thus making them reliant on their male relatives and social network. These perverse social relations, also characteristic in different forms of pre-colonial African society, were contrived during colonial and contemporary times by the male dominated central and local state and political power structures found in Africa. One thread which links the pre-colonial, the colonial, and the post-colonial experiences is the consistent denial to women of the rights to independent access to land and to control of the resources produced by the combination of land and labour.

The gendered discourses on access, ownership and control of land in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial societies in Zimbabwe are still controversial. Analytical distinctions among access to land, ownership and control should also be made. Access to land, which is common in Zimbabwe, can be direct whereby women use land in their own right or indirectly through husbands or kin members. Women may have access to land that they do not own. More so, women may own land but they may not control the produce from the land. Women can also control agricultural production decisions on land they do not own. Goebel (1999), noted that African women peasant farmers are in a contradictory position of autonomy by way of de facto headship of household and dependency and vulnerability by an ideology that maintain supremacy of male authority over land in the absence of men. This refers mostly to rural areas where men who are in urban areas still control land that their wives work on in rural areas.

In Zimbabwe, where the majority of people obtain their livelihood directly from agriculture, land ownership and use have always been sensitive issues and became major areas of dispute for blacks and whites since 1890s (Alexander, 2007). The dominant pre-colonial societies were based on patrilineage and patriarchal structures that fostered male domination and women's economic marginalization. Traditional authority (chiefs and headmen) prevailed and was central to resource allocation. Within the structures of economic organization, land formed the basis for power and authority and the fact that women did not have direct access, meant they were not able to make important decisions in the household or community thus becoming subordinate.

The land issue in Zimbabwe is rooted in settler land alienation, eviction and racial discrimination. Settler colonialism led to land expropriation and alienation of the

peasantry and aggravated the situation of women in accessing land. The colonial regime combined foreign ideologies, sexist discourses and local customary traditions and, ultimately widened structural economic inequalities between men and women (Sachikonye, 2004). The colonial regime took advantage of the structures of customary laws and traditions that already existed and introduced their own racist and patriarchal discourses to further widen the gender disparities between men and women. This worked in its favour as it pacified the African men as women became more inferior. As a result, women continued to face economic disempowerment with regards to access and ownership of land. Colonial systems thus found women disadvantaged as to land access and exploited for their productive and reproductive labour.

In many colonial governments in Southern Africa, women were relegated to the periphery in decision making and also in issues considered to be of importance including access to land (Mushunje, 2001). This colonial legacy resulted in an unequal structure of society and also unequal distribution of resources including land, an outcome that has been perpetuated in the post-independence era. Where women have tried to access land, they have met up with roadblocks, notably “exclusionary policies and practices” (Mushunje, 2001).

In Zimbabwe, the colonial regime created a system of "reserve" land, set aside for Africans, thus creating artificial shortage in areas designated for Africans at a time when land was still abundant, lack of access to land became acute, but particularly so for women. To maintain this system, women were confined to rural areas, the “reserves”, where they subsidised the colonial economy through their farming and income-generating activities and raised the next generation of workers. Typically, these lands were of poor quality and were often inadequate to support the

populations forced onto them. In spite of this, colonial authorities relied on women to work these lands for subsistence production while men were used by the colonial powers as migrant labour of various kinds so they could earn enough to pay a "head" tax designed to mobilize a supply of cheap labour.

Under colonial law, women were deemed legal minors, unable to enter into contracts or represent themselves in court without permission of and representation by a male guardian. The colonial state constructed its land allocation strategies through targeting males as farmers, whether white or black and until 1982 used traditional governance structures (chiefs, headmen) as the basis for local land management systems (Moyo, 1995). The male dominated traditional governance structures favoured male registration of land rights in resettlement areas. Women's accesses to secure tenure in their own right became a problem and were further marginalised from land distribution.

The settler regime marginalized the black peasantry to overcrowded low fertile areas and created a system of proletarianisation that forced black women into exploitative wage labour. It was against this background that the new post-colonial government sought to address the historical imbalances and inequalities in land ownership through land redistribution. The land questions were the impetus for mass resistance, nationalist uprisings and the war of liberation (Masiwa, 2004). The ambition of the post-colonial government to address the land concerns has been paralleled by discourses of gender equality and women's empowerment. Where women are located in the land reform policies remains controversial in the broader discourse of land and land reform in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's land reform comprised of three phases: the first phase from 1980 to 1992, and the second from 1992 to 1997 and the last phase from 2000 to 2004.

The fundamental objectives of the land reform programme were to redress the inequities in access and control of land, improve the base for productive agriculture, alleviate population pressure in communal areas, improve standards of living, providing opportunities to the landless, unemployed and those adversely affected by the war, maximizing production on abandoned or underutilized farm land and achieve national stability (Moyo, 1995). Moyo (1995) demonstrated the rationality of land redistribution in terms of economic efficiency while also stressing political and moral claims. Moyo and Skalness (1990) noted that land redistribution was also framed in terms of ecology whereby the government wanted to decongest the former reserves created by the white settlers and modernize production. Goebel (1999) agrees with the ecological dimension of Moyo and Skalness (1990) but called it the “paradigm of sustainable development”.

Land redistribution and resettlement was also to increase productivity and Bernstein (2003) noted that this was based on the paradigm of agricultural economics. “Resettlement” according to Kinsey (1982) was defined as the relocation, with official support, of populations from the communal areas to former white owned, commercial farms and ranches. This phase of resettlement was also by and large rehabilitative, targeting returning refugees and families displaced by war and largely benefiting the poorest of the poor (Chatora, 2004).

Land reform officially began in 1979 with the signing of the Lancaster House Agreement which paved way for transitional and more equitable distribution of land between the historically disenfranchised blacks and the minority whites. The Lancaster House Constitution prohibited compulsory land acquisition during the first ten years after independence from Britain in 1980. Instead, the government could only purchase land on offer on a “willing seller, willing buyer” basis, a formula that

effectively hindered any meaningful attempt at land reform. The Lancaster House stipulations that land reform proceed exclusively through willing seller transactions severely hampered the possibility of extensive legal land acquisition in the 1980s and over the first decade, only a total of 2.8 million hectares were acquired through these limited means (Stoneman, 1998).

In accordance with the prescribed willing buyer, willing seller model that the United Kingdom had insisted upon, the process involved state selection of beneficiaries and land to target for resettlement, acquiring small amounts of land by purchase through the established commercial land market rather than by expropriation. Unfortunately, the government did not have enough money to compensate white commercial farmers and found itself powerless in the face of resistance from the white landowners. Much of the more fertile land remained under control of a few thousand white farmers. Moreover, much of the land that had been distributed remained in the hands of a few black elites. Meanwhile, the population in already overcrowded communal areas increased and land hunger intensified.

The “willing seller, willing buyer” principle ensured that whites only sold land that had been abandoned during the war of liberation, or else was of poor quality, thereby denying new settlers the opportunity to establish a successful economic sector. This means that most of the land that had been acquired had very low agricultural potential. Nonetheless, this was the structural context in which the government embarked on a programme whose centrepiece was the resettlement of the poor and landless. Moreover, Goebel (1999) argued that women’s perspectives were marginalized in Zimbabwe’s land resettlement. Jacobs (2000) echoes the same argument by saying that women became dependent with agricultural commercialization in resettlements.

The redistribution of land for the benefit of African peasants was a key promise of the revolutionary force that freed Zimbabwe from white minority rule. Despite playing a central role in the liberation struggle for Zimbabwe's independence where land was the centre of the struggle, women continue to have limited access and control of land (Lyons, 2004). Kinsey (2004) concluded that early resettlement schemes by the government had important failures in terms of poverty alleviation and productivity and there was no net gain in terms of relieving pressure in communal areas. In addition, Jacobs (1992) in her studies of land resettlement of the 1980s, men benefited more primarily because land policies were gender blind.

Degorges and Reilly (2007), agree that the early land redistribution did not benefit the rural women and Goebel (1999) noted that the government did not fulfil its professed goal of resettling the rural women. Jacobs (2001) noted that land reform has been disappointing especially for married women. While, Kawewe (2005), offers the same conclusion by arguing that land resettlement had commercial orientation which exploited women's labour. However, Izumi (1999) presented a different argument by saying that land reform in the 1980s was a compromise between white farmers and black elites. Arguably, there are indications that questions of poverty, social justice, resettling the landless and equality were somehow political rhetoric as government policy became predominantly centred around capacity, efficiency and productivity, a criteria suited to black elites and white commercial farmers. This was further reinforced by the introduction of Economic Structural Adjustment programme (ESAP) in 1992.

The government inherited and reinforced the colonial legacy of denying women's access to land by disbanding egalitarian and equality principles. The commercial resettlement programme became an area of contention between the government of

Zimbabwe and Britain. In 1992, after the government was no longer constrained by provisions of the Lancaster House Agreement, the Constitution was amended in order to provide for the redistribution of land within the country. The government of Zimbabwe started intensifying its intentions to compulsorily acquire land from the white commercial farmers. In the second phase (1992-1999) land reform was undertaken using some force to compel landowners to sell some or all of their landholding at reduced prices.

The introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment programme (ESAP) in 1992 saw an emphasis placed on productivity and farming skills, as evidenced by possession of a Master Farmer Certificate as well as secondary level education as criteria for allocation of land. The land resettlement programme reoriented itself to tilt the resettlement initiative in favour of the technically capable as opposed to the merely needy (Moyo, 2000). Ncube *et al.* (1997) have argued that the emphasis on secondary education has prejudiced a number of rural women who only had minimum primary school education and who did not have the time to attend the training workshops to get a Master Farmer Certificate.

The land reform agenda moved from redistribution between unequally disadvantaged, historically racialized, agrarian classes to indigenization of agrarian capital and land ownership (Waeterloos and Rutherford, 2002). Most landless people did not benefit because the government emphasise on efficiency and productivity. The Master Farmer discourse inherited from the colonial regime continued to be justified by sustainability principles. As espoused by Moyo (1995), this approach led to widening rural differentiation and deep inequalities in land redistribution as most of the rural poor and women could not qualify.

The (ESAP) was introduced, with a negative impact on poverty and quality of life in general, moving further in the direction of economic liberalisation and privatization (Palmer, 2000). Economic liberalization prioritized the interests of the rich landed classes of the colonial era, as well as those of other emerging social and political elites. The effects were disastrous for the people of Zimbabwe, from cuts in social expenditures to skyrocketing prices once controls were lifted, to massive job losses and a large drop in wages and income and increased poverty in general.

ESAP created tremendous pressure on and need for land in this period including for food security, leading to heightened land struggles that partly took the form of peasant land occupations. Moyo (2000) further argues that the economic impacts of ESAP also led to massive urban to rural migrations as retrenched workers went back to their rural homes creating new demands for land. On the other hand, ESAP had direct extensive negative effects on the agricultural output markets of the poor, deepened national and agricultural income and wealth inequalities, and set in de-industrialisation (including in the agro-industrial sector).

In 1997, the government amended section 16 of the Lancaster House Constitution, which had governed the country for the past decade. According to the amendment, all land, not just under-utilized land was subjected to compulsory acquisition. In addition, all land for sale was to be offered to the government first, before sold to a third party. Government was to pay “fair compensation” within a “reasonable time” as opposed to “prompt and adequate compensation” as previously stipulated by the Lancaster House Constitution (Sachikonye, 2004).

In June 1998, the government envisaged compulsory purchase of 5 million hectares of land owned by commercial farmers, public corporations, churches, non-governmental organizations and multinational companies (Jacobs, 2001). The

acquisition was to be done over a period of five years and a large number of families were to be resettled. The bulk of these farms went to black entrepreneurs, senior army officials, civil servants and politicians. The government embarked on land redistribution programmes without any concerns for the position of women. Despite the government professing to create an independent state where women and men could work equally, evidence shows that it was only political rhetoric. Land distribution and resettlement lacked a specified gender focus. Mbaya (2001) noted that there is a weak link between gender and land in Zimbabwe's resettlement.

Gender was not an important issue in land resettlement of the late 1990s. The second phase of the land reform, while alleviating poverty to some extent (Kinsey, 2000), perpetuated patriarchal land policies that favoured men over women. The administrative arrangements regarding women were framed from the perspective that a woman should either be married or widowed to get land, thus sidelining unmarried and divorced women. Izumi (1999), found out that 1997 data on land registration shows that 75% of men were registered on land deeds, 20% were joint ownership, 5% were owned by women and 4% by black women. This shows the gender bias in favour of men in the land redistribution schemes.

In July 2000, the government adopted the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP), which is the third phase of land reform. The fast track was an accelerated phase where activities that could be done quickly were going to be done in an accelerated manner. The 2000 land occupations were spearheaded by peasants who moved onto white commercial farms adjacent to their communal areas. The Fast Track Land Reform Programme was officially launched with the stated objective of finally correcting the historical imbalance in land ownership. As compensation to

the white landowners, “government only paid for the improvements made on the farm and not for the land itself” (Sachikonye, 2004). The payment was staggered over a period of five years with an option for the government to convert the payment into land bonds. It is important to note that the fast track method started without an institutional and legal framework of implementation. These were developed when the process was already underway.

The question of land in Zimbabwe has always been political and gendered. Whereas “land reform was necessary in the context of highly unequal land ownership patterns and poverty, the (FTLRP) diminished opportunities or spaces for women to be empowered and shrunk the democratic spaces for genuine participation of women in the development process by denying them rights to land, widening gender inequalities and ultimately failing to alleviate their poverty” (Mgugu, 2008). Women and men’s differential access to land and the trajectories that push women to the margins were taken for granted.

The failure of the government to seriously consider women’s land questions of ownership and control does not only reflect the indifference of hegemonic masculinities to the gender-land interface but also a crisis in development and democracy whereby women continue to be victims. In Zimbabwe, women beneficiaries in the land reform programme ranges from 5-20% depending on province and scheme (Moyo, 2004). This explains why most land in Zimbabwe is under male ownership and control, with little attention being given to the question on women’s access to and control over land. This is further supported by Goebel (2005) who acknowledges that woman are the main farmers but their subordinate cultural and social position often curtails their production activities.

The land reform did not mainstream gender in anyway. There was no deliberate policy to make sure that women got favourable access to land. Moreover, there were increasing concerns that the method was not monitored by the judicial system. There was no legislation in place securing the rights of the beneficiaries in relation to distribution and participation as required by international law. The government did not place legal frameworks that ensure gender equality in the distribution of resettlement land (Mpahlo, 2003).The participation of women in land reform was hampered by a combination of law, practices and policies.

Very few women benefited from the land reform process, results of a study undertaken by the Women and Land Lobby Group showed that by June 2000 the government had resettled 2005 families under the villagised scheme and of these only 132 (6%) were female-headed households (WLLG quoted in Mpunga, *et.al.* 2002).Married women benefited from land reform through their husbands but the land allocated was not registered in the names of both spouses. The assumption that land should be held by the household head deemed a man is common internationally and has been a feature of many land reform programmes. This was contrary to government policy that there should be joint registration for married couples.

The Fast Track Land Reform Programme was an inefficient and inconsistent method of allocating land. The redistribution of land under the programme greatly discredited the economic rationale and efficacy of land reform in Zimbabwe. The Fast Track Programme had negative consequences on agricultural production. Due to the backward and forward linkages that had established between agricultural and the manufacturing industry, this contraction of the agricultural sector also saw the manufacturing sector and the whole economy shrinking by 15 percent by 2003

(Richardson, 2005). Its outcome also entailed uneven distribution of land and infrastructure, insecurity of tenure and displacement of ex-farm workers (Bernstein, 2003). Post-independence land reform therefore largely maintained the pre-existing gender gap in terms of access to land, though patterns of ownership are improving for women.

On the other hand, land reform in Zimbabwe was an inevitable and necessary undertaking whose major aim was to redress the historical injustices that resulted from colonialism. However, the struggle for equality over access and control of land was largely driven by the need to redress racial imbalances whilst overlooking other class disparities which emanated from gender perspectives. This has led to the negation of women's concerns in relation to their access and control of land.

### **1.3. Statement of the problem**

Women's access to and control over land is very critical as land is a major resource in women's livelihood. It is a source of economic empowerment and represents a key factor in the struggle for equity and equality. However, women's access and control of land is still limited in most African rural areas. Rural women limited access to land have contributed to the high incidence of poverty among women in Zimbabwe. As a result, rural poverty is deeply rooted in the imbalance between what women do and what they have. Rights to use and control of land are therefore central to rural women's livelihoods and needs to be addressed for sustainable poverty reduction. Although women do the majority of agricultural work, men, for the most part continue to own the land, control women's labour and make agricultural decisions supported by patriarchal social systems.

Moreover, in Zimbabwe women constitute 52% of the population and 86% of those residing in rural areas, are dependent on land for their livelihoods and they provide 70% of all agricultural labour (Women and Land in Zimbabwe, 2008). One would expect that women were considered an integral part of the FTLRP in line with their important roles in agricultural production and labour reproduction. However, the outcomes of the FTLRP, shows that women were marginalised in the distribution of land and still do not have access to land.

Women's land rights are insecure and inadequate for their ascribed roles as key agricultural producers and the compelled custodians of reproducing children, as well as of the family livelihoods in rural. This lack of entitlement contributes to inefficiency in the production system. In spite of the strong representation of women in development, they have been left out from the benefits of land redistribution programmes and, when considered at all, they tend to be marginal to the programmes. The problem that has informed this study is the lack of a solid gender analysis of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTRLRP) particularly focusing on access and control of land by women in Zimbabwe. Addressing the national question of land does not ensure economic efficiency if women are neglected.

Property rights and tenure security carry great practical significance for people's expectations of which investments and activities are likely to generate returns. Weak property rights lead to sub-optimal decisions and missed opportunities to tap into the tremendous productive potential of women in increasing agriculture productivity. It is also with this perspective that we focus on the role of women in agriculture as a means to integrating them in national development. That is, it is often a case of looking at what women can do with land that will improve their lives and their families' lives, and what the impact will be on rural poverty more widely. The

question therefore is what challenges do women have in getting access and control to agricultural resources under the FTRLP in Zimbabwe? Lack of access to land disadvantaged rural women in the access to bank credit, hybrid seeds, fertilizers and technical agricultural support, for it stand as collateral for mortgages and loans. Thus, women access to land ownership is good for eradicating food insecurity and alleviating rural poverty.

#### **1.4. Objectives of the study**

The major objective of this study is to contribute towards an improved understanding of how issues of land reform have been addressed in Zimbabwe and the extent to which they have impacted the lives of rural women access to land. In order to achieve this broad objective, the study attempt to address the following specific objectives:

- To assess the impact of land distribution programme with respect to its contribution to women's empowerment in the study area.
- To identify potential barriers to women's access and control of land in the distribution of land in Zimbabwe.

Lastly, suggestion will be made regarding the strategies that can be employed to promote women's access and control of land in Zimbabwe. In line with these objectives, the study attempted to answer the following research questions:

To what extend have been the Fast Track Land Reform Programme contributed towards improving rural women's access to land?

What have been the major challenges against the empowering of rural women's access to land in Zimbabwe?

Are women aware of government policies that have been employed to ensure that they get access to land under the FTLRP?

### **1.5. Significance of the study**

This study will be of contribution to show significance of women's equal access to and control over land in Zimbabwe. Equal access to and control over rural land to women in Zimbabwe will have positive impact on rural development. This study is envisioned for all stakeholders particularly policy makers in the field of land, property, and women's rights from within and outside governmental agencies who directly or indirectly contribute to the formulation and implementation of land policies. It is aimed at supporting stakeholder efforts and particularly women's agency in empowering themselves through women's equal rights.

Study findings will give better insight to gender issues and significance of addressing these issues in rural land administration system to ensure women's equal access to and control over land. The study will serve as an entry point for further research undertakings in areas of women's land rights and rural development. This study will contribute to the body of literature by highlighting the importance of women's equal access to and control over land to the socio-economic well-being of women as well as rural livelihood in Zimbabwe. This study will also contribute to the literature on FTLRP in particular and land reform in general by taking a gender perspective and arguing that the specific productivity, capability and power needs of women should form an integral part of land reform policy discourses. Eliminating discrimination in land and property rights is essential to rolling back the impoverishment of millions of women worldwide and is a necessary condition for equitable sustainable development.

The research will also give a starting point of an evaluation of the FTLRP with a view of informing future programmes that seek to address women`s access and control of land. The research may also be used as a policy advocacy tool to enhance transparency and effectiveness of such programmes in future. The study will be a guide on how future Land Reform Programmes can be used to integrate women in national, regional and global developments. The thesis will also inculcate future debates by highlighting the contradictions and challenges from the FTLRP that have trivialized the efforts by women to promote gender equality.

### **1.6. Research methodology**

The study will use a qualitative approach. Qualitative research involves exploration, elaboration and systematisation of the significance of an identified phenomenon. Klein and Myers (1999) point out that this approach assumes that reality is socially constructed and the researcher becomes the vehicle by which this reality is revealed. Qualitative research method has been chosen because it takes as its point of departure the inside perspective on social action (Babbie *et al*, 2001). The aim for using this methodology was to collect detailed information from the respondents concerning the research topic. According to Punch (2005) using qualitative methodology enables the researcher to get closer to what is being studied. It aims for in-depth and holistic understanding of the complexity of social life. Punch (2005) writes that qualitative method is the best way of getting the insider`s perspective, the actor`s definition of the situation and the meanings people attach to things and events. However, methodology procedures which include sampling, data collection and analysis will be further explained in details in Chapter 3.

## **1.7. Outline of the study**

### Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter gives historical background of land reform in Zimbabwe and its relation to women`s access to and control over land the land rights of women. It also discusses the statement of the problem, objectives, significance for carrying the study, snapshot of the research methodology, delimitation and outline of the study.

### Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

The chapter will also discuss women`s approaches to development. These include Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD) and Gender and Development (GAD).This discussion serves to place land and women in the Zimbabwean context, a move that assist the researcher to locate the study`s research questions in the general academic discourse on gender and land.

### Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter describes and justify the qualitative research methodology used to provide answers to the research questions. It will highlight why qualitative research methodology was appropriate to collect data from the respondents and why purposive sampling was the right way to go in terms of selecting interviewees. It will further describe how data will be collected from both man and women. Finally, it will describe the data analysis procedures employed in the research.

### Chapter 4: Data presentation and findings

This chapter discusses the findings presented in the preceding chapter and draws conclusions from the information recorded in the literature review. The conclusion established the views of the respondents on the way they access the land and the challenges they are facing in Zimbabwe.

### Chapter 5: Critical evaluation

The chapter will summarise the main findings of the study, raised questions and ideas for further research. It will make some concluding remarks of the study as well as policy to address issues raised.

### **1.8. Conclusion**

Chapter one has showed clearly that the main concern in this research is the study of women access and control over land in the FTLRP. The study area was Mutasa District of Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe. The chapter has explored the historical background to land reform in general and its impact on women access to and control over land in Zimbabwe. This chapter indicates that various issues or factors that have contributed in defining and shaping the place which women occupy in relation to land reform. In the following Chapter a theoretical framework will be developed. The framework will be used as guideline for collecting information.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORIES ON WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

#### 2.1. Introduction

Deprivation of women's land right regarding land inheritance and property distribution is a challenge in patriarchal societies in Zimbabwe. Women have indirect access to land in terms of use rights acquired through kinship relationships and their status as wives, mothers, sisters or daughters (Davison, 1988). Women play a prominent role in their national economic systems, yet the failure to integrate women into the development process prevented them from realizing their full potential. Women's development approaches emerged to remove these inequalities and to bring change in women's lives. To understand and abolish women's marginalization, it is essential to examine the process by which gender characteristics are defined, and gender relations are constructed (Connell, 2000). The patriarchal society socially constructs roles for women and men, ascribed to them on the basis of their sex. Gender roles depend on a particular socio-economic, political and cultural context (Chinkin, 2001). These roles are not natural, but just social constructs that a society produce and ideologically conscientise its members to believe in. The construction of gender involves the creation of gender hierarchies that include power relations between men and women. This differential allocation of power to men and women determines their access to resources, be they political, social or economical (Chinkin, 2001). The purpose of the chapter is to give an overview of approaches that paves the way for a clearer understanding of the research problem and identifies the knowledge gap this study seeks to fill. Women in Development (WID), Women

and Development (WAD) and Gender and Development (GAD) approach will be discussed in relation to women access to land in Zimbabwe.

## **2.2. Women in Development (WID)**

Women in Development (WID), was the first gender policy approach that focused on the integration of women into global processes of economic, political and social growth. Liberal feminists proposed the WID framework, which called for the integration of women in development planning. This paradigm sees women marginalization resulting from lack of political, social and economic conditions for development to take place (Connelly *et al*, 2000). WID advocates found that it was more effective if demands for social justice and equity for women were strategically linked to mainstream development concerns. In other words, arguments for equity tend to be more powerful and persuasive if they are combined with the pursuit of some overarching goal from which a large majority of people may gain.

The term "women in development" came into use in the early 1970s, after the publication of Ester Boserup's *Women's Role in Economic Development* (1970). This approach had been prompted by Boserup's observations that women were excluded from social and economic opportunities (Rogers, 1980). As a result, integrating women into development programs was seen as the solution to end women's subordination to men. WID advocates placed primary emphasis on the development of strategies and action programs aimed at minimizing the disadvantages of women in the productive sector and ending discrimination against them.

Boserup (1970) point out that the primary goal of WID was to include women into existing initiatives. Women were marginalized and excluded from the benefits of development. In so doing, the WID approach pointed out the major problem to

women's unequal representation and participation is the male patriarchal development policies (Schech and Haggis, 2000). In short, the WID approach blamed patriarchy which did not consider women's productive and reproductive work. In fact, women were tied to domestic work hence were invisible in development programmes (Young, 1987)

Boserup (1970) went on to analyse and point out the adverse the effects that European colonialism and capitalist penetration of subsistence economies had on women. The European colonial rulers were largely responsible for the neglect of the female farming systems of Africa and the resulting loss of status of the African women. They were unsympathetic to the female farming systems that they found in many of their colonies and believed in their superiority of the male farming system. Hence, when they introduced modern technology cash crops, and so forth, Boserup argues that they only trained the males to the neglect of the female farmers. This benefited the men, enhancing their prestige and lowering that of women. The discriminatory policies followed in education and training created a technical, cultural and productivity gap between men and women. Women were increasingly relegated to the subsistence sector of food production using traditional methods of cultivation. The land reform brought by the Europeans administrators, also resulted in the loss of rights for the women. From being cultivators themselves, women increasingly marginalized from agriculture and reduced to being "unpaid helpers in the production of crops belonging to their husbands". Thus, women lost income and status in comparison to men

WID approach was concerned with efficiency, equity and empowerment. Boserup (1970) suggested that women needed to reduce the work loads that they had so that they take part in projects which will also extend their power in the economy. In

addition Boserup pointed out that women have to receive credit facilities for greater economic projects. For example, Boserup echoed the mechanization of “female farming” in African women farmers and revolutionize traditional forms of agriculture for productive efficiency (Schech and Haggis, 2000)

Boserup (1970) argued that, women’s traditional roles in agricultural production allowed men to monopolise new technologies and cash crop production that were associated with the modern sector. This contributed to the demise of the female subsistence agricultural sector, resulting in women’s loss of income, status and power relative to men. Thus, far from “creating an egalitarian society, modernisation increases women’s economic and social marginality and had disruptive effects on accessing agricultural resources” (Moser, 1993). It is also with this perspective that we must discuss the role of Zimbabwean rural women in agriculture as a means to integrating them in national development.

Modernisation drew men away from production based on family labour and gave them near-exclusive access to economic and other resources. WID view gender inequality as the effect of women’s displacement from productive resources caused by imperfections in the modernization process. The economic survival and development of Zimbabwe would depend heavily on efforts to reverse this trend and to more fully integrate women into the development process. As a result, eradication of poverty and food security can only be achieved if women become full economic partners in development.

Although historically land has been treated as a common property resource in many African societies, there is an increasing shift to individual ownership resulting from the process of modernization and commercialisation. While this change is taking place it is observed that “women farmers are being limited in having access to land

and other productive resources although they continue to do most of the farm work” (Gittinger, 1990). Therefore, their contribution to national effort and household food security and national food self-sufficiency goes unnoticed.

With respect to the direction of change in women’s tenure rights, Birgegard (1993) contends that women are losing ground. He adds that commercialisation of production, individualization of indigenous tenure systems and formal titling schemes are all working into the same direction in which women’s land tenure rights are eroded. The introduction of cash crops and increasing land scarcity are all contributing to this erosion of women’s land rights, since land, which is allocated to women for food production, is reduced in preference to land, which is retained by husbands for cash crops.

Armed with Boserup’s work, liberal feminists continued to articulate their vision of integrating women in the development process. Women should possess the same rights as men to access and control land, which in the long term amounts to sustainable development for Zimbabwe. The emphasis of this WID perspective was on women's productive roles, fuelled by a belief that by simply improving women's access to land, technology, credit and extension services, women's productivity would increase and this would positively influence the development process.

To increase commitment to integrate women, the state is seen as an “essential benevolent institution that will both design and implement legislation to ensure women’s access to land and other social and economic arenas” (Wilson, 1986). In Zimbabwe women has been mobilised into grassroots associations to enable them to effectively participate in key sectors of the economy such as Women in Mining, Women in Tourism Trust, Women in Agriculture, the Zimbabwe Women Farmer’s Association and various women’s clubs. In short, the big challenge remains for

government to integrate land reform and policy into a broad rural development strategy in the context of a wider social and development vision.

Ascertaining gender equality in rights and using regulatory policies to address specific areas of gender inequalities are critical roles of the state since gender equality has been formally acknowledged as a goal by most governments (Lastarria-Cornhiel, 1995). Addressing women's particular disadvantages in relation to land ownership, access and control should be major focus in drafting new land policies. However, creating gender equality is a principal challenge for land policies and land administration systems. This is mainly because of lack of understanding on complex nature of property rights in existing gender relations in society.

Land reform in Zimbabwe has been constrained partly because it has not integrated women into the national development strategy. Most land reform programmes throughout the world have failed to mainstream the interests of women, and land reform processes in Southern Africa have been no exception (Sachikonye, 2004). Land reform programmes must give adequate attention to mainstreaming of gender concerns into land policy and implementation. This means ensuring that land reform programmes specifically address the interests and meets the needs of women. The increased uncertainties and risks that women face in their production activities, compounded by the lack of access to land, is pushing many of them out of traditional agriculture in Zimbabwe.

The WID approach advocated for the implementation of 'separate' or 'integrated' projects for women to existing activities. This approach views women in isolation, making resources more directly available to them as a means facilitating their involvement. In other words, their demands for the allocation of development resources to women hinge on economic efficiency and what women can contribute

to the development process. The underlying rationale being that development activity would proceed better if women were integrated into the process and thus as an untapped resource able to provide an economic contribution to development (Moser 1993). It is thus extremely important to address the specific hurdles faced by women in becoming empowered, politically and legally. Specific attention needs to be dedicated to the different impact of policies and programs on men and women, so as to ensure not only the consideration of gender differences, but also the proactive promotion of gender equality. Women's lack of access to and control over land is a key factor contributing to poverty, and needs to be addressed for sustainable poverty reduction.

In the Zimbabwean agricultural sector, development projects have not taken adequate account of women's responsibilities, participation and priorities in their specific local conditions to determine factors constraining them in the achievement of the objectives of the programmes. In addition women's access to development projects is more limited owing to cultural traditional and sociological factors. In particular, the "head of the family" concept which is used as the basis for allocation of resources in the rural area has historically ignored both the existence of female-headed households and the rights of married women to a joint share of resources (Sachikonye, 2004).

In addition to the WID agenda, there was the simultaneous effort by liberal feminists to get equal rights, employment, equity and citizenship for women. Liberal feminists insist that all that is needed to change the status of women is to change existing laws that are unfavourable for women and that will open up more avenues for women to prove themselves as equal to the opposite sex. No longer, therefore, should women

be seen as passive recipients of development assistance, but as active agents capable of transforming their own economic, social, political and cultural realities. Prior to this, however, women were brought into development policy on very sex-specific terms. Men were seen as the heads of households and productive agents. Women were seen as housewives, mothers and reproducers. Therefore development efforts targeted the male population; while women were relegated to the marginal welfare sector. Women can thus be seen as a “missing link in development, a hitherto undervalued economic resource in the development process” (Tinker, 1990).

Although WID interventions have been a necessary step in the right direction, this approach has proven incapable of raising questions about the role of gender relations and male structures of power which restrict women’s access to economic resources. This non-confrontational approach avoided questioning the sources and nature of women's subordination and oppression. By refusing to ask questions about why resources are so unevenly distributed between the genders in the first place, the issue of power asymmetry is effectively brushed aside. WID does not pay sufficient attention to the way in which powerful gender relations can subvert resources directed at women.

WID is accused of, above all, of ignoring the global inequality on women in the developing countries and failed to acknowledge the importance of race, ethnicity, history, culture and class in women’s lives. WID seems to categorise women as separate and homogeneous entities while in fact, they are diverse groups. It ignores the fact that women are not a single category. In a society divided along class lines and driven by economic exploitation, women are at a fundamental economic disadvantage. On the other hand, Gaidzanwa (1992) also argued that WID id not

look at the problems of men and global economic system which subordinated both men and women. Advancement of credit to women alone had devastating results. It also further widened the gap between men and women hence, more gender disparities transpired. A further limitation of the framework is that it does not recognise that equality cannot exist in a capitalist system as it ignores the structures of inequality, based on sex, which are intrinsic to capitalism. All the above shortcomings of WID led to its incompetency and consequently, to the development of Women and Development (WAD).

### **2.3. Women and Development (WAD)**

A closely related approach was known as "women and development" (WAD). It also came into being as a critique to the deficiencies of WID approach. Derived from a political economy perspective, it focused on the relationship between women and development processes, rather than on strategies for integrating women into development, noting that women have always been important economic actors in their societies. It argued that women have always been "integrated" in development processes and their work inside and outside is critical for the maintenance of society. However, "women integration serves primarily to sustain existing international structures of inequality" (Parpart, 1989). In essence, the WAD approach begins from the position that women always have been an integral part of development processes in a global system of exploitation and inequality. According to this perspective; women were not a neglected resource but overburdened and undervalued. Thus, it is from this perspective that we need to examine why women had not benefited from the development strategies of the past decades, that is, by questioning the sources and nature of women's subordination and oppression.

WID advocates were primarily influenced by the rise of radical feminist thinking. They put sexuality, reproduction and patriarchy at the centre of political discussions (Mannathoko, 1991). Proponents of this approach argued that women would never get their equal share of development benefits unless patriarchy and global inequality are addressed. What are needed are a re-evaluation of women's considerable contribution to the development process and a redistribution of the benefits and burdens of development between men and women. The perspective implicitly assumes that women's position will improve if and when international structures become more equitable. In the meantime, the under-representation of women in economic, political and social structures still is identified primarily as a problem which can be solved by carefully designed intervention strategies rather than by more fundamental shifts in the social relations of gender.

The WAD framework called for the recognition of women as the mainstay of agricultural production in developing countries (Rathgeber, 1995). Women contribute tremendously to agricultural output but unfortunately they hardly benefited from agricultural incentives and innovation because of economic suppression and social and traditional practices which undermine the constitutional provisions on the equality of men and women. Women exclusion in development programmes is the reason for the lack of women participation in agricultural programmes and projects. If Zimbabwe is to develop a more productive, sustainable, and equitable agricultural sector, it cannot afford to neglect women. Moreover, the constraints that women face must be addressed if agriculture is to be the engine of economic growth.

African women's fundamental contributions in their households, food production systems and national economies are increasingly acknowledged, within Africa and by the international community. However, the growing recognition of their contributions has not translated into significantly improved access to resources or increased decision-making powers. There has been insufficient political will and sustained commitment to meeting the needs and interests of women by local authorities and governments. Without meaningful commitment in the form of policy changes and the provision of resources to deal with the root causes of women's conditions, Zimbabwe cannot hope to see a breakthrough in its development and renewal.

WAD offers amore critical view of women`s position than does WID but fails to undertake a full-scale analysis of the relationship between patriarchy, differing modes of production and women`s subordination and oppression. Since the WAD perspective does not give detailed to the overriding influence of the ideology of patriarchy, women`s condition primarily is seen within the structures of international and class inequalities. Critics also argued that it was too inclined to see women as a homogeneous class ignoring differences among women, particularly women`s race, class and ethnic divisions which may exercise powerful influence on women`s actual social status (Connely *et al*, 2000) WAD concentrated on the productive part of women whilst downplaying the work and lives of women. It is contradictory to WID`s claim of exclusion and subscribes that women were already integrated, but fails to come up with a inclusive approach that is gender neutral.

Finally, it focussed on women and gender as a unit of analysis without recognizing the important divisions that exist among women and the frequent exploitation that

occurs in most societies of poor women by richer ones. So within the international development community, there has been a shift in thinking from the "women and development" (WAD) approach, which focused narrowly on women's productive roles, to a broader "Gender and Development" perspective, which takes into account all spheres of women's lives and seeks to bring gender analysis into the core of development policy.

#### **2.4. Gender and Development (GAD)**

The third policy approach to emerge was Gender and Development (GAD). Gender and Development (GAD), which has been underway since the 1980s, was partly borne out of recognition of the inadequacies of focusing on women in isolation. It emphasised on "social and historically constructed relations between women and men" (Moser, 1993), which allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the relational nature of gendered power, and of the interdependency of women and men. Pearson (1992) pointed out that there are clear cut relations in the interactions of gender, class and development processes. GAD appeals for a complimentary relationship between men and women for ultimate positive gender mainstreaming. GAD seeks to redress ethnicity, race, class, masculinities and femininities and show that they are interconnected.

The GAD approach commenced on integration of gender issues into the design and implementation of development programs. It finds its theoretical roots in Marxist-socialist feminism. Capitalism and patriarchy become effective mechanism for marginalising and exploiting women. Most significantly, the GAD approach starts from a holistic perspective, looking at "the totality of social organization, economic and political life in order to understand the shaping of particular aspects of society"

(Young, 1987). The GAD approach was projected towards addressing strategic gender needs which can empower women and transform gender relations. It examines women material conditions, class positions, and patriarchal structures responsible for women subordination (Moser, 1993).

The GAD framework then attempts to these concerns over patriarchy, capitalism, and the global economy and their impacts on development for women. It argues that women experience subordination according to their race, class, colonial history, culture, and the international economy. The GAD approach was projected towards strengthening the effectiveness of development work in improving the situation of both women and men, and achieving progress towards social and gender equality.

This approach rejects the dichotomy between the public and the private. It focuses attention on the oppression of women in the family, within the private sphere of the household. It emphasizes the state's role in providing social services to promote women's emancipation.

In most African societies women are isolated from production outside the home and are confined to the home. Because of this, women are compelled to rely on the "man of the house" for their living, which marginalizes and limits their autonomy and access to resource (Rathgeber, 1995). The GAD approach emphasizes the reduction of the gender gap between women and men in order to achieve gender-balanced development. Unequal gender relations in Zimbabwe, deny women from accessing or obtaining land, credit, education, technology and agricultural extension. Women's inequality exists not because they are bypassed or marginalized by development planners, but because women are not part of the power structures.

"Beyond improving women's access to the same development resources as are directed to men, the GAD approach stresses direct challenges to male cultural,

social and economic privileges, so that women are enabled to make equal social and economic profit out of the same resources” (Goetz, 1997).

A GAD perspective leads not only to the design of intervention and affirmative action strategies which will ensure that women are better integrated into on-going development efforts. It leads, inevitably, to a fundamental re-examination of social structures and institutions and, ultimately, to the loss of power of entrenched elites, which inevitably will have effect on women as well as men. Projects designed from a GAD perspective would question traditional views of gender roles and responsibilities and point towards a more equitable definition of the very concept of "development" and of the contributions made by women and by men to the attainment of societal goals.

The GAD approach seeks to correct systems and mechanisms that produce gender inequality by focusing not only on women, but also by assessing the social status of both women and men. Moreover, it emphasizes the role of men in resolving gender inequality, and places importance on the empowerment of women, who are placed in a socially and economically weaker position than men. At the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing Conference) held in 1995, the international community acknowledged the concept of gender mainstreaming as a method of entrenching the GAD approach. Furthermore, the United Nations Millennium Summit held in 2000 adopted the Millennium Declaration, which included, among the eight goals to be achieved by 2015, the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women. The declaration also acknowledged the importance of mainstreaming the gender perspective in all initiatives undertaken by the international community toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality in all fields of society. It seeks to identify men's and women's development issues and needs, as well as development impacts on men and women at all stages of development, through planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of development policies and measures and projects, on the premise that all development policies, measures, and projects have different impacts on men and women.

The GAD approach recognises that improving the status of women is not a separate, isolated issue but needs to be addressed by taking into account the status of men and women, their differing life courses and the fact that equal treatment will not necessarily produce equal outcomes (Young, 1987). It seeks to address these differences by mainstreaming gender into development planning at all levels and in all sectors, focusing less on providing equal treatment for men and women and more on taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure equal outcomes.

In insisting that women cannot be viewed in isolation, it emphasizes a focus on gender relations, when designing measures to "help" women in the development process (Moser, 1993). Hence, these insights will be used to tailor policies and programmes that will improve overall productivity. In order to assume a leading role in all aspects of gender and development, planning and budgeting, and ensuring the mainstreaming of gender into all sectors, the Zimbabwean government is making efforts to support the strengthening of the capacity of the National Gender Machinery through the Gender and Community Development and Ministry of Women Affairs.

The GAD approach blames women's subordination on the impact of the capitalist mode of production, patriarchy, and the international division of labour. These explanations for women subordination are embedded in Marxist-socialist feminism. It argues that the ideology of patriarchy operates within and across classes to oppress

women (Maguire, 1984). Engels (1972) argued that the establishment of private property in land, tools, and livestock created the possibility for men to exercise control over the means of production. In order to ensure legitimacy of heirs and control private property, men established a patrilineal and patriarchal form of society. For many Marxists, this has made “oppression on the basis of sex derivative from the development of a social surplus, the beginning of production for exchange and the institution of private property, thus providing an economic explanation for this form of oppression” (Hale, 1995).

However, O’Brien (1981) challenges the original thesis proposed by Engels that links male power and control over property. First, Engels all oppression of women is a result of private property in the means of production, and no other factors are considered. If there are cultural or other factors that originally played a role in this, or continue to exist, then removing private ownership may not eliminate women's oppression. The material base for of the gender hierarchy is the means of reproduction of children rather production of material goods. O’Brien (1981) suggest that men seek to control property in order to control women`s sexual and reproductive powers, not the other way round. The inheritance of property from father to son is also of paramount importance in the social assertion of the principle of paternity over biological maternity.

## **2.5. Towards a theory of women`s land question**

It is clear now from the discussion of the three approaches that WID wanted inclusion of women from exclusion while WAD emphasize integration to development and on the other hand GAD looks at interconnectedness for a vibrant gender mainstreaming. However, regardless of the various well-founded criticisms of GAD

approach, it has proven to be a useful conceptual tool, although it cannot sufficiently underscore the specificity of rural women's access to land in Zimbabwe. By focusing on what separates women and men, GAD neglects the social relations that also connects them, as well as how changes may be brought about in men's and women's respective roles. In addition by not emphasizing social relations sufficiently, it has been argued, the GAD perspective cannot explain how powerful gender relations can subvert the impact of resources directed at women or adequately identify women's interests and what trade-offs they are willing to make to fulfil their ideals of motherhood or marriage (Africa Recovery Paper, 1998). These social relations generally sanction male authority over women. Land belonged to men and women's access to land is mediated through men. Male members had the power and authority to distribute land to other male members who are heads of households. Men control household land because, community customs and traditions support land allocation to male. Lack of access and ownership militates against women's power over the earnings from the land for which they are the major producers. Thus, given the importance of land in food security, there is a need to address the social relations that hurdles to women access to land. This reality calls for a positive shift in the mindset of both women and men so that rural women can have more access to land.

However, the GAD approach will help the researcher to understand the phenomenon which surrounds rural woman land rights in Zimbabwe. GAD seeks to ensure that all decisions concerning development be reached through the local, equitable participation of women and men in the development process. It is increasingly recognized that the socio-economic needs of these women and men must be a priority in any sustainable strategy to resolve development problems. One of the

strengths of GAD is that it reconciled WID and WAD and aggregated that development is based on interconnectedness of variables like culture, economy, and politics. Women are viewed as the grassroots of development. Therefore they should be integrated into the national development strategies and policies.

Gender and development serves a point of reference to determine the judicious use of resources, provides a basis for analysis to improve upon the nation's efforts in dealing with gender, poverty and development issues and helps in bridging the existing gap between men and women and ensures gender equitable and sustainable development. The gender and development approach sees gender as a crosscutting issue with relevance for and influencing all economic, social, and political processes. A gender-focused approach seeks to redress gender inequity through facilitating strategic, broad-based, and multifaceted solutions to gender inequality.

Inherent in the GAD approach is gender mainstreaming which is a means of addressing women's concerns more holistically and effectively. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for making women as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral part of any development plan, by addressing their specific identified needs. The process requires extensive gender analysis and planning, taking into account current and past information and experiences. It requires gender planning to be applied to all development operations and projects, and allows women to be factored into economic and development policy.

In brief, this section has noted that GAD is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and

inequality is not perpetrated. The aim of gender and development is to ensure that change benefits both women and men. The GAD approach will help the researcher to understand the phenomenon which surrounds rural women land rights in Zimbabwe.

The reason why the study could not use WID and WAD is that both were too inclined to see women as a homogeneous class ignoring differences among women, particularly ethnic divisions, culture, race, history and class. In a society divided along class lines and driven by economic exploitation women are at fundamental economic disadvantage. Furthermore, rather than challenging male bias WID operates within the environment where it prevails and so largely ignores the real problem of women's unequal position to men. Although it was a necessary step in the right direction, this approach has proven incapable of challenging gender stereotypes and male structure of power. Even though WAD offers a more critical view of women's position than WID does, it failed to undertake a full analysis of the relationship between patriarchy, differing modes of production and women's subordination and oppression.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

The chapter has explored approaches that pave way for a clearer understanding of women access to and control over property in Zimbabwe. Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD) and Gender and Development (GAD) approach were discussed in relation to women access to land in Zimbabwe. In all these three approaches, women's empowerment is central to achieving gender equality. Through empowerment, women become aware of unequal power relations, gain control over their lives, and acquire a greater voice to overcome inequality in

their home, workplace and community. However, GAD was chosen for the study as it takes into account both women and men involvement in the mainstream of national development.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Chapter two discussed the related literature of this research. The essence of this chapter is to outline the methodological framework that will be used for the research. The chapter opens by a description of the study area followed by an explanation on why a qualitative research approach was necessary. Furthermore issues of the population and the sample will be discussed in depth and this will form the basis for conducting research interviews. The chapter will also describe data collection procedures and the plan for the data analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) data analysis software was used to analyse the data in this research.

#### **3.2. Description of the study area**

The study was conducted in Mutasa District which is situated in Manicaland Province, one of the 10 provinces in Zimbabwe. Harare is the capital city and other major urban areas are Bulawayo, Chitungwiza, Gweru and Mutare, the Manicaland provincial capital. Manicaland covers an area of about 36 459 km<sup>2</sup> and is divided into seven districts namely Buhera, Chimanimani, Chipinge, Makoni, Mutare, Mutasa and Nyanga (Utete, 2003). The administrative centre of the Manicaland Province is Mutare, which is the fourth largest city in Zimbabwe and is located in Eastern Highlands.

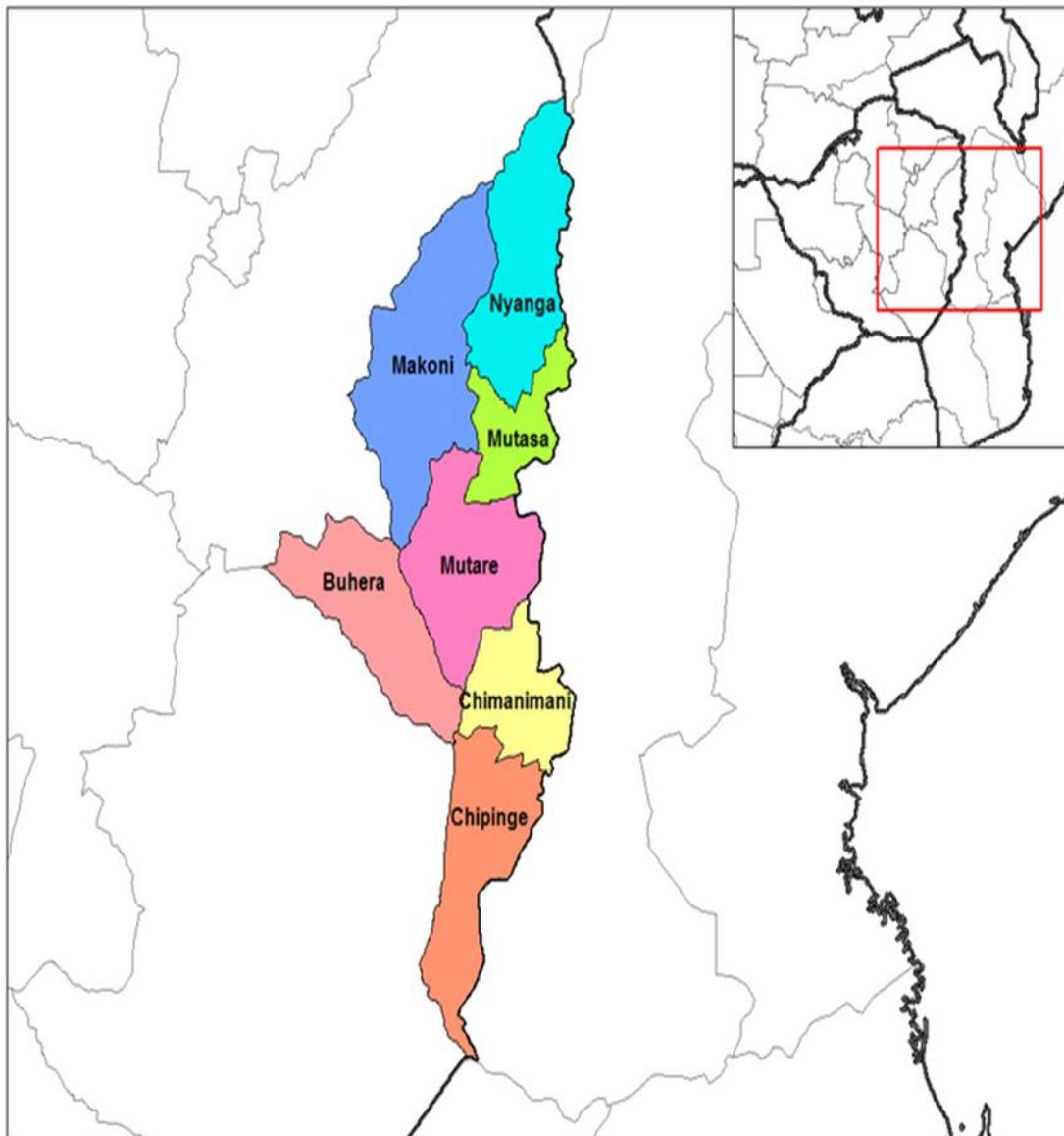
### **3.2.1. Geography**

Manicaland province is the eastern province of Zimbabwe and it stretches north and south along the eastern border with Mozambique. A range of mountains forms the border with Mozambique in the east and it stretches for 300 km. The mountains are Nyanga, which is the largest and situated to the north, Bvumba, which is in the middle, with the largest rainfall and the Chimanimani to the south (Samimi and Wagensel, 1999). These mountains are collectively known as the Eastern Highlands. The topography of Manicaland varies from the low-lying areas below 900m and soars to Mt Nyanga, the highest mountain in Zimbabwe at 2 593m. On the southern part of this mountain there is the Mutarazi Falls, which are 762m high and are the second highest in Africa, after the Tugela Falls in the KwaZulu Natal province of South Africa (Utete,2003). However, Mutasa district is located 30 km from Mutare and stretches up to the Honde Valley which is about 100 km north east of Mutare along the tarred road which branches off the Nyanga road to Eastern Highlands estates such as Katiyo and Aberfoyle (Manenji, 2004).

### **3.2.2. Population**

The population of Zimbabwe in 2002 was 11 634 663 (Central Statistical Office, 2002). Of these 5 631 426 were males and 6 003 237 were females. This means that males make 48, 4% of the population. The population constituted 2 653 082 households, leading to an average of 4 persons per household. The country has a population density of 30 persons per square kilometre. The distribution of the population by province for 2002 indicates that Harare with 16% of the total population is the most populous province. Manicaland province is next with 13%, followed by Midlands (13%) then Masvingo (11%), Mashonaland East (10%),

Mashonaland Central (9%), Matebeleland North (6%), Bulawayo (6%) and Matebeleland South (6%). Mutasa District has 27 wards and a total population of 167 462 with 39 847 households (Central Statistical Office, 2002). Figure 1 shows the districts in Manicaland Province and the location of Mutasa District.



**Figure 1: Districts in Manicaland Province and the location of Mutasa District (Wikipedia, 2012).**

### **3.2.3. Population Density**

Manicaland has the highest population density. The province has an area of 36 459 square kilometres and a population of 1 566 899. Its population density is 42 people per square kilometre where the national average is 31 persons per square kilometre (Utete, 2003). These statistics suggest a high demand for land by the people of Manicaland. Galang (2002), noted that there is a high demand for land in some parts of the province such that some people are forced to live on the hills, which were initially designated as grazing areas or places for fetching firewood. Buhera, Chipinge and Mutasa rural districts have the highest family sizes, possibly because the polygamous Apostolic Church is popular in these districts.

### **3.2.4. People**

About 74% of the population speak Shona as their mother tongue, while 18% speak Ndebele, 4% English and 4% other languages (FAO, 2001). These other minor languages include Tonga, Venda, Chewa and Kalanga. Shona is associated with the provinces of Masvingo, Manicaland, the three Mashonaland provinces and some parts of Midlands. Ndebele is mostly used in the two Matebeleland provinces and some parts of Midlands province. English is the language of communication in government and business. All three major languages are officially taught in schools. In Manicaland, although the population speaks Shona, different districts have own sub-dialects. For example Mutasa district uses the Manyika sub-dialect (Manenji, 2004). In Makoni, the people use the Maungwe dialect, Chipinge, the Ndau and Mutare, the Bocha and Jindwi dialects.

Christianity is the main religion in Zimbabwe, but traditional ethnic beliefs do persist on a limited scale (FAO, 2001). Almost half of people of Mutasa district practise their

own traditional way of worshipping and the others practice Christianity with the majority falling under the Methodist and Anglican churches (Manenji, 2004). Some fall under the Apostolic Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. There is high proportion of the Apostolic followers in Mutasa District and polygamy is quite prevalent among church members.

### **3.2.5. Communications, Health and Educational delivery systems**

All areas under study are linked by both primary and secondary road systems. The primary road system is made up of the main road network, which links main urban centres. These roads are tarred. Good-tarred roads link Mutasa to other towns like Nyanga, Chipinge, Chimanimani, Rusape and beyond. The state of the secondary, gravel roads in the province is quite heterogeneous. The rural areas are linked to the main roads by gravel roads.

The roads are in a bad state because of shortage of funds to maintain them. As a result most transporters are said to be shunning the roads that cause damage to their vehicles. The few transporters who sacrifice their vehicles and use these roads charge high rates, which many rural farmers cannot afford. The situation is worse during the rainy season where some parts of the district are inaccessible by road due to the bad state of roads. These areas will only be accessible by four-wheel-drive enabled vehicles due to the terrain. The poor road infrastructures act as a disincentive to the productivity of the rural farmers. However, the rail network is also extensively developed, but these are almost entirely confined to the large-scale commercial areas.

The (Central Intelligence Agency 2002) described Zimbabwe's telephone system as once one of the best in Africa, but now it is suffering from poor maintenance. In

addition to 232 000 fixed telephones, the country has three mobile phone service providers; NETONE, ECONET and TELECEL that have 100 000, 170 000 and 127 000 subscribers respectively, (Herald, 2004), and cover all urban centres plus rural areas that are not too remote. In Manicaland, phone, telegraph, facsimile, Internet and e-mail services are available in all urban centres. Although the telecommunication system has been greatly improved some farmers still have to walk some distance to go and make a phone call.

The telephone system is not very reliable especially during the rainy season. The current rural electrification system has resulted in the rapid expansion of the cellular system. Some parts of Mutasa District are now covered by NETONE cellular services. Zimbabwe boasts excellent regular and express mail services (Park, 1997). Farmers do not have problems with the mailing system. Trucks, buses and trains transport the mail. Farmers can even collect their cheques at the nearest schools through the mail.

As to health, the Government of Zimbabwe has constructed or upgraded 456 health centres, 612 rural hospitals and 25 district hospitals (Hansard, 2001). Although there is now a health centre within every 5 km radius, most of the rural hospitals are under staffed (IRIN, 2004). Zimbabwe boasts a literacy rate of 91%, which is the best for the whole of Africa (World Bank, 2003). In Manicaland a number of both primary and secondary schools are scattered around the province. Just as with clinics, in general, there is a school within a 5 km radius.

### **3.2.6. Climate**

Most of the rainfall experienced in Zimbabwe is of the convectional type although limited occurrences of other forms of rainfall are also experienced (Nyamaphene,

1991). For example the Mutasa District, because of the considerable elevation, also receives orographic rainfall at various times of the year, in addition to the normal convectional rainfall. This portion of the country, therefore, receives the highest rainfall in the country. This area receives between 70 and 80% of its rainfall between November and March, but even in the dry season rainfall is observed. The mean annual rainfall therefore reaches 1 000 to 2 000 mm, in the highest parts of the Eastern Highlands up to 3 000 mm (Phillips and Goodier, 1962), as quoted by Samimi and Wagnseil (1999). According to the altitude the temperatures are cool, ranging from 12 to 15 °C during the cold season and from 18 to 26 °C during summer. Frost is also common from May to October.

### **3.2.7. Water sources**

Mutasa district is in the Highveld, receiving high rainfall, hence there are a number of small to large dams in the district, the major ones being Osborne Dam and Nyawamba Dam. However the availability of dams is not benefiting rural farmers. This is because most of the dams found in the district are located in the former or current large-scale commercial farming areas. The forestry companies privately own most of the dams found in the Eastern Highlands and the water is used mainly for domestic and industrial uses.

In Mutasa district the combined capacity of the dams is very low which indicates that most of the dams are small. Most rural farmer does not have water pumps to take water from perennial rivers like Odzi, Pungwe and Honde. However a few farmers benefit from the water points along Pungwe – Mutare pipeline route which pass through the district. Quite a number of seasonal streams are found in the districts.

Farmers in Mutasa District also rely on underground water with most of it used for irrigation, livestock and domestic use.

### **3.2.8. Agriculture**

The rainfall pattern creates extensive variability in agricultural potential. In Mutasa agricultural production consists of subsistence farming on one hand, and commercial farming activities, on the other. Although much of the maize grown in Manicaland comes from Mutasa district, the area is also well known for producing sugarcane, bananas, vegetables and fruits such as avocados (Manenji, 2004). During good agricultural years farmers market all the other crops but with maize, only the surplus, after satisfying subsistence needs; they market to the Grain Market Board (GMB) or to other local deficit households.

As noted by Nyamaphene (1991), the soils found in the Eastern districts are not used for normal cultivation and are largely taken up by forestry and the growing of tree crops, especially tea and coffee. Tea and coffee are produced at Katiyo Tea Estate and Eastern Highland Estate while wattle extract is produced by Wattle Company Limited. These companies provide employment opportunities and income to many people. Some small farmers also grow tea and coffee and sell it to Katiyo Eastern Highland estates for processing and packaging. Villages also raise cattle, goats and chicken. Commercial egg and chicken production is more common in Mutasa district, all households have some poultry.

### **3.2.9. Mining**

Zimbabwe has a broad-based economy with three major productive sectors namely agriculture, mining and manufacturing (World Bank, 1999, as quoted by FAO (2001).

Principal minerals are asbestos, platinum, nickel, copper, gold, coal and chrome and the country's main mineral is diamond. The Marange diamond fields in Manicaland are an area of widespread small-scale diamond production in Chiadzwa, Mutare West, Zimbabwe. The hugely prolific Chiadzwa fields are regarded as the world's biggest diamond find in more than a century. The companies involved in diamond mining include the Anjin Investments, Marange Resources, Mbada Diamonds and Pure Diamonds.

However, production from Marange is controversial due to ongoing legal wrangles and government crackdowns on illegal miners and allegations of forced labour. On the other hand there is the Red Wing Mine in Penhalonga, 20km north of Mutare in Mutasa district and the Inyati Mine in Makoni, which are currently producing very little gold. Recently some gold deposits have been found in Chimanimani district and there has been an influx of people into the district to do gold panning. Zimbabwe has been experiencing some poor harvests since 2001 and many rural households have resorted to coping mechanisms such as gold panning (World Food Programme, 2003).

### **3.2.10. Tourism**

Tourism has been noted as one of the most important sectors of the Zimbabwe economy. Since independence tourism has been one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy but since the year 2000 it has experienced a slump due to political and other macro-economic instabilities. Zimbabwe boasts one of the Wonders of the World, the Victoria Falls. Other places of tourist attraction include the Great Zimbabwe and the Gonarezhou Game Park in Masvingo province, the Hwange Game Reserve in Matebeleland North and the Mana Pools in Mashonaland Central

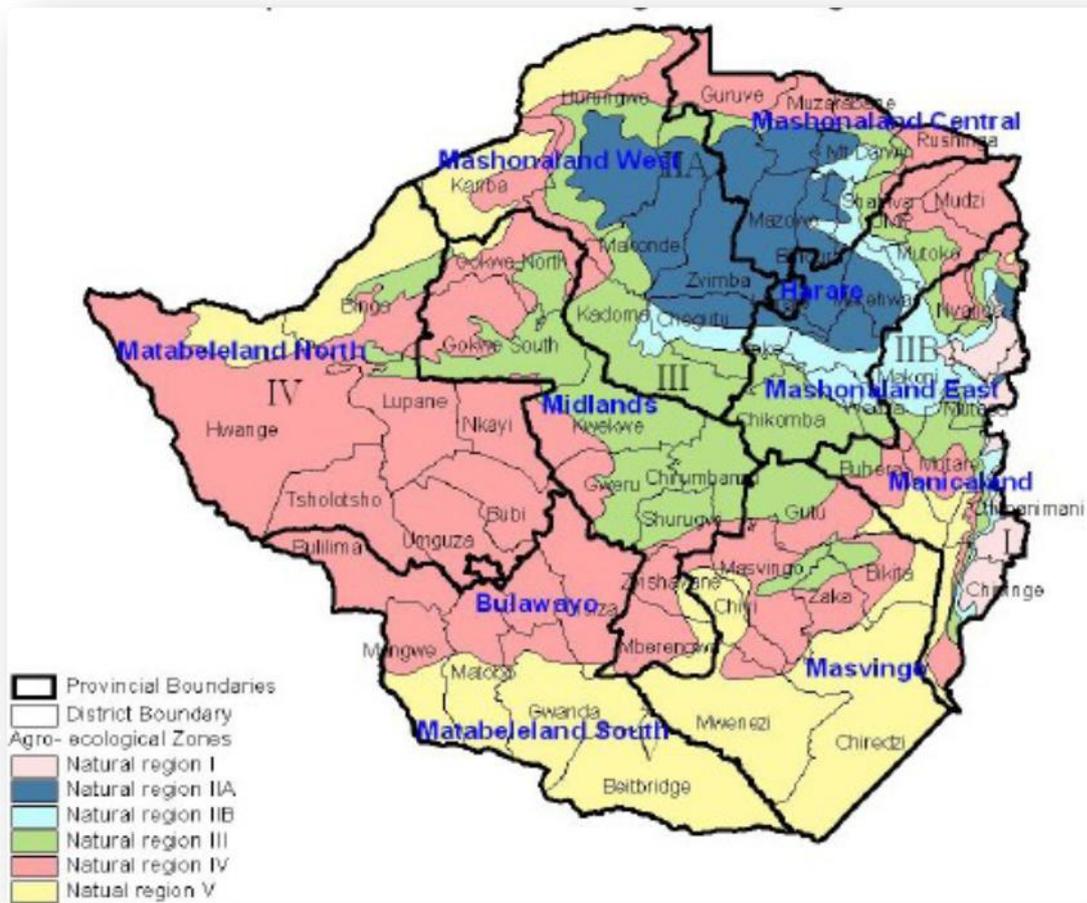
province. Manicaland is home to the famous Eastern highlands which includes the Nyanga, Vumba and Chimanimani mountains, and the Mutarazi Falls. The province hosts vast areas of both indigenous and exotic forestry, wildlife, parks, rivers and mountains, providing unique scenery. The Hot Springs and the Birchenough Bridge are some of the tourist attraction places.

### 3.2.11. Agro-Ecological potential

The physiographic features or natural resources of an area are among the major determinants of its production potential. These natural resources together with human and capital resources (socio-economic factors) dictate the viability of the agricultural enterprise and the economic development of the area (Sebotja, 1985). Zimbabwe is divided into five agro-ecological regions according to the amount of rainfall received. The five agro-ecological zones; regions I to V reflect the range from high-to-low quality land. The rainfall patterns and crop production progressively deteriorate from Region I to Region V.

Figure: 2 show the areas under each natural region in Zimbabwe. The single rainy season occurs in the summer months from November to March and is followed by seven months of dry weather. Rainfall reliability decreases from North to South and from East to West. Cattle production is very important for communal farmers in the low rainfall areas because it is a more viable production system than crop production. The natural or agro-ecological regions range from Natural Region I through Natural Region V.

**Figure: 2. Agro-ecological zones of Zimbabwe (Zimfarmer, 2012)**



Region I covers 1.56 percent of the total area in the country and it is located in the eastern part of the country (Zimfarmer, 2012). Rainfall in this region is high (more than 1 000mm per annum in areas lying below 1 700m altitude, and more than 900mm per annum at greater altitudes), normally with some precipitation in all months of the year (Muregerera 2003). Temperatures are normally comparatively low and the rainfall is consequently highly effective enabling forestation, fruit and intensive livestock production to be practiced. In frost free areas, plantation crops such as tea, coffee and macadamia nuts can be grown; where the mean annual rainfall is below 1 400mm, supplementary irrigation of these crops is required (Zimfarmer, 2012).

Region II covers 18.68 percent of the area of Zimbabwe and is located in the middle of the country (Zimfarmer, 2012). The region extends over three provinces Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland West. Rainfall is confined to summer and is moderately high (750-1 000mm). Region II receives an average of at least 18 rainy days per season and normally enjoys reliable conditions, rarely experiencing severe dry spells in summer (Muregerera, 2003). The region is suitable for intensive systems of farming based on crops and/or livestock production. However, 75-85 percent of the area is planted with crops (Zimfarmer, 2012). Farming is mostly diversified and specialised and the main agricultural activities include forestry, fruit production and intensive livestock rearing and major grown crops are tobacco, maize and wheat (Munyanyi, 2005).

Region III covers 17.43 percent of the country's land area and accounts 15 percent of the arable land (Zimfarmer, 2012). Rainfall in this region is moderate in total amount (650-800mm), but, because much of it is accounted for by infrequent heavy falls and temperatures are generally high, its effectiveness is reduced (Munyanyi, 2005). This region will receive an average of 14-16 rainy days per season. The region is also subject to fairly severe mid-season dry spells and, therefore, is marginal for maize, tobacco and cotton production, or for enterprises based on crop production alone. The farming systems, in conformity with the natural conditioning factors, should therefore be based on both livestock production (assisted by the production of fodder crops) and cash crops under good management on soils of high available moisture potential.

Region IV comprises 33.03 percent of the country's land area and this forms the largest part of the geographical regions in the country (Zimfarmer, 2012). This region experiences fairly low total rainfall (450-650mm) and is subject to periodic seasonal

droughts and severe dry spells during the rainy season (Munyanyi, 2005). The rainfall is too low and uncertain for cash cropping except in certain very favourable localities, where limited drought-resistant crops (sorghum and pearl millet) can be grown. The farming system, in accordance with natural factors, should be based on livestock production, but it can be intensified to some extent by the growing of drought resistant fodder crops.

Lastly, Region V comprises 26.5 percent of the country's land area (Zimfarmer, 2012). The rainfall in this region is too low and erratic for the reliable production of even drought-resistant fodder and grain crops, and farming has to be based on the utilization of the veldt alone. An extensive form of cattle ranging is the only sound farming system for this region. Included in this region are areas of below 900m altitude, where the mean rainfall is below 650mm in the Zambezi valley and below 600mm in the Sabi-Limpopo valleys (Muregerera, 2003).

Of these five regions, Mutasa district falls in Natural Region I and II. However with all these description of the study area, the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) should have uplifted the people because the area has vast resources which are crucial in maximising agricultural production. However agricultural production declined, hunger and starvation became the prominent feature in the study area. Women were left out of the programme although they are major agricultural producers in the area. Marginalizing women in accessing land under the FTLRP did more harm than good.

### **3.3. Research Methodology**

The study used a qualitative approach. The goal of this method is defined as describing and understanding rather than explanation and prediction of human

behaviour. Qualitative research involves exploration, elaboration and systematisation of the significance of an identified phenomenon. Babbie *et al* (2001) define qualitative research as an approach in which research takes as its departure point the insider perspective on social action. Punch (2005) writes that qualitative method is the best way of getting the insider's perspective, the actor's definition of the situation and the meanings people attach to things and events. It tries to understand any social phenomenon from the perspective of the actors involved, rather than explaining it from the outside.

It is a research approach that privileges the lived experience of the subject, and the meaning the subjects attaches to the phenomena being investigated while quantitative research involves counting and measuring of events and performing the statistical analysis of a body of numerical data (Smith, 1995). Simply put, it investigates the why and how of decision- making, as compared to what, where, and when of quantitative research. Being deductive and particularistic, quantitative research is based upon formulating the research hypotheses and verifying them empirically on a specific set of data (Bailey, 1998).

Qualitative research offers insights and understandings of participants, which is unobtainable by quantitative research, but is more than just non-numerical research. It aims to study the subject in their natural surroundings and to collect naturally occurring, non-biased data. According to Creswell (2003) qualitative methods yield large volumes of exceedingly rich data obtained from a limited number of individuals.

Qualitative research allows the subjects being studied to give much 'richer' answers to questions put to them by the researcher. Qualitative data collection methods include the use of photography, interviews, group and/or individual, observation, field

notes, projective techniques and life stories. While quantitative methods include a representation of an empirical system in a numerical mathematical system for the purpose of reasoning analytically within the mathematical system.

The qualitative approach has many advantages which this study draws on. These include, producing more comprehensive information, it makes use of subjective information and participant observation to describe the context, or natural setting, of the variables under consideration, as well as the interactions of the different variables in the context. "Qualitative research involves broadly stated questions about human experiences and realities, studied through sustained contact with people in their natural environments, generating rich, descriptive data that helps us to understand their experiences and attitudes" (Dingwall *et al*, 1998:168). Its aim is to find out people's feelings and experiences from their own point of view rather than from that of the researcher. Morse and Field (1996) support in saying that qualitative research has a greater validity since it is a holistic approach to research that does not reduce participants to functioning parts.

This approach allowed respondents to present their views and opinions on their challenges in accessing land through the FTLRP; both negative and positive issues were drawn out in answering the proposed question. The purpose to use qualitative methodology was also to uncover the conscious and unconscious explanation people have for what they do or believe, to capture and reproduce this particular social action so that actions people take become intelligible.

The decision to use qualitative methodology in this study has been influenced by qualitative researchers who point out that qualitative methods permit a considerable amount of flexibility to follow unexpected ideas during research and explore processes effectively. Grinnell, (1987) points out that qualitative data with its

emphasis on people's lived experiences is fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings of people, place on the events, processes and structures of their lives. Klein and Myers (1999) further point out that this approach assumes that reality is socially constructed and the researcher becomes the vehicle by which this reality is revealed. The aim for using this methodology is to collect detailed information from the respondents concerning the research topic. According to Punch (2005) using qualitative methodology enables the researcher to get closer to what is being studied and it also gives an in-depth understanding of the complexity of social life.

However, the demerits of qualitative method are that it is very difficult to prevent or detect researcher induced bias and its scope is limited due to the in-depth, comprehensive data gathering approaches required. Validity can be a major concern. Observers are forced to rely almost exclusively on their perceptions. They are, therefore, more susceptible to subjectivity, prejudices and selective perceptions. This can be major obstacles in participatory observation; since the researcher forms a close link with respondents and actually becomes part of the total situation (Bailey, 1998).

#### **3.4. Population and Sample size**

A population can be defined as including all people or items with the characteristic one wishes to understand, whilst a sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole (Babbie *et al*, 2001:27). Strydom (1996) describe sampling as the process of taking a portion of a population as a representatives of that population. In general, sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample, or a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole

population. The process of sampling is necessary due to large size of a population and the consequent impracticality and prohibitive cost of testing each member of any population (Denzin, 2000).

The choice for the sample size was mainly based on the need for accuracy required by the researcher and the degree of variation in the sample. The informants in this study consisted of 50 women from rural areas in Mutasa District. This study mainly focused on how women feel about equality in accessing land under the FTLRP. However the sample was limited 50 women because of time and financial resource constraints.

The researcher used purposive sampling to select informants. Purposive sampling is based on the 'judgement of the researcher that a sample has typical elements which contain the most typical attributes of the population (Alston and Bowles, 2003). This is the type of sampling that was used to select women for the research. Purposive sampling is when the researcher select sample on the basis of his own knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of the research aims, in short based on the judgement and the purpose of the study (Babbie *et al*, 2001).In purposive sampling; sampling is done with a purpose in mind. In fact, they are selected with a specific purpose in mind, and that purpose reflects the particular qualities of women chosen and their relevance to the topic of investigation. This type of sampling permits the selection of interviewees whose qualities or experiences permit an understanding of the phenomena in question, and are therefore valuable. This is the strength of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling procedures were used for the purpose of drawing a representative sample, from whose findings generalizations to the bigger population can be made.

Purposive sampling is used primarily when there are a limited number of people that have expertise in the area being researched. Purposive sampling can be very useful for situations where you need to reach a targeted sample quickly and where sampling for proportionality is not the primary concern. With a purposive sample, you are likely to get the opinions of your target population, but you are also likely to overweight subgroups in your population that are more readily accessible. Prior knowledge and research skill are used in selecting the respondents or elements to be sampled.

Justification for using the purposive sampling is that it stems from the idea that the research process is one of "discovery" rather than testing of hypotheses. It is a strategy where Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe as 'emergent and sequential'. Almost like detective, the researcher follows a trail of clues, which leads the researcher in a particular direction until the questions have been answered and things can be explained (Robson, 1993: 33). Dane (1990) points out the advantage of purposive sampling is that it allows the researcher to home in on people or events, which have good grounds in what they believe, will be critical for the research. Other merits of purposive sampling are that people who do not fit the requirements are eliminated and it is less expensive as it involves lesser search costs.

However, a limitation of purposive sampling is that, it is the responsibility of the researcher to choose participants, there is a possibility that the researcher could be wrong in choosing suitable participants for the study (Gilliam, 2000). It is not good enough, though, to assume that findings for the sample will be replicated in the rest of the population, so therefore the sample in the first place needs to be carefully selected if there is to be any confidence that the findings from the sample are similar

to those found among the rest of the category under investigation. Another drawback, with purposive sampling is that the type of people who are available for study may be different from those in the population who can't be located and this might introduce a source of bias. Since, purposive sampling targets a particular group of people, the desired population for the study maybe rare or very difficult to locate and recruit for a study; as a result, this may create many opportunities for error.

### **3.5. Research instruments**

An instrument is any tool that is used in data collection. Babbie *et al*, (2001) defines a research instrument as a tool that is used for collecting data needed to find solutions to the problem under investigation. The researcher used interviews and secondary data as research instruments.

Interviews are face to face meeting between the interviewer and the interviewee (Smith, 1995).In general interviews are discussions, usually one-on-one between an interviewer and an individual, meant to gather information on a specific set of topics. The main reason interviews was carried out as opposed to handing out questionnaires is that some respondents are illiterate in their own language and would not be able to fill out an questionnaire but could participate in an interview allowing a more richer and complex data to be collected.

Interviews offer the possibility of modifying one's line of enquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that postal and self-administered questionnaires cannot (Robson, 1993) therefore enhancing reliability of the data. The researcher purely for the fact that the interviews were in

Shona language was able to carry out the interviews. This promoted a unique closeness and a comfortable, safe, relaxed environment in which the respondents will feel safe to reveal their inner most feelings, anxieties and experiences; this can be enhanced by the provision of privacy and confidentiality (Robson, 2000).

Semi-structured interviews were used as the principal data gathering techniques for this study. The semi-structured interviews are defined as those organized around areas of particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth (Neumann, 2000). Semi-structured interview questions were used to allow participants to engage in a process of exchanging information and experiences. The main aim is to elucidate the participants' perceptions of the world without imposing any of the researchers view, therefore avoiding bias and achieving greater reliability. The idea is to allow the respondents "to express their views, concerns or opinions as freely as possible and this can be done through the semi-structured approach, thus emphasising the focus of qualitative research" (Babbie *et al*, 2001:27).

This technique is deemed appropriate for the data gathering process among women because; it is a rapid method for gathering information from individuals or small groups and is of low-cost. These interviews are partially structured by a written interview guide. An interview guide containing the main topics and questions was used. The flexible guide ensures that the interview stays focused on the development issue at hand, but that the interview is conversational enough to allow participants to introduce and discuss issues which they deem to be relevant. Familiarity of the interviewers with the interview guide, along with that of local languages and cultures, is critical in order for the interview to be conducted in a conversational, informal way. The human use of language is most fascinating both

as behaviour in its own right, for the ritually unique window that it opens on what lies behind our actions (Robson, 2000).

With a semi-structured interview, the interviewer and the interviewee are equal partners. Basically, the interviewer knows the areas he or she wants to cover with the interviewee, but allows the interviewee the options to take different paths and explore different thoughts and feelings. The interviewer, however, can then bring the interviewee back to the subject under discussion by the means of prompt questions, before allowing the interviewee to explore that particular aspect of the research problem. It is very much a two-way dialogue. At the same time, however, it is important to maintain a balance between flexibility and control. Semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity to pose questions in an open-ended manner as the researcher aims to elicit responses of an introspective nature. A semi-structured interview will involve many open-ended questions, although they may also contain some closed questions. There will be also probes and prompts to tease out from the interviewee various strands of their narrative to complete the story.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a fairly open framework that allowed for focused, conversational two way communication (Richards, 2005). Semi-structured interviews were selected because they allow for one to one interactions between the researcher and the participants. According to Richards (2005) the legitimate way to generate data is to interact with people, talk to them, listen to them and gain access to their accounts and articulations. These interviews enabled the participants to give information on their knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences and interactions of their social reality. Hence, the information obtained from semi-structured interviews provided not just answers, but

the reasons for the answers (Schwandt, 2001). Semi-structured interviews are useful for comparative listening to perspectives of diverse populations. The interviewer was therefore prepared to add interviews in the event that unforeseen biases or perspectives become apparent. However semi-structured interviews can be difficult to elicit participation from individuals who have time constraints; documentation and analysis can be time consuming and may require the help of someone versed in qualitative analysis.

Interviews were recorded using a note pad. There were factors which led the researcher not using a tape recorder. The chief was contacted for and gave the permission to conduct the research but he discouraged the use of tape recorder to his people. The chief only accepted note taking because he was anxious about the research being politically inclined. The researcher assured him that the research is not politically motivated and interviews will be treated with confidentiality. However the researcher did not manage to win the argument. The researcher also asked interviewees how they feel about being tape recorded the majority disliked to be tape recorded, so the researcher accommodate their preferences by taking notes. Respondents would be apprehensive and less likely to reveal confidential information when tape recorded. On the other hand the researcher received a warm welcome and respondents were willing to participate and were very supportive during the process. The respondents were patience enough when the researcher was taking notes. The researcher only managed to interview three to four respondents per day. This gave the researcher enough time to expand the notes during and after interviews.

The researcher used abbreviations and acronyms to quickly note what being said, then and type and expand them. After transcribing the data in a notepad the

researcher then read through each transcript repeatedly so as to get the respondents' general feeling about each question. The researcher proceeds by classifying the information into different categories.

While it is possible to try to jot notes to capture respondents' answers, it is difficult to focus on conducting an interview and jotting notes. Note keeping can also be very demanding. Blaxter *et al* (1996) support in saying that concentrating on asking questions, listening to the responses and taking notes is a complex process. This approach will result in poor notes and also detract from the development of rapport between interviewer and interviewee. It is difficult to record lengthy responses manually since the respondents will be answering to open-ended questions simultaneously. By tape recording, the interview means that the researcher will only concentrate on the process of the interview. It gives the researcher time to listen attentively to the respondents and made the interview session more conversational. It also allows the researcher to play the cassette recorder to test for accuracy before leaving.

The study also makes use of secondary data in data collection. Secondary data refers to data that are processed by others for purposes other than the problem at hand, however it can be used to fine-tune the primary research as it provides detailed knowledge of the research topic and problem. Secondary sources do not bear a direct physical relationship to the event being studied, but they are related to the event through some intermediate process. They are called "secondary" because they are not primarily developed for the study in which they are used. Through this approach, the belief is that the discourse under discussion will at the end ensure that there is a better understanding of the issue at hand.

Secondary sources take the role of analysing, explaining, and combining the information from the primary sources with additional information. In this study, secondary data was used as a means of triangulating the primary information from the research. The secondary data obtained mainly captured women access to land in relation to land reform programmes in Zimbabwe. The information will also be gathered from documentary sources such as books, journals, newspapers, reports, articles and other research related to this study. The essence is to review literature about rural women access and control of land in Zimbabwe. The literature to be reviewed will serve as both theoretical and empirical base for the analysis of the data collected. It will also supplement the information gathered during the fieldwork. However there are disadvantages on secondary data to the fact that the researcher cannot personally check the data so its reliability may be questioned.

### **3.6. Research procedures**

According to Grinnel (1987), a procedure refers to prescribed specific manner in which the goals are to be achieved. The researcher first seeks permission from the traditional leaders to work with their community in order to get information relevant to the study. The respondents were interviewed in their mother language which is Shona. Knowledge of the language of the people concerned can help the researcher to make respondents feel free and comfortable to disclose their personal experiences. On the other hand, the respondents were given the opportunity to be interviewed in the language they preferred. Other research participants used English mixed with Shona when explaining a point. The researcher had an advantage of getting the first hand quality information spoken in and non-verbal because he speaks the language of the participants and understands the culture.

The respondents were informed about the length of the interview so that they can make arrangements. Before the interview the researcher contacted the respondents by visiting their homes to confirm arrangements in case they have made other plans. The interviews were conducted in their own home, preferably with fewer distractions. The respondents would be more open in their own environment as opposed to a busy public environment. Great care was taken to ensure that privacy is maintained and disruptions minimised. The researcher also took into considerations the external variables such as telephone ringing, unexpected guests and childcare, these will be minimised as and when it becomes a problem. Interviews also allow some safe guards to be built into the interview situation. By interviewing at home, face to face, it can clarify misunderstood questions and the researcher can observe the level of interaction and understanding and co-operation. In addition, the researcher has a strict control over the order of questions.

The interviews obviously varied in length. Blaxter *et al* (1996) argues that anything under half an hour is unlikely to be valuable; anything that goes much over an hour may be making unreasonable demands on busy interviewees and could have an effect on reducing the number of persons willing to participate, so it has been decided an hour should be sufficient to extract the information needed. Duration of the interview is important because they are demanding and very time consuming but on the other hand; they provide the researcher with quality rich data.

### **3.7. Data analysis**

The process of data analysis involves structuring and bringing logical order to the vast volume of data collected. Data analysis is a stage at which the researcher tunes into the meaning and messages in his or her data and builds up an appreciation of

the nuances and structure and possibilities for analysis. The aim of data analysis is to understand the constitutive elements of data collected through an inspection of the relationships between concepts, variables and to verify trends that can be identified, isolated or to establish themes in the data (Mouton, 2001).

The data was first transcribed verbatim from the field notes onto a computer. To analyse and summarise the collected data a descriptive statistical method was employed. To simplify the analysis of gathered information, the collected data was pre-coded before entering into the computer. The information was grouped according to similarities and was analysed. The idea was to eliminate irrelevant data until only data critical to the research was identified and studied (Brynard and Hanekom, 1997).

The quantitative data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 15.0 which resembled a spread sheet. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (S.P.S.S) was useful in capturing raw data with the use of the computer. This will make it easier to notice patterns that emerged on the data. This includes inputting in the SPSS software to give the mean, mode or median for example. The analysed data was presented and summarised using tables, percentages and graphs. The completion of data analysis led to report writing and the conclusion of the study for recommendation of lessons learnt on how women best can have better access to land under the land distribution programme.

### **3.8. Ethical considerations**

Strydom (1996) defines ethics as a set of moral principle which is suggested by an individual or group is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental

subjects and respondents. During the research process, the researcher adhered to the ethical guidelines which govern all research involving human beings. The study did not expose respondents to any harm be, it physical, emotional or psychological. The researcher tried to keep up to basic safety concerns by ensuring that the information given by respondents do not jeopardise any friendships and working relations that were there before the study was conducted.

The principles of voluntary participation and informed consent were implemented during identification of interviewees and their recruitment to the study. Informed consent is a mechanism for ensuring that people understand what it means to participate in a particular research study so they can decide in a conscious, deliberate way whether they want to participate. Informed consent is one of the most important tools for ensuring respect for persons during research.

Participation was entirely voluntary and respondents were asked to sign a consent form. Informed consent included the provision for the study subject to withdraw at any time during the interview and to feel free to ask for further explanations when the need arises. The researcher explained to the respondent what the research will be all about, and how it would benefit them and other people. As aspects of informed consent, the participants were informed of the goal of the study and the approximate amount of time the interviews would take.

For this study confidentiality and anonymity, no names were mentioned and the researcher ensured that the information interviewees will not be transferred to a third party or will not be used for any other purpose apart from this study. Information provided by the researcher did not seek identities and postal addresses of the participants in order to observe the confidentiality of the respondents.

### **3.9. Limitations of the study**

As always is the case with research, the researcher experienced some limitations during the study. The researcher however, tried various ways to eliminate the problems so that the study could be successfully concluded. This study was limited to the investigation of access and control of land by rural women in Mutasa District. Although the study sample of women to be interviewed is arrived at through purposive sampling, the sample may not have been representative of Mutasa District and bias may have been introduced. As a result it might be difficult to generalize the research findings to a national level but it is believed that this study will be a stepping stone paving the way for future research.

Lack of resources such as money for transport to incorporate the recipients was a limitation to the study. The interviews carried out in the homes of the participants involved travelling which placed high financial demands on the researcher. Making appointments with respondents sometimes involved travelling more than once because some participants could not be found on the first day of the researcher's visit. Time consuming in terms travelling and also lengthy interviews tend to delay progress.

Carrying out the research from the home of the respondent brought about a limitation of distractions like crying of children, calling of the mother by other children, noise from the domestic animals as well as distraction from people arriving at the homestead. Sometimes the distractions would make respondents lose track of what they had been saying, and the researcher had to employ prompts and paraphrase what was said earlier in order to help respondents continue from where they had left off.

Although the researcher could speak and write Shona, he had problems with the translation of the English interview schedule into Shona to be used in individual interviews, as some of the English words and phrases do not exist in the Shona dictum. The interview schedule was developed in English but questions were asked in Shona and that consumed time and disturbed the flow of the process as the researcher himself is used to using the development terms in English. Likewise, translating the individual Shona interviews transcripts into English was also a problem as some words were difficult to put into English. However the researcher tried by all means to understand every statement made by the researcher and writes it in a simpler way.

### **3.10. Conclusion**

Chapter four has explained the analytical framework that will be used in the data collection and analysis. The research's chapter four will be based on this chapter as it guides and regulates all the data presentation and analysis. In this chapter the research design which is that of interviews will help during the data collection. It came out clear in this chapter that interviews are useful in the description of opinions, attitudes, feelings and perceptions of a given population. The preceding chapter, chapter five will now give the most important part of the research which is data presentation and analysis.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the presentation, analysis and discussion of the data collected. Information gathered through individual interviews with respondent and observation is integrated to give an overall view of the situation under study. This chapter presents data as it unfolded in the field in order to understand the dynamics of women's rights to access land under the FTLRP. Data collection was carried out during the month of December 2011 to January 2012 as indicated on the interview guide. Even at the beginning of the project, the aim was to follow a strict but important logic of data collection to ensure that the researcher gets to the bottom of problem. Data presentation therefore represents field notes as they were recorded during interviews. Thus presentation of findings will mainly be done according to the themes central to the study and the emergent sub-themes.

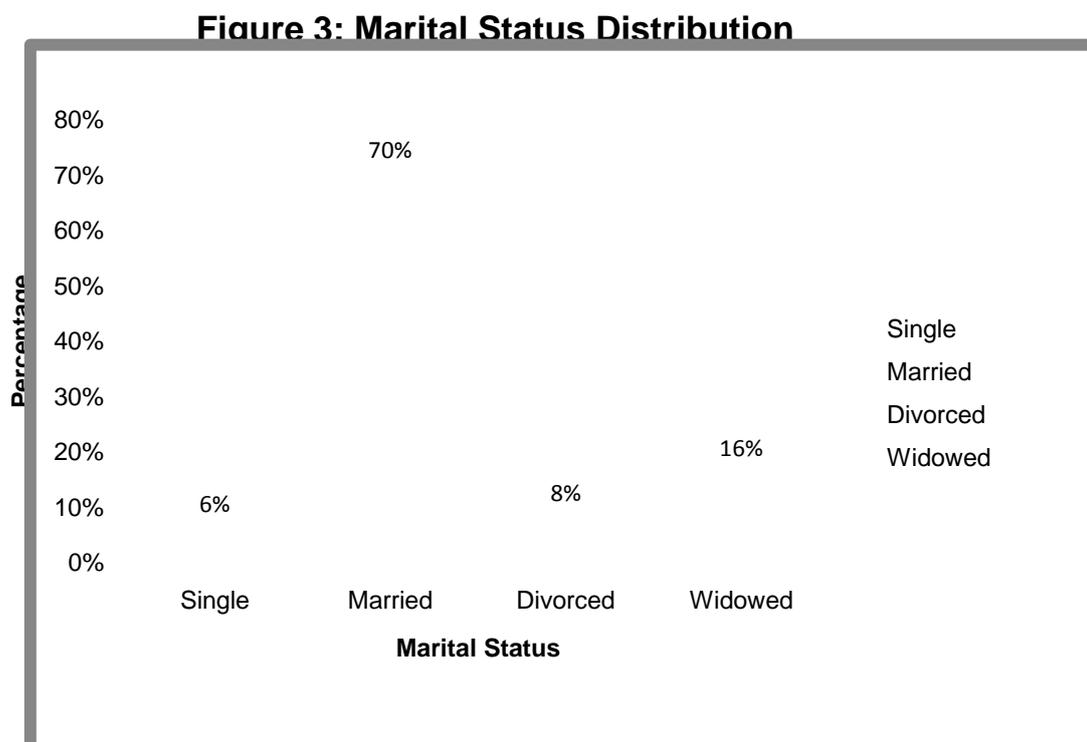
Data will be analysed using descriptive statistical methods to formulate tables, pie chart and cross tabulations. Other parts of the interview guide, especially those that dealt with open-ended questions that aimed at developing a deep understanding of women in Mutasa district as well as at analysing interviews. The findings presented in tables and figures are further explained to equip the reader with a clear picture and understanding of the phenomenon under analysis. This chapter focuses much on the key findings that are important in the understanding of woman land which can be generalized for the rural areas of Zimbabwe at large.

## 4.2. Household characteristics of the study area

### 4.2.1. Marital status

There were four categories of marital status namely single, married, divorced and widowed. The marital status of the respondents in the communal and resettlement areas of Mutasa district has the majority of the families in married structures.

From the 50 respondents interviewed, 70% were married, 16% widowed, 6% single, and 8% divorced as presented in Figure 3 below. Figure 3, which is a summary of the marital status distribution of the sampled households, illustrate that only 3 households were single, 35 married were married, 4 divorced and 8 widowed.



Only six per cent of the resettled farmers represent single women. The small number of farmers who are single is not surprising to people well versed with the Zimbabwean culture. It is very rare to find men or women who opt to remain single.

Every man and woman is expected to marry at a certain stage in life. The chief or headman only gives land to married women under the ownership of their husbands who are the heads of the household. This also explains why single women with farms are under-represented. On the same note, the low percentage of divorcees is probably a reflection of the custom and tradition in most of rural Zimbabwe where being single is not encouraged while marriages are accepted as satisfying the function of reproduction, maintenance and expansion of the kinship. Based on these findings, respondents who are widowed, single and divorced add up to 30%. These maybe assumed to be sole household-heads owing to the absence of a male partner.

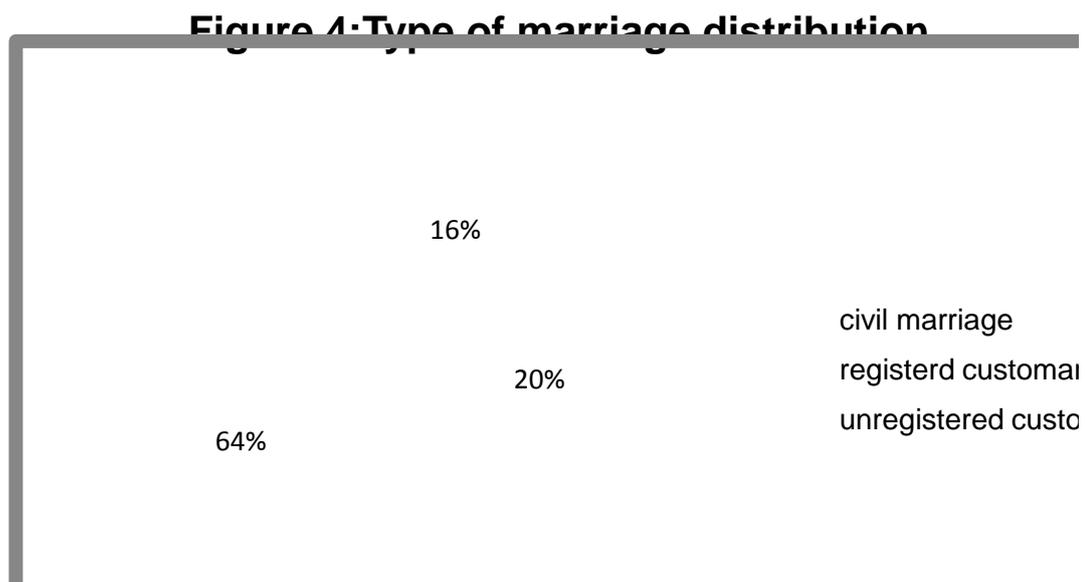
#### **4.2.2. Type of marriage**

Zimbabwe has different types of marriage depending on whether they are solemnized in terms of general law or in terms of African customary law. The marriages confer different rights and duties to the parties of the marriage. There were three types of marriage looked at by the study and these are as follows; registered customary, unregistered customary and civil marriage.

However, unregistered customary marriage are not fully recognized by the law as a proper marriage There is no marriage officer involved in creating this union. Whilst registered customary marriage is obtained from a community court before a marriage officer. Customary law governs property rights. A divorced wife can take what she purchased with her own money, or property given to her personally. If a husband dies without leaving a will his wife will inherit nothing. On the other hand, civil marriage involves the couple having to go to the magistrate's court to register their marriage and get a marriage certificate in the presence of two witnesses and a

marriage officer. All property acquired during marriage become jointly owned and upon divorce it is shared equally between the two.

From the respondents interviewed, 64% were married through unregistered customary, 20% through registered customary and 16% through civil marriage as presented in Figure 4 below. Figure 4, which is a summary of the type of marriage of the sampled households, illustrate that there were only 8 households married through civil marriage, 10 through registered customary and 32 through unregistered customary. Of these marriage forms only the registered marriages have full recognition at law. The unregistered customary law unions are recognised for certain limited purposes such as in matters relating to children.

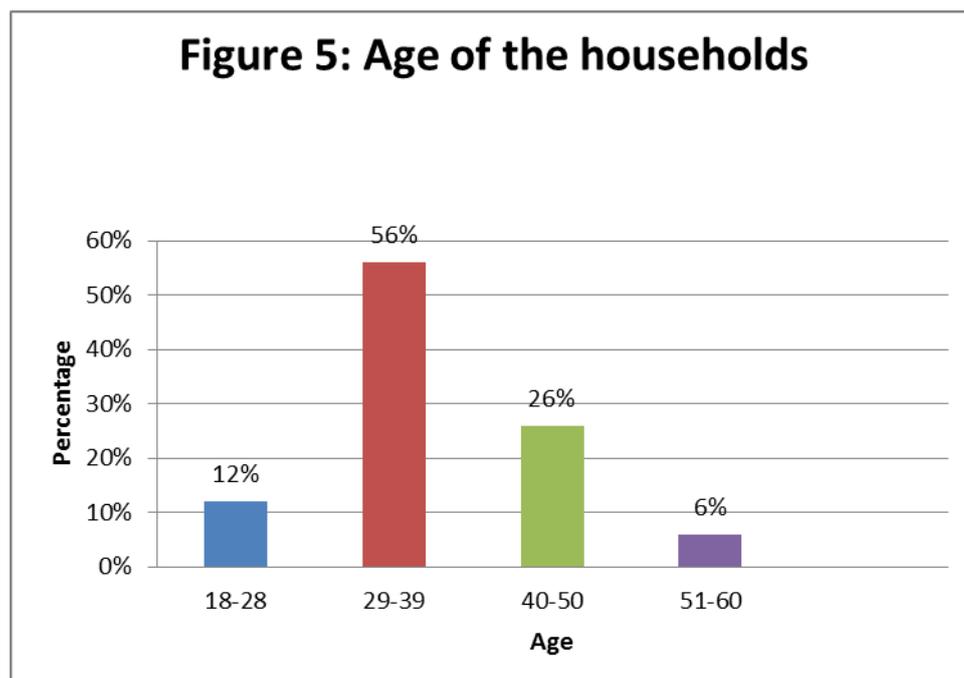


The study made manifest that the women who were in unregistered customary marriages were in the majority among the respondents. This is because in most rural areas where property ownership of women is still low, partners preferred to marry unregistered. Another reason is that a few couples have valuable property so there is no need to register their marriage. Only those who are educated and have valuable property can manage to formally register their marriage. The type of marriage did

emerge as a significant factor in preventing women having access and ownership of land. Customary marriage is very common among the people and women are generally a subordinate population in many sectors of life.

#### 4.2.3. Age Distribution

The women were requested to indicate their age. There were four categories looked at by the study and these are as follows 18-28 years, 29-39 years, 40-50 years and 51-60 years. The ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 60. However, the majority of the respondents were between the ages of 29-39. There were 6 (12 per cent) respondents who were between 18 and 28, with 28 (56 per cent) in the 28-39 category. In the 40-50 age categories, there were 13 (26 per cent) respondents, with 3 respondents in the 51-60 (6 per cent) age group. There were no respondents who were above 60 interviewed in the study. The youngest was aged 27 while the oldest was 60. The Figure 5 below shows the age distribution of 50 women interviewed on the study.

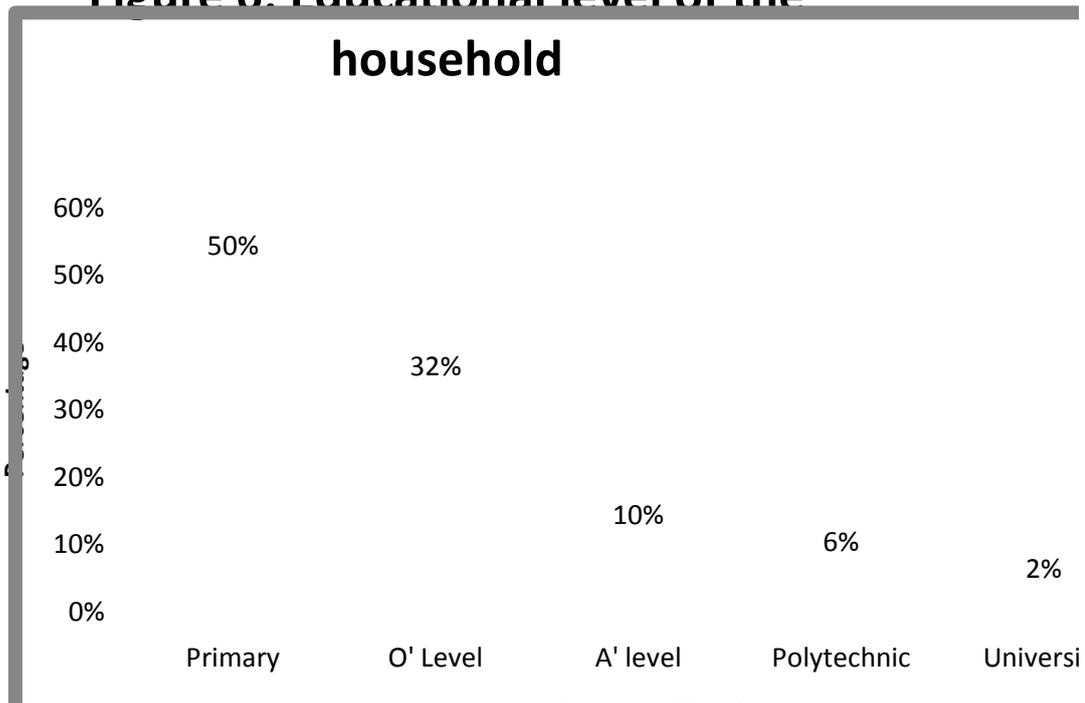


Also age of the head of household is very important as the head of household makes most of the decisions about the farming operations on the farm. Respondents were found to be mainly concentrated in the 29-39 years age group. This group represent the economically active group and who are supposed to be working in the nearby towns. This group is used as a source of labour in the household fields whilst man will be working in towns and coming on the weekends to check farm progress. Older women who are above 51 are few. This can be as a result of the FTLRP which included violent grabbing of the land. The older women cannot take part since they are now weak to engage in fighting. The old aged people have strong cultural ties with their areas and they might not support the idea of being resettled. Although there seems to be no stated policy on age of the resettlement beneficiaries it looks like the government is resettling relatively younger farmers since older farmers are expected to have greater inefficiencies because they are less adaptable to new technological developments.

#### **4.2.4. Level of education**

The women were requested to indicate their highest level of education. This variable was requested because it has the possibility of influencing people's beliefs on gender and land rights. In other words, education has an influence on culture and it helps people to be aware of their rights. There were five categories which depicted the level of education of the sampled households namely; primary, ordinary level, advanced level, polytechnic and university. Although education levels are generally very low in rural areas, the study revealed that all sampled households had attained some form of education. Figure 6 shows educational level of the household.

**Figure 6: Educational level of the household**



The results of the study revealed that 25 of the sampled households only managed to reach the primary level. This represents 50 percent of the sampled households. 16 households (32 percent) reached O' level whilst 5 households (10 percent) reached A' level. Only 3 household (6 percent) managed to go to polytechnic colleges and 1(2 percent) reached the university level. Lack of education is double edged. On one hand it leads to lack of financial independency while on the other hand it decreases one's chances of getting a job.

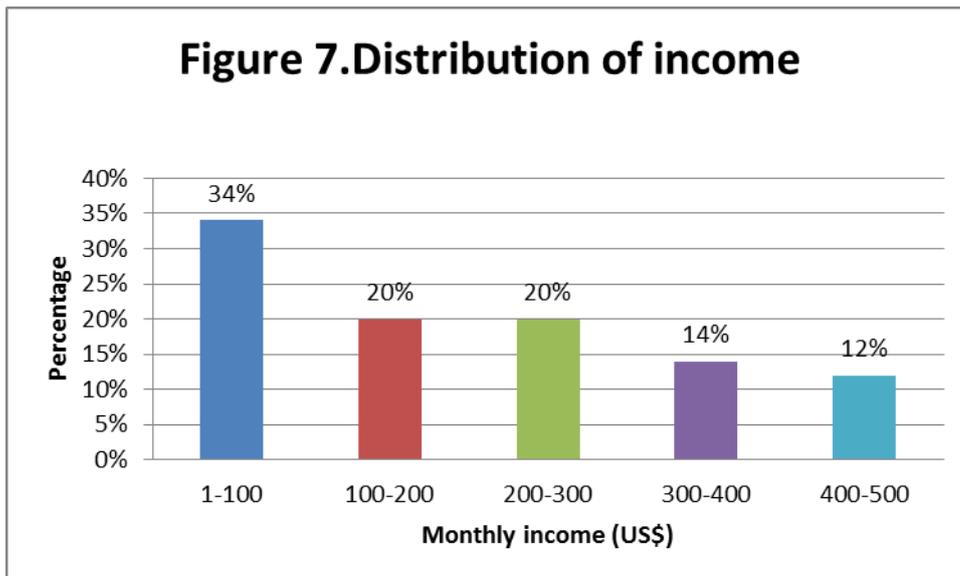
The educational need also needs consideration in view of the nature of society and its patriarchal attitudes towards women. Many women, in rural areas, only go to school to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills and then leave school to get married, they therefore do not know their legal rights. Given greater illiteracy and the skewed gender preference for education in our society, Kevane (2004) slates that an 'investment in education will yield high social returns and investments in girls even more so'. Little education among women impacts negatively in a dynamic society

and keeps them uninformed about new laws and policies as well as about means for survival.

In agriculture, more years of formal schooling are expected to enhance efficiency. The farmers' qualifications and success in farming depend, apart from individual talents, on education and practical experience. The ability of the farmers to perceive the advantages and to efficiently utilise new technology is often measured by education, farming experience and exposure to extension services. As noted by Parikh *et al* (1995), the role of education in improving farmers' efficiency is now widely accepted, in that it enables farmers to acquire and process relevant information more effectively. More years of formal education for the head of household are usually expected to result in smaller values of technical inefficiency effects (Seyoum *et al*, 1998).

#### **4.2.5. Monthly income**

Respondents were asked about their monthly income. The study revealed that 34% earned between US\$1-100, 20% earned between US\$100- 200, 20% earned between US\$200-300, 14% earned between US\$300- 400 and 12% earned between US\$400- 500. The vast majority of people living in Mutasa district have an income of less than US\$100. This indicates that poverty levels are highest among these households. Agricultural income is very low across the country. Farmers are urged to sell their products to national boards like Grain Marketing Board (GMB) which will buy their produces at a cheaper price. This will negatively affect farmers since they will not be able to buy adequate inputs for the next season. The Grain Marketing Board (GMB) delays payments, making it impossible to buy inputs on time.

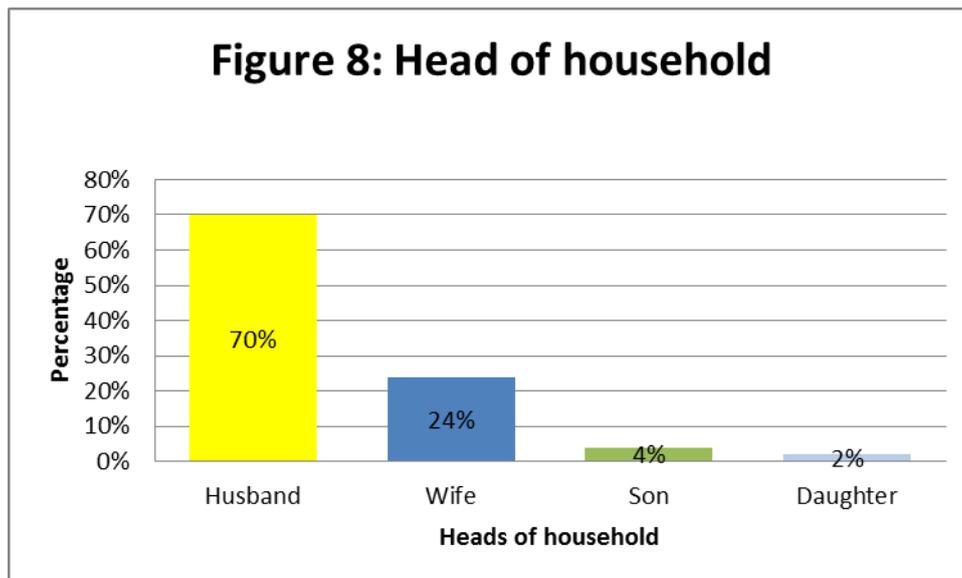


During off seasons farmers tend to have insufficient money to cater for the well-being of the family. Most respondents who earn below \$100 confirmed that they work in neighbouring farms to supplement their incomes during off seasons. With high cost of living it is eminent that the income cannot meet the demands of the households. Household income measures relative material well-being and it illustrates the degree of dependence on farm and non-farm resources. For the most part, their earnings are well below the poverty datum line and thus need to be supplemented by non-farm income.

### **4.3. Women and land entitlement**

#### **4.3.1. Head of the household**

The respondents were asked about the head of the household. The study revealed that 70% of the households are headed by husbands, 24 % headed by wives, 4% headed by sons and 2% headed by daughters.



The majority of respondents stated that their husbands are the heads of the household. Customary practices assume that men are the heads of families, thus, are given land and land is registered in their names. If a woman is married her husband will naturally become the head of the household according to Shona customs. A woman will only become the head of the household if she is divorced or widowed.

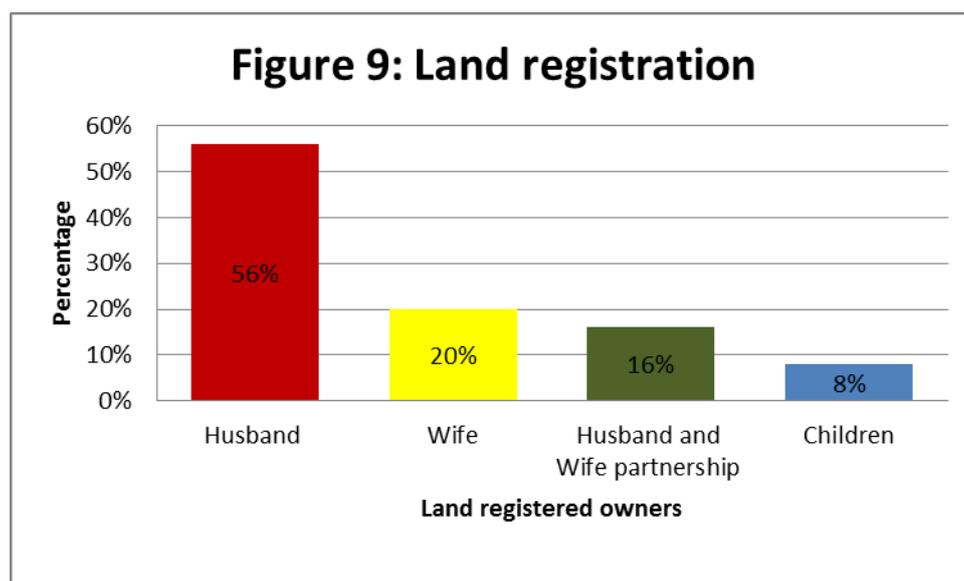
There is a low percentage of households headed by sons because they only take charge of the house if their fathers are absent or dead. On the other hand, daughters may only become heads of the household if there are no male relatives to look after the family. The study has shown that female heads of the households are more vulnerable to poverty incidences than married women who may depend for economic resources on husbands. Households with single, divorced and widowed heads have to do all the household activities as they do not have all the support unless from children who are old enough to do some household activities. Women can face extra difficulties as heads of households if they do not have an adequate educational background or are prevented from obtaining further education. Although women play

a pivotal role in all aspects of agriculture in rural areas most of the households are headed by men, which show the dominance of men in the farming community.

### 4.3.2. Land registration

Data collected on survey respondents' entitlement to land registration revealed that 28 respondents (56%), responded land is registered in the name of husbands, 10 respondents (21.7%) responded land is registered in their own names, 8 respondents (16%) responded land is registered in the name of both spouses, 8% responded land is registered and certified in children names.

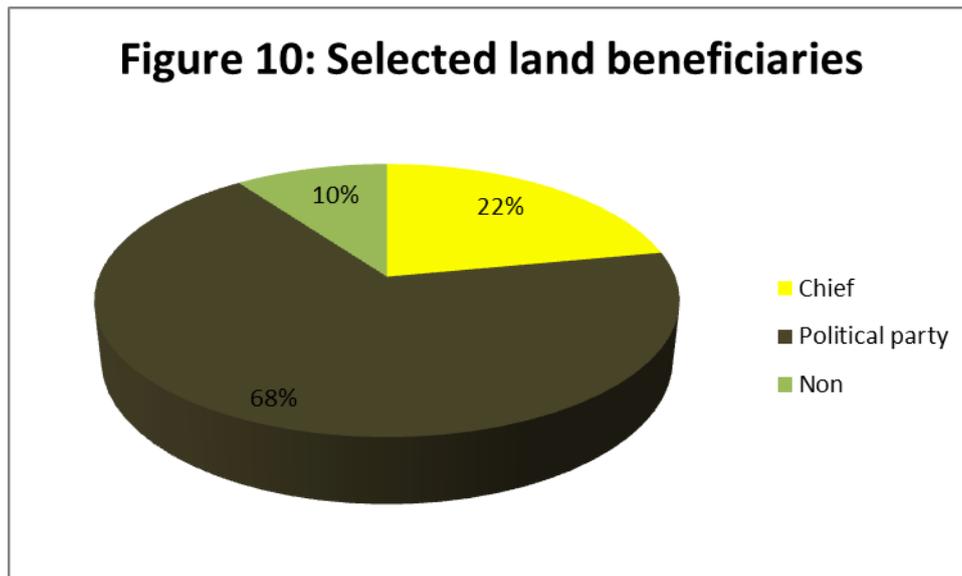
While in communal land tenure systems, women had significant indirect access and rights to use communal resources through their roles as household managers, they were further excluded when land tenure was individualized and invariably adjudicated and registered in the name of "heads of households" or men. Without legal protection, women are at risk of suddenly becoming landless. Overemphasis on privatisation, individual freehold tenure and rigid planning and registration procedures that is costly, lengthy and often inaccessible to the poor rural women deepens the gap between those who can and those who cannot afford.



Women face long periods of time where they manage and use the land but the land title is not in their name. During this time, rural women find it difficult to access formal credit, as they do not have legal title to use as collateral. Expanding farm operations is difficult, and women are often confined to a low-level of farm productivity. The FTRLRP did not open democratic spaces for women to participate as beneficiaries in land allocation and registration. Ownership of land in Zimbabwe continues to be a major hindrance to women's participation in national development. All married female respondents in Mutasa district revealed that land was actually registered in the names of their husbands, because they were the ones who processed all the paperwork. The procedures that are required in order to access land are so complex and inaccessible for rural illiteracy women. In fact, these procedures are more suited for man and wealthier women.

#### **4.3.3. Selection of land beneficiaries**

The respondents were asked how they were selected for the programme. This question points as to whether they were connected to any institution, political party or any traditional leader in the distribution of land. The study revealed that 68% got land because of their connection to the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party, 22% got through the chief whilst 10% have no connection at all. Figure 10 shows selected land beneficiaries. Most of the FTLRP beneficiaries got land through their support to the ruling party which spearheaded the land reform programme. The majority were war veterans who went into nearby farms and invade it. They would divide the farm among themselves then the government will come to formalise the process by giving them offer letters which proves that they are the new farm owners.



The other groups that were politically connected were government officials' military leaders, ZANU-PF leaders, businessmen, and others close to the ruling party have benefited. The study has found out that those who are connected to the chief are also linked to the ruling party. The chief distribute the land under the directives of the ZANU PF top officials. Only a few (10%) got land without any link to anyone. These are probably those who were indeed poor and landless. The actual beneficiaries of fast track are very different to government claims of aiding the landless and the less privileged. Accessing land through politics tends to be difficult for women since they are politically under represented. Most men hold higher positions within political parties whilst women hold inferior ones. This allows more man to have access to land than women because of their influence in politics.

#### **4.3.4. Loss of land if no longer connected**

The table below shows the response of the respondents whether they will lose their land if they are no longer connected to the political party or chief. The study revealed that 52% will lose their land if they are no longer connected to the political party

whilst 48% confirmed they remain owners of the land despite not being connected to the party or chief.

**Table1. Land connection**

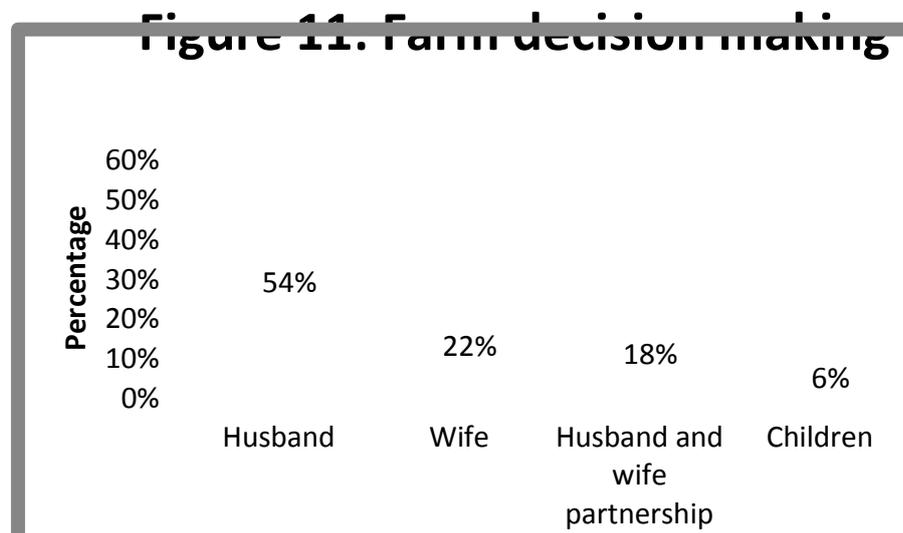
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	26	52
No	24	48
Total	50	100

Most of the respondents said that they are constantly monitored and checked to show whether they are still supporting the party which paves way for land distribution. They are checked using their regularity in attending party meetings and rallies. This only show that the land redistribution was political motivated and there is no security to land entitlement since the land can be taken and given to those who are loyal and supporting the ruling party. This will also limit agricultural production as farmers are afraid that they can be chased away if he/she can no longer support the party. The new farmers cannot fully utilise his land because of this threat. Those who cannot lose land are those who are top government officials who have the guarantee that the land will remain theirs.

#### **4.4. Women’s and decision-making**

Data collected on women’s involvement in decision-making on the amount of agricultural products to be sold reveals that 9 (18%) of the respondents responded that they decide with their husbands, (11) 22% responded they are involved in decisions, 18.2% responded they are involved sometimes, 3 (6%) responded that it

is decided by children whilst 22 (54%) responded that they are being made by their husbands. Figure 11 shows farm decision making. Due to patriarchal controls men are seen as powerful thinkers and managers in any development and women are not given a chance. Information obtained from respondents on women’s involvement in decision-making on land and land related issues reflect that women in male headed households have little say on what crops to grow, on the amount to be stocked for household consumption and on the amount to be sold.



Men and women produce different crops with women typically being responsible for household staples and the man producing cash crops. Women explained that they usually need to grow crops they prefer to use for household consumption but are not mostly accepted by husbands. They stated that land is mostly used to cultivate crops/grains that have good market prices. However, crops were usually marketed through the husband’s name, and payments received in his name.

Men are responsible for making decisions over land within families, though it was women who played a major role of growing crops on the land. Women critiqued this situation by saying: “this does not make sense, because it is us women who

intimately know the land, work on it every day. And surely we should have the capacity to make decisions on what to grow, when to grow, what to sell, and what to keep.” It would be good to see the situation change, since women are the key players in farming compared to men. Women should have knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision-making, greater ability to plan greater control over the circumstances that influence their lives and free them from shackles imposed by prevailing customs, beliefs and practices.

Women also tend to face problems that stem from lack of farm management experience; i.e. they may have worked on the farm with their husbands, but did not engage in the day-to-day decision making, leaving them with little experience managing a farm or dealing with banks. Women’s control over land is only exercised in the absence of males. This was confirmed by the fact that women were able to have control over land, compared to those women whose male spouses were still alive.

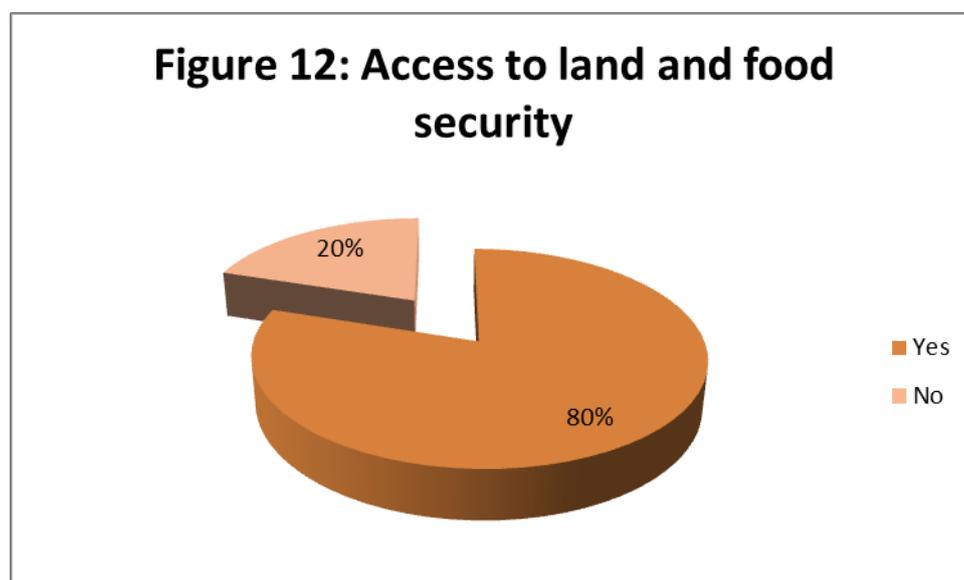
However, 9 respondents (18%) revealed that they jointly make decisions with their husbands. This allows women to engage their partners in dialogue and consensus building on issues relating to farming. Two heads are better than one. This will also motivate both partners to work towards improving their farm productivity and household food security. However, the number of women registered on spousal joint registration is low as compared to the number of married women considered in this study. Gender policies need to be revamped to cater for the needs for co-ownership of property and land by women and strong enforcement of such policies be put in place.

In the absence of male relative older children will make farm decisions. Children have with limited influence on how the land and its produce should be utilised since

in most cases they are not the heads of the households. Older sons are given more preference in making farm decisions as they are regarded as the rightful heirs to family property. This shows that women's spaces in land reform in Mutasa district are limited because men dominate decision making structures.

#### 4.5. Women and food security

##### 4.5.1. Access to land and food security



Of the sampled households 80% stated that women access to land can help to attain their household food security whilst 20% said it would not help. The above results show that most women are confident in their ability to improve household food security if given more access to land and adequate agricultural support. The patriarchal nature of the society limits the contributing of women to the well-being of the family. However 10 respondents (20%) stated that women access to land cannot help to improve the household food security. They argued that they need their husbands or any male relatives who will help them look after the well-being of the family. This shows women dependence on man for their survival and the family.

Women have also contributed to their marginalisation in the society since they are not able to move on with life without assistance from a man.

#### **4.5.2. Cultural and economic contribution**

Socially accepted norms of behaviour and the roles women play in their families can have profound effects on the type of economic activities in which women can engage. Of all sampled households 29 (58%) respondents said that women customary status in society constraint there economic contribution whilst 21 respondents 42% said their customary status cannot hinder their economic contribution.

**Table 2: Culture and economic contribution**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	29	58
No	21	42
Total	50	100

It seems that culture is regarded as fixed and not capable of changing to accommodate changes such as gender equity. It is often forgotten that the same culture can be modified to move from biasness to respect and value gender equity. Rural women are submissive to culture through indoctrination. Women share cultural characteristics that distinguish them from the dominant group of men. The socio cultural attitudes are known to shape women's attitudes and hinder their self-realization. It may also be difficult to change their attitudes. This also implies a challenge to change rural women's attitudes towards culture.

Women farmers also point to the need for a cultural environment that assures them control of land, because without this, they are sometimes unwilling to invest their maximum labour when they use their spouses' land.

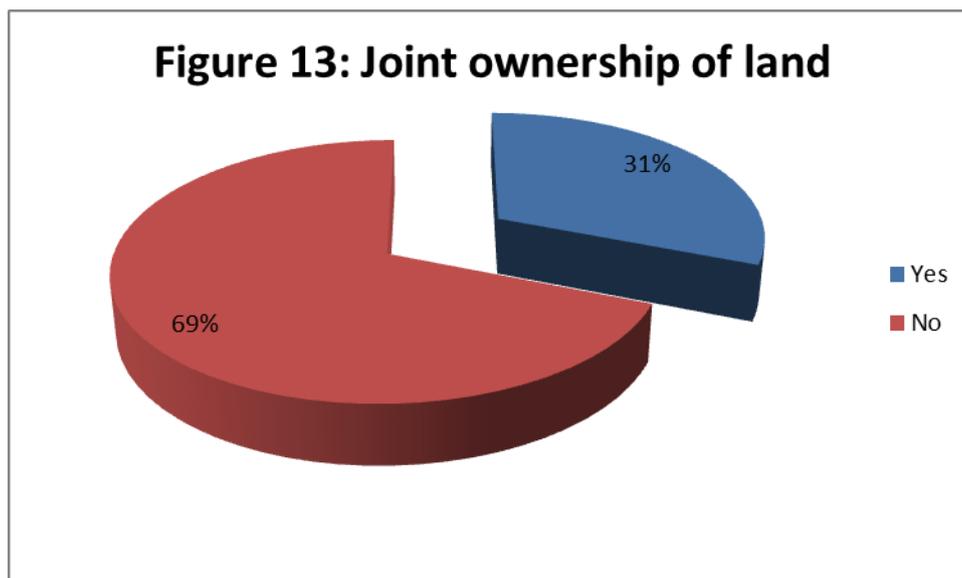
Patriarchy plays a major role in women's impoverishment through alienating them from the means of production. Thus, given the importance of land in food security, there is a need to address the social-cultural barriers to women access to land. By failing to do that, the gender and class characterization of poverty and landlessness will continue to prevail in Zimbabwe, as well as well as in most African countries. In other words, poverty in Zimbabwe is predominantly feminine as well (Mushunje, 2001).

Community interactions also revealed that where women are considered farm hands, they serve as primary producers who play both specialised and general roles in on-farm cultivation processes. However the same women are being marginalised in land ownership. Women's contributions are culturally defined as supplementing and at best, complementing men's roles.

#### **4.6. Women and land inheritance**

##### **4.6.1. Joint ownership of land**

The women were requested to indicate their land ownership status. The study revealed that 31% jointly own the land with their husbands whilst 69% do not jointly own with their husbands.



The policy of Government is to offer spouses joint tenure but they do not force couples to decide to apply for joint ownership or to register as individuals. What this means is that matrimonial decisions are still made by men since there is evidence that some women who had registered as individuals changed their names and submitting the husband's surnames and names.

The study has noticed that those who jointly own the land with their husbands are the ones who are educated. Decision-making is joint on most decisions, with the wife often specializing in marketing the crops and the husband in planting. Some women are not educated but they are married to educated husbands who are wise enough to jointly register the farm in their own names. Also those who have civil marriage and registered customary marriage have more access to jointly own the land with their husbands unlike those who have unregistered customary marriage.

Women do access land and participate in land use management decisions through co-ownership with their husband. Indeed, in general, these partnerships are more successful at running their farms because they have a larger economic resource base from which to pull for farm operations. With joint ownership of land partners are

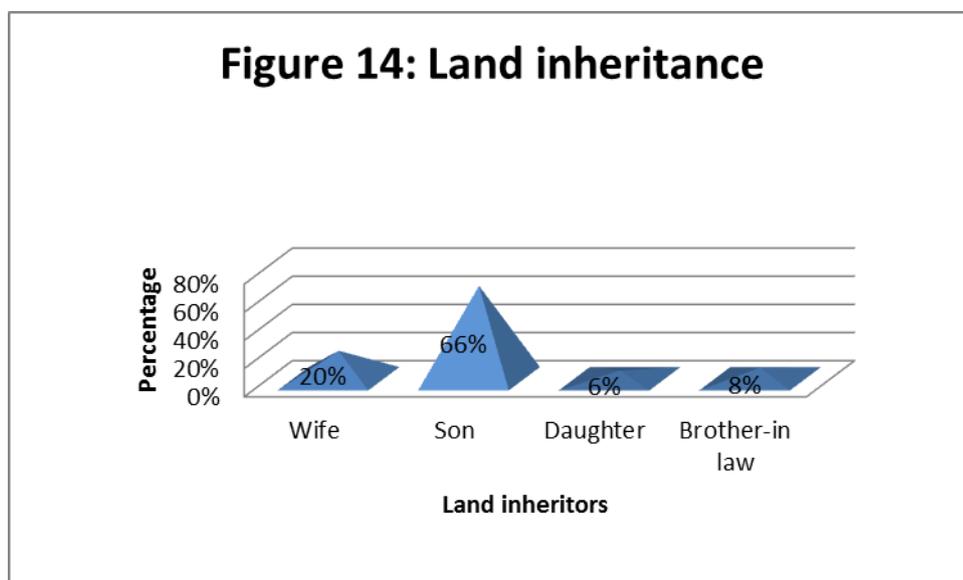
likely to combine their assets, their labour, their financial resources and the information they have in order to produce an agreed upon basket of goods and services, and then consume or invest the profits they obtain according to their shared priorities.

If the farm had been registered jointly, the wife would remain registered right holder of the land and house with the authority to sell, mortgage or carry out any other transaction. However most of the farms are separately owned by husbands although women have the right to use the land. This will marginalise women in making decisions concerning farm operations as she is not part of the ownership. Under customary law, married women are not allowed to own property jointly with their husbands, and widows cannot inherit the estate of the husband because a man's claim to family inheritance takes precedence over a woman's, regardless of the woman's age or seniority in the family.

#### **4.6.2. Inheritance to household farm**

As land is a key asset and an essential source of livelihood most societies have long developed rules to govern how land is transferred across generations. However women's ability to inherit land is often restricted. When the head of the household passes away, most respondents said it was the sons of that person who was supposed to inherit the household field. This was confirmed by 33 (66 per cent) of those interviewed, whilst 10 (20 per cent) said it was the wife who was supposed to inherit the property. Some said that the right to inherit belonged to the brother-in law. This was said by 4 (8 per cent) respondents. Only 3 (6 per cent) respondents said the right to inherit belongs to daughters.

With respect to inheritance in the event of death, it was unanimously stated that male children were supposed to inherit the farm. The basis for doing so was customary law and patriarchy. The son was the inheritor of the field because customarily he was the new head of the household. Therefore, rules that ensure that male children will inherit land serve to keep the land holdings of a particular clan concentrated geographically.



What was surprising, however, is that the majority of the women were of the view that male children were supposed to exercise overall control over the farm and not the girls. While it was expected that boys would take control of major assets such as cattle and land, the girls were to get clothes and kitchen utensils. It was generally argued that girls could not inherit the estate because they got married and left to live with their husbands. The views on inheritance reflect the weight of tradition in favour of male rather than female children even by women themselves. Other respondents

said that if there were no male children in the household when the husband dies, the land could revert to the chieftainship because daughters cannot inherit land.

Few respondents (20%) confirmed that they were able to inherit their farm following the death of a husband. However, inheritance practices can leave widows without land resources and livelihoods, unless a widow with minor children is allowed to remain on the land until a son comes of age.

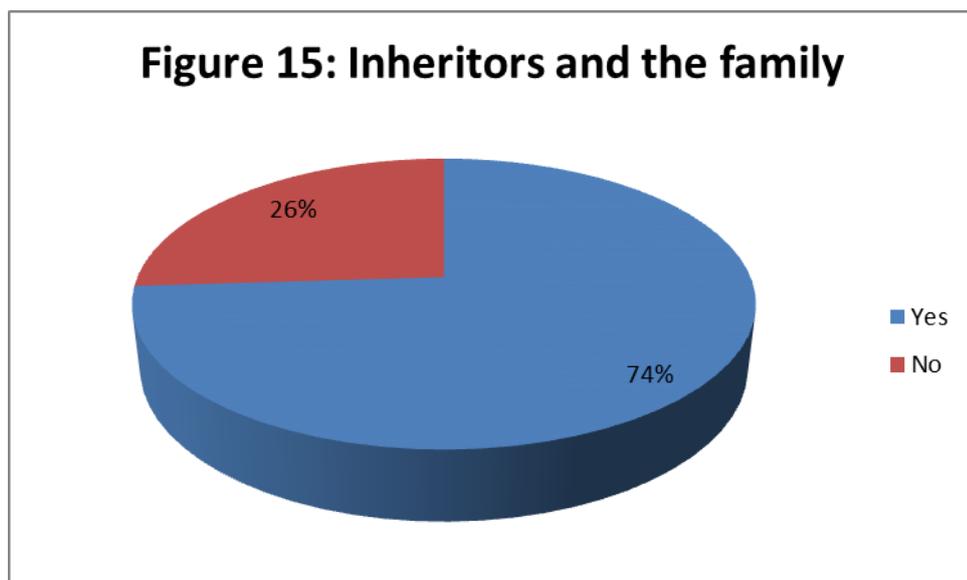
It seems male children have legal rights to inherit fields whilst their mothers continue to exercise their use rights as before. Women and daughters are considered minors who cannot be allocated or inherit land on their own without men. Even if the property was acquired during the marriage union women cannot inherit it from a traditional perspective. Moreover, with the majority of women having unregistered customary marriages, this means that the women face serious property inheritance problems and find themselves without any recourse to redress. In some instances, widows cannot inherit from their husband's estates even if their marriage was registered. Traditions and customs of various cultures take precedence and belief in them becomes very strong to an extent that they override legal preference (Anglophone Africa, 2004).

The study also identified the cultural practice of lobola (bride price) to be a contributing factor to land grabbing. The woman is considered as acquired, like any other asset. Moreover, when a woman is married, she joins the marital family with nothing and in case of divorce or death of the husband, she is expected to join her natal family without anything- exactly the way she joined the marital family. If there are no brothers, the late husband's family decides on an appropriate "inheritor." The property of the deceased, including his land is then inherited along with the wife and children. Strong social and economic pressures impel women into being inherited.

Biased inheritance rights often bestow land to male relatives, leaving both widows and daughters at a disadvantage (Agarwal, 2003).

The other group to inherit the farm are the in-laws. They demand the property of their relatives especially if the widow does not have sons and married through unregistered customary. However, for fear of contracting HIV and AIDS, relatives no longer inherit widows. They now leave them to re-join their natal families and in the process they lose land to their in-laws. Exclusion from assets inheritance can exacerbate vulnerability to chronic poverty and the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

#### 4.6.3. Inheritors and the family



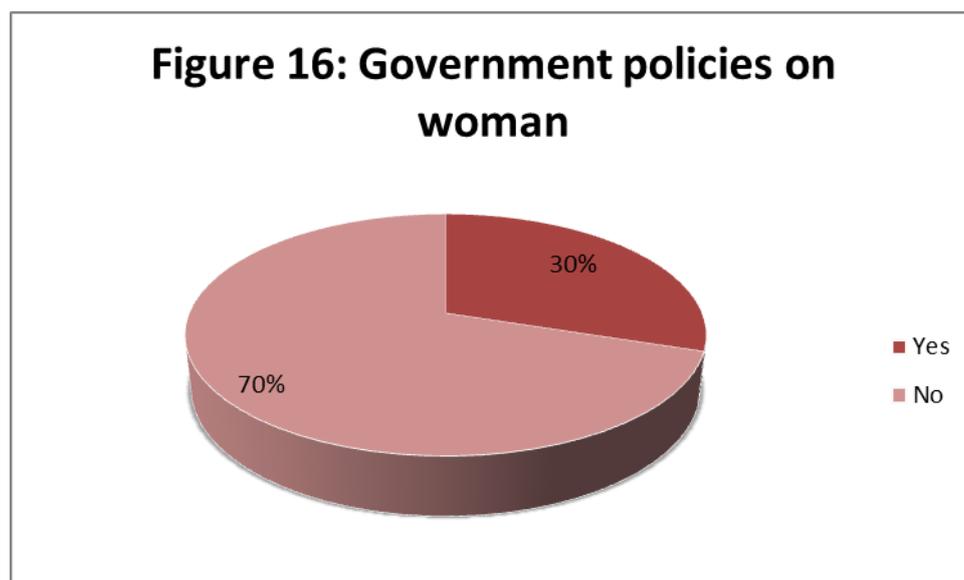
The respondents were asked if other relatives inherit the land whether they will be able to look after the family of the deceased husband. The study revealed that 26% agreed that other relatives can look after the well-being of the family if they inherit the land whilst 74% did not agree with the statement. In most cases other relatives can inherit the land and use the produce of the field to support their own families.

The deceased family will be given a small portion of land to cultivate and look after themselves. This will put the family in poverty since it will not be able to get access to credit and agriculture support since the land will be registered in the name of the inheritor. Widows are sent away to their natural families by in-laws or other immediate members of the deceased's family without sustenance.

#### 4.7. Government interventions

##### 4.7.1. Government policies on women

The sampled household was asked whether government policies on women are adequate ensure them access to land. Of all respondents 26% said government policies were adequate whilst 74% said they are not.

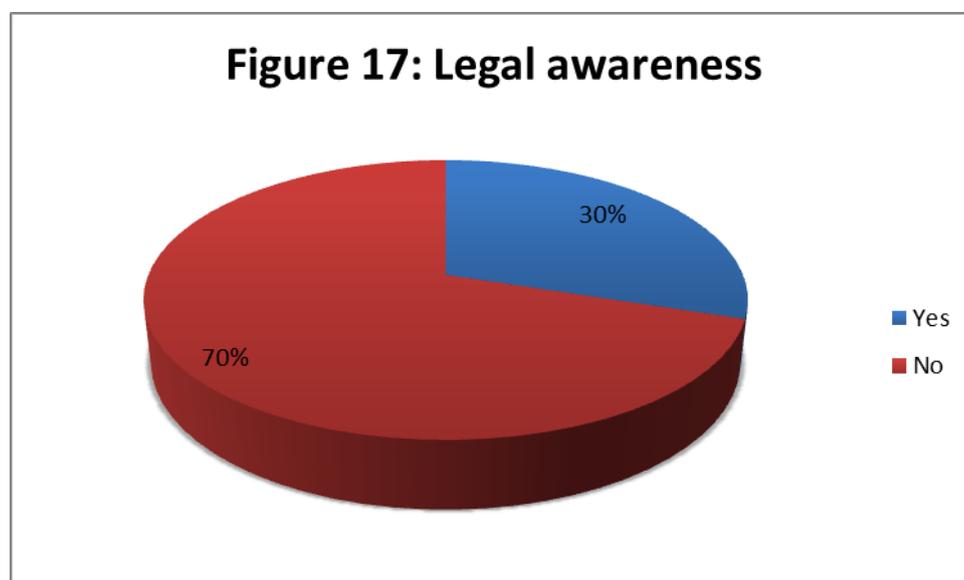


The problem is that people are unaware of the government policies that ensure that they get access to land under the land distribution programme. The noticed that 'most women lack access to information on laws and rights, in particular those to do with inheritance.' A major theme emerging from the study is the empowerment of women with information through education on government policies. Information

would be disseminated into the community if women would be educated and trained on government policies. Information would help women to take action in owning and controlling land through appropriate channels. This suggests that the state should take a firm stand towards the implementation of the gender equity policy. It also raises some concern as to whether the state is yet ready to do so. As the study findings demonstrate, most women farmers in rural areas have hardly understood these policies; and implementers of the policies have not applied them with a special interest on women's needs.

#### 4.7.2. Legal intervention

Respondents were asked whether they were aware of the legal interventions that would ensure their access to land in FTLRP. The study found that 70% were not aware of the legal interventions whilst 30% were aware of them.



Legal intervention is a possibly important form of intervention that women could exploit. Most of the respondents had no knowledge about the availability of legal intervention. Information as to the legal interventions is not disseminated properly, especially in remote areas where people are less literate. Many women do not have

information, confidence, experience and resources to obtain what they are legally entitled to. Worthy of note is the fact that even though legal reform may be effected, knowledge about law reforms is very scant in countries with high levels of illiteracy, scarce resources, and where women have limited access to information. As a result legal policies remain paper documents and do not help the intended consumers. Office Headquarters formulates policies and laws but at grassroots level people cannot access the information. Lack of knowledge to pursue legal intervention contributed to their inability to seek legal redress. Women farmers complained that there has not been much awareness regarding policy, legislation, and land use. This has resulted in farms being registered in the name of the husband who is the head of the household.

Women in Mutasa district felt that the only women that were knowledgeable seemed to be those that were involved in organisations or structures which deal with women's land rights. Usually knowledge building focuses on elite rural women who are already empowered, and therefore the goal of empowering grassroots women is rarely achieved. Women farmers indicated that while they had the bare knowledge that a lot of laws and policies governing land and agriculture existed, they were not aware of the details of such instruments. Increasing women's awareness and encouraging them to utilise these laws in order to safeguard the security of their land tenure would be one concrete way of shaping and solidifying women's land rights.

The level of women's knowledge of land laws and other laws that protect them has implications on whether or not they will seek to claim and defend their rights. However, it was also discovered that for the 30 per cent of women who claimed to know their land rights, they were only referring to traditional land laws and not statutory ones. Women farmers seemed to be more aware of traditional means of

resolving land disputes, or accessing land, than the statutory ones. Despite the relevance of traditional laws in women's lives, this situation showed that statutory laws are yet to be taken to grassroots women farmers. It was reported that women were not usually coming forward to seek legal assistance in land matters because most of them still did not know the practical steps of claiming those rights.

In fact, the study found that this low knowledge combined with low literacy rates, constrained women from applying and registering land, thereby leaving men to take on this task and most registered the land in their own [men's] names. It is therefore clear that without the right knowledge of their rights and avenues for claiming those rights, women will not make use of available justice mechanisms to claim their land rights. Women's ability to claim, use and defend their rights is also weak, they lack awareness of their rights and legal processes due to lower educational levels and difficulties when accessing courts due to lack of time, resources, mobility and judicial bias.

#### **4.7.3. Government inputs support**

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which government has provided them with support to initiate the programme. The table below indicates that 72% of the respondents reported that the government provided them with seeds and garden tools, 13% were assisted with seeds only while 15% were assisted with both seeds and fertilizers. Most of them indicated that there was a shortage of garden tools, as some of the beneficiaries still did not receive them. The above indicated that there was lack of support from the government to adequately equip the farmers with necessary inputs. As much as all the beneficiaries were provided with implements they also needed training in order to acquire skills necessary to sustain the

programme. This also indicates inefficiency from the side of the Department of Agriculture.

**Table: 3. Government inputs support**

Response	Percentage of respondents
Assisted with seeds and garden tools	72
Assisted with seeds only	13
Assisted with seeds and fertilizers	15
Total	100

The provision of inputs for agricultural production has suffered the same bureaucratic “pathologies” that typically affect African rural development. These include political interference, ineffectiveness of means-targeting, sizable leakages, procurement and distribution delays, and inadequate farmer training that reduce the effectiveness of the package. Rural women asserted that they do not get information on when inputs are distributed to farmers in their areas. They would only get the word that inputs like fertilizer or seeds and garden tools, had been delivered. By the time they sent their representatives there, they would be told that the supplies were finished. Others felt that because the farms are too big and far apart, communication would be a natural problem.

Respondents have also pointed to the high incidence of corruption affecting the distribution of government support and their access to inputs, fertilizer and diesel. They pointed to allegations that influential people were accessing all conduits of government support for various implements and inputs. Women disclosed that agricultural inputs such as selected seeds are distributed to male farmers only.

Findings reflect that women has limited access to agricultural inputs, this is constraint as they couldn't make proper use of the input.

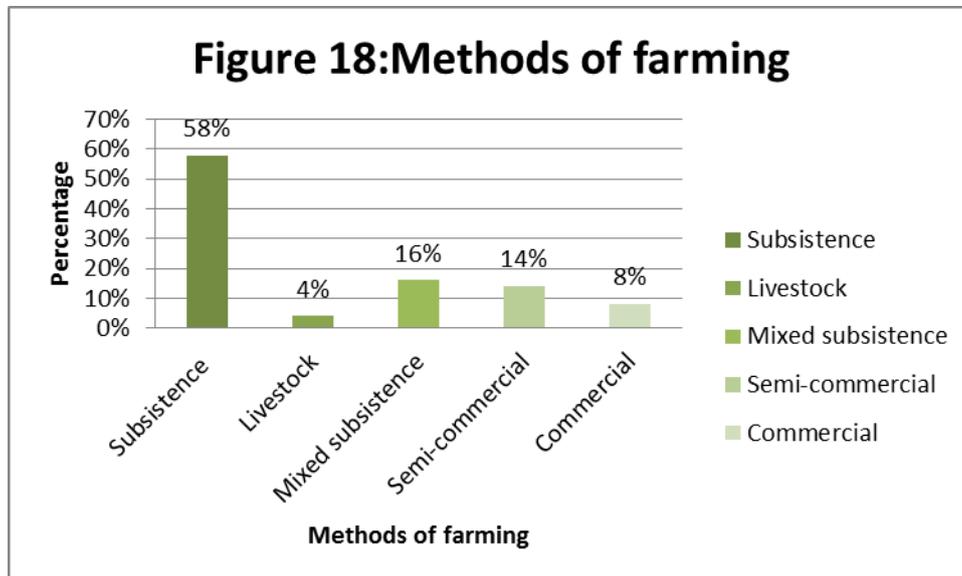
Respondents mentioned that they do not use fertilizer when they can't afford and they explained that they get fewer yields when they farm without fertilizer because, their land produces fewer yields without fertilizer. Fertilizer has been a major limitation throughout the country (Moyo, 2003). In some cases people receive inputs at a time when they are no longer needed and they end up stocking them up for the next season. The supply of inputs is very haphazard and disorganised. In some circumstances, people who receive fertilizer and seeds may end up selling them or diverting the use for which the fertilizer would have been meant.

#### **4.8. Women and farm operation**

##### **4.8.1. Methods of farming**

The respondents were asked to indicate the type of farming system they were practicing. The results show that 80% of the respondents practiced subsistence farming, 4% practising livestock farming, 16% practising mixed subsistence, 14% practising semi-commercial and 8% practising commercial farming. Most respondents they do not have sufficient agricultural inputs, this lowers their produces and cannot surplus to buy other necessities. Figure 18 shows methods of farming practised by resettled farmers in Mutasa District. Most women and their households engage in subsistence farming and commercial farming is rare. The harvest is for household consumption or exchanged and given to, among others, children and neighbours. However, study noticed that the processes of acquiring inputs from the government, such as seeds and fertilizer, have been militarized and politicized. This

will result in women continuing to cultivate small pieces of land because of the limited inputs, thus; they are incapable to expand production beyond subsistence.

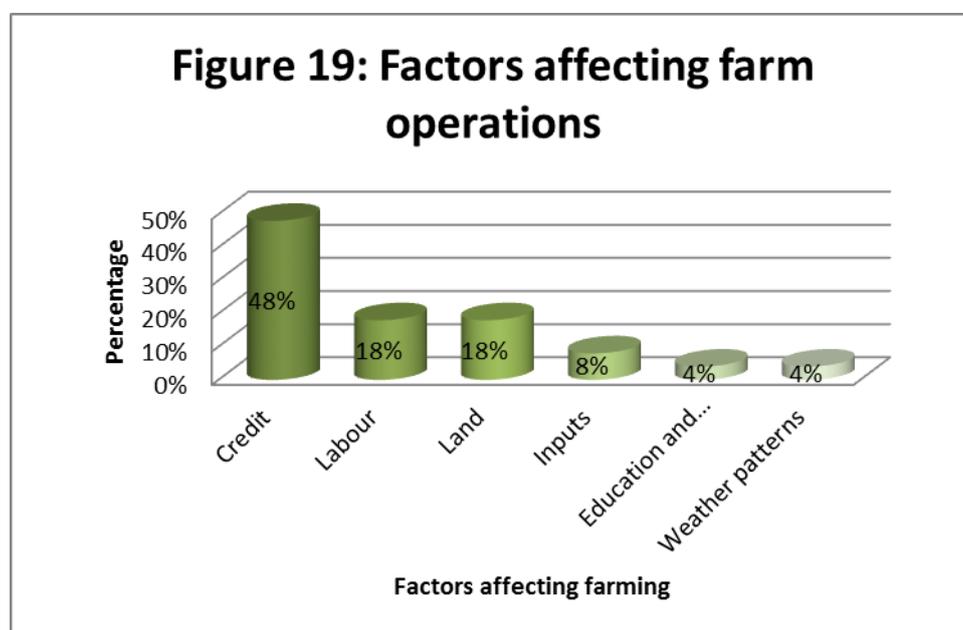


Also the majority of farmers still rely on the hoe which often results in low yields. More recently however, there has been introduction of tractors as a result of the current farm mechanization programme introduced by the government. However the programmes tend to benefit commercial farmers and politicians who are in most cases, men. Those who engage in livestock farming are few since there few people who have livestock in Mutasa district. Since most women are not able to own property including livestock this type of farming is male dominated.

#### 4.8.2. Factors affecting farm operations

The respondents were asked about the factors affecting their farm operations. The study revealed that 48% lacked access to credit, 18% lacked access to labour, 8% lacked access to inputs, 4% lacked access to education and training .The other 4% said they were being affected by weather patterns whilst 18% lacked access to land.

The results show that most farm operations are being affected by lack of credit facilities in Mutasa district. This will also affect their agricultural inputs and outputs since they have to buy using the credit facilities available. Credit enables producers to initiate, sustain, or expand agricultural production and increase productivity. However, producers with limited resources, especially rural women, receive only a minor share of formal agricultural credit even in countries where they are major producers. As land is the major asset used as collateral to obtain rural credit, women have limited access to credit facilities.



Lack of information and knowledge concerning how to apply for credit and mutual distrust between banking institutions and agricultural producers constitute additional obstacles. Indeed, most women in this study cite difficulties in accessing formal credit. Responses included banks that are reluctant to give loans because the title is not in their name or discrimination on the part of banks because they are women and lack farming experience.

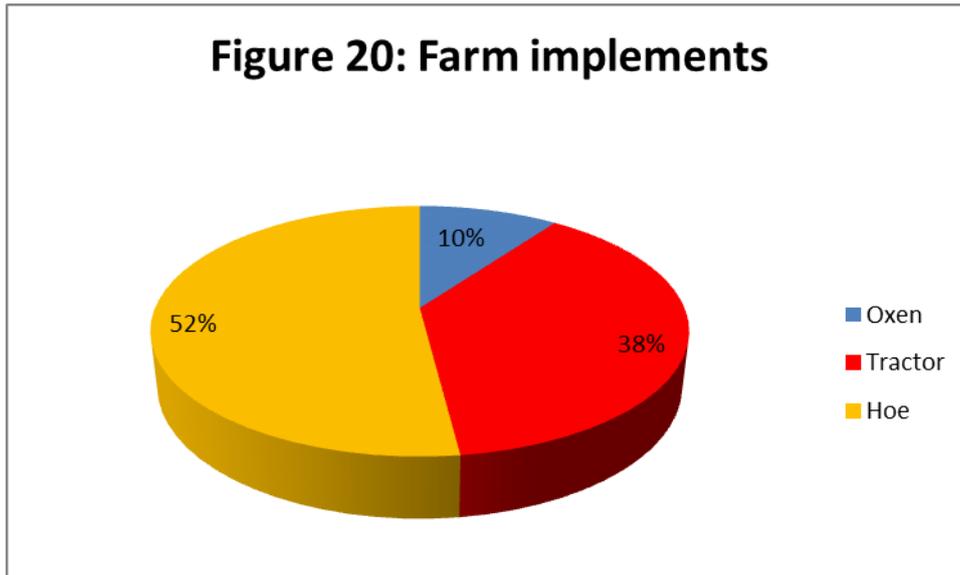
Labour is also affecting farm operations since most economically active groups are migrating to urban centres in search of greener pastures because the agricultural sector which is the major source of income in rural areas is not even capable to give farm workers minimum wage. Some respondents stated that they need more land to improve their operations. In most cases these are the farmers who are doing well in their farms. Few respondents do have their farm operations affected by weather patterns. This may be because a lot of farming are resettled in area were they receive good rains. The other same percentage is affected by educational and training. Since most women do not have access to education this may be crucial factors although few acknowledge it as affecting their farm operations.

#### **4.8.3. Farm implements**

The farm implements used for ploughing included hoes, ox-drawn plough and tractors. Of all sampled households 52 per cent had hoes, 10 per cent use ox-drawn plough and 38 per cent use tractors. The type of farm implements also contributes to the level of agricultural productivity.

The study noticed that a hoe was a common tool in this area and more than half of the respondents had it. Most of the resettled farmers did not have enough money to hire an ox-drawn plough or a tractor that's why they resort to using hoes. Use of hoes makes cultivation difficult and time consuming especially when you have a large piece of land to plough. This has resulted in farmers utilising a small portion meant only for subsistence.

**Figure 20: Farm implements**



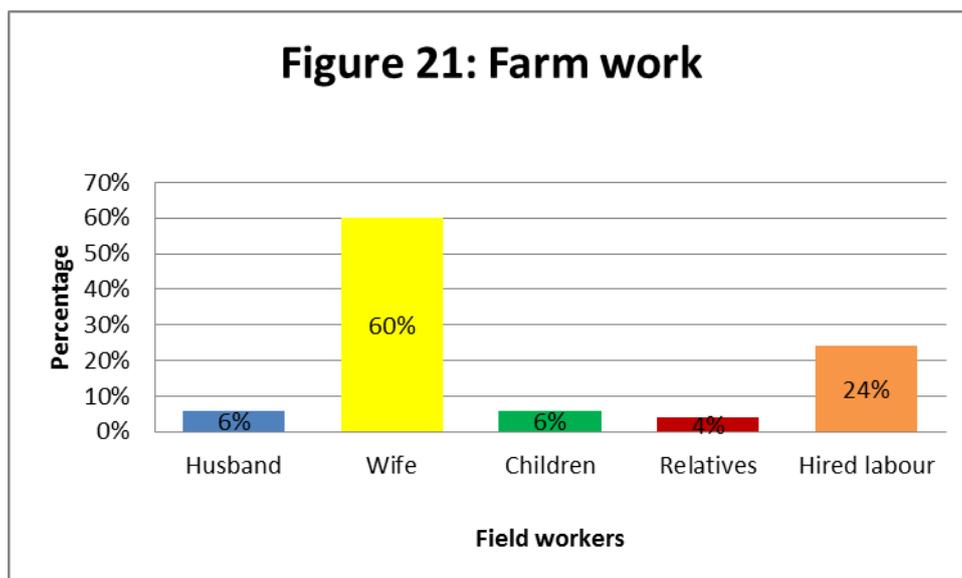
An ox-drawn plough is a very important tool for cultivation purposes. However, the majority of the households did not have this asset. The main reason behind the lack of ox-drawn ploughs is that most farmers in this area did not own cattle. Most respondents indicated that they hired those who have cattle to come and plough their land for them before planting anything. In most cases this resulted in them planting their crops late. The use of ox drawn plough is a challenge to women since they are marginalised in owning property like cattle. Women’s control over their families’ livestock varies by culture. Yet, typically, men are responsible for the purchase, sale or pawning of large animals, such as cows, horses and oxen, while women tend to claim control over small animals such as goats, sheep, poultry and pigs (World Bank, 2008)

Another asset owned by was a tractor. Most of these farmers managed to get tractors left by former white commercial farmers and some of them were given by the government through its various programmes aimed to equip the new farmers with necessary equipment. Those who are using tractors were able to produce more in their fields and getting extra income if other farmers want to hire it.

#### 4.8.4. Farm work

The study revealed that 24% use hired labour, 6% use husbands, 4% use relatives, and 6% use children. The majority 60% of the respondents said that they work alone in the field. Most men do not work in the fields they will be engaged in other non-farm activities or seeking employment in urban centres.

The need for labour contribution from wives in this regard is also evident in the trend in Mutasa district. Wives do the most of the work in the field and in some cases helped by their children. The work hours of women are worsened in the farming season, when their day would begin at half past four in the morning and end around nine o'clock in the evening. Women's hours of work are increasing and they are gradually becoming more and more marginalized. However women work in fields which they don't own although they have the right to use the land. This also limits their potential to maximise production since the husband who doesn't work in the field, makes decisions about the farm produces. This is unjust to the women who spend most of her time working in the field.

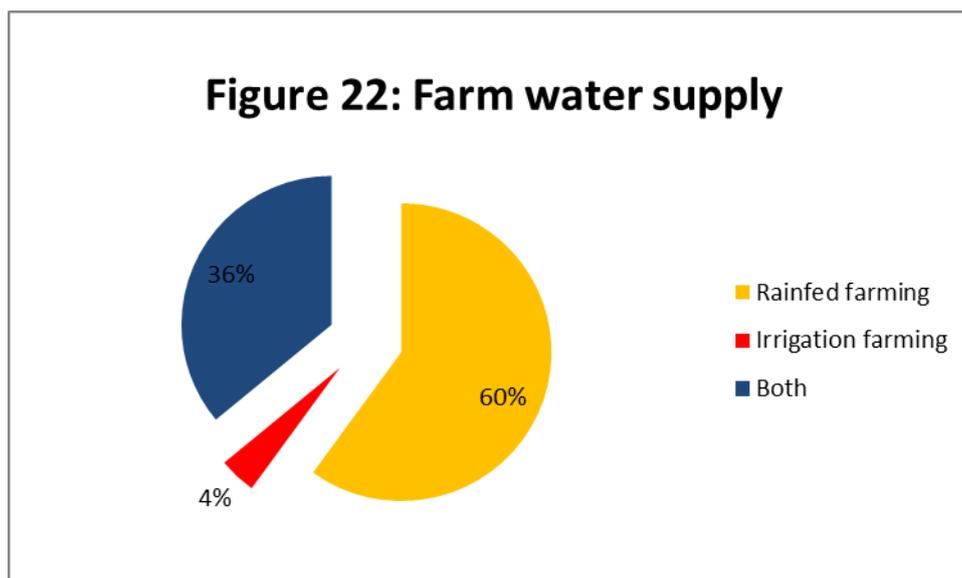


When wives engage in farm-based activities, their labour is not considered work on its own merit but as help to the male members. The study noticed that wives who join hired hands may be rewarded as the hired hands. Even when women receive rewards like hired hands, their contribution is still framed as help and their rewards as appreciation. Such rewards come in the form of farm produce and cash incomes and are considered women's personal earnings although they are used directly or indirectly to support household provisioning.

Even though families use outside sources of labour for their production, family labour is still vital in production. Family labour is not sufficient as such households use hired labour from neighbouring communal areas for tilling, weeding and harvesting. Such labour is exchanged for grain and small stock, depending on their needs. Extended family networks are also a source of labour. Relatives also help in the farm and they will be given money for their effort and contribution. Community co-operatives are another source of labour even though their contribution is limited due to lack of unity in the area. Some of the farmers are not willing to join community co-operatives because they have enough labour at their disposal.

#### **4.8.5. Farm water supply**

The respondents were asked to state their source of water supply which they use in their farms. The data revealed that 30 (60%) respondents practise rain fed farming whilst 2 (4%) practise irrigation farming. The remaining 18 (36%) use both rain fed and irrigation for watering their fields.



The main challenge faced by resettled farmers is erratic rainfall patterns at different periods of the crops production. According to respondents, rainfall patterns have affected yields with crops failing due to either shortage of rain or excessive rains. The rain effects are also mediated by other factors pointed out by respondents. The amount of rain that is received requires fertilization for crops to do well. However, due to fertilizer shortage, farmers cannot achieve the balance needed when there is too much rain. Rains, coupled with the effects of labour shortage and limitations of draught power and soil quality also affect acreage used by households. When there is too much rain, the most efficient means of tillage is diesel-powered tractors. Without the tractors, households use less of their land and using ox-drawn tillage is largely inappropriate and ineffective.

Women farmers also realise that nature alone is not enough for sustainable agriculture, and they need irrigation facilities to be made available so that they can multiply their yields and have extra for sale. On the other hand the study have noticed that irrigation have contributed to enabling farmers to increase crop intensities through double cropping, through supplementary watering during drought, as well as enabling crop growth in dry areas-crop expansion. However few

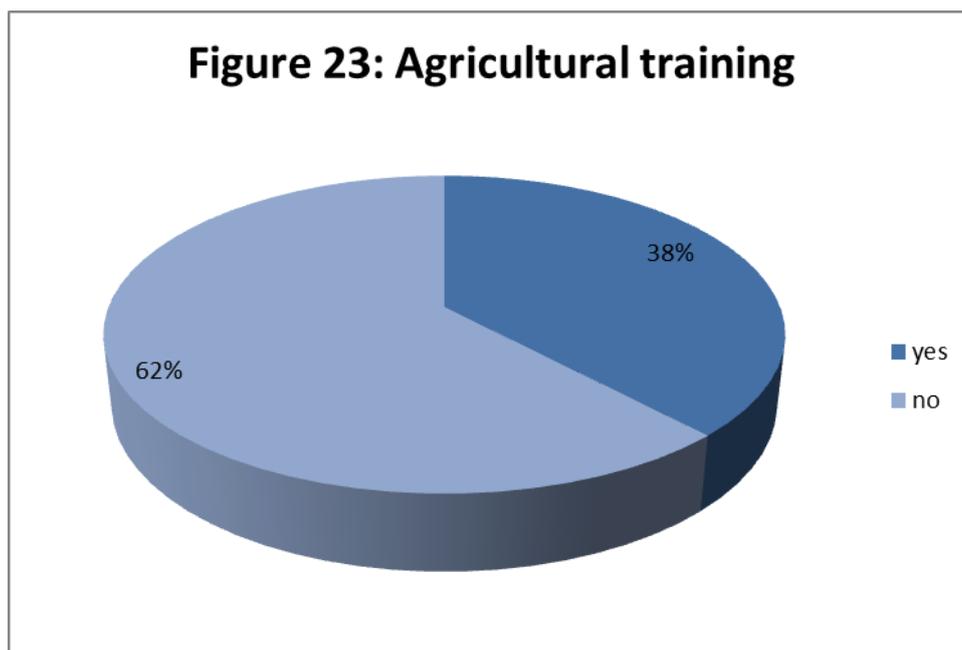
respondents use irrigation alone this may be because they live in areas where they receive erratic rainfall patterns.

There is considerable number of respondents who are using both rain fed and irrigation. According to Chiza (2005), using both irrigation and rain fed farming has a multi-faceted role in contributing to food security, self-sufficiency, food production and exports. Most farm beneficiaries have also been well positioned to take advantage of the irrigation systems they inherited upon resettling at the property.

#### **4.9. Agriculture training**

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they had received any agriculture related training, only 38% of the sample indicated had access to agricultural training while a significant 62% had not received any agricultural training. Many factors affect women's participation in education and agriculture training programmes in Zimbabwe. These embrace economic hardships, socialization, early pregnancy, culture and religion. Social and cultural barriers lower women's educational levels relative to men where sometimes they dictate that a woman marries at an early age. For cultural reasons families tend to place greater value on the education and employment of male children as future bread winners and women are expected to marry early and depend on the house hold head, the husband. In most cases marriage tends to end a woman's academic career.

Lack of training was attributed to low levels of literacy and lack of finance. However, lack of interest was also observed among the elderly women who thought their experience was adequate. Some respondents said they were unaware of availability of such opportunities and some said they did not get a chance due to household commitments which limited available time for other activities.



Others revealed that another discouraging factor was that training is often distance away from the women which made it too long for women to leave household chores such as cooking for children. Lack of awareness of such programmes portrays a picture of poor information networks in Mutasa district. It was observed that in light of these challenges women are often confined to indigenous methods in a rapidly changing environment that requires more sophistication in terms of farming methods. This seriously restrains their ability to provide food for their families.

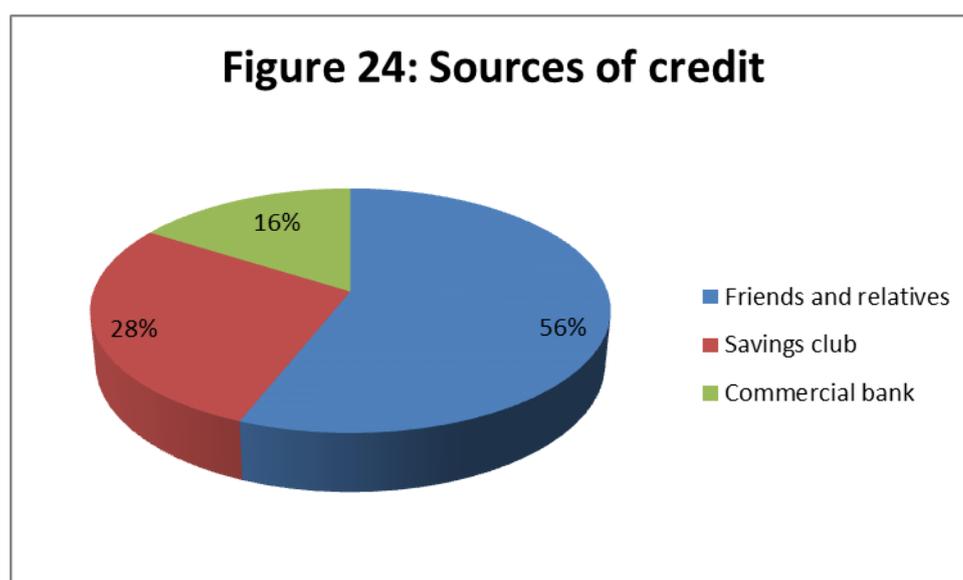
Agriculture education and training help farmers the necessary technical skills and knowledge to enable them to utilize their land, capital and labor to the best advantage, and also to develop the ability of the farmer, given the input resources available to him to choose the enterprise that would give the most profit through the use of proper farm budgeting and record keeping. It is evident that most farmers are not getting the required and necessary agriculture training. The government alone may not be able to bring about the required agriculture training for all the farmers. Private stakeholders can go a long way to complementing the government efforts.

Most women gain farming experience by working with their husbands. However, they learn little of farm management or mobilizing resources, such as labour or credit, as these tasks are typically undertaken solely by the husband. As shown in figure 21 above, a very small number of farmers received this specialized agriculture training. This also shows that no specific criteria in relation to educational levels were used to selecting beneficiaries of the land resettlement programme, because one would expected more of the Master Farmers to have been selected.

#### 4.10. Women and credit support

##### 4.10.1. Sources of credit

The respondents were asked about their sources of credit. The study revealed that 16% get their credit through commercial banks, 28% from savings club and 56% from friends and relatives.



A reasonable number of respondents, 56% borrowed from sources other than the formal lending institutions. These include friends, neighbors, relatives, and local shops. Most smallholder farmers did not apply for credit from the established lending institutions. The newly resettled farmers were too timid to request formal loans. They are afraid to incur debt, which will make them lose their assets as the banks try to recover their loaned funds. This indicates that most farmers need credit but the prohibitive interest rates are a disincentive. As a result, most farmers do not realize their potential productivity.

Also commercial banks and similar institutions are located in Mutare and are, therefore, not easily accessible to the majority of these rural farmers. This shows that loans and information about loans is very difficult to access. Even when they have access to information on the financial services and market opportunities available to them, women may be less equipped to process it. Their lower levels of literacy and lack of exposure to other languages, especially relative to “male family members, hampers women’s ability to benefit directly from information that is provided in writing or in languages other than those they speak at home” (UNDP, 2007)

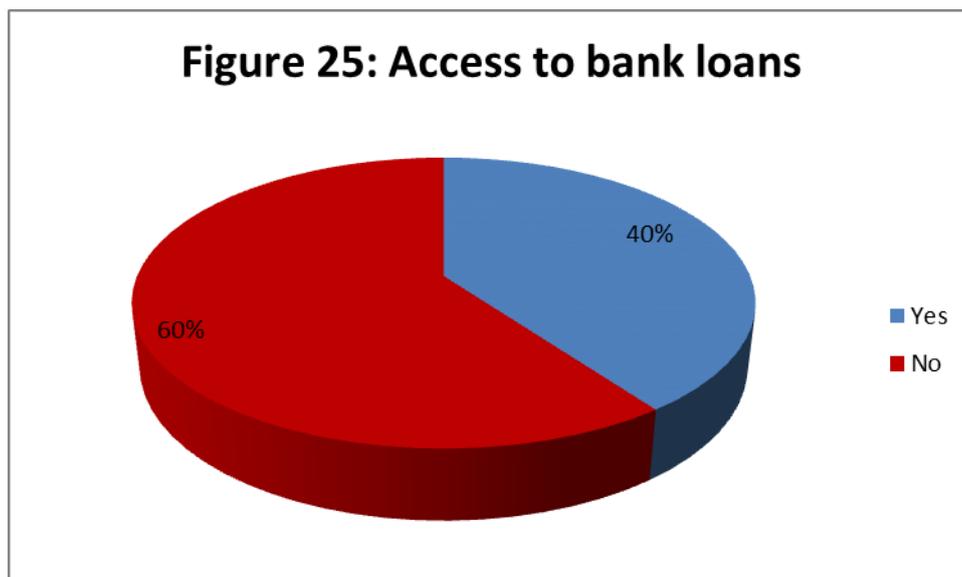
Those who borrowed from friends and relatives did so at 0% interest rate as compared to about 30% charged by the banks, but were expected to repay within short periods, mostly not more than two months. These informal sources are filling the gaps in the financial sector. They serve predominantly lower income people, who, are perceived by the financial institutions as “unbankable” due to their inability to comply with conventional loan collateral requirements. The distinct advantages of the informal credit schemes include: no restrictions imposed on the purposes of credit use, credit is provided in very small amounts and it is typically available with a minimum time delay (Adams and Fitchett, 1992).

Legislation allows women in Zimbabwe to have access to bank loans, but banks often ask for a husband's consent or for guarantees that women are rarely able to provide. As a result, financial institutions grant very few loans to women. Some credit institutions are successfully targeting women and there are increasing numbers of women-only savings clubs, which give women access to financing.

#### 4.10.2. Women and bank loans

The respondents were asked whether they have access to credit facilities in Mutasa district. Out of the sampled households only 40% have access to credit whilst 60% do not. This limited and often complete lack of access to rural financial services hampers women's efforts to improve or expand their farm activities so as to earn cash income to achieve and maintain household food security.

The FAO (2002) observes that generally women are afraid to borrow because of the tedious paperwork which requires some proficiency in reading and writing. It was also revealed that women were afraid of the adverse consequences of borrowing such as the banks impounding and auctioning their assets when they default.



Farmers need access to credit to give them reasonable access to inputs like fertilizer, seeds and pesticides. In short of these inputs women particularly gain less benefits from their farm lands and this make them vulnerable to poverty. Very few of the sampled farmers received loans from the commercial banks due to long distances, poor transport services in some districts and high transport costs. Since women often do not control their resources or own land in their own right, they tend not to have the collateral required to access credit from commercial financial institutions. Many women are still treated as minors and may not contract without the consent of a male guardian.

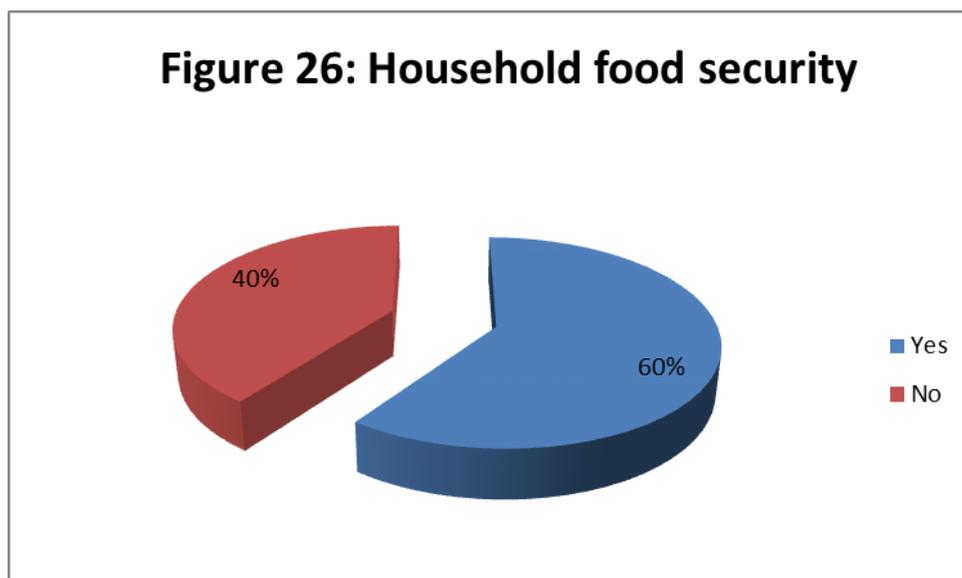
Arguably, access to credit will increase agricultural productivity and profitable entrepreneurial activity among women. Given women's particular role within households, increases in women's income should contribute to increased overall household welfare. Increased access to financial resources may also decrease rural women's dependence on male relatives, and/or enhance their status within households.

Finally, rural women's access to financial resources is also limited by biased lending practices that emerge when financial institutions in the area consider them smaller, less experienced and therefore less attractive clients, or when institutions lack the knowledge to offer products tailored to women's preferences and constraints (Fletschner, 2009). Many women said they were refused credit because they were women or that the banks would not authorize a loan without the signature of their husband. Women also tend to have little experience with banks, again, due to farm and business operations being run primarily by husbands and lack of knowledge and empowerment to negotiate the banking system. Therefore, when asked where they

would go if they needed money for farming operations, many women said they would go to relatives or their husbands.

#### 4.11. Farmers' standard of living

Respondents were simply asked to state their views about their standard of living before and after resettlement. They claimed that the land given to them is better in terms of both size and quality. When respondents were asked to indicate the impact of the programme in improving their household food security, the below figure 23 indicates that 60% of the beneficiaries claimed that they now feed their entire families directly from the produce from their farms.



The majority of the sampled resettled farmers testified that their standard of living greatly improved after being resettled. It showed that more households had more food after the FTLRP. However some farmers supplement with food relief programmes in order to strengthen their household food security, a situation that reflects household food insecurity. Some families had excess to sell or to give other

friends and relatives during times of need. On the other hand, 40% reported that they were still experiencing food shortages despite having access to land. The respondents attributed poor production to adverse weather patterns, lack of inputs, lack of credit facilities and lack of adequate productive land. This suggests the respondents produce little or no surplus and barely enough for domestic needs.

#### **4.12. Conclusion**

Land reform in Zimbabwe was an inevitable and necessary undertaking whose major aim was to redress the historical injustices that resulted from colonialism. The struggle for equality over access and control of land was largely driven by the need to redress racial imbalances whilst overlooking other class disparities which emanated from gender perspectives. This has led to the negation of women's concerns in relation to their access and control of land.

The paper agrees that the Fast Track Land Reform Programme was a noble cause, but it did not ensure democratic outcomes for women. It is apparent that the programme was short sighted and driven by other factors such as political expediency thus could not fully address women's concerns for land ownership and control. It is plausible to conclude that overall, the Fast Track Land Reform Programme diminished the opportunities or spaces for women to be empowered and shrunk the democratic spaces for genuine participation of women in development processes by denying them rights to land, widening gender inequalities and ultimately exacerbating their poverty.

The proponents and implementers of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme were short sighted in giving women land, without addressing factors that would improve the utilization of land by women. Women in Zimbabwe still have undefined and

unsecure land rights hence their control on land and its produce is compromised. The situation of women is worsened by lack of credit facilities, agriculture training, and agricultural inputs.

It is important to note that understanding the gaps in terms of gender in the fast track land reform is a crucial step in any reconstitution of post land reform policies that may be done in Zimbabwe. However, any land reform policy measures that might be taken in Zimbabwe should be guided by a new constitution that protects women's rights to property and the dual laws should be revised. It will not make sense to give women rights to land that can be invalidated by customary laws.

The criteria for allocation of land assume that applications would be made by married couples, or that women would only seek land within the family context. The socio-economic pattern of land allocation is embedded within wider socio-cultural relationships and the succession and inheritance laws of Zimbabwe that perpetuates hostility to women's rights. This has resulted in the perpetuation of marginalised rights for women in land allocation and their insecurity of tenure. It is doubtful that, without a clearly stipulated affirmative action policy that is backed by legal force, women will have a fair chance of access to resettlement land.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CRITICAL EVALUTION

#### 5.1. Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study. It ties up the entire project based on previous discussion by providing a summary of the key findings. From these linkages with the theoretical framework in chapter two are drawn. Recommendations with respect to key findings are also provided. The study also makes provisions for future research and practice. Lastly a concluding statement about the entire project is also presented.

The study has attempted to bring out the current status of women in accessing land in Mutasa district. Clear evidence has demonstrated that criteria used in allocating land for women are complex, stricter and tougher. It can be concluded that as per the literature, women farmers tend to obtain or have access to land through their husbands, parents or other male relatives. However access to and control over land is critical for rural women's empowerment in terms of economic benefit and social status. Rural land reform policies affirming women's equal rights to land hardly bring intended changes in reality and bring about women's empowerment. The FTLRP have failed to challenge existing community gender perspectives on women's access to and control over land.

The study also revealed that women's farming is failing due to lack of assistance from the government. The newly resettled farmers lack access to agriculture inputs like hybrid seeds, pesticides fertilizers. Without adequate inputs many rural women farmers will remain unproductive. There was lack of coordination and poor facilitation from the government officials. Rural women asserted that they do not get information

on when inputs are distributed to farmers in their areas. They pointed to allegations that influential people were accessing all conduits of government support for various implements and inputs. In addition, farming inputs such as seeds and fertilizers were not distributed to every woman in the rural areas; instead those few men and women in politics had access to the inputs and were able to hoard them. They reportedly proceeded to resell them at exorbitant prices beyond the reach of many. This has resulted in inefficiency in the production system.

The study has also noticed that at household level women have less influence on decisions on land and land related matters like on what crops to grow on the land, on sales of proceedings and control of income. The household socio-economic factors, identified in this study, which discouraged high women contributions to farm decision making; were their number of years of formal education, experience and financial contributions to household farming activities. Low decision-making power has become challenge to women's meeting their responsibilities in household food sufficiency. Women in male headed households have relatively less decision-making power because, men control land in most married households. Male dominance in leadership and decision-making is considered to be a fundamental principle of daily life. Men are seen as natural leaders, whereas women were considered to be too weak and vulnerable to be good leaders or major decision-makers.

Women are considered as if they were easily disposable family labourers rather than livelihood managers, farmers, or individuals with decision-making abilities. The lack of recognition of the role women play as decision makers is one of the major reasons for women's poor access to productive resources. As a result, most of the agriculture initiatives that aim at enabling poor and vulnerable farmers to improve their livelihoods and provide access to productive resources fail to take into account

women's concerns. Patriarchal norms largely account for women's restricted role in decision-making at household, community, regional and national levels. This lack of female voice reinforces women's own sense of self and underpins the continuance of the economic and social realities which make women unable to be integrated into national development initiatives.

Furthermore, the study showed that rural women were not productive because there were no credit facilities in place and as a result, the farmers had to rely on friends and relatives for capital assistance. Of great importance is the fact that the majority of the rural poor do not have enough agricultural inputs to improve their production. This in turn was negatively affecting their farm productions. It is clear from the findings of the study that the rural women do not have access to capital from financial institutions because they do not have adequate collateral security. However, credit is required to assist them in starting whatever activities they either wish to engage in so that they will be able to earn sufficient income to meet basic farm inputs.

Apart from that, agricultural training was found to be a challenge faced by women in Mutasa district. Agricultural training programmes provide farmers with a lifeline of information about new technologies, plant varieties and market opportunities. However, the agricultural training programmes fail to reach rural women farmers effectively. It was apparent from the research that social and cultural barriers lower women's educational levels, where sometimes they dictate that a woman marries at an early age. For cultural reasons families tend to place greater value on the education and employment of male children as future bread winners and women are expected to marry early and depend on the household head, the husband. In most cases marriage tends to end a woman's academic career.

The study found that one of the challenges facing rural women under the FTLRP was access irrigation. Women were struggling to obtain water for irrigation. Most rural women depend on rain fed farming which is most cases inadequate enough for farming activities. In many developing countries; climate change is increasing the incidence of drought, crop failure and livestock deaths, and is accelerating water scarcity. This calls for the introduction of irrigation facilities to the resettled rural women.

The study founded that hand-hoe is still the farm implement most used in Mutasa district in cultivating the land. This is because they cannot afford to hire and possess a tractor or an ox drawn plough. However, the quality and durability of this implement are often poor, and little can be done to improve its design. Many of the women stated that the hand-hoe imposed strict limitations on production and that they would never make any progress without access to tractors. The feeling among rural people was that hoeing is the hardest and most time-consuming job that women do on the land. In short, even when other outputs such as fertilizer and improved seeds are available, it will be difficult to raise agricultural output much above subsistence level as long as the hand-hoe remains the primary means of tillage and weeding.

The study found that land inheritance in Mutasa district is along patriarchal lines. The sons are given the first preference to inherit the property and land. The inheritance of property from father to son is also of paramount importance in the social assertion of the principle of paternity over biological maternity. Land was seen as a priceless commodity and needed to be vested in men to assure the welfare and continuity of the descent group. Therefore, changes to the customary inheritance system will strongly depend on men's perceptions of the existing practices. Wives can inherit

land, but would usually claim or receive the land in the name of a son. However, although sons still tend to be the ones to inherit land from parents, any interested child can inherit and in cases where there is only one child or where only the daughters' are interested in farming, it is assumed that they will inherit the land. The in-laws can also inherit the land but in most cases they are not able to look after the well-being of the deceased family.

The findings also revealed that there is a lack of flow of information and knowledge about government policies and laws. The majority of the respondents were not aware of what the law states with regard to land ownership. They are not informed that they have such rights and must demand for them. Information is the key to every aspect of development involving communities, as a lack of knowledge at certain levels of development could lead to perplexity which would delay the progress of the programme. When women lack information on government policies and laws they are unable to participate effectively in their development and remain disempowered.

The results show that culture and tradition overburdened women with multiple household tasks and allocated fewer tasks to their husbands. Women are still discriminated against under customary law, thereby limiting their economic contribution. Their customary status requires them to depend on their husbands or any male relatives. This shows that women cannot venture into any type of investment without the consent of a male partner. Patriarchal attitudes among community members and leadership structures ensure that women do not participate effectively in the land reform process. In a nutshell this has further marginalised women in getting access to land under the FTLRP.

The study has revealed that rural women in Mutasa district lack access to financial services, such as credit, low-cost loans, deposit facilities, micro savings and insurance. Credit enables producers to initiate, sustain, or expand agricultural production and increase productivity. Remarkably few farmers used formal financial institutions to finance their farming activities. The majority get financial assistance from their friends and relatives. Producers with limited resources, especially rural women, receive only a minor share of formal agricultural credit even where they are major producers. As land is the major asset used as collateral to obtain rural credit, women have limited access to credit facilities. Lack of information and knowledge concerning how to apply for credit and mutual distrust between banking institutions and agricultural producers constitute additional obstacles.

Whereas the FTLRP has largely, negatively impacted women's poverty, there are some positive aspects which should be considered. Some women who got land feel that they have benefited, especially female headed households. These households are experiencing increases in incomes, food security, and nutrition for children. Some women have also expressed gratitude for moving away from patriarchal extended families and, therefore, are able to make independent decisions in production. However, this should not be overstated because considering that women are demographically the majority and also provide 70% of labour in agricultural production, the percentage owning land from the Fast Track Land Reform Programme is ridiculously very low.

## **5.2. The following steps are required to improve women access to land**

### **5.2.1. Improving marriage registration system**

Consistent to literatures reviewed for this study, marriage becomes a primary means to get access to land. However, customary marriages which make the majority of marriages in Zimbabwe have led to the suffering of many rural women. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are therefore made: Existing legislation for protecting the property rights of Zimbabwean women married under customary law need to be revised and strengthened to help prevent the plight of women on the death of the husband. Rural women need proper the registration of marriage and issuing of marriage certificates. The traditional leaders should be allowed to certify marriages. This will help deal with accessibility of legal procedures in marriages at a more local level and enable the majority of women to have registered marriages. On the other hand, any intervention that seeks to protect women through registering their marriages needs to be supported by measures that encourage disposed women to seek help through legal channel.

Marriage in community of property should be supported and made known to the rural women. Marriage in community of property creates one joint estate for the persons in the marriage. This means that everything that a husband and wife own, including their debts before they got married is combined into one joint estate. If you are married in community of property the other spouse is automatically entitled to a 50% share of the asset. This will also improve women authority and decision making on the farm.

### **5.2.2. Incorporating women in land registration**

Concerning land registration to land, it is recommended that the government should run a series of awareness campaigns in order to capacitate rural people, especially women, on their rights to land as well as other land reform programmes. The processes of land registration of tenure should also be carried out in an open manner which does not discriminate against women in any way and which encourages an increase in women's access to land. And registering land in the name of husband and wife can help to reduce the loss of land rights of women, both within the marriage as well as in case of widowhood or divorce.

#### **5.2.2.1. Encouraging joint registration of land**

Study findings reveal that number of women registered on spousal joint registration is low as compared to the number of married women considered in this study. The rural land registration process should recognize spousal-joint registration rights on land for married women. The government should identify joint tenure types that improve women's security of tenure and mechanisms to increase independent registration of land in women's names. There is need for laws guaranteeing co-ownership of property and this law needs to be enforced to protect women and children from property grabbing. Gender policies need to be revamped to cater for the needs for co-ownership of property and land by women and strong enforcement of such policies be put in place. The legal processes for joint registration of customary and statutory household land rights for spouses should be simplified to benefit illiteracy rural women.

The government should make it compulsory for families receiving titles for land distributed under state agrarian reforms to be issued in the names of both spouses.

As a result of this legislation and the dissemination campaign and training initiatives accompanying it, the number of women with legal rights to land will dramatically increase. Joint land registration increases their protection against the dispossession of women through abandonment, separation, or divorce; and increases a woman's bargaining power in household and farm decision-making (Grown and Gupta, 2005). However individual titles may give women greater flexibility and control over the land than joint titles, enabling them to explore alternative institutional arrangements for cultivation and management.

### **5.2.3. Involving women in farm decision-making**

Women's ability to influence or make decisions that affect their lives and their futures is considered to be one of the principal components of empowerment by most scholars. Ensuring that women are well represented in all decision making processes surrounding farm operation tend to improve farm productivity. A balanced participation by women and men in decision-making is important for local democracy and for the quality of decisions taken on developments that affect the life and future of rural communities and economies. Women making decisions about farm investments jointly with their husband, represents a step forward because most husbands make decisions alone.

Man and women should have equal voice in farm decision making as equal partners. Channelling credit or savings options to households through women may enable them to play a more active role in farm decision-making, decrease their own and household vulnerability, and increase investment in family welfare. On the other hand, women should be educated as their level of education significantly relate with their level of contribution to household farming decisions. In other words, highly

educated women were likely to make higher contributions to farming decisions than less educated ones. Educated women may be more aware of their rights and responsibilities on the farm and may be more assertive about them than uneducated ones. A sound educational background can reinforce natural talent and it can provide a theoretical foundation for informed decisions.

#### **5.2.4. Advocate for harmonization of customary law**

Promoting women's equal access to and control over land requires addressing socio-economic issues particularly customs and traditions that affect realization of women's equal rights to land. The GAD approach argues that the ideology of patriarchy operates within and across classes to subordinate and oppress women (Maguire, 1984). However, there is need to review reform and harmonise customary and statutory laws, and legislation to address sources of discrimination against women owning land. At the same time, laws on marriage, inheritance, divorce, also need to be harmonized so that women are comprehensively protected by a clear set of laws. Therefore the rural land administration system should design strategies to address these issues through advocacy and awareness creation programmes to change community attitudes and practices.

Since chiefs are the custodians of customary law, and they are most accessible in resolving land related matters, they should be sensitized and taught about gender and development approaches that could improve the quality of the justice they deliver to women. Lower tiers of traditional leadership should be incorporated because these work closely with women. Customary justice custodians should be equipped with knowledge and materials on the national constitutions and relevant

laws that could promote women's land and related rights on marriage, inheritance and divorce.

This call for the need to actively engage in sensitisation and education campaigns to influence traditional norms, values and laws to allow women to own and control land and property. There is need to disseminate information about new laws that promote the rights of women to land and property so that they are familiar to all stakeholders working on the issues. They should encourage communities and custodians of culture to publicly acknowledge that women deserve to be allocated land in their own right. The media can play a major role in promoting gender equality.

#### **5.2.5. Safeguarding women land inheritance**

Consistent with the findings of the study, it is recommended that laws be updated and reformed to protect women and girls' property inheritance rights across all age groups as women are victims at all age groups. Women and daughters are not protected by customary laws on inheritance and statutory law has not yet challenged community customs and traditions. Change is needed in property rights laws so that women may hold individual or joint land titles. This will decrease the chances of property and land grabbing by other relatives. There is need to ensure female property and inheritance rights would help to empower women and rectify a fundamental injustice

Further, women need to be aware of their rights in order to claim them. Educational campaigns on property inheritance and the legal rights of women and girls should be increased. Information on such issues enables young women and girls to be equipped with information on their property rights. Such campaigns will see them empowered to deal with the problem of property inheritance. In schools, children

need to be taught about their property inheritance rights irrespective of the gender. These will be educational advocacy campaigns that can be ongoing and need to be done alongside those of women and young girls in order to reach a large audience. Information on inheritance issues needs to be accessible in local languages so that even people with minimal education will be able to comprehend it. If people are made aware of the legal intervention, it could give women stronger land rights and may also undermine some of the current patriarchal inheritance practices. At the same time, laws on inheritance also need to be harmonized so that women are comprehensively protected by a clear set of laws. Awareness is not only required for rights holders but in many instances other stakeholders and actors including land professionals, policy makers, judges and magistrates who need the capacity and knowledge to interpret and implement national laws with respect to equal inheritance rights.

#### **5.2.6. Enlightening government policies on women**

Knowledge of the national land policy relevant legislations affecting women's rights to land is also low in the study communities. Information is less accessible to rural women given the high illiteracy rate, low access to information. Improving women's access to land must begin with massive awareness creation, educating women on existing land laws and policies. The state should have a firm stand on the implementation of the gender equity policy. There is a need to create rural people's awareness of Land Reform and its programmes. The state should see to it that the implementation of land reform programmes and policies benefit the poor rural women. Women's awareness on their land rights plays vital role in breaking traditional barriers to women's access to and control over land. Therefore, the

current rural land policy should be revised in a gender sensitive manner to address existing gaps and factors that retarded women's equal access to and control over land.

The policy makers must prioritise women, given the difficulty situations they are faced with, as noted by the study. There is a need for agricultural policies that make social provisions for women to access land. The government need to provide initiatives with a nation impetus, taking up the policy changes involved and developing further complimentary initiatives. National legislation and policies must be developed or revised to ensure women's equal access to land and property and remove discriminatory practices. A stronger emphasis must be placed on enforcement of such legislation and the establishment of relevant mechanisms at local levels. Governments should carry out gender sensitive land reform processes. Gender sensitization training must be provided to all cadres of staff working on land reform.

Women's participation in the process of developing a land policy is fundamental to increasing women's access to land. Women gain greater access to land through land reform where the participation of rural women is a well-defined state policy. For a land policy to be able to ensure women's equal access to land, it needs to be based on the principle of gender equality in access to land, have clear objectives on equal access to land. The basic gender policy within the context of land administration should promote secure access to land and other natural resources for women, independent of men relatives and independent of their civil status. Such a policy stance is the basis for identifying and establishing instruments that eliminate, or at least decrease, gender bias with regard to natural resource tenure in land administration programs, including titling and registration.

### **5.2.6.1. Increasing legal intervention awareness**

Many women, in rural areas, only go to school to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills and then leave school to get married, they therefore do not know their legal rights. Thus the majority of women did not know their rights concerning land rights. Those women who have managed to acquire some awareness about their rights often do not know how to enforce those rights. This makes it difficult for those women who know their rights to attempt to enforce them.

Knowledge and awareness on women's equal land holding rights is critical to all concerned bodies including women themselves to realize women's rights on land. Knowledge and information on land administration and use proclamation and other relevant legislations is limited among women in the study area. Knowledge and information is essential for women because most women hold secondary rights. They have to be aware of the rules and their legal rights to raise claims and to challenge denial of opportunities and rights. Women's low awareness of their legal rights will affect the impact of the land redistribution because they cannot claim what they do not know. Where efforts are being taken, education seems to stop at women's general awareness of land laws. Rural women should also be informed them about where to turn to get assistance to claim land or protection against their land rights.

A general ignorance of the law is also part of the problem, with women remaining unaware of what they are able to do to seek redress in the event that their rights are violated. In some instances, cumbersome legal procedures make access to justice both difficult and unaffordable. At the same time the legal system in a patriarchal society makes the addressing of women's land rights issues very difficult.

It is necessary that policy and institutional response be sensitive to the problems facing women in accessing the formal justice system. Rural land policy should apply effective implementation strategy to address women specific issues that affect their equal rights to land. Gender mainstreaming strategy should be applied in the rural land administration system to remove existing barriers that retard women's equal access to and control over land. The rural land administration system needs to be gender inclusive and gender responsive to ensure women's equal access to and control over land.

#### **5.2.7. Recuperating government input support**

Secure access to land is not enough. Farmers must also be equipped with fertilizer, pesticides and improved seeds to maximize the productivity of their land. Because women tend to have less access than men to methods for improving soil fertility, fertilizer and seed vouchers should be targeted to smallholders with explicit efforts to reach women. Where women do not have enough cash to pay for fertilizer, fertilizer-for-work programs can target women, or smaller quantities can be sold at lower cost. Another strategy for ensuring women's access to inputs is to introduce high-value cash crops into women's cropping systems, whereby women pay for fertilizer for their food crops with cash-crop receipts. Smaller packs of good quality low-cost seeds, fertilizer and other inputs need to be available and close to farms at convenient times.

The government must make available both seed and fertilizers well before the start of the planting season so that farmers can plan with confidence and focus. . There is need to consider interaction among inputs rather than treating each input in isolation. This may mean strengthening women's access to resources across a range of

resources rather than having an intervention oriented around a single resource. Corruption in the distribution of agricultural inputs should be completely eliminated. Every farmer should be entitled to a fair share of the available inputs. Also special input schemes targeting women only should be put in place so that women can access inputs independently. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), private sector and other interested stakeholders should play their party in ensuring fair and adequate distribution of inputs in rural areas.

#### **5.2.8. Assisting with farm implements**

In conclusion, there is no quick or simple solution to improving the production tools and implements used by women. However, to bring about any change in the situation requires action on the part of governments, development agencies and (NGOs). This might involve: Encouraging governments to pursue tax and duty policies favourable to local producers and distributors of tools and implements. This will lower the prices of farm implements making them affordable to the poor rural women. This should be supplemented by giving women more access to credit facilities and giving a longer period for repayment so that they will be able to acquire necessary farm implements without facing difficulties.

Indeed, tractors were widely seen as the solution to the farmers' problems. The introduction of tractors meant that larger land areas will be cultivated. This will increase their farm production and ensure household food security. The government may assist the rural farmers with tractors that will be owned by the community. This will help those who cannot afford to buy or hire a tractor for cultivation. The government should initiate schemes which ensure distribution of tractors and other heavy farming equipments on credit and with zero deposit. However, there should be

extension services which should go beyond providing their traditional type of advice and give farmers the type of information that will help them take the right decisions about tools and equipment.

#### **5.2.9. Investing in irrigation farming**

Investment in irrigation infrastructure and water distribution systems is, however, low in Mutasa district. Government should allocate substantial resources towards irrigation development now and in the future. The government can provide support through the establishment of more irrigation schemes or projects that can assist farmers to produce their own food and be food secure. The schemes typically involve building dams and providing flood or sprinkler irrigation technologies, the latter often involving large recurrent subsidies to pay for the pumping of water. Introduction of water harvesting tanks or water conservation methods will go a long way in improving farm water supply. There is need to build small dams near farms as bigger dams like Osborne and Eastern Highlands dam are located away from the newly resettled farmers.

Policy makers need to promote irrigation development in the semi-arid areas and also in areas where it rains sufficiently, so that farmers can still irrigate an extra crop, produce fruits and vegetables or cultivate rice which uses a lot of water. Also more boreholes should be made available in farms. Many boreholes made provision for cattle watering in the dry season and assist vegetable or crop production or other household income-generating activities. Boreholes are less expensive in terms of initial investment costs and more likely to be sustainable in the long term.

### **5.2.10. Advocate for women focused agriculture training**

Agriculture education exposes farmers to improved techniques. Owens *et al*, (2001) have argued agricultural training represents a mechanism by which information on new technologies; better farming practices and better management can be transmitted to farmers. According to Seyoum *et al* (1998), more training expected to result in smaller values of technical inefficiency effects. But, as noted by the study, rural women have limited access to agricultural training institutions. Quality training empowers communities with skills that can contribute toward their own community development and reduction of poverty. Accredited training on regular bases is recommended. There is a need to create more agricultural training colleges in most rural areas of Mutasa District. However all training programmes need to take into account the specific constraints faced by rural women.

There is need to encourage agricultural educational institutions to use quotas, awards and scholarships to enrol more women will increase the number of female agricultural graduates. Scholarships will allow women to pay school fees and other associated costs of schooling. In this way, they contribute to enhancing the potential for economic empowerment through delayed marriage age and completion of schooling. On the other hand, eliminating or substantially reducing agriculture colleges fees will result in increases in enrolment, particularly for women. There is need for an approach that considers educating all people, not only women, at grassroots level and need to be made a policy issue. This then should be followed by rigorous implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Where women have lower literacy or schooling rates than men, it is critical to adapt training materials to be easily understood by women. There is need for adult literacy programs, especially when combined with the acquisition of other skills relevant to

the learner, may be particularly useful where there are pockets of undereducated women. Efforts should be intensified at capacity building through increasing investment in education as this will better enhance the earning capacity of respondents and invariably improve their food security status. There is need for short courses and refresher courses that are not time-consuming.

Gender perspectives should be integrated into the extension curricula and teacher training materials. Extension officers, both men and women, should be trained in gender-sensitive delivery of extension services in order to ensure that the services reach both women and men farmers. Only training that accurately addresses the needs of women smallholders, and takes into account both their different productive activities and their needs in accessing and applying training, offers serious prospects for raising women's productivity and improving their livelihoods. However, the government alone may not be able to bring about the required extension service for all the farmers. Private stakeholders can go a long way to complementing the government efforts.

#### **5.2.11. Improving access to credit.**

Land reform serves to redistribute land and to achieve increased productivity. Higher productivity can only come about as a result of changes in the structure of support services such as research, extension and credit. Land reform without farm credit will achieve little in terms of redistribution for justice and efficiency. Farmers need access to credit to give them reasonable access to inputs like fertilizer, hybrid seeds and pesticides.

The single most commonly reported obstacle to investment and entrepreneurship is inadequate access to capital (Davis, 2003). This is particularly due to the fact that

most rural poor people do not own assets to serve as collateral and major financing institution, especially banks, are afraid of losing large amounts of money in unpaid debts (World Bank, 2007). Conversely those who do own assets to serve as collateral are unforthcoming to put assets at risk as collateral when they are vital to livelihoods. Therefore, there is need to provide micro-financial services which will provide access to credit to rural women who do not have the collateral. Credit delivery can be improved by setting up micro-finance institutions in rural areas and reorienting the banking system to cater to the needs of small farmers, especially women. The Grameen bank, a major micro-financing institution targeting the poor in Bangladesh has been very successful in this regard.

In order to improve production, farmers need access to financial capital. Buying seeds, fertilizer and other agricultural inputs often requires short-term loans, which are repaid when the crops are harvested. Thus, banks should vary their loan maturity periods; this will help poor female farmers, whose ability to repay loans may depend on the gestation period of their crops. However installing major improvements, such as irrigation pumps, or acquiring new technology that increases future yields is impossible without access to long-term credit. There is need to design loan packages that support women's engagement in more profitable, but non-traditional, economic activities by bundling credit with additional services or by helping women connect with agencies or groups where they can obtain that support. The full range of economic policies, including banking regulations and access to commercial credit and other financial services, needs to be reviewed to ensure that there are no explicit or implicit barriers to full gender equality and equity.

Access to credit and other rural finance services should be improved in order to strengthen women's potential to purchase inputs, property and other assets needed

for agricultural production. Women smallholder farmers need information on types and terms of credit. The relevant government and bank agencies must provide information on available credit and repayment terms in language that rural women can understand. Simplify lending processes so that illiterate and semi-literate rural women can effectively make use of credit facilities. Credit information can be made in language that all can understand to join or start credit. The steps to apply for credit should be easier to follow. However credit facilities should be accompanied by agricultural technical skills and human development training both for women and community leaders, to enable them to utilise and receive full benefit from loans.

Banks should offer incremental loans based on individual repayment behaviour to reach out to women who might not be able to provide collateral. There is need to ensure that women can apply for loans without their husbands' or other male approval. Women need to be recognized as adult citizens with the right to enter into contracts credit agreements independently of men. Regulations that defend women's control over loans against the demands of other family members can make rural finance a more effective instrument for poverty reduction.

Measures should be undertaken by the government to assist commercial banks in reducing their stringent lending criteria in order to accommodate women farmers. The criteria should focus on the viability of the project being financed and not strictly on the ability of the farmer to pledge collateral. Viability based lending is common in developed countries and can create access rural women to financial resources. This can contribute to the growth of the agriculture sector and of the rural economic growth.

Women's roles in household financial management may improve, in some cases enabling them to access significant amounts of money in their own right for the first

time. This might enable women to start their own economic activities, invest more in existing activities, acquire assets or raise their status in household economic activities through their visible capital contribution. It can also lead to improved well-being for women and enable them to bring about changes in gender inequalities in the household. The banks should also be willing to offer lower interest rates or interest-free loans which may be obtained without requirement for collateral.

Policy initiatives for gender-equitable finance cannot be limited to microcredit but must involve the development of more inclusive and women-friendly formal financial systems and complementary supporting services. To be an entrepreneur with parameters that determine the scope of an enterprise in rural situations, the smallholder farmers must be familiarized with the principles of business economics, record keeping and they should become proficient in managerial.

Microcredit interventions remain, however, an effective tool for poverty reduction. Evidence suggests that lending to women is more cost-effective when compared to men, as women are more reliable credit-takers. Furthermore, women's income is consistently utilized for expenditures that are beneficial to the entire family and the wider community. For example, research findings from a number of countries demonstrate that women spend much of their income on household well-being, including children's education and their own health. However efforts to empower women through financial services should also address prevailing power relationships.

#### **5.2.11.1. Intensifying the Input credit schemes**

This is a scheme where some companies engaged in certain agricultural commodities have resorted to financing smallholder farmers for a specific crop.

These product companies provide farmers with the needed inputs at subsidized rates. The farmers make a commitment to market their products through the company that lent them the inputs. Most successful is the Cottco input credit scheme, which was started by the Cotton Company of Zimbabwe. Such input credit schemes should be strengthened so that rural women can benefit. The input credit scheme should specifically targeted women farmers located in marginal communal areas of the country. However the prices of their produces should be favourable to the rural farmers.

The government, through the GMB, should intensify their distribution of inputs to poor smallholder farmers who cannot afford to buy inputs from the market. The government recovers its money at the end of the season when the farmers market their produce through the GMB. As a result it is important for the private sector to also come on board and the international donor community too.

### **5.3. Concluding remarks**

From the above discussion, it is apparent that Land Reform Programme has done little to improve women's access to land, wealth and authority. Women's particular position is influenced by the lack of credit support, unequal division of labour, lack of irrigation equipment, lack of farm implements, decision-making powers, marital status, patriarchal patterns of land allocation and inheritance, lack of legal intervention awareness, social services, education and training. What is needed is to make it more productive and this can be possible if all the above mentioned suggestions are taken into consideration by rural development planners and practioners. However, it is of utmost importance to note that all rural development efforts hinge upon policy formulation and implementation.

Apart from incorporating these recommendations in rural development plans and policies and there is a great need to go a step further and implement these suggestions in all rural areas countrywide so that the much anticipated growth and productivity of the land reform programme would be achieved. There is the need to enhance awareness about the disadvantages of these discriminations not only to women and girls but to the community at large. It should stress, in particular, the need for rural women's full access to land and property, including through ownership, co-sharing, inheritance and succession.

Unless all these points are not taken into consideration, future land reforms will remain unproductive and with the decline in agriculture production the rural women will continue to suffer. No land reform programme will succeed as long as women are oppressed and unable to utilise or control their resources.

#### **5.4. Possible areas for future research**

Future researchers could make use of other gaps from this research that could be developed into research grounds. Some of these areas include the following:

- The impact of the FTLRP on the economy of Zimbabwe.
- The effects of the FTLRP on the national food supplies in Zimbabwe.

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**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Consent form**

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. Before we start, I would like to emphasize that:

- Your participation is entirely voluntary;
- Some questions may be emotionally trying;
- You are free not to answer any question;
- You are free to withdraw if need arises and

Consistent with the requirements of research, the information given will be kept confidential since no personal details, contact and physical addresses will be required.

As a requirement from the University Research Committee and to show that I have read the contents to you and you have understood, may you sign this consent form.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

**INTERVIEW GUIDE**

**RURAL WOMEN AND THE LAND QUESTION IN ZIMBABWE. THE CASE OF MUTASA DISTRICT**

**This research is conducted by Mr B. Toro in fulfilment for the requirements of Master of Social Sciences in Development Studies.**

**ADDENDUM A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Interview schedule No..... Date .....

District..... Village/ location.....

**APPENDIXES**

Appendix 1: **Interview guide**

**PERSONAL DETAILS**

SEX:

Male	Female
------	--------

AGE:

18 - 28	29-39	40 - 50	51 - 60	60 - 70	71 - 80	80+
---------	-------	---------	---------	---------	---------	-----

MARITAL STATUS:

Single	Married	Divorced	Widow
--------	---------	----------	-------

TYPE OF MARRIAGE:

civil marriage	registered customary	unregistered customary
----------------	----------------------	------------------------

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL:

Primary	O"Level	A" Level	Polytechnic	University	6) Other
---------	---------	----------	-------------	------------	----------

CHILDREN:

1	2	3	4	4+
---	---	---	---	----

HOUSEHOLD SIZE:

1	2	3	4+
---	---	---	----

MONTHLY INCOME (\$):

1-100	100-200	200-300	300-400	400-500	500+
-------	---------	---------	---------	---------	------

**WOMEN AND LAND ENTITLEMENT**

1. Who is the head of this household?

Husband	Wife	Other
---------	------	-------

2. To whom does the land in the communal areas belong to?

Husband	Wife	Children	Other
---------	------	----------	-------

3. Who has the responsibility of allocating land in the communal areas?

Chief	Clan	Government	Other
-------	------	------------	-------

4. Who was entitled to receive land in the Fast Track Land Reform Programme?

Husband	Wife	Children	Other
---------	------	----------	-------

5. In whose name is the land registered?

Husband	Wife	Children	Other
---------	------	----------	-------

6. Which of the following categories describes your land ownership status?

Owner	Leasehold	Freehold	Headmen's allocation	Inherited	Renting	Other
-------	-----------	----------	----------------------	-----------	---------	-------

7. What kinds of land rights do you have?

Permanent	Temporal	Lease
-----------	----------	-------

8. How were beneficiaries selected in the Fast Track Land Reform Programme?

.....

9. Did you get land because you are known to?

Chief	Political Party	NGOs	Other
-------	-----------------	------	-------

10. Would you think you will lose your land if you are no longer connected to them?

Yes	No
-----	----

11. Would you consider the process transparent to the community? Was the community involved?

.....

12. Do you have access to a land after the Fast Track Land Reform Programme?

Yes	no
-----	----

13. If yes, what is the size of your land?

1-5ha	5-10ha	10-15ha	Other
-------	--------	---------	-------

14. How far is your homestead away from the field?

0-1km	1km-2km	2-3km	Other
-------	---------	-------	-------

**WOMEN AND DECISION MAKING**

15. Who does most of decision making on your land?

Husband	Wife	Children	Other
---------	------	----------	-------

16. Who controls the produce from the field in your households?

Husband	Wife	Children	Other
---------	------	----------	-------

17. In the absence of the husband who make family decisions?

.....

**WOMEN AND FOOD SECURITY**

18. Do you think that women's improved access to land can help attain household food security?

Yes	No
-----	----

19. If no explain why?

.....

20. Do you think women are capable of looking after the wellbeing of the family?

.....

...

21. Do women customary status in society constraint their economic contribution. Give reasons for your answer?

Yes	No
-----	----

**WOMEN AND PROPERTY INHERITANCE**

22. Do you jointly own land with your husband?

Yes	No
-----	----

23. If No explain why?

.....

24. With regard to land, who has the right to inherit it in the household? Give reasons for your answer?

Wife	Son	Daughter	Brother-in law	Other
------	-----	----------	----------------	-------

25. In the absence of husband who controls the land?

Wife	Son	Daughter	Brother-in law	Other
------	-----	----------	----------------	-------

26. If other relatives inherit the land do they also look after the wellbeing of the family?

.....

...

27. Where did you get assistance when confronted with land right problems in the community?

Chief	Clan	Relative	Other
-------	------	----------	-------

**GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

28. Do you think the government policies on women land rights are adequate enough to represent their problems?

.....

...

29. What kind of assistance do you receive from the government?

.....  
 .....  
 30. Are you aware of any legal intervention that would ensure that women get access to land in the Fast Track Land Reform Programme?

Yes	No
-----	----

31. What is your view of the existing legal policies and laws that the Zimbabwean government employed to ensure women's access to land in the Fast Track Land Reform Programme?

.....  
 ...

32. Do you think men and women should have equal access to land in the Fast Track Land Reform Programme?

.....  
 ...

33. To what extent have been the Fast Track Land Reform Programme contributed towards improving your access to land?

.....  
 ...

**WOMEN AND FARM OPERATION**

34. Which of the following best describes your method of farming?

Subsistence	Livestock	Mixed subsistence	Semi- commercial	Commercial farming	Other
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35. Which of the following would you consider as factors that affect your farming? (You may cross more than one)?

Access to education and training	Access to credit	Access to inputs	Availability of more labor	Land	Weather patterns	Access to information	Other
----------------------------------	------------------	------------------	----------------------------	------	------------------	-----------------------	-------

36. What sort of farming implements do you use?

.....

37. Are they adequate?

Yes	No
-----	----

38 If NO, please explain?

.....

39. Do you practice?

rain fed farming	irrigated farming	both
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40. Who does the ploughing of your field (s)?

self only	hired labour	family and self	community co-operative	Other
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41. How is the ploughing done?

By oxen	By tractor	By hand/hoes	Other
---------	------------	--------------	-------

42. Who does most of the work in the field?

Husband	Wife/wives	Children	Relatives	Hired labour	Other
---------	------------	----------	-----------	--------------	-------

### AGRICULTURAL TRAINING

43. Do you have any specialized training in agriculture?

Yes	No
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44. If YES at which of the following level(s)? (You may select more than one)

High School	Agriculture College	Master Farmer Certification	Short Course	University	Other
-------------	---------------------	-----------------------------	--------------	------------	-------

45. If NO, please give reasons why?

.....

## AGRICULTURAL CREDIT SUPPORT

46. Have you ever borrowed money to finance your farm operations?

Yes	No
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47. If yes, who did you borrow money from?

Friends Relatives	Savings club	Commercial bank	Other
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48. What interest did they charge you?

1-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	+50%
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49. Is the information about how to obtain a loan sufficient for you?

Yes	No
-----	----

50. If you borrowed money, why did you borrow?

To purchase inputs	To purchase farm implements	Other
--------------------	-----------------------------	-------

51. When borrowing from the bank or agencies, what collateral (security) was requested from you?

Title deed	Insurance policy	Other:
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52. Do you sometimes need credit to support your farming activities?

Yes	No
-----	----

53. Do you have access to credit?

Yes	No
-----	----

54. If NO what is the reason?

.....

55. What are the sources of credit?

Government	Unions	Bank	Friends &relatives	Cooperative	Church
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56. What requirements do you have to meet to qualify for credit from institutions?

.....

57. Which of the following best describes how you acquire farming inputs?

Government Input Scheme	Buy	Cooperative purchase	Borrow	Donation/specify	Other
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58. Do lack of access to land disadvantaged you in accessing to other agricultural support e.g. bank credit, hybrid seeds, and fertilizers.

Yes	No
-----	----

59. If yes, state the problems you have

.....

...

**WOMEN AND COMMUNITY PERCEPTION**

60. What are the people attitudes towards women in relation to land in the community?

.....

61. Do you think they can be a change in what the community think in relation to land?

.....

62. Would you think the land distribution poverty have contributed towards alleviation of poverty in your community?

.....

...

63. Are you satisfied with the way these projects are administered?

.....

**GENERAL**

64. Do you produce enough to feed yourself and family for the whole year?

Yes	No
-----	----

65. If No, why are you unable to produce enough food?

Land is too small	Soil is too poor	Area receives little rain	Labour is too scarce	Other
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66. Do you need more land for farming?

Yes	No
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67. If Yes, you need the land for:

Grazing	Cultivation	Garden
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68. Compared to the years before you were resettled, has the quality of life of your household

Improved	Remained the same	Deteriorated
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69. Compared to the years before you were resettled, has your agricultural production?

Improved	Remained the same	Deteriorated
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**We have come to the end of our interview. Thank you very much for having time to participate in this study.**

**THE END**