A Micro Study of Livelihood Factors Impacting the Lives of Rural Households in the Buhera District of Zimbabwe.

by

Jacob Mugumbate

Supervised by Mr. B. Sachikonye

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Social Work degree of the University of Zimbabwe, Faculty of Social Studies, School of Social Work.

August 2010

UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

:: knowledge :: diligence :: integrity

Abstract

Poverty is the greatest humanitarian challenge the world faces. With a fifth of the world living below the poverty datum line, the world has a huge burden to reduce poverty. A target has been set through the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to reduce poverty by half by the year 2015. In pursuing this goal, livelihoods of poor people, especially in rural areas, play a major role. This study sought to understand the role played by livelihood assets, strategies and security in the fight against poverty in rural communities. The location of the study was Buhera District, located in Manicaland Province, eastern Zimbabwe. The district was chosen because of its huge rural population of 93.3% and accessibility to the researcher. It has a population of 250 000 people. A sample of 100 heads of households, representing 0.2% of the 50 000 households in the district were interviewed. The sample consisted of 52% females and 48% males further stratified into children, youths, adults and the elderly. Findings indicated that each household had on average 6.51 members against a national average of 4.3%. The research found out that households had a diversified physical asset base but yielding low income. The major asset was found to be livestock especially cattle. Households had on average 2.5 heads of cattle, the same finding UNICEF found in its 2002 study in Buhera. All households had good pieces of land averaging 5 hectares but not very fertile. The majority of households had little access to information, technology, markets and basic services. Infrastructure especially for schools is dilapidated, roads are eroded and the land is degraded, posing major threats to livelihoods. Financial resources at the time of the study per household ranged from US$0.50 to US$44. Livelihood strategies were found to be diversified but falling within two major categories, farm and off-farm activities. The major strategies included crop farming especially maize and groundnuts (grown by 98% of households) followed by livestock based strategies. Remittances and support from NGOs had a significant role. Food production was at pathetic levels showing an average deficit of 87% in the last season. Security factors were found to be mainly lack of rainfall, political instability, disease and land infertility. These factors acted vindictively against the efforts of the households. Due to their effects, total income per household per month was only US$52 on average against an average monthly expenditure of US$87. Households had several but hopeless ways to cope with the deficit. Most of them just consumed less food, fail to pay school fees or sell livestock. Conclusions reached included that crop cultivation is the major source of livelihood but it is under threat from inadequate rainfall and soil infertility. With dwindling crop yields families rely on livestock thereby straining their asset base which is under threat from empty pastures and lack of adequate water. To save their livestock, households rely on off-farm activities. Men leave the villages to look for work in turn improving remittances. Surprisingly, there is inaccessible government social security for vulnerable groups including large families from polygamous marriages. Resultantly, the cycle of poverty perpetuates itself. In light of these conclusions, the researcher recommends that livelihoods must be protected, promoted and rehabilitated. Water availability must be prioritized whilst social capital and community cohesion must be enhanced. To curb migration, agriculture must be made viable whilst social services must be made accessible. Behaviour change must be promoted to curb early marriages, gender imbalances and polygamous marriages. There is need for participation of villagers and provision of adequate resources from government and NGOs. Areas for further study include livelihoods of child headed households, nutrition and irrigation.

Dedication

This research project is dedicated to my wife Chiedza and son, Germane Derrick.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge with utmost gratitude the support given by my supervisor, Mr. B. Sachikonye through out the period of the project and my wife, for the motivation derived from her whilst working on this project.

Many thanks go to Lloyd Muchemwa, a professional and academic colleague for constructive critic of my work.

Last but not least, I thank all the villagers who took time to work with me during the period of the project especially as respondents and key informants who took time off their busy schedules.

Definition of Key Terms and Phrases

Food Poverty Line (FPL) is a level of income at which people can meet their basic needs.

Household means family unit made up of people who are mainly related and lives together sharing livelihoods or as Tsuro (2001) put it '…an economic unit where people live together and eat food prepared in the same kitchen'.

Human Development Index (HDI) measures human development by combining life expectancy at birth, adult literacy an income, ranging from 0-1.

Livelihood in this study is taken as a source of income or the income itself. This includes cash and non-cash income.

Livelihood asset is in this study defined as a tangible or intangible good, service or skill that has got the capacity to generate income if utilized.

Livelihood factors in this study include livelihood assets, livelihood strategies and livelihood security. These are aspects that determine income.

Livelihood security relates to the safety, protection and sustainability of income, assets and strategies.

A *livelihood strategy* is a way, tactic or approach to generate income needed to meet human needs.

Poverty in this report is seen as deprivation of basic necessities in life like food, clothing, shelter, health and non-intangible things like opportunities or rights.

Rural area is here defined as a non urban area where dwellers depend mainly on agriculture for their livelihoods.

Total Consumption Poverty Line (TCPL) is the level of income at which people can meet their basic food and no-food needs.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acronyms

APA	American Psychological Association
CBO/s	Community Based Organisation/s
CCZ	Consumer Council of Zimbabwe
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DFID	Department for International Development
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FPL	Food Poverty Line
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
HDI	Human Development Index
HPI	Human Poverty Index.
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HEA	Household Economy Approach
HLS	Household and Livelihoods Security Approach
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MLPSSW	Ministry of Labour Public Service and Social Welfare
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PAS	Poverty Assessment Study
POSB	People's Own Savings Bank
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
SLF	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
SLSO	Sustainable Livelihoods Support Office

TB	Tuberculosis
TCPL	Total Consumption Poverty Line
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
US$	United States Dollar
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
VGP	Vulnerable Group Profiling
WHO	World Health Organisation
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
Z$	Zimbabwe Dollar

Chapter One

Introduction to the Study

1.1 Introduction

Poverty is the greatest humanitarian challenge the world is currently facing. This chapter starts with an examination of poverty. This is followed by a discussion on livelihoods. A statement of the problem is highlighted whilst a justification is made to support the significance of investigating this area. Following this is an indication of the aim and objectives.

1.2 Background Information

1.2.1 Conceptualisation of Poverty

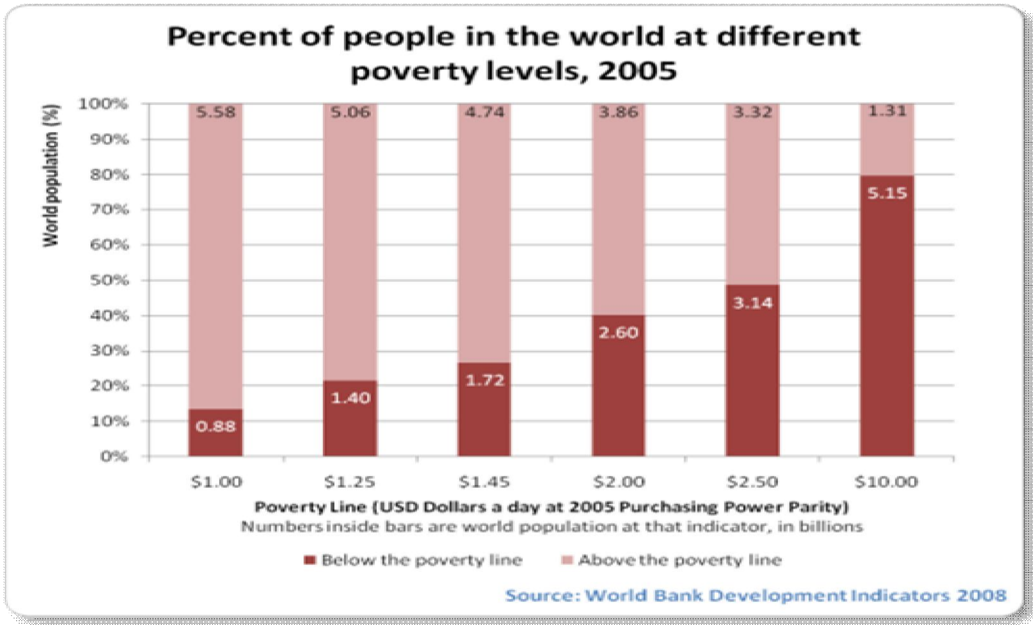
Poverty is deprivation of basic necessities in life like food, clothing, shelter, health and non-intangible things like opportunities or rights (World Bank, 2007). It is an undesirable physical, social and psychological condition which can be viewed in either absolute or relative terms. The absolute view entails a situation whereby a person is unable to secure the basic needs to meet their physiological needs which sustain life, argues UNDP (2008). In support of this view, DFID (2010) further asserts that with 1.3 billion people in extreme poverty, poverty is the single greatest global challenge. In monetary terms, this represents people whose income is below a specific minimum level needed to satisfy the basic needs. The World Bank considers that extreme poverty is when a person lives on less than US$1 per day or less than 2000-2500 calories of food per day for an adult person. The same institution considers those living on less than US$2 a day as moderately poor. About 21% of the developing world population lives in extreme poverty, asserts World Bank (2008).

On the other hand, relative poverty is a situation whereby a person is less well off compared to others. This represents a social definition of poverty which views inequality, unemployment, lack of capital and poor standards of living as constituting poverty. On the extreme end, the psychological definition of poverty considers people poor when they are vulnerable, dependent, powerless, exploited, excluded and have no freedom of choice and lack access to opportunities (Todaro, 1987). Over seventy six percent of the world's people live in absolute poverty, argues UNDP (2008) and World Bank (2008).

1.2.2 Global Poverty Context

Almost half the world — over three billion people — live on less than $2.50 a day (World Bank, 2008). Figure 1 below show the percentages of the world population and different income levels.

Figure 1 World Poverty Levels provided by World Bank



Rural areas account for three in every four people living on less than US$1 a day and a similar share of the world population suffering from malnutrition.

The developing nations of Africa, Latin America and Asia are the most affected by poverty. Women, children, the elderly, the disabled, the displaced and the unemployed are among the most affected by poverty. The saddest and most fearful effect of poverty is that like a cancer, its likelihood to cause more poverty is very high and is possibly astronomically multiplying with each passing day. SADC (2008) argues strongly that the rural areas have been worst affected by poverty. They have been submerged into the vicious cycle of poverty. Gender development experts have also said poverty has affected women more than any other group. On the other hand, organisations representing disability, children, the unemployed, the homeless, the sick and the destitute argue that poverty has affected these target groups severely.

1.2.3 Vulnerable Populations

The following citations highlight the levels to which poverty most affects rural poor, women and children.

> "Seventy-five per cent of the world's poorest people - 1.05 billion women, children and men - live in rural areas and depend on agriculture and related activities for their livelihoods", IFAD (2010).

The DFID in its 2002 White Paper on poverty eradication elaborates that:

> Some 1.3 billion people (almost 70 percent of whom are women) nearly a quarter of the world's population continues to live in extreme poverty, on less than the equivalent of (US)$1 per day. They lack access to opportunities and services. They feel isolated and powerless and often feel excluded by ethnicity, caste, geography, gender or disability. They lack information and access to health,…education,…assets, or...market...are the most vulnerable….

While UNICEF (2010) had this to say in its state of the world's children for 2009 report: "1 billion children are deprived of one or more services essential to survival and development."

1.2.4 Poverty in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a landlocked Southern African country with a size of 390 557 square kilometers (Central Statistics Office (CSO), 2003). The 2002 census by the CSO found a total population of 11.6 million people, with 85% of them dependent on agriculture and 70% living in rural areas. Although the Human Development Index (HDI) was 0.621 in 1985, it slowed to 0.496 in 2003. These HDI figures are provided by IDS (2003) and supported by Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) (2004). In its 2004 Millennium Goals Report (MDGs) GoZ reported a life expectancy of 43%. This later dropped to 37% in 2006 according to UNAIDS (2008). To give a better understanding of poverty, the IDS (Zimbabwe) also gave Zimbabwe's inequality rate as 0.57 of the Gini Co-Efficient based on findings by the Ministry of Labour Public Service and Social Welfare's (MLPSSW) 1995 Poverty Assessment Study (PAS). The Poverty Assessment Survey found that 72% of female headed households were living in poverty. The same assessment found that Zimbabwe's Human Poverty Index was 36%, food poverty 68% and consumption poverty 80%.

Rural areas of Zimbabwe have high and rising levels of poverty (UNDP, 2008). An empirical study carried out in nine rural districts by Government of Zimbabwe/UNICEF in 2002 to determine beliefs, knowledge and practices of parents and adolescents in key development issues of health, education, sanitation, adolescent rights and mother to child transmission of HIV confirmed the existence of poverty. The study recommends information enhancement, strengthening of traditional leadership roles, indigenizing approaches to make them appropriate, strengthening traditional social systems, strong intervention by government, rights based approaches and strengthening livelihoods.

Interesting to note were findings on Buhera District, the target location for this study. The study by UNICEF showed that household mean size was 4.5 people, access to media was 54%, availability of productive assets was 20%, cattle ownership mean was 2.25% and 50.4% of households owned ploughs. The study concluded that with little access productive assets the area was prone to poverty. Orphans and women were the most affected by poverty. HIV/AIDS was found to be the major cause of death, poverty and general suffering in the communities studied.

To sum up, causes of poverty in Zimbabwe have been cited as economic programmes like structural adjustments (the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) being the notable one), HIV/AIDS, marginalization of rural areas, exclusion of disadvantaged groups, droughts and floods and many others. These reasons are supported by GoZ (2010) and key institutions like UNDP (2008). Solutions have also been cited by these institutions and these include supporting agriculture with irrigation and inputs, fight HIV/AIDS, create employment, subsidies, socials services and many others. Writers in the last decade like Chinake (1997) and current literature from UNDP (2008) and GoZ (2010) support these solutions.

1.2.5 Fighting Poverty: the MDGs Poverty Goal

With one fifth of the world living below the poverty line, the world leaders agreed to reduce world poverty by half by the year 2015. This was the first of eight goals to develop the globe. Thus halving the population of people living below one United States of America dollar per day became a key target. The goals are:

1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

2 Achieving universal primary education

3 Achieve gender equality and empowerment of women

4 Reduce child mortality

5 Improve maternal health

6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

7 Ensure environment sustainability and

8 To create a global partnership for development.

The poverty and hunger goal has 4 targets. These are:

1. Halve, between 2002 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than the Total Consumption Poverty Line (TCPL).
2. Halve, between 2002 and 2015, the proportion of people in Human Poverty, as measured by the Human Poverty Index (HPI).
3. Halve, between 2002 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

4. Reduce by two-thirds, between 2002 and 2015, the proportion of under-five children who are malnourished.

It has been argued by key development institutions like UNDP, World Bank, DFID among others (UNDP, 2010) that the poverty goal can only be achieved if sustainable livelihoods are promoted, adopted and protected.

1.2.6 Poverty and Livelihoods

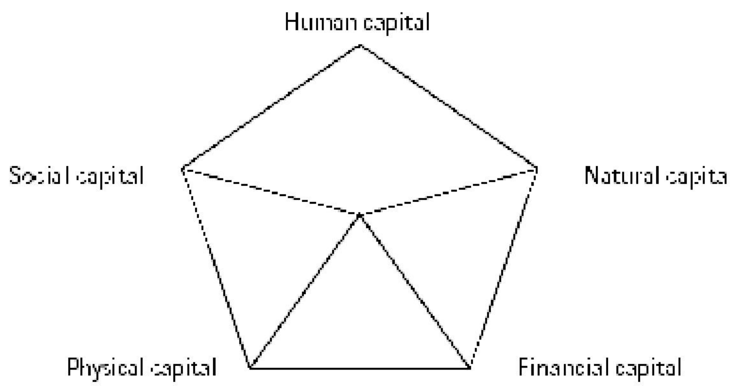
As a result of high levels of poverty, writers on development like Carney (1999), Conway (2001) and others and institutions like the World Bank, UNDP, DFID and others have questioned the role of livelihoods in poverty prone communities. A livelihood is a means of making a living (Chambers and Conway, 1992). It is composed of capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living, adds IDS (1997). Livelihoods are interconnected but they are exposed to numerous security factors i.e. undesirable features or interventions that result in negative livelihood outcomes. Availability of assets and access to them promotes better livelihoods. On the one hand, utilization of these assets through livelihood strategies creates resources like food needed by households. Therefore, livelihood assets and strategies contribute directly to improving the lives of people.

Livelihood strategies are affected by geographical conditions, availability of infrastructure, institutional settings, asset levels and many other risk factors (UNDP, 2008). Asset levels enhance or worsen income earning capacity.

1.2.7 Livelihood Assets

As Chambers and Conway put it, assets can be human, social, physical, natural capital or financial as shown on Figure 1 below.

Figure 2 The Asset Pentagon provided by DFID



Knowledge, skills, education, age, physical ability and family size form part of human assets (Iiyama et al, 2008). Social assets include mutual acquaintance, trust, social norms, relations or kinship networks, recognition, opportunities, unity, relationships, access to social institutions, leadership, bonding, solidarity, informal protection, inclusion and cohesion (Saracostti, 2007). Physical assets encompass livestock, houses, community infrastructure and markets. Natural assets entail the innate endowments available to people like land, forests, labour, rainfall, temperature and vegetation. These capital assets are crucial in determining the quality of life of each household. On the other hand, financial assets include savings, income from livestock and products sales and remittances or income from work in urban areas or other sources. To benefit from these assets, activities or strategies are carried out. For example, the land has to be tilled or savings must buy food.

1.2.8 Livelihood Strategies

Livelihood strategies are sources of revenue adopted to meet human needs. Such strategies can be formal or informal, legal or illegal, moral or immoral, safe or risky. Chambers and Conway (1992) noted that strategies could be natural (like land cultivation) and non-natural (like trading). In rural communities, such strategies are largely based on the environment, in the forms of agriculture or mining. Iiyama et al (2008) grouped the livelihood strategies into farm and off-farm income earners. UNDP (2008) articulates that some farm activities include garden produce, fruits and livestock trading whilst off farm strategies include government support, mutual aid, remittances from urban workers, vending, mineral panning, firewood selling and support from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Such strategies vary in effectiveness and they are influenced by capital assets available to the household.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

This research seeks to explore livelihood assets, livelihood strategies and livelihood security of households in the Buhera Rural District. These are factors of importance given the plurality of socioeconomic issues impacting upon the lives of households in the District. Previous researches on poverty by UNICEF

(2002) and Dananai (2008) all indicate that a low asset base and poor livelihood strategies are among the major factors most households in Buhera Rural District have remained in poverty.

1.4 Justification for the Study

It is imperative to study the livelihood factors in the Buhera District in order to come up with recommendations that will help to strengthen livelihood strategies and contribute to reduction of the practical problem of poverty if adopted. Murambinda Mission Hospital (2009) notes that poverty is on the increase in the Buhera district and recommends institutions, scholars and professionals to empirically study and understand livelihood strategies and security factors impacting on them. This observation is supported by UNICEF (2008), UNDP (2008) and Dananai (2009). These organisations agree that the district is prone to livelihood threats that affect household income and they all recommend that studies must be carried out to inform development programmes about the nature of such livelihood security issues. This will resultantly give better livelihood outcomes like food security and good health.

The researcher was unaware of any study on livelihood strategies, capital assets and security factors in the area at the time of writing the proposal and this means a research gap still remains. This research therefore seeks to contribute to literature by filling this identified gap.

1.5 Aim of the Study

To explore livelihood factors of households in the Buhera Rural District.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

a). To assess livelihood assets in the Buhera District.

b). To examine livelihood strategies in the Buhera District.

c). To assess livelihood security factors in the Buhera District.

1.7 Conclusion

The information presented in this chapter shows that the world's biggest challenge is poverty and that the livelihoods approach is one of the several ways to combat this challenge. This chapter analysed the concepts of poverty and livelihoods. It then highlighted the justification for carrying out this study, the aim and objectives. The next chapter reviews literature on livelihoods.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Development institutions mostly in developed countries e.g. DFID, CARE and others and writers on development like Carney (1999), Hussein (2002), Conway (2001) and others provides valuable information on livelihoods. In this chapter, an attempt is made to provide an overview of literature available on livelihoods. It critically looks at the various publications that have been produced in the area of this subject by various researchers, writers and scholars. The researcher analyzed the contributions of these writers, discerning consistency and disagreements as they relate to the research problem of this assignment. Some of the publications described, summarised and analysed include sustainable livelihoods, livelihood framework, livelihoods assessment and analysis and livelihood outcomes. In this chapter, methodological approaches to livelihoods were reviewed, with a view to providing a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches as they relate to rural poverty. At the end of the chapter it will be comprehensible which livelihoods concepts are clearer, which ones are debatable and which ones warrant further investigation.

2.2 Sustainable Livelihoods

Writings on rural livelihoods (e.g. by DFID, World Bank and UNDP) have stressed sustainable livelihoods, argues Hussein (2002). The debate has largely focused on which livelihoods assets and strategies are least affected by security factors (World Bank, 2008), which ones are reliable and are ecologically friendly (DFID, 1997) and types of livelihood frameworks in use (Hussein, 2002). Previously, issues of livelihoods were neglected but it was later realized that to bring meaningful development, livelihoods have to be identified, protected and promoted, contends Carney (1999).

DFID (2007) sums up what sustainable livelihoods are by noting that:

> It is our duty to care about other people, in particular those well off than ourselves. We all have a moral duty to reach out to the poor and the needy. But we also owe it to our children and our grandchildren to address these issues as a matter of urgency. If we do not do so there is a real danger that, by the middle of the next century, the world will simply not be sustainable. The combination of population growth, environmental degradation and the conflict and disease to which this will lead could impose catastrophic pressures upon the planet.

Sustainable livelihoods may mean that development strategies must be ecologically friendly (FAO, 2010). It might also means the world must meet the needs of today and those of future generations without sacrificing the resources needed now and in the future (DFID, 1997). Sustainable livelihoods go beyond sustaining the ecological environment to also sustaining human beings (DFID

1997, GoZ 2010 and UNDP 2010). Sustainable development may also refer to people centred approaches, argues UNDP (2008) and Wanmali and Singh (1999). All these writers agree that without sustainable development the world will not be able to eliminate poverty.

2.3 Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA)

As Carney (1999) succinctly puts it, the sustainable livelihoods approach is a way to improve understanding of the livelihoods of poor people. This approach is being used by DFID, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), CARE, UNDP, FAO and many other key development institutions, notes Hussein (2002) in his comparative study of use of this approach by 15 key development institutions. DFID (2001) states that the approach is based on the factors affecting livelihoods and the relationships they create. The two key components of the SLA are:

- a *framework* which is necessary to make poverty more understandable
- a set of *principles* necessary for implementing programmes to reduce human suffering

Carney (1999), writing about sustainable livelihoods for the rural poor, had this to say:

> After decades of limited success in eliminating rural poverty, new ideas about rural development are emerging. A number of

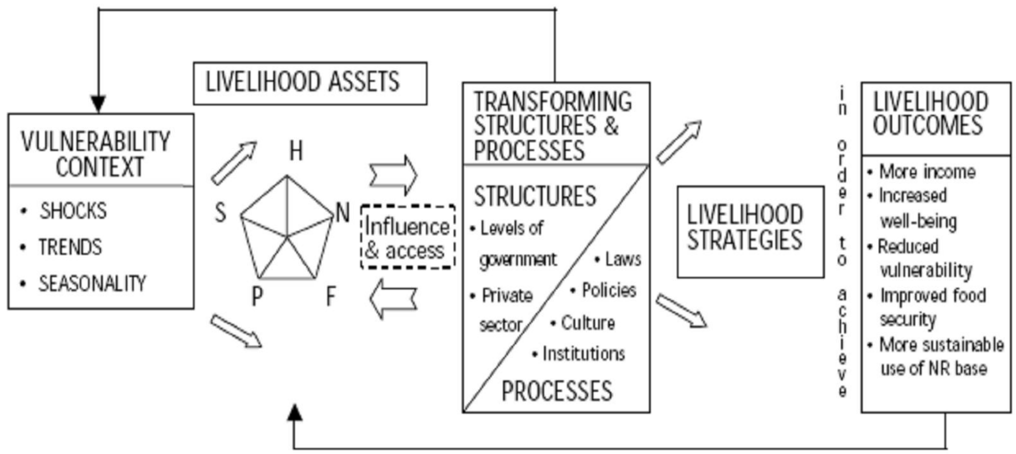
> prominent agencies are currently revising their rural development strategies in broadly similar directions.
>
> So-called 'livelihoods approaches' work with people, supporting them to build upon their own strengths and realise their potential, while at the same time acknowledging the effects of policies and institutions, external shocks and trends. The aim is to do away with pre-conceptions about what exactly rural people are seeking and how they are most likely to achieve their goals, and to develop an accurate and dynamic picture of them in their environment.

This provides the basis for identifying the constraints to livelihood development and poverty reduction. Such constraints can lie at local level or in the broader economic and policy environment. Such constraints are also exposed if the sustainable livelihood framework is used as discussed below.

2.3.1 Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF)

In an attempt to understand livelihoods of poor people, a schema has been provided by DFID and this is one of the several frameworks available on livelihoods notably by Institute of Development Studies (IDS), CARE, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Oxfam. This framework is shown below. The framework is only a guide, warn its proponents. It is only available to provide a common understanding of the factors that interplay to shape livelihoods. An understanding of the interplay is necessary to find ways to support livelihoods in an attempt to take people above the poverty datum line.

Figure 3 The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework adopted by IDS, DFID among others



Key:

H = human capital N = Natural capital F = Financial capital S = Social capital P = Physical capital

As shown on the diagram, the poor are at the centre of influences that shape livelihoods. Thus as Carney (1999) puts it, assets and resources influence livelihoods. Such assets and resources can be social, physical, human, natural or financial. Access to assets and resources is dependent upon the vulnerability context which includes trends (for example, economic, political, and technological), shocks (for example, epidemics, natural disasters and civil strife) and seasonality (for example, prices, production, and employment opportunities). On top of vulnerability context, assets and resources are also influenced by policies, institutions and processes. As the process continues, livelihood strategies chosen by the poor are heavily influenced by the factors discussed in this paragraph. Resultantly, livelihoods end up negative or positive. Positive outcomes are desirable.

The framework has the capacity to find out the main concerns and opportunities of poor people as they say them. People are the main concern, rather than the resources they use or their governments. Once again it has been stressed that the framework is not a universal solution but is an adaptable attempt to put people at the centre of their livelihoods and to better understand factors impacting their livelihoods. The framework is situational.

However, some writers like Hussein (2002) feel that the framework has serious shortcomings: among these, the absence of political capital, gender and other power issues and rights. Also, the failure of the asset pentagon to distinguish between personal and common assets (e.g. natural and physical assets such as water and roads) has been sighted as a shortcoming.

In a 2002 study commissioned by the UK Department for International Development's (DFID's) Sustainable Livelihoods Support Office (SLSO) Karim Hussein of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) compared 15 frameworks from bilateral, multilateral and non-governmental organizations and concluded that SLAs incorporate and summarise much of what is considered to be 'best practice' in development. Another point to emerge from this review is that SLAs have common origins and principles, rooted in early work on participatory methodologies, ecosystems analysis, vulnerability and livelihoods. However, the diversity of interpretations of SLA reviewed by Hussein highlights an important aspect of SLA: they are not uniform and prescriptive, but provide a foundation for creativity in applying holistic analysis to a variety of issues.

2.3.2 People Centred Approaches

The IFAD (2010) argued that the original frameworks to understand livelihoods have not put the poor at the centre. They assert that these initial frameworks alienate the poor and puts attention on assets and strategies. To address this challenge, they have come up with their own framework, Figure 4.

Figure 4 An Alternative Framework, The People Centred Livelihood Framework by IFAD

The IFAD framework attempts to give a people centred approach by placing the poor literally at the centre of the diagram and arranging the other elements in the framework in relationship to them. In the original framework adopted by DFID and others, "processes" include such diverse elements as policies, legislation, the formal and informal rules governing institutions such as markets, organisations and tenure arrangements, culture and power relations defined by gender, age, ethnicity, caste and class. IFAD argues this is complex and in their new framework these processes are "unpacked". First of all, key aspects such as gender, age, class, ethnicity and ability are given greater salience, and placed at the centre, to reflect the fact that they can influence everything at all levels within the framework. The inclusion of the aspirations of the poor, and the opportunities that they are able to pursue, argues IFAD, encourages users of the sustainable livelihoods framework to focus on the hopes of the poor themselves and their capacity to take advantage of opportunities rather than making assumptions about what options and opportunities may exist within a given livelihoods system. This encourages a people-centred analysis and an understanding of the strengths of the poor that can be built on through the development process.

The idea of participation has also been encouraged by notable writers like Burkey (1993:56) who stated that:

> Participation is an essential part of human growth, that is, development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility, cooperation. Without such development within the people themselves, all efforts to alleviate poverty will be immensely difficult, if not impossible. This process, whereby people learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems, is the essence of development.

Rodgers, who is considered the father of the people centred approach, wrote in support of such approaches:

> ...an attempt to produce (these) changes for the community by means of ready made institutions and programmes planned, developed and financed and managed by persons outside the community are not likely to meet with any success in the future than they have in the past (Rodgers, 1987:59).

2.3.3 Sustainable Livelihoods Principles

The sustainable livelihoods approach has seven guiding principles which are not prescriptive but rather circumstantial in nature. According to DFID (2001) these are:

- *Be people-centred.* Participation of people is very valued and this should begin when needs are being identified. The first point is to identify livelihoods.
- *Be holistic.* Focus on the various strategies to secure livelihoods as well as the various stakeholders interacting with a community.
- *Be dynamic.* Action should be based on the fact that livelihoods change over time.
- *Build on strengths.* Support existing livelihoods, thus building on the people's strengths, capabilities and opportunities rather than their problems.

- *Promote micro-macro links.* Since policies and institutions influence livelihoods, it is recommended to study them and ensure that they are in the best interest of the poor.
- *Encourage broad partnerships.* Partnerships that are broad in nature are critical especially with private sector.
- *Aim for sustainability.* Only sustainable solutions have the power to take the poor people out of poverty.

International development agencies like IDS, UNDP, UNICEF, FAO and governments share a common consensus on these principles although priorities vary across institutions (Young et al, 2008).

2.4 Livelihoods Assessment and Analysis

To ensure most effective livelihood strategies and efforts are supported, especially be development agencies, DFID (2001) argues that livelihoods must be assessed and analysed. Assessing and analyzing livelihoods help understand the people's concerns and priorities. The IFAD (2010) supports this idea, arguing that this is very important in forming a foundation to select and shape interventions to support more rewarding livelihoods. Such strategies are guided by the livelihood principles earlier discussed.

A common approach for assessing livelihoods is Household and Livelihoods Security Approach (HLS) developed by CARE (CARE, 2001). Although there are other approaches that are applied in trying to understand livelihoods, the HLS has been singled out as it is very relevant for this study. Its relevance emanates from the fact that it can be applied in stable situations to understand livelihoods of poor people. Other approaches like the Household Economy Approach (HEA) used by Save the Children UK and the Vulnerable Group Profiling (VGP) are all more applicable to emergency situations in the context of food security rather than poverty and livelihoods in general.

The HLS approach is relevant to the understanding of poor people's livelihoods since it makes use of all elements on the livelihood framework, argues Save the Children UK (2002). Its goal is to offer a broader understanding of livelihoods and discover people's concerns. This then helps to shape programming.

In doing this form of analysis, data sources can be both primary and secondary as well as both quantitative and qualitative (DFID, 2001). A triangulation of data collection methods may be adopted. This might include key informant interviews, focus groups, direct observation, household interviews or many others. In the analysis, the feasibility of different livelihoods is determined. Interventions are then drawn from conclusions.

Dorward, Poole, Morrison et al (2003) argues that this framework has shown strengths if applied to stable communities but has been weaker in conflict areas. However, Ellis (1998) argues that although it helps to build a holistic framework for livelihoods it is not ideal for emergency situations basically because it takes four to six weeks to implement. In such emergency situations, the HEA and the VGP are some of the applicable livelihood assessment approaches.

2.5 Livelihood Outcomes

According to the livelihood framework (DFID, 2001 and IFAD 2010) livelihood outcomes can be economic (e.g. food or income security), biological (e.g. low mortality or malnutrition) or social (e.g. dignity or right to life). The three types of livelihoods are interdependent. Generally, positive outcomes offer security and protection to households. Negative outcomes are a threat to lives and livelihoods. If a household uses farming as a livelihood strategy, thy will expect to get more yields. If they are good rains and they had all the seeds and fertilizer needed, they are likely to produce a surplus. This strengthens their resource base. However, if there is a drought, resources are applied to buy food resulting in fewer resources for seeds and fertilizer, argues Murwira, Wedgwood, Watson and Win, (2000). This gives a negative outcome where food is inadequate, security and nutrition are compromised.

2.6 Conclusion

Taking from the above discussion, it has become necessary for development efforts to be modeled along sustainable development objectives. This approach is supported by various frameworks, among them the DFID and IFAD frameworks. To ensure outcomes are successful, efforts must be research and needs based. This requirement is satisfied through livelihood assessment and analysis. Experts from key development agencies, among them CARE, UNDP, DFID and many others concur that understanding livelihoods result in realisation of better approaches to give best livelihood outcomes.

Chapter 3

Methodology, Presentation, Discussion and Analysis of Findings

3.1 Introduction

This study sought to explore livelihood factors of households in the Buhera Rural District. To achieve this objective, a methodology was drawn, executed and results obtained. This chapter addresses the research methodology employed in gathering information for this study. It then proceeds to present, discuss and analyse the findings. This chapter presents the findings with a discussion and analysis.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Research Design

The research utilised both quantitative and qualitative designs. The researcher was satisfied this design was the most suitable to answer the research questions of this project.

3.2.2 Target Location and Population

Buhera Rural District, the site for this study is situated in Zimbabwe's eastern province of Manicaland. The district comprises 32 administrative wards all run by the District Council. An elected councilor represents each ward in Council.

According to the Central Statistical Office (CSO) (2003) the district had 250 000 people in 32 administrative wards after the 2002 national census. Buhera Rural District was chosen for the study because of a number of reasons. There was no known study on livelihoods in the area. The area was also accessible to the student.

The District is amongst the poorest districts in Zimbabwe. Social services in the district are poor, so are road networks and infrastructure. Murambinda Mission Hospital (2007)'s concludes that Buhera is one of the poorest districts of Zimbabwe. Most people scratch a living by semi-subsistence farming. The climate is semi-arid and the soil is poor. Any failure of rains or disturbance of the crops or cattle will spell disaster to the people. Buhera District has problems with malnutrition and malaria. Infant deaths are common and many mothers die in pregnancy and childbirth. Added to this, in recent years, HIV/AIDS and TB have been devastating.

The District, with 93.3% of its population living in communal areas and 6.7% at growth points (CSO, 2003), provided a good location for the researcher who wanted to study households that were not largely influenced by urban life.

3.2.3 Sampling

Sampling selected 100 heads of households to participate in this research out of a possible 50 000 households in the district. It was assumed that heads of households were going to be both males and females. Therefore, sampling adopted the CSO (2002) women to men ratio of 52:48. Therefore 52 women headed households and 48 men headed households were targeted.

However, it was realized that heads of households varied in ages. Therefore the incorporated heads of households in the following age groups: children, youths, adults and elderly. To ensure that these groups were represented, quotas were set for them using findings by UNICEF (2002) that child headed households constituted up to 2% of households in Buhera. The same study indicated that youths headed households, adults headed households and old people headed households constituted 37%, 45% and 16% respectively.

Therefore, the following table indicates the sample.

Table1 Sample Characteristics by Sex and Age Group

Age group of heads of households	**Sex**		**Total**	**%**
	Male	**Female**		
Children below 18 years (but not married)	1	1	2	2
Youths below 35 years (but married)	17	22	37	37
Adults between 36 and 64 years	20	25	45	45
65 years and above	12	4	16	16
Total	48	52	100	100

Since respondents were free to participate in the research or not, convenience sampling had to be adopted based on willingness to participate and accessibility of the head of household.

A total of 100 respondents, representing 0.2% of the estimated households in Buhera District were interviewed. Respondents came from 10 administrative wards.

The sample excluded people at growth points, service centres, mission centres and schools because their demographic characteristics were closer to urban areas than rural areas.

Key informants, who included the Agriculture Extension Services Officer, the District Social Welfare Officer and the Council's Community Services Manager, were interviewed separately. It was crucial for the study to interview the Agriculture Extension Services Officer since his office is responsible for supporting agricultural efforts in the communities. Agriculture was anticipated to be the main source of livelihoods. The District Social Welfare Officer is responsible for members of the district who require social assistance and their office is also responsible for public works programmes and working with community based and non-government organisations. It was necessary to interview the Council's Community Services Manager because her office is responsible for coordinating community development efforts in the district including coordinating NGOs. Key informants were selected using judgmental sampling. It was necessary to use personal judgment to choose the key informants since it was assumed they had adequate key information given their positions in working with households in the district.

3.2.4 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

An interview schedule (Appendix 2) was utilized to collect responses from heads of households. The schedule was seen as the most appropriate to use due to anticipated low literacy levels amongst the respondents. The schedule was translated to Shona, the vernacular language. Shona was the preferred language for all but 3 respondents. The researcher personally interviewed respondents whilst an assistant recorded responses. Data collection was done from 21-30 May 2010 and 12-17 July 2010.

An interview guide (Appendix 3) was used to collect data from 3 key informants. The researcher interviewed key informants and recorded the responses.

Observations were made by the researcher to gather more evidence to support interview findings. An observation guide checklist was used (Appendix 4).

The interview schedule was pre-tested on ten heads of households who were interviewed at the Council offices where they had come from villages for various reasons. After these ten interviews, questions that were difficult to understand because of language differences were corrected.

3.2.5 Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data were analysed manually since the sample was too small for a computer based analysis.

3.2.6 Limitations of the Study

With limitations of resources, the researcher sampled 100 households out of 50 000 households in the district. This gives a lower sampling percentage of 0.2% which affects representativeness of the sample and generalisability of findings. However, considering the homogeneity in demographics of the district this sample sufficed in giving data that gives a stronger foundation for inferences but requires caution to generalize to other areas. The researcher also noted that in the District there are teams from organizations which normally interview people with an intention to give the most needy food handouts. As a result, it could be possible that some respondents expected that even though the researcher had notified them of the intention of the study, there might be room that the interviews may be used to choose recipients of aid. This matter could have resulted in exaggerations to some answers.

There are people doing illegal activities like diamond mining who were hesitant to fully talk about their trade. However, key informants and other respondents were free to share this information.

Lastly, the data was collected during political tensions in Zimbabwe although a unity pact had been reached between the three main political parties. During the data collection, constitution teams and political parties were also doing constitutional outreaches and this could have affected answers as well.

In spite of all these limitations, the study however is a product of intensive interviews and library research which should enable the researcher to come out with fairly comprehensive findings.

3.2.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues were guided by key codes of ethics like the American Psychological Association (APA 2002) Code of Ethics.

Participation in the research was voluntary and this was ensured by a voluntary consent form (Appendix 1) that was explained verbally in vernacular to a prospective respondent. After agreeing to be interviewed, the form was signed by the researcher and respondent. The consent form spelt out that responses were going to be recorded, kept, processed and reported in confidentiality.

The researcher affirmed a commitment not to harm participants in any way through the consent form and this was also communicated verbally to respondents.

The research also interviewed two children heading households. These were 18 and 19 years respectively. Given that they had reached the age of consent, they gave their own consent to take part in the research.

Professional neglect was avoided by referring community members to specific organizations for help. This was helpful for seven households that required social assistance. Their need was observed by the researcher during the study. They all got assistance for medication fees and bus fares. To ensure that other respondents were not tempted to give responses that showed their need for social assistance, the referrals for these seven households were done only after completing interviewing respondents in that same area. None of the households needed urgent referrals.

Lastly, the researcher remained neutral and non-judgmental during data collection. Opinions of respondents were respected. This was necessary given the diverse backgrounds of residents of the district in terms of religion, knowledge, norms and values.

3.2.8 Feasibility

The Buhera District Council gave the student permission to proceed with the research. It was possible to reach out to 100 households since the student was engaged by a health institution working in the whole district. Respondents were therefore reached during outreach meetings with the health institution.

3.3 Presentation, Discussion and Analysis of Findings

3.3.1 Profile of Respondents and their Households

3.3.1.1 Sex and Age of Respondents

A total of 100 heads of households were interviewed. These comprised 52 female heads of households and 48 male heads of households. Of the 52 women who were interviewed, one was a child, four were elderly women above 65 years of age, 22 were youths while 25 were between 36 years and 64 years. Of the 44 men who were interviewed, 12 were above 65 years, one was a child below 18 years, 15 were youths and 20 were between 36 years and 64 years.

Only two children heading households were interviewed. It was very difficult for the researcher to get these two child headed households. In fact, child headed households are rare phenomenon in the district. Most of children orphaned have been absorbed into their extended families and they were mainly being looked after by their grandparents.

Married youths who were quite many and the interviewer did not struggle to get them. It was surprising to note that youths as young as 16 years were married. This confirms UNICEF (2002) conclusion that early marriages were rife in Buhera.

Respondents were asked to give a reason why their households were not male headed in their household. This question was necessary to ascertain the circumstances that gave rise to child and female headed households given that in rural districts heads of households are expected to be mainly males as fathers or husbands. The circumstances why 52 of households were led by females were given as husband at work (22%), husband deceased (15%), husband in polygamous relationship (15%), father deceased (10%), husband sick (8%), negligent husband (13%) and other reasons (17%). Men are working at the growth points, in cities and in neighbouring countries. Those who were deceased or sick this was probably due to HIV/AIDS. Polygamous husbands rotate their time between families or simply neglect their very big families. Other reasons included husband having a disability, divorced and other reasons.

3.3.1.2 Education and Health Status of Respondents

To ascertain the educational and health status of respondents, they were asked to indicate their levels of education. They were then also asked to indicate whether they were in good health or not. The findings from these questions are presented on table below.

Table 2 Education and Health Status of Respondents

Household Asset	Attribute	Sex		Total respondents	%
		Male	Female		
Education	Never been to school	3	3	6	6
	Primary level	24	11	35	35
	Form 2	23	7	30	30
	Up to Form 4	14	3	17	17
	Up to form 6	1	1	2	2
	Tertiary qualification	9	1	10	10
	Total	412	239	100	100
Not in Good Health	Below 18 years	0	0	0	0
	19 to 35 years	1	0	1	11
	36 to 64 years	3	3	6	67
	Above 65 years	2	0	2	22
	Total	6	3	9	100

The literacy level for the respondents was very high. Given that only 6 respondents had never been to school and were unable to read and write, the literacy level could be 94%. Heads of households with ordinary levels and advanced level are likely to be employed or looking for employment in the cities than staying in the villages. In terms of health, 9 respondents were not in good health due to old age and undisclosed ailments.

Formal skills were limited to 10 respondents who were trained as teachers (2), drivers (2), carpenters (3), bricklayers (2) and a baker (1). Only the baker was a female, the rest were male. All of them were no longer practicing formally because of reasons including retirement, retrenchment and unemployment. All the bricklayers and carpenters were doing their trade from the community informally. Fifty (50%) respondents alluded to having some informal skills.

3.3.1.3 Size and Composition of Households

The total 100 households interviewed had a combined total of 651 members. These were people feeding from the same kitchen during the period of the study and those who were temporarily away for less than a month's period. This gives a mean average of 6.51 people per household. The median was six (6). In terms of range; the lowest household had two members whilst the highest had 21 members. The household with 16 members belonged to an Apostolic Sect and the family actually has seven kitchens but the father is responsible for them all as the head of household. The other families with more than 10 members notably are living with orphaned children from the extended family. Overall, these figures indicate that Buhera has one of the largest household sizes in Zimbabwe. The CSO gives the average national household family size as 4.3 members per household. This figure is obtained by dividing the total population of 11 631 657 by the total number of households of 2 649 921 (CSO 2002 Census Report). However, the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) uses six members per household to calculate the monthly price index (CCZ, 2010). The UNICEF study of 2002 found Buhera had an average of 4.5 members per household. The differences with this study may be due to the sample, especially the wards reached. This study reached wards 18, 19 and 11 which have the highest prevalence of apostolic sects. These apostolic sects have polygamous marriages.

Respondents were asked about the composition of their households. Members who were temporarily away were enumerated as members of the households. The following table summaries responses under this question.

Table 3 Composition and Size of Households

Age Group Of Members Of Household	**Sex**				**Total**	**%**
	Male		**Female**			
	Members	**%**	**Members**	**%**		
Below 18 years	123	54	105	46	228	35
Between 19-35 years	74	57	56	43	130	20
Between 36 and 64 years	112	49	116	51	228	35
Above 65 years	26	40	39	60	65	10
Total	335	51.5	316	48.5	651	100

This study found out that there were more males than females for the sampled households. The CSO (2002) gave a female male ratio of 52 to 48. This study found a 48.5 to 51.5 ratio. The differences could be due to the sample used in this study.

With children and the elderly constituting 45% of these households, there is a huge dependent population. This is a huge setback given the household's main source of income is on-farming activities, a labour intensive exercise.

3.3.2 Findings on Livelihood Assets

3.3.2.1 Human Assets

The researcher sought to establish the human assets of the households. Questioned about their human assets, the responses given are indicated on the table below.

Table 4 Human Assets of Households

Household Asset	Attribute	Sex		Total members	%
		Male	Female		
Education	Never been to school	11	19	30	4.6
	Primary level	110	72	182	28
	Form 2	100	30	130	20
	Up to Form 4	133	85	218	33.4
	Up to form 6	30	22	52	8
	Tertiary qualification	29	10	39	6
	Total	412	239	651	100
Not in Good Health	Below 18 years	3	4	7	9
	19 to 35 years	10	5	15	20
	36 to 64 years	11	10	21	28
	Above 65 years	16	17	33	43
	Total	40	36	76	100

Literacy level was high; about 95.4% of members of the households have been to school and only 30 (4.6%) were unable to read and write. This translates to a literacy level of 95.4% in this case against the national average of 90.5% according to CSO (2002). However, UNDP (2010) has reported that Zimbabwe's literacy level is now over 92%, the highest in Africa followed by Tunisia with

87%. The findings however show bottlenecks in Zimbabwe's education system: only a few are able to reach tertiary level with very few getting formal skills.

Those who had gone beyond Form 4 were unlikely to remain in the village whilst those who could not finish form four had their prospects of being gainfully employed limited; hence they chose to remain in the village, with some marrying at very tender ages. On the other side, this had a huge impact on remittances.

Almost 12% of members from respondent's households were not in good health. This accounted for 76 out of 651 members. For the elderly, who accounted for the highest number of people who were not in good health, 43%, this was due to old age. For the rest this was due to various conditions including disability, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and other. Given that each household had on average four members who could work, labour was fairly adequate for most households.

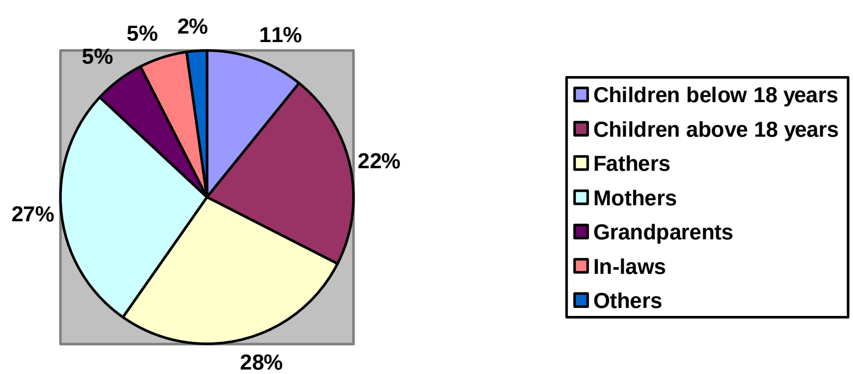
Formal skills were limited to 40 people who were trained as drivers, carpenters, bricklayers, teachers, a baker and others. Most of these were no longer practicing because of reasons including retirement, retrenchment and unemployment. Some of them, especially bricklayers and carpenters were doing their trade from the community informally. They were 25 males and 15 females. Given that the economy is agriculture based, it is surprising to note that none of the members had training in any agriculture related formal skill.

The informal skills that were mostly mentioned included mat making, blacksmithing, shoe making, sewing, construction and thatching. The useful traditional knowledge included sourcing and applying herbs, performing rainmaking ceremony, performing traditional circumcision and playing role of marriage middleman.

3.3.2.2 Income Generation

Questioned about the amount of income brought into the household by members, including labour responses given were summarised on the pie chart below.

Figure 5 Distribution Of Household Members By Average Income Contributed Per Month



Parents provided a combined total of 55% of household income. The difference between incomes from fathers was only higher by 1% against that provided by mothers. This shows that women are very active in generating income for their households. The children often provided farm labour. Parents provided labour and in the case of fathers, remittances. Other grown up children often provided remittances and labour. In laws were instrumental in providing labour and other support.

3.3.2.3 Access to Information

Asked about their household's access to information sources, respondents indicated responses summarised on the table below.

Table 5 Distribution of Respondents by Access to Sources of Information

Source of Information	Have Access		Sometimes Have Access		Do Not Have Access	
	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%
Radio	80	80	15	15	5	5
Television	3	3	17	17	80	80
Newspaper	1	1	5	5	94	94
Agriculture Worker	50	50	45	45	5	5
Phones	15	15	45	45	40	40
Community meetings	30	30	20	20	50	50
Books	2	2	3	3	95	95

Concurring with previous findings by UNICEF (2002), radio is the most accessible information source for households in Buhera. This is not the same with television, whose viewership is only three households most of the time. It is even worse with newspapers. Extension workers, who are provided by the government, have been overwhelmed and they are affected by failure by government to give them transport. In terms of literature, the figures might have been high if it were published in the local language, Shona. The phones used are all cellphones and they are increasing rapidly. Previous studies by UNICEF (2002) indicated insignificant access to telephone services.

3.3.2.4 Access to Technology

Questioned about the technologies they have access to, respondents' indications are shown on table below.

Table 6 Distribution of Respondents by Access to Technology

Description of Technology	**Responses**	**%**
Value addition machinery	10	10
Fertilizers	75	75
Diversification	100	100
Soil management	80	80
Seeds-High Yielding Varieties	50	50

The value addition technologies mentioned included four peanut butter making machines, four grinding mills and two oil extraction machines. In most cases, community members take their products to the nearby shopping centre, growth point or town for value addition. Three main products are useful here. These are cereal (largely maize) grinding into mealie meal, peanut grinding into peanut butter and sunflower grinding into cooking oil. However, peanut butter making is done using traditional stone grinder while the same applies for smaller grains like sorghum and rapoko.

Fertilizers are very expensive. Where there are cheaper in the towns, the cost increases due to transport. Only 75 households are using fertilizers at a minimum scale. Organic manure is used by those with cattle and goats, while birds provide garden manure. Given the high costs of treated seeds, 50% are unable to purchase them. They rely on untreatable maize seeds.

3.3.2.5 Financial Resources

Respondents were asked about their financial resources. Their responses are recorded on Table 7 below.

Table 7 Distribution of Respondents by Financial Resources

Type of Asset	Responses	%	Average Value in US$/Household
Cash at hand	20	20	20
Cash in bank account	3	3	25
Pension	3	3	25
Cash in investments	0	0	0
Remittances	60	60	10
Minerals	-	-	-

Only 20 households had cash at home, ranging from US$0.50 to US$44. This supports assertions findings by GoZ (2002) and UNICEF (2002) that Buhera’s economy is not cash based. This is strengthened by the fact that none had investments other than a pension. Only three pensioners had cash banked largely because they were receiving it through a postal bank, the People's Own Savings Bank (POSB). About 60 households indicated they were receiving remittances ranging from $2 to $60 per month. There was speculation by some respondents and key informants that some households had minerals, notably diamonds from Chiadzwa, but none of the respondents claimed so.

3.3.2.6 Physical Assets

Cattle were found to be the most valued asset. Most of those people with more than five heads of cattle proved to be living a much better life than those without. Those without cattle rely on hiring which is costly or simply do zero tillage which is tiresome and can not cover much ground. Assets like cattle are important for a variety of things, among them cultivation, investment, lobola (especially so for young males or families with young males), manure, milk and others. These assets were seen to be mainly inherited.

Table 8 Distribution of Respondents by Type of Physical Assets

Type of Asset	Responses	%	Average Quantity	Average Value/Household in US$
Land	100	100	5 hectares	-
Cattle	90	90	2.5 heads	1200
Plough	92	92	1 plough	50
Scorch cart	70	70	1 cart	300
Poultry	100	100	12 birds	30
Goats/sheep	95	95	5 heads	150
Crops	100	100	100kgs	25
Garden	100	100	1 x 100m^2	-
Fruit trees	20	20	4 trees	-
Grazing land	-	-	2 hectares	-
Water point	-	-	-	-
Donkeys	20	20	0.5	75
Pigs	0	0	0	0

Fruit trees ranged from a single tree to an orchard of a variety of fruits ranging from oranges, bananas, *masawa*, baobab, mangoes, guava and many others. Grazing land was communally owned but inadequate. Many resorted to saving pieces of their land for grazing. Water sources included four smaller dams, all had shallow wells, and 45 had deep wells. Only one owned a borehole, the rest had access to a communal borehole with distances ranging from 0.5 meters to 4 kilometers.

Ninety out of 100 owned their pieces of land but almost all said they do not control the land. The value of the land was unknown. They said it is controlled by the in laws, village head, chief and some pointed out that the government had ultimate control. Sizes of land under cultivation were related to family sizes and ranged from one *gandiwa* (about 1 hectare) to 15. 80% said land was adequate. 10% borrowed from others whilst 10% had no where to get extra land. None had any title deeds to the land.

The study confirms findings by UNICEF (2002) that the average number of cattle heads per household was 2.5.

Whilst owning land makes villagers happy, the threat of environmental degradation is a reality. The photo below shows a common landscape of Buhera villages.

Figure 6 Land Degradation in Buhera

Photo by Jacob Mugumbate, 2010

The Agriculture Extension Services Officer said efforts to curb degradation have been thwarted by lack of monitoring mechanisms. He said there are very good policies against environmental degradation but the laws are not enforced. He highlighted the Environment management Act as an example. He also decried the lack of capacity by traditional leaders who only watch as community members deform the environment. There is need to give community environmental control to traditional leaders, he argued.

3.3.2.7 Types of Crops

Questioned about their crop types and their yields, respondents gave information summarised on the Table 9 below.

Table 9 Distribution of Respondents by Type of Crops

Type of Crop	**Responses**			**Average regarded as adequate per season**	**Average yield most recent season in KGs**			**Average deficit most recent season in KGs**		
	M	F	T	Yield in KGs	M	F	C	M	F	C
Maize	47	51	98	1200	100	120	80	-1100	-1080	-1120
Groundnuts	47	51	98	500	50	60	30	-450	-440	-470
Millet	30	30	60	600	140	140	60	-460	-460	-540
Roundnuts	40	50	90	200	40	50	10	-160	-150	-190
Sorghum	40	20	60	400	100	50	40	-300	-350	-360
Beans	20	30	50	100	10	15	6	-90	-85	-94
Rapoko	45	15	60	600	80	90	0	-520	-510	-600
Cotton	5	5	10	1000	400	200	0	-600	-800	-1000
Sunflower	5	3	8	200	10	20	0	-190	-180	-200
Total				4800	930	745	226	-3870	-4055	-4574
%				100	19	16	5	81	84	95

Key: M=Male, F=Female C=Children, T=Total

Each household regarded 4800 kgs of field crops as adequate if harvested per season. This is only a dream. On average, the two child headed households interviewed harvested 226 kgs during the last season, leaving a deficit of 4574 kgs. These households were unable to diversify crops mainly due to labour shortages.

Female headed households harvested an average of 745 kgs per household during the last season. Their male counterparts harvested 930 kgs. Although the differences are not very pronounced, this finding show that women headed households might be more impoverished than male headed households. This may be due to labour shortages and lack of funds to meet the costs of seeds and fertilizer.

The reliance by farmers interviewed on maize has been disastrous. The crop is expensive in terms of seeds and fertilizers but inadequate rain had always meant a weaker harvest. Small grains have performed much better. Other crops that were mentioned are short term varieties like pumpkins, sugarcane, sweet potatoes and vegetables.

Child headed households are the worst hit. Their income from crop yields is very pathetic, showing a deficit of 95%. Although only two child headed households were interviewed, the finding that all of them were unable to grow a sizeable amount of food is not surprising given the amount of responsibilities they have and the little assets at their disposal.

3.3.2.8 Infrastructure Resources and Services

Respondents were asked to specify the infrastructure available to them. Although all respondents had access to a road, these were mainly very bad gravel roads accessed by at least a single bus a day. Only five had access to a tarred road within less than 5 kilometers from their homesteads. The respondents indicated they had a borehole within walking distance, but out of the 60 boreholes noted, only 20 were working. This doubled and at times trebled the distance people had to walk to get to the nearest working borehole. The distance to the nearest school and hospital were given as 8km and 10km respectively. There were only two dilapidated halls; otherwise school classrooms and open space are used for meetings.

School infrastructure has grown old and it is threatening the education system. Observations indicated that some schools have no roofs and others are a threat to the security of children and teachers. The following photos indicate some of the findings at these schools.

Figure 7 Dilapidated Schools In Buhera

Photos by Jacob Mugumbate, 2010

The photo to the left shows a wooden and thatch shade under which children are learning from facing an old wall. The right side photo shows a toilet which has fallen. Situations like these are a common feature in Buhera.

3.3.2.9 Markets

Respondents were asked to specify the markets available to them. It was reported that there were three cattle market places to which the respondents had one within a walking distance. These are for cattle trading only. They are currently open on twice a year although previously they used to open once every month. These markets use an auction system which was preferred by white farmers and buyers, making the prices very competitive. The white farmers have since disappeared largely because of the land reform programme that favoured black farmers. Currently, the buyers who are coming are black middlemen. This has made prices discouraging. It is important to note that the previous auctions were very useful to the communities as they provided a week long period to sell their wares ranging from smaller animals, beer, artifacts, farm produce and to buy these and groceries, hardware, clothing and many others from wholesalers and retailers.

Shopping centres provide another market. Schools, clinics, Murambinda Growth Point, community gatherings for political, religious, beer drinking and educational purposes, towns (mainly Mutare and Harare) and neighbouring countries (mainly Botswana, South Africa, Zambia and Mozambique) also provide a market. All out of community markets require transport while community based markets buy at low prices or desire barter trading.

3.3.3 Findings on Livelihood Strategies

3.3.3.1 Types of Livelihood Strategies

Asked about their livelihood strategies, all respondents concurred that they rely on both on-farm and off-farm strategies. With Buhera having 93.3% (CSO, 2003) of its residents in communal areas, where they depend on farming, and in the context of persistent drought, this finding is consistent with previous findings in Buhera (UNICEF, 2002) and other Districts like Chivi (Murwira et al, 2000),

3.3.3.2 On-farm Livelihood Strategies

Respondents were asked about the farm based livelihood strategies they use. The table below summarises responses on on-farm livelihood strategies.

Table 10 Distribution of Respondents by On-farm Livelihood Strategies

Livelihood Strategy	**Responses**	**%**
Field crops	100	100
Livestock trading	50	50
Gardening	100	100
Livestock products	100	100
Others	30	30

Respondents also indicated that they rely on exotic and indigenous fruit trees. A small percentage, 20% said they are at times hired as labourers.

3.3.3.3 Off-farm Strategies

Respondents were asked about the off-farm based livelihood strategies they use. The table below summarises responses on off-farm livelihood strategies.

Table 11 Distribution of Respondents by Off-farm Livelihood Strategies

Livelihood Strategy	Responses by Age				Responses by Sex			
	Children	Youths	19-34 yrs	Elderly	Male	Female	Total	%
Panning for minerals	1	15	6	5	17	10	27	27
Social Welfare	0	0	0	2	1	1	2	2
NGO support	1	4	58	7	30	40	70	70
Public Works	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Remittances	1	5	44	11	30	30	60	60
Vending	1	23	15	2	20	21	41	41
Small enterprises	0	29	3	0	10	22	32	32
Beer brewing	0	1	13	9	6	17	23	23
Transportation	0	3	5	7	15	0	15	15
Wild fruits and food	2	22	18	5	25	22	47	47
Cross boarder trading	0	7	15	0	13	9	22	22
Support from church	2	4	4	6	5	10	15	15
Extended family support	2	7	23	9	22	19	41	41
Support from community	2	5	42	9	33	35	68	68
Pension	0	0	0	3	3	0	3	3

A significant number of up to 70% were supported by NGOs in the previous year and were hoping to get the same support once again this year. It was astonishing to note that although families indicated they had family members who would qualify for social assistance, only two were being assisted with a grant amounting to $20 a month and a free medical treatment order all provided by the Department of Social Welfare.

Mineral panning, especially diamonds from Chiadzwa was indicated as a livelihood strategy. Chiadzwa is within walking distance from Buhera. However, no respondent indicated having paned in the last six months. Panning also increased vending and small enterprises as people set small shops at panning sites and engaged in all sorts of businesses.

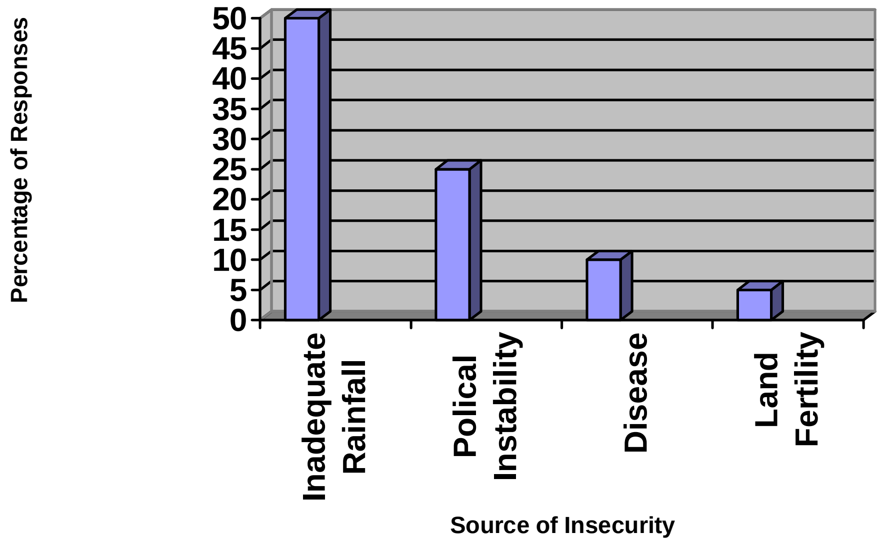
3.3.4 Findings on Livelihood Security Factors

3.3.4.1 Major Security Factors

Security factors impacting on assets were found to be the same as those impacting livelihoods and these were given as inadequate rainfall, political instability, thieves, disease, migration to and from urban areas, famine, wild animals (hyena, jackals, crocodiles, baboons, snakes, mouse, rats, stock borers and eagles) and traders. This shows that there is an intricate relationship between assets and strategies. To make assets and strategies more secure, respondents said they transfer larger livestock to pasture rich areas, hire labourers, stay with grandparents to make labour available, strengthen animal pens and report thieves to police but they face problems like thieves getting lighter sentences, no replacement for stolen items, police being far away yet traditional leaders can do nothing.

Asked to rank their security threats, respondents gave responses summarised on Figure 8 below.

Figure 8 Major Security Factors



Rainfall patterns have always provided a major threat to livelihoods but political instability has affected household income between the last ten years but particularly in 2008 before and soon after the disputed June elections. Respondents who were affected are still bitter about loss of their assets especially livestock and stock. One respondent personally alluded to the fact that his family lost the following:

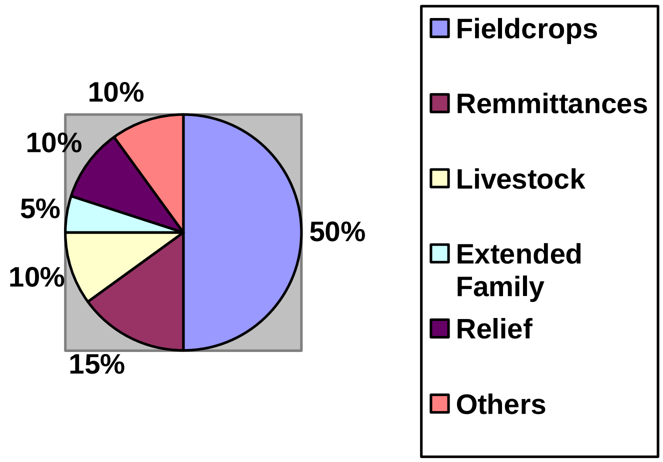
- He was heavily beaten and for the last two seasons he could not provide labour to his family at full capacity. At most he is only able to herd cattle while the wife does cultivation and weeding.
- His two children who used to provide labour were chased from the village
- One beast was slaughtered at a political base after he was forced to use it to compensate for his deed of joining an opposition party.

- He lost a goat when youths visited his compound to fetch him which was slaughtered to feed them whilst they chanted and celebrated arresting him.
- During the arrest, 20kgs of mealie meal was used to cook *sadza* and another 20kg of sorghum was splashed to lure chickens which they wanted to capture for their base. Ten hens were captured.
- He borrowed Z$800 which he had to pay them as cash fine (this was equivalent to an oxen)
- Relationship with relatives and neighbouring villagers were severely strained due to diverging political ideas.
- Cash needed to cover medical bills and transport.

3.3.4.2 Most Valued Livelihood Strategies

Asked to rank their strategies from one (1) up to five (5), the five strategies which were considered the most significant are field crops (60%), remittances (15%), livestock (10%), NGO relief (10%) and support from extended family (5%). Although support from NGOs was anticipated by 70% of respondents, they pointed out that it was not reliable. This view was corroborated by the Social Welfare Officer who indicated that relief NGOs were failing to cope especially at a time donations for NGOs are very little.

Figure 9 Distribution of Respondents by Most Valued Livelihood Strategies



These findings were found to be consistent with findings from other rural areas in other countries. In their empirical study of Kerio Valley in Kenya, Iiyama et al (2008) noted that crops were the biggest source of livelihoods. However, in their stock, this was followed by livestock and not remittances. The differences may be due to differing climatic conditions, usefulness of livestock and survival rates of livestock. In Buhera, livestock survive under harsh conditions and therefore households own minimum livestock and disposing them is done as a survival strategy under the most difficult situations since the livestock is also a source of labour and insurance. In the Kerio Valley the situation is different; they use livestock for most of their needs. Iiyama et al (2008) also did not study remittances, although they concluded they may be playing a bigger part.

An important finding is the role played by families. In his study of the Chivi households, Murwira et al (2000) concluded that social capital is very vital in improving livelihoods. This study confirms the same finding. The extended family and other social networks are still strong in the Buhera District. Previous findings by the UNICEF (2002) indicated dwindling social networks in urban districts and some rural districts.

3.3.4.3 Household Income

Respondents were asked to indicate their household monthly income. Their responses were recorded and summarised on table below.

Table 12 Distribution of Households by Monthly Income

Source of Income	**Average Income in US$/Month**						
	Age Group			**Sex**			
	Children	**Youths**	**Elderly**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total US$**	**%**
Field crops	2	5	3	14	12	26	50
Remittances	1	1	2	3.9	3.9	7.8	15
Livestock	0	0.1	1.5	4	1.2	5.2	10
Extended Family	1	0.2	1	1	1.6	2.6	5
NGOs	1.5	0.5	1.5	2.6	2.6	5.2	10
Others	1	1	0.8	2.6	2.6	5.2	10
Total	6.5	7.8	9.8	28.1	23.9	52	100

The table shows that the average income for the households was US$52 per month. This shows glaring poverty. Child headed households earned the least followed by youths and the elderly. The youths earn less than the elderly because they do have assets and their social capital is weak. Male headed households earn more than their female counterparts.

3.3.4.4 Household Expenditure

Asked on the amount of money they use each month, the averages were found to be as indicated on the table below.

Table 13 Distribution of Respondents by Basic Needs per Month

CSO Expenditure Group	CSO group ranking %	Cost/month in US$ for respondents	Study group ranking %
Food	29	38	44
Beverages and tobacco	9.9	4	5
Clothing and footwear	9.8	10	11
Rents, rates, fuel and power	18.7	1	1
Furniture, utencils, furnishings	7.2	-	0
Medical Care	2.8	5	6
Transport and Communication	8.4	2	2
Recreation and entertainment	2.0	-	0
Education	7.6	5	6
Miscellaneous	4.4	22	25
Total	100	87	100

Based on major groups Consumer Price Index (CPI) used by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) (now ZimStats).

Respondents were conservative in their expenditure figures. An explanation could be that they gave figures for the very basic things they require each month. The table shows that respondent's households use 44% for food and 25% for what CSO group under miscellaneous. This shows that respondents are using more on food than the rate given by CSO of 29% on food. Differences may be due to the cost of food. Under miscellaneous, this research found out that farm seeds, fertilizer and related expenditure was grouped here. It shows that the CSO index has some loopholes. The CSO Index does not quite reflect the expenditure of Buhera residents. It does not prioritize agriculture inputs but they contribute a significant amount of expenditure.

Grinding fee is the amount used to grind cereals into mealie meal. This is normally US$1 per 20 kgs payable to millers. Stew includes cooking oil and salt whilst breakfast has tea, sugar and flour. Beverages in Buhera include beer which is taken usually by the male members. Under medical services, this is normally money for transport since treatment is free at the local clinic and district hospital. On education, the cost is normally on tuition fees, examination fees and uniforms. Energy includes paraffin while laundry includes soap.

It is worthy noting that rural dwellers produce most of their food resources. Services by government are rarely paid for except schools which are now charging tuition. The Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) in May 2010 argues that an average family of 6 needed $437 each month. This may be applicable in the urban areas but may be too high for the no-cash based rural areas.

When Todaro (1987) argued that poor families earn less than $150 per year and use less than a dollar a day; he was referring to situations like the one existing in

Buhera. This study found out that the expenditure of villagers studied ranged from US$9 to US$140 per month. The average expenditure was US$87 per month, translating to an average expenditure of US$13.3 per person per month or US$0.43 per day per person. Compared to an average income per household of US$52 per month, the families suffered a deficit of US$35 per month.

3.3.4.5 Coping Strategies

To copy with deficits, respondents said they reduce meals down to once a day even if it means one small meal a day, sell livestock, walk long distances instead of boarding buses, eat raw food, seek traditional based instead of clinic based health services, withdraw children from school, rely on fruits, encourage girl children to marry, seeking lobola from in-laws, look for employment and vending.

3.3.4.6 Factors Influencing Livelihood Strategies

In contrast to Akindola (2010), who found out that in Nigeria villagers alluded to micro factors, respondents focused on both macro and micro factors. These factors are rainfall patterns, low prices of products resulting from a poor economy, political instability affecting villagers, employers and buyers, lack of affordable transportation and inadequate water for animals.

3.3.4.7 The Plight of Animals

Animals play a significant role in the life of Buhera households. However, animals face persistent food and water shortages. From observations, animals competing with human beings for water at boreholes and wells. Figure 10 below shows an animal seeking water at a dry borehole.

Figure 10 A Cow Seeking Water at a Borehole

Photo by Jacob Mugumbate, 2010

3.3.4.8 Recommended Strategies and Assets

Some respondents were willing to make recommendations. Assets that were recommended include water points (this would include all year farming and animal health). These may include dams and boreholes. Dams would also act as sources of food e.g. fishing. Recommendations also focused on trying to balance gender distribution of wealth. Women said there is need for them to equally own and control wealth. They also decried the lack of education for girl children since the community still values boy children. Government was recommended to bring services closer to the people like schools, health services, extension services and transport. There is a lot of deforestation due to energy sourcing (mainly firewood and brick burning), overgrazing and farming. Respondents said this trend has to be reversed otherwise all the land will become unsuitable for farming. Animals form a significant component of the life of Buhera residents. The health of animals should be prioritized. Animal health may improve by having dip tanks and veterinary workers. Respondents also decried the lack of markets and wished if the cattle auction pens could be fully utilised than before.

It is sad to note that animals have to go through this ordeal. Because the water is always inadequate, animal health is severely compromised. The Agriculture Extension Services Officer indicated that efforts to build larger dams have not been successful due to shortage of funds but the two major dams available, Ruti and Mukono have made animal health near these dams admirable.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology and findings. Findings were arranged on background of respondents, livelihood assets, livelihood activities, security factors and recommendations by respondents. Based on these findings, the next chapter draws numerous conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 4

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

The findings from this research lead to numerous conclusions. The previous chapter presented the findings from the study. The aim of this chapter is to summarise, draw conclusions based on these findings and make recommendations.

4.2 Summary

The research sought to understand livelihood assets, strategies and security. To achieve this, 100 heads of households were sampled and interviewed. This consisted of men and women across all age groups. In terms of biography, the respondents had a high literacy rate of 94% while only 9 (9%) of the respondents were not in good health. Information obtained about the households sampled showed that each household had on average 6.51 members against a national average of 4.3%. This was attributed to polygamous marriages. The dependency population for children below 18 years and the elderly above 65 years was 45%. Of the 651 members making up the 100 households, only 12% were not in good health while the literacy level was 73.4% against a national average of 92%. Human assets were very critical in providing labour and remittances while social capital was useful in ensuring support from the community and extended family. In income, fathers, mothers and children below 18 years contributed 28%, 27% and 225 respectively. For the children this was mainly in form of labour.

The research found out that households had a diversified physical asset base. However, income from all the assets was very little. The major asset was found to be livestock especially cattle. Households had on average 2.5 heads of cattle, the same finding UNICEF found in its 2002 study in Buhera. All households had good pieces of land averaging 5 hectares but not very fertile.

The majority of households had little access to information, technology, markets and basic services. Infrastructure especially for schools is dilapidated, roads are eroded and the land is degraded, major threats to livelihoods. Financial resources were very little. Average cash available at the time of the study per household ranged from US$0.50 to US$44.

Livelihood strategies were found to be diversified but falling within two major categories, farming and off-farm activities. The major strategies included crop farming especially maize and groundnuts (grown by 98% of households) followed by livestock based strategies. Remittances and support from NGOs had a significant role. Although households diversified, they were unable to get enough income for their households. Food production was at pathetic levels showing an average deficit of 87% in the last season, with child headed households most affected.

Security factors were found to be lack of rainfall, political instability, disease and land infertility. These factors acted vindictively against the efforts of the households. Due to their effects, total income per household per month was only US$52 on average against an average monthly expenditure of US$87. The highest expenditure of 44% was on food followed by farming based expenditure at 25%. Households had several but hopeless ways to cope with the deficit. Most of them just consumed less food, send children to school term after term without fees being paid or risk their asset base by selling some livestock.

4.3 Conclusions

4.3.1 Field Crops are the Basic Form of Security

Field crops provide 50% of the livelihoods of the households of respondents. If agriculture would improve, this goes up. However, if there are fewer yields, livestock resources, providing about 10% will increase at the same time reducing the security of households. This makes households more vulnerable.

4.3.2 Vulnerability Worsens Due to Poor Asset Base

The major source of livelihood requires drought power and human capital to provide labour on top of the land itself and financial assets to purchase seeds and fertilizer. Households are diversifying strategies but the result is still inadequate incomes. This is due to the fact that most of their strategies rely on farming which has not been productive for a more than five years now due to lack of adequate rainfall.

A weaker asset base results in use of poor strategies yielding little income. On the other hand, a strategy without an asset base means less income. A good asset base may mean more income. However, the more assets available the more the risk there is to content with.

4.3.3 Family Support Systems are Still Very Strong in Some Households

Contrary to popular beliefs that family system and community cohesion has broken up in rural Zimbabwe, they have not. They only need strengthening. The role of social capital is still very strong in the District. The gap left by the farming and the market is reduced by utilizing social networks, mainly the extended family. To deal with these challenges, respondents recommended that water should be made available especially for agriculture. Other recommendations included addressing gender imbalances, improving animal welfare, addressing environmental degradation and making markets accessible.

4.3.4 No Major Differences were Shown Between Female and Male Headed Households

In fact, female headed households were better off than some male headed households. This shows that women are now able to compete with men in the villages and they are able to farm productively.

4.3.5 Child Headed Households have Weaker Livelihoods

The two children headed households had a weaker asset base and therefore this translated to weakened livelihoods. The major asset missing is human capital in the form of an adult and mature person to direct the household.

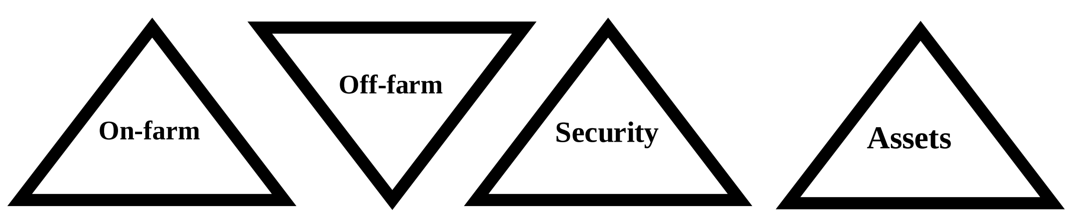
4.3.6 Larger Households are Most Vulnerable

Households which had more people than the average of six members faced numerous difficulties in meeting their most basic needs. The food and education needs were the most threatened.

4.3.7 Livelihood Assets, Strategies and Security are Related

There is a direct relationship between the three factors studied. This relationship can be clearly shown by the framework below proposed by the researcher.

Figure 11 Framework to Understand Relationship Between Livelihood Factors



The framework above shows that if on farm activities are yielding more resources, off farm activities little. This makes the families more secure. Resultantly, assets would remain available. The opposite is a very dangerous situation for the villagers. At the middle, which is where most people are, everything is on average. The desired state is the bottom level.

4.3.8 Lack of Essential Services Necessitates Migration

Most people migrate to look for employment. But a newer trend is that if they migrate and get income, they will not remit it. Neither will they establish homes in their own communities. They build homes where there are basic services like growth points.

4.3.9 Being Household Head does not Mean Being the Major Source of Income

The researcher concludes that in each household there is the head of household who could also be the primary source of income. There is also a subhead, which is responsible for a significant part of family income, at times equaling the head. In most cases these are the wives or eldest child, in most cases male child. This could be secondary source of livelihoods. The tertiary sources are mainly suppliers of labour like the children.

4.3.10 There is Great Potential to Use Remittances to Reduce Poverty

With a greater number of families receiving remittances, there is a lot of potential in harnessing this source of income to fight poverty. Although the remittances were very low, they ere in line with the fact that the economy studied was not a cash based economy.

4.3.11 Females Play a Pivotal Role in the Labour Intensive Rural Farming Sector

Most of the labour in the farms is being provided by women who in other cases are also heads of households. Women have gone beyond the traditional caring roles to be now very active in the previously male dominated sectors of agriculture.

4.3.12 Women's Caring Roles are under Threat from Economic Roles

However, the changing roles of women are not being met with equal concessions from their male counterparts. This has left the traditional caring roles of women under threat. This role, it seems, is being transfer to children and their siblings. The children now have to learn to care of themselves at many tender ages.

4.3.13 The Active Population has Dwindled in the Villages

The effects of migration and deaths are noticeable in the villages. Active men and women have migrated to urban centres and neighbouring countries, leaving children and the elderly in the communities. Although this has a positive impact on remittances, it has a negative impact on labour especially considering that Buhera is agriculture based.

4.3.14 Religion Contributes to Poverty

The religious and sometimes traditional values adoring polygamy have done nothing except to increase populations depending on fewer working people in the villages. This has generally increased poverty levels in the villages. Children from such polygamous households are likely to miss school, or attend very few days and ultimately to marry at tender ages.

4.3.15 Social Assistance has Failed to Reach the Most Needy

Government social assistance, channeled through the Department of Social Services has failed to make an impact. Needy people struggle for survival in villages without knowledge of the assistance of medical assistance and other benefits.

4.3.16 Water is Inadequate for Humans, Plants and Animals

Animals, plants and human beings compete for water from the very few water sources available. Animals, especially the bigger ones like cattle and donkeys suffer from a chronic shortage of water and this affects their health. Orchards and gardens run dry mid year whilst human beings travel long distances to get fresh water.

4.3.17 The Poverty Cycle Continues

The above mentioned conclusions, indicating the reality on the ground, indicate that poverty goes on unabated. The author makes the conclusion that the saddest and fearful effect of poverty is that like a cancer, its likelihood to cause more poverty is high, possibly astronomically multiplying with each passing day and generation.

4.4 Recommendations

4.4.1 Protecting Livelihoods

The fewer and strong livelihoods identified must be protected so that they keep giving the same amount of income or more. If protected, then the households will still have sources of income albeit inadequate. Some of the ways to protect livelihoods include promoting animal health and improving water sources.

4.4.2 Promoting Livelihoods

However, protecting livelihoods alone will not help to reduce poverty. The available livelihoods must be promoted so that they increase income. Support services must be put in place, for example, to increase seed and fertilizer availability so that even when there are little rains, villagers are able to plant sizeable amounts of land.

4.4.3 Rehabilitating Livelihoods

Some livelihoods need rehabilitation. There are boreholes that have broken years back and they are not repaired, there are dams that burst years back and they are not restored, there is land that is degrading but it is not being restored. Water sources like dams and the land itself should be restored to ensure livelihoods are enhanced.

4.4.4 Improve Appreciation of Inheritance Laws

Inheritance laws are still not favourable to women, especially in the villages. If women get a fair share in the distribution of their husbands' estates then this will help to reduce situations where poverty results directly from lack of assets caused by death of a spouse.

4.4.5 Curb Rural to Urban Migration

It might be useful to ensure people remain in their communities, and develop them. This could be achieved by providing all the necessary services. This being difficult, the nodes of development must be the focus of attention and not growth points. In this case, residents of Buhera should be given the option to build their homes near shops or zones with major services like near mission centres where there is electricity and piped water.

4.4.6 Promote and Make Remitting Easy

At the moment, those making remittances from major towns and neighbouring countries find it very difficult. The safest option is for them to go to their rural homes but this is the most expensive option. Some rely on sending friends, relatives and community members. Some are relying on bus drivers. All these methods have loopholes. Using the postal system looks the better option in terms of safety.

4.4.7 Increase Access to Water for Irrigation

With increase in water for irrigation, households will be able expand their gardens for all year farming. This improves food availability and has a huge positive impact on nutrition. The outcome of this strategy will to ensure crop farming under irrigation for staple crops.

4.4.8 Creation of Markets And Increasing Market Access

This view is strongly supported by Akindola (2010) who studied the Nigeria poor and concluded that market should be opened to poor people. This will allow them to gain competitive income from their field crops, labour and livestock. This reduces exploitation that comes with traders and private sector players. The government itself must play an important role in ensuring that the poor have markets. A case in point is the introduction and re-introduction of rural livestock markets that should be combined with field crop produce marketing.

4.4.9 Increasing Rural Poor Peoples' Access to Financial Services

Since some livelihood strategies like entrepreneurship require some form of capital, government, NGOs and companies must initiate savings, insurance and credit schemes.

4.4.10 Increase Technology, Transport and Communication Access

Communication technology like telephones must be made accessible to people in rural areas. This helps to improve communication with markets, social networks and service offices. Road networks must be improved to reduce transport costs.

4.4.11 Open up Opportunities for Rural Off-Farm Employment and Enterprise Development

This recommendation is supported by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) which for several years has been encouraging governments to adopt community based employment creation initiatives (ILO, 1995). Small village industries are crucial if rural areas are to improve their income.

4.4.12 Improve Local and National Policy and Programming Processes

Policies on distribution of the national income must ensure that marginalized areas get a piece of national resources. Consultation should reach villagers and it should be genuine consultation.

4.4.13 Give Poor People a Voice in the Decisions that Affect their Lives

Using the theme 'dancing to the tune of the song the poor have chosen', development institutions like the UNDP have succinctly summed up what should happen. Development workers and institutions must bear this theme in mind, always. Concluding their study on Chivi District, Murwira et al (2000) made it clear that without participation by the poor people development priorities will always be mistimed. They encouraged use of local skills and knowledge, something this researcher strongly encourages.

4.4.14 Capacity Building of Youths through Village Skills Centres and Community Apprenticeship Systems

There is need to curb the involvement of the youth in dangerous income earning activities like mineral panning and political activity. The youths should be trained in the community in order that they get skills relevant for use in the community and even in the city. The training may take the form of informal apprenticeships where an experienced artisan or craftsman teaches youths their trade. According Kishindo (1995) this strategy has boomed Nigeria’s formal economy and has been recommended in Malawi. Skills may be trained at locally established informal training centres run by master artisans with skills in construction, carpentry, pottering, weaving, trading, entrepreneurship, smithing, livestock keeping, welding, tailoring, baking, knitting, barbing, hairdressing, repairing small wheeled equipment, shoe making/repair curving, basketry and many village based skills. This is important given that the youth are unable to find formal work.

4.4.15 Governance

With poor governance structures at both national and local level, development of rural communities remains a challenge. Writing on this topic in the Journal of Social Development in Africa Journal, Omona (2010:129) sums it when he writes:

> The paper identifies poor governance, charactrised by weak governing institutions, poor leadership and undemocratic tendencies as the main causes of limited progress towards the achievement of the MDGs in development countries.

According to the livelihood framework, structures and processes must be transformed if poverty alleviation strategies are to have maximum impact. The researcher recommends the same.

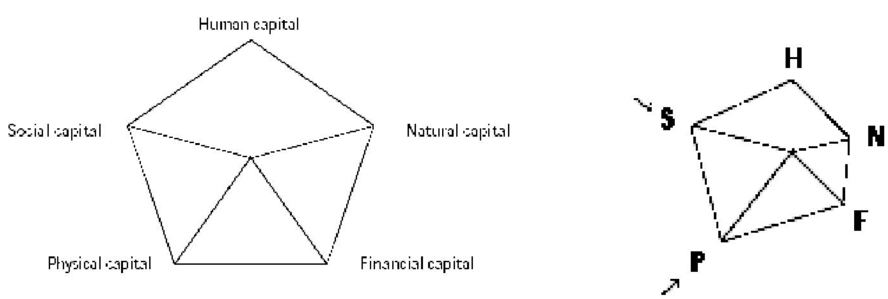
4.4.16 Training of Professionals

The livelihood framework is an important tool in working with poor people and work by the DFID and other key development institutions have found it very beneficial. The researcher strongly urges development workers to be rained about the livelihood approach to development and many other features related to it.

4.4.17 Diversification

Most households are diversified in some way. This paper recommends that households must be helped to benefit most from all the assets available to them. The asset pentagon in situations where a household is using most of the assets available to them can be presented as a pentagon (see Figure 12 below).

Figure 12 The Asset Pentagons Provided by DFID



H =human capital N = Natural capital F = Financial capital S = Social capital

P = Physical capital

The larger pentagon is what is recommended because households re diversifying productively. The smaller pentagon indicates that households are hugely depended on physical assets only. Community workers must strive to ensure that the ‘pentagons’ of households are bigger and balanced.

4.4.18 Strengthen Local Institutions

Such institutions include traditional leadership composed of village heads and chiefs and local government leadership composed of councilors and Council. Set ups like Village Development Committees (VIDCO) and Ward Development Committees (WADCO) must be trained in needs identification, advocacy and resource mobilisation .To ensure monitoring and evaluation, local independent institutions like district development committees, community based organisations and other area development committees must be given an opportunity to play a role.

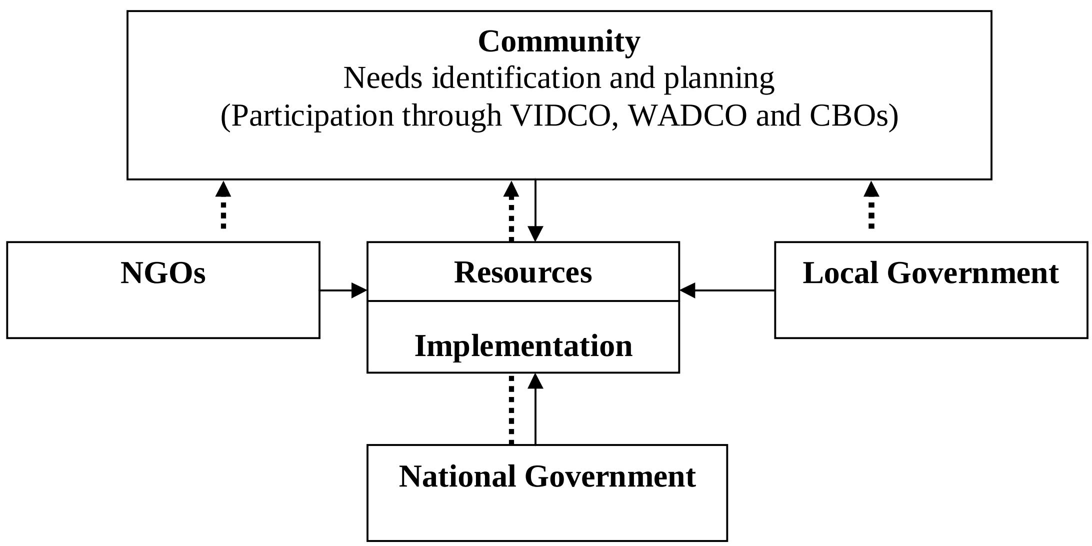
4.4.19 Inclusion of the Poor in Social Security Initiatives

The poor should find their way into programmes uplifting their life. Kaseke (2003, 1998) alluded to the fact that the continued exclusion of the poor in social security programmes has contributed to immense suffering. The social security programmes the rural poor rely on, writes Kaseke (2003) are not able to meet the numerous challenges they face due to hunger and disease.

4.4.20 Integrated Development

The researcher proposes a framework to ensure integrated community development in rural areas like Buhera.

Figure 13 An Integrated Community Work Framework To Improve Livelihoods



Key: *= ideas* *= financial and human resources*

This framework ensures resources are prioritized. Participation of the community when resources are not available will not improve livelihoods.

4.4.21 Community Cohesion and Political Tolerance

With divergent political views and lack of tolerance, the only result is poor cohesion. This is not an asset for development. If anything, lack of cohesion opens up and widens cracks in the development process. Efforts must be made to ensure community cohesion.

4.4.22 Prioritise Drought Tolerant Crops

Crops like millet, sorghum, rapoko, ground nuts and cotton tolerate the harsh conditions of Buhera. This has been supported by Lybbert (2010:10) who argued that, "Farmers must be able to see the benefits of planting drought-tolerant crops for themselves, such crops could improve food security… With climate change, growing water insecurity and renewed concerns about food security in the wake of recent price spikes, the potential welfare gains from effective DT (drought tolerance) crops are enormous."

4.4.23 Areas for Further Study

The researcher recommends the following areas to be studied:

- Livelihood strategies for child headed households with a focus on female children.
- Strategies to enhance crop farming throughout the year.
- Research on livelihood strategies and assets using various statistical methods that are more reliable than manual analysis.
- Research on malnutrition in Buhera.

4.5 Conclusion

The commitment by Social Workers and other professionals to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the target to halve the proportion of hungry and extremely poor people by 2015 is only realizable if the rural poor, constituting 75% of the world population, are given an opportunity to earn adequate income. This is no easy task to achieve since the income they should earn must take them above the poverty line. However, if the recommendations made by this study are adopted, the road to achieving a world free of poverty might not be that long after all.

List of References

Akindola, R. (2010). “Causes of Poverty: Voices of the Rural Poor from Oyo State, Nigeria” in *Journal of Social Development in Africa* Volume 25 Number 1 2010 pp105-128.

American Psychological Association (APA) (2002). Ethical Code of Conduct. Document. Washington: APA.

Babbie, E. and Morton, J. (1995). *The Practice of Social Research (South African Edition).* Oxford: Oxford Southern Africa.

Brown, D. R. Stephens E. C., and Ouma, J. O. (2006). ‘Livelihood strategies in the rural Kenyan highlands’ in African Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (AfJARE) Volume 1 Number 1 pp29-38.

Bryman, A. and Cramer, D. (1999). *Quantitative Data Analysis.* London: Routledge.

Burkey, S. (1993). People First: a guide to self reliant, participatory, rural development. London: ZED Books.

CARE (2010). Livelihoods Framework [online]. Available: http://www.careinternational.org.uk [accessed 13 July 2010].

CARE (2001). *Household and Livelihoods Security Approach (HLS)*. Harare: CARE

Carney, D. (1999). *Approaches to Sustainable Livelihoods for the Rural Poor*. London: ODI.

Central Statistics Office (2010). Census [online]. Available: http://zimstat.co.zw/html/census.html [accessed 15 July 2010].

Central Statistical Office (CSO) (2003) Quarterly Digest of Statistics 2002. Harare: CSO.

Central Statistical Office (CSO) (2002). *Consumption Expenditure Survey Report*. Harare: CSO.

Chambers, R. (2000). *Rural Development: Putting the Last First.* Harlow: Prentice Hall.

Chambers, R. and Conway, T. (1992). *Challenges to rural development.* London: IST.

Chinake, H. (1997). 'Strategies for Poverty Alleviation in Zimbabwe' in *Journal of Social Development in Africa* Volume 12 Number 1 pp29-38.

Conway, T. (ed.) (2001). *Case studies on livelihood security, human rights and sustainable development*. London: ODI.

Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (2010). Consumer Price Index Research [online]. Available: http://www.ccz.org.zw/ [accessed 19 July 2010].

Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) (2009). Consumer Price Index. Document. Harare: CCZ.

DFID (2007). Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century. White Paper. London: DFID.

DFID (2007). Zimbabwe Programmes. Document. Harare: DFID.

DFID (2001). Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets. London: DFID.

Dorward, A., Poole, N., Morrisson, J., Kydde, J. and Urey, I. (2003). "Markets, Institutions and Technology: Missing Links in Livelihoods Analysis." in *Development Policy Review*, Volume 21 Number 3 pp319-332.

Ellis, F. (1998). "Household strategies and rural livelihood diversification." *Journal of Development Studies*, Volume 35 Number 1 pp1–38.

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2000). *State of Food Insecurity in the World.* Rome: FAO.

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2010). *State of Food Insecurity in the World.* Rome: FAO.

Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) (2004). *Zimbabwe Millennium Development Goals 2004 Progress Report.* Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) and UNICEF (2002) *Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs and Practices: A baseline Survey for the Government of Zimbabwe UNICEF Country Programme for Cooperation 2000-2004*. Harare: UNICEF.

Hobley, M. and Shields, D. (2000). *The Reality of Trying to Transform Structures and Processes: Forestry in Rural Livelihoods*. Working Paper 132. ODI: London.

Hussein, K. (2002). *Livelihoods Approaches Compared: A Multi-Agency Review of Current Practice.* London: ODI.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2010). *An IFAD Sustainable Livelihoods Framework*. Rome: IFAD.

International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) (2010). Governance for Sustainable Development. Available: http://www.iisd.org/governance/.html [accessed 26 July 2010].

International Labour Organisation (ILO) (1995). *Social Exclusion Rhetoric, Reality and Responses.* Eds Rodgers G., Gore C., Figuoredo J. B. ILO: Geneva.

Iiyama, M., Kariuki, P., Kristjanson, P., Kaitibie, S. and Maitima, J. (2008). “Livelihood Diversification Strategies, Incomes and Soil Management Strategies: A case Study from Kerio Vally, Kenya” in *Journal of International Development,* Volume 20 Number 3 pp 380-397.

Institute of Development Studies (Britain) (IDS) (2008) Livelihoods. Document. London: IDS.

Institute of Development Studies (Zimbabwe) (IDS) (2003). *Zimbabwe Human Development Report.* IDS: Harare.

Kaseke, E. (1998). *Social Security System in Rural Zimbabwe*. Harare: Fredrick Ebert Stiftung.

Kaseke, E. (2003). “Social Exclusion and Social security; the case of Zimbabwe” in *Journal of Social Development in Africa (JSDA*), Volume 18 Number 1 pp 33-48.

Kishindo, P. (1995). “Apprenticeship Systems and Employment Opportunities” in *Journal of Social Development in Africa (JSDA),* Volume 10 Number 2 pp 53-60.

Lybbert, T. J. (2010). Drought-tolerance: Learning challenge for poor farmers. The Herald, Wednesday, July 28, 2010

Murambinda Mission Hospital (2007). Murambinda Mission Hospital. Unpublished document.

Murwira, K., Wedgwood, H., Watson, C. and Win, E. J. (2000). *Beating Hunger. The Chivi Experience.* London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Omona, J. (2010). “Meeting the MDGs targets: proposed UN global governance framework to confront challenges of the 21st century”, in *Journal of Social Development in Africa (JSDA),* Volume 25 Number 1.

Oxfam (2010). Policy Papers [online]. Available: http://www.oxfam.org.uk/policy/papers/lpapers.html [accessed 9 July 2010].

Rodgers, C. R. (1987). *Client Centred therapy: its current practice, implication and theory.* London: Constable.

SADC (2008). Poverty and Development in Southern Africa. Document. Gaborone: SADC.

Saracostti, M. (2007). "Social capital as a strategy to overcome poverty in Latin America: an overview" in *International Social Work,* Volume 50 Number 4 pp515-527.

Save the Children (UK) (2010). Food Security [online]. Available: http://www.scfuk.org.uk/foodsecurity/index.html [accessed 4 July 2010].

Save the Children (2000). *The Household Economy Approach: A resource manual for practitioners.* London: SC (UK).

Todaro, M. (1987). *Economics of the Third World*. London: Sage.

Tsuro, J. M. (2001). An investigation into the situation of children heading households in Makonde District, Mashonaland West Province. Dissertation submitted to School of Social Work, University of Zimbabwe.

UNDP (2010). Poverty [online]. Available: http://www.undp.org/sl/Documents/Documents.htm#WSSD [accessed 16 July 2010].

UNDP (2010). *Statistical Digest.* New York: UNDP.

UNDP (2008). *African development in a comparative perspective.* Africa World Press: Oxford.

UNDP (2008). *Human Development Report 2007.* New York: UNDP.

UNICEF (2010). The State Of The World's Children Special Edition [online]. Available: http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/sowc/pdfs/SOWC_SpecEd_CRC_ExecutiveSummary_EN_091009.pdf [accessed 24 July 2010].

UNICEF (2002). *Annual report 2001*. Harare: UNICEF.

UNICEF (2002). *Knowledge, attitudes, Beliefs and Practices: A baseline survey for the Government of Zimbabwe/UNICEF country programme of cooperation 200-2004*. Harare: UNICEF.

Wanmali, S. and Singh, N. (1999). Sustainable Livelihoods, Lessons Learned from Global Programme Experience’. Strategy Paper. New York: UNDP.

World Bank (2010). [online]. World Development Report 2010 Available: http://www.worldbank.org/.html [accessed 6 July 2010].

World Bank (2008). *World Bank Indicators Database.* New York: World Bank.

Young, H. et al (2008). *Food security assessments in emergencies: a livelihoods approach.* ODI HPN Network Paper 36. London: ODI.

Appendices

The following documents are appended:

Appendix 1 Consent Form for Respondents

Appendix 2 Interview Schedule for Heads of Households

Appendix 3 Interview Guide for Key Informants

Appendix 4 Observation Guide

Appendix 1

Consent Form for Respondents

**This form should be filled in duplicate. One form should be given to interviewee.*

Introduction: Good morning/afternoon. My name is …………………………………………….. I am carrying out a study on livelihoods factors. You have been chosen to participate in this research as a respondent. Details of the research and researcher are given below:

Title of Research: A Micro Study of Livelihood Factors Impacting the Lives of Rural Households in the Buhera District of Zimbabwe

Interview details: The interview will take approximately 30 minutes and you are free to reject taking part or terminating the interview at any time. Your responses as well as observations made in this interview will be used for the purposes of this study only and will not be released to anyone. The interview procedure involves me asking you questions and I will record your answers/us discussing issues I have on my list (key informants). You are free to seek clarification, expand your responses or ask questions. There are no risks or direct benefits associated with this study but your accurate contributions will help build knowledge that will be used to shape future interventions.

Name of Researcher and Contact Person: Mrs. Shumbanhete

Contact Details
Address of Researcher: Sanga Community
Buhera

Telephone Numbers: 0712780126

Declaration of Consent:
I……………………………consent to take part in this research under the terms stated above. I have appended my signature below in the presence of my witness who will also sign below.

Interviewee's signature:…………………………………Witness's signature:…………………

Interviewer's signature:…………………………………Date:…………………………………..

Appendix 2

A Micro Study of Livelihood Factors Impacting the Lives of Rural Households in the Buhera District of Zimbabwe

Interview Schedule for Heads of Households

Interview Code:……………Village………………Ward…………Date……………

1. BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

a. Sex: Female [ ] Male: [ ]
b. Age of respondent [ ] years
c. Size of household [ ] people.
d. Composition of household
   Children below 18 years [ ]
   Youths between 19 and 34 years [ ]
   Adults between 35 and 64 years [ ]
   Adults above 65 years [ ]
e. Educational level reached.…..……………………………………………………..
f. Skills that you have……………………………………………………………………
g. Your health status……………………………………………………………………..
h. Any other relevant details...

2. QUESTIONS ON HUMAN ASSETS

a. Complete the following table.

Type of human asset available to your household		Sex		Number of household members
		Male	Female	
Education	Never been to school Up to Grade 7/Standard 3 Form 2 Up to Form 4 Up to form 6 Tertiary qualification			

	Not able to read or write			
Not in Good Health	Below 18 years 18-35 years 36 to 64 years Above 65 years			
Skills	Formal Informal			
Useful traditional knowledge				
Labour				
Other (specify)				

Specify the effect to household livelihoods……………………………………… ………………………………………………………………………………………

b. Complete the following table.

Member of Household description	Income contributed to family per month

c. Tick your level of access to the following:

Source of information	I have total access	I sometimes have access	I do not have access

d. Specify the technologies you use and the size of income they give your family per month in the following table?

Description of technology	Tick if available

3. QUESTIONS ON FINANCIAL ASSETS

a. Complete the following table.

Type of asset	Tick if available	Description (Quantity/Quality etc)

4. QUESTIONS ON PHYSICAL ASSETS

a. Complete the following table.

Type of asset	Tick if available	Description (Quantity/Quality etc)

b. Do you own land? YES [ ] NO [ ]
c. What is the size of the land……………………………………………
d. Who controls the land?...
e. What is the size of land you ploughed in previous season…………………
f. Complete the following table.

Type of crop	Tick if grown	Yield regarded as adequate	Actual yield most recent season	Deficit/ Surplus

g. Is your land adequate? YES [ ] NO [ ]

h. Size of borrowed land if any………………………………………………

i. Complete the following table.

Type	Tick if available	Size	Income/month

j. Who controls the livestock?..

k. Specify the infrastructure available to you and how much they contribute to your income. Rank the contribution from 1-5. 1 represents a very weak contribution and 5 the strongest contribution.

Infrastructure	Tick if available	Description

l. Specify the markets available to you and how much they contribute to your income. Rank the contribution from 1-5. 1 represents a very weak contribution and 5 the strongest contribution.

Type of market	Tick if available	Description

5. QUESTIONS ON LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

a. Which livelihood strategies is your household relying on

....

....

b. Complete the following table on on-farm livelihood strategies.

Livelihood Strategy	Tick if used	Estimated income per month

c. Complete the following table on off-farm livelihood strategies.

Livelihood Strategy	Tick if used	Estimated income/month

d. Which 5 strategies do you consider the most significant in order of strength?

i. …………………………………………………………..

ii. …………………………………………………………..

iii. …………………………………………………………..

iv. …………………………………………………………..

v. …………………………………………………………..

e. How much money do you need a month as a household?..

f. How much money do you spend a month as a household?......................................

g. How much money do you make a month as a household?.......................................

h. Complete the following table to indicate your expenditure per month.

Group	Basic need per month	Description	Cost/month in USD
Food			
Beverages and tobacco			

Rents, rates, fuel and power			
Furniture, utencils, furnishings etc			
Medical Care			
Transport and Communication			
Recreation and entertainment			
Education			
Miscellaneous goods and services			
Total			

Based on major groups Consumer Price Index (CPI) used by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) now ZimStats

i. If there is a deficit, what do you do to cover up for it?..
……………………………………………………………………………………….…
……………………………………………………………………………………….
j. If there is surplus, what do you do with it? ....
…………………………………………………………………………………….……
……………………………………………………………………………………….
k. What factors influence your main livelihood strategies?
…………………………………………………………………………………….…
……………………………………………………………………………………….
…………………………………………………………………………………….…
……………………………………………………………………………………….
…………………………………………………………………………………….…
……………………………………………………………………………………….

l. Rank the factors in order of strength using a scale of 1-10, 10 being the most influencing factor?

6 QUESTIONS ON LIVELIHOOD SECURITY FACTORS

a. What security factors impact on your assets?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

b. What security factors impact on your livelihood strategies?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

a. Rank your security threats to assets and strategies?

b. What do you do to make your assets more secure?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

c. What do you do to make your livelihood strategies more secure?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

d. In your opinion, what relationship exists between strategies and assets?

....

....

…………………………………………………………………………………………

e. What problems do you face in making your assets and strategies more secure

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

a. What other strategies and assets might increase income if adopted in this community?

....

....

b. Outline any recommendations to improve livelihoods

....

....

c. Give comments, if any

....

....

8 RECORD OF OBSERVATIONS

....

....

....

This marks the end of the interview. Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix 3

A Micro Study of Livelihood Factors Impacting the Lives of Rural Households in the Buhera District of Zimbabwe

Interview Guide for Key Informants

This interview shall endeavor to collect data as close to the following aspects as possible:

1. Background Information of key informant

a. Name of key informant……………………………………………………………..
b. Institution's name…………………………………………………………………...
c. Title…………………………………………………………………………………...
d. Summary of work…………………………………………………………………...
e. Period at work……………………………………………………………………….
f. Any other details…………………………………………………………………….

2. Livelihood Assets in the District

a. Which major livelihood assets are available in this District?
b. How are the assets mentioned above related to poverty in households?
c. Who controls the assets mentioned?
d. How useful are these assets in improving household income?
e. What other assets might increase income if adopted in this community?
f. Are there differences between livelihood assets from family to family?
g. What are these differences?
h. What are your suggestions for improvement?
i. How are assets acquired?

3. Livelihood Strategies of the District

a. What are the major livelihood strategies in this District?
b. How successful are the strategies?
c. What's the impact of these strategies to livelihoods?
d. What factors determine these strategies?
e. Are there differences between livelihood strategies from family to family?

f. What are these differences?
g. What are your suggestions for improvement?
h. What is your organisation doing to ensure the strategies yield more income?
i. What other strategies might increase income if adopted in this community?

4. Livelihood Security Factors

a. What are the major factors affecting livelihoods in this District?
b. What are the impacts of these security factors?
c. What is the community doing to avert risk factors?
d. What is your organisation doing to avert these risks?
e. What else could be done to avert these risks?

5 General Discussion

a. Any areas you would want us to discuss?

Thank you for your time

Appendix 4

A Micro Study of Livelihood Factors Impacting the Lives of Rural Households in the Buhera District of Zimbabwe

Observation Guide

The following are to be observed by the researcher where possible:

1. Assets mentioned by respondents.
2. Community assets.
3. Observable livelihood strategies.
4. Any other observable aspects that may be relevant to the study.

University of Zimbabwe School of Social Work

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

STUDENT
J. Mugumbate
R013514N
Master of Social Work

SUPERVISOR
B. Sachikonye

September 2007

TITLE

A Micro Study of Livelihood Factors Impacting the Lives of Rural Households in the Buhera District of Zimbabwe

1. Introduction and Literature Review

A livelihood is a means of making a living (Chambers and Conway, 1992). It is composed of capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living, content Chambers and Conway. Livelihoods are interconnected but they are exposed to numerous security factors i.e. undesirable features or interventions that result in negative livelihood outcomes. Availability of assets and access to them promotes better livelihoods. On the one hand, utilization of these assets through livelihood strategies creates resources like food needed by households. Therefore, livelihood assets and strategies contribute directly to improving the lives of people.

As Chambers and Conway put it, assets can be human, social, physical, natural capital or financial. Knowledge, skills, education, age, physical ability and family size form part of human assets (Iiyama et al, 2008). Social assets include mutual acquaintance, trust, social norms, relations or kinship networks, recognition, opportunities, unity, relationships, access to social institutions, leadership, bonding, solidarity, informal protection, inclusion and cohesion (Saracostti, 2007). Physical assets encompass livestock, houses, community infrastructure and markets. Natural assets entail the innate endowments available to people like land, forests, labour, rainfall, temperature and vegetation. These capital assets are crucial in determining the quality of life of each household. On the other hand, financial assets include savings, income from livestock and products sales and remittances or income from work in urban areas or other sources. To benefit from these assets, activities or strategies are carried out. For example, the land has to be tilled or savings must buy food.

Livelihood strategies are sources of revenue adopted to meet human needs. Such strategies can be formal or informal, legal or illegal, moral or immoral, safe or risky. Chambers and Conway note that strategies can be natural (like land cultivation) and non-natural (like trading). In rural communities, such strategies are largely based on the environment, in the forms of agriculture or mining. Iiyama et al (2008) grouped the livelihood strategies into farm and off-farm income earners. UNDP (2008) articulates that some farm activities include garden produce, fruits and livestock trading whilst off farm strategies include government support, mutual aid, remittances from urban workers, vending, mineral panning, firewood selling and support from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Such strategies vary in effectiveness and they are influenced by capital assets available to the household.

Livelihood strategies are affected by geographical conditions, availability of infrastructure, institutional settings, asset levels and many other risk factors (UNDP, 2008). Asset levels enhance or worsen income earning capacity.

According to FAO (2009) food security exists when all people, at all time, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. There are three basic factors to achieving food security-availability, accessibility and utilization. A household can make food available by producing or trading and stocking enough. Once stocked, it must be available and accessible when needed. The same food must be fully and safely utilized by the body and it was provide the necessary nutrients for growth and development. If households are food insecure, they are hungry. Food insecurity can be short or long term, but results from a number of factors some of them being poor asset levels, weaker livelihood strategies, low production, natural hazards, instability and many others (FAO 2009).

2. Statement of the Problem

This research seeks to explore livelihood assets, strategies and livelihood security factors of households in the Buhera Rural District. These are factors of importance given the plurality of socioeconomic issues impacting upon the lives of households in the District. Previous researches on poverty by UNICEF (2002) and Dananai (2008) all indicate that a low asset base and poor livelihood strategies are among the major factors most households in Buhera District have remained in poverty. The majority of the people are poor and they require external support with basic needs almost all year round (UNDP, 2008). UNDP adds that social services are poor, so are road networks and infrastructure. This analysis is in line with Dananai (2008:2)'s conclusion that "Buhera is one of the poorest districts of Zimbabwe. Most people scratch a living by semi-subsistence farming. The climate is semi-arid and the soil is poor. Any failure of rains or disturbance of the crops or cattle will spell disaster to the people. Buhera District has problems with malnutrition and malaria. Infant deaths are common and many mothers die in pregnancy and childbirth. Added to this, in recent years, AIDS and TB have been devastating."

3. Justification

It is imperative to study the livelihood factors in the Buhera District in order to come up with recommendations that will help to strengthen livelihood strategies and contribute to reduction of the practical problem of poverty if adopted. Murambinda Mission Hospital (2009) notes that poverty is on the increase in the Buhera district and recommends institutions, scholars and professionals to empirically study and understand livelihood strategies and security factors impacting on them. This observation is supported by UNICEF (2008), UNDP (2008) and Dananai (2009). These organisations agreed that the district is prone to livelihood threats affecting how people make a living and they all recommend that studies must be carried out to inform development programmes about the nature of such livelihood security issues. This will resultantly give better livelihood outcomes like food security and good health. The researcher was unaware of any study on livelihood strategies, capital assets and security factors in the area at the time of writing the proposal and this means a research gap still remains. This research therefore seeks to contribute to literature by filling this identified gap.

4. Aim

To explore livelihood factors of households in the Buhera Rural District.

5. Objectives

a). To assess livelihood assets in the Buhera District.

b). To examine livelihood strategies in the District.

c). To assess livelihood security factors in the District .

6. Methodology

a) Research Design

The research is going to utilise both quantitative and qualitative designs.

b) Target Population

The research shall be carried out on households in Buhera Rural District, located in Zimbabwe's Eastern province of Manicaland. According to the Central Statistical Office (CSO) (2008) the district has 310 000 people in 32 administrative wards.

c) Sampling

Sampling shall seek to select 100 heads of households to participate in this research out of a possible 6000 households in district. Simple random sampling method shall be used to select household members to participate in the study. A purposive effort shall be put in place to include in the target households led by women, children and the elderly. The sample excludes those staying at growth points, service centres, mission centres and schools because their demographic characteristics are closer to urban areas than rural ones.

Key informants shall be chosen from key development institutions in the district using judgmental sampling. It is necessary to use personal judgment to choose the key informants since this shall allow people with key information to participate in the research.

d) Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

A questionnaire shall be utilized to collect responses from heads of households. The questionnaire shall be translated to Shona, the local language. The researcher shall personally interview respondents whilst an assistant records responses.

An interview guide shall be used to collect data from 4 key informants. The researcher shall interview key informants whilst an assistant records responses.

Observation shall be done by the researcher to gather more evidence to support interview findings.

e) Data Analysis

All findings shall be analysed manually since the students has no access to a suitable computer data analysis package. This results from the fact that participants are fewer for computer based analysis.

8. Possible Limitations

With limitations of resources and time, the researcher shall sample 300 households out of 6000 in the district. This gives a lower sampling percentage of 5% which may possibly affect representativeness of the sample and generalisability of findings. However, considering the homogeneity in demographics of the district this sample will most likely suffice in giving data that gives a stronger foundation for inferences.

9. Ethical considerations

Participation in the research shall be voluntary and this shall be ensured by a voluntary consent form that will be explained verbally in vernacular, signed by the researcher and respondents. The consent form shall also spell out confidentiality of responses and a commitment not to harm participants in any way. Voluntary participation and confidentiality are key elements in any research since they avoid possible harm to participants.

10. Feasibility

The Buhera District Council has given permission to the student to proceed with the research.

List of References

Bryman, A. and Cramer, D. (1999) *Quantitative Data Analysis.* London: Routledge.

Babbie, E. and Morton, J. (1995) *The Practice of Social Research (South African Edition).* Oxford: Oxford Southern Africa.

Chambers, R. (200) *Rural Development: Putting the Last First.* Harlow: Prentice Hall

Chambers, R. and Conway, (1992) Challenges to rural development. London, IST.

Chinake, H. (1997) 'Strategies for Poverty Alleviation in Zimbabwe' in *Journal of Social Development in Africa Volume 12 No 1 p29-38*

DFID (2007) 'Fighting poverty around the world'. Harare: DFID.

Government of Zimbabwe (2004) *Zimbabwe Millennium Development Goals 2004 Progress Report.* Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Government of Zimbabwe and UNICEF (2002) *Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs and Practices: A baseline Survey for the Government of Zimbabwe UNICEF Country Programme for Cooperation 2000-2004*. Harare: UNICEF.

Iiyama, M.; Kariuki, P.; Kristjanson, P.; Kaitibie, S. and Maitima, J. (2008) 'Livelihood Diversification Strategies, Incomes and Soil Management Strategies: A case Study from Kerio Vally, Kenya' in *Journal of International Development Volume 20 Number 3 pp 380-397*

Murambinda Mission Hospital (2007) ‘Murambinda Mission Hospital’ (unpublished document).

Murwira, K.; Wedgwood, H.; Watson, C. and Win, E. J. (2000) *Beating hunger. The Chivi Experience.* London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Poverty Reduction Forum (2004) *Zimbabwe Human Development Report 2003.* Harare: Institute of Development Studies.

Todaro, M. (1987) *Economics of the Third World*. London: Sage.

SADC (2008) *Poverty and Development in Southern Africa*. Gaborone: SADC.

Saracostti, M. (2007). ‘Social capital as a strategy to overcome poverty in Latin America: an overview’ in *International Social Work Vol. 50 Number 4 pp515-527*

UNDP (2008) *African development in a comparative perspective.* Africa World Press: Oxford.

UNICEF (2002) *Annual report 2001*. Harare: UNICEF.

World Bank (2008) *World Bank Indicators Database.* New York: World Bank.

Young, H. et al (2008) *Food security assessments in emergencies: a livelihoods approach.* ODI HPN Network papers 36. London, ODI.