

**GENDER DYNAMICS IN COTTON PRODUCTION: A CASE
STUDY OF A1 FARMERS IN SESSOMBI KWEKWE
DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE.**

BY

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DEDICATION

To my parents Mr. and Mrs. Nyamudeza, my sisters Lorraine, Lynette/Norrious, Appinesh/Rutendo and my young brother Abbronzé. Thank you for the support.. **YOU MEAN THE WORLD TO ME.** My wife Anna Tsungai Bvure (**KEEP SHINING**).

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AMA: Agricultural Marketing Authority

AREX: Agriculture Extension Services

CMB: Cotton Marketing Board

COTTCO: Cotton Company of Zimbabwe

ESAP: Economic Structural Adjustment Programme

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

FHH: Female Headed Household

FTLRP: Fast Track Land Reform Programme

GMB: Grain Marketing Board

GoZ: Government of Zimbabwe

LAA: Land Apportionment Act

LAA: Land Tenure Act

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NGP; National Gender Policy

SADC: Southern African Development Community

SARDC: Southern African Research and Documentation Centre

TTL: Tribal Trust Land

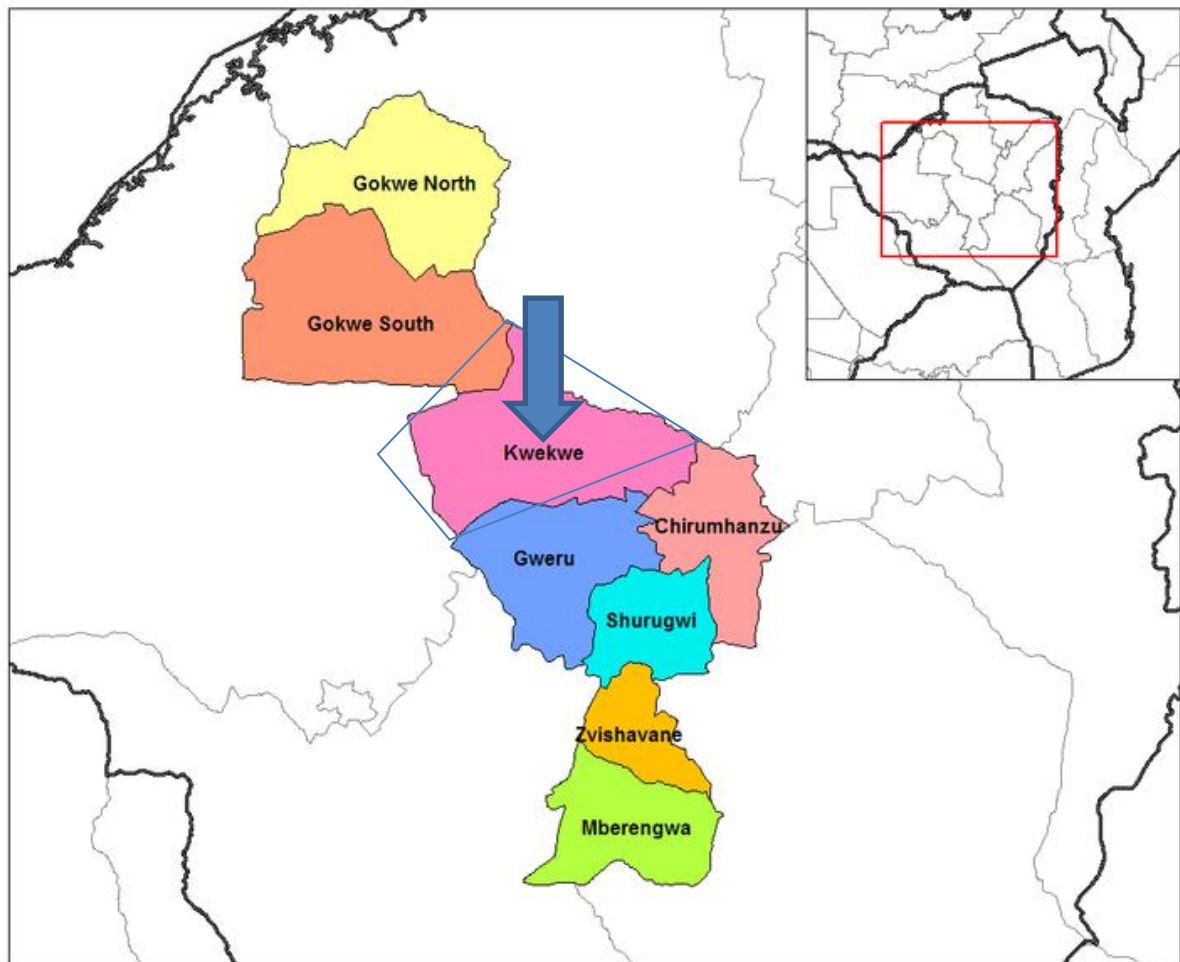
WLLG: Women and Land Lobby Group

ZWRCN: Zimbabwe Women Resource Center and Network

Abstract

The study explored the roles of women and men in cotton farming as well as access and control of resources. The research was conducted in Sessombi in the Kwekwe district of the Midlands Province. The qualitative methodology was employed throughout the study. The Marxist Feminist framework was used to explore the phenomenon under study. Findings from this study revealed that women have limited access to land as well as the returns from cotton farming. Power and decision making is skewed towards men. Women provide both productive and reproductive labour.

Map Showing Midlands Province and its Districts



Introduction

Cotton farming is an important part of the development process in Zimbabwe and has been nationally practiced at higher levels in the North-West part of Zimbabwe where it has been grown since the 1960s (James 2006). Women play a key role in subsistence agriculture in Zimbabwe. Eighty six percent of the women depend on the land for the livelihoods of themselves and their families, but women living in the communal areas are treated as dependents of men, not as landholders or farmers in their own right (Human Rights Watch, 2003). Together with men, women also perform cash-crop production or buy and sell to earn extra income (ZWRCN/SARDC 2008). Rural women farmers play a vital role in food production and food security. They account for 70% of agricultural workers, 80% of food producers, 100% of those who process basic foodstuffs and they undertake from 60% to 90% of the marketing (Fabiya et al 2007). The introduction of modern agricultural techniques and cash crops has increased women's workload by expanding tasks such as weeding and transplanting, but without bringing women an appropriate share of cash-crop payments.

Background

Many of the farms in the communal areas have women as the *de facto* heads of household (ZWRCN/SARDC 2008). This is because many of the men work in urban areas, leaving the farming to their wives and children. These women have to balance production, consumption and nurturing demands (Muir-Leresche, 2006). Due to culture most women do not own the land on which production takes place, and as a result they derive fewer benefits from it than men. Women are the major players in the agricultural sector in terms of actual employment figures and in general as the mainstay food producers and actually contribute 71% of the total labour force employed in the sector (Mafusire and Chigumira; 2007). Besides their contributions and efforts they do not have access to returns from their labour and they are treated as second class citizens.

Around 220,000 smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe grow cotton and it follows that cotton production supports significant segments of the rural populations in Zimbabwe. Cotton is

Zimbabwe's second largest foreign currency earner after tobacco and moreover 75% of the crop emanates from the smallholder farmers (Larsen 2002). Amongst the reasons cited by Chizarura (2007) for growing the crop are that it is the principal source of income in relatively drier areas, inputs are readily available and the market is guaranteed. Cotton is grown in the drier districts of Zimbabwe where maize production is risky due to moisture stress (Chizarura, 2007). The cotton sector in Zimbabwe was liberalized in 1994, following the commercialization of the then Cotton Marketing Board (CMB) which became the Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (COTTCO). It is grown largely by peasants in semi-arid regions, with an average annual rainfall of 600mm per annum and temperatures around 30 degrees Celsius.

The research was conducted in Sessombi Kwekwe District which is in the Midlands Province. Sessombi has a communal side and a commercial side. The research site covered Maywood which is a village composed of A1 farms. Other villages surrounding Maywood are Chesterfield and Crushers. It was a farm which before the Fast Track Land Reform of 2000 belonged to one Mr Midley who was into cattle ranching. Maywood is 29kilometers from Kwekwe town along the Kwekwe Gokwe road. Maywood village has 83 households which are headed by a village headman (Sabhuku).

The farmers were resettled as villagised arrangements (Scoones and Marongwe et al 2011). Major crops grown in Sessombi are maize, groundnuts, sweet potatoes, cotton, sweet reeds and pumpkins. Prior to the introduction of cotton production by COTTCO farmers grew maize for both subsistence and income generation. Cash crops have been largely grown by men while women have been linked with subsistence crops like groundnuts, roundnuts, sweetpotatoes and vegetables which are mainly for consumption.

Cheques/cash for farm produce sales are paid to the land holder and this has resulted in men cashing cheques even though they were not responsible for the production. In many cases, men have used the money for purposes that did not benefit the family (Larsen 2002). Some have used the money to marry second wives; others have spent the money on beer drinking (ZWRCN 2007). High incidences of suicide among women in cotton producing areas have been reported

due to misappropriation of cotton income by their husbands i.e. in Gokwe ZWRCN (2007). Organizations representing women farmers have begun lobbying for a system that allows them to sell cotton in their own right. In a study on sales to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), The Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre and Network concluded that man who sold the family horticultural produce controlled the income earned from horticulture and that in most cases they did not account for the money. However women who marketed their own produce and had husbands working elsewhere had more freedom to choose what to use the income for (ZWRCN 2007).

Cotton production is labor intensive and women make up the bulk of the labor force. Disagreements on cotton pricing between farmers and buyers have been escalating with buyers determining the price of cotton. This has had a negative impact on the household as the prices are not break even. Women have had the burden of ensuring that households have to survive in the wake of low producer prices for cotton growers. Rural women work long hours, sometimes as much as 15-16 hours a day.

Statement of the Problem

Women's contributions to agricultural development have been undervalued in both policy and practice; due to patriarchal domination and socialization which defines domestic chores as women's work. This has led to unequal access to productive resources, profits and a lack of implementation of policies. While policies have been made that try to address gender inequalities their implementation is not adequate and women still remain marginalized. Despite women's contribution in cotton farming which is labour intensive they have limited access to sales returns and little power to make decisions on resource utilization. Men have control of outputs and can make any decision with regards to use of cash from cotton sales. This has rendered women as laborers and wives who take care of the children.

Justification

The focus on gender in cotton farming came out of the realization that extensive research has been done focusing on cotton varieties (Mariga 2006), the impact of contract farming on cotton farmers (Cheater 1986) and the contribution of cotton to the economy (Chizarura 2007) without addressing relations of production between men and women. These studies did not have a gendered perspective in outlook. The study seeks to address the information gap on gender relations in cotton farming. The study will make a contribution to the academic understanding of challenges that women face in relation to cotton production. It will also play a pivotal role for policy makers who are concerned with improving the welfare of women in agricultural communities.

Objectives of the Study

Overall Objective:

- ☒ **To establish gender dynamics in cotton production among A1 farmers in Sessombi in the Kwekwe District of the Midlands Province**

Specific objectives of the study are to:

- ☒ Establish benefits that men and women derive from cotton production;
- ☒ To investigate gendered power dynamics in access and control of resources among the farmers and
- ☒ Identify gendered dimensions of labor among the cotton producers.

Research Questions

- ☒ **What benefits are women and men deriving from growing cotton?**

- ☒ **What power dynamics are inherent in access and control of resources among cotton farmers?**
- ☒ **What are the gendered dimensions of labor between men and women in cotton production?**

Methodology

The qualitative methodology was suitable for this study because reality as perceived by cotton farmers is multiple and subjective. The enquiry therefore focused on the way respondents interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world they live in. The qualitative methodology is essentially context specific and it yields more data. Its major shortcoming is generalizability i.e. the information obtained cannot be used to explain other scenarios elsewhere, but remains particular to that context only. Primary research involved interviewing women and men farmers: to elicit information on gender roles in cotton farming, access and control of benefits from agricultural production between men and women farmers and the gender division of labour.

Methods

Qualitative research methods used in this study included in-depth interviews, direct observations and key informant interviews.

The Case Study research design was used in the study as it examines a phenomenon in its natural setting in this case cotton production. This design also allowed the researcher to explore in-depth the process of cotton production and relations of production between men and women in Sessombi. Case Studies were used to develop as full an understanding of cases as possible. The case study seeks to understand the case in depth, and in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context (Punch 1998). It also has a holistic focus, aiming to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case. The individual cases provide information on: women and men's role in the cotton production process, benefits that women and men get from

growing cotton, challenges that they face in the production process and other sources of livelihoods they resort to besides cotton farming. The data for case studies was collected through observation, semi-structured interviewing and key informant interviewing. Case studies were used to identify women and men's roles in the cotton production process, access and control of benefits between men women from growing cotton, gender division of labour amongst cotton growers, power dynamics in access and control of resources.

Study Population

The study focused on households that are growing cotton and have been growing cotton for the past two years. Male-headed households were interviewed with the husband or the male head being the respondent. Three of these households were interviewed. Two women farmers who are growing cotton on their own were also interviewed. Initially the study targeted three women cotton farmers but the other targeted respondent had attended a funeral in Gokwe.

Sampling Method

Purposive sampling was used to identify five households in the study area. Purposive availability sampling is also referred to as judgemental sampling since it involves the researcher making a decision about who or what units of analysis to be involved in the study (Twumasi 1997). With purposive sampling, the researcher uses their knowledge to determine who or what study units are most appropriate for inclusion into the study (Chingarande 2008). Respondents were purposively selected depending on availability targeting cotton farmers who have been growing cotton for the past two years. Women cotton growers were selected on the basis of having a piece of land (allocated by husband or personally owned) where she is growing her own cotton with or without a husband present. Key informant interviewee were also purposively selected targeting Extension Officers working with farmers on the ground and another one Arex Officer working in the District office for an overview of the cotton situation.

Data Collection Methods

Key informant interviews- Officials from Agricultural Extension Office (AREX) were interviewed to obtain expert information on cotton production in Sessombi. The advantages of this technique are that, it creates a learning environment in which the two, the researcher and the

respondent are involved in a purposeful discussion (Twumasi 2001). The interviewer can assess the mood of the people and can appraise the validity and reliability of the answers. Key informant interviews can be combined with other techniques. Their disadvantages are: informants can give information based on their own impressions and biases. To limit this shortcoming semi-structured interviews were conducted with people on the ground that is cotton farmers. Agricultural Extension Officer (AREX) was interviewed as they work with farmers on a daily basis and are able to articulate farmer needs and concerns. The Village head was also interviewed as a key informant to provide information on women's role in the production process and challenges that women face as a result. The AREX officer at district level was interviewed in Kwekwe where he is based.

Semi-structured interviews/In-depth Interviews .The main function of the interviewer in this type of interview is to focus attention upon a given experience and its effects. He/she has a list that constitutes a framework of topics to be covered, but the manner in which questions are asked and their timing are left largely to the interviewer's discretion. Although the interviewee is free to express his/her line of thought, the direction of the interview is clearly in the hands of the interviewer. He/She wants definite types of information and part of his/her task is to confine the respondent to discussion of the issues about which he/she wants knowledge. The flexibility of the semi –structured interview if properly used, helps to bring out the affective and value-laden aspects of the subject's responses and to determine the personal significance of his/her attitudes(Bongo 2003).The major shortcoming of semi-structured interviews are: It is time consuming and resource intensive, it has to be carefully planned so as not to make the questions prescriptive or leading(www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk).The researcher gave ample time to planning and designing appropriate questions. These were designed to elicit the following information: women's role in the cotton production process, benefits that women get from growing cotton, challenges that they face in the production process and other sources of livelihoods they resort to besides cotton farming. Six questionnaires were administered i.e.one respondent one questionnaire. The questionnaires focused on the background or socio-demographic data. The researcher also used a recording device to capture responses more effectively. Interviews were conducted at the respondent's homestead to allow the researcher to carry out observations and also do a tour of the cotton fields.

Observations. The researcher observed: women and men's role in the cotton production process-the researcher also observed women and men working in the cotton field this was also augmented by information obtained from interviews: benefits that women and men have access and control over from growing cotton-these were in the form of assets, household items and other tangible things that can be attributed to cotton farming. Other non-observable benefits were covered by the interview techniques:

Ethical Considerations

A verbal consent was obtained from the respondents, village head and Arex officers before participating in the study. The researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity of information about participants is kept private by using codes to represent households and their heads and can only be revealed with their consent. Respondents had the right to withdraw when they felt it was necessary without any questions asked. They were also at liberty not to respond any question(s) when they felt like it.

Literature Review

Role of Women and Men in Agricultural Production

Women's Role in Cotton Farming

Chizarura (2006) in a study in Lower Gurove of the Mashonaland Province with an estimated 20 312 peasant farmers noticed that cotton was grown as the principal source of cash income required to meet daily household needs. Out of these households, he approximates 40% to be female headed (the women are either widowed, divorced or have spouse gainfully employed outside Lower Gurove).Chizarura concludes that farmers have resorted to reliance on food hand-outs from NGOs,side marketing and abuse of input schemes as legitimate strategies for those who harvest less cotton as expected by cotton merchants. In extreme cases some have resorted to cross-border trading, poaching and gold panning activities which are illegal in order to survive.

Cotton is a high pesticide-input commodity, and women are often responsible for applying pesticides – even when pregnant. Horsley and Weisenfeld (2005) clearly highlight the effects of chemical use by women and children. They claim that Children are exposed to pesticides in the field as they work with their mothers, through residues on their mothers' skin and clothing and through breast-feeding

In all societies, men and women are assigned tasks, activities and responsibilities according to their sex. The gender division of labour varies from one society and culture to another, and within each culture, it also changes with external circumstances and over time. In most societies gender power relations are skewed in favour of men, different values are ascribed to men's tasks and women's tasks (March et al 1999). In all types of work done by women and men, a distinction can be made between productive work (production) and reproductive work (reproduction). Production includes the production of goods and services for income or for subsistence. It is this work which is mainly recognised and valued as work by individuals and societies, and which is most commonly included in national economic statistics. Both women and men perform productive work but not all of this is valued or rewarded in the same way (Boserup:1989; March et al 1999). Reproduction encompasses the care work and maintenance of the household and its members, such as cooking, washing, cleaning, nursing, bearing children and looking after them, building and maintaining shelter. This work is necessary, yet it is rarely considered of the same value as productive work. It is normally unpaid and is not counted in conventional economic statistics. It is mostly done by women (March et al 1999).

Boserup (1989) identified, felling, hunting and warfare as the chief occupations of men before the European conquest of Africa. As felling and hunting became less important and inter-tribal warfare was prevented by European domination, little remained for men to do. With the coming of colonialism there was a decline in the status of women relative to that of men. Leacock (1981) posit that the formal allocation to men of whatever public authority and legal right of ownership was allowed in colonial situations, by missionary teachings and by the persistence of Europeans in dealing with men as the holders of all formal authority. The introduction of wage labor for men as observed by and the trade of basic commodities speeded up processes whereby tribal

collectives were breaking up into individual family units in which women and children were becoming economically dependent on men (Sacks 1975, Leacock 1981, Boserup 1981).

The Food And Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2011) estimate that women produce between 60 to 80 per cent of food in most of developing countries and are responsible for half of the world's food production, yet their key role as food producers and providers and their critical contribution to the household food security is only now becoming recognised. FAO studies confirm that while women are the mainstay of small-scale agriculture, farm labour force and day to day family subsistence, they are facing more difficulties than men in gaining access to resources such as land and credit and productivity enhancing inputs and services (FAO 2011).

Women have a central function and a vital stake in the agricultural sector and its development. But this highly consequential fact is often not recognised or acted upon (Chidzonga 1993).

Division of labour reflects differences in land types and crops that are grown by men and women. There are certain crops that are grown solely by men and others by women. In Gambia for example men cultivate sorghum, millet, maize and groundnuts while women cultivate rice as subsistence crops. Otieno (2001) concludes that the division of labour in Africa does not recognise the presence of unmarried women and widows in society who make great contributions in agriculture. Generally women are expected to grow subsistence crops, gather fuel and rear children in return men provide cash crops for the family. In most of rural areas of Kenya, women are actively involved in almost all the farming system's smallholder farming (Mutoro 1997). Women's agricultural labour in the small-scale sector is greater than men's and more so with the growing out-ward migration of men from the rural areas. But women's labor is not economically valued in Kenya (Mutoro 1997). It is labour given for the welfare of the household.

In cotton production Horsley and Weisenfeld (2005), identified women as the actual workers who are doing most of the work. According to them women are responsible for housekeeping, taking care of the family, and farming food crops and cotton. A typical woman rises before dawn, breastfeeds her baby, walks miles to gather firewood and water, cooks breakfast, and washes and dresses the children before starting to farm at 8am. She then walks to the fields with a baby on her back to plough, hoe, weed, and plant. The woman comes home to get more water,

care for the baby, and prepare an afternoon meal. She returns to the fields for three more hours of weeding and hoeing. Then she comes home to get more water, pound maize into flour, and prepare and serve dinner. Finally, she washes the children, breastfeeds the baby, washes the dishes, and goes to bed. Most women consider weeding the most taxing job, and women are considered lazy if they are not constantly working. In situations of male migrant labour as in Southern Africa for instance where men are involved in wage labour, at times women have to take over an extra task that may include the entire range of agricultural activities as well as domestic work (Gabriel 1991). Rural women already work long hours sometimes as much as 15-16 hours per day. The effects of high yielding varieties and the green revolution have increased the agricultural production and processing tasks for many women for instance in weeding water collection harvesting, threshing and storage

Specific for agriculture is its multiform and heterogeneous character, closely associated with the fact that it is practised by actors who embody different interests, are part of diverse networks and share particular cultural repertoires (Herbinck and Van der Ploeg 1997). Farms and farmers' practices are located in different domains of activities: those of production, reproduction, family and community, institutional and regulatory settings. According to Herbinck and Van der Ploeg (1997) farmers denote actors engaged in agriculture only, while farmers' livelihoods increasingly entail migratory work, petty trade, and other forms of off-farm and on-farm non-agricultural activities.

Access to and Control over resources

When considering the way in which resources are allocated between men and women (the gendered allocation of resources), it is important to look at the difference between access to resources and control over them. Access is defined as the opportunity to make use of a resource and control is the power to decide how a resource is used, and who has access to it. Women often have access but no control (March et al 1999).

Men control the land and profits

Women have traditionally had little access to income from cotton and other crops. To address this problem Cargill and later adopted by Cottco initiated a new payment system, in which it pays for

cotton within an hour of farmer delivery. This helped woman by eliminating the need for repeated trips to the gin. Even with this improved payment system, however, men are still far more likely to bring the cotton for grading and therefore control the proceeds. According to researcher Colin Poulton (Horsley and Weisenfeld: 2005), men have control and decide what to do with the money and the decision making does not reflect the amount of labor that goes into the farm. He concludes that cotton may nominally be the man's crop, but the women put in the labor and the men get the profits. Poulton also concurs with Margaret Samuriwo of Oxfam who concludes that in most cases, it is nearly impossible for women to access profits. Women work very hard to uplift the productivity on the farm, and the husband will collect the money and spend as he wants and even marry another wife to bring on the farm. Women have access to pesticides that are poisonous. They choose to take the pesticides and die. Women find themselves as laborers without pay, lacking power to alter their situation (Horsley and Weisenfeld: 2005).

Women and Access to Land

Land is the most important household asset for households that depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Access to land is a basic requirement for farming and control over land is synonymous with wealth, status and power in many areas. Strengthening women's access to, and control over, land is an important means of raising their status and influence within households and communities (FAO 2010-2011). Improving women's access to land and security of tenure has direct impacts on farm productivity, and can also have far-reaching implications for improving household welfare.

Despite playing a significant role, women face a number of challenges which retard the development of their livelihoods. One of their greatest challenges is access to land. Gabriel (1991) observed that land reforms of the past and more recently have tended to have the effect of allocating or redistributing land to men, even at the expense of depriving women of long-established rights to land use. This has reduced incomes, affected the health of women and their families adversely and increased women's dependence upon men. In terms of local customs and traditional systems of inheritance, women have limited access to and control of land (Jere 2008). Female headed households are particularly vulnerable as they often lose title to land when their husbands die or when divorced.

Pre and Colonial Land Rights

According to the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) (National Gender Policy (NGP) 2004:5) access to productive land was the basis of separation between the rich and the poor in the traditional society. It clearly posits that women in traditional society owned land and its produce in their own right. Changes in the social structure brought about by colonialism eroded women's rights with their status. Under a similar vein Chidzonga (1993) stress that prior to the impact of colonial capitalism; women had access to a socially defined minimum of land from their husband's holdings. A woman's rights to land were dependent upon her obligation to fulfil her responsibilities as a wife. Women were expected to grow specific food crops such as beans, grains, groundnuts and vegetables for relishes on their allotted plots. This corporate, lineage-based tenure system ensured women cultivation rights to land (Chidzonga 1993). Mutoro (1997) reports a similar case in Kenya where women had access to land and limited control over it for the production of food for the household. She in agreement with the NGP added that women were allowed to dispose of their extra produce as they wished, as long as this did not compromise the food reserves of the family.

Colonial state policies affected women's land rights in several ways: First, the policy of confining the African population to Native Reserves had the effect of creating a land shortage within the reserves that heightened competition between men and women (Chidzonga 1993). Secondly colonial policies directed towards the reserves interfered with customary practices of allocating land within the household.

From the very occupations in 1890, land has been cast in black-white race relations. Thus most historical accounts of this period speak in general terms about the expropriation of land and cattle of the indigenous people rather than the latter day gendered approach (Action Aid 2009). The Action Aid report highlights that the various colonial proclamations on land reveals that land allocation had all the trappings of patriarchy where women and children were subsumed under male headship.

Post-Colonial Reforms

In some countries, despite legislative and tenure changes in favor of smallholders, women continued to be placed in disadvantaged position in terms of access to land. As the amount of land cultivated per person declined in the face of increased population pressure and decreased areas of growth for arable and permanent crops, women's access to land was rarely addressed and thus their benefits from land reforms were few.

The need for land inspired the Zimbabwe liberation struggle. At independence land ownership, control and access was an issue between whites and blacks. When Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980 the land question was made a priority issue (ZWRCN 2007, Action Aid 2009). The aim was to address the following issues:

- Unequal and inequitable land distribution
- Insecurity of tenure and
- Unsustainable and sub-optimal land use (Government of Zimbabwe 1998)

The government embarked on land reform process that resulted in the creation of resettlement schemes which had different models. Some of the models were meant to give land to the landless or to people with unproductive land. Other settlements were meant for commercial agricultural production. The land was acquired from white commercial farmers under the willing buyer willing seller scheme.

From 1980 to 1993 the following types of resettlement model schemes were created:

Model A - Commonly referred to as nucleus village settlement bounded by individual arable holdings and communal grazing lands (Moyo 1995). Under this model land which belonged to the state was allocated to household heads through permits, these heads were predominantly male. Only 2-15% of the households heads were female (Gaidzanwa 1995). Three permits were given: one for residence; another for cultivation and the other one for pasturing livestock. Female heads of households could have permits in their own right but priority was given to widows (Action Aid 2009:11). Infrastructure was provided: schools, clinics, feeder roads, boreholes and marketing depots. Extension and Resettlement officers were also available to give technical advice on cropping and other services.

Model B - This was a scheme for cooperatives involving membership of between 50 to 200 members living in a village and using farms and infrastructure collectively. All adults including women and their children were also allowed to be members. Women were equal participants in every way regardless of their marital status (ZWRCN 2007).

Model C and Model D - Model C was based on individual settler plots with land averaging 10 hectares in size. Land was surrounded by a core estate owned by the state. Model D was a pilot livestock model of the resettlement programme for natural regions IV and V.

Fast Track Land Resettlement Programme

Land reform programme in Zimbabwe, implemented from 2000 to date has largely been justified by the state and beneficiaries on the grounds of responding to the demands of the rural poor for social and economic justice (Moyo and Matondi,2008).

When the fast track land reform programme (FTLRP) formally ,the 20% quota for allocation of land to women had still not been achieved despite pressure from various stakeholders, especially the Women and Land Lobby Group(WLLG),(ZWRCN 2007).The Utete Report had recommended a 40% quota, especially for A1 peasant farmers, but this was not taken up by policy makers and implementers. As the table below shows 18 per cent of female headed peasant farmer households and 12 per cent of female headed commercial farmer households benefited from A1 and A2 land allocations in terms of total household beneficiaries (ZWRCN 2007).The land ownership data clearly highlight that women do not own or control resources such as land in either A1 or A2 models.

Women have less access to land compared to men in all types of settlements and in all land reform exercises. The government quota for women is a mere 20 % when the population of women in Zimbabwe is about 52 %. In communal areas women do not own land in their own right but through their husbands. As a result of being unable to access land means that women remain property-less, have no decision-making power in the household or community; they will also have limitations on the kinds of crops grown as they mainly grow for household

consumption and as such may not diversify to include cash or perennial crops like tobacco, cotton and yet these fetch better prices on local and world markets.

Table 1: Land Allocated by Sex and by Province

Province	Model A1				Model A2			
	Male	%	female	%	male	%	female	%
Midlands	14 800	82	3 198	18	338	95	17	5
Masvingo	19 026	84	3 644	16	709	92	64	8
Mashonaland Central	12 986	88	1 770	12	1 469	87	215	13
Mashonaland West	12 782	81	5 270	19	1 777	89	226	11
Mashonaland East	12 967	76	3 992	24	-	-	-	-
Matebeleland South	7 754	87	1 169	13	215	79	56	21
Matebeleland North	7 919	84	1 490	16	574	83	121	17
Manicaland	9 572	82	2 190	18	961	91	97	9
Total	106 986	82	22 723	18	6043	88	796	12

SOURCE: Utete (2003), Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee: August 2003; P40

Gender, Power and Decision Making

Changes to date have had a little impact on the elimination of gender gaps that exist between the social, political and economic positions of women and men in Southern Africa. There are marked discrepancies in the power relationships of men and women. The majority of women do not enjoy the freedom of thought and action which is conducive to personal growth because traditionally they are perceived as subordinate to men.

Connell (1987) points out that power maybe a balance of advantage or an inequality of resources in a workplace, a household, or a large institution. He stresses that power asserts the ability to impose a definition of the situation, to set the terms in which events are understood and issues discussed, to formulate ideals and define morality. In short to assert hegemony.

Women are still confronted with numerous legal, political, economic, social and cultural barriers that negatively affect their full participation as active members of their respective societies (SARDC WIDSAA and ZWRCN: 2005).

Power, Marriage and Resource Utilization

The power struggle between women and men within the institution of marriage generally revolves around issues of control over decision-making and marital resources, which include the husbands and wife's income, children, succession and inheritance. The position of women within a marriage is not equal to that of men in terms of power and decision-making (SARDC WIDSAA and ZWRCN: 2000). This minority status restricts women from entering into contracts, obtaining access to credit or registering property in their own names. As such women cannot acquire property in their own right as individuals and neither can they obtain access to credit facilities without their husbands. Decision making in this case is fully vested in the husband, who reserves the right to approve or disapprove any decisions that the wife might take (SARDC WIDSAA and ZWRCN: 2005).

In Mozambique like in any other Southern African country, by the act of marriage, the man becomes the head of the household, with the duty to decide on all aspects of the marital life and being responsible for the couple's assets and those of the wife. The special powers of the father can only be executed only when the husband is absent or is incompetent (Connell 1987).

The unequal division of labour and responsibilities within the household resulting from the unequal power relations limit women's potential and above all, do not allow the time required for women's skills development. The household is the only place where women exercise power and participation in decision making, though the ultimate decision lies with the men.

Traditionally the economic arena is considered a male domain, while women are regarded as housekeepers who are naturally in the private sphere; men are regarded as the breadwinners and heads of households, making economic decisions in the family (SARDC WIDSAA and ZWRCN: 2005). This has given men power over economic resources, including decision making over income expenditure, land use and cattle.

Theoretical Framework

The study relies on feminist gender analysis frameworks these frameworks allow for a differentially analysis of how women as compared to men are accessing, owning and controlling land and other resources. It also allows for an analysis and explanation of relations of production between women and men in any given society.

Marxist Feminism

Feminist scholarship seeks to challenge the whole gamut of inequalities, i.e. be they pre-colonial or post-colonial by introducing a gender perspective into the debate. A Marxist feminist perspective distinguishes societies by their forms of productivity and characterises the history of any given society in terms of changes in production. A Marxist answers to the question of woman would point to the division of labour and the implications of this division of labour for power differentials between men and women (Walby 1990). According to Michelle Barrett (1980) Marxist Feminism concerns itself with identifying the operation of gender relations as and where they may be distinct from, or connected with, the processes of production and reproduction understood by historical materialism. Thus it falls to Marxist Feminism to explore relations between the organizations of sexuality, domestic production, the household and historical changes in the mode of production and systems of appropriation and exploitation.

Women in Engel's Theory

Engels presents a historical process by which women are transformed from free and equal productive members of society to subordinate and dependent wives and wards. The growth of male-owned private property, with the family as the institution that appropriates and perpetuates it, is the cause of this transformation (Sacks 1975). According to Engels the material base for women's transformation from equal members of society to subordinate wives lay in the development of valuable productive resources, initially the domestication of large animals as private property.

Private property transformed the relations between men and women within the household only because it also radically changed the political and economic relations in the larger society. As production for exchange eclipsed production for use, it changed the nature of the household, the significance of women's work within it, and consequently women's position in society.

Private property made its owner the ruler of the household. In this respect those who have the farms registered in their names on which cotton production takes place become the rulers of the household. Women and other property less dependents work to maintain and augment the household head's property for he is now engaged in competitive production and exchange. Women's labour was a necessary but socially subordinate part of producing an exchangeable surplus. Women's role is of significance as observed by Engels in cotton production as they toil to produce exchangeable surplus in the form of cotton a cash crop grown for the export market. Women became wards, wives and daughters instead of adult members of the society (Sacks 1975).

Case studies

Five case studies were studied comprising two households with women cotton farmers who are growing cotton on their own on their husband's farms. Three other cases are male headed households which have various years in growing cotton. Some are new entrance and others have more than five years' experience growing cotton. These cases present the organisation of labour between men and women, sources of labour, decision making in the production process and the access and control profiles.

Mahuni Household

The Mahuni household has seven members; Mr and Mrs Mahuni and their five children, three boys and two girls. The first and second born sons are doing form three and one respectively at Tiger Reef Secondary school which is twelve kilometres from their plot. The third and fourth born are still at primary school which is a satellite school established just 800meters from their homestead. They are doing grades six and four while the last born is two years old.

The Mahuni family settled in Maywood farm in 2001 during the fast track land reform programme. Previously they were staying in Sessombi Communal area with their parents. As elaborated by Mr Mahuni he heard from a friend that Chesterfield farm will be repossessed by war veterans. He together with his friend joined the war veterans in repossessing the farm and as a result he got his 50 hectares of land. According to Mr Mahuni the family started growing cotton in 2009 after realising the potential it has in providing an income to the family. The household has maize, groundnuts and roundnuts also planted. Previously the family grew a lot of maize which gave them problems in getting payment from the Grain Marketing Board.

The current farming season saw the family planting 6 hectares of cotton which is now 4cm above the ground. He estimates percentage germination to be around 95%.

Mr Mahuni is contracted by Olam Zimbabwe and has received 20kilograms of seed for planting. According to Mr Mahuni the whole family does the land clearing but were a lot of strength is required during the process he is responsible. When it comes to ploughing the men of the household are responsible. They use the ox-drawn (*gejo*) plough. When the children are going to school it is the wife who leads the ploughing cattle during the ploughing process. When it is time for planting usually just after the first rains, the whole family (men and women) comes in to do the planting. When it comes to weeding we also come together as a family but at times when there are too much weeds we call for *Humwe* so that we can get assistance from fellow farmers in the area. Spraying the cotton is the husband's duty and Mr Mahuni reiterated that his wife can only carry the sprayer only when he is not around. The family comes together to pick the cotton when the hectarage is not big, but when the hectarage is big like the current 6h they call the extended family to come and assist and at times they will call for *Humwe* again. Packaging is done by the men usually Mr Mahuni and his sons. Mr Mahuni had this to say “*packaging*

inorwadza zvekuti inoda kuitwa nesu varume. Madzimai havanga kwanise kutsika nesimba uye kuti bhero ribude zvakanaka” packaging is very painful that it needs men who are strong and who can pack the lint well. For marketing it’s no longer like what they used to do were one had to travel to collect a cheque. Now they will just inform the headman that they will be coming to buy and they will come to the homestead and weigh and pay right on the spot. Whilest they stress the presence of both husband and wife the money is handed to the person who signed the contract. In this respect the money is paid to Mr Mahuni in the presence of his wife. The Mahuni household’s main source of labour is family labour and when there is a shortage of labour they call their relatives/extended family to assist. When they are not available they turn to hired labour when they have extra cash or at times Humwe.

According to Mr Mahuni cotton has the potential to improve farmer’s livelihoods. Women are able to have cash which allows them to buy household items like pots and pans and in some cases when the money is good they can buy cattle. For men they are able to get cash which they can use to buy cattle, ox-drawn carts, and *chikoforo* cultivator.

Access and control Profile: Table 1

Resource (<i>listed above</i>)	Access (A)		Control(C)		Ownership (O)	
	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>
Land	x	x	x	x	x	
Equipment	x	x	x	x	x	
Labour	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cash	x	x	x	x	x	
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Benefits						

Income	x	x	x	x	x	
Assets	x	x	x	x	x	
Basic Needs	x	x	x	x	x	x
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Power/Prestige	x	x	x		x	

Mrs Mahuni is the one who decided that the family should grow cotton after realising that it has the potential to improve their day to day life and can provide them with money for school fees for their kids.

Mr Mahuni Activity Profile: Table 1. 2

Time	Activity
5.00 am	Wakes up
5.25 am – 6.00 am	Puts cattle on the yoke
6.00 am – 10.00 am	Ploughing
10.00 am – 11.00 am	Breakfast
11.00 am – 3.00 pm	Resting
3.00 pm – 5.00 pm	Back in the field
5.00 pm – 6.00 pm	Takes a bath
6.00 pm – 7.00 pm	Eats Supper
7.30 pm – 8.00 pm	Goes to sleep

Tigere Household

The Tigere household is comprised of Mr and Mrs Tigere and their six children two boys and four girls. The farm is registered under Mr Tigere's name. The farm is a 50hectar farmland and the family grows cotton, groundnuts, roundnuts, and maize and soya beans. Mr Tigere and his family have been growing cotton for fours now.

Mr Tigere is contracted by Cottco and he received 15 kilograms of seed for planting. For sourcing of inputs he was responsible through the Cottco credit scheme. Land clearing according to Mr Tigere was his responsibility i.e. clearing the field and burning tree stumps. The wife assisted during this process by carrying and burning grass. Mr Tigere is also responsible for ploughing. He uses ox-drawn implements led by his son. The family comes together when it is time for planting. He elaborated that sometimes when the area needed to plant is big he will ask for assistance from his parents and his young brothers who are in Gokwe to come and assist. Weeding is mainly done by the family as a whole and when the weeds are so many Mr Tigere and his son uses the ox-drawn harrow for weeding. Spraying is done by Mr Tigere as he claims that chemicals can affect his wife, so he does not want her to do the spraying. The family comes together again for picking and taking to the homestead but Mr Tigere and his son will do the packaging which he says requires a lot of energy. Market according to Mr Tigere is now done here in his homestead as buyers will come to his house and pay him in the presence of his wife. The previous season he gave all the money to his wife to make the decisions. The household's main source of labour comes from the family and when they are behind with work they sometimes turn to Humwe or when they have surplus grain they use *Maricho* and pay labourers with grain. The extended family also comes in when labour shortage hits hard.

Mr Tigere said that women get such things as cash which allows them to buy clothes, plates, pots and cups for home use. While men derive benefits such as farming implements, furniture and cattle.

Access and Control Profile Table 2.1

Resource (<i>listed above</i>)	Access (A)		Control(C)		Ownership (O)	
	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>
Land	x	x	x	x	x	
Equipment	x	x	x		x	
Labour	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cash	x	x	x	x	x	x
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Benefits						
Income	x	x	x	x	x	x
Assets	x	x	x	x	x	
Basic Needs	x	x		x		x
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Power/Prestige	x	x	x	x	x	x

The wife was the first person to suggest the family grow cotton but the husband refused. After realising that other households were making a living from cotton production the husband was left with no choice but to follow the wife's idea.

Mr Tigere Activity Profile: Table 2. 2

Time	Activity
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5.00 am	Wakes up
5.25 am – 6.00 am	Puts cattle on the yoke
6.00 am – 8.00 am	Ploughing
8.00 am – 10.00 am	Breakfast and Resting
10.00 am – 4.00 pm	Ploughing
4.00 pm – 6.00 pm	Look for cattle and bring them back home
6.30 pm – 7.00 pm	Takes a bath
7.00 pm – 8.00 pm	Eats Supper
8.00 pm	Goes to sleep

Chitundu Household

Mr Chitundu is a cotton farmer who has been growing the crop since 2008. He is married with 3 kids two girls and one boy. His farm is 50 hectares and grows groundnuts, maize and roundnuts. The farm is registered in his name and he makes most of the major decisions in the household. Before he got the farm in 2001 Mr Chitundu worked in his father's fields in Gokwe and that's where he learned to grow cotton. When he decided to grow cotton he took his young brother and two other relatives from Gokwe to assist him.

Mr Chitundu received 45 kilograms of seed from Cottco and has successfully planted all of it. He estimates the cotton germination to be 96%. In terms of sourcing inputs he says that he was responsible but his task was a lot easier as he got the seed from Cottco. Mr Chitundu emphasised that he does the land clearing assisted by his brother and another male relative. Ploughing is done by him as well with ox-drawn ploughs and his brother leading the cattle. Planting is done by

women in this case Mrs Chitundu and another female relative. Weeding is done by the whole family. Spraying according to Mr Chitundu is what he is supposed to do but he can't do it because he has breathing problems so his brothers will do it. When they are not around he looks for relatives. When the worst comes to the worst he approaches his neighbours for assistance. Picking is done by the family or when there is too much of it to be done he uses *Humwe*. Packaging is done by the whole family as well. The person from Cottco visit homesteads to buy the cotton. The money is paid to Mr Chitundu in the presence of his wife. The household rely on family labour and at times use hired labour.

Women will get cash from cotton which they will use to buy things they need the most. Men will benefit cash and prestige especially in our farming area. The last season they bought cement, roofing sheets and built a house. The previous years cotton has not been paying so it was difficult to get any tangible benefits.

Access and control Profile Table 3.1

Resource (<i>listed above</i>)	Access (A)		Control(C)		Ownership (O)	
	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>
Land	x	x	x		x	
Equipment	x	x	x	x	x	
Labour	x	x	x		x	
Cash	x	x	x	x	x	
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Benefits						
Income	x	x	x	x	x	

Assets	x	x	x		x	
Basic Needs	x	x	x	x	x	x
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Power/Prestige	x	x	x	x	x	x

Mr Chitundu was the one who decided to grow cotton.

Activity Profile: Table 3. 2

Time	Activity
4.00 am	Wakes up
4.00 am – 9.00 am	Ploughing
9.00 am – 10.00 am	Resting
10.00 am – 11.00 am	Land clearing
11.00 am – 12.00 pm	Resting
1.00 pm – 4.00 pm	Back in the field
4.00 pm – 4.45 pm	Takes a bath
5.00 pm – 6.00 pm	Checks cattle
7.30 pm – 8.00 pm	Chatting
9.00 pm	Goes to sleep

Mucheri Household

Mrs Mucheri is a 50 year old married woman who is growing cotton. The farm where production takes place is registered under the name of Mr Mucheri. She has seven children that is three boys and four girls. On the farm they also grow maize, groundnuts, rapoko and roundnuts. The farm is 50hacters and she started growing cotton in 2010.Mrs Mucheri stays with her daughter in-law and her husband. Her daughter is also home after having a divorce from her husband. For Mrs Mucheri all these people help her with household chores and as a result she has more time to spend in the fields.

Mrs Mucheri is contracted by Olam and she is the one who signed the contract which saw her receiving 20kilograms of seed. According to her she worked with her husband and children to clear the land. The husband would cut down trees and she would carry and burn logs. When it was time for ploughing her husband did the ploughing using cattle. Mrs Mucheri did the planting assisted by her daughter in-law and her husband (Mrs Mucheri's son).During the time of the interview with Mrs Mucheri she was busy weeding with her children and son's wife. Her husband had gone for beer drinking in Sessombi Communal Lands. Spraying is done by Mr Mucheri and his son. Mrs Mucheri says that she cannot carry the knapsack on her back because it is too heavy. Picking is a family task which means that they will pick on the main field that which is said to be Mr Mucheri's and they will then move to Mrs Mucheri's.Packaging is done by the father and his son. Mrs Mucheri lacks the know-how of packaging and she is not able to produce good corners. Mrs Mucheri's main source of labour is family labour but when there is a lot to do they also resort to hired labour.

Mrs Mucheri described benefits from cotton as cash which she is looking forward to buy two heads of cattle, pots, pans, and plates for her household. For her husband she said the two cattle belong to her husband. Previously she had access to little cash which allowed her to buy clothes and pay school fees for her children. She said she is looking forward to buying a tractor in the next three years if the prices are favourable enough. The decision to request for a separate field to grow cotton on her own came after realising that her husband gives her money when there is a pressing issue and gets little for the up-keep of the family.

Access and control Profile Table 4.1

Resource <i>(listed above)</i>	Access (A)		Control(C)		Ownership (O)	
	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>
Land	x	x	x	x	x	
Equipment	x	x	x	x	x	
Labour	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cash	x	x	x	x	x	
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Benefits						
Income	x	x	x	x	x	
Assets	x	x	x	x	x	
Basic Needs	x	x	x	x		x
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Power/Prestige	x	x	x	x	x	x

Mr Mucheri was the one who decided to grow cotton and has been growing since 2010. Mrs Mucheri started growing hers this season and it was her decision.

Mrs Mucheri Activity Profile: Table 4. 2

Time	Activity
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5.00 am	Wakes up
5.00 am – 12.00 pm	Field work
12.00 pm – 2.00 pm	Lunch/Resting
2.00 pm – 5.00 pm	Back in the field
5.00 pm – 7.00 pm	Bathing/Resting/eating supper
8.00 pm	Goes to sleep

Chadiwa Household

Amai Chadiwa is married to Mr Chadiwa. Together they have six children three boys and three girls. The seventh child who was the eldest passed away on the 13th of November 2011. Mr Chadiwa stays in Kwekwe where he works for a mining company as a driver. She started growing cotton in 2009 and also grows maize and groundnuts on the plot. She turned to cotton farming after realising that she would be able to get cash for assisting her husband paying fees for their kids and also improving the farm homestead. The farm where she grows her crops is registered in Mr Chadiwa's name.

Amai Chadiwa is contracted by Cottco and she received 45kilograms of seed after signing her contract. According to her land clearance was done by the whole family. Her husband would cut down trees and she would take the logs home for drying and to be used later as firewood. She also did the burning of leaves and grass, while digging roots was done by Mr Chadiwa. During winter Mr Chadiwa was home and he did the winter plough using ox-drawn plough. Planting was done by the family and weeding as well. Spraying is done by the father but Mrs Chadiwa will be fetching the water. Picking also done by the whole family. When buyers from Cottco come they will give me the money since my husband will not always be around. Amai Chadiwa's main source of labour is family labour but at times she uses Maricho or Humwe when there are enough chickens to feed everyone who will participate.

The benefits that she has derived from cotton so far include paying school fees for her kids, uniforms, bought plates, pots and pans. She added that her husband got such benefits as buying cattle, farming implements, home theatres, digital video decoders (DVD), solar panels and television sets.

This time around Mrs Chadiwa plans to spend her money on items that she feels are dear to her since the contract is registered under her name. It was both the husband and wife's idea that they should grow cotton.

Access and control Profile Table 5.1

Resource <i>(listed above)</i>	Access (A)		Control(C)		Ownership (O)	
	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>	<i>men</i>	<i>women</i>
Land	x	x	x	x	x	
Equipment	x	x	x	x	x	
Labour	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cash	x	x	x	x	x	x
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Benefits						
Income	x	x	x	x	x	x
Assets	x	x	x	x	x	
Basic Needs	x	x	x	x		x
Education	x	x	x	x	x	x
Power/Prestige	x	x	x	x	x	x

Activity Profile: Table 5. 2

Time	Activity
6.00 -7.00 am	Wakes up/washes dishes
8.00 am – 9.00 am	cooking
9.00 – 9.45 am	Lunch/Resting
10.00 am – 1.00 pm	In the field
1.00 pm – 2.00 pm	Resting/eating lunch
3.00 pm – 5.00 pm	Back to the field
5.00 pm – 6.00 pm	Cooking
6.00 pm – 7.00 pm	Bathing
8.00 pm	Goes to sleep

Discussion of Findings

According to Moser (1993) the unit of production in agricultural activities extends beyond the household to include others. These are linked by such criteria as kinship, ethnicity, gender or geographical location. This is clearly shown in the case studies as all households in the sample rely on kins for assistance when there is a lot of work to be done. As confirmed by the study households in the same geographical area organise themselves to assist each other on the provision of labour through *humwe* (collective work groups). While the use of collective labour from fellow households is an effective and quick way of ensuring that work on the farm is done on time it is in itself resource consuming. This is because the household which calls for *humwe* is responsible for the welfare of the households gathered to assist them on that particular day.

Kinship lines are also evidenced by the invitation of kins to assist in the provision of labour. Some households have kins on a permanent basis that are part of the household and are there to assist with production activities.

Men and women not only have differing access to resources. Gender based responsibilities also result in differences in the management and distribution of resources within the household. Gender division of income allocation vary widely. Moser (1993:24) argues that cultural traditions determine which aspects of collective income each must cover. Rarely are women's and men's income allocated to the same expenditure categories. As evidenced by the studies income from cotton production is spent differently: women allocate income towards food, clothing needs and domestic goods. Men on the other hand buy assets like cattle and farming equipment. Whitehead in Moser (1993) has argued of the 'maternal altruism' that is the part of women's obligation to the family. This is what prompted the Chadiwa and Mucheri households to parcel out land to women to grow their own cotton.

Whitehead (1984) posits that the household is not a collectivity of mutually reciprocal interests. He observed that even where an ideology of sharing exists it does not mean that an equal distribution of resources occurs. Within the household self-interest is often the predominant motivation. Although women and men often own and have access to income and resources this is structured differently. This is shown by access to and control over land. Women acquire land by means of their relationship to individual males such as husbands, fathers, or brothers by virtue of their gendered roles as wives or mothers. As seen in the two households women had to be allocated land by their husbands so that they can grow cotton. Men on the other hand own land in their own right or by virtue of lineage membership or other systems of inheritance. In the three households studied all the land is owned by the men through registration on the 99 year lease.

Reproductive role comprises the childbearing/rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks undertaken by women, required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. It includes not only biological reproduction but also the care and maintenance of the workforce (husband and working children) and the future workforce (infants and school going children) (Moser 1993). The reproductive role is considered women's work because women bear children and that this connects naturally to the reproduction of human life. According to Scott

and Tilly (1982) in (Moser 1993) the division of labour that makes reproductive work women's work is a consequence of capitalism. A crucial matter relating to reproductive work is its invisibility and undervalue. As Moser (1993) observed it is seen as natural work therefore it is not real work and as result becomes invisible. When men finish work on the farm they rest be it in the form of sleeping or drinking beer. Domestic work has no clear demarcations between work and leisure, caring for children is without beginning or end. In most cases women are the first to wake up and the last to go to sleep. In an explanation of the rigidity of the gender division of labour around human reproduction Whitehead 1981 argues that it is because marriage based households are constructed by definition on the basis of gender, with economic relations within such households also structured by gender. Housework and childcare are mostly influenced by relations of marriage.

Despite government efforts to uplift women through various policies like National Gender Policy women still have limited ownership of assets. As shown in the Access and Control Profiles women do not own useful tools like farming equipment, land and household incomes in houses that are farming in one field. The Access and Control profiles also show that women are responsible for basic needs of the household. This points women in a difficult situation as they do not control the household income. In the households where women are growing cotton on their own they are doing fairly well as they can buy what they want without control from their husbands.

Productive role comprises work done by both men and women for payment in cash or kind. It includes both market production with an exchange value, and subsistence/home production with an actual use-value, but also a potential exchange value. For women in agricultural production this includes work as independent farmers, peasant's wives and wage workers (Moser 1993). The ideology of patriarchy has served to reinforce the popular stereotype of men as the breadwinner. This has masked the valuable contribution of women in productive role. In agricultural production Boserup's research work established that women work on subsistence crops while men grow cash crops. This resulted in high levels of invisibility of the contribution of women in agricultural production. The study confirms that women have a dual productive role a fact which is also echoed by Moser (1993). They have to do domestic work and provide farm labour. In

cases where women have separate access to land it is common for them to work both as independent farmers on their own plots of land and work as peasant wives contributing to household production as unpaid labour in the fields of male household members where they work in planting, hoeing and weeding.

Capitalist agriculture has put pressure on women to spend time on their husband's farm. This had reduced the income in cash or kind. The change of ownership from collective to private ownership with state codified individual forms of land allocation and resettlement has resulted in blindness to or ignorance of women's land rights.

Engels correctly observed that private property made its owner the ruler of the household and in this case the holder of the ninety-nine year lease becomes the owner and makes the decisions. According to Engels the material base for women's transformation from equal members of society to subordinate wives lay in the development of valuable productive resources, initially the domestication of large animals as private property and technologies. Women's lack of access to farming technologies is a case in point. Men are the ones who use technologies such as sprayers, ox-drawn ploughs and have access to decision making. Men as compared to women have sole ownership of agricultural implements and women have access and can only control when the male figure is absent.

Conclusion

The study confirms that the gender division of labour among the A1 farmers is skewed towards men. Men have access to and control of farming implements which reduce their labour. Women on the other hand have less access to technologies and use their physical strength in providing labour in the production process. Women are active in weeding, planting and picking while men are active in land clearance using ploughs, spraying using knapsack and packaging. Despite women's roles in the production process they are active in the execution of house chores. This has increased women's roles among the A1 farmers as they are expected to take part in the farming and household duties.

Men have power to make decisions in relation with cotton production. They can determine when and how to grow cotton. They determine how to use the returns from cotton production. Cash from cotton farming is paid directly into their pockets and as a result of that they keep the money and give it to their women as at when it is required. This has led to women requesting small pieces of land to grow their own cotton as in the case of Mrs Chadiwa and Mrs Mucheri. This gives them the power to determine how to spend their money from cotton farming. These women despite having their own portions of land parcelled to them from their husbands they still rely on family labour.

Cotton production has the potential to improve livelihoods of farmers if the returns from it are even distributed between men and women. The study confirms that benefits from cotton farming range from cash, cattle, household furniture, and solar panels for men and women get little cash, clothes, kitchen utensils and pots. Some farmers indicated that growing cotton is also very prestigious among fellow farmers. It shows high levels of organisation and hardworking. Some farmers do not have the know-how and lack labour as it is a labour intensive crop.

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