

**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**  
**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES**



**challenges in the implementation poverty reduction strategies in bocha, marange area,  
manicaland province of zimbabwe.**

**BY**

**TANATSWA DUMA(B203235B)**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Peace and Governance in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the Master of Science in Peace and Governance Degree

Supervisor: DR CHIPAIKE

Bindura, Zimbabwe

June, 2024

## **ABSTRACT**

*The study sought to understand challenges in implementation of poverty reduction strategies in Marange Bocha. The main research objectives were to understand factors contributing to poverty and underdevelopment in Bocha, explore the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies and suggest measures that can be put in place to ensure the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies in Marange. A qualitative methodology was employed in this study. A sample of 20 participants was used for the purpose of this study. Data was collected through interviews, focus groups, and surveys. Based on research findings, the structural economic factors have created a difficult environment for the operation of NGOs in Zimbabwe given the shortages of enablers like fuel and other supplies needed for the smooth operation of NGOs. Efforts to explain poverty in poor households have tended to focus on factors within the household and factors within the NGOs themselves. These explanations tend to ignore the impact of the external economic environment. NGOs studied are dependent on donors to an extent that they cannot do anything outside what was agreed by their donors. Based on these findings the study recommends that NGOs seek funding from funders that believe in the ability of NGOs to craft poverty reduction interventions suited to the local context. To nature working and strategic relationships between NGOs and the government, at policy level the government of Zimbabwe should look at possibilities of grant funding to NGOs This also reduces the traditional dependency on donors that comes with strings attached.*

## DECLARATION FORM

I, Tanatswa Duma (B203235B) hereby declare that this project is my own original work and that it has not been copied or lifted from any other source without acknowledgement.

Signature.....

Date.....

2

*Tanatswa Duma*  
Declaration

I, B203235B hereby declare that the information provided in this document is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. The research study titled "challenges in the implementation, poverty reduction strategies. Case of Bocha Marange area, Manicaland province of Zimbabwe, represents my original work, except where otherwise acknowledged. I confirm that all the sources used in this study have been properly cited and referenced. I understand that any form of academic misconduct including plagiarism is strictly prohibited and may result in severe consequences. By signing the declaration I take full responsibility for the content and conclusions presented in this study.

STUDENT SIGNATURE: *Tanatswa Duma* DATE: *10/05/24*

SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE: *[Signature]* DATE: *10/05/24*

CHAIRPERSON'S SIGNATURE: *[Signature]* DATE: *07/10/2024*

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my late father and my mother.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to my mother Simbisai Duma that enabled this study to be done, finished and submitted. I am also expressing my gratitude to my supervisor, pleasant guidance despite his busy schedule, he was willing to help me.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

GoZ                      Government of Zimbabwe

MB                      Marange, Bocha

PR                      Poverty Reduction

SW                      Social Welfare

WHO                    World Health Organisation

### **Contents**

ABSTRACT.....	1
DECLARATION FORM.....	3

DEDICATION .....	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	4
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS .....	4
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND .....	8
1.1 Introduction .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
1.2 Background to the study .....	8
1.3 Statement of the problem .....	11
1.4 Purpose of the study .....	12
1.5 Research objectives .....	12
1.6 Research questions .....	12
1.6 Research assumptions .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
1.7 Justification of the study .....	12
1.8 Delimitations of the study .....	13
1.9 Limitations .....	13
1.10 Chapter summary .....	13
CHAPTER TWO .....	14
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	14
2.1 Introduction .....	14
2.2 Sustainable Livelihood Theory/Concept .....	14
2.3 Role of culture on poverty reduction .....	15
2.4 Role of socio-economic system on poverty reduction .....	15
2.5 Role of international cooperation and development aid in reducing poverty .....	16
2.6 Role of education in poverty reduction .....	16
2.7 Role of socio-economic system on poverty reduction .....	17

2.8	Poverty Statistics .....	18
2.9	Challenges faced in poverty reduction .....	18
2.10	Chapter summary .....	20
CHAPTER THREE .....		21
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....		21
3.1	Introduction .....	21
3.2	Research Philosophy .....	21
3.3	Research Methodology.....	22
3.4	Research Design.....	23
3.5	Study Population .....	24
3.6	Sample size.....	24
3.7	Sampling method.....	25
3.7.1	Purposive sampling.....	25
3.8	Data Collection Methods.....	26
3.8.1	Interviews.....	26
3.8.2	Surveys.....	26
3.9	Validity and Reliability .....	27
3.10	Data Presentation and Analysis.....	27
3.11	Ethical Considerations.....	28
3.12	Summary .....	29
CHAPTER FOUR.....		30
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.....		30
4.1	Introduction .....	30
4.2	Demographic characteristics of study participants.....	30
	<b>Sex.....</b>	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

<i>Categories of participants</i> .....	31
4.3 Presentation and analysis .....	31
4.4 Findings .....	32
4.4.1 Structural economic factors on poverty reduction strategies .....	32
4.4.2 Dependency problems .....	35
4.4.3 Impact of COVID-19 and the disruption of NGOs' supported livelihoods .....	36
4.4.4 Political interference .....	37
4.5 Chapter summary .....	38
CHAPTER FIVE .....	40
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	40
5.1 Introduction .....	40
5.2 Summary .....	40
5.3 Conclusions .....	41
5.4 Recommendations .....	42
References .....	44
Appendix A: Interview guide for community members .....	46
Appendix B: Interview guide for community leaders .....	47

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

Globally, governments are actively looking for poverty and sustainable development strategies at the national and worldwide levels due to the growing demand for a solution to poverty and the rising levels of poverty in developing nations. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been endorsed by numerous nations, both developed and developing, as a consequence of international collaboration. High levels of poverty still exist in African nations, necessitating greater government initiative and dedication. On financial and non-financial metrics of poverty, some governments have established national targets. This has affected fiscal development. Zimbabwe is no exception to the detriments of poverty despite the implementation of poverty and sustainable development strategies. The study therefore sought to understand the challenges in the implantation of poverty reduction strategies in Zimbabwe using Bocha, Marange as Units of analysis.

Extreme poverty eradication has long been a global focus, as seen by the inclusion of this goal in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Scholars have extensively researched on the interventions on poverty reduction but however, little is known on the context specific challenges faced in implementing poverty reduction strategies. Hence this study draws insights from Zimbabwe specifically on Bocha, Mutare district to adequately understand challenges surrounding implementation of poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies.

Poverty and underdevelopment are multifaceted. Hence, the need of multispectral approach in poverty reduction and sustainable development is critical. Food security, the economic environment, violence, and climate are some of the numerous factors that can be used to view the



complex layers and causes of poverty. The number of individuals living below the new poverty line of USD 2.15 per day (in 2017 Purchasing Power Parity) declined from 1.872 billion in 1998 to 659.23 million in 2019, according to World Bank estimates, and contributed to the reduction in the poverty rate from 31.3 percent to 8.5 percent during that time. However, according to the Bank's March 2023 Global Poverty Update, there would be 659 million poor people worldwide, nearly the same number as in 2019. (World Bank, 2017). This has been worsened by the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic which has eroded the income of the majority not only in Zimbabwe but on the globe. Therefore, given such a background, there is need to rethink the efficacy of poverty reduction strategies implemented to address the problem of escalation of poverty and underdevelopment. However, there is need to examine challenges in implementation of poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies drawing from the experiences of developing countries such as Zimbabwe.

Since independent, Zimbabwean Government has embarked on a number of strategies earmarked on poverty reduction and sustainable development. Like the majority of post-colonial African governments, Zimbabwe is primarily a rural country. Given that up to 60% of people on the continent live in rural regions, this is not surprising (Chimhowu, Manjengwa, and Feresu, 2010). Among those who live in rural areas, 73% are in extreme poverty and make less than \$1 per day. Bunwaree and Kasenally (2007) assert that poverty is a violation of fundamental human rights. Conventional development projects that offer in-kind transfers instead of cash transfers subtly suggest that governments, NGOs, and donors are more knowledgeable than the impoverished about what the latter need in order to break free from poverty. Supply-side interventions hold that there is already a demand for education and health care that is not being met because of a lack of infrastructure, in contrast to educational training programs that assume that demand is weak, technological adoption is low, and agricultural productivity is low due to a lack of information.

Table 1 demonstrates that Sub-Saharan Africa significantly reduced poverty between 1990 and 2018, as shown by the head count index's decline from 55 to 40%. Sub-Saharan Africa's population expanded by 112% during this time, from 509.45 million to 1078.31 million, and the number of the poor rose by 55%, from 280.95 million to 435.56 million. This large rise in the number of the poor—by nearly 154.61 million—indicates the urgent need to step up efforts to

reduce poverty. Table 1 shows Head count index (%) and the number of the poor (millions) in sub-Saharan Africa. Source: PovCalNet, World Bank. (2017b)

World Bank (2017b)

Sub-Saharan Africa has a significantly greater poverty rate if one uses a \$3.20 per day poverty level to compute its rate. 2017 World Bank. Some academics argue that the generally recognized \$1.90 per day poverty threshold is too low for assessments of standard of life. They argue that a more practical standard for gauging poverty is \$3.20 per day. Table 1 shows that, as predicted, when a \$3.20 per day poverty threshold was used instead of a \$1.90 per day poverty line, the rates of poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa throughout the research period were higher. Nonetheless, the number of people living in poverty rose by 333.26 million between 1990 and 2018, rising from 385.5 million to 718.76 million (see Fig. 1 below).

Source: World Bank (2017a)

Investing in technological advancement, implementing sound economic and social policies, utilizing resources creatively and efficiently, practicing good governance, having visionary leaders with the political will to prioritize the needs of the poor are just a few of the ways developing nations can overcome poverty. The provision of the fundamental needs for a life of dignity and health as well as for economic production—such as roads, schools, clinics, power, soil nutrients, and clean drinking water—depends on these elements, according to Sachs (2005). Many countries are already taking action to combat extreme poverty and improve living conditions in impoverished areas; in some cases, these initiatives are experiencing consistent progress.

According to Chimhowu, Manjengwa, and Feresu (2010), unemployment and underemployment, as well as low income from farm-related livelihood activities, are the main causes of poverty in Zimbabwe's rural areas. Regardless of the root causes of rural poverty, women, children,

individuals with chronic illnesses, and the elderly are those who are most impacted. These groups of people are at risk because African cultures and traditions unintentionally supported colonial masters' policies that marginalized their ability to advance economically and socially.

Marange Area that is 70 kilometers to the southwest of Mutare. The Marange Apostolic sect, which practices polygamy and promotes child marriages that result in enormous families, predominates in the area. It is categorized as part of Zimbabwe's Natural Ecological Region 5, which is distinguished by little rainfall (400mm), hot summers with highs of up to 33°C, and chilly winters with lows of about 6°C (Mambondiani, 2015). The most profitable agricultural production strategies involve the raising of tiny animals (goats) and the cultivation of short-season minor grains (sorghum, millet, and rapoko). The majority of those unemployed work as civil servants in the neighbouring city of Mutare, where the unemployment rate is around 80%. Poverty indicators in the areas also include food insecurity, child and maternal mortality owing to the existing social- cultural norms.

Given the natural resources in the study area, poverty has remained high. Through the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment program implemented by the government of Zimbabwe which culminate in the establishment of the Marange Community Share Ownership trust, poverty level have remained high. The study therefore will set to analyse challenges faced in poverty reduction strategies using Bocha Marange as a case study.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Since independent, Zimbabwean leadership has embarked on a number of strategies earmarked on poverty reduction and sustainable development. The prevalence of poverty has remained high despite the implementation of poverty reduction strategies. The prevalence of poverty in Bocha Marange has manifested through food insecurity, child marriage, child mortality and high stunting growth among the children under the age of 5 years. Since the dawn of independence, poverty reduction strategies have been implemented for example cash-based transfer programs, command agriculture and income generating projects. These strategies have yielded little results; therefore, this study explored the challenges faced in poverty reduction strategies focussing on Bocha Marange.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The study sought to understand challenges in implementation of poverty reduction strategies in Marange Bocha.

### **1.4 Research objectives**

- 1 To understand factors contributing to poverty and underdevelopment in Bocha, Marange Areas in Zimbabwe.
2. To explore the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies in Bocha, Marange areas in Zimbabwe.
3. To suggest measures that can be put in place to ensure the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies in Marange.

### **1.6 Research questions**

1. What are the factors contributing to poverty and underdevelopment in Marange, and Bocha areas in Zimbabwe?
2. How effective are the strategies being used to reduce poverty in Bocha, Marange areas in Zimbabwe?
3. What can be done to ensure the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies in Marange?

### **1.5 Research Strategies**

- Poverty reduction do not meet the development needs for communities in Mutare, Bocha and Marange.
- Poverty reduction strategies should be informed by a grassroots approach.

### **1.6 Justification of the study**

The study will be beneficial to policy makers, based on the findings of this research, policy makers will be able to redesign policy relating to safety nets and poverty alleviation in low-income communities of Zimbabwe. It will also be beneficial to academics; this is because the study will provide framework for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Most importantly it will show the different problems being faced by the poor as it is drawn from real people, with real life experiences, from that evidence the academic fraternity can be equipped

with the know how to avoid such problems when they put theory into practice in the real world in their different chosen professions. The realisation of sustainable development goals especially sustainable development Goal 1 which speaks to poverty reduction and insights into the practical ways of realising sustainable development will be added to literature.

### **1.7 Delimitations of the study**

Delimitation refers to the bounds of the study—both conceptual and physical—as well as the subject matter and location of the investigation. The knowledge, availability, and flexibility of the responses were taken into consideration throughout the selection process. This study was conducted in Manicaland Province focusing on Marange Bocha District. The study only focused on poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies implemented in these three districts.

### **1.8 Limitations**

Time and resource constraints were the major limitations that the researcher faced during the study. Travelling to Marange required financial resources which are beyond the student reach. To counter this challenge, the researcher had to make use of a representative sample.

### **1.9 Chapter summary**

This chapter sought to provide the foundation on which the research was built on. It also highlighted what prompted the researcher to carry out this study. It has therefore provided information on the background to the study, the problem statement, the study aim, research questions and objectives. The chapter has also given an overview of the delimitation, limitation of the study and definition of key terms. Chapter 2 focused on the theoretical framework and a review of related literature.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter introduces and explains in detail the theoretical framework to be used in the study as well as the literature review. The primary focus of the literature relating to the observations of the challenges in the implementation poverty reduction strategies in Bocha Marange Area, Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe.

#### **2.2 Sustainable Livelihood Theory/Concept**

The sustainable livelihoods approach is a framework for thinking about poverty reduction. This approach views poverty as a result of a lack of access to a combination of resources, including natural, physical, human, financial, and social capital. This approach also recognizes that people have different strategies for earning a living, and that these strategies may need to be adapted to their local context. From this perspective, poverty reduction efforts should focus on strengthening people's access to resources and providing opportunities for them to diversify their livelihoods.

According Sen (2000), to the sustainable livelihoods approach, there are several challenges that can arise in the implementation of poverty reduction strategies. One challenge is that people may not have the necessary information or capacity to make the most of available resources. Another challenge is that people may face barriers to participating in markets or accessing credit. A third challenge is that the social and political context may not be conducive to poverty reduction efforts. Finally, there may be environmental constraints that limit people's ability to build sustainable livelihoods.

According to Tooley (2013) there are several challenges in the implementation of poverty reduction strategies that have been identified through case studies and research. Another study

found that lack of infrastructure, such as roads and electricity, was a major barrier to poverty reduction in rural Malawi. There are also studies that have found that gender inequality and social exclusion are major barriers to poverty reduction.

Kabonga's (2023) study on sustainable livelihoods in Malawi found that weak institutions and governance structures were a major challenge to implementing effective poverty reduction strategies. Other studies have found that lack of access to markets and information about market opportunities is a barrier to sustainable livelihoods. In addition, the literature suggests that environmental factors, such as climate change, can have a major impact on the ability of people to build sustainable livelihoods.

### **2.3 Role of culture on poverty reduction**

The literature on sustainable livelihoods also discusses the role of culture and social norms in poverty reduction. For example, some studies have found that traditional gender roles and norms can be a barrier to women's empowerment and economic participation. In addition, the literature suggests that cultural beliefs about the environment and natural resources can affect people's ability to build sustainable livelihoods. For example, some communities may have cultural beliefs that prohibit certain types of resource use, such as fishing in certain areas (Dumba 2005).

Huntington (2011) has argued that culture can play a significant role in shaping economic development. He argues that certain cultural traits, such as the Protestant work ethic, are associated with higher levels of economic development. In addition, development economists such as Easterly (2008) have argued that culture can influence the effectiveness of development programs. Easterly has found that programs that are culturally appropriate and take into account local customs and beliefs are more likely to be successful.

### **2.4 Role of socio-economic system on poverty reduction**

There is a great deal of literature on the role of socioeconomic systems in poverty reduction. One of the most influential scholars in this area is Joseph E. Stiglitz (2016). Stiglitz has argued that the type of economic system in a country can have a significant impact on poverty. He has compared the experiences of different countries, such as the United States and China, to show how different economic systems can lead to different outcomes in terms of poverty reduction. In

addition, many development economists have studied the impact of various social welfare policies on poverty. These studies have found that policies such as cash transfers and social protection can be effective in reducing poverty.

### **2.5 Role of international cooperation and development aid in reducing poverty**

One key scholar in this area is Jeffrey Sachs, who has argued that development aid can play a crucial role in breaking the cycle of poverty. Sachs has argued that poverty reduction requires a "big push" from the international community, in terms of both funding and technical assistance. The literature on this is that aid can be effective in reducing poverty if it is well-targeted and coordinated, aid can be used to build capacity and support reform efforts in developing countries. One such case study is the Millennium Villages Project of 2019, which was spearheaded by Sachs (2019). The project aimed to reduce poverty in 14 villages in sub-Saharan Africa through a holistic approach that included investments in health, education, agriculture, and infrastructure. Another case study is the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, which provides debt relief to the world's poorest countries. These case studies have provided valuable insights into the potential and limitations of international cooperation and development aid in reducing poverty.

### **2.6 Role of education in poverty reduction.**

According Nobel Prize-winning economist Stiglitz (2017) has argued that investing in early childhood education is one of the most effective ways to promote economic growth and reduce inequality. He has also argued that early childhood education is essential for promoting social mobility and breaking the cycle of poverty. In addition, the economist Jeffrey Sachs has highlighted the importance of early childhood education in his work on development. Creswell, (2018) Another issue that has been highlighted in the literature is the role of external factors, such as aid and development assistance, poverty reduction. There is some debate about whether this assistance has a positive or negative impact on sustainable livelihoods. Some studies have found that aid can create dependency and disincentive people from taking responsibility for their own livelihoods. Others have found that aid can play a positive role in building sustainable livelihoods, as long as it is targeted and well-designed (Kufakunesu 2013).



A Sen (2014), has argued that education is essential for the development of capabilities, which in turn lead to poverty reduction. He argues that education should not be seen as a luxury, but as a fundamental human right. In addition, the World Bank has produced a number of reports on the role of education in poverty reduction. These reports have found that education is one of the most effective tools for reducing poverty, as it can lead to higher wages, improved health, and greater social mobility

Another issue that has been discussed in the literature is the role of education in poverty reduction. The scholars include developmental psychologists such as L Vygotsky, James P. Comer, and Beatrice and Goodenough (2020). Studies have found that education can play a key role in helping people to build sustainable livelihoods. For example, education can provide people with the skills and knowledge needed to take advantage of economic opportunities. It can also help to break down barriers to social inclusion and build social capital. However, some studies have found that there are limits to the impact of education on poverty reduction, and that other factors, such as access to finance and infrastructure, are also important (Gudza, 2014).

### **2.7 Role of socio-economic system on poverty reduction**

Adequate money continues to be a crucial component. Minimum wage legislation, efforts to end parallel labor markets, and anti-discrimination laws—which are seen to be among the most successful anti-poverty measures—may all be necessary under a capitalist society to reduce poverty (Kbonga et al., 2022). The environment may also be used as a tool for the affluent groups in society to exploit the poor. For instance, because of where they live, the poor are more likely to be affected by air pollution, which is typically caused by richer groups. Marxian/radical economics have also contributed the idea that poverty is a moral problem in addition to a technical one. More conventional economic frameworks frequently lack this, with the exception of those that (like Sen) include political ideas of justice into their analysis

Social capital and social exclusion a different body of scholarship highlights the connection between social exclusion, social capital, and poverty and emphasizes the significance of societal structural features as well as the circumstances facing particular groups. Of all the methods that have been discussed, social exclusion and social capital theories are perhaps the ones that concentrate most on comprehending the underlying mechanisms that enable deprivation to

develop and endure. However, the broad definition of poverty taken into account by these theories results in a less clear definition and makes it more difficult to measure and address the policy (Chitongo 2013).

## **2.8 Poverty Statistics**

The statistics on poverty in Zimbabwe are from the World Bank's 'Poverty in Zimbabwe' which was established in (2011). The report draws on data from the Zimbabwe Poverty Assessment Survey (ZIMPHAS) which was conducted in 2009. The BOCHA Marange has more than three quarters of its population lives in poverty with about less than 25% of the population living with less than \$ 1,25 per day. Additionally poverty rate has been increasing in recent years, in part due to country's political and economic stability (Denzin & Lincoln (2017)).

## **2.9 Challenges faced in poverty reduction**

This section is set on analyses scholarship with regards to challenges faced in poverty reduction. While poverty is pervasive, it is also dynamic, changing over time. One of the most difficult concerns endangering the development efforts (of governments, non-governmental organizations, and individuals) and survival of humanity continues to be the problem of poverty and the corresponding solution to it. In Africa, 490 million people are expected to live below the poverty line of \$1.90 PPP/day in 2021, up from the 478 million people who were living in extreme poverty in 2019. (2021) (UNCTAD). These statistics points to prevalent of poverty from a regional perspective which does not give a clear picture on the challenges with regards to implementation poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies in Zimbabwe hence this study.

As noted, scholars such as Sachs (2005), Chimhowu, Manjengwa, and Feresu (2010) have only researched on indicators of poverty and underdevelopment, however there is dearth of literature on implementation deficits in poverty reduction strategies. Numerous studies in Zimbabwe (Chitongo, 2013; Dube, 2020; Nyathi, 2012) adopt the normative approach to research on poverty reduction, examining how NGOs, the private sector, government departments, and ministries contribute to eradicating poverty without taking into account how the strategies implemented fails to ameliorate poverty and addressing underdevelopment.

Economic instability is a significant driver of poverty across the globe, particularly in developing countries. According to the World Bank (2020), the global poverty rate declined from 36% in 1990 to 8.6% in 2018, but economic instability continues to drive poverty in many parts of the world. In Africa, for example, Gentilini et al. (2018) note that economic volatility is a primary driver of poverty. Economic instability can be caused by a range of factors, including inflation, recession, and economic downturns, and it can affect individuals and communities in various ways, leading to poverty.

In Zimbabwe, economic instability has had a particularly severe impact on poverty levels. The country has experienced significant economic and political turmoil in recent years, including hyperinflation, currency depreciation, and high levels of debt. Adato and Bassett (2018) note that Zimbabwe's economic instability has led to food insecurity, unemployment, and limited access to essential services, which has increased the prevalence of poverty. The Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) (2020) reports that poverty levels in the country increased from 29% in 2019 to 49% in 2020, indicating the impact of economic instability on poverty levels.

However, despite the significant impact of economic instability on poverty levels in Zimbabwe and across the globe, there is a knowledge gap in understanding the specific mechanisms through which economic instability drives poverty. For example, Davis et al. (2019) argues that there is a need for research to examine the relationship between macroeconomic instability and poverty in more detail. Similarly, Rogan et al. (2018) highlight the need for research to examine the impact of specific economic shocks on poverty levels. Thus, there is a need for further research to identify the specific drivers of poverty related to economic instability in Zimbabwe and other developing countries.

Natural disasters can be a significant driver of poverty worldwide, with low-income countries being the most affected. According to the World Bank (2021), natural disasters can reduce a country's gross domestic product by 1-2%, exacerbating poverty levels. Africa is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters such as floods, droughts, and landslides, and climate change has increased the frequency and severity of these events (IFRC, 2020). In Zimbabwe, natural disasters such as cyclones, floods, and droughts have resulted in severe food shortages and displacement, which has contributed to increased poverty levels Chikodzi, (2018); ZIMSTAT,

(2020). These findings highlight the need for effective disaster management policies to mitigate the effects of natural disasters on poverty levels.

## **2.10 Chapter summary**

The chapter sought to review the literature related to this study. It comprised and dealt with scholarly views in relation to poverty reduction strategies. The chapter employed the funnel approach where it started from the global level down to the community level. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework approach was also presented as the guiding concept of this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methodology for the study on the challenges in the implementation of poverty reduction strategies in Bocha Marange Area. It outlines the research philosophy, methodology, design, population, sample, sampling methods, data collection methods, validity and reliability, data presentation and analysis, ethical considerations, and provides a summary of the chapter.

#### **3.2 Research Philosophy**

The research philosophy adopted for this study is interpretivism. Interpretivism, also known as constructivism or social constructionism, is a research paradigm that emphasizes the subjective understanding of social phenomena and aims to explore the meanings and interpretations individuals attach to their experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). It recognizes that social reality is complex and shaped by individuals' perceptions, beliefs, and interactions.

Interpretivism is an appropriate research philosophy for this study on poverty reduction strategies in rural communities. This philosophy aligns with the aim of understanding the context of poverty reduction, this means recognizing that poverty is a complex and multi-dimensional issue, and that there is no single solution that will work for all communities. It also means recognizing that poverty is not just an economic issue, but is also shaped by political, social, and cultural factors. The interpretivism philosophical perspective is a way of understanding the world that is based on the idea that there is reality that exists independently of our perceptions and understanding of it.

According to Bhaskar (1975) interpretivism, social phenomena are shaped by a complex interplay of factors including economic, social political and cultural forces. One of the strengths of interpretivism is its focus on capturing rich, contextualized data. By emphasizing in-depth exploration and understanding, interpretivism allows researchers to uncover the nuances and complexities of individuals' experiences and perspectives. This philosophy encourages

researchers to consider multiple viewpoints, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the research topic.

Additionally, interpretivism is well-suited for studying social phenomena that are influenced by cultural, historical, and contextual factors, as it recognizes the importance of these influences in shaping individuals' interpretations and meanings. One weakness of interpretivism is that findings may be subjective and dependent on the researcher's interpretations. Since interpretivism acknowledges the subjective nature of reality, different researchers may interpret the same data differently, potentially leading to variations in findings. Additionally, the in-depth nature of interpretivism can be time-consuming and resource-intensive, as it requires substantial data collection and analysis efforts. Moreover, as interpretivism focuses on individual experiences and meanings, it may be challenging to generalize findings to broader populations or contexts.

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

The research methodology for this study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is an approach that focuses on exploring and understanding social phenomena through the collection and analysis of non-numerical data such as interviews, focus groups, and document analysis (Creswell, 2013). Research on the challenges of implementing poverty reduction strategies in Bocha Marange Area uses qualitative research methods. These include methods such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and case studies (Kothari, 2004). This type of research was useful for understanding the complex social, political, and economic factors that affect poverty reduction efforts. It also helped to identify the specific challenges that are faced by rural communities, and to develop strategies that are tailored to their needs.

In addition, it helped to provide a voice for the poor and marginalized, who may otherwise be left out of the decision-making process. Qualitative methodology was well-suited for this study as it allowed for an in-depth exploration of the complex social processes and interactions involved in the poverty reduction strategies. This methodology enabled the researcher to delve into the lived experiences and perceptions of individuals, shedding light on the intricacies of local development within the framework. One strength of qualitative methodology is its ability to capture rich, detailed data. Through methods such as interviews and focus groups, researchers

can gather in-depth information, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of participants' perspectives and experiences.

Qualitative research also enabled flexibility and adaptability during data collection, facilitating the exploration of emerging themes and the ability to probe deeper into participants' responses (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, qualitative research is well-suited for studying complex social phenomena influenced by cultural, historical, and contextual factors, providing a holistic understanding of the research topic. A limitation of qualitative methodology is the potential subjectivity and bias in data interpretation. Since qualitative research relies on the researcher's interpretations, different researchers may analyze the same data differently, potentially leading to variations in findings. Additionally, qualitative research often involves small sample sizes, which may limit the generalizability of findings to broader populations or contexts.

Another important method used in research on poverty reduction strategies is participatory action research (PAR). PAR involves working with the people who are affected by the issue being studied, so that they can participate in and shape the research process. In the context of poverty reduction, this involved working with poor and marginalized communities to design and implement strategies that meet their needs. PAR was particularly effective in helping to identify and overcome the challenges that face rural communities, as it allowed for a deeper understanding of the local context and the specific needs of the community

### **3.4 Research Design**

The research design for this study was a case study design. A case study design involves in-depth examination and analysis of a specific case or context to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Yin, 2018). The case study design is well-suited for this study as it allowed for a detailed analysis of the poverty reduction strategies. By focusing on Bocha Marange as a case, the study explored the unique characteristics, dynamics, and challenges related to devolution and local development in this particular locality. The case study design enabled the researcher to examine the context-specific factors that influence the challenges in the reduction of poverty.

One strength of the case study design is its ability to provide rich, detailed, and context-specific data. By focusing on a specific case, the study gathered in-depth information about how the

people in the Bocha Marange Area are surviving. The case study design also allowed for the examination of multiple data sources, such as interviews, focus groups, and document analysis, enhancing the depth and breadth of the data collected. Additionally, the case study approach facilitates the exploration of complex social phenomena within their real-life contexts, providing a holistic understanding of the research topic (Menheim, 2011). One of the case study designs is its potential lack of generalizability. Since the focus is on a specific case, the findings may not be easily applicable to other contexts or populations. The case study design also requires careful selection of the case, which may limit the representativeness of the findings.

### **3.5 Study Population**

Creswell (2012) pointed out that when researching the challenges of implementing poverty reduction strategies in Bocha Marange Area, it is important to consider the specific characteristics of the population being studied. This includes factors such as geographic location, age, gender, economic status, and cultural background. The study population should be selected carefully, to ensure that the findings are relevant and applicable to the people who are most affected by poverty. In addition, it is important to consider the diversity of the population, and to ensure that a range of perspectives are represented. For example, in rural communities, it was important to include both farmers and non-farmers in the study population, as the experiences of these two groups may differ significantly.

Furthermore, it is important to consider the power dynamics within the population, and to be aware of the ways in which these dynamics may affect the research process. For example, in rural communities, there may be a power imbalance between men and women, or between landowners and landless people. These power imbalances can influence how people respond to questions about poverty reduction, and should be taken into account when designing the study.

### **3.6 Sample size**

The sample size for a study on the challenges of implementing poverty reduction strategies depended on a number of factors, including the research design, the study population, and the resources available. However, a common rule of thumb is that a sample size of at least 30 participants is needed in order to achieve statistical significance. In addition, it is important to consider the number of groups or sub-groups within the population, as this will affect the



necessary sample size. For example, if there are multiple ethnic groups within a rural community, a larger sample size may be needed in order to get a representative sample from each group. This sample size allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the data collected while ensuring that the researcher engaged in detailed and in-depth discussions with each participant.

It is important to note that the sample size in qualitative research is not determined by statistical considerations but rather by the depth and richness of the data collected and the attainment of data saturation, where new information and insights are no longer emerging from the data. The manageable sample size ensured that the research can be conducted within the available resources and time constraints while maintaining the rigor and quality of the qualitative data collection and analysis processes.

### **3.7 Sampling method**

For this study sampling method used was purposive sampling.

#### **3.7.1 Purposive sampling**

Purposive sampling is a type of non-random sampling that involves selecting participants based on specific criteria that are relevant to the research question (Rubin 1995). In a study on the challenges of implementing poverty reduction strategies in rural communities, purposive sampling was used to select a sample of participants who are from different socioeconomic backgrounds, or who have experienced different forms of poverty. This sampling method can be useful for ensuring that the sample is representative of the population, and that the findings are applicable to a wide range of people.

One advantage of purposive sampling is that it can help to ensure that the sample is diverse and representative of the population. This is particularly important when studying poverty, as it is a complex and multidimensional issue that affects people in different ways. Another advantage of purposive sampling is that it allows for the inclusion of participants who may be difficult to reach through other methods, such as hard-to-reach or marginalized groups. This helped to ensure that the findings of the study are relevant to a wide range of people, including those who are most vulnerable to poverty.

### **3.8 Data Collection Methods**

For this study, data collection methods used were interviews, focus groups, and surveys

#### **3.8.1 Interviews**

Interviews were well-suited for this study as they allowed for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, perspectives, and insights regarding poverty (Fontana & Frey, 2005). There are several ways to conduct interviews in studies on poverty reduction. One approach is to use in-depth, semi-structured interviews. This type of interview is usually conducted one-on-one and allows the researcher to ask open-ended questions and probe for further information. This approach was particularly useful for understanding the personal experiences and perspectives of people living in poverty.

Another approach was to use focus group interviews. These are usually conducted with a small group of people and allow for a more open discussion of the issues being studied. This can be a good way to collect data on topics that may be sensitive or difficult to discuss one. A limitation of interviews is the potential for social desirability bias, where participants may provide responses, they perceive as desirable or acceptable to the researcher.

#### **3.8.2 Surveys**

When conducting surveys in studies on poverty reduction, it is important to consider the specific context and culture of the community being studied. For example, in rural communities, the use of paper-based surveys may be more appropriate than digital surveys, as not everyone may have access to technology (Bowen, 2009). It is also important to consider language barriers and other factors that may affect the ability of people to participate in surveys. The use of trained interviewers who are familiar with the community helped to ensure that the surveys are conducted in a way that is appropriate and respectful.

Another important consideration in conducting surveys on poverty reduction is the framing of questions. In order to get accurate and meaningful responses, it was important to use neutral language and avoid leading questions. For example, rather than asking "How often do you feel hungry?", a more neutral question would be "In the last week, how many days did you not have enough food to eat?". Additionally, it was important to consider the use of multiple-choice and

open-ended questions. Multiple-choice questions can be helpful for gathering quantitative data, while open-ended questions provided richer insights into the lived experiences of people living in poverty.

### **3.9 Validity and Reliability**

Validity refers to the extent to which a study accurately measures or reflects the phenomenon it intends to investigate (Cook & Campbell, 1979). In other words, it assesses whether the conclusions drawn from the research are well-grounded and represent the true nature of the research topic. Reliability refers to the consistency and repeatability of a study's findings (Morgan, 2014). Both validity and reliability were important in this research, as they ensured that the findings are accurate and useful. Validity and reliability were particularly important when studying complex social phenomena such as poverty. Furthermore, the researcher maintained a reflexive approach throughout the study, documenting personal biases, assumptions, and reflections to enhance transparency and minimize any potential influence on the findings.

### **3.10 Data Presentation and Analysis**

Data presentation and analysis are crucial steps in the research process that involve organizing, interpreting, and presenting the collected data to derive meaningful insights and draw conclusions. In this study, a thematic analysis approach was employed for data presentation and analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method that involves identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns or themes within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After the data has been collected, it needs to be presented and analyzed in a way that is accessible and informative. There are a variety of data presentation methods that can be used, including graphs, tables, and charts. For example, in a study on poverty reduction, a graph showing the percentage of people living below the poverty line over time can be a powerful way to illustrate the impact of interventions. When analyzing the data, it was important to use appropriate statistical methods, such as correlation analysis and regression analysis. This helped to determine the relationships between different variables, such as poverty and access to healthcare or education.

### 3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are a critical aspect of research that involves the identification and adherence to moral principles and guidelines to ensure the protection, welfare, and rights of the participants involved (American Psychological Association, 2017). Ethical considerations are essential in maintaining the integrity and trustworthiness of the research process and safeguarding the rights and well-being of individuals or communities involved in the study.

In this study, several ethical considerations were taken into account:

**Confidentiality and Anonymity:** Confidentiality is a key ethical consideration in research on poverty reduction. This involves ensuring that the identities of participants are not revealed, either directly or indirectly. This is particularly important in studies involving sensitive topics, such as poverty, as it could lead to social stigma or discrimination. Respecting participants' privacy and confidentiality was crucial to protect their identities and sensitive information. Measures were taken to ensure that the data collected is securely stored and only accessible to the research team. Participants' identities were anonymized in the reporting and dissemination of the findings to ensure their confidentiality.

**Informed Consent:** Informed consent is a fundamental ethical principle that ensures participants are fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits before voluntarily agreeing to participate (World Medical Association, 2013). Informed consent was another key ethical consideration in research on poverty reduction. This involved ensuring that participants understand the purpose of the study and the potential risks and benefits of participating. This included providing information in a clear and understandable way, and giving participants the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification. Informed consent was obtained before the study began, and participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

**Respect for Autonomy and Privacy:** Participants' autonomy and privacy was respected throughout the study. They had the right to decline participation, withdraw from the study at any time, or provide limited responses if they feel uncomfortable. The researcher created a safe and non-coercive environment for participants to freely express their views and experiences.

### **3.12 Summary**

This chapter outlined the research methodology employed in the study on the challenges in the implementation of poverty reduction strategies in Bocha Marange Area. It described the research philosophy, methodology, design, population, sample, sampling methods, data collection methods, validity and reliability, data presentation and analysis, and ethical considerations.

## CHAPTER FOUR

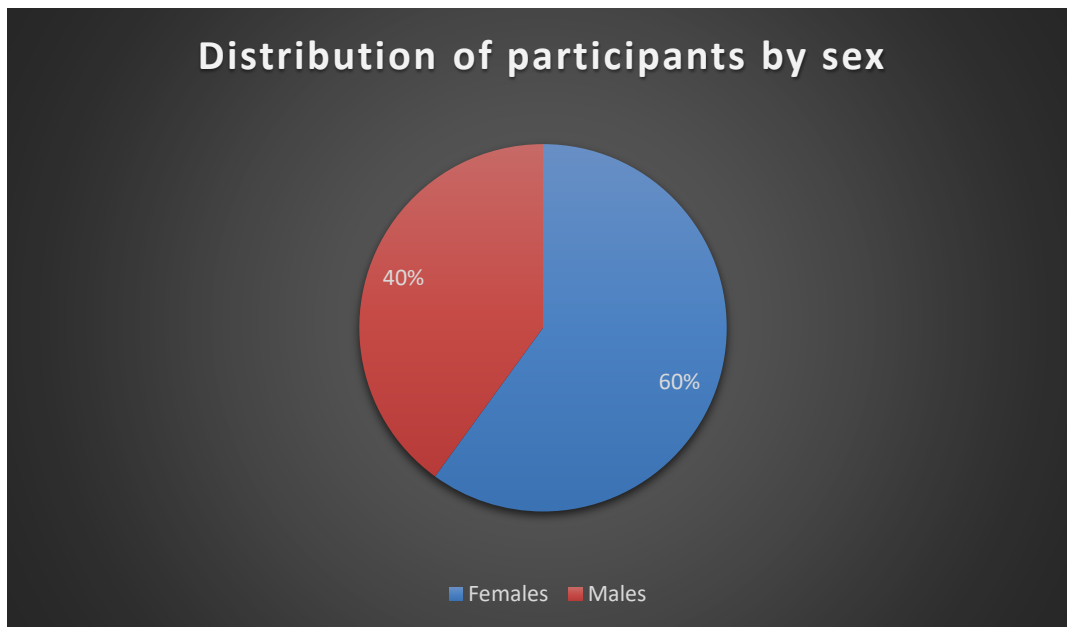
### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter sought to outline the methodologies that were employed in this study. This chapter presents the key findings of the research conducted in relation to the research goals and the primary data obtained. It draws implications from the data collected and also relates these results to wider development concerns highlighted in chapters two and three. In line with this, this chapter therefore presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from various sources.

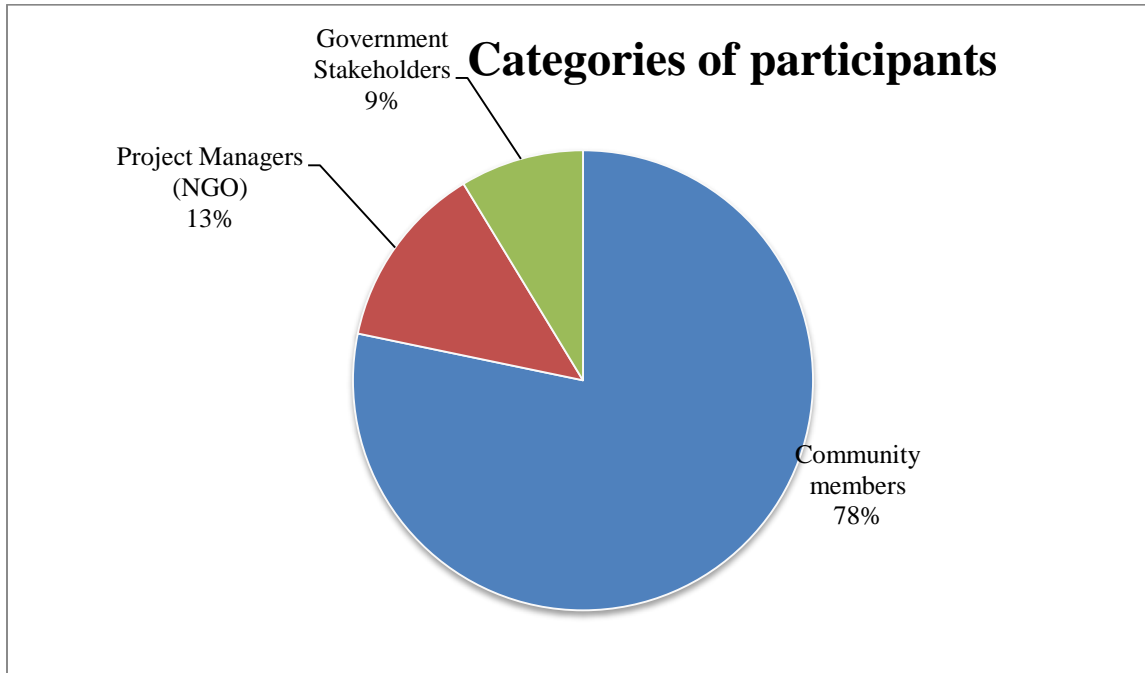
#### 4.2 Demographic characteristics of study participants

##### Gender



A total of twenty study participants were involved in this study and they were chosen purposively. As can be noted from the above, females constituted 60% and males only constituted 40% of the participants. As can be inferred from the previous sections the project was mainly targeting residents of Bocha Marange in Mutare District.

### *Categories of participants*



For the purpose of this study, three categories were considered. These include community members who happen to be the beneficiaries of the poverty eradication projects who constituted 78% (15), followed by Project Managers with 13% (3) and lastly Government Officials with 9% (2).

### **4.3 Presentation and analysis**

Subsequent to the transcription exercise, the researcher reviewed the field notes and transcribed interviews to generate codebook. They used an overlapping, yet objective process to identify themes and subthemes from transcribed field notes. In the first step of the thematic analysis process, the researcher reviewed textual data “line-by-line to identify major themes and sub themes. It is worth noting that the process of identifying themes began during transcription of interviews. Grouping of sub themes took place by reviewing their meaning in relation to the major themes.

The purpose was to start grouping themes in a hierarchical tree structure. Sub themes placed under each major theme in a way that provided interpretation of the major theme. This was necessary to ensure she had captured the full meaning of the major themes. After major and sub

themes were identified, we provided interpretation of the themes by including information from field notes to explain each theme in a more elaborated manner. To supplement and support study findings, the research used direct “quotes” provided by study participants.

## **4.4 Findings**

### **4.4.1 Structural economic factors on poverty reduction strategies**

It emerged that one of the challenges affecting agencies in poverty reduction is the impact of structural economic factors. The researcher was told of several constraints that agencies have to contend with on a daily basis. The operating environment in Zimbabwe is characterized by shortages of enablers like fuel and raising prices which makes budgeting difficult for them. It was submitted by some respondents that even enablers whose prices are quoted in US dollar like fuel they keep increasing. Below are some excerpts from participants:

*We are operating in a precarious and unpredictable environment where one morning you wake up and the fuel pumps are absolutely dry. Moreover, what worries us is why do the price of fuel keep increasing despite being quoted in supposedly stable US dollar currency. To our surprise in other countries like South Africa sometimes the price of fuel falls down, this is never the case in Zimbabwe, it is always going up (R2).*

*What I can say is that the Zimbabwean economy is unstable, very unpredictable which makes it difficult to budget even use the US dollar as the base currency (R3).*

In relation to the above, some respondents also had the following to say:

*If you compare the prices of goods and services in Zimbabwe and other regional countries, they are a bit higher in Zimbabwe (R1).*

*Generally, the operating environment is difficult, speculation leads to shortages (R2)*

*Speculation is rife in the Zimbabwean economy thus there is no guarantee that consumables that we use in our daily operations will always be available (R3).*



The excerpts above shows that the challenges affecting NGOs in poverty eradication are intrinsic to NGOs themselves while other are extraneous to NGOs. Amongst the extraneous factors are the impact of structural economic factors inherent in the Zimbabwean economy. The structural economic factors have created a difficult environment for the operation of NGOs in Zimbabwe given the shortages of enablers like fuel and other supplies needed for the smooth operation of NGOs. This is affecting the poverty reduction endeavours of NGOs. Earlier on Brown and Kalengaonkar (2012) had revealed that material shortages retards NGOs' efforts in poverty reduction, and this reality emerged in this study.

Below are some extracts from the participants:

*Things are difficult for everyone in Zimbabwe. Thus, with reduced disposable incomes us in the nutritional gardens we also suffer. There are fewer customers buying our produce (R14).*

In a different interview, one respondent had this to say:

*While as an organization we are doing our best to reduce poverty through propping up income generating activities from ISALS, we have no control on the external environment that these groups are operating in. Our beneficiaries have to live with liquidity challenges and an inflationary environment (R9).*

In contrast to prior research (Perera, 2019), which identify a limited civic space as the main obstacle facing NGOs, this study indicated that obstacles brought on by the economy were impeding attempts to reduce poverty. According to Munyonga's (2018) research, attempts to reduce poverty are thwarted by economic difficulties. Even with the usage of the US dollar, which is thought to be a stable currency, the budgeting process for non-governmental organizations is extremely difficult due to the persistent price rises that define the unpredictable economic climate. The household and the NGOs themselves have often been the focus of explanations for poverty in low-income households. These justifications typically downplay the significance of the external economic environment.

*The people want to repay their debts...but they are constrained by the bad economic situation obtaining in the country (R3).*

*We are living in the same environment as these people, so when a person comes to me and confess inability to pay, I understand their situation (R2).*

*Everyone is burdened by the economic challenges (R17).*

*One cannot blame these people for failing to service their debts, it is a function of the bad economic situation that we are living in (R1).*

The project beneficiaries who are enrolled in nutritional gardens show a decline in customers, which is an obvious sign of the influence of structural economic reasons. Participants in the nutritional gardens made it clear that they are selling their produce for less because of liquidity issues, as reflected by IR6, which stated that "we have no choice but to sell our produce at a lower price because people in the community do not have money due to the economic challenges." In this manner, we benefit.

The researcher agrees with Adjei et al. (2012) that understanding how the macroeconomic environment affects poverty alleviation is important. In light of this, Dube (2020) contends that external variables such as the macroeconomic climate that restricts NGOs' efficacy should be held accountable for their failure to reduce poverty rather than NGOs themselves. For example, even while NGOs are increasing financial assets (revenue) through interventions like ISALS, nutritious gardens, IGAs, and vocational training, the benefits are offset by periods of inflation typical of the Zimbabwean economy.

Economic hardships have affected livelihoods supported by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as ISALS. Respondents agreed that ISALS groups have suffered greatly from liquidity issues, with some members leaving the groups due to inability to repay loans, and others suffering from the blunt force of liquidity issues, as indicated in the following excerpts:

*In the past, we would do our savings in ISALS without challenges. Right now, everyone is afraid to borrow the group funds because you are not sure whether you will be able to pay back the money (R6).*

*In our group we used to be fifteen but now we are six, the majority have dropped along the way because of the inability to pay the borrowed loans from the groups (vakakundikana kubadhara zvikwereti) (R2).*

As the aforementioned quotations make clear, recipients of the chosen poverty reduction initiatives reported that their clients were unable to pay their obligations because of the state of the economy. Teguru (2016) acknowledged in previous research the impact of economic volatility on non-governmental organizations' activities in Zimbabwe. The SLF is a popular theory in poverty studies that emphasizes how poverty struggles of impoverished households take place within the context of vulnerability. The background of vulnerability expressed in risks and shocks impedes attempts to reduce poverty. According to this report, COVID-19 was a shock that had an immediate impact on NGOs and the people they assist. Directly, COVID-19 decreased NGOs' financing sources, as East Africa Philanthropy also discovered.

#### **4.4.2 Dependency problems**

Literature demonstrates that NGOs' reliance on donors, which severely impedes sustainability efforts, is one of the disadvantages of using them to reduce poverty. The study's conclusions demonstrate how NGOs' approaches to reducing poverty are impacted by donor reliance. ISALS groups are one of the tactics used in one intervention to address district poverty. The organization does not provide financial incentives to these groups. An intervention official bemoaned this and made the following submission:

*Our donor is against making a direct financial investment to the ISALS groups. I am positive if we were allowed to make a partial financial investment, these people could make something out of their lives. If we could say give each member US\$20 to start their saving journey, I am confident they could have progressed well by now. Unfortunately, the donor is against this (R3).*

The findings demonstrate that NGOs need the funders' approval before they can realistically modify their approaches to reducing poverty. As with the last intervention, using funds for purposes other than those agreed upon with the donor was prohibited since doing so would amount to financial mismanagement. As stated in the donor agreement, "we are given funds for a specific activity, they cannot be used for other reasons despite compelling contextual realities to do otherwise." As a result, we must adhere to donor specifications (R5). The results demonstrate that they are experiencing the negative impacts of donor dependence, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

One initiative depends on financial donations from American churches to support the organization's operations. Nevertheless, funding for this project was applied because COVID-19 also had an impact on the churches.

*Churches in the USA that sponsor our activities were affected by COVID-19 that hit the world since 2020. This has resulted in dwindling funding to us thus affecting investment in educational support, nutritional gardens, drilling of boreholes and vocational training (R3).*

#### **4.4.3 Impact of COVID-19 and the disruption of NGOs' supported livelihoods**

The vulnerability context—which explains how the external environment affects livelihoods and institutions—is discussed in the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) (Carney, 1998). COVID-19 appeared as a shock to the District's NGOs-sponsored livelihoods. According to one respondent, COVID-19-induced lockdowns seriously interrupted poverty reduction initiatives like ISALS. "Due to the lockdowns we had to temporarily suspend savings only resuming recently, we lost several months of saving," the respondent stated (R1).

Additional responses confirmed that the district's ISALS groups were impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns, as evidenced by several group members quitting:

*We have many of our group members who have dropped out. This is because they could not afford to repay the loans borrowed from the groups. In this era of lockdowns, you cannot do any business to repay the loans (R11).*

*Except for the disruption that we have witnessed due to COVID-19, the savings are moving on well (R8).*

*It was impossible to meet as ISALS groups during COVID-19 lockdowns. We lost many months of making regular savings. We could be somewhere by now as a group (R13).*

Furthermore, it was shown that ISALS and buying and selling—a means of subsistence derived from NGOs' efforts to reduce poverty through ISALS and nutritious gardens—were also negatively impacted by COVID-19. Buying and selling are typically done during growth points and when individuals relocate, both of which were forbidden during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Nutritious gardens were also reportedly disturbed by COVID-19 lockdowns. This is a result of the members of the nutritional gardens being unable to get together to assess their progress and motivate one another to persevere in the face of difficulties. A number of responders expressed concern about the interruption of output in nutritional gardens resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of certain institutional gardens,

#### **4.4.4 Political interference**

The study's conclusions demonstrate how politicians meddle in NGOs' efforts to reduce poverty. It was discovered that political leaders, such as council members, abused their power to sway the choice of potential recipients and the course of initiatives aimed at reducing poverty. It was argued that:

*The challenge that we are facing is that the politicians they want to politicize everything that we do. They have a habit of hijacking our meetings and politicizing those meetings. In our line of work, we are not supposed to work with politicians because beneficiaries have different political inclinations. We are neutral such that we do not alienate our beneficiaries (R3).*

*Politicians want to dictate everything, who should benefit from our activities and whom we should work with in the community. Failure to heed to their call, they threaten us that we will not work in their areas (R2).*

Political meddling is becoming more frequent for NGOs working in Bocha, which has an impact on their operations there. NGO exploitation by politicians for political gain can take several forms. Politicians sway NGOs' operations to the advantage of their supporters in an effort to win votes. Another respondent highlighted the following:

*It was also said that some politicians go to the extent of claiming that they are the ones initiating NGOs' projects or they are the ones responsible for bringing the NGOs in the community "we are told during their political meetings, the politicians brag they are the ones that have brought us to operate in the community (R4).*

Stories of politicians threatening communities that NGOs will move out if not voted in power are not new to me" IR10 and "... it is true that some politicians want to take advantage and claim they are responsible for bringing NGOs" R13. The findings show that beyond structural economic factors and dependency problems, politicians' interference in NGOs interventions is one of the factors retarding poverty reduction initiatives.

In addition to political meddling, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operate within a restricted civic space in Zimbabwe, as shown by the government's mistrust of NGOs as potential agents of regime change (Teguru, 2016). (Xinwa, 2020). In order to restrict the activities of NGOs in Zimbabwe, the government has passed legislation like the Private Voluntary Organizations Act (17:05) and the Private Voluntary Organizations Amendment Bill. NGOs working in the fields of governance, advocacy, human rights, and constitutionalism are most impacted, but development, which includes reducing poverty, is also impacted.

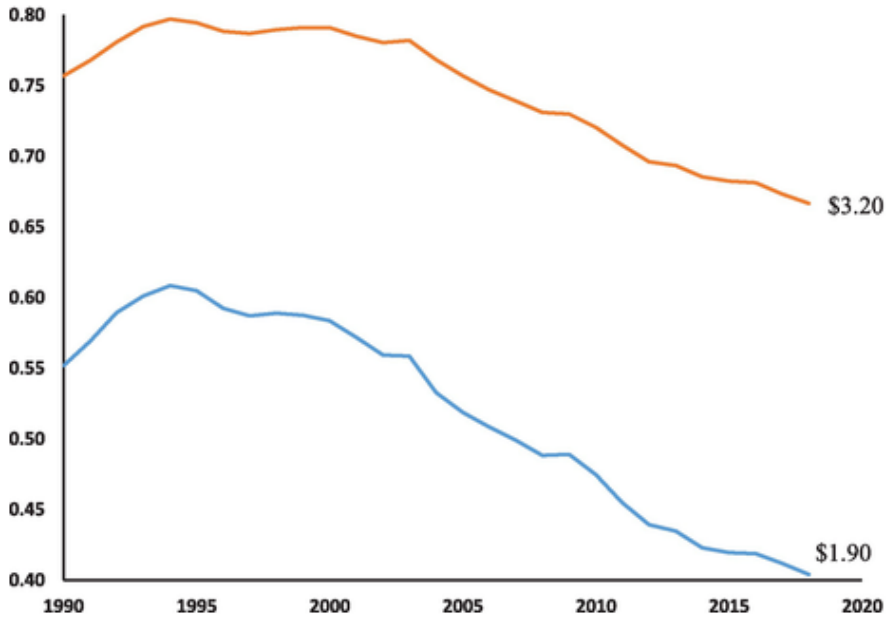
#### **4.5 Chapter summary**

The chapter has focused on the presentation and analysis of the data that were obtained from the field. It sought to provide the answers to the research questions that were highlighted in chapter one. The findings of the study have been also discussed in relation to other relevant literature. The next chapter will provide a summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.

World Bank (2017b)

	Poverty line of US\$ 1.90		Poverty line of US\$ 3.20	
	Head count index	Number of the poor	Head count index	Number of the poor
1990	0.55	280.95	0.76	385.50
1995	0.60	352.76	0.79	463.37
2000	0.58	388.27	0.79	526.33
2005	0.52	393.57	0.76	574.25
2010	0.47	412.49	0.72	626.12
2015	0.42	417.60	0.68	679.09
2018	0.40	435.56	0.67	718.76

World Bank (2017a)



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter seeks to summarise the key findings presented in the previous chapter based on the research objectives and provide some conclusions and recommendations derived from these conclusions. It is structured in a way that the first part speaks to the first objective, the second part also speaks to the second objective, up to the third objective. Recommendations are presented at the end of this chapter.

#### **5.2 Summary**

Chapter one of this study provided a general overview including the significance, problem, aim and objectives of the study and it acted as the foundation of this study. Chapter two reviewed literature review focusing on the most relevant literature to the study. Chapter three outlines and explains the methodology which is relevant and the best instruments to the research. Chapter four was focusing on data presentation and analysis linking new knowledge to fill the gaps identified in literature review. Chapter five was now focusing on providing conclusions and recommendations.

The results of the study have demonstrated the influence of structural economic elements present in the economy of Zimbabwe. Given the shortages of essential supplies like fuel and other items required for NGOs to operate efficiently, fundamental economic reasons have made it challenging for NGOs to operate in Zimbabwe. This has an impact on NGOs' efforts to reduce poverty. In contrast to prior research (Perera, 2019; Helliker & Murisa 2020), which identify a limited civic space as the main obstacle facing NGOs, this study indicated that obstacles brought on by the economy were impeding attempts to reduce poverty. Even with the usage of the US dollar, which is thought to be a stable currency, the budgeting process for non-governmental organizations is extremely difficult due to the persistent price rises that define the unpredictable economic climate.



The household and the NGOs themselves have often been the focus of explanations for poverty in low-income households. The influence of the external economic environment is frequently disregarded in these theories. The researcher agrees with Adjei et al. (2012) that understanding how the macroeconomic environment affects poverty alleviation is important. In light of this, Dube (2020) contends that external variables such as the macroeconomic climate that restricts NGOs' efficacy should be held accountable for their failure to reduce poverty rather than NGOs themselves.

Even more disastrously, COVID-19 shattered the plans for poverty alleviation backed by NGOs. Lockdown measures made it impossible for saving clubs to assemble, and also made it impossible for those who were interested in buying and selling to sell their goods at growing spots. Political meddling is becoming more commonplace for NGOs functioning in the district, which has an impact on their operations there. NGO exploitation by politicians for political gain can take several forms. Politicians sway NGOs' operations to the advantage of their supporters in an effort to win votes. Furthermore, a few politicians assert that they are the ones who introduced NGOs to underprivileged areas. They assert that NGOs can leave the underprivileged areas at their command.

In addition to political meddling, NGOs in Zimbabwe operate within a restricted civic sphere because of the government's mistrust of them as potential agents of regime change. In order to restrict the activities of NGOs in Zimbabwe, the government has passed legislation like the Private Voluntary Organizations Act (17:05) and the Private Voluntary Organizations Amendment Bill. NGOs working in the fields of governance, advocacy, human rights, and constitutionalism are most impacted, but development, which includes reducing poverty, is also impacted.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Evidence from this study as well as from other literature suggests that NGOs are essential to the fight against poverty. NGOs use livelihood, economic development, health, education, and empowerment tactics to help reduce poverty. NGOs are using ISALS, nutritious gardens, job training, and assistance for health and education to help reduce poverty in Bocha. Nonetheless, this study demonstrated that NGOs are confronting a number of obstacles that are delaying their

attempts to reduce poverty, despite their crucial role in this regard. NGOs face both internal and external obstacles. The influence of structural economic forces, which are marked by periods of inflation, is one example of an external element.

The gains made possible by economic strengthening initiatives like ISALS and nutritious gardens are being reversed by inflation. For example, even while NGOs are increasing financial assets (revenue) through interventions like ISALS, nutritious gardens, IGAs, and vocational training, the benefits are offset by periods of inflation typical of the Zimbabwean economy. NGOs have material shortages as a result of economic difficulties, which has an impact on their activities. The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing lockdowns prevented NGOs from implementing programs like ISALS, IGAs, and nutritional gardens; as a result, homes that had made progress fell even farther into poverty. NGOs struggle internally with donor reliance, which limits their ability to engage in activities aimed at reducing poverty. Considering the numerous difficulties that NGOs in the district are facing.

The NGOs under study are so reliant on their funders that they are unable to act in ways that are not authorized by them. This entails implementing adjustments that can enhance their actions for reducing poverty. It became clear that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are eager to improve their initiatives with practical adjustments, such funding ISALS and nutrient gardens. They are unable to deviate from approved ideas and budgets, nevertheless. This was mentioned as one of the NGOs' shortcomings. NGOs and funders often have a supply-led relationship, with donors having a significant impact on NGOs' operations. Due to the financial dilemma, non-governmental organizations shift their focus from their goals and mission to popular causes that garner attention.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The study proffers the following recommendations:

- The Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) bears the responsibility of addressing the structural economic problems. Given the shortages of essential supplies like fuel and other items required for NGOs to operate efficiently, fundamental economic reasons have made it challenging for NGOs to operate in Zimbabwe. Therefore, it is advised that

NGOs alert the government to the effects of macroeconomic issues on the eradication of poverty. This can be accomplished at NGOs' routine interactions with government representatives.

- NGOs routinely provide the government frequent reports. These reports can be used to describe the obstacles preventing initiatives aimed at reducing poverty.
- The analysis makes clear how this reliance on donors is impeding efforts to reduce poverty. Therefore, it is advised that NGOs look for financing from donors that have faith in their capacity to develop localized poverty reduction initiatives. A small number of donors are beginning to give considerable consideration to the requests of local players rather than imposing development measures from the top down. The report advises NGOs to look for partnerships with these sponsors or contributors.
- Additionally, it is advised that NGOs have a variety of financing sources rather than depending entirely on foreign donors whose support has conditions attached in order to combat the issue of donor reliance.
- In order to foster cooperative and strategic partnerships between NGOs and the government, the Zimbabwean government ought to consider opportunities to provide grants to NGOs at the policy level. Additionally, this lessens the customary reliance on donors that carries conditions.
- A number of responders expressed concern about the interruption of output in nutritional gardens resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. For several institutional gardens, it required a fresh start.

#### Areas of further research

1. Impact of microfinance initiatives on poverty alleviation.
2. Role of agricultural training programs in improving livelihoods.
3. Effectiveness of vocational skills training in enhancing employability.
4. Analysis of social safety nets and cash transfer programs.
5. Investigation into access to healthcare and education.
6. Impact of community-based initiatives on poverty reduction.
7. Assessment of infrastructure development (e.g., roads, water, sanitation).
8. Evaluation of entrepreneurial support programs.
9. Analysis of gender dynamics in poverty reduction.

10. Investigation into environmental sustainability and climate change.

These areas can provide valuable insights for targeted interventions and policy-making. Would you like me to expand on any of these points or suggest more areas?

## References

Chikodzi, D. (2018). The impact of drought on rural livelihoods and food security in Zimbabwe: The Case of Masvingo Province. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 20(4), 127-146.

Chimhowu, A., Manjengwa, J. and Feresu, S. (eds) (2010). (2 edition); Harare: Institute of Environmental Studies, University of Zimbabwe.

Chitongo L (2013) *The contribution of NGOs to rural development: The case of Catholic relief services protecting vulnerable livelihoods programme in Zimbabwe. Asian Journal of Management Sciences and Education* 2(3): 124–1

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2015). *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach*. Sage Publications.

Dube K (2020) *Ngos and vulnerability in rural Zimbabwe. A case study of CARE interventions in the Zaka District, Masvingo. PhD Thesis, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.*

Merriam, S. B. (2018). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wiley & Sons.

Nyathi D (2012) *Evaluation of poverty alleviation strategies implemented by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Zimbabwe: A case of Binga Rural District. PhD Thesis, University of Fort Hare, South Africa*

Sachs JD. *The End of Poverty: The Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: Penguin Press; 2005

Trochim, W. M., & Donnelly, J. P. (2008). *The research methods knowledge base*. Cengage Learning.

UNCTAD. (2021). *World Investment Report*. Geneva: United Nations. /Press/Pr/2021/046  
Accessed at <https://unctad.org/press-material/facts-and-figures->

UNDP (2018a). *Human development indices and indicator*

World Bank (2017b), *Closing the Gap. The State of Social Safety Nets (2017)*, Washington Dc: Technical Report

World Bank, (2017a), *Monitoring Global Poverty: Report of the Commission on Global Poverty*: Washington Dc  
Chapoto, A., & Zikhali, P. (2019). Zimbabwe's food system: Can the cash transfer program improve household food security? *Development Southern Africa*, 36(2), 172-188.

World Bank. 2000a. *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty*. Washington D.C.: World Bank.

World Bank. 2000b. *Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?* Washington D.C.: World Bank.

World Bank. 2001a. *Global Development Finance: Building Coalitions for Effective Development Finance*. World Bank: Washington D.C.

World Bank. 2001b. *World Development Report 2002: Building Institutions for Markets*. Washington D.C.: World Bank.

World Bank. 2002a. Global Economic Prospects and the Developing Countries. Washington D.C.: World Bank.

World Bank. 2002b. Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook. Washington D.C.: World Bank.

### **Appendix A: Interview guide for community members**

1. Male/Female?
2. How old are you?
3. What do you think are the biggest challenges in reducing poverty in your community?
4. What do you think is needed to overcome these challenges?
5. How can the government and other organizations best support your community in reducing poverty?
6. Do you think the current strategies being implemented are effective? If not, why not?
7. What would you change about the current strategies, if you could?
8. Are there any cultural or social factors that make it difficult to reduce poverty in your community?
9. How do you think the government can do in order to reduce poverty?
10. Do you feel that you have a voice in the decisions that are made about how to reduce poverty in your community?
11. Do you feel that there is enough coordination and cooperation between different organizations working on poverty reduction?
12. Do you think there is enough information and awareness about the poverty reduction strategies being implemented?
13. How do you think the economic situation in Zimbabwe affects the ability to reduce poverty in your community?
14. How does the issue of corruption affect the implementation of poverty reduction strategies?
15. Do you feel that there are enough opportunities for people in your community to earn a living?

## **Appendix B: Interview guide for community leaders**

1. What do you think are the biggest challenges in implementing poverty reduction strategies in your community?
2. Do you feel that there is enough support and resources from the government and other organizations to effectively reduce poverty?
3. How do you think the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe affects the ability to reduce poverty?
4. How do you think cultural and social factors affect the ability to reduce poverty?
5. What do you think is needed to improve coordination and cooperation between different organizations working on poverty reduction?
6. How do you think the strategies currently being implemented could be improved?
7. Do you feel that the community members are sufficiently involved in the process of developing and implementing poverty reduction strategies?
8. What do you think can be done to address the issue of corruption, which may hinder the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies?
9. What specific needs do you see in your community that are not being addressed by the current strategies?
10. Do you feel that there is a need for more education and awareness about poverty reduction strategies?
11. Do you think there are any particular groups in the community who are at a disadvantage when it comes to poverty reduction, such as women, children, or people with disabilities?

