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THE ROOT CAUSES OF HUNGER IN
ZIMBABWE : AN.OVERVIEW OF THE
NATURE, CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF
HUNGER, AND STRATEGIES TO COMBAT
HUNGER.

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ZIDS WORKING PAPERS

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We thank also the CDAA and various African Church development agencies, which contributed to the development of our ideas.

As usual, we hold only ourselves, fully responsible for the contents of this working paper.

September, 1985

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1. This ZIDS working paper is a version of a paper originally prepared for the Churches Drought Action in Africa (CDAA) Studies Sub-Committee, which called for an Africa-wide research, by African Scientists into the critical and chronic hunger problems facing Africa today. The CDAA was largely responding to the phenomenal 3-year famine and crisis of the 1980s. To contribute to the solution of the problem, it was decided to carry out research which would form a solid basis for the formulation of longer-term strategies to deal with the problem of hunger, as opposed to the popular emergency food aid programmes. For, while emergency aid and relief are important, they cannot constitute the permanent solution to Africa's problems. In consequence, importance was attached to the definition and explanation of the problems by African intellectuals and researchers - (AND NOT BY FOREIGNERS), who would hopefully perceive their problems much clearer from the African perspective and then propose strategies to deal with the problem.

Although the research programme was financed by Churches, the study itself, was not to be confined to an evaluation of church-based development programmes, it was a secular and scientific endeavour by African intellectuals and researchers. The role of the CDAA was to facilitate this endeavour by meeting the research expenses as well as by convening an Africa-wide conference and consultations which enabled the authors to gain experience and insights into the hunger problems in the African context.

This paper is, therefore, a study of the problem in the context of Zimbabwe, of an otherwise Africa-wide research study. The Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies (ZIDS) is grateful to the CDAA for the resources made available to it to execute the study, and for having been associated with such an important programme. In presenting the results of this study as a "Working Paper", in its "Working Papers Series", it is hoped the results of the study, the efforts of CDAA and the researchers involved in the project will be available to policy makers, researchers and a much wider public. It is also hoped that the dissemination of these results will encourage more research and generate more discussion on the problem.

2. ZIDS is particularly gratified that the research was a collaborative endeavour between the research community at ZIDS and the University of Zimbabwe. Even though this collaboration was on an informal basis, it is a step in the right direction and creates the propitious conditions for further formal co-operation between the two, in pursuit of ZIDS' objectives of collaborating with the University of Zimbabwe, and other Zimbabwean Institutions and researchers. Such efforts will go a long way in strengthening our research capacity and capabilities, thus greatly obviating our reliance on external expertise in policy-oriented socio-economic research.

3. This study is of critical importance to the future development of Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. For the questions of hunger, food production and the ability to feed ourselves is a thorny and current issue all-over Africa. In the context of Zimbabwe within the broad perspective of the socialist enterprise to which government has embarked the question of land and food are critical not only to achieve self-sufficiency but equally, self-reliance. It is now a truism that the food-weapon is a crippling one in international politics today.

In clear recognition of the critical and cardinal importance of these issues, ZIDS has placed great importance on the "Agrarian Question" on its research agenda. This research programme will not only look at matters related to food production, but agrarian relations, land tenure, co-operatives and the impact of drought. Though the programme is at a conceptualisation stage, a beginning was made with a ZIDS Working Paper No. 3 by T.D. Shopo on "The Political Economy of Hunger in Zimbabwe", itself an important milestone in the study of food and hunger in Zimbabwe. Similarly, the current project on a study of Makoni District Collective Co-operatives commissioned by the Organisation of Collectives Co-operatives in Zimbabwe (OCCZIM) clearly underlines the importance which we attach to the agrarian issue.

4. It is the policy of ZIDS to carry out scientific and objective policy-oriented research as a contribution to an understanding of our problems, finding solutions to them, or at least providing a basis for the generation of debate and discussion. This effort, it is hoped, will enhance the greater appreciation of planners and policy-makers of the broader issues that need to be taken cognisance of in pursuit of the declared socialist goals of government. Equally, it is hoped that researchers, planners and policy-makers can seriously comment on our research findings in order to assist us in our future work.
5. Finally, we wish to restate that we stand committed to collaborative research efforts with individual Zimbabwean researchers, institutions and organisations in a common effort to contribute to the socio-economic development of Zimbabwe.

A M RUKOBO
ACTING DIRECTOR

I Introduction

In the midst of so-called African food and hunger "crisis", Zimbabwe has been widely acclaimed to be a unique "success" story in comparison to other African countries because of increasing aggregate output of agricultural products, especially food products which are locally consumed. The fact that Zimbabwe has been able to export grains and meat (besides the traditional cash crops of tobacco, cotton, tea, et) during normal years and was able to maintain a measure of food self-sufficiency on the aggregate during the three years of drought have reinforced this placard of success. It is in fact this performance which has earned the country the name "bread-basket" and the role of food security coordination within the SADCC region.

Of equal importance in the "success" story is the role that peasants have played in aggregate output of agricultural products. It is frequently pointed out that peasants have increased their aggregate production especially in maize and cotton (as well as sorghum and sunflower seed, etc.) from well below 10% of the marketed output prior to independence to well over 40% in maize and cotton in 1985. It is thus generally assumed that given peasant rationality these increases in marketed output also reflect sufficient food crop retentions which have ensured self-sufficiency in food among the rural peoples, in contrast to the situation in the rest of Africa. In

fact there has been a tendency to exclude the Zimbabwean peasantry from debates on hunger and related problems in the African context. Some donor agencies have even suggested that Zimbabwe does not need much foreign aid in respect of the food problem.

The "success" has consequently been attributed to correct agricultural policies (in pricing, marketing and research) and a "model" rural development strategy which was adopted since independence. In fact the CDAA study focus which was recommended for the Zimbabwean team emphasized the need to extract "lessons" from Zimbabwe's "Model", with particular interest in the role of women's cooperation groups in the struggle against hunger.

It should however be strongly pointed out that this so-called "success" is based on aggregate performance which on closer scrutiny does not reflect the true situation and that the actual hunger and related health status of the peasantry when closely inspected does not match up to the colourful impressions created especially by the international media. Thirdly the actual explanations of the causes for the increased aggregate outputs have not yet been fully investigated and require further exposition for any real lessons to be derived. Finally, it is questionable whether Zimbabwe does indeed have an integrated model of rural development and if it does its impact has not been fully assessed. These issues need to be investigated in relation to the hunger problem.

Dimensions of Hunger in Zimbabwe

Regarding peasant production, for example, the preliminary evidence of output when assessed in terms of the proportions

of households who have contributed, the regional coverage of contribution and the environmentally determined security of such production reveals a few striking features (See Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4).

The data on provincial deliveries of maize in 1984 from the Communal Lands shows a definite dominance of the Mashonaland Provinces, which together sold eighty-three per cent of the Maize received by the G.M.B. Midlands features next with the majority of deliveries coming from Gokwe Communal Lands (over sixty per cent of the Midlands deliveries) and is followed by Manicaland. This pattern of deliveries generally coincides with the favourable agro-ecological regions (Regions I, II and III) but also reflects the importance of the agricultural services infrastructure in the province with the highest deliveries.

Sorghum deliveries also reveal a definite pattern of concentration within the poorer regions, III and IV, with the Midlands, parts of Manicaland and Masvingo provinces being the dominant suppliers of Sorghum in the Communal Lands. It is interesting however, that sizeable surpluses are also produced in the Mashonaland provinces (which have the greatest maize surpluses) while the Matebeleland Provinces pointed badly in both maize and sorghum. Some of these patterns reflect the selective pattern of drought during the year in question. Gokwe again features as the major Communal Land delivering in the Midlands and one of the top deliverers in the whole country. It is interesting therefore to enquire how drought-resistant the present sorghum varieties produced by Research and Specialist Services are!

TABLE 1 :

MARKETED MAIZE DELIVERIES TO G.M.B. FROM COMMUNAL AREAS
BY NATURAL REGION AND MANNER OF CONVEYANCE (in Kgs) IN 1984 (1983-84 Season)

| | NATURAL REGION I AND II | NATURAL REGION III | NATURAL REGION IV | TOTALS of Known Deliveries |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Producer Deliveries | 133,804,944 63,3% | 37,465,470 17,7% | 40,137,520 19,0% | 211,407,934 |
| 2. Coop Deliveries | 33,934,925 67,7% | 9,981,143 19,9% | 6,223,058 12,4% | 50,139,126 |
| 3. Approved Buyer Deliveries | 19,448,065 55,3% | 10,695,690 30,4% | 5,002,624 14,2% | 35,146,379 |
| 4. TOTALS | 187,187,934 Kgs (187,189 tons) 63,1% | 58,142,303 kgs (58,142 tons) 19,6% | 51,363,202 kgs (51,363 tons) 17,3% | 296,693,439 kgs (296,693 tons) |

SOURCE: Grain Marketing Board Registry, 1985 (G.M.B. Registry)

(Note: The distributions by Natural Regions were derived from Zimbabwe Land tenure maps (Surveyor General) by the authors).

TABLE 2 1984, MAIZE DELIVERIES BY PROVINCE

| PROVINCE | Kgs DELIVERED | PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Manicaland | 8,075,319 | 3,7 |
| 2. Mashonaland West | 75,541,259 | 35,0 |
| 3. Mashonaland East | 69,247,312 | 32,1 |
| 4. Mashonaland Central | 35,319,658 | 16,4 |
| 5. Midlands | 24,702,729 | 11,1 |
| 6. Masvingo | 881,860 | 0,4 |
| 7. Matabeleland North | 230,269 | 0,1 |
| 8. Matabeleland South | 1,620,126 | 0,8 |
| TOTALS | 215,618,532 | 99,6 |

SOURCE : G.M.B. Registry 1985

(Note : Distributions derived from Zimbabwe's Political
Boundary maps - Surveyor General's Office-
by the authors.

TABLE 3 : SORGHUM DELIVERIES FROM COMMUNAL LANDS BY PROVINCE IN 1984
(1983/84 SEASON)

| PROVINCE | Kgs DELIVERED | PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Manicaland | 521,382 | 22,0 |
| 2. Mashonaland West | 217,617 | 9,0 |
| 3. Mashonaland East | 243,666 | 10,0 |
| 4. Mashonaland Central | 141,661 | 6,0 |
| 5. Midlands | 675,931 | 28,0 |
| 6. Masvingo | 548,699 | 23,0 |
| 7. Matabeleland North | 4,324 | 0,0 |
| 8. Matabeleland South | 1,112 | 0,0 |
| TOTALS | 2,354,392 | 98,0 |

SOURCE: G.M.B. Registry, 1985

(Note : Distributions derived from Zimbabwe's Political
boundary maps - Surveyor General's Office)

TABLE 4 **SUNFLOWER SEED DELIVERIES FROM COMMUNAL
LANDS IN 1984 (1983/84 SEASON) BY PROVINCE**

| PROVINCE | Kgs DELIVERED | PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Manicaland | 217,041 | 3,4 |
| 2. Mashonaland West | 2,100,471 | 33,2 |
| 3. Mashonaland East | 687,220 | 10,9 |
| 4. Mashonaland Central | 320,884 | 5,1 |
| 5. Midlands | 2,778,389 | 44,0 |
| 6. Masvingo | 37,945 | 0,6 |
| 7. Matebeleland North | 167,267 | 2,7 |
| 8. Matebeleland South | 6,798 | 0,1 |
| TOTALS | 6,311,015 (6,312 tons) | 99,9 |

SOURCE: G.M.B. Registry 1985

(Note: Distributions derived from Zimbabwe's Political
Boundary Maps)

This is also the majority of land owned by the white large-scale farmers. This is the area where over 70% of production in Zimbabwe occurs anyway.

Furthermore, less than 20% of the peasantry within this favourable region (30 000 households) have contributed to this marketed output. In contrast peasants in the other regions are living under serious and threatening population density. Moreover, the peasantry and its production activities are closely linked to urban cash remittances and the effects of the decline in real urban wages has had a serious impact on increased hunger in rural areas. In fact the evidence from

the district case study indicates that only 29% of the households sold more than 20 bags of maize (valued at an approximate income of \$4 000.00), while 69% retained less than 10 bags of maize which is inadequate to feed a family of 5 throughout the year and 70% of the households had an annual income of \$700. This indicates food shortages in terms of household production as well as inability to purchase food from various sources of income.

Structure of the Report

In the remaining sections of the paper the above issues are examined in further detail. Section II deals with the roots of hunger in Zimbabwe and demonstrates clearly that although Zimbabwe is described as a middle income country with fairly high life expectancy and literacy rates, these indices say little about the reality of a country estimated to have the most unequal income distribution in Africa; a country where it takes "the high income urban group from 1st to 10th January each year to earn the annual income of the average peasant cultivator". Furthermore, despite being a substantial food surplus nation, Zimbabwe has a major malnutrition problem. Section III examines the national strategies and policies to promote rural development in general and questions whether Zimbabwe does have an "integrated approach" to rural development - one that might be recommended for adoption by other underdeveloped and hungry African nations. The role of women's organisation, the churches and community-based development strategies directed at alleviating rural poverty and hunger are explored in Section IV. In particular, the discussion in Section IV centres around cooperativization

as one of the means of structural and social-relations transformation chosen by the Zimbabwe government. Section V has the concluding remarks. This working paper draws upon a case study of Chikwaka, which will also be published as a separate working paper.

II The Roots of Hunger in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is described in the World Bank Development Report as a 'middle income, oil importing country'. Located in Southern Africa, as shown in Figure 1, it occupies a land mass of 391 000 km² and has a population of 7,5 million (1982 census). The aggregated statistics of per capita GNP (US\$630 in 1980), Life expectancy (55 years), literacy rate (74%)⁽²⁾ and Infant Mortality Rate (120/1000)⁽³⁾ say little about the reality of a country estimated to have the most unequal income distribution in Africa;⁽⁴⁾ a country where it takes "the high income urban group from 1st to 10th January each year to earn the annual income of the average peasant cultivator".⁽⁵⁾

Despite being a substantial food surplus nation, Zimbabwe has a major malnutrition problem. At a time when the country was reported to be producing 109% of its per capita food requirements, upward of 20% of children under 5 years of age were reported to have second and third degree malnutrition and nearly 30% were found to be stunted.⁽⁶⁾ Kwashiorkor and marasmus, uncommon in first world health statistics are seen with frequency at Zimbabwe health facilities. Neither is undernutrition a phenomenon which only appears with drought, having been documented in 1981, when weather and harvests were optimal. While the effects of droughts recorded in oral tradition in pre-capitalist periods are not clear, what is clear is that today the human, technical and financial resources exist, both globally and within Zimbabwe, to eradicate the food insecurity which arises from recurrent

and often predictable climatic variations. It is therefore in the social organisation of production and consumption, both nationally and globally, that the causes for the continuing presence of hunger lie.

This section describes the epidemiology of the 'hunger' problem in Zimbabwe, analysing the distribution and dimensions of undernutrition in the context of the historical development of the relations of production in the country.

Magnitude and Nature of the Problem

The most useful and accessible measure of nutritional status is nutritional anthropometry, particularly in children under five years of age. The anthropometric measures commonly used are:

- (a) Weight for age, considering children less than 75% standard as second and third degree malnourished.
- (b) Height for age, an indicator of stunting or chronic undernutrition in those below 90% standard, and
- (c) Weight for height, an indicator of recent or acute wasting in those below 80% standard.

The findings reported below are primarily based on these standards.

Little information on nutrition conditions in rural areas were collected before 1980, and portions of that were not made public. The Nutrition Council Report of 1957/58

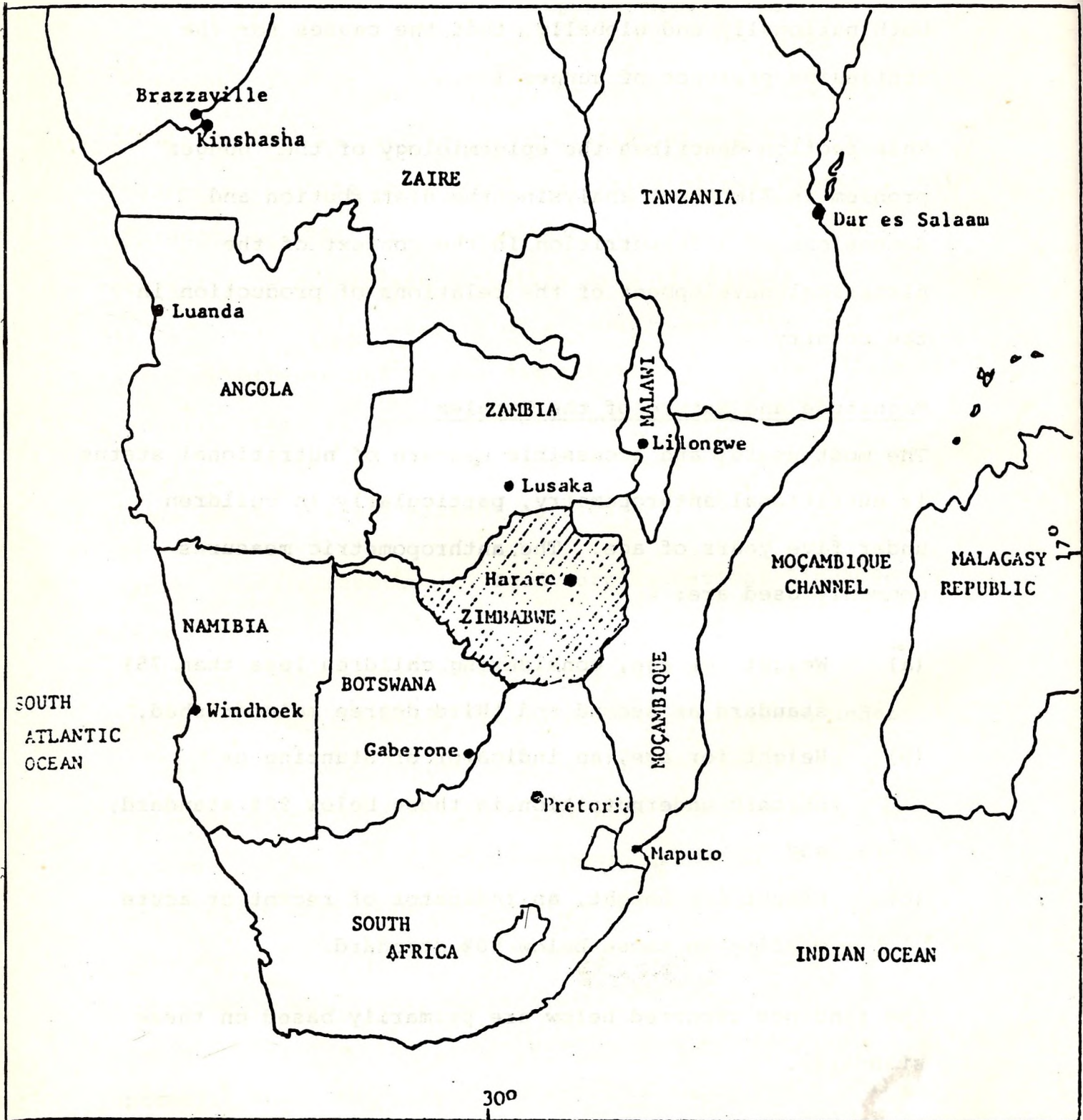


Figure 1: Zimbabwe - Geographical Location

reported 'widespread malnutrition' in rural areas, while nutritional deficiencies such as scurvy were reported to be prevalent in mine workers in the Public Health reports of the early 1900's. A 1977 unpublished Government report concluded that 32-43% of children in three peasant areas studied were stunted. Hospital based studies in 1973 indicated that undernutrition was diagnosed in 33% of paediatric admissions to the central referral hospital, and was the direct cause of 5% of hospital deaths in 1979, not including deaths from nutrition related diseases such as measles and diarrhoea. Analysis of 23 studies carried out in 1980-1982 indicate that the most serious nutrition problems are found in the children of commercial farm workers, followed by those in peasant communal areas; mineworkers families are better off than the former, while the least undernutrition is seen in the urban areas. The relative stability of these relationships is shown in Tables 5a and 5b, where anthropometric measures repeated 2 years later in the same geographical areas showed the same relative distribution, although absolute levels improve.⁽⁷⁾ There are significant seasonal differences in the incidence of undernutrition, the worst period being from October to December, when food is in short supply in peasant areas.⁽⁶⁾ The greatest prevalence of undernutrition is documented in children in the 7 to 24 month age group. Micronutrient deficiencies are more prevalent than generally believed, particularly pellagra and goiter. In the nutrition/immunisation coverage survey of July 1984, 16% of children in the 1-5 year age group were found to be **undernourished**, indicating little change since recorded 1981 levels.⁽⁸⁾ In fact, improvements in socio-economic

Table 5a : Age Standardised Anthropometric Results^a, Cross sectional Survey Done in a 50km radius area of Mashonaland Central, 1981/82

| | Number of children | % with second & third degree malnutrition | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| | | Weight for age ≤ 75% std | Weight for height ≤ 80% std | Height for age ≤ 90% std | Arm circum- ference ≤14cm | |
| | | | | | (1) | (2) |
| Commercial farming area | 223 | 40 | 15 | 30 | 27 | 23 |
| Communal area | 396 | 17 | 12 | 28 | 41 | 36 |
| Mining area | 623 | 22 | 6 | 15 | 25 | 23 |
| Urban area | 543 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 24 | 14 |
| X ² test on differences between areas | | p < 0.001 | p < 0.1 | p < 0.001 | p<0.05 | p<0.005 |

a: Standard population is total under five year population for all areas

b: (1) including 0-6 month age group

(2) excluding 0-6 month age group

Table 5b : Stability Test for Nutrition Data Relationships

Comparison of non age standardised data within the same areas showing first and second survey results

| | Percent with second and third degree undernutrition using | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| | Weight for age 1981/2 1983 | | Weight for height 1981/2 1983 | | Height for age 1981/2 1983 | |
| Commer- cial farming area | 42 | 20 | 16 | 7 | 30 | 15,42 ^a |
| Communal Area | 20 | 11 ^b | 13 | 3 | 31 | 24 |
| Mine Area | 22 | 9 ^c | 6 | 4 | 15 | 13 |
| Urban Area | 6 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 9 |

a : adjacent commercial farming area (Glendale farming area)

b : adjacent communal area (Chikwaka)

c : second mine survey conducted in the larger two mines surveyed in 1981/2, carried out by the mine doctor with the researcher's assistance in analysis.

SOURCE: Loewenson R. The Health Status of Labour Communities in Zimbabwe. M Sc (CHDC) dissertation, University of London, 1984.

conditions since 1980 may, to some extent, be undermined by drought and recession, hence resulting in little overall change in aggregated statistics. It is a vital and uncompleted task to assess which groups within each sector are becoming increasingly malnourished, such data not being available in the country in a coherent, statistical form.

Food Intake and Infection

The immediate causal factors in hunger are declining food intake, and the occurrence of infection. The latter not only decreases net food intake, but also implies declining ability to absorb ingested food. In addition poor nutritional status increases the susceptibility to and severity of communicable diseases.

Food Intake and Availability

Overall, Zimbabwe is a food surplus nation. The major food staple is maize, which is also exported to the region. Exports rose from 7 million dollars in 1980, to 35 million in 1981.⁽⁸⁾ After adjusting for imports and exports in 1978, the 2576 calories available per person per day compared favourably with the 2205 calories per capita estimated for Africa in general.⁽⁶⁾

However, the unequal distribution of this food is indicated in the fact that of 1 000 families surveyed in 1981 in peasant areas, 25% needed to buy basic subsistence food, not producing enough for their needs, and over half had no beans for consumption.⁽⁹⁾ In a survey of 92 Agritex (Agricultural Extension) Officers, carried out in 1982, one third indicated that food is in short supply for 1-3

months of the year in peasant communities, and another third that food is short for up to 6 months.⁽¹⁰⁾ One farm study in Chibi Peasant Farming area in 1982 indicated that 34% of families grew insufficient maize to last the whole year.⁽¹¹⁾ Shortage of land, draught power (cattle) and cash for inputs were implicated in poor production in these areas. In 1981/82, the first year of the drought, peasant farmers produced one third of the 1,6 million tonnes of maize produced, retaining 80% for home consumption.⁽⁶⁾ This translates to about 900 calories per person, leaving an estimated dietary shortfall of 500 calories of staple. In wage earning groups, wages falling below poverty datum lines have implied that up to 100% of the salary is spent on food. Six food items predominate in purchases - maize meal bread, milk, tea, meat, and sugar, this being reported in urban areas.⁽¹²⁾ Only 4% of consumption is estimated to be in the form of dietary fat. While sadza (maize meal porridge) and vegetables constitute the regular diet, at times of food shortage the maize meal may be consumed with only salt. It is therefore now locally agreed that the bulk of the under-nutrition does not represent a protein lack as much as a general energy lack, the bulk of the cereal diet being supplemented by inadequate energy dense food such as oil and groundnuts.

This is particularly noticed in children in the weaning period, where the small infant is unable to consume sufficient bulk for the calories required, particularly as time constraints restrict feeding to 2-3 times per day.⁽¹³⁾

Infection

While the infant mortality rate for Zimbabwe is lower than that of other African countries (100 per 1000 in 1969, 60 per 1000 reported in 1985 by Ministry of Health, Zimbabwe), such statistics are speculative and do not reflect the incidence of morbidity, particularly of the chronic form. The type of disease pattern experienced nationally is summarised in Table 6, arising from poor water supplies inadequate sanitation and overcrowded housing. These have been particularly documented in commercial farm labour, mine labour and sections of the peasant community. Mine and farm workers depend entirely on employer expenditure, on adequate environment, without any definitive minimum standards legislation. In addition, in those areas where environment has been found to be poorest, health services are usually most inaccessible, implying that diseases arising may progress to more severe forms, causing greater nutritional debilitation.⁽⁷⁾

Primary Health care and Immunisation coverage in Zimbabwe has risen greatly since 1980. However communicable disease rates are still high. Diarrhoeal disease also accounts for a fairly high percentage of infant deaths in the country. Half of peasant and farm labour children less than 5 years of age were found to have had diarrhoea in a 2 week recall in field investigations.^(7, 14) The contribution of diarrhoea to undernutrition has been documented in a number of studies generally; specifically it may be assessed to play a significant role in exacerbating undernutrition in Zimbabwe.

In descriptive terms, therefore, the most serious nutritional problems are found among the children of commercial farm labourers, followed by those living in peasant farming areas. Mine workers have relatively better nutritional status than the former, as do urban children. However there are clearly subdivisions within each of these broad groupings, some of which have been or are being investigated, but many of which remain to be assessed; viz;-

- the unemployed, underemployed and lowest income groups in urban areas;
- those with least access to land, cattle, labour, cash in rural areas, who shift to contract and seasonal employment in large scale and wealthier peasant farms;
- the growing number of seasonal and contract employees in the large-scale farm sector, who face insecurity of employment, of income and of housing tenure as they move between the status of contract labour and vagrancy.

These groups represent degrees of alienation from the material wealth of the country, and from the means to generate a secure income. The negative effects on their nutritional status have been subjectively reported, if not quantitatively verified. Analysis of the changes in the relations of production and consumption is necessary to understand the documented nutritional patterns given above. Given the difficulty of collecting nutritional data in a sufficiently disaggregated statistical form to assert mathematical relationships, the analysis of political and

Table 6 : The Classification of Most Diseases in Underdeveloped Countries.

| NUTRITIONAL | Airborne | COMMUNICABLE |
|--|---|--|
| Undernutrition and associated vitamin deficiencies | 1. Viral Influenza Pneumonia Measles Chickenpox Smallpox 2. Bacterial Whooping cough Diphtheria Meningitis Tuberculosis | Water-related, vector-borne and faecally-transmitted 1. Water-borne or water-related Cholera Typhoid Diarrhoea, dysenteries and amoebiasis Infectious hepatitis, poliomyelitis and intestinal worms 2. Water-washed (a) Skin and eye infections Trachoma, Skin infection (b) Skin infestation Leprosy, Scabies 3. Water-based (a) Penetrating skin Bilharzia (schistosomiasis) (b) Ingested 4. Water-related insect vectors (a) Biting near water Sleeping sickness (b) Breeding near water Malaria |

NOTES

- Airborne:** spread by breathing airborne, respiratory secretions from an infected person;
- Water-borne:** spread when the pathogen is in the water drunk by people who may then get infected;
- Water-washed:** spread by the hands, cooking utensils etc, but the chance of catching the disease falls when more water for drinking and hygiene is used (whatever the quality of the water);
- Water-based:** the pathogen spends part of its life-cycle in an aquatic animal (e.g. a snail).

SOURCE: Loewenson R. (1984).

economic developments is also used to identify vulnerable groups for whom adequate statistical verification is not yet available; most importantly, the analysis challenges the historical theoretical perspective inherent in policy statements such as that made in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Agricultural Industry in Zimbabwe, which stated that

"Gains in Productivity have been insufficient to keep up with the population growth with the result that the average Zimbabwean is both poorer and hungrier today than he was in 1971. In effect, the very real gains in productivity achieved in the large scale farming sector have been more than offset by the agricultural decline in the communal areas". (15)

Such statements do not acknowledge the relationships between different classes in the historical and current access to the means of production within the country. They therefore advocate solutions which do not deal with the structural inequalities causing the phenomena they observe.

In addition, it would be clearly myopic to deal with the hunger of sections of the Zimbabwean working classes and peasantry, without counterposing the 'malnutrition' which occurs in those local and foreign classes which control the major proportion of the national wealth - the rising prevalence of arteriosclerosis, coronary heart disease, obesity and degenerative bowel diseases. To quote a story from a recent paper by Mahmoud Mamdani, (16)

"I remember hearing a story, during the Sahelian

Famine of the 70's, of a fat man and a thin man. Said the fat man to the thin man, 'You should be ashamed of yourself. If someone visiting the country saw you before anyone else, he would think there was a famine here'. Replied the thin man, 'And if he saw you next, he would know the reason for the famine!!'

Dimensions of Hunger: The Chikwaka Case

Despite Zimbabwe as a whole producing a substantial food surplus, there is a high prevalence of malnutrition, affecting mothers as well as children from weaning age on. Families in communal areas follow those of commercial farm workers as the worst affected. October, November and December tend to be the critical months, when food is in short supply. Malnutrition is variously attributed to poverty, nutritional ignorance, family problems, infection and a shift away from the traditional diet. (17)

(a) Food and Diet

In common with much of Zimbabwe, in Chikwaka the main foods consumed by children and adults are sadza, vegetables, beans, meat, peanut butter, eggs and milk, with mangoes, oranges, guavas and green maize in addition when in season. There is a trend towards the substitution of traditional foods by western foods in the diet.

The Dairy Marketing Board survey⁽¹⁸⁾ reported that men were said to eat less than others because of alcohol consumption. 21% of families in the sample had some type of taboo food, 72% of these applying to the mother and usually being meat or offal of domestic

animals. Pregnant women were still found to eat grasshoppers, bird and rat meat, okra and nhopi (pumpkin with peanut butter), probably through necessity of supplementing the diet with cheap indigenous foods.

In this same study, 59% families claimed never to be short of food, while 30% claimed to be short for up to 3 months of the year. Maize and groundnut supplies were reported as lasting an average of 7-9 months, vegetables for six months, rapoko for five months, beans and sweet potatoes for less than two months.

In a smaller sample of 12 households, calorie intake was measured. Based on Recommended Daily Allowances of 2 700 calories in adults and 1 200 calories in under 5's, adult women were found to be getting 72% of their calorie needs and under 5's 86% of their needs. The deficit appeared to lie in high energy foods (fats and oils) in both adults and children.

During the three drought years, children under 5 benefitted from supplementary feeding schemes, run by the clinics and village health workers, providing cooked beans, groundnuts, oil and sadza in groups.

(b) Nutritional Status

For Goromonzi district, the overall nutritional status in under 5's is reported to be good compared to most of the country. Of a sample of 1 485

children under 5, 12,7% weighed less than 80% of the average weight of healthy children. Excluding those under 1 year (mostly being breastfed) 20,6% fell into this category. (19)

The breakdown of these figures by communal land in the district is shown in Table 7.

Table 7 : PERCENTAGES OF CHILDREN BELOW AVERAGE WEIGHT IN GOROMONZI COMMUNAL AREAS

| | OVERALL UNDER 5'S BELOW | 1-5's BELOW |
|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Chinamhora C.L. | 7,2% | 10,9% |
| Chikwaka C.L. | 13,8% | 22,2% |
| Chinyika C.L. | 14,7% | 17,6% |
| Kunzwi C.L. | 28% | 42% |

However, within Chikwaka there were found to be great variations in the figures. Excluding those from Bosha Clinic (Dzvete Ward) the figure for 1-5's is 11,7%. For Bosha Clinic itself the figure is 43% 1-5's. The explanation given for this is not that malnutrition is much worse in Dzvete, but that many children attend from the commercial farming areas of Shamva, nearby. Many of the farm workers or their relatives have children who are malnourished. A month when the Umwindisi River was inflood and therefore closing the route to the clinic for these children, the Bosha Clinic figure for 1-5's dropped to 14,8%.

The children's supplementary feeding programme was suspended in 1984 on the basis of 1983 figures, indicating that Goromonzi was not a priority area.

In the Dairy Marketing Board survey, Kwashiorkor and marasmus were reported to be decreasing problems in the area. Health workers associated malnutrition with poverty, lack of knowledge about diet, a poor weaning diet and debilitation due to diarrhoeal disease.

The results of measuring 687 under 5's indicated a greater degree of chronic than acute malnutrition. 54% of the under 5's were found to be undernourished (height for age measure) and 18% undernourished (weight for height measure). High levels of under-nutrition were also found amongst samples of school children.

(c) Environmental Factors

The situation described above is compounded by poor water supplies and sanitation, overcrowded housing conditions and low standards of hygiene. These encourage a high prevalence of communicable disease which interacts with nutrition. Infection, such as diarrhoea, measles and bilharzia, undermine the absorption and utilization of nutrients. Therefore environmental factors, including water, sanitation, housing, along with health care and immunisation play a key role in hunger. Ease of access to health care and incomes sufficient to build adequate

housing and hygienic facilities are clearly critical factors.

(d) Food Production

However, more directly, prevailing cropping patterns do not reflect a high protein contents. Small numbers of livestock are reflected in the relatively low consumption of milk and meat. In fact the larger livestock are mainly for draught power. Vegetable gardening has to be seasonal. If perennial, it is localised amongst households near to stream banks or where there is access to a borehole. Low numbers of small livestock limit the nutritional benefit which could be gained, and the variety in the diet offered by products such as eggs.

Although the picture presented by the Dairy Marketing Board survey is perhaps exaggerated by the fact that the study was undertaken during drought (although Chikwaka was relatively unaffected) this is important nonetheless because food security needs looking at longer term, and should be ensured continuously. This area has, in the past, experienced much more serious drought. However, it is interesting to note, the local elite do not perceive a hunger problem.

(e) Perceptions of the Hunger Problem

In spite of the patterns of food production and consumption and their consequences revealed above, it is the opinion of salaried bureaucrats at district level that there is no hunger problem in Chikwaka. (This opinion may be connected with a

general urban-based conception of rural plenty, associated with the lavish provisions usually sent to towns, but more so with an idealised life of "communal" areas). The area did not receive drought relief in the form of food, showing a low estimation of the hunger problem. This is a further indication of the perceptions at district level of government officials.

However, an exploration of the perceptions of the population of Chikwaka themselves indicates hunger which, contrary to the notions of officials as due to laziness and failure to heed extension advice (showing a poverty of level of understanding of bureaucrats) suggests a fair number of critical causes of hunger. In fact, explanations given by peasants are grounded in objectively concrete material circumstances, as opposed to socio-psychological modernization theories.

Peasants refer to the problem of population pressure forcing cultivation on marginal lands. Here heavy rains have resulted in entire crops being washed away because of the poor quality of the light sandy soils. In such circumstances the ability to reap any harvest is uncertain from year to year. They emphasize the pivotal role of lack of access to fertilizers and seed, due to cash constraints and lack of sufficient draught power to effect timely ploughing in a situation of already unreliable rains. Our evidence on livestock population and sources of income generally, bears this out.

Male absenteeism during critical periods was also cited as an important factor in the hunger situation. This suggests

that the labour factor is a critical bottleneck, as well as the all important organisational efficiency which is affected by male absence for males tend to have greater command of resources in the social context.

Females cited the problem of lack of sufficient cash to purchase foods for their children; men control the cash income from the crops. Hunger affects certain groups such as widows, the elderly, large families, the mentally ill, and orphans, especially and has most deleterious effects on children. Supplementary rations for children were even found to have been sold for cash and also consumed by adults.

Context to the Hunger Problem in brief.

The Colonial Period

The genesis of the hunger problem is in the colonial system. Through the process of land alienation which confined the African majority to the drier and less fertile parts of the country, the colonialists planted the seeds of contemporary rural under-development. An examination of the division of land shows that nearly three-quarters of the communal land area is in natural regions IV and V where arable farming is extremely difficult even with the most advanced technology. The 1982 population census showed that some 2,65 million people (62% of the communal land population) live in these areas.

The increase in human and livestock population over time has of course put added pressure on the limited natural resource base. As soil erosion became widespread, the decline in production was only predictable.

Gradually, through various political and economic mechanisms the communal lands were reduced to a source of cheap labour - the "labour reserve" - for the farms, mines and industries of the capitalist centres. And increasingly, communal lands could survive only by transfers of food, clothing, consumer goods, fertilizer, seed and cash from relatives in urban wage employment. In one area, 56% of rural cash income was traced to urban migrant remittances.

At the same time however, the need to remit income to rural families diminished the power of urban labour to purchase adequate food supplies, resulting in the prevalence of malnutrition in the urban areas as well.

In Chikwaka, for example, about 57% of males migrate for work leaving a high proportion (69%) of female-headed households. Furthermore, a higher proportion (54%) of households were shown to be receiving remittances from relatives working elsewhere. (The comparable figure for households in the communal areas of Mashonaland East as a whole receiving remittances from relatives working elsewhere was 37,9%).

Political and Economic Developments since Independence

In 1980 the new government inherited an economy characterised by uneven development, possessing on the one hand a modern industrial and commercial sector which was primarily designed to serve the interests of the minority white settler community and of the imperialist process of reproduction; one which was notably dependent on foreign monopoly capital and technology, and, on the other hand, a low-productivity and generally underdeveloped peasant sector.

Emphasising the point of linkage of the two sectors the Three-Year Transitional National Development Plan said,

"the two sectors, however, are not functionally separate and of particular importance in this regard is that the one, the modern sector, has historically fed on the other".⁽²¹⁾

In 1980 and 1981, following the lifting of sanctions and the good harvests, the economy grew very rapidly achieving growth rates of 11% and 15% respectively in real terms. The inheritance of an ageing and poor capital stock, for production, with equipment and machinery which had been run down during the UDI period, meant that a great demand was placed on the need to import capital goods. This, in addition to the balance of payments deficit inherited due to military expenditure and the reliance on fuel imports, increased the debt service ratio from 0,9% in 1978 to 30% in 1984.⁽²²⁾ The need to increase export oriented production to meet growing deficits, and the declining terms of trade for exported commodities greatly constrained structural changes to the economy in the post independence years, as did the political and economic concessions to private property made at Lancaster House in 1979/80. The agricultural sector continues to dominate the economy, both in terms of wage employment (33% total) and as a major contributor to GDP. After the large harvest of 1981, agricultural output declined by 15% in 1982 and by 30% in 1983, rising again by an estimated 22% in 1984, despite the drought. Subsidised pre-planting prices continue to

direct production, although declining world prices for maize, sugar and other food crops in the face of rising chemical and other input costs have shifted large scale (and increasingly small scale) production to some degree towards non-food crops such as cotton and tobacco. The national supply of maize production is therefore increasingly provided by the peasant sector (55% in 1982/83), which has also to some extent been stimulated by state expenditure on improving markets, such as Grain Marketing Board depots in rural areas, and increasing access to inputs and credit. However, this has not significantly overcome historical shortages of capital and market imbalances, and measures have tended to localise changes within the peasant sector, where purchasing power is low, without changing the structures of commercial large scale production. Most marked in this respect is the fact that despite land under-utilisation in the large scale sector, and land overcrowding in the peasant sector, the exact dimensions of this are not clearly documented, and the redistribution of land has remained a marginal exercise. Hence urban workers continue to be the major source of cash for peasant agriculture, so that the effects of the drought in converting income to food supplies has both undermined investment in peasant agriculture, and increased social-economic stratification within these areas. Death of cattle, particularly in the southern areas of the country, also served to diminish peasant draught power and capital assets, so that some families, unable to allocate the necessary inputs to work the land, were compelled to hire themselves out as labour on large scale farms, or to wealthier peasants. This process is

reported in a number of studies, but not yet clearly quantified.^{14 (23)}

In the large scale agricultural sector, increases in the minimum wage for permanent agricultural workers and in input costs of chemicals, machinery etc, have intensified an already existing trend towards decreasing labour intensity of agriculture, so that permanent employment has declined by 30% between 1974-1984.⁽²⁵⁾ Shifts in production towards tobacco, cotton and coffee increase seasonal and contract labour demands, with increasing involvement of female labour. Hence, despite wage rises in the sector (now \$75 per month) wages are still below subsistence needs, and, with increasing insecurity of employment, agricultural labour remains in a nutritionally vulnerable position.

Minimum wages have risen in all formal labour sectors. These wages, however, still fall below calculated subsistence demands. In addition, expansion in manufacturing output in 1980/81, declined in 1982-83, particularly in the manufacture of equipment, metal products and mineral production. Food production rose by 30% from 1981-83, so that 14% of total production is in the food industry, with a further 22% in agribusiness. There has however been no substantial reduction in foreign control of food industries, with perhaps even the opposite trend occurring, given the purchase of a major oil seed refining industry by Heinz corporation in 1982. The removal of government subsidies on food products to the consumer has increased urban food prices significantly, while shortages of basic foods in rural outlets have been reported as traders claim that controlled prices on certain staples (e.g. maize meal)

do not cover transport and distribution costs.

Hence the major transformation towards more socialised ownership of production has almost exclusively occurred in the 'informal' sector, with increased co-operative production in peasant agriculture, some predominantly female cooperative rural production of local consumer goods (school uniforms, clothes, bread etc), and urban informal sector co-operatives catering primarily for the low income market. The development and constraints faced by these are discussed more fully in a later section.

Without significant changes in the structure of property ownership, land tenure and distribution of access to capital, the major concessions the state has been able to make have been in the direction of democratising existing political structures, and in increasing access to health and education, both by increasing the coverage of facilities and by removing economic barriers to low income groups. Thus greatly increased access to primary health and schooling facilities is noted, clearly of importance in improving the nutritional and health status of the child population. However, with the need to invest capital in an economy still primarily based on agro-exports, and while the institutional supports to production remain essentially untouched, the state appears to be constrained both in terms of raising public sector funds to extend the coverage of an inherited inadequate network of education and health care, as well as in legislating or negotiating for increased private sector responsibility and expenditure on the income, environmental and other

factors limiting well-being among the rural poor. This is most clearly reflected in the 1984 recessionary budget cuts in health expenditure, (24) and in the fact that, excluding allowances for fuel and accommodation, there has been no change in the legislation governing minimum living conditions for rural workers. There is therefore a continuing conflict between private accumulation and public service provision in an underdeveloped country, such as Zimbabwe, where much of the national wealth is privately and foreign owned.

Overall, the reduced re-distribution of incomes and reduced state budgetary outlays for the rural poor to solve the hunger problem, are directly related to the economic "structural adjustments" precipitated by the IMF policies and conditions set out in the Zimbabwe agreement. In this context the drought may be observed to have had several effects on the existing structural inequalities:

- i) by increasing dependence on food purchases and reducing cash for investments in agriculture, in the absence of accessible credit, poorer sections of peasant society are forced to abandon cultivation in favour of wage employment, thereby potentially increasing inequality in the distribution of land and capital.
- ii) increased proletarianisation in the context of recession creates high levels of unemployment, and diminishes

the bargaining power of labour, particularly unskilled labour, to raise wages. Strategies such as Contract employment, which engender income and employment insecurity, can be easily employed by large scale agricultural sector, and in manufacturing, depressing income in the poorest sections of the population.

iii) newly introduced forms of organisation of production, such as producer co-operatives, begin with levels of production debilitated by drought and recession, are unable to repay loans or raise capital for investment and are therefore at risk of disintegrating without considerable support from the state.

iv) the demand on public resources, both to supplement consumption and to assist in buffering agricultural production from the effects of drought reduces domestic savings for investment, increases dependency on foreign loans, and diminishes possibilities of developing the manufacturing base so that dependency on agricultural exports for which terms of trade are declining is reduced.

- v) the demand on public resources further reduces state capacity to provide social services such as health, education and post employment security at a time when politically and economically these are most vital, and therefore increases dependence on foreign aid for such services, with its inherent conditionality.
- iv) labour, given the insecurity of employment and the dependence on a cash wage for family survival is less empowered to place demands and can be more easily fragmented in the protection of its immediate economic interests. With the historical legacy of weak labour organisation and the conflicting interests of the state in relation to protecting the surpluses of private capital for economic growth, drought can therefore intensify political inequalities between labour and capital.

Hence the visible manifestation of hunger in marginal, semi-proletarianised peasant communities, in contract workers, in the families of unskilled labour in the large scale agricultural, mining and manufacturing sectors, and in the economically marginalised sections of the informal sector is a reflection of the effect of national under-development and inequality in global economic terms, and of the structural inequality inherent in private and foreign ownership of wealth in national terms. Drought, as shown above intensifies these inequalities. Similarly the

donation of aid, the promotion by international finance agencies of selected development policies and the promotion of various explanations of the causes of hunger cannot be interpreted outside of the interests of the relevant donor agency, country or class in preserving or transforming the organisation graduation from which inequalities arise both nationally and globally. Hence while the rest of this document may focus on the Zimbabwean policies of 'Integrated Rural Development' and their effect on the structural causes of hunger the continued analysis of Third World Policies by western and local intellectuals without parallel analysis and challenge to the policies of developed capitalist economies represents a limited perspective on the political economy of hunger, and one which may be seen to be advocated in the class interests of the 'satiated'".

III Integrated Rural Development in Zimbabwe

The last section discussed the dimensions and historical roots of Zimbabwe's hunger problem. It was shown that the problem has its origins in the colonial political economy. This section concentrates on national strategies and policies to promote rural development in an attempt to eradicate hunger and malnutrition.

Among the issues to be discussed in this part of the paper are: What is meant by an "integrated approach" to rural development? Is there a common view about the concept? What does it mean in the context of Zimbabwe? Does Zimbabwe have an "integrated approach" to rural development - one which might be recommended for adoption by other underdeveloped and hungry African countries?

The integrated rural development approach is usually viewed by its adherents as a counter to development through "industrialisation". The argument goes that the "industrialisation" approach has failed to provide a cure to the problems of underdeveloped countries - problems of hunger, unemployment and underemployment, general poverty and inequality. The industrialisation strategies, based on import substitution and focussing largely on urban development often embraced highly developed enclaves in agriculture (including the rural sub-

sector) for the production of cash crops to earn forex for the industrialisation process. These enclaves however often have few or no linkages with the rest of the economy and have the consequence of heightening stratification among the rural population leaving the majority in a state of aggravated poverty. The emphasis, moreover, was always on growth with lipservice being paid to equity considerations. The hope was that the fruits of growth would "trickle down" to the mass of the population. This apparently has not happened in most underdeveloped countries.

Thus in the early 1970's, when the development experience of the preceeding twenty years as reviewed it was concluded that the poorest section of the population of the underdeveloped countries - the bottom 40 percent - had not participated in that progress. Hunger and malnutrition were still rife. In the search for a more meaningful alternative the World Bank and other International organisations, including UN agencies such as the ILO, began to call for a new approach to development to eradicate poverty and hunger by focusing on the satisfaction of the "basic needs" of the poorest. The real test of the new strategies and programmes was to be their ability to give poor people an opportunity to produce their own food or to earn incomes adequate to purchase enough food. The causes of hunger were seen to be rooted in poverty, both the lack of food-purchasing power of the poor and the health conditions associated with poverty. (26)

The basic needs approach thus emphasised one real problem: that there is no necessary linkage between nutrition

improvement and increased food production and that Green Revolution - type experiments might in fact exacerbate the problem of malnutrition. Basic needs approaches unfortunately did not stress the structural foundations of the hunger problem and the fact that it was rooted in the basic social structure of societies.

What considerations are put forward for emphasising rural development:

- that over 70% of the population of developing countries lives in the rural areas;
- that low levels of development there encourage migration of able-bodied people to the urban areas further underdeveloping the rural areas;
- that agriculture (the rural sector) is a source of raw materials, food, forex and markets all of which are necessary for industrialisation to take place;
- rural development for its sake : to feed the rural population and raise their living standards.

What does integrated rural development really mean? What are the objectives of the strategy?

There are various interpretations of the concept of integrated rural development. Some understand it as a system in which all components in the process of development can be understood as important and appreciated for the part which they play individually and collectively. In this sense it is more than simply a harmonization of plans or cooperation of various agencies. It involves the linking together and coordination of all the organisations - both

public and private and also people involved in rural development. It emphasises teamwork and inter-dependence of action. It implies a comprehensive survey of needs and resources and the planned and timely supply of relevant services and facilities that enable a rural development programme to succeed.

A major objective of integrated rural development is the creation of mechanisms for the mobilisation of human and investment resources, the formation of local leadership and management cadres and the diffusion of knowledge and technical knowhow. These mechanisms take the form of organisations and institutions for the planning, implementation and management of policies and programmes.

Among the important pre-requisites for the attainment of the above objectives are:

- a) a framework of policies and real commitment by the national government;
- b) establishment of coordinated development structures to formulate, execute and monitor development programmes in a systematic way.
- c) effective participation by the local communities in planning, decision-making and implementation of programmes;
- d) a clear statement of objectives to serve as a basis of criteria for evaluating development programmes.

Few people would quarrel with the necessity, indeed urgency, for rural development. But some theories and practitioners

have a tendency of viewing rural development as an alternative to industrialisation. They tend to present an 'either or' kind of argument as if the problem of rural underdevelopment can be solved from within that sector alone. This 'one-sectorism' fails to understand that the two sectors must be linked and developed in a mutually supportive way. For how can a developing country lessen dependence on foreign countries, how can it stand on its own feet or achieve self-reliance without building a domestic industry?

Secondly, a lot of rural development strategies and programmes, tend to concentrate on the few so-called 'progressive' farmers thereby widening the gap between the rich farmers and the poor farmers. Thus integrated rural development is a strategy which is full of contradictions. On the other hand a lot of rural development schemes have met with disaster because they are often imposed on the peasants by bureaucrats and others who think they know better than the peasants, who think they know what is good for the peasants. Often, however, the two groups hold different and opposed views about what constitutes 'development'. While the technocrats tend to see development in terms of technological innovation - of adapting to new varieties and techniques - the peasants, on the other hand, see "two kinds of development, two ways of bringing agricultural change to their area; the choice was not between innovation and stagnation, but between change evolved from within, and change imposed from without" (27)

We will return to this important issue of peasant response later. The problem of rural underdevelopment, poverty and hunger is inevitably linked to Zimbabwe's political economy and agrarian structure. Before independence there were four distinct agricultural subsectors:

Communal Lands (previously called Tribal Trust Lands);

Large-Scale Commercial farming sector;

Small-Scale Commercial farming sector (or Purchase Area Farms);

State Sector.

Since independence at least two more sub-sectors have emerged through the Intensive Resettlement Programme, namely

Model A Resettlement Scheme based upon individual arable plots, communal grazing areas and village settlements;

Model B Resettlement Scheme which provides for co-operative farming and communal living.

Model C Scheme is like Model A but has added to it a central core estate which will provide certain services to farmers and to which farmers will contribute labour.

But the Zimbabwe government, not satisfied with the progress of the intensive resettlement programme supported by the British government, initiated the accelerated resettlement programme in September, 1981. This was designed to speed up the movement of settlers on to newly acquired land or to legitimise occupation by squatters.

The real problem lies with the communal lands. These lands are inhabited by roughly 60 percent of Zimbabwe's population. Since their forced creation through colonial occupation and land alienation by the white settlers, the communal lands have served as a labour reserve for the capitalist sector. The system of labour migration mostly of young men and

middle-aged healthy men left behind a permanent population of women, children and the elderly. Over the years the communal lands, which are in the drier and less fertile parts of the country (mainly Regions IV and V) have deteriorated. Such factors as the rapid growth in human and livestock populations have added a severe stress on the resource base leaving the prospect of a precarious existence for an increasing number of communal lands dwellers.

The deterioration of employment prospects in more recent times combined with drought and international recession has created a crisis situation for many communal area households. This crisis, as Dan Weiner et al. point out, "is not a short term problem caused by a temporary environmental fluctuation. It is a result of a long term deterioration in the viability of the labour reserve economy as a whole. This is particularly true for the 2,65 million people living in areas where simply producing a bare subsistence crop is considered to be a good year". (28)

It is this huge problem that the Zimbabwe government aims to solve through integrated rural development. The three Year Transitional National Development Plan says, "communal areas will be the target of much agricultural investment in the public sector". Government aims to achieve the following goals in its investment programme:

- to alleviate poverty in the rural areas;
- to introduce institutional, infrastructural, production and services arrangements necessary for rural restructuring; and

to promote growth and development in all productive rural sectors. (29)

Various attempts by successive colonial regimes to deal with rural underdevelopment did not and could not succeed because they did not address themselves to the real issues. For the purposes of our analysis the starting point is perhaps with the colonial regime's so-called Integrated Plan for Rural Development of 1978 with its geographic-specific plans - the so-called "intensive rural development areas". The plan envisaged only a limited and 'orderly' transfer of land from the white commercial sector (unused or vacated land not land that was already productively farmed) which was to be distributed to a small group of 'true' farmers in the Tribal Trust Lands (especially the "master" farmers) and not to ordinary cultivators. Greater security of tenure was to be developed in the TTLs for the most productive farmers while it was intended that many of the TTL cultivators would eventually find employment in the wage economy.

Being highly protective of the white commercial farming interests and aimed at only a few Kulak farmers in the communal lands and faced with political opposition from the masses of Zimbabwe who were behind the liberation struggle the plans of successive colonial regimes failed to promote rural development and to eradicate hunger.

Independence brought new opportunities. In its analysis of the situation in the communal lands the Riddell Commission Report said in view of the heavy pressure on land in the

communal lands more land should be redistributed to the communal area farmers by way of resettlement schemes. This need not affect the productivity of existing commercial farms. The Report thought that the restructuring of the rural economy would be difficult as long as it was dependent upon:

- i) the purchase of European land on a willing buyer and willing seller basis thus restricting the pace of resettlement and the type of land being acquired, and
- ii) the general context for rural as well as urban reform is one where the immediate concerns are to maintain the short term profitability and levels of productivity of the inherited political economy. (30)

While the Riddell Commission's recommendations constituted a departure from colonial formulations, Cliff and Bush believe that their strategy and current government strategy, was still based on the common prescription of getting rid of migrant labour:

"a division of the existing peasant-worker population of migrant workers and their rural dwelling families into an urban proletariat cut off from the land, on the one hand, and a settled, full-time peasantry on the other hand. What is more, even though the 'radical' alternative would settle more peasants on more former

white land and with more inputs and supporting services, any realistic assessment of the radical variant of this strategy in the context of Zimbabwe's present potential is going to leave in the middle of this divide a residue of poor for whom there is no provision of neither land nor jobs". (31)

This raises a number of questions about present resettlement policy : who should receive new land? Originally, the idea was to give land to the poor peasants without land or jobs. In more recent discussions however it appears policy might move towards giving land also to the better farmers with resources and farming know-how. What about the numerous dependents of migrant workers? The most vulnerable groups are households headed by women who are not classified as widows, or women on their own for some other reason.

A further question is, should resettlement be viewed as an "integrated" programme of rural development? A major issue of concern is how resources in resettlement schemes (e.g. grazing land, machinery, etc.) can be used by a wider number of people especially those from the communal lands. Integrated rural development must presumably imply such an approach - of sharing resources across the fence as it were. This was implied by the Prime Minister in his recent address to the Commercial Farmers' Union when he stressed that the government wants an integrated agricultural system with commercial, peasant, state-owned and cooperative farmers working together to enhance

productivity and food security.⁽³²⁾

The Communal Lands Development Plan (CLDP)

"Since independence, a number of policy prescriptions have been devised to bring about meaningful rural development. However, not all of these strategies have been successful. Some even contradicted the intended goals" This statement by the Secretary for Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development at the start of a national workshop on the draft CLDP in March, 1985 reveals some of the dilemmas and contradictions inherent in planning for rural development. The draft document was presented as a framework plan for a long term process of self-sustained development in the communal lands.⁽³³⁾ Comments on the draft plan have been solicited from government Ministries and departments, the parastatal and other interested parties in the private sector and the academic community. Written comments are also expected from the Provincial Governors after grassroots consultation through the District Councils, Ward Development Committees and Village Development Committees.

The draft was prepared by the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development following a directive from the Prime Minister to produce a plan for the restructuring and development of the communal lands. It is described as a plan for "integrated rural development".

The Plan highlights five problem areas and main constraints to communal lands development:

- the unfavourable population/resource ratio;
- the underdeveloped resource management situation and migration;
- the inadequate delivery system;
- the inadequate rural infrastructure, and
- the inadequate land tenure system.

Further analysis suggests though that the plan is no more than a statement of objectives, intentions, hopes and aspirations about the development of the communal lands. Much hope is pinned for the success of the plan upon the inputs of state and voluntary organisations, technical and development assistance from abroad, and the participation of local communities.

The Role of the State Sector

The State Sector in agriculture includes not only the various marketing boards - Grain Marketing Board, Dairy Marketing Board, Cold Storage Commission, Cotton Marketing Board, a finance organisation, the Agricultural Finance Corporation, but also the multifarious activities of the Agric. and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) which runs over 20 large-scale and highly mechanized state farms most of which are irrigated. ARDA's other role is to act as a planning and coordinating agency for rural development. Most of these state agencies have expanded their activities since independence with great emphasis being given, at least on paper, to assisting rural farmers. The increased deliveries to the Grain Marketing Board and the Cotton Marketing Board have been illustrated in the introductory

part of our report although it was shown there that the "success" was only partial in terms of regions. The extension services have been unified by the merger of the two extension organisations DEVAG and CONEX - into AGRITEX. Also significant has been the expanded role of the AFC in providing credit to small scale commercial farmers and communal land farmers through its small farm Credit Scheme. In 1983/84, for example, the AFC granted 50 036 loans to individual farmers and groups in the communal lands totalling \$23,4 million including 87 tractors at \$1,34 million. In the small scale commercial sector 2539 loans were granted to individual farmers for \$5,9 million.⁽³⁴⁾ The table below shows the number and value of loans granted to communal and small scale commercial farmers under the Small Farm Credit Scheme during the period 1981/84 and the projected volumes for 1984/85.

| | 1981/82 | 1982/83 | 1983/84 | 1984/85 |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| No. of loans granted (thousands) | 33,7 | 41,8 | 52,5 | 65,0 |
| Value of loans (\$million) | 13,6 | 17,7 | 29,3 | 38,4 |

SOURCE: AFC ANNUAL REPORT 1984

In addition, a Resettlement Credit Scheme was introduced in 1982 to assist resettlement farmers under the government's Resettlement Programme. During 1983/84 a total of 18 277 loans were granted for a value of \$8,5 million, compared

to 4 173 loans for \$1,5 million in 1982/83. Some definite advances have been made in delivery systems since Independence; more credit is available to rural farmers than before independence. But this is only a start. Many problems lie ahead. There is always the danger that only a few farmers will benefit.

Planning for rural development is presently divided among several government Ministries and departments - especially the Ministries of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development, Local Government and Town Planning, and Agriculture, as well as the Statutory bodies mentioned above. The fragmentation of responsibilities among many institutions and government departments must inevitably create many problems in plan co-ordination and increase the risks of policy inconsistencies and overlap of efforts. Some of this was revealed in our case study in Chikwaka. Many government Ministries and Departments have officers working in the Chikwaka district. Although these government officials are meant to co-ordinate their activities around the District Administrator who chairs the development committees, these have rarely met nor is there much communication amongst the officials who report independently to their separate Ministries at the provincial level.

The Role of External Donor Agencies, NGOs and Church Organisations

Zimbabwe like other developing nations has been receiving foreign aid and technical assistance for agricultural development in general and rural development in particular.

Examples of this in Zimbabwe are the work of the World Bank in supporting small sector credit through the AFC; support for Agritex to revamp extension services and for monitoring and evaluating peasant performance. USAID did the study on how the small sector credit funds should be utilized, the emphasis being on cash cropping with support directed to proven peasant farmers. USAID has also given money for the construction of grain silos. They are also supporting farming systems research through the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zimbabwe. The Nordic countries have been supporting water development schemes in communal lands and the Swedes have just announced support for cooperatives. The EEC are giving support for water development/boreholes, prevention of cattle diseases in connection with Lome III and upgrading slaughter houses.

In Gutu District, Masvingo Province, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) is involved in developing the concept of Coordinated Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) whose goal is to improve the living standards of peasant farmers in the communal areas of the District.

The British are giving support for the intensive resettlement programme Model A schemes, have withdrawn support for cooperatives and did not support the Accelerated Resettlement Programme. Also, in Mashonaland East, the British Crown Agents are experimenting with Integrated Development for Communal, Resettlement and Small-scale Producer Areas while the Italians are "helping" in the

Manicaland Province.

In addition, numerous NGOs and Church Organisations are engaged in promoting rural development and self-help in many parts of the country.

As yet there is little research on the impact of aid agencies in rural development in Zimbabwe. We hope to dig a little further into this area in the next phase of our study.

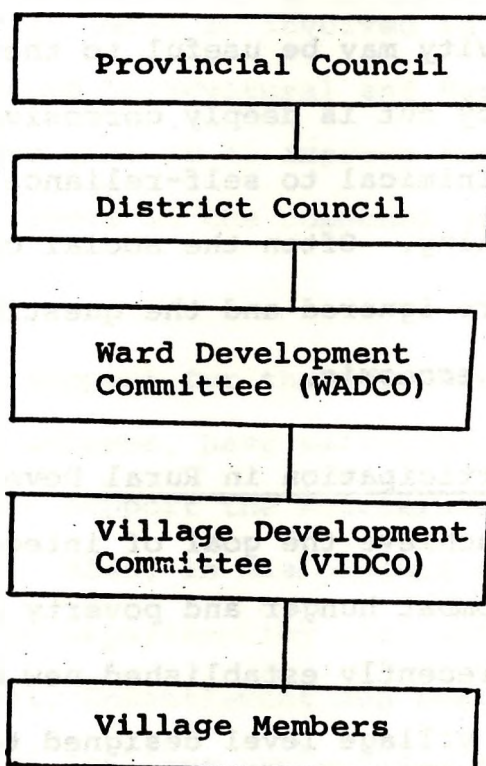
It appears that the CLDP envisages an important role for donor agencies in communal lands development although this has not been explicitly spelt out. In some developing countries research has shown that competing donor agencies have effectively partitioned the rural areas by creating "spheres of influence" in particular regions or sectors. (35) These activities give donor agencies great local influence at the same time leading to increased regional disparities. All this activity may be useful to the prestige of the external agency but is deeply corrosive of the integrated approach and inimical to self-reliance and coordinated national planning. Often the social consequences of rural development are ignored and the questions asked are technical and economic.

Grassroots Participation in Rural Development

In trying to achieve the goal of integrated rural development and to combat hunger and poverty the government of Zimbabwe has recently established new administrative structures at village level designed to increase the

involvement of local communities in development. A total of 6 094 village development committees (Vidcos) with a membership of 36 294 and 1 048 ward development committees with 15 720 members have been formed throughout the country. Also with the passage of the Provincial Council Bill during the last Parliament, the government is now set to establish eight provincial councils with a total membership of about 200 throughout the eight administrative provinces in the country.⁽³⁶⁾ The new administrative structure will thus comprise village development committees, ward development committees, district councils and provincial councils. The vidcos are the basic unit of organisation under the new structure which has been broadened to create opportunities for greater participation by village communities. Work is under way to create similar organs of popular participation in the resettlement areas.

Diagrammatic Presentation of the New Administrative Structure



By establishing these new grassroots structures the government is trying to end the colonial system whereby central control by reactionary District Commissioners took precedence over popular participation and where maintenance of law and order took precedence over development of the rural areas.

Perhaps it is too early yet to say whether or not these new structures will be effective. The intention is good. They at least hold the promises of:

- i) creating a wider sharing of rural economic and political power, and
- ii) increasing and broadening human welfare through broader participation in economic and political decision-making.

In Chikwaka, we found that although members have been elected to VIDCOs, apparently not many villagers could explain what their functions are and they expect the VIDCOs to do things (provide materials, etc.,) for them as if they (the people) are not part of them. The VIDCO's main functions, so far, had been to protect bore-holes, organize fencing and drainage channels for land conservation. Apparently the initiative to undertake these activities came from above. Our interviews indicate that some of the issues discussed by the Chikwaka VIDCOs are:

1. How to provide land for those without land including newly-married couples ;

2. The need for schools.
3. Transportation problems (roads, lack of bus coverage).
4. Digging wells and toilets.

These issues have been presented to councillors who so far are seen not to have effected any possible solutions to the problems. In fact some of the VIDCO members complain that they are troubled by the land-use and conservation measures they are expected to undertake by government. These activities they say take away their time and are in conflict with their needs for gardens along stream-beds. The following tendencies seem to have emerged from the governmental attempts to alleviate poverty in the Chikwaka area and in general:

1. There has been very little coordination between the technical officials on the one hand and the local political structures on the other hand in the attempts to promote rural development generally.
2. A few development committees have met (combining officials and popular representatives) but these have mainly been those concerned with water, sanitation and health. The procedures however have not yet been sufficiently routinised to provide for smooth deliberation.
3. The overall effort amongst these coordinated programmes are not focused on the fundamental issue of food security, let alone do they deal with the underlying causes of hunger. The absence of land and related material inputs issues among the

DISTCOs priority activities : A tendency to deal with symptoms.

4. There is a definite tendency for the political representation to be concentrated among the rural elite, which is problematic within the inherently unequal wealth status of the Chikwaka households.
5. The lack of enthusiasm amongst households over VIDCO's probably reflects inadequate popular mobilization as well as the tendencies for those issues of greater concern (e.g. land) to receive less attention from the VIDCO's.

In the final analysis, therefore, although it is too early to conclude about the efficacy of the Integrated Rural Development Strategy, there are numerous organizational problems which need to be resolved. In particular the question of popular participation in identifying developmental needs in the concrete context of Chikwaka needs to be freshly addressed. Moreover such needs as are identified by the people need to be coordinated into a truly integrated strategy of rural development, which specifically addresses the hunger problem.

Among the questions to be asked about these organisations are : Will they give meaning to decentralization? Do they represent popular democracy? That is : will the government and bureaucrats not appropriate to themselves too great a degree of authority leaving little opportunity for participation in policy-making by the village masses? Will the people have effective protection against misuse of power at the district level?

The model implicit in the CLDP discussed earlier appears to be grounded in the modernization paradigm whereby communal lands are viewed as entities to be developed so as to catch up with the dominant capitalist sector. The historic links with the capitalist sector and the exploitative nature of this relationship in particular are little discussed. For example the plan seems to attribute the low productivity of the communal lands largely to factors internal to that sub-sector such as the system of land tenure. Hardly is the basic issue - that of shortage of good land - mentioned except in passing.

Moreover the CLDP appears to treat the communal areas as homogeneous societies. There is not much mention of the regional variations brought about by decades of capitalist development and of how these disparities shall be redressed. Furthermore, little focus has been given to the poorest sections of the rural population who suffer from deprivation and lack of access to productive assets. This suggests that equity is used as a general term, nor does the CLDP reflect on the causes of inequality. It is therefore not clear if the CLDP intends to promote equity in the communal areas or that there is awareness that the plan itself may be a source of deeper stratification or restratification of the peasantry.⁽³⁷⁾ More research needs to be done on most of these issues.

On the question of incentives for rural farmers, the CLDP seems to lay emphasis on producer price incentives and marketing outlets, etc. Little consideration has been

given to input prices which often constitute the greatest constraint on rural farmers or to shortages of labour and draught power at peak times. Moreover, in a highly dualistic economy such as Zimbabwe's it will be difficult to develop a policy framework which suits both peasant farmers and large scale commercial farmers. Often the policy framework and the effective terms of trade will discriminate against small farmers and growers of food and other traditional crops. The issue of local participation in such a mammoth exercise is obviously crucial. The CLDP comes just in time after the appointment of Provincial governors to coordinate decentralized participation in decision-making and a year after the establishment of the grassroots organisations - the Vidcos and Wadcos. The plan appears to have neatly fitted these structures into its participation strategy. What is surprising is the apparent faith of the CLDP in the efficacy of these structures before they have even taken root in most areas.

In this connection, the following are among the questions that need to be asked : "What are the experiences so far of district and provincial administrations and problems encountered? How have the governors and district councils performed in mobilizing participation? What is the experience of inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation in rural development programmes? ... How do non-governmental organisations and other donor agencies operate in conjunction with government and amongst themselves? What forms of self-help and participation have taken ground in rural areas and at what cost?" (38)

Information on these and other questions is needed to inform the planners and policy-makers in order to avoid disasters.

Finally, to what extent is the CLDP itself a "bottom-up" exercise? What role will the rural elites play in the initiation and implementation of the CLDP? Does the plan aim to transform existing social relations? Or will it merely reinforce old and dominant relations?

IV WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS, CHURCHES AND COMMUNITY -
BASED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Hunger and Cooperation Strategies

In the foregone sections, the nature of poverty and hunger were discussed and it was pointed out that a government strategy of integrated rural development was being developed with numerous teething problems and that much work still has to be done to eradicate poverty and hunger. In this section we discuss cooperativization in Zimbabwe, because it has been one of the major areas of structural and social-relations transformation that the independent government has timelessly promoted in the struggle for overall "growth with equity". Our interest here is to gauge the extent and nature of cooperativization, in order for us to place this strategy in perspective of the overriding problems of hunger and food security. The section is necessarily brief because very little research has been done on cooperatives, and of the work done, most involves the timeless listing of "constraints" with little policy analysis nor investigation of actual productive activities. We discuss first collective cooperatives to be followed by informal cooperation.

Zimbabwe has a long history of cooperative activity which dates back to the early 1950's among the settler communities. Up until 1979 the majority of

these were service cooperatives engaged in produce marketing, inputs supplies, financing and consumer wholesaling. From 1956 to 1979 there were 370 registered cooperatives with a membership of 45 520 and a share capital of \$251 387,00. At independence, with a socialist policy orientation, the number of registered producer cooperatives apart from services cooperatives grew to 1 380 in 1984 with 115 584 members and a share-capital of \$775 483 (Mumbengegwi and Mazur, 1984).

The tendency therefore towards producer and collective cooperative activities has been the most significant movement towards cooperativization. This movement has been seen in the context of creating a basis for transformation towards socialism, in spite of the fact that the legal framework of cooperative property relations has not yet been altered. Such cooperatives grew for some time at the rate of 41% with groups ranging in size from 10 to 150 with members' average age at 33 years and an average sex ratio of 3 males to 2 females (Mumbengegwi and Mazur, 1984).

The origins of capital for the producer cooperatives have varied with 45% of the cooperatives having raised all their capital, 23% of them having received grants from government, another 18% of them having received donor-agency grants and 8% having taken bank loans. ⁽³⁹⁾ Altogether 22% of the producer cooperatives had their initial capital originating from more than one source. (Mumbengegwi and Mazur, 1984).

In terms of types of collective cooperatives, 59% were agricultural, while 21% were industrial, 16% commercial and

4% were engaged in transportation (Mumbengegwi and Mazur, 1984). The predominance of agricultural collective producer cooperatives reflects the government policy emphasis on agriculture and the promotion of cooperatives through the resettlement programme that took place between 1980 and 1984.

The massive growth of collective producer cooperatives shows a major achievement in cooperativization. These cooperatives have, however, faced numerous problems, which need to be tackled to promote their overall development as part of the rural development strategy. Some of the problems include; low levels of returns and income to members related to undercapitalization, marketing problems, lack of transportation equipment, lack of technical manpower and managerial capacity. Most of these problems are of course directly related to the continued existence of colonial patterns of delivery of services, as well as the capitalistic lending policies of financial institutions, in the absence of government or cooperative union-owned financial institutions. On the other hand, there is of course a lag in the development of supportive policies for cooperatives, in for example pricing, subsidies, preferential marketing structures etc. These are of course policy matters that are constrained constitutionally and that are a major locus of the transformation problematic in independent Zimbabwe.

Besides producer collective cooperatives, the major development in Zimbabwe's cooperativization is the formation of

"pre-cooperative" groups, which are not necessarily registered formally, but which perform similar functions, especially in creating economies of scale in marketing, transportation, access to technical advice and to credit. Such "pre-cooperatives" were initially initiated by churches (especially Silveira House), N.G.O.'s and Agricultural Extension Agencies. Since independence, the government through the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs has played a major role in the creation of pre-cooperatives. The private agro-chemicals supply sector has also been lately involved in forming pre-cooperatives for the bulk purchase of inputs.

As a result therefore there is a multiplicity of types of pre-cooperative groups including:

1. Savings clubs, which save money and purchase inputs together;
2. Credit groups, which jointly take loans;
3. Good Farming groups which receive collective government extension services;
4. Equipment-Sharing groups (involving, tractors, draught power etc.);
5. Marketing and Supply groups;
6. Commodity groups, for group marketing of cash crops;
7. Joint operations (labour-sharing) groups.

Such "pre-cooperatives" are as numerous as the types of organizational patterns are and need detailed study to uncover their tendencies and their impact on rural development and action against hunger. A major point of interest here, is the fact that the majority of members in "pre-cooperatives"

are women, yet they play a minor role in producer and collective cooperatives. Women are the majority of those involved in rural "pre-cooperatives" formed into "income-generating" groups which deal mainly in non-agricultural activities (baking, soap-making, crafts, school uniform-making, sewing, literary groups, club houses and marketing centres). It appears that women are therefore mainly expected to generate supplementary incomes in rural areas, from non-agricultural petty marketing and industrial activities, as well as to spearhead community projects for literacy and health care and prevention in the Communal Lands.

Overall therefore although the cooperative movement has grown considerably, the performance of cooperatives in terms of income creation has not really matched initial expectations and there is a growing awareness that such an achievement has to be looked at in the longer term, as the society learns from the experiences of the last few years and new support structures and policies are developed. For the moment, the cooperatives and "pre-cooperatives" have, not been so much directed at long term food security per se, but at raising production of crops for sale through organized marketing for the resolution of immediate needs of communities. On the other hand cooperativization has not yet involved the majority of the rural society and has benefited the generally better off households, while emasculating women in terms of expanding their labour contributions towards community development and reproductive activities. These are of course issues which require further scientific investigation in order for more

detailed practical lessons to emerge in terms of fighting the hunger problem in Zimbabwe. Our case study provided in-depth information on the practices, experiences and problems of "pre-cooperatives" and their attempts to deal with the hunger problem.

Types of groups and cooperatives

In order to combat the food and hunger problem local communities have developed various group organizational strategies to resolve, or improve the situation. A wide range of types of groups and cooperatives was found in Chikwaka. These are shown in the table below.

(a) Farmer Groups

Although not shown on this table, farmer groups are widespread throughout Chikwaka. Silveria House has a field promoter based in the area training some of those in cooperative formation. There are 36 groups under Group Development Areas. These are encouraged by the agricultural extension service, which channels advice through them. The groups practice varying degrees of cooperation particularly in marketing of grain and supply of agricultural inputs. These groups have an elected body, the Agricultural Central Committee, affiliated to the National Farmers Association of Zimbabwe. Although a greater proportion of the membership of farmer groups is female, and a number of them have female chairpersons, they tend to be dominated by older men, more likely to own cattle. Officials reported participation in these groups of a wide cross

Table 8

PRE-COOPERATIVE GROUPS IN CHIKWAKA

| TYPE OF GROUP/COOPERATIVE | TOTAL NUMBER OF GROUPS/COOPS | REGISTERED COOPS | TOTAL NO. OF MEMBERS | MALE | FEMALE | INITIATED SUPPORTED BY |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|------|--------|--|
| Savings Club | 10 | | 197 | 47 | 150 | Windmill fertilizer Co. Savings Dev.Movement Silveria House |
| Credit Union | 1 | 1 | 23 | 5 | 18 | Silveria House |
| Marketing & Supply | | 4 | 560 | 140 | 420 | Silveria House CSSD LWF |
| Sewing | 10 | 3 | 207 | | 207 | Silveria House CDWA |
| Crochet | 3 | | 243 | 4 | 239 | CDWA |
| Carpentry | 1 | | 17 | 17 | | CDWA |
| Poultry | 2 | | 68 | 50 | 18 | Silveria House CDWA |
| Piggery | 2 | | 45 | | 45 | Silveria House CDWA |
| Agricultural | 2 | | 39 | 9 | 30 | |
| TOTALS | 35 | 8 | 1 399 | 272 | 1 127 | |

SOURCE: Field Survey, May 1985.

section of the population, but some of the poorest farmers tend to feel inhibited from joining groups dominated by better-off members.

(b) Savings Clubs

Savings clubs commonly coincide with farmer groups; all of them save to purchase fertilizer collectively and distribute it according to how much each individual has saved. Some of the clubs save in association with a local fertilizer company. Other clubs raise funds through cooking, beer brewing and poultry keeping as well as from grain sales. These are sharing collective savings to purchase pots, pans and other household items and to pay for school fees. During the drought years these clubs use their savings to purchase foodstuffs instead of fertilizer. Savings clubs are favoured since there is no banking facility in the locality. Collected savings are taken to the building societies in Harare.

One farmer group savings club was found to have formed a cooperative engaging in vegetable gardening, with plans for bakery, poultry and latrine digging projects. The members share the few cattle owned for ploughing each others' fields and cooperate in marketing and supply of inputs.

(c) Income Generating Projects

Community development workers, Silveria House nutrition promoters, with the assistance of Home Economics demonstration are active in encouraging

income generating projects, mainly for women. There seems to be no sound criteria applied in selection of projects. Workers expressed difficulties in monitoring all projects and in reaching all areas, because of lack of transport, although the 2 CDWs have bicycles. The CDW in Mwanza has been working there as the women's Adviser since 1974. They reported working together with agricultural extension workers, village health workers, Veterinary Department, calling on these to bring their specific expertise to the groups when required.

They reported lack of funds for all projects as a problem. During the drought years many groups stopped functioning altogether due to lack of money to purchase inputs. Poultry keeping was encouraged at that time, but then maize was short, to mix with concentrated feed.

Lack of reliable markets was also reported to be a problem. Poultry sold well at a school in Mwanza, but the market for crochet is virtually non-existent. Sale of school uniforms met with various problems. The 7 groups visited had started between 1982 and 1984. 3 had registered as cooperatives. 4 groups had started following 6-month; dress-making courses run by CDWA; 1 following a similar, 2-month course, and 1 following a 1-year course sponsored by LWF. CDW's and H.E.D. had told women in clubs and church groups about the possibility of arranging these courses.

All groups expressed the value of their activities together as working towards self-reliance. Also they are gaining

knowledge of sewing, cooking and "how to look after their husbands in the home". Most were keen to start keeping poultry and baking bread, and to make their own group's uniform.

Membership of these groups had not dwindled despite problems.

When asked whether membership of the groups could help in event of food shortage, members replied that they could be of no help so long as they had no money. 1 group reported that during the drought each member had brought some contribution which they pooled and distributed to non-members locally who were needy. Another group said that if they did do something as a group to alleviate a food problem it would only be to help members within the group.

Group members reported that they did not have problems of food shortage themselves, but knew others did. The reasons given were lack of fertilizer, seeds, ploughs; ploughing late. One woman said that some people don't have enough food because their men are forever after beer and so have no time to plough. Some reported that this year some people were short of food because heavy rains had spoilt crops.

During the drought years it was reported that no help had come from the government in the form of food. The government assisted widows with fertilizer and seed. Supplementary feeding for children was also mentioned. Kwashiorkor was believed to be widespread among children because of lack of food (Chiringa Group). Others reported no feeding problems among children and availability of all foodstuffs (Kowoyo Group).

It was believed that those who had problems should work hard as a solution, and not be lazy.

In concluding this section, our analysis shows that there is enthusiasm to organise groups, but that there are a number of constraints, facing both individuals and group operations, which limit the efficacy of such organisation. The major problems are:

- (a) Marketing; marketing skills and the means to market (storage, transport);
- (b) Overall undercapitalisation; inadequate sources of capital;
- (c) Lack of management skills;
- (d) Heavy household responsibilities.

This suggests that the level of government support required is greater, given the overall constrained resource base of the study area and generally, and the low levels of income generation.

When these forms of organisation and their purposes are actively analysed, however, there are very serious doubts as to the long term feasibility of these strategies to combat the underlying structural causes of hunger. Some of the main conclusions arrived at in this study may be summarized as follows:

- (a) There is a tendency for most of these associations to rely heavily for their organizational coherence on external agencies, be they local or foreign non-governmental organizations, government departments and individual officials and private sector salesmen.

The pervasiveness of the private sector involvement in farmers' associations extends to the creation of dependency of groups of farmers on the capitalist logic of profit, which in some cases has gone to the extent of selling unjustifiable quantities of inputs and dangerous chemicals (pesticides). These farmers' groups live on the mercy of input salesmen!

- (b) Most of the groups which organize "income-generating projects" have a tendency to be involved in either marginal products (crafts etc.) which have limited markets or products which are facing growing competition from large industries (bread, soap etc.), which rely on sophisticated wholesale marketing and aggressive advertising techniques. The niche which such groups have tried to carve out for themselves do not have long term viability prospects.
- (c) The majority of the income-generating activities are based on labour intensive work which is either super-self exploitation (especially of women and children) or compete heavily for the labour time of women vis-a-vis domestic work and normal agricultural production activities. This is not surprising given that such projects are largely promoted by urban petitbourgeois women and foreign donor agencies.
- (d) The political constituency of such groups is not quite democratic or grass-roots given the level of social differentiation in the rural areas and

the tendency for better-off families to be the beneficiaries of such projects. It is therefore not possible to justify systematic government support to the majority of the existing groups to the exclusion of the majority of the rural poor who are not involved in group activity. In other words, such groups do not address the hunger problem where it is most needed (amongst the poorest).

- (e) Perhaps not surprisingly given the patriarchal value-system dominant within the country, it appears that the burden of developing the communities social and health needs, as well as the supplementary feeding of children, has been squarely placed on women, through these so-called cooperation and self-help groups.

These findings point towards the need for further systematic research and evaluation of the groupings developed as a vehicle towards increased rural development, as well as the institutional arrangements and development strategy implied and attendant to such promotion, in order to improve the overall struggle to combat hunger.

Women's Organizations and the Churches' Role in Zimbabwe

In the following sections we briefly discuss the role of women's organizations and the churches in development activities, related to the hunger problem. Although there is an extensive network of women's organisations covering the whole of Zimbabwe, the effectiveness of their work has

been limited by a lack of co-ordination and by the domesticating content of most women's programmes. Projects such as sewing, knitting, crochet and craftwork, childcare, and gardening, cooking and bakeries - tend to reinforce women's traditional roles. Indeed there is very little attempt to get men and women to perform the same roles both inside and outside the home, and to arrange domestic work co-operatively - as was the practice in the camps in Mozambique and Zambia during the liberation struggle. After independence "income-generating" projects became the fashion - however these often tend to divert women from the more vital struggle to play a greater role in the more productive aspects of the rural economy and to have more direct access to economic resources and agricultural state support services. In fact women have been restricted to a narrow sphere of women's issues, and this has prevented them from participating in decision-making at a local, district and national level. Furthermore, according to our interviewees' opinion, women's groups use "passive forms of meeting and learning", and do not debate wider socio-economic/political issues, they are very vulnerable to the manipulations of unscrupulous politicians.

There are two signs that women's organisations are not yet relevant to the poorest and most oppressed women in Zimbabwe:

- there has been a substantial drop in membership of many organisations since independence.
- young ex-combatants women, the most radical and creative group of women in Zimbabwe, do not join women's organisations as they feel that the organisa-

tions have nothing to offer them.

Hopefully, the many leaders of Zimbabwean women's organisations who attended the Forum in Nairobi will be able to make their organisations more effective. The end of the Decade of Women discussions should help them to question themselves, explore new directions, and work together to involve women directly in the transformation of Zimbabwe.

The Churches and the Food Problem

The involvement of the churches in Zimbabwe in combating the hunger and general development problems has a long history which cannot be adequately recounted here. What is clear however is that the churches made major breakthroughs in establishing N.G.Os. which have actively engaged women's involvement at the local level. One of the main problems however is that there has been a tendency for most church related programmes to be uncoordinated. It is in this context that the Southern African Conference on "Food Crisis and Food Production", held in Harare between the 25th to 30th of March 1985, was a major breakthrough.

At this conference the churches attempted to outline a holistic framework of dealing with the hunger problem. The following issues were among the main aspects agreed to that reflect the churches new role in development:

1. The role of self-help and the importance of the extended family need to be fully appreciated in the development effort.

2. There is need to have emergency reserve funds derived from national appeal campaigns in order to be constantly prepared for recurring droughts;
3. There is need to ensure a balanced and diversified local food production vis-a-vis cash crop production, even though most investment tends to favour the latter;
4. There is need to provide food crop price incentives, storage and small credit facilities;
5. The need to encourage traditional practices such as as inter-cropping, improve local seeds and technologies and, develop local-level small-scale irrigation;
6. There is need to develop information networks in order to identify food surplus and deficit areas in good times, to develop nutrition education and the general conscientization about the food problem;
7. The need to tackle and control population growth;
8. There is need to strengthen the churches' structures which serve the poorest sections of the population and to encourage small-holder production;
9. The churches which own land need to fully utilize this land for the production of food for the benefit of the poor;
10. There is need to strengthen regional cooperation in tackling the food and other problems;
11. There is the overriding need to reduce dependency on food-aid and encourage peoples' participation in developing food self-sufficiency and therefore self-liberation.

The concept of self-liberation as the key to self-development thus seems to have emerged as a central concern amongst the churches in Zimbabwe. This was amplified at the Second International Conference on 'the Five Year Development Process and Joyful Witness, organised by the Zimbabwe Christian Council (ZCC) in Harare, between the 13th - 25th of May 1985. We quote the conclusions drawn by the general secretary of the ZCC to elaborate the concept of self-liberation at the above conference:

1. "Human beings are our greatest assets and resources and they should be developed to the fullest extent;
2. We were our own liberators;
3. We shall be our own developers;
4. Any assistance must help us to be self-reliant rather than make us professional dependents;
5. Our partners' participation must be in the spirit of mutual sharing rather than paternalism;
6. We are utilizing to the full our immediately available human and natural resources before appealing for our partners' participation and financial assistance".

Of critical importance in all this is that the churches more and more begin to see themselves as partners of the government in the development process and emphasize cooperation. Perhaps the orientation of the Zimbabwean churches may best be depicted through the activities of the ZCC, in cooperation with the government resettlement programme since independence and their future plans.

All member churches of the Zimbabwe Christian Council agreed that they would participate in the massive Government Resettlement programme by setting up six resettlements, one in each of our provinces. The first Zimbabwe Christian Council Resettlement scheme was started on the 10th October, 1982 at Berry's Post Moouti Farms about 180 km north of Harare: The Resettlement is called Kuwadzana Cooperative. It has a membership that fluctuates between 97 and 110 at a time. This is a Model B Resettlement scheme, which is to say it is a collective producer cooperative. Everything necessary for the smooth running of the cooperative is shared in common by the members.

The Government provided the land, the Zimbabwe Christian Council is providing the funds with the courtesy of the Swedish National committee (SIDA) and the Lutheran World Federation, World Service Zimbabwe office, which is providing the funds as well as implementing the project at the request of the Zimbabwe Christian Council. The LWFWS has the expertise, manpower and the experience of resettling people in independent Africa.

So far the resettlement story is a successful one and the cooperative is building up capital which should make it self-reliant and avoid dependency on heavy loans from the Agricultural Finance Corporation. The main crops they grow are maize and cotton and these crops do well. Even during the three year drought period, the cooperators were able to feed themselves and sell some surplus maize.

From the above discussion it is quite clear that the churches are playing a significantly relevant role in the struggle against poverty in general and hunger in particular. In the following pages we highlight "savings clubs", as an example of one of the relatively successful models of small-scale development projects that the churches have developed since the early 1960's.

The Savings Development Movement

The Savings Development Movement (SDM) was initiated in response to the limited cash available in rural areas, lack of a Peasant Credit Scheme and to the frequent failure of existing credit schemes for the benefit of small farmers.

The specific aim of the SDM, which started in 1963 at Chishawasha Mission (Roman Catholic Church) was to mobilize the little MONEY peasants had. The first savings club was started with 20 women and men by a group of voluntary workers who formed the SDM. The function of the SDM is to promote and assist savings clubs and to liase with government and private agencies to coordinate agricultural inputs, the organisation of technical services and the provision of savings materials.

Savings clubs should be seen as an initial phase of extended development of peasantry, as they are a basis for accumulation of capital which is used to purchase inputs and promotes interpersonal adoption of agricultural innovations and the later development of cooperatives for additional income generation.

Growth of Savings Clubs

The savings clubs have grown from 30 clubs with approximately 2 000 members in 1968 to 400 clubs in 1981 and to well over 5 000 clubs in 1985. It is estimated that in the 1982/83 farming season the savings Development Movement had issued savings stamps to clubs worth \$5 million on face value.

The result of this growth has been that most peasant households involved in Savings Clubs use considerable amounts of agro-chemicals, produce food surpluses, have better diets and can save for home improvements, school fees etc. Some of the broader achievements Of the Savings Development Movement have been:

- i) to destroy the myth that peasants have to depend on formal agricultural financing for inputs;
- ii) it has created optimal decentralization and group autonomy due to the very local level of group formation;
- iii) it has developed simple administrative procedures which have allowed many uneducated rural people to participate in the planning and implementation of the programme.

V Concluding Remarks

In the foregoing we have attempted to indicate that the hunger problem in Zimbabwe is quite acute, affecting the majority of the rural populations and concentrated regionally in the Southern and Western provinces. The dimensions of hunger were found to be concentrated among children below the age of five and this mainly among farm labourers. The direct causes were found to lie in reduced food intake associated with changing production patterns towards maize for the market, environmental problems and access to basic means of production.

The underlying problem here was suggested to be the overall structure of the economy directed as it is by the "logic of capital" and the slow pace of agrarian reform since independence. Elsewhere we have indicated that in fact most foreign aid (multi-lateral, bi-lateral, foreign N.G.O.'s and church aid) has largely supported activities which are not fundamentally reformist. The interest in this has been to support "commercialized" production among peasants and due to the dominance of efficiency considerations and not "social" balancing, the growth in incomes has therefore tended to be concentrated among those few with access to financial means to purchase inputs.

The state has attempted to develop the poorest sections of the population but has been constrained financially and because of the world recession and three years of

drought. Although new structures have been created for popular participation the track record is too short to draw substantive conclusions. The evidence suggests that the model is affected by "one-sectorism" which is a focus on communal lands as isolable units to be developed, in spite of the wish to develop an integrated approach.

Regarding cooperativization, formal cooperatives have been constrained by the legal and policy frameworks, while they themselves operate with meagre resources and skills.

Women tend to have been mobilized into informal and marginal economic activities and are faced with increased demands on their labour time. Overall the cooperatives are not clearly at an advantage in competing with individually owned and multi-national enterprises.

In conclusion the strategies to combat hunger have so far evaded the fundamental root causes which are structural and politically loaded in newly independent Zimbabwe today. In spite of constraints faced by the state there appears to be a long term commitment however to the necessary transformation.

It would appear that the efforts by the churches in Zimbabwe should reflect seriously on the transformational problematic that underlies the hunger problem outlined. Some of the quite obvious areas of assistance in this context are to strengthen popular participation efforts by government and local communities in various ways; organizational, educational, communication-wise and materially. The need to develop local political skills is urgent and has to be countenanced instead of the usual tendency to stay away from "politics"

(whatever this means). The need to focus on productive agricultural projects is imperative, not to remain at the level of marginal activities which in the Zimbabwean case tend to define women and cooperation groups outside of the framework of the national political economy and its attendant structural inequalities. This of course requires ideological transformation in the churches with the objective of strengthening popular democracy in defining development objectives and needs. As indicated earlier many of the fadish pet-projects brought in by donors and churches are labour exhaustive and yet marginal to the hunger problem.

In conclusion, therefore, although the community-based strategies involving women and churches have grown considerably, the performance of cooperatives and pre-cooperatives in terms of income creation has not really matched initial expectations and there is a growing awareness that such an achievement has to be looked at in the longer term, as the society learns from the experiences of the last few years and new support structures and policies are developed. It is in this perspective that the Churches need to view their future contribution to the solution of the hunger problem. For the moment, the cooperatives and "pre-cooperatives" have, not been so much directed at long term food security per se, but at raising production of crops for sale through organized marketing for the reselution of immediate needs of communities. On the other hand cooperativization has not yet involved the majority of the rural society and has benefited the generally better off households, while emasculating women in terms of expanding their labour

contributions towards community development and reproductive activities. These are of course issues which require further scientific investigation in order for more detailed practical lessons to emerge, in terms of fighting the hunger problem in Zimbabwe.

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