

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION



The Impact Of Command Agriculture On Household Food Security In Chidzikwe Area Of Masvingo North

BY

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DECLARATION FORM



The undersigned certify that they read and recommended to the Bindura University of Science Education for acceptance of a research project entitled **The Impact of Command Agriculture on Household Food Security in Chidzikwe Area of Masvingo North** submitted by Valentine Takura Moyo (B1953827), in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Agricultural Economics and Management

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research study to my family who stood by me as a prop to my flagging spirit all the way to the penultimate submission of this dissertation. My mother, my father and my two siblings (Michelle and Wisdom) have always been my pillars of strength during the precarious period of COVID-19, helping me to hold on till the end.

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The accomplishment of the research study would not have been possible without the expert guidance of my supervisor, Mr. I. Govere, a mentor per excellence, who shepherded me throughout the arduous research journey. His diligent and professional guidance helped me get through my research encounter.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of the Command Agricultural programme on household food security in Chidzikwe area of Masvingo North. The study uses mixed methods, blending quantitative and qualitative techniques. Using the case study design, from a total population of 620 people, a sample of 50 questionnaire respondents and 12 qualitative research participants were the study samples. The quantitative sample of 50 was arrived at through systematic random sampling, with purposive, convenience and snow-balling techniques being employed to arrive at the 4 interviewees and 8 focus group discussions (FGD) participants. The study sought to unlock how the programme was implemented; challenges faced; potential positive impact to household food security in Chidzikwe; ways of improving the programme roll out, respectively. It was noted that the programme was not very efficiently implemented owing to administrative constraints. On challenges, the following were noted: inputs were late and inadequate; at times, inputs supplied were not area-compliant; some inputs were not accounted for; side-marketing affected loan repayment owing to unattractive maize producer prices; the farmers lacked expertise; there were no implements like tractors. On potential positive impacts, the programme led to improved livelihoods; food security was guaranteed; those who diversified improved nutrition health; social conflicts were reduced; there was potential for rural development of Chidzikwe. On way forward and recommendation, the following were raised: extension services were urgently required; the programme should be transparently administered; inputs should come early and in required quantities, suitable for the agro-ecological area; monitoring and evaluation was needed; land audits were required to assess the extent of utilization of land with prospects for resettling competent farmers; maize producer prices were supposed to be attractive and payments should be timeous and in United States dollars.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

There have been arguments in favor of the noble reasons behind the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (Chisango & Tichakunda, 2018) and counter-arguments against the 2000's Agrarian revolution in Zimbabwe (Moyo, 2011) and its attendant government-supported 'contract farming' system code-named Command Agriculture. Like any other development policy, its sustainability, prospects and challenges ought to be unpacked in order to offer policy-makers with policy-relevant knowledge for decision-making on how to improve the system (Chisango & Tichakunda, 2018). Against this background, this study investigates the impact of Command Agriculture on household food security for the smallholder farming community of Chidzikwe, in Masvingo North. This opening chapter gives an introduction to the research problem and its setting. The chapter supplies background information to the research problem before stating the problem under review. Research questions and objectives will be stated, followed by hypotheses tested in the research encounter. The study significance are highlighted, to situate this study within related bodies of knowledge on food security and Agricultural policy frameworks in Zimbabwe, highlighting how several stakeholders benefit from the study. The chapter delimits the study focus and parameters, as well as the limitations therein. Key operational terms used in the research report are defined, followed by an outline of what each chapter of the dissertation will deal with.

1.2 Background of the study

For smallholder farming to be viable in a largely Agrarian-based economy like Zimbabwe, it needs to be supported. This is the global approach that seeks to make smallholder farming part and parcel of the value-chain in the economy (Mazwi et al, 2019). Prior to the land reform in Zimbabwe, the state (Government) supported agriculture through subsidized loans channeled through the Agricultural Finance of Zimbabwe (AFZ), targeting mainly commercial farmers (Dube, 2021). The targeted farmers had collateral security and, so could afford loans to help them along, together with the cushions from subsidies. In essence, therefore, the facility of financial subsidies did not cater for the smallholder farmers who, incidentally, constituted the majority (Hanusch et al, 2019). Accordingly, smallholder farmers were in dire need of financing of their operations.

The situation for Zimbabwean smallholder farmers was not peculiar, since it was the same in several other global members; especially those with a bias towards agricultural economies. Rehber (2007) suggests that the financing needs of farmers have led to contract farming taking the financing as a stop gap measure. Saenz (2006) adds that in Costa Rica, contract farming has created opportunities for smallholder farmers to thrive. However, this only takes shape where the operational environment is even and less tense (Alexander, 2006).

For her part, when Zimbabwe launched the Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP), since the approach involved ‘forcible’ removal of former White Commercial Farmers from what they had taken to be their rightful ownership to property, the international community, slapped the nation with stringent International Economic Sanctions (IES) in retaliation to the way the ‘reforms’ were put in place (Mazwi et al, 2019). Given that the sanctions and withdrawal of international financing ruptured Zimbabwe’s sources of resilience, the newly resettled Model A2 farmers, like those in the Chidzikwe area of Masvingo North, were now susceptible to poor performance in their farming business; hence, the need for financial assistance which could only come from government.

In pursuit of an Agrarian financing policy that borrowed from other countries, Zimbabwe adopted Command Agriculture. This is a contract farming system which sees Government of Zimbabwe, through various ministries, finance the operations for smallholder farmers. As a system of credit, it theoretically requires that the farmers reimburse or pay back what they owe, at very reasonable terms that promote sustainability. For Dube (2021), Command Agriculture integrates state interventions on viability issues of farming, especially to smallholder farming communities.

Considering that Chidzikwe community falls within a resettlement A-2 model scheme, this study sought to unveil the impact (positive and negative) of Command Agriculture (contract farming model) in the A2 smallholder farming community of Chidzikwe. As a student of Agricultural Economics, the study limited itself to interpretations related to Agricultural Economics, in order to provide insights that could shape policy redefinitions on the Command Farming in the community of Chidzikwe.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Command Agriculture was launched by the Government of Zimbabwe in order to promote high productivity among the resettled farmers under the FTLRP. It is modeled upon contract farming in which farmers are supported with inputs and other utilities for their production process (farming) in the hope that they would repay when they harvest their crop. Ideally, those contracted for seed maize production or soya bean or even wheat will be obliged to sell their produce to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) at prices set up by Government. From the amount that a farmer will be due to receive, the fraction for the 'loan' or 'credit' will be deducted. If the system operates in a sustainable way, with farmers remitting their dues to Government, there comes a time when the farmers will break even and become self-reliant that they will no longer need the 'loans' or 'credits'. As noted by Chisango and Tichakunda (2018), Command Agriculture was dogged by several challenges: delayed distribution of inputs; lack of transport; sabotage by some officials; lack of transparency; farmers with no knowledge of farming or Agricultural economics; politicization of the whole program. The study, thus, looked at whether the challenges noted by Chisango and Tichakunda (2018) affected the roll out of Command Agriculture in the Chidzikwe area of Masvingo North, with the view to establishing ways to plug these challenges for the promotion of sustainable smallholder farming in the community under study.

1.4. Research questions

1.4.1 Main research question

- How has Command Agriculture impacted on household food security in Chidzikwe area of Masvingo North?

1.4.2 Research sub-questions

- What constraints are faced by Command Agriculture in Chidzikwe area?
- How is Command Agriculture administered in Chidzikwe area?
- How has Command Agriculture improved household food security in Chidzikwe area?
- How could the implementation of Command Agriculture in Chidzikwe area be improved?

1.5. Objectives of the study

1.5.1 Main objective

- To assess the impact of Command Agriculture on household food security in Chidzikwe area.

1.5.2 Specific objectives

- To investigate constraints faced by beneficiaries of the Command programme
- To establish how Command Agriculture is administered in Chidzikwe area
- To assess how Command Agriculture has improved household food security in Chidzikwe area
- To explore possible ways of improving the implementations of Command Agriculture programme in Chidzikwe area

1.6 Hypotheses

- Command Agriculture beneficiaries of Chidzikwe faced challenges in procuring inputs
- Command Agriculture programme in Chidzikwe area was poorly administered
- The community of Chidzikwe has not fully benefitted from the Command Agriculture programme

1.7 Significance of the study

The study contributes to knowledge bodies in Agricultural Economics and policy in general, with a slant towards the unveiling of the strengths and weaknesses of the Government-supported Command Agriculture contract farming system. Given that the study looks at issues related to financing of smallholder farming, the study could stimulate new ways of handling the financing of this critical sector using more sustainable models. Within the broad scope of the study stakeholders, the following are set to benefit directly and indirectly from the study:

- Through interaction with the researcher, Chidzikwe farmers get capacitated and empowered on how the Command Agriculture programme should benefit them. On one

hand, they get to know their rights to quality inputs timeously before the onset of rains and, on the other hand, they get to appreciate that inputs should not be abused, but used for production purposes. As such, they would become keener to improve their yields so that they can break even and begin to enjoy the fruits of farming.

- Local traditional leadership get to know that their roles in the programme are to coordinate people with no undue politicking or blackmailing of people. In this respect, once there is smooth and transparent coordination of the programme activities, it would translate to a buy-in among the community and, consequently, promote high productivity in the area. Thus, local leadership can foil or promote sustainable household food security depending on how they interact with the smallholder farmers in the area.
- Central Government benefits from the need to have systematic and regular audits of the conduct of both Government officials and beneficiaries of the Command Agriculture programme. The audits will help to identify non-performing people who may need to have their plots sub-divided and given to competent and needy locals from the area. At the same time, once rigorous audits are done, they help to track the performance of the programme so that Government makes decisions based on factual and concrete evidence.
- Local Agricultural Extension personnel equally benefit from their role in educating farmers on how to utilize their land for higher productivity. Given that most farmers' allocated land had no prior training or experience in farming, the use expertise from the Extension officers helps to plug the knowledge gaps. As the experts work with the community of Chidzikwe, they gain insights into challenges and prospects of improving smallholder farm productivity and will, in their recommendations, contribute to knowledge building in the field of small-scale crop production.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was conducted in the Chidzikwe A2 smallholder farming community of Masvingo North. The study was conducted during the 2020-2021 cropping season stretching from December 2021 to July 2022. In terms of its demographic locus, only the farmers under the Command Agriculture scheme in the area were involved in the study, excluding those who were sub-leasing land for farming from beneficiaries of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme.

1.9 Limitations of the study

During the December (2021) to March (2022) period, the flooded road to Chidzikwe made traveling by any vehicle difficult. As such, the researcher had to alternate walking the 13 kilometer stretch from the main road (Masvingo- Zvishavane) with the use of scotch carts hitched from the main road. Therefore, the accessibility to the area was a challenge. In order to lessen the traveling challenges, the researcher networked with key people from Chidzikwe who could be contacted by way of WhatsApp or calling at short notice. In this regard, even during the semester days while at University, the researcher was in constant touch with the stakeholders from Chidzikwe area.

1.10 Definition of operational terms

1.10.1 Agricultural financing refers to the funding done to all operations of Agriculture (Laurie, 2016).

1.10.2 Breaking even refers to the situation when an enterprise operates within levels and margins of profitability. That is, after taking stock of the expenditure or investment used, the output will be high enough to allow the enterprise to be floating (Escobal & Caverro, 2012; Trifkovic, 2014).

1.10.3 Command Agriculture refers to a programme that is run or administered through the arms of Government from the military side, in order to maintain utmost discipline, accountability and focused-action to deliver the mandate of the Agricultural production unit (Miyata et al, 2009; Sokchea & Culas, 2015).

1.10.4 Contract Farming is the kind of financing in Agriculture where farmers are assisted with inputs for the production process in return for repayment when they harvest or after a set period of time (Lie et al, 2016).

1.10.5 Externalities are the unintended effects or impacts from a program or project (Dunn, 2018).

1.10.6 Policy analysis is a means of analyzing knowledge “to draw from it policy alternatives and preferences stated in comparable, predicted quantitative and qualitative terms” (Dunn, 2018:20). Policy analysis can be done before implementation outcomes, in what is called ‘prospective analysis’ or *ex ante analysis* or it happens after the impacts or outcomes of policy

implementation have been realized: through what is termed ‘retrospective analysis’ or *ex post analysis* (UNDP, 2009; Dunn, 2018).

1.10.7 Policy monitoring “describes a process of identifying and tracking performance indicators and reviewing the programme’s implementation” (Dunn, 2018:12). It is an ongoing process over the lifetime of the programme, involving the routine observation and recording of activities taking place in a project or programme (White, 2008; UNDP, 2009; Taylor, 2013).

1.11 Organization of chapters

The research report is in five chapters, each dealing with a particular issue. The chapters are as follows:

- Chapter 1 introduces the research problem and its setting, problematizing the issue that the study focuses on.
- Chapter 2 reviews related literature in order to situate the study within its proper context in the fields of knowledge. The chapter establishes the research gap which the study sought to fill. At the same time, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks help to direct how the study was conceived in terms of theory or models.
- Chapter 3 describes the materials and methods. The chapter identifies and describes the approach, design and sample used. Data collection instruments are described, alongside the data collection procedure and ethical considerations which were taken note of.
- Chapter 4 presents the findings from the study. The presented data findings are then discussed against the backdrop of the hypotheses of the study.
- Chapter 5 gives a summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations.

1.12 Conclusion

The chapter introduced the research problem as a study that sought to establish the impact (positive and negative) of the roll out of Command Agriculture in the Chidzikwe area of Masvingo North. The chapter located Command Agriculture within Zimbabwe's post-2000s Fast Track Land Reform Program political economy of recovery to the sanctions-constrained economy. Given that smallholder farmers had no collateral security to secure loans, funding of their production processes needed alternative financing mechanisms. In keeping with global best practices alluded to in the background of the study, Government of Zimbabwe mooted the contract farming model which was, by then, commanded from the military arm of Government; hence, the label of Command Agriculture. The chapter delimits the study to an A2 smallholder farming community in Masvingo north called Chidzikwe. The chapter located challenges of accessibility to the area during the muddy-conditions of the downpours of December 2021 to March 2022, but these challenges were overcome through walking, hitching ox-drawn scorch carts and use of online communication platforms where visuals could be sent through WhatsApp. Key operational terms were defined, followed by an outline of the components of five-chapter report. The next chapter reviews related literature.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews related literature in order to situate the study within its proper context. Literature review looks at previous works on the subject, though not directly reflective of the study setting (Aaron, 2020). The reviewed literature locates the gaps which the study sought to fill. In this chapter, literature related to the roll out of the Command Agriculture in Zimbabwe will be looked at, using the following sub-headings to reflect the study objectives and research sub-questions:

- The administration of Command Agriculture
- Potential benefits of Command Agriculture
- Constraints to the roll out of Command Agriculture
- Ways to promote household food security through Command Agriculture

2.2 The administration of Command Agriculture

On its inception in 2015, the Command Agriculture Programme was administered under the Zimbabwe Defense Forces (ZDF), with members of the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) and those from the Air force of Zimbabwe (AFZ) taking the leading role. The security personnel were responsible for procurement and distribution of the inputs. They were also responsible for the monitoring of the programme, along the value chain from production to marketing. The use of the army was adopted from countries like China and Vietnam which used the same model in order to promote discipline, transparency, accountability, compliance and high production to promote food security.

In terms of financing, the first model involved Government being the guarantor of loans which farmers incurred. However, this later changed when Government noted that there was a very high default rate. In the new model which was started during the 2020-2021 cropping season, Government contracted CBZ Bank as its agent for the Command Agriculture Programme. The farmers had to apply to the bank under the CBZ Agro Yield (PVT) Ltd and would be expected to pay the bank loans after. The Government guaranteed 80% of the debts.

In both schemes and models of financing, the farmers were expected to repay the loan after harvesting. As part of the repayment contract, each farmer was supposed to sell five (5) tons of maize to the Grain Marketing Board from which the loan owing would be recovered and the farmer would get the balance. In this study, it would be important to consider how farmers benefitted from the scheme and whether there was compliance in repayment of the loans.

2.3 Potential benefits of Command Agriculture

The Command Agriculture Programme came in at a time when financing of agriculture was now difficult since the FTLRP caused withdrawal of financiers (Mazwi et al, 2019). Therefore, Government came in to close the gap that was now crippling the programme of the land reform. In this regard, the Command Agricultural Programme was a noble venture meant to provide the much-needed funding to agriculture.

It was hoped that once farmers received adequate inputs in time, with good rains, they would produce enough to repay the loans and get profit and adequate food for their families. In this regard, the programme was expected to reduce the unemployment rate by absorbing many people in the agri-business venture. Once many people in rural and resettlement areas were employed, this would reduce rural-urban migration and, in the process, reduce the challenges of housing, unemployment, crime and prostitution in major cities and towns. In the process, the country would get enough food and even surplus to export and get foreign currency. With good yields and returns from farming, the standards of living for people in Zimbabwe would improve. Therefore, this study looked at whether the Command Agriculture programme improved the lives of people of Chidzikwe and whether the rural-urban drift and the exodus to neighboring countries was reduced through Command Agriculture.

2.4 Constraints in the roll out of Command Agriculture

It has been noted that Command Agriculture is bleeding the nation through the huge funding that does not get returns or repayments. Between 2015 and 2016, the programme was funded outside the national budget with an unbudgeted US\$3 billion expended on the programme during that period (*Economic Governance Watch, 2022*). This has been largely through defaulters. Regarding this dimension of defaulters, it has to be established as to whether the Chidzikwe farmers honored the debt repayments.

It has been argued that the use of fewer companies like Sakunda Holdings caused monopoly and lack of transparency in the way the system was done (Albertus, 2015). In addition, while the country has put billions into resuscitating agricultural production, the report in the 2022 Statement of Public Debts suggests that this investment has not brought returns as the country continued to import maize (*Economic Governance Watch*, 2022). In the study, since the area of Chidzikwe was chosen, it had to be established as to whether grain production through Command Agriculture sustained the needs of the community.

In 2017, there were reports of ‘theft’ of Command Agriculture inputs, leading to arrests and conviction of people (Chingarande, 2017). This reflects corruption and the study also sought to look at such cases of abuse and misuse of inputs in the Chidzikwe area. In addition, Mazwi et al (2019) indicate that the farmers who took up Command Agriculture largely failed on account of the following: overstrained farm management due to tilling of too much land which was difficult to manage; lack of extension education; late input supply; inadequate inputs; unsuitable seed varieties; politicization of the input scheme. These points were part of the research gaps looked at from the roll out of Command Agriculture in Chidzikwe area.

Above all, since the Command system was meant to revamp national grain production, it would only happen if farmers took their produce to the GMB. However, Mazwi et al (2019) indicate that some farmers in Chegutu and Bindura side-marketed the maize. This did not promote the goals of the programme, but it was also noted that the producer prices offered by Government and delays in payments forced farmers into side-marketing. From the study on Chidzikwe area, these forces were also looked at during the appraisal of the Command Agricultural Programme in the area.

2.5 Ways to improve household food security through Command Agriculture

One point raised in a study by Dube (2020) is that Command Agriculture on its own could not solve the food security challenges in Zimbabwe. There were policy reforms needed to address fiscal prudence and macroeconomic resilience. As such, the study looked at how the policies on Agriculture and its value chain could be improved in order to promote higher productivity and compliance by contracted farmers.

In addition, since it was noted that some farmers were not repaying loans, it was important to find means of enforcement. At the same time, there was need for agricultural training targeting skills and technologies that are climate responsive (Dube, 2020). Mazwi et al (2019) also suggest the need to have suitable inputs for a specific area, which should be adequate and supplied early before the rainy season. Therefore, these points were considered as part of the capacity building through collective resolution of the challenges to the Command Agriculture, as depicted in the research findings in Chapter 4.

2.6 Conclusion

The chapter outlined that Command Agriculture was introduced in order to provide the financial investment to farming. It was administered under the army, hoping that there was going to be discipline and accountability. The programme was launched in order to promote food security, grain surplus and improvement of rural households. In the end, once people in rural areas took farming as business, the unemployment issues and rural-urban migration would be reduced. The chapter noted that there were challenges in the roll out and administration of the programme, owing to: lack of accountability; poor farming skills; lack of strict monitoring on the returns; unfavorable producer prices; sabotage; lack of transparency in roll out of the programme, among other challenges. These challenges could only be plugged through reforms in policies on agricultural financing, fiscal discipline, macroeconomic reforms, as well as focusing on production more than politics. The next chapter will describe the methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological framework of the study. The chapter begins by situating the study within its geographical setting, using mapping for spatial geo-referencing. The research paradigm (mixed methods) and design (case study) are described in-depth. The population of the study, sample and sampling techniques are equally outlined. The triangulated research instruments (questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion) are outlined, followed by an outline of data collection and analysis procedures. Ethical considerations are highlighted before the conclusion wraps up the chapter.

3.2 Study site

Chidzikwe community is located approximately 16 kilometers from the Central Business District (CBD) of Masvingo City. The community is in Masvingo North, flanked by Chief Bere and Chief Musara's areas and is 6 kilometers from the Masvingo-Zvishavane main road. The area emerged out of the post-2000's Fast Track Land Reform Programme which saw Government of Zimbabwe sub-dividing expansive commercial farming areas into modeled A2 farming units. From the provincial map of Masvingo, the area is in Masvingo District, northwards, as denoted in Fig.1.

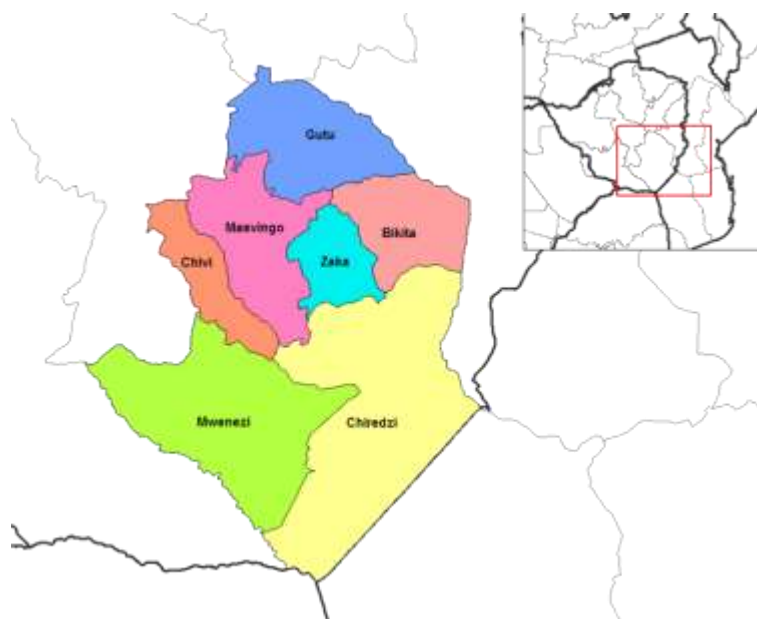


Fig. 1: Map of Masvingo Province, denoting Masvingo District.

3.3 Research paradigm and design

Research is conducted based on two broad perspectives or paradigms: positivism (quantitative research) and interpretivism (qualitative research). The research paradigm is a set of beliefs or assumptions which guide how research is conducted. A research paradigm subsumes the worldview or theoretical orientation that guides conduct of the research, based on certain philosophical assumptions. According to Babbie (2017) and Aaron (2020), the worldview directly influences the approach which will be used while, on the other hand, the chosen approach will equally stimulate the design or practical application of the study undertaking.

While quantitative research looks at facts from measurable outcomes, qualitative research looks at views or attitudes of people. In this research study, the researcher blended quantitative techniques (through questionnaires) and qualitative aspects (using interviews and focus group discussions). Therefore, the mixed method was used.

The particular approach or method used is called the design (Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2011; Creswell, 2014). The design is a means by which the researcher can get to the predesigned end or destination in the research journey. This research design is the researcher's overall plan for obtaining answers to reach a question (Tracy, 2013; Maxwell, 2014; Babbie, 2017). Thus, deduced from the given definition, it can be said that a research design is a strategy that a researcher uses to study the research problem and answer the research question. Research design refers to a basic plan or strategy of research and a logic behind which makes it possible to arrive at a valid question. Since the study focused on a specific setting (Chidzikwe A2 smallholder farming community), it falls under case study research.

A case study explores a given locality or setting in-depth. In this regard, the various forces at hand within a given setting are thoroughly explored. As noted by Ritchie and Lewis (2003), Walliman (2010) and Kumar (2011), case studies afford the researcher opportunity for rigor or detailed exploration of a given context. In addition, the researcher will try to understand the case within its own setting, without manipulations (Bermauer & O'Dwyer, 2013). Best and Khan (2006) add that the case will be fully understood when it is studied within its context.

In addition, case study research seeks to improve the ways of life of people in the study area, following the noted challenges they may face. According to Burns and Grove (2009), when challenges get noted, they will be easily plugged through relevant interventions techniques. This view is supported by Charles (2000), Christians (2005) and Chiromo (2012) who all state that the recommendations tendered will help to transform the lives of people studied in a given setting. To this end, the case study design was used in order to ensure that challenges associated with the roll out of the Command Agriculture programme in Chidzikwe area of Masvingo North could be plugged through intervention strategies involving multiple stakeholder involvement.

3.4 Population

The study population comprised of a total of 300, predominantly male-headed households (with an average of 2 adults per household), together with a school community with 13 teachers, a business center with 5 proprietors, a Counselor, as well as an Agricultural Extension officer. Therefore, there was an average of 600 adults from the 300 households, plus 20 other stakeholders from the area, giving a total of 620 potential participants for the study.

3.5 Sample and sampling techniques

Since mixed methods were used, two samples were used: a quantitative sample of 50 people to administer the questionnaire, as well as a qualitative sample of 10 people to administer interviews and focus group discussions. As guided by research techniques, the quantitative sample was arrived at through probability sampling (Maxwell, 2013), while the qualitative sample was arrived at using non-probability sampling techniques (Aaron, 2020).

Stratified random sampling was used to divide the area into strata form, from which participants were located in the sample scope. For the 4 interviewees, purposive, convenience and snowballing techniques were used. In purposive sampling, the researcher deliberately selected the local political leader and conveniently selected the Farmer-of-the-year from the area. Through help from the Counselor, the researcher identified the Agritex officer; hence, snowballing. The 6 participants for focus group discussions were identified through convenience sampling, based on their proximity to the access road to the area.

3.6 Research instruments

The study triangulated three research instruments in order to promote validity of the research findings: questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion, respectively. These tools are separately described below.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

The researcher designed a questionnaire and distributed it to the 50 subjects. The approach was used to get many people involved in a relatively short space of time (Creswell, 2014). It was also cost effective in that one copy was printed and photocopied for the 49 copies needed. The researcher used simple language to ensure that there was no language barrier. The questionnaire guide is reflected in Appendix A.

3.6.2 Interview

Using a semi-structured interview guide, the researcher set out to have face-to-face question-and-answer sessions with 4 members to elicit their views regarding how Command Agriculture program had impacted on household food security in the Chidzikwe area. The method was used for its ability to get firsthand information directly from participants (Creswell, 2014). It was also easy to probe or restate questions in order to get responses from the participants (Babbie, 2017). However, the method could not be used for many people since it was time consuming and; hence, uneconomic (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2014). As such, the triangulation of data collection instruments was done. The interview guide is reflected in Appendix B.

3.6.3 Focus group discussion

The focus group discussion involved a loosely-configured discussion in which the researcher acted as moderator (Aaron, 2020). Using unstructured questions, the discussion was made more flexible to ensure that each of the 6 participants could participate freely. As noted by Christians (2005), the researcher ensured ethical treatment of the views of the people and, in the process, gained their trust. The views from the group were from both face-to-face physical interactions and WhatsApp group chats. The guide to focus group discussion is reflected in Appendix C.

3.7 Data collection procedure

Questionnaires were distributed to the randomly selected 50 subjects and later collected. For the interview sessions, Wednesdays were chosen for interviews with the ‘Farmer-of-the-year’ (F) since the day was a traditionally resting day from field chores. For the business proprietor (B), mid-mornings on Saturdays were used when most people were in their fields. For the Councilor (C), Wednesday after session with participant ‘F’ was chosen. For the Extension Officer (E), Saturdays were selected as he was usually ‘free’. The focus group discussions were conducted during community gatherings.

The researcher confirmed appointments with participants and ensured that there was flexibility in the times used. Given that visits to the area were limited, telephone interviews and WhatsApp focus group discussions complemented the face-to-face meetings conducted.

3.8 Data analysis

Questionnaire data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, while content analysis of the interview and focus group discussion transcripts was also conducted. Qualitative data from the interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed for emerging themes from the transcribed content.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are a critical component of research that deserves mention. Ethics are morals and guiding principles of a research. A successful study can only be achieved through the strict adherence to ethical standards such as the need to avoid harm to the participants, respecting the privacy of participants and avoidance of use of deception (Gray 2009). In addition, there was a need to seek for informed consent of the participants via signed consent forms (Aaron, 2020).

On the other hand, the study used anonymity when referring to the study participants in order to protect identities (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2011). For the four (4) interview participants (a local political leader: Councilor), an Agricultural Extension officer, a ‘Farmer –of-the-year’ and local business man, the codes used were as follows: C (Councilor); E (Extension officer); F (Farmer-of-the-year); B (Business operator), respectively. For the focus group discussion (FGD), the following codes were used: FGD1; FGD2; FGD3; FGD4; FGD5; FGD6; FGD7; FGD8. At the

same time, there was a deliberate move towards the avoidance of any underhand issues which could be prejudicial to the research participants, hence the issue of trust (Best and Khan, 2006; Creswell, 2014). With these ethics, the research was able to enter the research field with confidence.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter described the research methodology. The chapter identified the study as a mixed methods case study. By mixed methods, it means the study blended techniques from quantitative and qualitative research. The study population comprised farmers in Chidzikwe area as well as other stakeholders in the area. The study used a quantitative sample of 50 people for the questionnaires; with 12 people being used for interviews and focus group discussions. The chapter highlighted that sampling and data collection instruments were triangulated in order to give validity to the findings. Research ethics were highlighted, too. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the three research instruments. Data presentation, analysis and interpretation is done concurrently, in keeping with the mixed methods approach. The chapter first presents the demographic data of the participants, dividing the demographics according to instrument used. Data presentation then follows, guided by the themes derived from the sub-research questions. The presentation of questionnaire data, using the likett scale is followed by graphical presentation, while excerpts from the interviews are used to present qualitative data. A brief discussion of the findings is given, followed by a chapter conclusion.

4.2 Biographic data

This section of the chapter presents the demographic data of the research participants, based on the three instruments used to collect the data: questionnaire; interview and focus group discussion, respectively.

4.2.1 Questionnaire respondents

Out of a total of 50 respondents, the bio-data given reflected the following information as in the table below.

Table 2: Bio-Data from questionnaire

GENDER	FREQUENCY
MALE	24 (48%)
FEMALE	26 (52%)

Graphically, Fig. 1 depicts the bio-data from questionnaire.

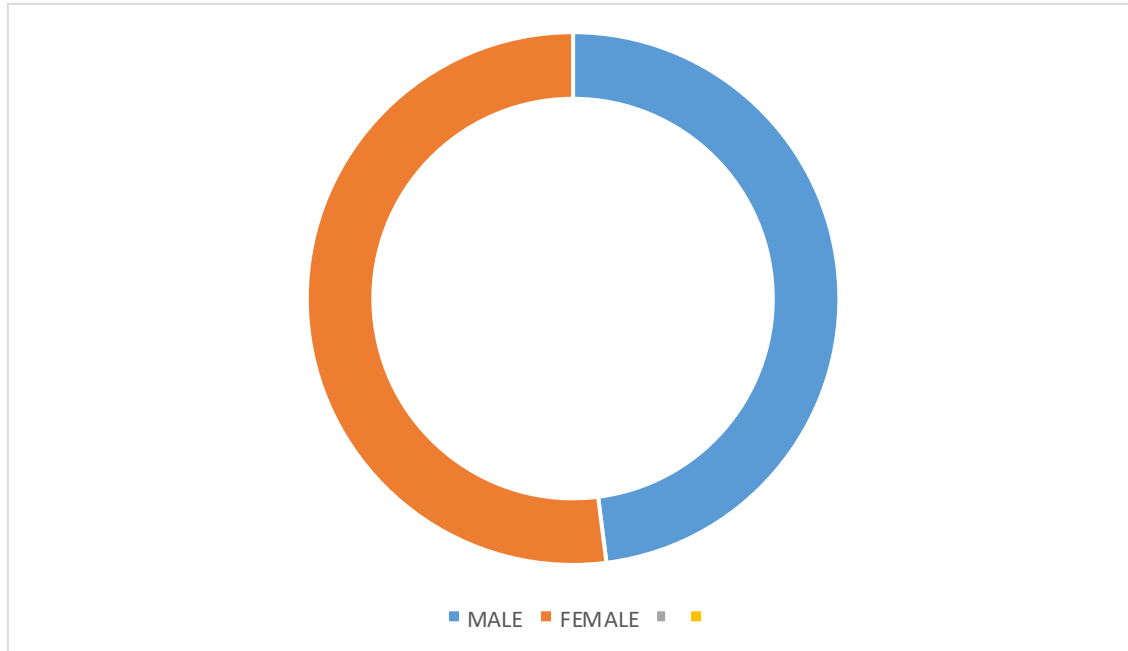


Fig. 1: Graphical presentation of questionnaire bio-data

Fig. 2 depicts that the questionnaire respondents were almost balanced, though there was a slight edge for females (by 4%) over males. Coincidentally, the ZIMSTAT (2022) gives a demographic ratio of 48:52 (Male-Female), which was replicated in the study findings. This suggests that the national statistical outlook on gender is replicated to communities which build up the entire nation of Zimbabwe.

4.2.2 Interview respondents

Table 3 depicts the bio-data of the interview participants.

Table 3: Bio-data of interview participants

GENDER DIMENSION	FREQUENCY
MALE	3 (75%)
FEMALE	1 (25%)

From Table 3, Fig. 2 was developed to illustrate the bio-data with visual appeal.

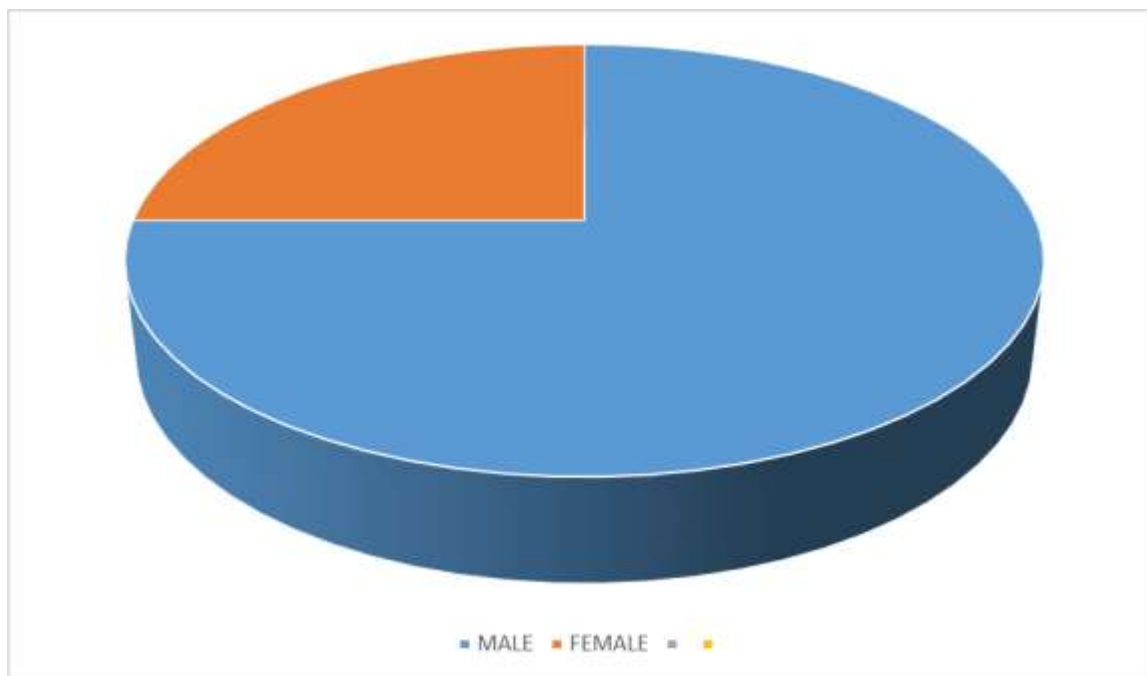


Fig. 2: Interview-based bio-data graph

From the bio-data presented in Fig.2, it could be noted that there were more males than females. This could suggest the socio-cultural dynamics of politics in which a male figure usually holds local leadership position and extension officers usually fall within the male category. This skewed perspective was not likely to interfere with the findings because the research did not look at variables that gender influences.

4.2.3 Focus group discussion respondents

From the focus group discussion (FGD) participants were 8, with Table 4 depicting the bio-data perspective.

Table 4: FGD Bio-Data

GENDER MATRIX	FREQUENCY
MALE	4 (50%)
FEMALE	4 (50%)

Table 4 could be translated into Fig.3 for visual impact.

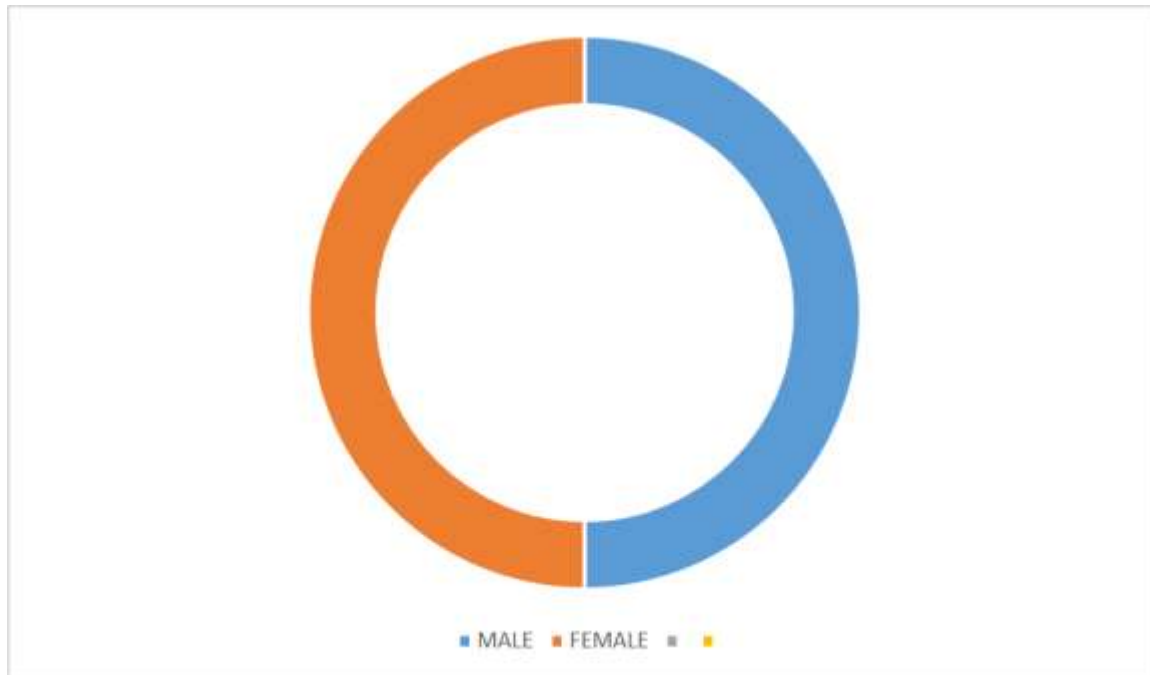


Fig.3: Graphically presentation of FGD Bio-Data

The data presented in Fig. 3 depicts that there was a gender balance between men and women (male-female) participants for the FGD instrument. This helped to balance off the skew in the interview bio-data presentation.

4.3 Data presentation and interpretation

This section presents data findings from the three research instruments. The findings are presented and interpreted simultaneously. Data presentation is guided by the research sub-questions from Chapter 1.

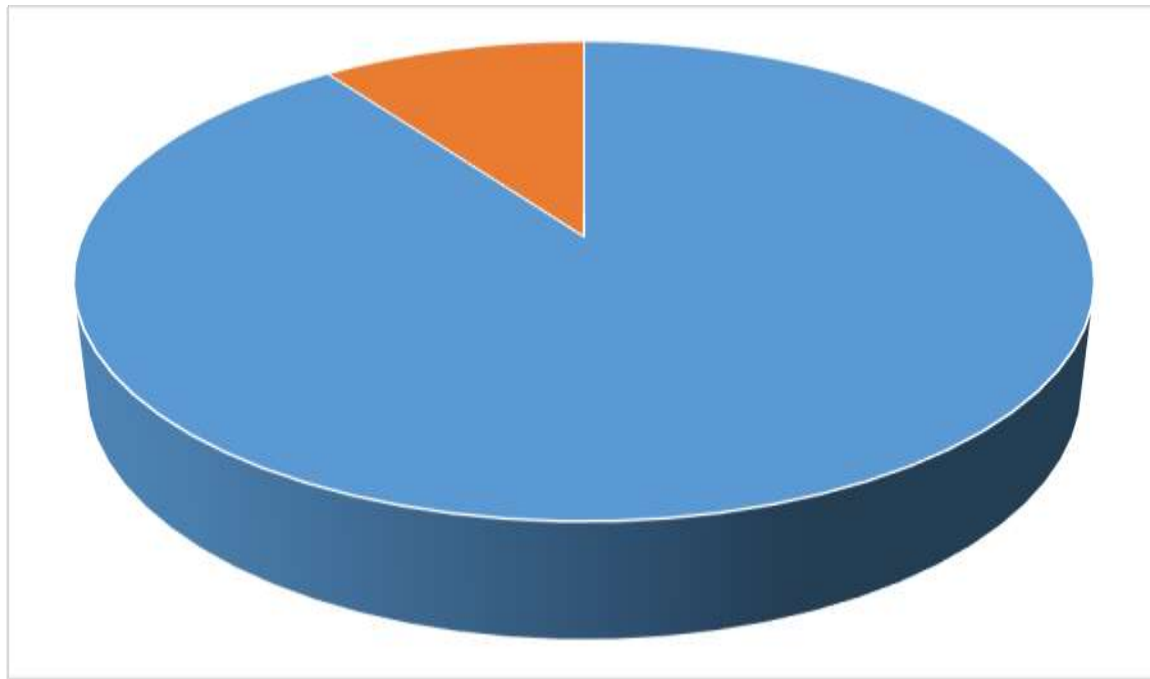
4.3.1 Administration of Command Agriculture Programme in Chidzikwe

One of the findings related to the administration of Command Agriculture is that there was poor administration of the input procurement and distribution system. Table 5 sums up the questionnaire data responses stressing that Command Agriculture was not efficiently administered.

Table 5: Responses to the point of inefficient roll out of program

COMPONENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
FREQUENCY	28	17	0	3	2

Based on the data from the table, it emerged that there was inefficient roll out of the Command Agriculture added to 45 (90%) and those who disagreed added to 5 (10%). This could be visually presented in Fig. 4.



The visual impression of the illustration above depicts that the majority of the respondents pointed that the Command Agriculture Programme was not effectively rolled out in Chidzikwe area. These sentiments were echoed by the following transcribed interviews and focus group discussion excerpts:

Q. How neutral is the Command Agriculture Programme from political influence?

C: *This is a shambolic program. It lacks proper coordination.*

E: *This is an ineffectively administered programme.*

F: *This is not a systematically rolled out program.*

B: *We don't see how the program progresses. It's not very transparently done.*

FGD1: *The scheme lacks proper organization.*

FGD2: *It's not well handled.*

FGD4: *The input roll out is rather messy.*

FGD5: *There is too much red tape involved.*

FGD8: *It's not as transparent as it ought to be.*

The interview and focus group transcripts all point towards the inefficiency and lack of transparency in the roll out of the programme. This means that there was likely to be logistical problems in the whole process; yet, there was need for an efficient and transparent programme roll out.

It was also established that distribution of inputs was not timely and that there was no monitoring or land audits during the programme roll out. The questionnaire responses on 'timely distribution' of inputs, 'monitoring' of the programme activities and 'audits' on land utilization are collated in the table below.

Table 6: Responses on 'timely distribution' 'monitoring' and land 'audits'

POINT OF REFERENCE	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Systematically administered	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	-	39 (78%)	9 (18%)
Transparently rolled out	-	4 (8%)	-	43 (86%)	3 (6%)
Monitoring was done	2 (4%)	3 (6%)	-	44 (88%)	1 (2%)

Based on the data presented above, it could be noted that those who agreed that the programme was systematically administered were 2 (4%), with the majority of 48 (96%) disagreeing. Those who indicated that the program was transparent were 4 (8%), while 46 (92%) indicated that there was no transparency. Again, on whether monitoring measures were conducted to assess

utilization of the land, 5 (10%) agreed, with 45 (90%) indicating that there were no land audits to talk about in Chidzikwe. The data here could be presented in graph form as in Fig. 5.

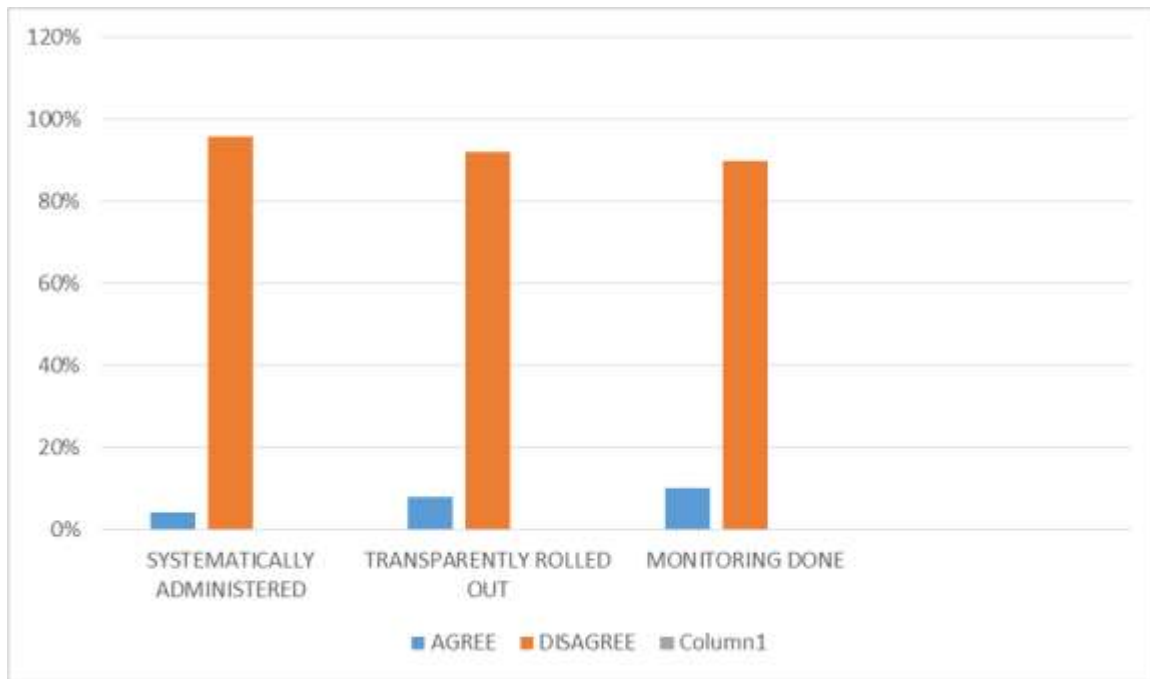


Fig.5. Graphical representation of questionnaire data on ‘systematic’, ‘monitoring’ and ‘audits’

From the graph, it could be noted that the questionnaire respondents considered the roll out and implementation of the Command Agriculture in Chidzikwe area to be inefficient since inputs are not distributed systematically. It is equally noted that the respondents were not happy about the lack of monitoring and that land audits to assess utilization of the land resource were generally not done. In this regard, the programme was unlikely to yield its best potential benefits. As such, it had to be improved, as indicated through the subsection on how to improve roll out of the programme.

On the overall running of the programme, the following tabulated (qualitative data) responses were elicited through interview and focus group discussion (FGD) transcripts:

Table 7: Overall evaluation of Command Agriculture

REMARK	INTERPRETATION
<i>C: Rather chaotic and marred by corruption.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chaotic • Corruption-rife
<i>B: No proper audits.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No control systems
<i>F: Lacks transparency and accountability.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor governance
<i>FGD1: No monitoring at all. A poorly run thing.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No control system
<i>FGD2: Looting of inputs rampant. Top Chefs lining their pockets.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption-rife
<i>FGD3: Too militarized and lacks accountability.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor governance
<i>FGD4: No follow ups on who does what. Some people abuse the input scheme.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No control system

The data captured in Table 7 suggests that the roll out and administration of the Command Agricultural scheme in Chidzikwe was not properly handled. The respondents pointed the leakages in the form of looting and abuse of inputs; lack of accountability; corruption; lack of audits and control mechanisms, all reflecting poor governance systems at hand. Therefore, the study suggested poorly coordinated activities, with no proper monitoring and attendant audits being done.

4.3.2 Challenges of Command Agriculture implementation in Chidzikwe

The study noted that several challenges affected the implementation of Command Agriculture in Chidzikwe area. From the questionnaire responses, several challenges were faced in the roll out of the Command Agriculture programme in Chidzikwe area. On the tag that inputs were not distributed in time, 80% indicated that inputs did not come in time, while 20% indicated that they got inputs timeously. On the issue of adequacy of inputs, 90% indicated that they got what they required, while 10% stated that they did not get adequate inputs. 90% indicated that land was not fully utilized with 10% disagreeing to this. On the expertise on farming and land utilization, 96% said they relied on their traditional knowledge while 4% said they had modern farming expertise. On the issue of equipment to prepare land for planting, 92% indicated that they had challenges in

land preparation processes, with 8 % not committing themselves at all. In graphical terms, this could translate into Fig. 5.

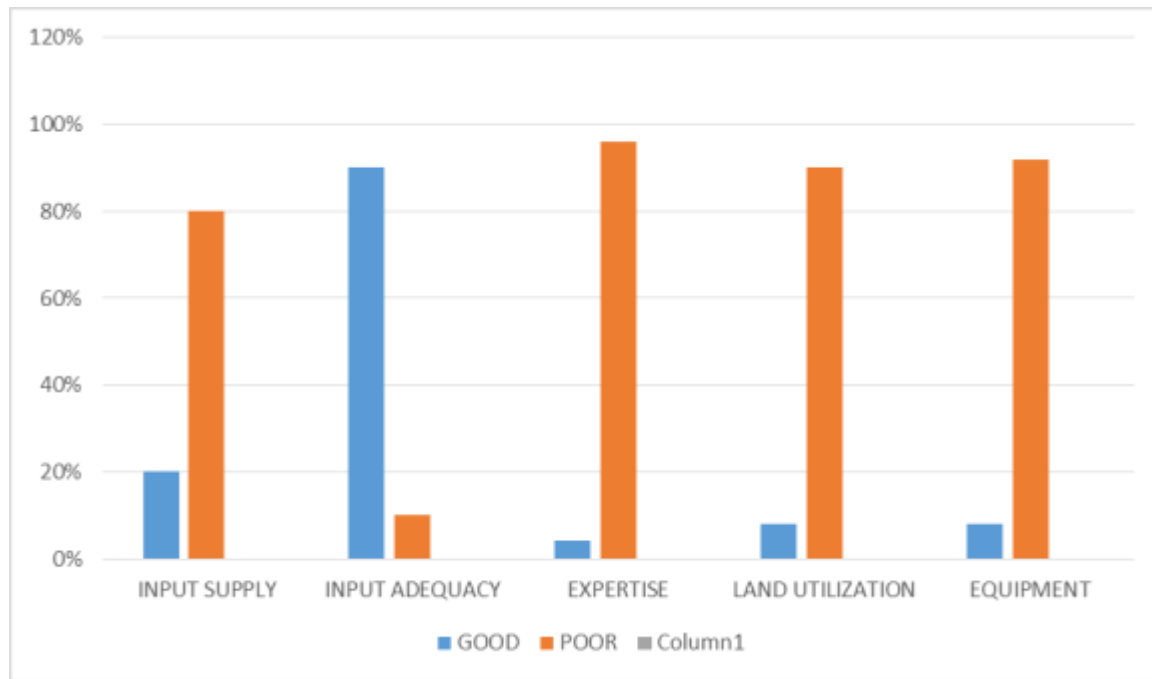


Fig. 6: Challenges of Command Agriculture in Chidzikwe

From the illustration above, it could be noted that inputs were not supplied timeously, though the farmers alleged that they got adequate supplies required. There was also poor expertise on farming, yet the Command Agriculture system leveraged on expertise for high productivity. In addition, farming equipment was poor, thus, compromising productivity. These views were corroborated by the following views noted from the interview and focus group discussion transcripts:

- *Inputs were delayed to a point where rain would be gone (FGD2).*
- *Sometimes we got varieties not suitable to our area (FGD8).*
- *People complained of high transport costs charged by suppliers (FGD7).*
- *We have no knowledge on modern farming (FGD5).*
- *Some people sell the inputs for beer (FGD3).*
- *Some just sub-let their land to other people (B).*
- *Pricing at GMB not favorable (E).*
- *We can't risk repaying politically-linked things as we will give them our votes (C).*

Notable from the transcribed interview and focus group discussion data are the following points of note: there were delays in the distribution of inputs; at times the seed varieties used were not compatible with the climate and agro-ecological region of the study area; those who transported the inputs to farmers charged exorbitant charges; some farmers were not utilizing the plots, but would sub-let the land or even sell the inputs for beer; the producer prices at the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) were not pleasing or encouraging; due to the politics of the programme, some farmers saw it as vote buying and would not repay their loans. As such, the study noted that the Command Agriculture Programme roll out in Chidzikwe area was marred by several challenges.

4.3.3 How Command Agriculture improved household food security in Chidzikwe area

Despite the challenges noted in section 4.3.2, Command Agriculture was a significant plug of household food security in the study area. The data from the questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions point to this effect. In this section, questionnaire data presentation comes first, followed by the presentation and interpretation of qualitative data from the interview and focus group discussion transcripts.

From the questionnaire data, on the question tag that Command Agriculture value-added livelihoods in Chidzikwe, 35 (70%) strongly agreed; 12 (24%) agreed; there were no neutrals; 2 (4%) disagreed; 1 (2%) strongly disagreed. In graphical representations, the statistics here yielded Fig. 7.

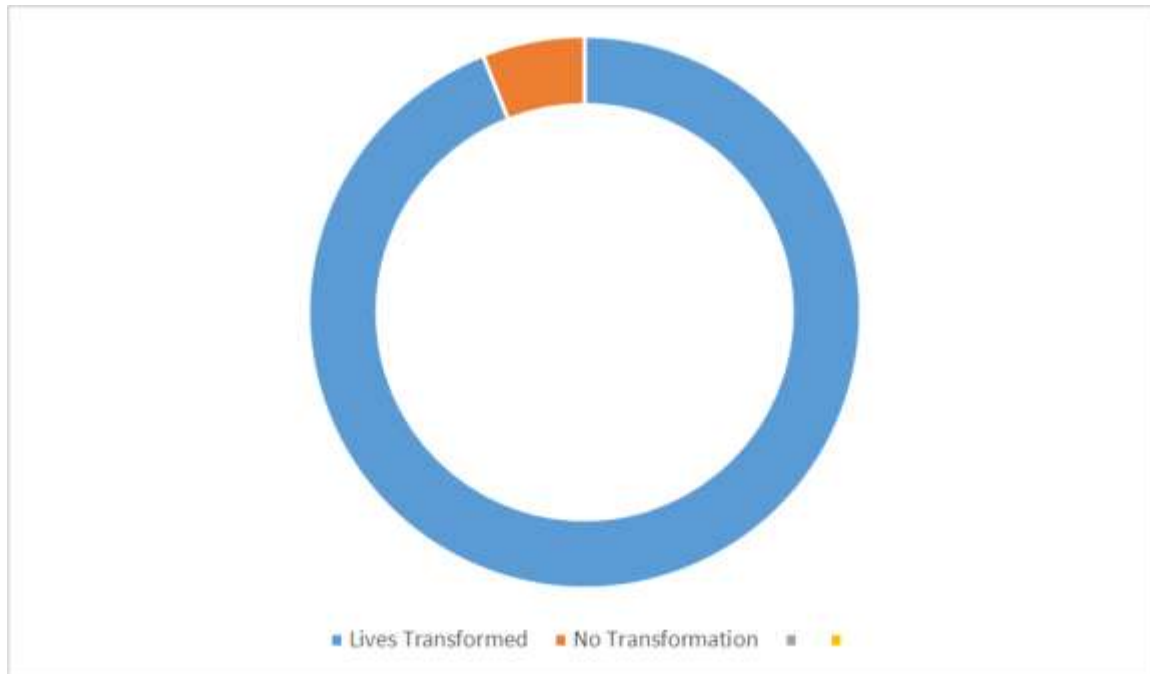


Fig.7. Command Agriculture and value-addition of Chidzikwe livelihoods

From the illustration above, it seems as if the introduction of Command Agriculture has made a significant difference to the Chidzikwe community's livelihoods. This does not, however, gloss over the challenges mentioned already, but is indicative of the fact that the programme has potential benefits, if managed more efficiently.

Related to the foregoing, the questionnaire aspects on whether or not Command Agriculture improved nutrition in Chidzikwe area, the responses were that: 5 (10%) strongly agreed; 3 (6%) agreed; there were no neutrals; 39 (78%) disagreed; 3 (6%) strongly disagreed. Taken collectively, it appears that 16% held that the nutrition needs improved, while 84% disagreed. On the prevention of hunger and starvation, 42 (84%) agreed that hunger and starvation were prevented, while 8 (16%) indicated that there were still starving families in Chidzikwe. On whether the programme had reduced conflicts among community members, 46 (92%) were in agreement that conflict tendencies were reduced, while 4 (8%) disagreed with this perspective. On the potential of the programme to promote overall community development and socio-economic transformation, 49 (98%) agreed, but 1 (2%) disagreed. The data findings captured here could be visually presented as Fig. 8.

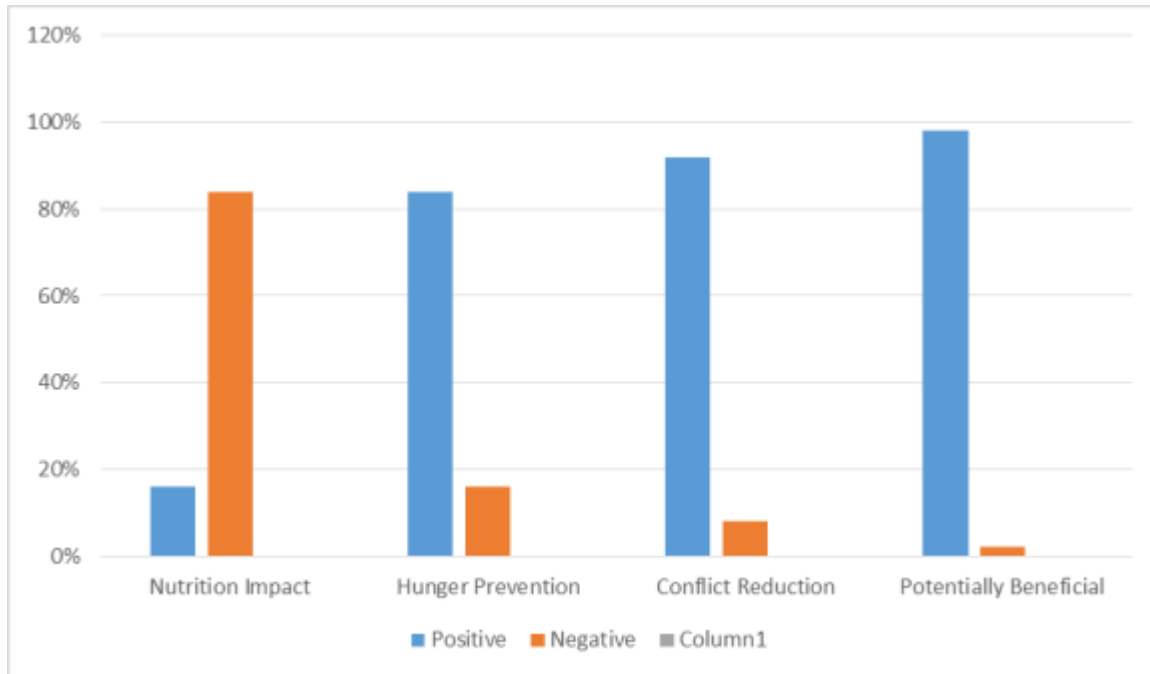


Fig. 8: Overall impact of Command Agriculture on Chidzikwe livelihoods

Based on the visual impression of Fig. 8, it could be noted that questionnaire respondents opined that Command Agriculture did not necessarily improve nutrition in the Chidzikwe area. On hunger prevention, the respondents were of the view that hunger and starvation no longer affected the majority of the Chidzikwe community members. On the impact of Command Agriculture in conflict reduction, there was an overwhelming agreement that conflicts were reduced. Above all, the overall potential impact of Command Agriculture was that it could positively transform the lives of the people of Chidzikwe community.

The foregoing questionnaire responses could be compared with the interview and focus group discussion transcripts as follows.

Q. Has Command Agriculture brought positive changes to the Chidzikwe community?

C: *If managed properly, this is a potential gold mine. We can see wonders, really!*

E: *We are no longer as poor as we used to be.*

F: *There is no denial that the programme has changed lives here.*

B: *The programme has made a difference to the community.*

FGD1: *Lives have changed.*

FGD2: *We have seen marked changes in lifestyle here.*

FGD3: *Things are no longer what they used to be.*

FGD4: *It's noted that the programme is a game changer, though marred by irregularities.*

FGD5: *Lives have been value-added.*

FGD6: *We are no longer where we were before the programme was launched.*

FGD7: *We have since seen positive changes.*

FGD8: *Change has come, thanks to Command Agriculture.*

All the responses suggested that the Command Agriculture programme had changed life in the community of Chidzikwe. This supports the views from the questionnaires. In this respect, the programme could be taken as a positive life-transforming venture that could value-add the community of Chidzikwe.

On subsequent interview and focus group discussion questions on the impact of Command Agriculture on nutrition, the following responses emerged:

C: *Remember, the programme here bases on maize only, so nutrition is not balanced.*

E: *In Chidzikwe, maize is the focus of production, so the protein-based crops are not catered for.*

F: *Farmers only spare portions for legumes and other crops, with maize being the main crop under cultivation.*

B: *Farmers mix free range poultry with small stock, large stock, some with piggery, into the maize-production plots. This makes the nutrition levels high.*

FGD1: *Only those who diversify are nutrition-assured, but the rest only major in the staple maize crop.*

FGD2: *It would do if the project provides seed for beans and other nutrition crops.*

FGD3: *Nutrition not guaranteed since maize is the main crop cultivated.*

FGD4: *Project tilted one side to maize only.*

FGD5: *No guarantee for nutrition health-based crops like legumes.*

FGD6: *Nutritional needs not fully addressed.*

FGD7: *Protein and vitamin provisions not prioritized.*

FGD8: *Only maize is dominant, with rarely any emphasis of variety for nutritional needs.*

The responses above support the questionnaire view that nutrition levels were not catered for. Given that the programme was for maize seed and nothing else, it could not gear farmers to diversified farming for better nutrition provision. Only those who diversified on their own were guaranteed better nutrition, with the rest only getting the maize for staple diet.

Regarding other benefits of the programme to the well-being of Chidzikwe people, similar points from the questionnaire draft were noted as presented in the sample responses below:

Table 8: Other benefits of Command Agriculture in Chidzikwe

TRANSCRIBED VIEWS	COMMENTS
<i>C: People no longer idle.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Farming source of employment
<i>E: Conflicts no longer serious.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflicts reduced
<i>FGD2: No more cases of starving people.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Household food security assured
<i>FGD3: Food security assured.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Household food security guaranteed
<i>FGD5: Only those who sub-let plots are insecure food-wise.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not all people were productively using plots
<i>FGD6: Even with little rains, people sail through.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resilience mechanism improved
<i>FGD8: Most households have improved and children now going to school.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved livelihoods

From the information above, it could be noted that Command Agriculture provided employment to the local people. Due to this preoccupation with farming, people were no longer idle. As such,

conflicts resulting from lack of employment were reduced as people were busy on their plots and ventures. There was also improved household food security, better resilience and improved life in the area. However, some who did not utilize the land had food shortages.

4.3.4 Strategies to improve Command Agriculture Programme in Chidzikwe

From the questionnaire responses, Table 9 summarizes the main findings. The table is translated into Fig. 9 for visual impression.

Table 9: Questionnaire responses on ways to improve Command Agriculture in Chidzikwe

COMPONENT	Extension needed	Need for monitoring	Need for timely supplies of inputs	Need for area-compliant seed maize	Need for tractors	Need for competitive maize producer prices
Frequency on Agree	49 (98%)	42 (84%)	47 (94%)	45 (90%)	39 (78%)	48 (96%)
Frequency on Disagree	1 (2%)	8 (16%)	3 (6%)	5 (10%)	11 (22%)	2 (4%)

Based on the table above, the following graph (Fig. 9) was derived.

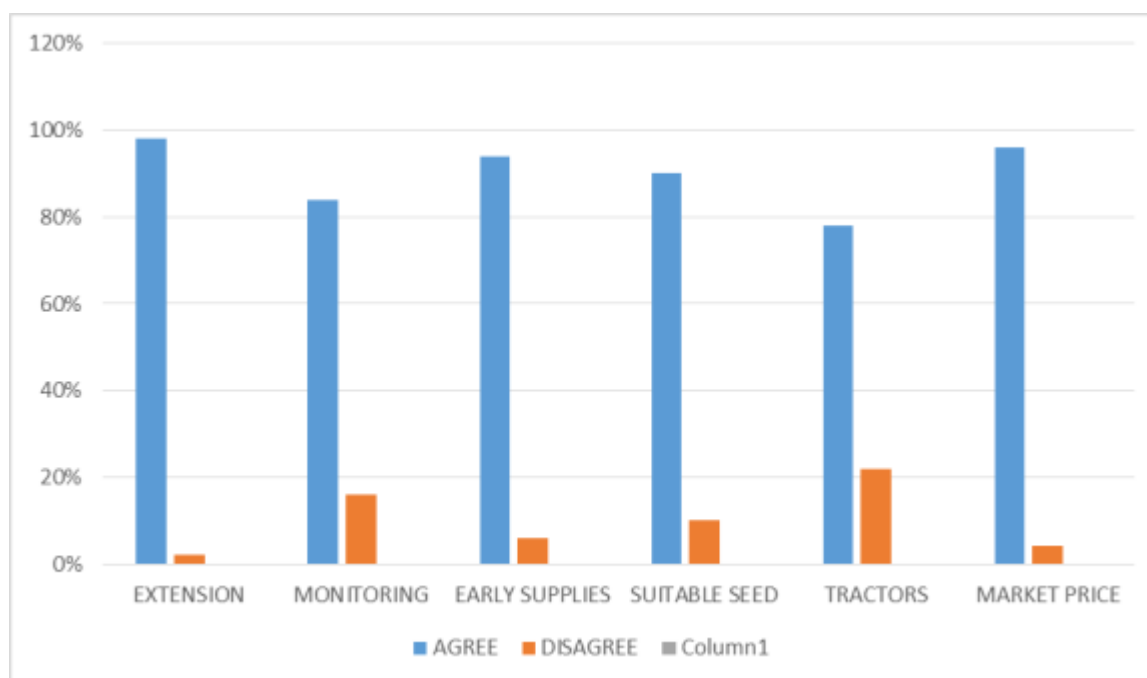


Fig. 9: Graphical summary of ways to improve Command Agriculture in Chidzikwe

Based on the visual impression of the graphical illustration, it could be noted that stakeholders considered several measures as significant in improving the roll out and impact of Command Agriculture on household food security in Chidzikwe. There was an agreement that extension services were needed; that monitoring was needed; that seed and other inputs should be supplied early; that the seed supplied should be compliant to the area; that implements like tractors were needed; that market prices should be reviewed. The above views were supported by the transcribed responses from the interviews and focus group discussions summarized in the table below.

Table 10: Summary of transcribed interviews and focus group discussion recommendations

TRANSCRIBED RESPONSE	COMMENT
<i>C: Extension services, early inputs, monitoring, as well as good prices at GMB can work out wonders.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension • Early supplies of inputs • Monitoring

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good prices at GMB
E: <i>Farmers need extension help and the system should be monitored to weed out corrupt practices and sub-letting of plots.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension • Monitoring
FGD2: <i>The politics of threats should end and farming needs monitoring.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depoliticization • Monitoring
FGD4: <i>The farmers need extension services, early supplies of inputs in correct quantities, as well as monitoring for checks on utilization of the land and inputs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension • Early input supplies • Correct quantities of seed maize • Monitoring
FGD5: <i>The project needs monitoring, extension service and incentives from GMB.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring • Extension • Good prices at GMB
FGD6: <i>Monitoring is critical to avoid all the corruption happening.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring
FGD8: <i>Seed maize should not be supplied late and prices at GMB should be encouraging.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early inputs supplies • Good prices at GMB

From the data above, it emerged that the same views held from the questionnaires were raised in the interview and focus group discussion transcripts. It was apparent that extension services were the most critical point, alongside monitoring. It was raised that corruption had to be curbed and that incentives in the form of attractive producer prices at GMB were needed. At the same time, inputs were supposed to come early, in required quantities and that the seed varieties should be suitable for the Chidzikwe area.

4.4 Discussion

Based on the findings from the study, a discussion of the emerging themes will be conducted in this section of Chapter 4. The discussion links the findings to the reviewed literature. This helps to highlight the significant contributions that the study makes to Command Agriculture roll out from the case study of Chidzikwe community of Masvingo North.

In keeping with the military-based style, Command Agriculture was initially rolled out through the coordination of army personnel. In essence, this made the programme a militaristic approach. As noted by Mazwi et al (2019), the military style was hoped to promote discipline, accountability and transparency in the way the input system was done. However, as the study noted, there was no serious accountability, with inputs sometimes unaccounted for or side-marketed, reflecting the chaos which saw some officials being arrested in 2017 (Chingarande, 2017). In line with the findings from the *Economic Government Watch (2022)*, Government incurred huge loss from the programme since the farmers did not repay their loans and, as some respondents from the study indicated, this was spurred by the lack of transparency in the roll out of the programme which made farmers to believe that since they would vote for the ruling ZANU PF Party, they had no obligation to repay the loan scheme.

In line with revelations from literature that the national Command Agricultural programme was affected by skills deficits, misuse of the inputs, sub-letting of plots, side marketing of maize produced (Albertus, 2015; Dube, 2020), it was noted that the farmers were not skilled in farming, with some sub-letting the land and others deciding to sell their produce to the black market, side-stepping the GMB facility. As such, the programme had constraints which were supposed to be plugged accordingly.

Despite the lack of agricultural economics skills and farming expertise, alongside the reliance on rain-fed agriculture, the Command Agriculture scheme value-added the food security in Chidzikwe area. People could produce adequate grain for the staple maize, ending perennial food

shortages. The programme equally enabled the farmers to have surplus for sell to the GMB, getting income. That people got adequate food all year round reflects the potential positive impact of the programme to household food security in Chidzikwe area of Masvingo North.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from the study. The chapter highlighted the demographic characteristics of the research participants, where the majorities were male (men) since the system of land allocation was mainly based on the paternal system of male-headed households. The data indicates that the roll out of the Command Agriculture system was not very effective since there was no accountability or transparency, side-marketing, lack of compliance, poor farming systems, late inputs, as well as sub-letting of plots. On challenges faced, there was indication that some politicians threatened people; implements for farming were inadequate; inputs did not come early; some had no knowledge of proper farming and Agricultural Economics. On the benefits of the programme, it was noted that most households were now food secure; people now had employment; conflict had been reduced; most families had better lifestyles; no starvation happened; resilience was improved. On how to improve the system, the following points were raised: need for extension service; need for timeous distribution of inputs in required quantities; need for monitoring; need for competitive producer prices; need for the depoliticization of the project. The next chapter gives a summary of the whole study, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations. The chapter begins by summarizing the main issues raised from each chapter, as the research report develops the research problem under review. Conclusions derived from the research findings are then highlighted, followed by recommendations of how to make household food security in Chidzikwe a reality through the Command Agriculture programme.

5.2 Summary

The study explored the impact of Command Agriculture programme roll out on household food security in the Chidzikwe community of Masvingo North. The study report comprises of five chapters, with each chapter building up to the development of the problem exploration. Chapter 1 introduces the research problem and its setting. The chapter specifies the aim of the study, research objectives and questions which the study sought to address. Among the objectives of the study were the following: to examine how Command Agriculture was administered in Chidzikwe area; to explore the challenges of implementation of the programme; to explore how the programme impacted on household food security in the Chidzikwe area; to assess possible ways to improve the roll out of the programme towards sustainable household food security in Chidzikwe community. The Chidzikwe community, which is located north-west of Masvingo City, within the 20km radius, was the study location and the time period for the study was delimited as the 2021-2022 cropping season.

On findings, the study noted that there was a centralized system of administration, fronted by security personnel from the army, but roll out was not efficient. Logistics were not properly handled. Challenges included lack of transparency which affected accountability; delays in procurement of inputs; inadequate quantities of inputs; distribution of inputs which are not

compliant to the area. However, the program had the potential of uplifting households; promoting household food security; reducing conflicts and crime in the area, among other possibilities. As for the strategies to promote effectiveness in programme roll out, it was noted that there was need for timely distribution of inputs; procurement of correct varieties; transparency in the roll out of the programme; monitoring of the loan repayment process; extension service provision, respectively.

5.3 Conclusions

The study notes that the ‘military’ approach of a Command System is evident in the roll out of the Command Agriculture Programme in Chidzikwe, with military personnel usually coming to coordinate activities of input distribution. However, there was no systematic roll out of the programme. Regarding challenges faced, the study noted that there were logistical challenges: delays in input supply; costly transport charges; wrong inputs supplied; lack of skills to effectively utilize the plots; side-marketing to parallel markets, respectively. On potential benefits of the programme, it was noted that the relatively large plots yielded enough food for home consumption; food insecurity was reduced in the area; many people could use the surplus produce to sell. As such, people were gainfully employed in the agro-sector and households were uplifted. However, since few people diversified in crops to promote nutrition health, the programme did not fully address the nutrition needs of the people since it largely focused on the staple maize crops. For the few who had small stock and poultry, as well as gardens, their families were assured of nutrition health. Most families could send their children to the local schools, with a few sending theirs to boarding schools. On way forward, the study noted the need for transparency and control and monitoring mechanisms; extension expertise; quick distribution of inputs in their correct quantities and right type.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions from the study findings, the following recommendations have been made:

- Extension services could empower the farmers with knowledge and skills for higher productivity
- Monitoring was needed to check out for land utilization and proper utility of inputs
- Sub-letting should be discouraged through repossession of the plots
- Strict monitoring and controls in running the supply chain and inputs distribution should be done
- All farmers should sell their maize produce to GMB
- Government should review maize producer prices
- Payments at GMB should be timeous
- Farmers should be paid in United States dollars for the bulk of their maize produce for sustainability

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE

SECTION A: BIO-DATA

Complete the following by filling in [X] in each case:

1. GENDER MALE: FEMALE
2. AGE RANGE 20 – 30: 30 – 40:..... 40 +:
3. EDUCATION O’Level: Post- O’Level: Diploma/Degree:

SECTION B: ADMINISTRATION OF COMMAND AGRICULTURE IN CHIDZIKWE

4. Command Agriculture is systematically rolled out

Strongly Agree:

Agree:

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

5. The system was transparently rolled out

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

6. The Command Programme was monitored

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

7. Land audits were conducted

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree:

SECTION C: CHALLENGES OF COMMAND AGRICULTURE IN CHIDZIKWE

8. Inputs are not supplied timeously

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

9. Inputs were inadequate

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

10. Farmers have no agricultural knowledge and skills

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

11. Land is not fully utilized

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree:

12. There were no farming implements

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

13. There is lack of accountability for the supplied inputs

Strongly Agree:

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

14. Maize producer prices unattractive

Strongly Agree:

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

SECTION D: IMPACT OF COMMAND AGRICULTURE ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY IN CHIDZIKWE COMMUNITY

15. Command Agriculture improved livelihoods

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

16. Command Agriculture improved nutrition health in Chidzikwe

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral:

Disagree:

Strongly Disagree: ...

17. The programme reduced community-based conflicts

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

18. The programme could potentially develop the community

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

SECTION E: WAYS TO IMPROVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMAND AGRICULTURE IN CHIDZIKWE COMMUNITY

19. Extension service provision is needed

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

20. There is need for monitoring

Strongly Agree:

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

21. Inputs should come early

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree:

22. Suitable seed maize is required

Strongly Agree:

Agree: ...

Neutral:

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree:

23. Tractors are needed

Strongly Agree: ...

Agree: ...

Neutral:

Disagree:

Strongly Disagree:

24. Need for attractive maize producer are prices

Strongly Agree:

Agree: ...

Neutral: ...

Disagree: ...

Strongly Disagree: ...

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is Valentine Takura Moyo, a Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Agricultural Economics and Management student at the Bindura University of Science Education. I am conducting a research study in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the programme under study, on the topic: *The impact of Command Agriculture on household food security in Chidzikwe area of Masvingo North*. I request that you could participate in this interview if you are agreeable on condition that you have the right to refuse and that you can withdraw at any given time. Your views will be treated with utmost confidentiality and, should you decide to participate, do sign this consent form.

I do hereby agree to take part in the interview under question on this (Date) of (Month) in the year (Year).

Signature:

1. What are your views on the way Command Agriculture was implemented in Chidzikwe?
2. Do you consider the programme to be efficiently implemented?
3. What is your take on supply of inputs in terms of time, adequacy and area-compliance?
4. What challenges do farmers face in their farming activities and marketing of produce?
5. How has Command Agriculture impacted on livelihoods in Chidzikwe area?
6. Has the programme made significant influence on nutrition health?
7. How has the programme impacted on social well-being and relations among Chidzikwe community members?
8. What are the overall potential benefits of the programme to sustainable livelihoods in Chidzikwe area?
9. How could the programme implementation be improved?

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) GUIDE

My name is Valentine Takura Moyo, a Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Agricultural Economics and Management student at the Bindura University of Science Education. I am conducting a research study in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the programme under study, on the topic: *The impact of Command Agriculture on household food security in Chidzikwe area of Masvingo North*. I request that you could participate in this discussion if you are agreeable on condition that you have the right to refuse and that you can withdraw at any given time. Your views will be treated with utmost confidentiality and, should you decide to participate, do sign this consent form.

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4. What challenges do farmers face in their farming activities and marketing of produce?
5. How has Command Agriculture impacted on livelihoods in Chidzikwe area?
6. Has the programme made significant influence on nutrition health?
7. How has the programme impacted on social well-being and relations among Chidzikwe community members?
8. What are the overall potential benefits of the programme to sustainable livelihoods in Chidzikwe area?
9. How could the programme implementation be improved?

