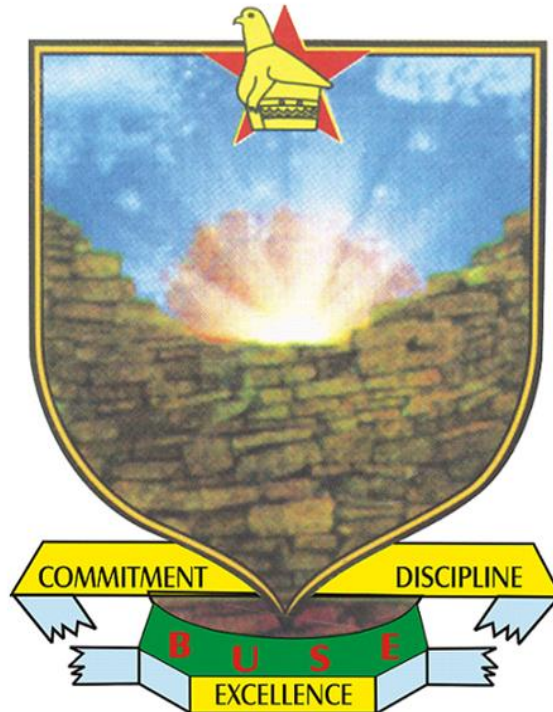


**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**



Munashe Chivanga

B200779B

Supervisor: Dr R.B. Maponga

Sustainability of Donor-Funded Community Empowerment Projects for HIV infected women. A case of Ward 10 of Mazowe District, Zimbabwe.

April 2024

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO BINDURA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFULMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following individuals and organizations for their support and guidance throughout my research journey:

The Almighty God, for through him, everything else was made possible.

My supervisor, Doctor R.B. Maponga, whose expertise and guidance helped shape my research and provided valuable insights into the field of sustainability and community empowerment.

The women of Mazowe District, who shared their experiences and stories with me, and whose resilience and strength in the face of adversity inspired me throughout this research.

The organizations and community leaders who facilitated my data collection and provided valuable information on the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects.

My family and friends, who supported me emotionally, financially and spiritually throughout this research, and who encouraged me to pursue my academic goals.

Bindura University and the Geography Department who provided me with the resources and facilities necessary to complete this research.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the donor organizations and funding agencies that have supported community empowerment projects for HIV-infected women in Mazowe District and whose efforts have made a significant impact of the lives of those women. This research would not have been possible without the contribution of these individuals and organizations, and I am forever grateful for their support and guidance.

DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my family, whose unwavering support and encouragement have been a constant source of strength and inspiration throughout my academic journey. I also dedicate this research to my friends and colleagues, who have provided guidance, feedback and camaraderie throughout this process and to all those who have come before me, whose contributions to the field have paved way for my own research and discoveries.

DECLARATION


I Munashe Chivanga studying for the Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Development Studies, aware of the facts that plagiarism is a serious offence and that falsifying information is a breach of ethics of Development Studies research, truthfully declare that:

The dissertation report titled: Health implications and coping strategies of the urban poor in the face of limited access to water and sanitation services. Lessons from Mabvuku and Tafara is a result of my own work and has not been copied, I have followed research ethics required in pursuit of Development Studies research and I grant permission to the University to use this report for educational purposes.

Student

Signed Date 24/09/2024

Supervisor

Signed  Date 24/09/2024

Chairperson

Signed  Date 24/09/2024

ABSTRACT

In the wake of HIV/AIDS epidemic, donor-funded community empowerment projects have proliferated as a strategic response to mitigate the socio-economic impacts on affected communities, particularly women. However, the sustainability of these projects remains a pressing concern. This dissertation investigates the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects for HIV-infected women in Mazowe District, Zimbabwe, using a mixed-methods approach. A concurrent triangulation design was employed, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. The study's conceptual framework drew on the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach. The research employed the descriptive research design and the explanatory research design. For sampling purposes, the researcher used the convenience and stratified sampling techniques. Through the use of questionnaires, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and surveys as research instruments, the study managed to gather a reliable set of primary data which was presented and analyzed using thematic data analysis methods and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) to draw conclusions on the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects. Findings indicate that while donor-funded community empowerment projects have

positively impacted the economic, social and health outcomes of HIV-infected women, their sustainability is compromised by inadequate capacity building, limited financial resources, and insufficient community ownership. Moreover, the study reveals that project beneficiaries' empowerment is hindered by patriarchal norms, gender-based violence and stigma. This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting the critical factors influencing the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects. The study's recommendations, informed by the findings, emphasize the need for donor organizations and funding agencies to prioritize capacity building, community ownership, and financial sustainability in their funding strategies. Additionally, the study advocates for a gender-sensitive approach to address the socio-cultural barriers hindering the empowerment of HIV-infected women.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER PAGE	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the study.....	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	3
1.3 Research Aim.....	4
1.4 Research Objective.....	4
1.5 Research Questions.....	4
1.6 Scope of the study.....	4
1.7 Significance of the study.....	5

1.8 Definition of key terms.....	6
1.9 Conclusion.....	7
CHAPTER TWO.....	8
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
2.0 Introduction.....	8
2.1 Overview of HIV and women.....	8
2.2 Theoretical Framework.....	9
2.2.1 Sustainable Livelihoods Framework.....	9
2.2.2 Principles of Sustainable Livelihoods Approach.....	12
2.3 Community Empowerment Projects, Global Overview.....	15
2.4 Community Empowerment Projects, Regional Level.....	16
2.5 Community Empowerment Projects, Local Level.....	17
2.6 Sustainable Development.....	18
2.7 Factors affecting sustainability of projects.....	19
2.8 Gaps in the current empowerment projects.....	21
2.9 How to make Donor-Funded Community Empowerment Projects a success.....	22
2.10 Chapter Summary.....	23
CHAPTER THREE.....	24
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	24
3.1 Introduction.....	24
3.2 Description of the study area.....	24
3.3 Research Design.....	26
3.4 Data Collection Methods.....	27
3.4.1 Procedure.....	27
Key Informant Interviews.....	27
Focus Group Discussions.....	27
Questionnaire.....	27
Surveys.....	29
Secondary Data.....	30

3.4.2 Population and Sampling Techniques.....	30
Target Population.....	30
Sampling Procedure.....	30
3.4.3 Data Collection Instruments.....	32
Questionnaire.....	32
Key Informant Interview Guide.....	32
Focus Group Discussions Guide	32
Surveys.....	33
3.5 Data Analysis Methods.....	33
3.6 Conclusion.....	34
CHAPTER FOUR	35
4.1 Introduction.....	35
4.2 Demographic Characteristics	35
4.2.1 Social Cluster of Respondents.....	35
4.2.2 Educational level.....	36
4.2.3 Population Age Structure.....	37
4.2.4 Respondents source of employment.....	37
4.3 Impact assessment.....	38
4.4 Challenges faced	40
4.5 Sustainability of donor funded community empowerment projects.....	42
4.6 Conditions for Sustainability of the projects.....	47
4.7 Conclusion.....	47
CHAPTER FIVE.....	48
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	48
5.1 Introduction.....	48
5.2 Summary of findings.....	48
5.3 Conclusions.....	49
5.4 Recommendations.....	49
List of Tables.....	viii

List of Figures.....	ix
List of Appendices.....	ix
List of Acronyms.....	x
REFERENCES.....	51
APPENDIX 1: Interview Guide	58
APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire	60

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 Social Cluster of Respondents.....	35
Table 4.2 Respondents distribution by Education level.....	36
Table 4.3 Distribution of Respondents by Age.....	37
Table 4.4 Distribution by employment.....	37

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1 The study area map for Ward 10 of Mazowe District.....	25
Figure 4.1 Outcome indicators.....	38

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Interview Guide.....	58
Appendix 2 Questionnaire.....	60

ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Virus
DDO	District Development Officer
DREAMS	Determined Resilient Aids Free Mentored and Safe
FDG	Focus Group Discussions
GOZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HIV	Human Immune Virus
ISAL	International Money Savings and Lending
MRDC	Mazowe Rural Development Council

MWAGCD	Ministry of Women Affairs Gender and Community Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
SDF	Social Development Fun
UN	United Nations
WDC	Ward District Coordinator
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Millions of new infections and AIDS-related deaths are recorded each year, making the H.I.V. epidemic a persistent global public health concern. Donor-funded community empowerment projects have emerged as a key strategy in addressing H.I.V related issues by empowering communities to take ownership of their health and implement tailored interventions. These projects aim to empower communities especially women infected with H.I.V, enhance access to prevention services, and address the underlying social determinants of H.I.V transmission. In developing nations, official efforts to promote development are complemented by donor-funded initiatives carried out through non-governmental organizations. In Zimbabwe, non-governmental organizations have been active for a number of years (Ndhlovu E, 2018). Previous research has shown that N.G.Os is working on a number of programs in Mazowe District, including food assistance, water and sanitation, financial assistance, and climate change resilience. There has been a minor shift in the socioeconomic development of households in the district since NGO operations began, and difficulties were noticed following the cessation of donor assistance. This resulted in several initiatives coming to a standstill or failing, which had an impact on the growth of the Mazowe community.

With Mazowe District being the epicentre for child marriages, STIs, and HIV/AIDS, Mazowe has been fighting these issues for a prolonged period of time. This is partly due to the district's very high rate of artisanal mining, lack of formal industrial employment, and growing number of commercial sex workers. Poverty increases vulnerability to HIV/AIDS either directly or indirectly, and there is a complicated connect in between the disease and poverty. Unemployment and poverty are major contributing factors and the fundamental cause of the epidemic. Certain areas of Mazowe District, such as Jumbo, Concession, Caesar, and Nzvimbo (Rosa Mine), are hotspots and ideal hunting grounds for sex workers due to the abundance of mining activity in these areas. Furthermore, a lack of sufficient needs assessment has led to a lack of knowledge about the Mazowe people's way of life, which highlights the necessity of participatory grassroots development initiatives. Notwithstanding the numerous donor-funded initiatives that are underway in the Mazowe District, the district's underdevelopment is a sign that these initiatives are insufficient and unsustainable.

Many African nations relied on the developed world's material, financial, institutional, and technological support shortly after gaining their freedom to chart their course for growth. As the need to assist the UN's rural development process grew, so did the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international development agencies (IDAs), and donor-funded project interventions (Banks N, 707-18). The 1990s saw a surge in this NGO movement as numerous international donors backed rural development initiatives across Africa (World Bank, 2020).

While numerous donor-funded projects have been implemented, it is essential to critically examine their sustainability to ensure optimal allocation of resources and long-term impact. Sustainability, which works together with community ownership, is the capacity of a project or program to maintain its intended goals and influence after the original funding has expired. Without sustainable mechanisms and sustainable practices, the gains made through these projects may be lost, and the vulnerable population remains at risk. When communities are actively involved in project design, implementation, and decision-making processes, they're more likely to take ownership and continue the projects activities even after external funding ends. Therefore, this study will help identify factors that contribute to community empowerment and can inform strategies to foster greater community participation and ownership.

Previous research has demonstrated that N.G.Os are an important organization that supports gender equality and HIV prevention (Lewis Kanji, 2009). Their impact is evident in several domains that bolster the welfare of society, such as employment, healthcare, education, economic growth, safeguarding children, and women's empowerment (Chitongo 2013, Mhaka 2013, and Kabonga et al 2022). The effects of community empowerment initiatives supported by donors on HIV prevention in Zimbabwe are extensive and varied. The viability of the donor-funded programs is still in doubt, though, due to the fact that most communities, particularly minority groups, continue to be undeveloped despite participation.

Sustainability of these projects for H.I.V infected women is influenced by a various factors. Financial sustainability is a critical aspect, as these projects need stable and diversified funding sources to cover operational costs, staff salaries, and ongoing activities .Institutional sustainability involves building local capacities, fostering partnerships, and integrating the project within existing community structures. Social sustainability requires addressing stigma,

discrimination and social norms that perpetuate gender inequality and H.I.V related stigma. Therefore, it is essential to assess these projects' sustainability in order to determine whether or not they are accomplishing their goals and whether or not the resources allocated are being spent efficiently. Additionally, it will assist in assessing sustainability as we identify the elements that influence the project's long-term success or failure. Sustainable projects are designed to create lasting change and benefits for communities beyond the duration of the funding period.

When dealing with women empowerment projects that aim to uplift women and provide them with opportunities for growth and development, sustainability is crucial. If a project is sustainable, it means that it can continue to function and deliver its intended benefits even after the external support or funding ends. However, if a project is not sustainable, women who would have benefited from the project's interventions may face challenges in sustaining the progress they have made. This will pose a setback that will hinder their ability to maintain the newfound empowerment, skills, or opportunities they gained through the project, therefore, it is imperative that this research assess the sustainability of those initiatives that receive funding from donors.

1.2. Problem Statement

Women infected with H.I.V in Mazowe remain marginalised and therefor there is a need to assess the projects sustainability. Despite efforts towards financing community empowerment projects for H.I.V infected women increasing drastically since 2001,with more bilateral and private sector donors joining in the effort to fight the H.I.V pandemic, women living with H.I.V continue to face significant setbacks in their health ,livelihoods and empowerment ,jeopardizing the progress made through donor-funded projects. This has made women living with H.I.V to experience a loss of access to essential healthcare services and the discontinuation of financial assistance and livelihood programs has hindered their economic independence, exacerbating their vulnerability and limiting their ability to sustain a decent standard of living. Aid based on harmonisation, coordination, alignment, and managing for results is difficult to implement with vertical initiatives like the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Global Fund, and the World Bank's Multi-country HIV/AIDS Programme (Saasa, 2007). Ensuring the effectiveness of available donations for recipient countries is a difficulty. An extensive assessment of these projects is required, even though anecdotal evidence points to promising results. Henceforth, a study on the sustainability of donor-funded projects for women living with H.I.V is essential

to bridge the knowledge gap and inform evidence –based interventions that ensure sustained support, empowerment and improved outcomes for this vulnerable population.

1.3. Research Aim

To evaluate the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects for H.I.V infected women.

1.4. Research Objectives

- ❖ To determine the impact of donor –funded community empowerment projects on the economic, socio and health outcomes for HIV infected women in Mazowe.
- ❖ To identify challenges faced by women in Mazowe community from projects handed over for community ownership.
- ❖ To assess sustainability of donor funded community empowerment projects in Mazowe District.
- ❖ Examine conditions for sustainability of community based projects for HIV infected women.

1.5. Research Questions

- ❖ To what extent do donor-funded projects for HIV-infected women demonstrate sustainability?
- ❖ What are the key challenges that hinder the sustainability of Donor-Funded Community Empowerment Projects?
- ❖ What is the effect of donor-funded projects for HIV-infected women on the economic empowerment of these women?
- ❖ What strategies can be implemented to influence the long-term sustainability of donor –funded community empowerment projects in Mazowe District?

1.6. Scope/Delimitation of the Study

The research is confined to Mazowe District focusing on the findings from the Ministry of Social Welfare personnel and other key informants like councillors and the Ministry of Education. The research focused on specific types of community empowerment projects targeting H.I.V infected women like those that provide vocational training, income –generation opportunities, health education and psychosocial support. Additionally, in order to have a better understanding of the many perspectives and interests of the stakeholders, the project will explore the perspectives of various stakeholders involved in the project's sustainability. The study will also focus on evaluating the sustainability of those projects using specific evaluation methods ,such as qualitative interviews ,surveys ,case studies , or mixed –methods approaches.

This will provide a rigorous assessment of the sustainability outcomes. The dissertation will focus on projects implemented within the last ten years. Also, the research will focus on specific types of community empowerment projects for H.I.V infected women that primarily address economic empowerment, healthcare access and social stigma reduction. The researcher may not be able to explore all the research elements due to time and resource constraints, therefore they will mostly focus on the sample population that was chosen.

1.7. Significance of the study

Studying the sustainability of these projects helps identify factors that contribute to the enhanced project effectiveness and impact, leading to improved interventions and outcomes for this vulnerable population. The findings of the dissertation can inform policy development and programmatic decisions related to H.I.V interventions. Therefore, understanding the sustainability of donor-funded projects can guide the design, implementation, and improve funding allocation for future initiatives .Policy makers, government agencies, and donor organizations can utilize the research outcomes to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and long-term impact of their interventions. By examining the specific context of donor-funded community empowerment projects, the research can provide valuable insights that have practical implications for improving the lives of women infected with H.I.V. The study aims to provide NGO's and other Mazowe stakeholders with a toolkit to help them refocus their sustainable development plans. This information can guide project managers, implementers, and community organizations in designing and implementing H.I.V interventions that are more sustainable, responsive and tailored to the needs of H.I.V-infected women. It can also help identify strategies to strengthen community engagement, address funding challenges, and promote long-term behaviour change.

The research might be used to contribute to the empowerment of H.I.V-infected women by amplifying their voices, experiences, and needs .By understanding the sustainability of donor –funded projects, interventions can be designed to enhance the social, economic, and health outcomes of women living with H.I.V. The research can be used for developing tactics that encourage HIV-positive women to meaningfully participate in and interact with decision-making processes pertaining to their own health and well-being. Additionally, the research will add to the body of information already available on gender-related issues, HIV interventions, and sustainability. This will provide chances for new theories, concepts, and ideas to be

developed that will advance the field. The research can inspire further studies that delve deeper into specific aspects of project sustainability or explore different contexts, populations, or interventions related to H.I.V –infected women. Conducting this study on the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects for H.I.V infected-women will improve resource allocation, strengthen collaboration and partnerships between implementing partners, provide evidence –based insights that inform policy and advocacy efforts, promote long-term empowerment and well-being of H.I.V-infected women. Disseminating the knowledge can help foster learning, replications and scaling up of effective interventions, ultimately benefiting H.I.V-infected women.

1.8. Definition of key terms

Affected person(s): those whose lives have been impacted by the epidemic's wider effects and/or infection, either directly or indirectly (Smart, 2004:226).

- Contextually, it refers to a women in Mazowe infected with HIV and receives donor funding for empowerment.

Community empowerment is used to describe the process of giving communities more power over their own lives. Communities are made up of individuals who may or may not live close to one another but who nevertheless have similar identities, interests, and concerns. Community empowerment is the process by which people gain control of the factors and decisions that affect their lives (Laverack, 2008).

-Contextually it can be defined as donor funded projects for the HIV\AIDS infected women for improving their livelihoods.

Discrimination:

Discrimination is the practice of passing unjust or biased judgments on people on the basis of the classes, organizations, or other groups to which they belong or are believed to belong (Cambridge Dictionaries, 2013).

Contextually this is when people will be acting on a pre-existing stigma.

Economic growth /development: The procedure through which a nation enhances its capacity to generate commodities and amenities (Barnett Whiteside, 2002 271).

-In a contextual sense, it will allude to a rise in an economy's output of products and services during a given time frame.

Sustainability -Shows whether or not a project can go on and meet its goals for as long as possible when funding from donors has ended. (2013) Sally Z, Gaskin SJ. Project sustainability is defined as a project's capacity to go on functioning and serving its beneficiaries after external funding has ended (Chiduzha C. 1987). Said another way, sustainability is an initiative's capacity to go on long after donor funding runs out.

1.9. Conclusion

To sum up, Chapter one gave a general summary of the research topic, which is community empowerment projects for HIV-positive women supported by donors. The foundation for the dissertation has been established in this chapter, which also presents the research objectives and questions, methods, scope, and problem statement. This section additionally highlights the importance of the study. The chapter also reviewed existing literature on community empowerment, sustainability, and donor funding highlighting key themes and gaps in the current research. The subsequent chapters will further explore these aspects, contributing to the further understanding of these donor-funded community empowerment projects and their impact on reducing the burden of H.I.V on women.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

Chapter two provides an overview literature review and its purpose, highlighting the importance of examining the sustainability of donor-funded projects for H.I.V –infected women. This section of the study examines the body of research on community empowerment projects supported by donors in the context of HIV-positive women. It will review studies, reports and evaluations of similar projects, examining their theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and key findings. The literature review covers community engagement, behaviour change and programme sustainability .It will provide a solid foundation for the research and identify gaps in the current knowledge base.

2.1 Overview of HIV and women

Millions of individuals are afflicted by the HIV global health pandemic, with women being disproportionately affected. Worldwide, women make up over half of all HIV-positive individuals. According to UNAIDS (2017), 17.8 million women worldwide were expected to be living with HIV in 2016 (aged 15 and over), making up 52% of all HIV-positive adults. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the most affected region, women make up over 60% of those living with HIV (WHO, 2013). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the interconnectedness of global health and the significance of implementing long-term community empowerment projects in order to tackle HIV and other health concerns. Certain regions have much greater infection rates among young women than among men, putting them at a heightened risk. Gender inequality, poverty, lack of access to healthcare and education, and gender-based violence are some of the factors contributing to the rising prevalence of HIV among women. Major research questions still need to be answered despite advancements in our knowledge of the variables linked to the course of the disease and the risk factors for HIV transmission to women. This research has been motivated by worries and ambiguity regarding the sustainability of project benefits and impact. With the HIV epidemic still going strong and its disproportionate effects on women, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, community empowerment projects that are sustainable are needed to support women living with HIV. The necessity of defending and advancing HIV-positive women's human rights, such as their right to empowerment, dignity, and good health, emphasizes the significance of long-term community empowerment initiatives.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

In theory, the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework acts as the foundation for this research, which evaluates the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment initiatives in Mazowe District by looking at how these initiatives affect beneficiaries' livelihood assets, plans, and results as well as the community at large. This research attempts to give livelihood dynamics, interventions, and sustainable empowerment outcomes utilizing the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework.

2.2.1 Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

This study used the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, a conceptual framework for analysing complicated problems that have an impact on people's lives, especially in the context of development activities, was adopted by the study. It discusses the vulnerability context, which explains how the external environment affects institutions and means of subsistence (Carney 1998). The simplest definition of a livelihood, as illustrated by Chambers and Conway (1992:5), Chambers (1995:174), and Scoones (1998:5), is a way of making a living. The Department of International Development (DFID) in the UK improved the framework created by Chambers and Conway in 1992, and it was extensively embraced by international development organizations in 1999. "Our Common Future," the official name of the Brundtland Report, published by the United Nations in 1987, defines sustainable development as "development that ensures current needs are satisfied without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own ". The livelihood theory has its roots in Robert Chambers' research from the mid-1980s. Chambers created the concept of Sustainable Livelihoods in an effort to improve development cooperation's effectiveness (Kollmar and Gamper, 2002). The British Development for International Development (DFID) expanded upon his ideas, which form the foundation of the sustainable livelihoods strategy. According to Kollmar and Gamper (2002), the DFID has incorporated the method into its development assistance program since 1997. The concept was broadened during the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, which promoted achieving Sustainable Livelihoods as a general objective for reducing poverty (Balgis et al., 2005).

Livelihoods refer to resources and rights that allow them to support themselves. Stated otherwise, a livelihood is an earnings stream or a means of subsistence. A livelihood is made up of one's resources, activities, and abilities (Krantz, 2001). Accordingly, the definition of assets encompasses not only physical infrastructure like roads, marketplaces, clinics, schools, and bridges, but also natural or biological resources like land, water, common property resources, flora, and fauna, as well as human resources like knowledge and creation through talents and social networks, participation, and empowerment (Haida, 2009). The International Institute of Sustainable Development defines sustainable livelihoods as centered on people's ability to produce and maintain their means of sustenance, enhance their own well-being, and that of future generations (Balgis et al., 2005).

Because it is community-centered with the goal of enhancing the rural poor's current capacities, the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework greatly prioritizes local priority interpretations and abilities (Sporton and Thomas, 2002). Thus, the framework was suitable for examining conditions for sustainability of the donor-funded community empowerment projects. Human capital, social capital, physical capital, financial capital, and natural capital are the five asset categories that are highlighted as being essential for guaranteeing sustainable lives. By examining the various types of assets that these women have access to, as well as the vulnerabilities and shocks that they face, the Sustainable Livelihood Framework can help to identify strategies for fostering project sustainability within this intended audience and examining the effects of donor-funded initiatives on HIV-positive women's standard of living. Through examining changes in the five types of assets over time, it is possible to determine whether these projects are contributing to sustainable livelihoods or whether they are exacerbating existing vulnerabilities.

Five components make up the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, according to Sporton and Thomas (2002). Based on rural production is the first. Projects that provide jobs through waged labour or subsistence farming that uplifts the self-worth of the rural populace are the only ways in which livelihoods can become sustainable. Reducing poverty is the focus of the second link. In order to be deemed successful, the programs must create sustainable means of subsistence and tackle the qualitative and quantitative aspects of poverty, ultimately fostering gender parity in the acquisition of capital assets. The ability to access and mobilize resources with stronger subjective perceptions of wellbeing makes up the third factor, together with improved

capacities and wellbeing. Fourth, the element focuses on how resilient the initiatives are to temporary pressures.

The fourth factor is the ability of the projects to recover from long-term shocks and endure short-term pressures. The sustainability of the natural environment refers to the long-term resilience of its resource base to shocks and pressures. Depletion of natural resources beyond the capacity of a system to support production can lead to long-term stock depletion detrimental to livelihoods (Sporton & Thomas, 2002).

Because the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework offers an integrated and holistic approach to studying the various elements that influence the livelihoods of the vulnerable population, it is especially pertinent to the study of Donor-Funded Community Empowerment Projects for HIV-infected women. Implementing programs consisted of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework could contribute to a decrease in poverty and lessen the difficulties faced by women living with HIV. If donors can make use of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, issues such as dependency syndrome and unsustainable projects can be lessened. To be compliant with the Sustainable Development Framework, a plan needs to be people-centered, multilevel, participatory, collaborative, sustainable, dynamic, and backed by a commitment to decreasing poverty (Sporton Thomas, 2002).

The framework for sustainable livelihood provides a paradigm for addressing poverty and vulnerability in contexts of both development and humanitarian relief. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (Sporton and Thomas, 2002) was inspired by the need to maintain the sustainability of natural resources for present and future generations, while placing HIV-affected women and all aspects of their lives and means of subsistence at the centre of development and humanitarian efforts.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework is being utilized in this study because it is better at integrating the aforementioned principles with community development and is aware of the different facets of rural poverty (Chambers, 1983 referenced in Ellis and Biggs, 2001). Building livelihood assets and capacities is crucial for HIV-positive women who confront major obstacles to economic empowerment, as the SLF highlights. It also looks at the requirements for the programs' sustainability.

Therefore the researcher opted for this framework to probe the research because it helps gain a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics involved in sustaining livelihoods for HIV-

infected women within the context of donor-funded community empowerment projects. The framework aids in the exploration of sustainability's multifaceted dimensions and the identification of critical elements that either support or undermine such projects' long-term viability. In particular, the livelihood framework acts as a tool for defining the parameters and providing the analytical foundation for livelihoods study by identifying the key factors influencing livelihoods and the relationships between them (Carney, 1998). Understanding the difficulties HIV-positive women encounter in maintaining their livelihoods requires an understanding of the vulnerability context, which includes trends, shocks, and seasonality. This is why the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework takes this context into consideration. The framework's focus on community-level analysis, which fits with the community employment program focus, allowing for an exploration of how programs affect community dynamics and livelihoods of HIV infected women.

Generally, in both development and humanitarian contexts, the sustainable livelihoods approach offers a framework for tackling HIV-related concerns and vulnerabilities. The Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) emerged from the necessity of giving the impoverished, in all aspects of their lives and means of subsistence, priority in humanitarian efforts and development while maintaining the sustainability of natural resources for present and future generations (Sporton and Thomas, 2002). Utilizing this approach, the sources of livelihood that Mazowe locals rely on to either make a living or survive have been identified. The approach will also assist people in realizing and creating their own coping methods, as opposed to depending on outside funding.

2.2.4. Principles of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA)

The sustainable livelihoods method is based on a few concepts, just like any other poverty-focused development strategy. The sustainable livelihoods approach's tenets are listed below.

Individual-focused

According to Goldman (2001), persons and communities are unique. The method acknowledges the diversity within communities. According to Goldman (2001), there should be distinctions made between different groups of people via external assistance. On the other hand, Krantz (2001) elaborates on the same concept, saying that long-term poverty eradication

is only possible if outside aid pays attention to what matters to individuals, acknowledges the differences between different social groups, and works with them in a way that is congruent with their context, ability to adapt, and current means of subsistence.

Participatory and Intuitive

The idea that poor people are helpless objects should not be applied to those who are trying to overcome their poverty (Goldman, 2001). Any strategy to combat poverty must fully and actively involve the underprivileged. Individuals must be included at all levels in controlling their complete growth because they are the ones who know their situations the best. In identifying and addressing matters pertaining to livelihood priorities, the impoverished themselves must play a significant role. Outsiders need protocols in order to listen to the poor and help them (Krantz, 2001). For example, NGOs can determine the programs that Mazowe inhabitants need by properly assessing their needs and integrating their clients in all levels of planning.

Focus on Individuals' Capabilities

Everyone has strengths, as does society. According to Goldman (2001), all growth ought to acknowledge and capitalize on individuals' abilities. Assessing the resources available in a specific location can be the first step in doing this. Positive qualities should take precedence over negative ones while attempting to identify someone's strengths. According to Krantz (2001), providing support ought to provide everyone—including the impoverished—more voice, opportunity, and overall well-being.

Comprehensive

For an initiative to be successful, the efforts of multiple departments must work in concert (Goldman, 2001). It's also important to think about the effects of different strategies. Krantz (2001) argues that even though the actions that follow from such understanding may be targeted, we still need to understand people's livelihoods and how they may be improved in a holistic manner that acknowledges the relationships between the various spheres of their lives. For example, wealthy individuals can use their money to purchase other goods, whereas the poor must own a specific set of assets in order to survive (Krantz, 2001).

Mini-Macro Connection

People may act locally, but institutions and regulations at the local, regional, and federal levels determine how they can access resources and services (Goldman, 2001). The method emphasizes the need for institutional and policy analysis at all levels by connecting the micro and macro levels (Krantz, 2001). Local services must be responsive, efficient, and easily accessible. Support, oversight, and coordination must come from regional levels. The centre needs to give strategic and all-encompassing guidance. Eliminating poverty is a huge task that can only be accomplished by working at several levels, making sure that macro-level structures and processes enable individuals to build on their own strengths and that micro-level activity influences the creation of policy and an efficient enabling environment (Sporton and Thomas, 2002).

Performed in Collaboration

Collaboration between the public and business sectors is vital, as stated by Krantz (2001). Implementing a plan that leverages the expertise of all relevant industries is necessary if a proposed approach depends on several components working together (Goldman, 2001). To achieve development, it is imperative to make optimal use of the public and private organizational strengths.

Long-term viability

Economic, institutional, social, and environmental sustainability are the four facets of sustainability (Krantz, 2001). Development agents must accomplish sustainable changes in all areas. To put it another way, development professionals need to give up on trying to better the lives of the poor on a temporary basis. Stated differently, Krantz (2001) says that the approach acknowledges that while reducing poverty and addressing other social ills that may be affecting a project's sustainability may require economic growth, there is no guarantee that the two will be related because everything depends on the impoverished's ability to take advantage of expanding economic opportunities. It is increasingly clear that poverty as experienced by the destitute encompasses more than just low money; it also comprises additional factors like vulnerability, a general sense of helplessness, bad health, illiteracy, and a lack of social services. Since it is commonly known that persons who are destitute often have the best understanding of their needs and situations, it makes sense to include them in the development of policies and programs targeted at improving their quality of life (Krantz, 2001). The study

looks at the ways that the Mazowe people plan and take part in life-supporting events. The SLA can be used to build a framework for livelihood practices that function well and make communities more resilient to similar stresses and shocks. For NGOs working on projects, especially in rural regions, this could provide guidance. The livelihoods approach to rural development, which considers entitlements and capability issues as well, provides a helpful understanding tool for understanding rural household poverty and the processes and actions that follow in their pursuit of development (Chambers and Conway 1992; Ellis 1998, 1999, 2000; Ellis and Biggs 2001; Carney 2002; Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones 2002; Scoones 1998; Bryceson 1996, 1999, 2000, 2001). CARE International, the United Nations, the Overseas Development Institute, DFID, and many other international development organizations have all adopted the livelihoods idea as their paradigm.

2.3 Community Empowerment Projects for HIV infected women, global overview

Donor-Funded Community Empowerment Projects refer to initiatives that are supported by donors, such as governments, organizations or individuals with the goal of enhancing the capacity and self-reliance of communities'. These often aim to address various social, economic and environmental challenges that communities face, ultimately contributing to sustainable development. UNAIDS estimates that 38 million people globally were HIV positive as of 2020, with women making up half of new HIV infections. Women are more susceptible to HIV infection when there is a difference between their socioeconomic status and political influence compared to men. Women's rights are not respected, which both contributes to the epidemic and makes its effects worse. Mosedale, Sarah (2005) asserts that women cannot be empowered by others; instead, they must take the initiative to do it. This suggests that in order to promote empowerment, dealing with women requires facilitative approaches rather than prescriptive ones.

The necessity for women to be empowered is widely acknowledged. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) presented a revised understanding of the connections between population growth and personal happiness. A 20-year Programme of Action (POA), also known as the Cairo Consensus, was agreed by governments across the country at the (ICPD, 1997), recognizing gender equality, women's empowerment, and reproductive health and rights as the cornerstones of population and development programs. Women should be empowered and given full access to all aspects of society, according to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995. All nations in the world have agreed upon

the eight millennium development goals as a framework for giving the world most poorest people a quantifiable, minimal level of progress.

These initiatives have played a critical role in giving HIV-positive women resources and support, particularly in low- and middle-income nations. .Examples of such projects include the Global Fund to fight AIDS,TB and Malaria which has supported various community empowerment projects for HIV infected women, including support groups, income –generating activities and access to anti-retroviral therapy. Globally community empowerment projects have been implemented by NGOs like the Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS relief PEPFAR through its Women Fast Track initiatives, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Elton John AIDS Foundation through its women Cancer Program and its Key Populations Program, World Health Organization (WHO). These aim to fight against HIV-related stigma and discrimination which has been hindering women’s ability to access healthcare, employment, and social services.

Women face challenges in accessing affordable, quality healthcare, including HIV treatment and sexual and reproductive health services. Projects often focus on short-term outcomes, neglecting long-term sustainability and community empowerment. All so, these projects often fail to address intersecting factors like race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, and age, which affect women’s experiences and empowerment. Projects often focus on short-term outcomes, neglecting long-term sustainability and community empowerment. There is limited assessment and evaluation of project impact, outcomes, and sustainability hinder learning, improvement, and scalability.

2.4 Community Empowerment Projects for HIV infected women at regional level

Donor-Funded Community Empowerment Projects for HIV-Affected Women have been essential in tackling the complex issues that African women living with HIV face. These initiatives seek to enable HIV-positive women to lead better and more satisfying lives by offering them financial possibilities, healthcare services, education, and support. These regional initiatives, which aim to address the stigma, discrimination, and lack of resources that frequently accompany an HIV diagnosis among women, are carried out throughout Africa. Donor-funded initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa, where women are disproportionately affected by HIV, have prioritized providing comprehensive care and support services to afflicted women. In order to foster growth and healthy seeking behaviours, these programs address challenges including treatment availability, mother-to-child transmission prevention, and

community-based treatments. People who live in poverty are more susceptible to shocks and hazards, including losing their jobs, being ill, experiencing droughts, floods, conflicts, and failing to make ends meet. This underscores the need for social safety programs to assist the impoverished (Chitonge, 2012). These programs tackle problems like treatment availability, preventing mother-to-child transmission, and community-based interventions to support development and constructive behaviour. Chitonge (2012) asserts that those living in poverty are particularly susceptible to various shocks and hazards, including job loss, illness, natural disasters, droughts, floods, conflicts, and lack of livelihood. These factors underscore the importance of social protection in providing support to the impoverished. Ellis et al. (2009) posit that in the past, donor agencies, civil society, and/or non-state actors have assisted African governments in delivering social protection, primarily through the provision of emergency food relief and humanitarian aid. However, the unpredictability of this support has little effect on the enduring causes of vulnerability in the region because relief aid is

2.5 Community Empowerment Project for HIV infected women at local scale

Donors have been active in Mazowe and continue to do so. Nearly every ward in Mazowe has seen the implementation of several NGOs' projects, according to the district's community development officer. These included the DREAMS, MSASA, ROOTS, and Catholic Relief Services, among others that were named. This suggests that a significant number of initiatives in the district are supported by donors. One would anticipate a shift in community development with the concentration of NGOs in the District, given the efforts being made to attempt and reach the Sustainable Development Goals and Vision 2030 targets, respectively. HIV-positive women still experience a great deal of stigma and discrimination in their communities, which restricts their access to opportunities and resources. Under the direction of Zimbabwe Health Interventions, the USAID-funded Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) Re-Ignite Innovate Sustain and Empower (RISE) program collaborates with the private sector to provide market-oriented vocational skills, training internships, and mentorship for adolescent girls and young women (AGYW). In Zimbabwe, compared to their male counterparts, girls in this age group have a disproportionately higher prevalence of HIV. The most recent results of the Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey indicated that the prevalence of HIV in females rises with age, from 27% of women aged 15–17 to 13,9% of women aged 23–24 (Ministry of Finance, 2020). As a result, non-governmental organizations switched to a development mode and began assisting communities with initiatives that produced a variety of assets. The creation of the financial, social, human, and physical assets

that make up the Sustainable Livelihood Framework was largely dependent on projects like horticulture and small businesses. These NGOs went back to their welfare roots, helping communities with food, clothing, medical treatment, and shelter (Dumba, 2005). The efforts made by donor organizations to support and empower women living with HIV in rural Mazowe villages are not yielding positive results, since the women's livelihoods have not improved at all. Given that these projects occasionally had signs, there appears to be a disconnect between the idea of community empowerment and how these were developed and carried out. The study's findings highlight the lack of research conducted in Zimbabwe to date on the viability of donor-funded community empowerment initiatives for HIV-positive women, notably in Mazowe District. In order to provide women living with HIV with the knowledge they need to support themselves independently of donor assistance, the researcher hopes to close that knowledge gap.

2.6 Sustainable Development

The socioeconomic landscape of nations has changed significantly on a global scale, with notable increases in the degree to which national policies are embracing the sustainable development paradigm. The Sustainable Development Goals were established in 2015 by world leaders as a means of addressing extreme poverty, hunger, and disease (UN, 2017). The goal of sustainable development is to strike a balance between the economy, society, and environment. It is assumed that projects and other development endeavours must be carried out so that future generations might profit from them (Krantz L., 2001; World Bank, 2020). Drawbacks on revenue-raising have become a barrier to community development and sustainability, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. As a result, international development organizations have become significant actors, especially when it comes to financing sectoral and infrastructure projects that are interim in nature, with an emphasis on incorporating sustainability principles into community development initiatives. Sally Z (2013) defines sustainability as a project's capacity to continue functioning and serving beneficiaries after donors have withdrawn their support for as long as possible. Project sustainability is also defined as the project's capacity to continue operating and rendering services to beneficiaries after external support has ended (Cheptemal, 2021). (Chiduzha, 1987).

According to Kates et al. (2005), sustainability should take into account the preservation of the environment, ecology, earth, livelihoods, culture, and communities. The three pillars of sustainable development today are economic, social, and environmental (UN, 1987), according

to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. At the local, national, regional, and international levels, the Johannesburg Declaration established a shared responsibility to promote and strengthen the interconnected and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development, namely social development, economic development, and environmental protection (Kates et al., 2005).

Development agents must bring about long-lasting changes. In order to guide changes, this entails routinely evaluating the impact, results, and sustainability of projects encouraging proactive community leadership, engagement, and involvement in project planning, execution, and decision-making. As Krantz (2001) shows in a different way, the Sustainable Livelihood Framework acknowledges that, although economic growth may be necessary for reducing poverty, there is no guarantee that the two will occur because it all depends on the impoverished's ability to seize growing economic opportunities. From the standpoint of this study, it indicates the capacity of project beneficiaries to go on managing their initiatives and earning a living once the financial support term from funders expires. Considering the numerous donor-funded initiatives Mazowe, but the lives of women living.

2.7 Factors affecting the sustainability of Donor –Funded Community Empowerment Projects

Funded by Donors Projects that empower communities are essential for assisting localities and promoting sustainable development. Assuring these projects' long-term viability, however, might be difficult for a number of reasons. Women living with HIV have suffered significant costs as a result of NGOs' duplication of efforts. The literature also mentions that NGOs waste resources that may be used to continue their operations when they duplicate their efforts (Kabonga, 2016). By building strategic alliances in the field of poverty reduction, NGOs can counteract such institutional shortcomings and lower the likelihood of project failure. Repetitive actions indicate a lack of networking expertise among NGOs. In the NGO industry, networking and collaboration are trendy terms. According to Teguru (2016), NGOs seldom ever use them. Also prominent in the literature are funding concerns that have impacted how NGOs have carried out their work. NGOs in Zimbabwe are finding it more and more difficult to obtain funding, especially in this period of global economic downturns made worse by the Covid-19 outbreak. Teguru's (2016) study demonstrates how NGOs in Zimbabwe and other countries must fight for the few resources at their disposal. In order to survive, an organization must compete with others. Donor financing is not guaranteed for those who are lucky enough to have access to it in the future (Teguru 2016). This reflects the difficulties with sustainability

that NGOs face. Zinyemba and Zinyemba (2013) contend that the delayed disbursement of cash affects non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who rely on donors to carry out their intended projects. This will have an impact on NGOs who carry out programs in regions where project execution is mostly seasonal. The influence of structural economic elements ingrained in the Zimbabwean economy is one of the external variables. Because to the fundamental economic problems, it is challenging for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to operate in Zimbabwe due to shortages of essential commodities like petrol. This has impacted attempts to enhance the quality of life for women who are HIV positive. It was previously discovered by Brown and Kalangeonkar (2002) that NGOs' attempts to improve the lives of HIV-positive women are hampered by a lack of materials. Although earlier research (McCandless and Pajibo 2003, Perera 2019, Helliker and Murisa 2020) identifies constrained civic space as the main obstacle facing NGOs, Munyanga's (2018) study demonstrates that financial difficulties undermine initiatives aimed at reducing poverty. The persistent price increases in the unstable economic climate make budgeting for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) an extremely difficult task, even when using US dollars, which are often regarded as stable currency. The impact of the external economic climate can also have an impact on the sustainability of community empowerment projects financed by donors.

The effect of macroeconomic issues must be understood, and the researcher concurs with Adjei et al. (2012). Dube (2020) contends that external factors such as the macroeconomic environment that limits the efficacy of NGOs should be held accountable for the ineffectiveness of NGOs rather than the NGOs themselves. For instance, even while NGOs are constructing financial assets through interventions like ISALs and vocational training, the advantages are offset by the periodic inflation that characterizes the Zimbabwean economy. The effects of economic volatility on NGOs' operations in Zimbabwe were acknowledged in a previous study by Teguru (2016). The degree of community ownership and involvement is a crucial component that adds to the sustainability of projects sponsored by donors. The active participation of communities in project planning, implementation, and decision-making processes.

NGOs operate within a limited civic space in Zimbabwe (McCandless and Pajibo 2003; Tarisayi 2014; Perera 2019; Xinwa 2020), which is defined by the government's mistrust of NGOs as potential agents of regime change (Chakawarika 2011); (Teguru 2016). To regulate the operations of NGOs in Zimbabwe, the government has therefore implemented laws like the Private Voluntary Organization Amendment Bill. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework's

emphasis on human capital is equally crucial for ensuring the long-term viability of the donor-funded community empowerment program for HIV-positive women. Reliance syndrome can be eradicated with the aid of human capital, which includes people's skills, knowledge, and capacities. It will affect women living with HIV since NGOs are so reliant on donors that they are unable to operate in ways that are not approved by them. As a tactic to raise the standard of living for HIV-positive women, this entails implementing improvements to their poverty reduction approaches. In an effort to improve their interventions in ISALS, NGOs are eager to make practical adjustments to their policies. They must stick to the plans and budgets that have been agreed upon, though Salamon (1987) identified this particularism as one of the shortcomings of non-governmental organizations, which is not unexpected.

2.8 The gaps in the current empowerment projects for HIV infected women in Mazowe District.

Donors' attempts to empower and develop women living with HIV in Mazowe District are failing since the women's livelihoods are improving very marginally or not at all. The idea of community empowerment appears to be absent from the planning and execution of these programs, as seen by the projects' occasional lack of sustainability, which makes it harder for communities to combat poverty. Due to this, there are still significant unemployment rates and poverty, which has led to individuals moving to nearby nations in search of better opportunities.

Historically, national public policies and resource mobilization initiatives at the national and international levels have failed to acknowledge the diverse possibilities of the rural sector (Arriquez and Stamoulis, 2007). Other policies that contribute to poverty include those that promote private land ownership at the expense of Africans' capacity for community-based initiatives like extended family cooperatives. According to Salvatore (1989), the focus of African governments has mostly been on accelerating the pace of both national and aggregate development, which has contributed to the persistent trend of uneven regional development.

The numerous potentials of the rural economy have not always been acknowledged by national public policies or resource mobilization efforts at the national and international levels (Arriquez and Stamoulis, 2007). The promotion of private land ownership at the expense of African potential for community-related activities like cooperatives based on extended families is one of the additional policies that perpetuate poverty. Generally speaking, African governments have placed a strong emphasis on accelerating both national and aggregate

growth, which has made the persistent trend of uneven regional development worse (Salvatore, 1989).

The projects being implemented lack appropriate evaluation programmes. Johnson-Lans (2005) postulates that NGOs are criticised for lacking appropriate evaluation strategies of their programmes, particularly when it is performed by donor agencies that might not be sensitive to the needs of the locals. Monitoring is very important in the sense that it makes an organisation track progress. There is little evidence about the effectiveness of the donors' projects. Questions about the efforts of the NGOs in providing services in general development as in particular ,mean that they are no longer seen as magic bullets for international development (Bendell,2006).The emergence of NGOs as important development actors in India and any other parts of the world implies that one can hope for more attention to the needs and concerns of the poor in policy formulation and implementation (Rajesldhor,2004) .Despite the fact that NGOs are perceived to be the drivers of development it is hard to prove this (Frutter and Guari,2005).

2.9 How to make Donor-Funded Community Empowerment Projects a success

In view of the numerous difficulties being encountered by HIV infected women in sustaining the Donor-funded Community Empowerment Projects, the research proffers the following recommendations. In addition to ensuring the sustainability of the donor-funded community empowerment projects, investigating other funding sources can drastically reduce dependency on donor support. According to Muir and Riddell (1992), non-governmental organizations have supported income-generating enterprises and assisted cooperatives. Their participation in the projects that generate revenue has been limited to the common spaces. The majority of the enterprises that were supported were small-scale endeavours like raising chickens, growing vegetables, raising pigs, knitting, woodworking, and a variety of general crafts including jewellery making, weaving, and ceramics (Muir and Riddell, 1992). These programs specifically targeted women.

NGOs' interventions in Zimbabwe's communal areas of the agriculture sector were primarily concentrated on a single activity that intended to increase revenue levels (Muir and Riddel, 1992).The approaches involve lending money, supporting savings plans, offering technical input guidance, increasing the variety of crops produced, ploughing, supplying inputs, and

offering marketing support (Muir Riddell, 1992). Although they took a distinct approach, these activities supplemented those of the government (Muir Riddell, 1992).

Building trusting bonds with current contributors can result in funding that is more steady and dependable. This can be done by maintaining regular contact with contributors and informing them of the results of their gifts, which can foster a sense of loyalty and inspire additional donations. Numerous interpretations exist on the incorporation of projects into national institutions. According to a 1990 study by Yoholem and Hoadley on sector planning and development in Swaziland, sector development initiatives should be strongly linked into the sector's institutional framework, strengthen it, and assist its initiatives. Bossart (1989) and Thomas (1990) have also highlighted the significance of integration.

2.10 Chapter conclusion

To sum-up Chapter Two has provided a comprehensive overview of the existing literature on the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects for HIV –infected women. The chapter emphasized the significance of sustainability, outlined obstacles to donor-funded community empowerment projects' sustainability, offered solutions for boosting these projects' sustainability, and pointed out areas of knowledge that needed to be explored further. The knowledge gathered from this literature review will inform the construction of a conceptual framework and empirical inquiry into the sustainability of these initiatives, laying the groundwork for the dissertation's later chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 aims to establish the groundwork for the entire study effort by illustrating the theoretical foundations and methodological rigor. A multitude of research tools, strategies, and techniques were used in order to meet the study's goals. The research design, population and sampling methodologies, data analysis, data collection methods, processes, and study area description are the corresponding subtopics under which this chapter is organized.

3.2 Description of the study area

The Mazowe Rural District served as the purposeful study site, a district in the central province of Mashonaland southern region. Its borders are shared to the north by Muzarabani District, to the east by Mount Darwin District, to the east by Bindura District, to the south and southeast by Goromonzi District of Mashonaland East Province, and to the west by Zvimba District. The Mazowe Rural District Council and the Mvurwi Town Council are the two local authorities that make up the district. There are 35 wards in the district; 34 are under the jurisdiction of the Mazowe Rural District Council, and one is under the Mvurwi Town Council. Mazowe District is located in Agro-Ecological Region 2A and experiences between 800 and 120 mm of precipitation annually (Vincent & Thomas, 1960). The district is separated into five intensive conservation areas with different land sizes, totalling 450, 822 hectares. In the district, maize, tobacco, soy beans, and sugar beans are the principal crops farmed.

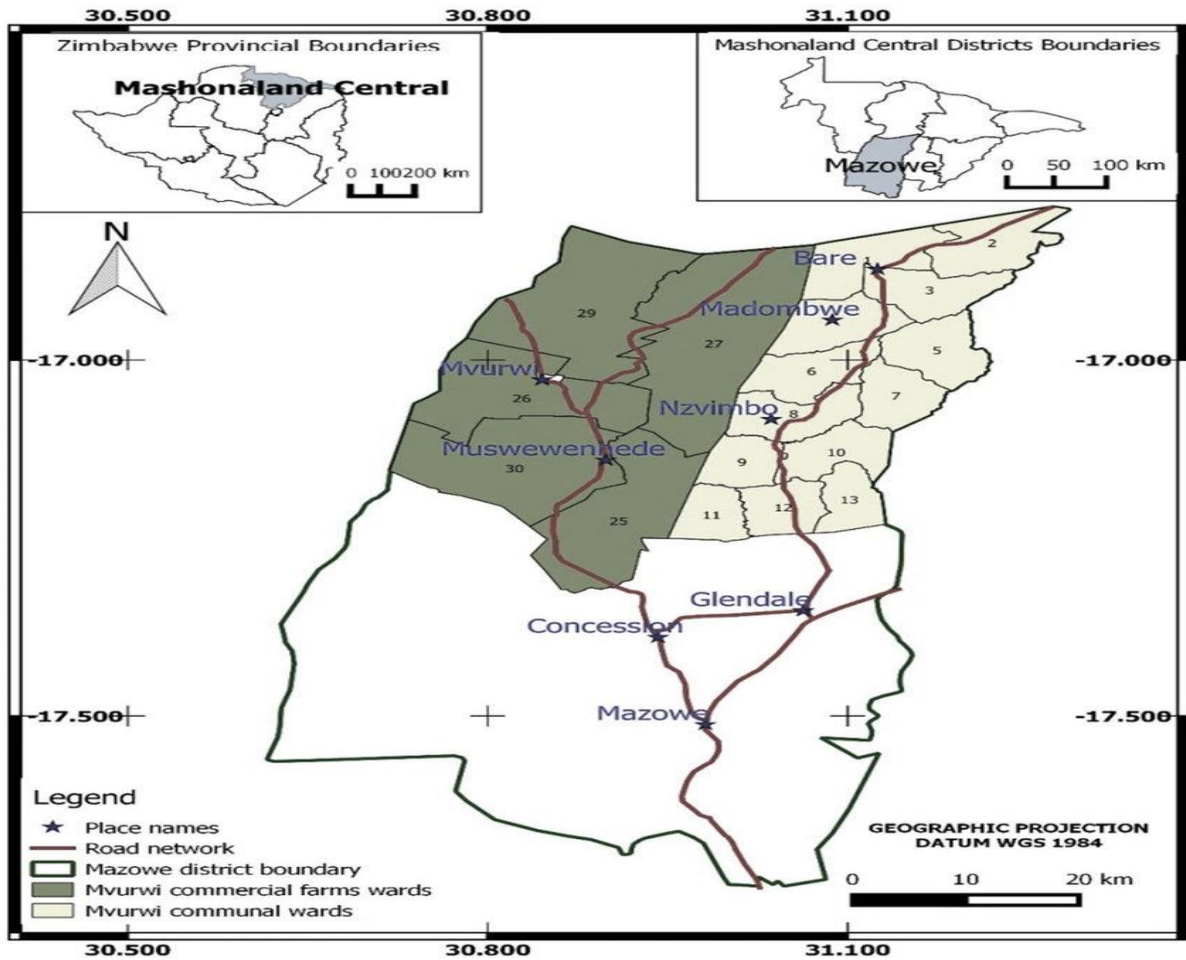


Figure 1.0: Location of the study area

Mazowe District is rich in minerals; the main resource that is mined there is gold. Being one of the richest gold mining districts in all of Mashonaland Central, the area has seen an influx of migrant labourers that have disrupted social dynamics. In Mazowe District, the majority of the population—more than 40% or 60% of the total—lives off of small-scale mining and related industries (Zimstats, 2017). As per Shoko's (2005) findings, the cumulative impact of multiple activities can be highly destructive to nearby communities and ecosystems, even though the consequences of individual activities might not be very significant. Because there is a lot of mining activity in some areas of Mazowe District, like Jumbo, Concession, Ceaser, and Nzvimbo (the Rosa mine), these areas are highly favourable. Council on HIV/AIDS (NAC). The bulk of the population in Mazowe District is becoming more dependent on artisanal mining despite the area being mostly dominated by small-scale miners, also known as artisanal miners, who have few formal work alternatives due to industrial activities and overall poverty. Thus, it should be highlighted that the high rate of HIV prevalence among sex workers provides evidence that one of the things compromising women's sexual and reproductive rights and health in the district is a lack of economic empowerment. Because they

turn to prostitution as a means of escaping poverty and various other financial difficulties, the majority of them are susceptible to HIV and STIs. Therefore, the majority of NGOs carry out a range of initiatives and activities with the goal of slowing the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

3.3 Research Design

According to Huysamen (1994), a research design is a strategy or blueprint that directs the collection of data in the most cost-effective way possible in order to answer the research question or hypothesis. When it comes to ensuring validity and reliability, no research methodology is flawless (Maxwell, 2012). Chiromo (2006) agrees that several types of research designs exist. These study designs include explanatory, diagnostic, experimental casual, correlational, and descriptive. The study used an explanatory research design for qualitative research and a descriptive research approach for quantitative research. To guarantee a comprehensive comprehension of the research questions and aims, a combination of the two methods was employed in this investigation. These were the most practical research designs because the study aims to investigate sustainability aspects and delve more into people's attitudes and perspectives on donor-funded community empowerment initiatives. The examination of the requirements for the viability of community-based programs for HIV-positive women was greatly aided by these research designs. The research designs had significance for the study as they aided in identifying obstacles impeding the sustainability of these initiatives.

In the social realm, naturally occurring events can be described, decoded, translated, or otherwise understood through the use of a variety of interpretive procedures that are collectively referred to as qualitative research approaches (Welman et al., 2005). To find out why people believe, act, or feel a certain way is the goal of quantitative research designs. The primary benefit lies in the platform it provides, which allows responders to elucidate and expand on their opinions related to the subject matter. Rahman (2017) supports this, pointing out that a qualitative technique enables the researcher to gather comprehensive information on the subject, allowing the participants to elucidate their meanings, emotions, and comprehensions.

According to Rasigner (2013), a qualitative technique enables the research to take into account the participants' own perceptions. Thus, in order to maximize efficiency, this study combined qualitative and quantitative research methods. Descriptive data was collected using a qualitative research approach. It was also determined that a quantitative research technique was

required to collect statistical data on different parameters. In order to achieve data validity and dependability as well as a comprehensive understanding of the topic area, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were combined in this study.

The researcher adopted this approach because it offers comprehensive insights that are characterized by feelings and observations made by the research, eliminating prejudice. This is significant when analysing elements that affect the sustainability of community empowerment programs financed by donors in Mazowe. It also aims to comprehend human behaviour and experiences. Once more, the adoption of qualitative research is due to its explanatory and inductive nature, which leads to conclusions that are unexpected even by the researcher. Establishing the socially constructed nature of reality, highlighting the interaction between the researcher and the study's subject, and emphasizing the inquiry's value-laden nature are the objectives of qualitative research (Wellman et al., 2005).

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The study will employ a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. The researcher will be able to investigate the durability of community-based programs for women living with HIV as a result. The data collection methods included the collection of secondary data from reliable sources and the administration of surveys to project implementers, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders. Surveys and questionnaires will be used to gather quantitative data. Focus group discussions and key informant interviews will be used to gather qualitative data. According to Rajasker et al. (2013), training in procedures pertinent to the research as well as the ability to pick appropriate methods, materials, and scientific instruments are all part of research methodology. These techniques for gathering data made it possible to thoroughly examine the sustainability indicators of the project, as well as the sustainability-influencing and sustainability-hindering variables.

3.4.1 Procedure

Key informant Interviews

A key informant interview is defined by Goode and Hatt in Raj 2005 as a qualitative, in-depth interview with individuals who are aware of community issues. Key Informative Interviews

played a pivotal role of allowing for in-depth exploration of the topic, enabling the researcher to gather detailed and nuanced information about the project sustainability. The researcher selected individuals with expertise and experience related to the project, such as project managers, community leaders, healthcare professionals and beneficiaries to capture diverse perspectives. In this study, the researcher interviewed 15 key informants who involved a representative from DREAMS, a representative from the Ministry of Women Affairs, a representative from ROOTS Africa, the councillor of Ward 10, a representative from the police and health department, a representative from the District's Development Office of Mazowe District and 5 representatives from selected villages. Appointments were made at dissimilar days to meet the target population and they were booked two days prior to the actual day of the interview. This was meant to accommodate cancellation and other unexpected possibilities. Reminders were sent through telephones. Responses given by respondents were recorded using a mobile cell phones and some of the points were jotted down in a diary. The interviewer upon realizing that no new themes were coming from the interviewees did not conduct the sessions any longer.

Open-ended questions on project sustainability, community empowerment, and the experiences of HIV-positive women were included in a semi-structured interview guide. An interview guide is a questionnaire designed to facilitate interviews, according to Holstein and Gubrium (1995), as referenced in de Vos et al. (2005). Offering pre-planned questions that might be utilized as a suitable tool to draw participants in and identify the terrain is its primary goal. Face-to-face platforms were used for these. A schedule of questions for an interview is organized logically, with each question knowing its place and how to approach various topics appropriately. To address the topic of interest, the researcher might formulate pertinent questions pertaining to each field (Smith et al., 1995). To prevent respondents from being confused or biased, the researcher avoided use of jargon and unclear terms. Biased and judgmental questions were avoided. In order to obtain the precise information needed for the study, focused questions were also encouraged (de Vos et al., 2005).

Key Informative Interviews were suitable for this research because informants possess extensive knowledge and experience related to the project, enabling them to provide insightful and authoritative information. Key informant interviews also offered spaced platform for in-depth exploration of the topic since it is a sensitive issue where the majority of HIV positive women fear to be disclosed.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus groups are organized conversations intended to gather opinions on a certain topic of interest in a welcoming and non-threatening setting, according to Kingry et al. (1990). When more opinions or comments are required on a particular subject, focus groups are a good option (deVos et al, 2005). The goal of an interview focus group, according to Krueger (1998), is to gather qualitative information and offer participants' attitudes, views, and opinions. The benefits of focus groups exceed the drawbacks, which is why the research employed them. For those with limited literacy, the focus group is appropriate. In Mazowe Rural District's Ward 10, the majority of the women are illiterate, yet they are conversant in conversation. There were planned focus group talks. These categories included married, divorced, widowed, and single women living with HIV. They also included women from varying socioeconomic backgrounds. This made it easier for the researcher to identify trends and how the donor-funded community empowerment projects influence women according to different social statuses. Rich data is obtained from focus group conversations, which involve direct communication between the researcher and the respondents. Focus groups are affordable, rather simple to put together, and offer great flexibility in terms of structure, questions to ask, and intended results (Welman et al., 2005; de Vos et al., 2007). Focus group talks, however, can potentially prevent some participants from speaking honestly since they may feel uncomfortable with other participants in the group (Welman et al., 2005).

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were effectively employed as a data collection method providing quantifiable data, enabling statistical analysis and generalizability. Based on the research objectives and questions as a guide, a questionnaire was created. The questionnaire's design allowed for the inclusion of both open-ended and closed-ended questions, enabling respondents to provide comprehensive and nuanced answers. The researcher also got assistance from the village heads, the ward councillor and his secretaries to distribute the 40 questionnaires to the subjects to fill in and 34 questionnaires were completed and returned, translating into a 90% completion rate.

Surveys

A sampling frame was used to guide the surveys. This helped the research determine exactly who the research was targeting. The survey questions were designed to be clear, precise, unbiased and relevant to the research objectives. Surveys were used to identify gaps in the

projects being implemented by Donors for the community empowerment of women with HIV. Questionnaires will be administered through online platforms and hard copy.

Secondary Data

According to Jewel (2001), secondary data are those that have already been gathered and are easily accessible from other sources. Secondary data is available from a number of sources, such as research reports and papers, government publications and statistics, academic journals and articles, online search engines (like Google), reports from international organizations (like the UN and WHO), reports from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and already-existing datasets and data repositories. For this research, the researcher made use of academic journals and articles, research reports and papers, Government publications and statistics by ZIMSTATS, international organizations reports (e.g. UN and WHO), NGO reports and data .

3.4.2 Population and sampling Techniques

Target population

The target population is a crucial component of research that forms the basis of the study. Alyi (2016) defines a target population as a group of people from a given demographic who satisfy a certain set of requirements for a study. The study's target demographic in Mazowe District consisted of women over the age of 18 and young girls. A population is a group of possible participants to whom you wish to generalize the study's findings (Welman et al., 2005). According to Wellman et al. (2005), the population is also seen as the study object and is made up of people, groups, organizations, human products and events, or the circumstances under which a sample is gathered. However, because of the size of the territory, the study was unable to examine the entire population. As a result, the study employed a sample drawn from the Mazowe community using the sampling technique described below.

Sampling procedure

In the study, stratified and convenience sampling methods were employed. Rahman (2017) defines a research sample as the act of choosing units from an interest population so that our findings can be fairly generalized to the community from which the sample was selected. A sample is defined as a percentage of the population by Polit et al. (2001). The researcher's goal was to make sure that the traits and qualities of the sample fairly represented the traits and qualities of the general population. Therefore, gathering data from every single person who fit the specific research subject was either impractical or impossible. Projections, justifications,

and general facts on the entire population were generated from the sample. According to census (2022), the total population of women in Mazowe is 21 985 and the total number of females who benefited from the donor funded projects is 11 786. Therefore, the sample size was calculated using the following procedure:

$$n = (1.96)^2 * 0,54 * 0,46 / (0.05)^2 = 187$$

One-on-one interviews were conducted with five important informants. A representative from the Ministry of Gender and Youth Employment Creation, a headman from Rosa, a representative from the Ministry of Social Welfare, and representatives from ROOTS, Z.H.I., and the neighbourhood clinic were among them. A sample is a portion or a relatively modest representation of the total population. Forty people who utilize and benefit from NGO services made up the sample for this study. Six stakeholders were also included in one-on-one interviews. The size and representativeness of the sample are the most fundamental factors to take into account. It is possible to extrapolate from sample results to the full population.

The research also used the convenience sampling and stratified sampling techniques. Convenience sampling is ideal for sampling because it can be used in initial explanatory phases or when access to groups is limited. In this sampling technique, researchers can choose participants based on their availability and proximity. Given the nature of the population under study, the convenience sampling technique was most viable because women in this area spend most of their time doing piece jobs. Stratified sampling was also used. In this technique, the young women and adolescent girls is divided into subgroups or strata based on certain characteristics that are relevant to the study, such as age, income level, level of involvement in community empowerment programs. Stratified sampling can help ensure that the sample includes a proportional representation of different groups of HIV-infected women who have benefited from Donor Funded Community Empowerment Projects. Samples were then randomly selected from each stratum to ensure representation from all important segments of the population .By employing these sampling techniques , the researcher was able to gather robust data on the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects for HIV infected women while ensuring that findings are reliable and applicable to the broader population.

3.4.3 Data Collection Instruments

The study included four data collection methods, including key informant interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions (FDGs), and surveys, to meet its goals and guarantee the validity and reliability of the data. The researcher used the triangulation approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques. According to Lance and Vandenberg (2008), triangulation is seen by many researchers as a beneficial method of conducting research since it allows the researcher to address the shortcomings of both high- and low-quality research.

Questionnaire Guide

According to the study's aims and questions, questionnaires were created. A quantitative data set that allowed for statistical analysis and generalizability was provided by the questionnaire guide's design. The questionnaire was also designed to assess specific sustainability indicators, such as project continuation, women and community ownership. And resource mobilization. The questionnaire was administered through paper surveys on the 13th of April 2024 in Ward 10 of Mazowe District.

Key Informant Interview Guide

One interview guide was created in an effort to gather thorough and in-depth data, and it was intended to answer the goals and inquiries of the study. This was administered on the 13th of April 2024. The researcher opted for this because, by involving community members and women as key informants, the interview process can empower communities and promote ownership and agency. Key informant Interviews also provided valuable insights into the local context, enabling a deeper understanding of how project sustainability is influenced by cultural, social and economic factors.

Focus Group Discussion Guide (FDGs)

A focus group discussion guide was created in order to record qualitative data. Open-ended questions made up the guide. The essential topics in the handbook were designed to investigate the ways in which the sustainability of donor-implemented initiatives affects women and their means of subsistence. This made it easier for the researcher to get thorough and trustworthy data from a big sample size, which gave important insights into how long donor-funded programs for HIV-positive women can last.

Surveys

Surveys were used to gather quantitative data efficiently. The survey questions were designed to be clear, precise, unbiased and relevant to the research objectives. Surveys were used to identify gaps in the projects being implemented by Donors for the community empowerment of women with HIV. They provide a standardized way of collecting data from respondents. By using structured questionnaires. The researcher also opted for this collection instrument because it allowed the researcher to collect numerical data on various aspects such as project impact, community engagement, resource allocation, and long-term outcomes. The surveys were a cost-effective method which required fewer resources in terms of time and manpower, making them ideal for this research.

3.5 Data Analysis Methods

Descriptive statistics were used in the study to analyse quantitative data, and thematic data analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. Data analysis and presentation help the presenter make a point, according to Saunders et al. (2009).

Qualitative Data

Thematic analysis was employed. The researcher identified and analysed patterns or recurring themes within qualitative data. The researcher coded and categorized the data to identify recurring ideas, concepts, or patterns of meaning. This approach allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the various themes related to project sustainability, such as challenges that hinder projects sustainability or empowerment of HIV-infected women. The data were translated, transcribed and typed into Microsoft Word.

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data analysis involved descriptive statistics to provide an overview of sustainability indicators and inferential statistics to examine relationships between variables. For quantitative data collection, Kobo was installed in Android smart phones (version 6.0). The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20 program was used to import 187 questionnaires for data cleaning and analysis. Running frequencies was used for data cleaning to make sure there were no mistakes made when recording the data. Descriptive statistics such as graphs were used for data analysis. The author also used cross-tabulations to analyse the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

3.6 Conclusion

All in all, the chapter has provided a solid approach and framework for data analysis, laying the groundwork for the dissertation's later chapters. The researcher combined quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in a mixed-methods strategy to collect data. This made it possible for the researcher to look at the requirements for community-based initiatives for HIV-positive women to be sustained. A more complex comprehension of the study issues will result from the integration of quantitative and qualitative data.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The main objective of this chapter is to present, assess, and analyse the quantitative and qualitative research findings. The presentation of data gathered from secondary data sources, focus groups, questionnaires, and interviews will be informed by the goals and questions of the study. Pie charts, graphs, and tables will be used to show and present the data. Responses will be compiled using thematic analysis and descriptive statistics.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Major objective of identifying demographic characteristics was to obtain insights on the socio-characteristics of women infected with HIV as it boosts the applicability and generalization accuracy of findings.

4.2.1 Social Cluster of Respondents

Understanding the difference in existing social groups is of paramount importance when determining the impact of community empowerment projects for HIV infected women supported by donors. It is mainly the unmarried, divorced and widows who suffer the most if donor funded community empowerment projects turn out not to be sustainable. For the married, it differs because they receive support from their spouses. To exacerbate, the elderly and disabled are adversely affected if donor funded community empowerment projects are not sustainable as they are likely to suffer from physical challenges that hinder them from embarking on other alternative survival strategies.

Table 4.1 Social Cluster of Respondents

Sample of Respondents	Total Number of Respondents	Percentage%
Married	18	45%
Single	10	25%
Divorced	5	12%

Widows	4	10%
Disabled	3	8%

Source: Primary Data

n=40

Presentation in table 4.1 shows that a total of 40 respondents was selected and all of them were women as they are the target group. Basing on social clusters of respondent, table4.1 shows the social cluster involved the married 45%, single 25%, and divorced 12%, widowed 10%, and the disabled consisting 8% of the total population. Deducing from the presented data, it shows that over half (55%) of the HIV infected women are not married which might suggest why the targeted population remains vulnerable as women have weak livelihood strategies for their survival and hence when projects collapse they resort to transitional sexual .

4.2.2 Educational Level

Probing the educational level is a pivotal step in having a better understanding of the study objectives as education determines their understanding of HIV transmission, prevention methods, how they dispel myths and misconceptions and promote the adoption of safe behaviors. It also further determines one's priorities in livelihood diversification.

Table 4.2 Respondent distribution according to education level

Level of Education	Total number of respondents	Percentage %
Not Educated	5	12%
Primary	24	60%
Secondary	10	25%
Tertiary	1	3%

Source: Primary data

n=40

Basing on the findings in Table 4.2, the majority (60%) attended primary level and only 3 obtained tertiary education. 12% never attained education at all and the other 25% attained secondary education. The above findings show that the majority of women in this community are well educated hence they understand the questions asked in the questionnaires and also are able to think outside the box if the donors withdraw their funding.

4.2.3 Population Age Structure

The researcher studied the population age structure to understand the age distribution of HIV-infected women which helps predict future project needs, ensuring long-term sustainability by considering aging trends and demographic changes.

Table 4.3 Distribution of respondents by age

Age	Total number of respondents	Percentage
18-25		30%
26-40		50%
Above 40		20%

Source: Primary data

n=40

In light of the study's findings, which are shown in table 4.3. Of the respondents, 30% were between the ages of 18 and 25, 50% were over 40, and 20% were in between. This illustrates how the respondents' views varied based on their age.

4.2.4 Respondents source of employment

The researcher also analyzed some data based on sources of income. By understanding employment sources, projects can develop sustainable economic empowerment strategies, reducing dependence on donor funds. Studying employment sources helps identify women most vulnerable to poverty, exploitation and HIV risks, enabling targeted interventions.

Table 4.4 Distribution by employment

Employment source	Total number of respondents	Percentage %
Government Sector	3	8%
Private Sector	5	12%
Self employed	8	20%
Not employed	24	60%

Source Primary data

n=40

From the presented data of table 4.4 more than half of the targeted population is not employed, 20% is self-employed, 12% is into the private sector and 3% is employed by the government. Therefore one can conclude that the majority 80 that is unemployed and self-employed will be affected by the sustainability of donor funded community empowerment projects. These groups will suffer the most after donor funded community empowerment projects have been implemented and they turn not to be sustainable. Those into private and government sector are likely to sell their property to sustain themselves, thus also increasing their vulnerability.

4.3 Impact of community empowerment projects funded by donors on HIV-infected women

The researcher noted a slight improvement in the socio-characteristics of women infected with HIV after their participation in the projects. The outcome indicators are presented below:

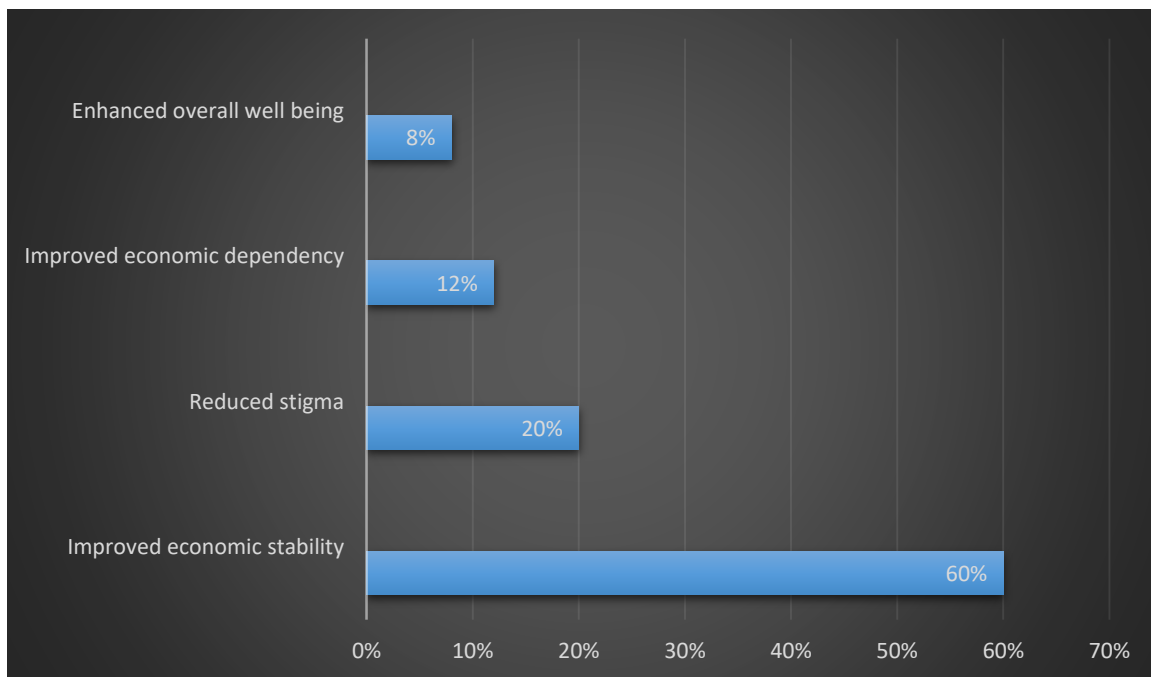


Fig 4.1 Outcome Indicators

To address the question, “*What is the impact of the donor-funded community empowerment projects on the economic empowerment of HIV infected women*“. This study found out as shown in Fig 4.1 that women’s socio-characteristics changed with the introduction of donor funded community empowerment projects and this suggests a positive impact on their lives. Evaluation of impact was based on respondent’s ratings during the survey. Through the use of an interview guide and a questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate the significance of each and every factor.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 40 HIV infected women as beneficiaries of the donor funded projects to gain an in-depth understanding of their experiences. Thematic analysis revealed several key themes. Participants reported that donor-funded projects greatly improved their livelihoods and economic dependency through skills training. As one woman said:

I learned bakery and cake-making skills. Now I have my own business and can support my children.

The majority of the responders stated that following the removal of donor help from several executed initiatives, their biggest difficulty was a lack of funding. Positive emphasis was also placed on financial support for businesses that generate revenue, such as vegetable gardens and chicken farming. A respondent noted:

When funds stopped, the project collapsed. We need sustainable funding to keep our businesses running.

Participants emphasized the need for linkage to markets as a barrier. It was evident enterprises struggled without marketing support. Suggestions were made to establish cooperative groups to jointly market products and access broader markets. Document review of progress reports submitted to donors revealed generally positive impacts on socio-economic status through productive engagement. However, reports also acknowledged volatility risks to continued community participation without ongoing incentives. While temporary external stimulation had improved conditions, long-term sustainability would require embedded local capacity-building and institutionalization of support structures. Triangulating multiple data sources afforded comprehensive assessment of both benefits and challenges for comprehensively serving this vulnerable group.

The findings both validate and extend previous research on the essential role of economic empowerment initiatives in improving livelihood resilience for HIV positive women. Studies have commonly reported skills development and income-generating activities as pivotal to enhancing self-sufficiency, maximizing health and social outcomes (Owen et al., 2021; Tembo et al., 2022). However, the sentiments regarding struggles post-project withdrawal align with more recent studies emphasizing the need for sustained, market-integrated support. Transitioning from initial external boosts to locally-driven continuity demands capacity-building focused enterprise clusters and cooperative networks (Daigneault et al., 2019; Mgombelo et al., 2020). Furthermore, the reliance on relationships highlights the human-

centered nature of empowerment called for in frameworks stressing community empowerment over short-term assistance (Earnshaw et al., 2020; Dehne & Irwin, 2021). While projects show potential, the literature reinforces findings suggesting impact volatility without institutionalizing partnerships and systematic ownership transition (Matovu et al., 2021; Elani et al., 2022). Overall, this underscores the need for holistic, multipartner interventions addressing structural drivers through locally-embedded solutions as advocated in current empowerment models.

4.4 Challenges faced by community members (women) from projects handed over for community ownership

To be able to identify the challenges women are facing from projects handed over for community ownership, the researcher gathered data using survey and interview guide and these were the results:

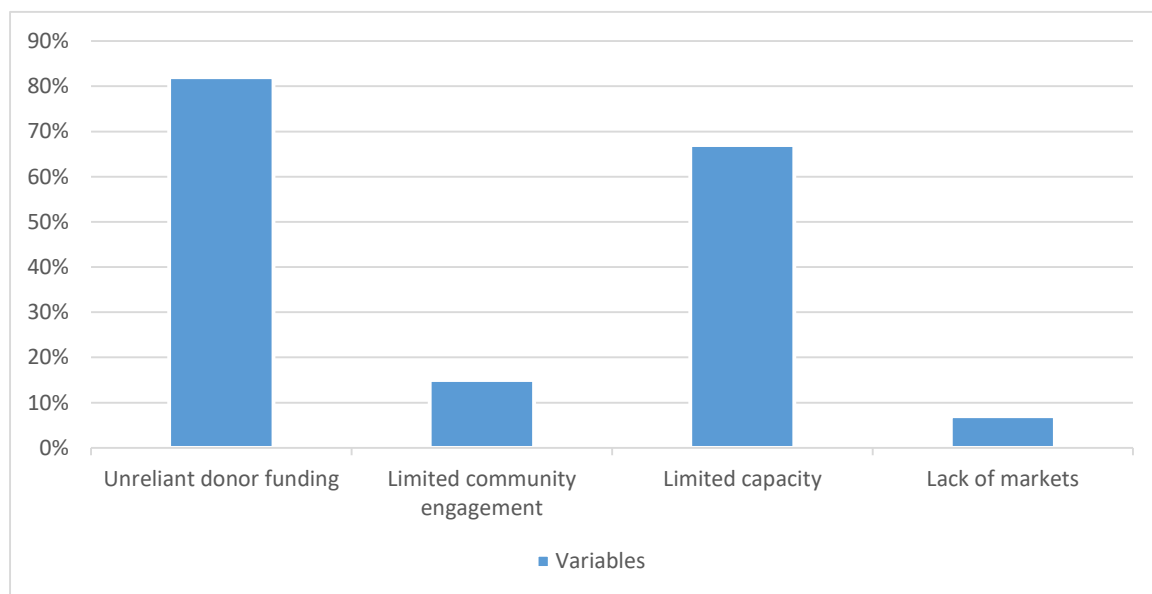


Fig 4.2 Challenges faced by community members from projects handed over for community ownership

After donor support for several implemented initiatives was withdrawn, the majority of responders (82%) stated that their biggest difficulty was a lack of funding (Fig.4.2). Limited capacity challenges were pointed out by 67% of respondents, 74% indicated lack of markets and only 15% mentioned participation and limited community engagement as a challenge in running projects after handover by NGOs. The respondents clarified that when a community lacks the ability to raise its own funds, it can be challenging to manage a project that relied on funding from outside sources. These results are in line with what Martens (2010) found in a

study carried out in Binga, which found that while NGOs can be commended for bringing projects that support community welfare, such as chicken projects, community gardens, fattening cattle, and borehole drilling, they only operate when funder organizations and benefactors are present. Many fishing cooperatives failed to operate due to challenges of finance and this was also experienced in donor-funded projects after their withdrawal. Due to the financial difficulties, it became difficult to obtain the equipment needed to start or finish the projects. The reason given by those who identified community participation as a barrier is that project implementers do not involve the intended population at every level of the design, implementation, and assessment of the project. Most of the time when they run into difficulties. They have no one to turn to for help, which ultimately interferes with the projects' ability to proceed smoothly. This can be noted from a women interviewed who had this to say:

“I want to sell more crafts but don't know where to find customers. It's hard to keep going without reliable buyers.”

Transport difficulties were also a barrier to delivering products and accessing wider markets for sales. A focus group discussion with participants yielded further insights. When asked how projects could be improved, one replied:

Projects need to help us form cooperative groups. If we work together to market and sell each other's goods, it will be easier than trying alone.

Others agreed that cooperatives could facilitate bulk production, joint branding for recognition, and coordinated transport of goods to viable markets. This collaborative approach was seen as key to sustainable livelihoods. Despite challenges, most participants remained optimistic that through dedication and new partnerships, their circumstances could be enhanced. As another remarked:

With the right continuing assistance, especially with selling our products, I believe we can strengthen our businesses. No one should have to struggle alone with this disease.

Triangulating perspectives afforded a nuanced understanding of both persisting obstacles and potential solutions for empowering this community in the long-term.

The findings provide valuable contextual insights that help explain some of the quantitative results. While the statistical analysis surprisingly did not show challenges as significantly hindering empowerment, the interviews and focus group discussion revealed specific challenges like lack of access to stable markets and transport difficulties that were indeed

creating meaningful barriers for project sustainability and livelihood growth. These qualitative perspectives give voice to the real-life experiences facing beneficiaries in ways purely quantitative data cannot capture. A key theme that emerged was the potential of cooperatives to help address market-related challenges through joint efforts, supporting the notion that collaborative solutions may be better able to facilitate sustainable empowerment. Triangulating the qualitative exploration of challenges with the quantitative results suggests there may be alternate, unmeasured factors beyond those challenges quantified that have a greater influence on empowerment outcomes. Overall, incorporating the qualitative element provides real-world perspective and a more holistic understanding of both the empirical findings and lived realities of participants. It offers valuable context for more completely assessing empowerment interventions and pathways for the target population.

The findings align with prior studies emphasizing the crucial role community partnerships play in overcoming economic vulnerabilities (Mgombelo et al., 2020; Tembo et al., 2022). However, the quantitative results not finding challenges significant diverge from literature stressing market barriers as key sustainability deterrents (Owen et al., 2021; Matovu et al., 2021). This discrepancy could relate to quantitative constraints masking socioeconomic nuances better captured through qualitative probing (Elani et al., 2022). The participant-highlighted potential of cooperatives ties into literature advocating for collective entrepreneurship models shown to magnify impacts and build resilience (Daigneault et al., 2019; Mgombelo et al., 2020). While some studies showed individual enterprises strengthening empowerment (Shamu et al., 2022), findings here implying collaborative approaches may better optimize available resources and facilitate economically sustainable solutions support evolving frameworks conceptualizing community empowerment as an integrated process (Dehne & Irwin, 2021). Overall, by synthesizing mixed results with literature underscoring community-centered strengths, this research reaffirms holistic, systems-thinking interventions are pivotal for comprehensively empowering highly vulnerable groups in securing long-term livelihoods.

4.5 Sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects

The researcher assessed the community empowerment projects funded by donors for sustainability, and the findings are shown in Fig. 4.3 below.

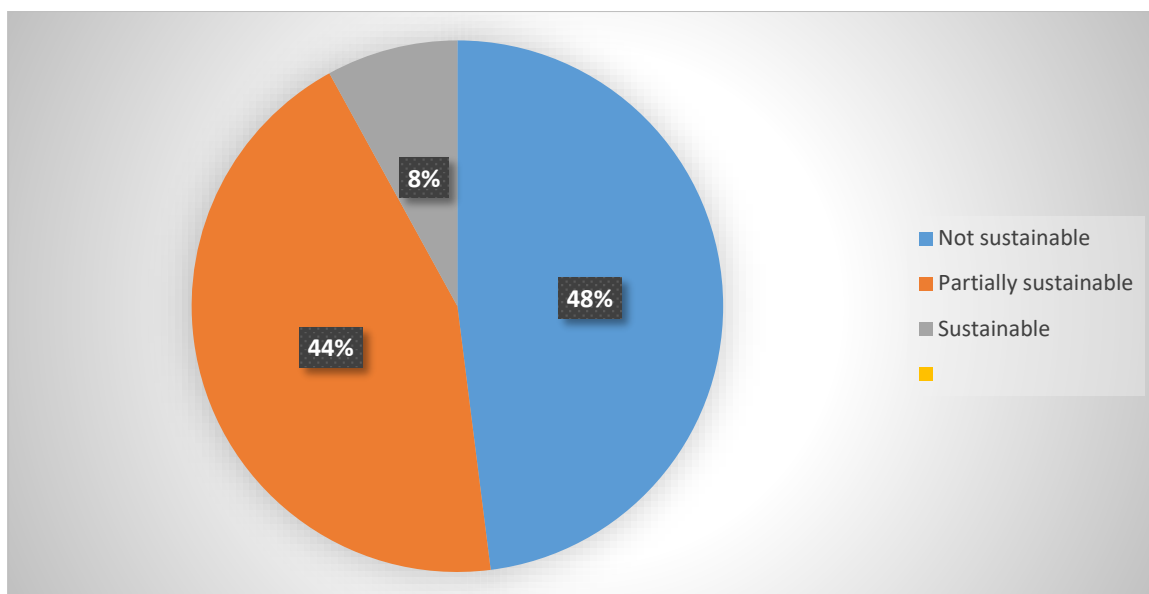


Fig .4.3 Sustainability of implemented projects without reliance on donor funding

To address the research question, *“To what extent do donor-funded projects for HIV-infected women demonstrate sustainability?”* According to the study's analysis of Fig. 4.3's results, 48% of respondents said that NGOs' programs are not long-term. Of the participants, 44% noted that the projects are only partially sustainable, and just 8% were satisfied with the projects' claim to be sustainable. The main justification offered by people who thought that most NGOs' programs weren't meeting their needs was because they weren't sustainable. These results align with the findings of Mago et al. (2015), who found that some projects carried out by NGOs are carried out without consulting community members, leaving the targeted population's demands unmet. This implies that NGOs execute these initiatives in order to protect their contracts without necessarily concentrating on the project's viability in strengthening the rural communities, in an effort to impress the benefactor and draw in further funding. Participants in Rosa highlighted agricultural development programs that do not address the specific challenges faced by women living with HIV. They said that this was a good project, however it did not do much to address their challenges such as access to healthcare, discrimination and gender based violence. These programs included distribution of fertilizers. Women living with HIV usually suffer from stigmatization and discrimination from acquiring land for agricultural purposes and this made them view fertilizers and other inputs to be less of importance, and hence they end up selling fertilizers in neighboring communities.

Participants indicated that in the district, NGO strategies and dependency syndrome are interrelated. Constant distributions make people reticent and make them wait for hand-outs

from NGOs through ISALs, which keeps them from progressing as a community. Despite their underdevelopment, the Mazowe community may contribute to its own growth provided its qualities are recognized, capitalized on, and promoted. Research conducted by (Appel S., 2019; Dube K., 2021) details case studies of how NGOs are facing similar issues in Ghana and Latin America due to their reliance on donor aid, shifting donor priorities that lead to donors withdrawing their support, and projects ending too soon. 100% of the key informants provided explanation of why there hasn't been any noteworthy development since the engagement of various NGOs in the District with some stating that the NGOs are addressing symptoms and not the root causes of HIV.

Furthermore, it was suggested that NGOs need to understand the reasons and historical background of HIV in Mazowe. Due to the inaccessibility of some wards where those in need live, their inability to conduct home visits to households with special needs, and the location of their offices far from service users, the majority of them are unable to reach the most vulnerable members of the community. For instance, DREAMS serves 31 wards that are spread out from its Glendale offices, despite the fact that its personnel are located there. Therefore, it will be feasible to integrate those areas in the development initiatives by utilizing the SLA approach. Additionally, this will assist in resolving the constraint that NGOs encounter in Zimbabwe, as identified by Mpofu et al. (2012) that NGOs come to Zimbabwe with prearranged programs and provide conditions in the delivery of aid and their commendations on development can easily be prejudiced towards false anticipations, their limited understanding of their home countries, or adopted from the practices of few countries.

Interviews were conducted with participants to gain an in-depth understanding of their perspectives. Many highlighted that projects starting income-generating activities had strengthened their sense of empowerment through enhanced livelihood skills and greater financial autonomy. Projects establishing community gardens and poultry businesses were particularly praised for their sustained self-sufficiency. However, concerns were raised about dependencies developing post-project as resources diminished. Participants emphasized the need for continuity of funding to institutions managing projects for ongoing support. Without maintenance of projects, accumulated empowerment gains were at risk of dissipating.

Focus group discussions provided further insights. In one group, participants debated that fostering local leadership and community ownership of projects from inception better ensured sustainability. Proposals were made to establish village development committees to drive

projects long-term rather than constant reliance on external implementing partners. Such embedded structures, if properly trained and resourced, could gradually assume full responsibility for locally prioritized activities. While projects were recognized as crucially empowering vulnerable communities, sustained donor commitment to developmental approaches and institutional frameworks was imperative for leaving lasting legacies of empowerment beyond isolated temporary interventions. Collaborative strategies emphasizing community participation held promise for actualizing sustained empowerment gains. One of the respondents noted:

When the funding stops, it damages all the progress we have made. The projects must continue or else we will go back to how things were before.

Another respondent said that:

We need to be in charge of our own development. If the community takes control, these projects will not end once outside help leaves. We know best what we need.

The participant concerns around project dependencies align with studies demonstrating widespread risk of erosion without ongoing investment (Matovu et al., 2021; Mgombelo et al., 2020). The suggestions to foster local leadership and community ownership also validate frameworks emphasizing user-centered approaches for sustainable capacity-building (Tembo et al., 2022; Daigneault et al., 2019). This participatory philosophy proposed by interviewee's ties into models showing community management bolsters viability long-term through localized contextualization (Owen et al., 2021; Elani et al., 2022). However, as the literature also notes, such transitions require long-term technical support and gradual institutional strengthening to cultivate independent governance capacities (Earnshaw et al., 2020; Dehne & Irwin, 2021). The debates reflected an understanding empowerment is iterative, not instantly achieved, necessitating enduring, systems-level commitments from all stakeholders for transformational change (Shamu et al., 2022; Fonner et al., 2019). The findings corroborate recent studies advocating community-led development through embedded structures ideally resourced to lead continued progress, versus short-term aid leaving behind sustainability gaps (Fonner et al., 2019; Mgombelo et al., 2020). This underscores the need for collaborative partnerships grounded in communities' aspirations.

4.6 Conditions for sustainability of the projects

To tackle the objective on the conditions for sustainability of the projects the researcher made use key informative interviews. Studying the conditions for sustainability of the projects was pivotal because it helped ensure the long-term impact of these projects. Not only that, but by identifying the conditions that support sustainability, organizations can allocate resources more efficiently, maximizing the benefits for HIV positive women and their communities. Participants reported that projects located near health facilities were better able to continue services, as women received ongoing medical support critical for their condition. Reliable access to treatment strengthened empowerment gains by improving health and quality of life. However, women farther from clinics struggled more with nutrition and self-care needs due to transport barriers, affecting independence and business activities over time.

Focus groups explored this topic further. Discussions highlighted how social conditions like community acceptance and family support were major facilitators of sustained participation. Women felt empowered expanding craft businesses when not stigmatized for their status. Those rejected by others or managing alone showed signs of diminished self-efficacy and involvement in groups after project completion. Participants agreed dedicated mentoring and establishing support networks countered effects of social isolation threatening independence. Overall, triangulating survey data with qualitative interviews and focus groups provided deeper contextual understanding consistent with quantitative results. Interactive dialogues probed complex influencers like health, geographic, social and emotional factors beyond metrics. This nuanced examination affirmed conditions distinctly shaped participants' abilities to actualize and preserve empowerment gains through community projects as hypothesized based on the analytical objective. The findings echo prior research highlighting how contextual barriers like distance from services, stigma, and lack of familial aid undermine HIV positive women's empowerment pursuits (Shamu et al., 2022; Mukherjee et al., 2021). Particularly, the transportation obstacles faced resonate with studies showing remote geographic access hinders sustained care utilization and economic involvement integral to empowerment (Breni et al., 2019; Mgombelo et al., 2020). There is need to use the grassroots approach. This will also assist in resolving the issue raised by Mpfu et al. (2012) in Zimbabwe, which is that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) enter the country with prearranged programs and set conditions for aid delivery. Their acknowledge for development can be prone to bias due to erroneous expectations, a narrow understanding of the targeted countries, or adoption of

practices from a small number of countries. Conversely, the supportive effects of acceptance and close community ties corroborate literature emphasizing socio-emotional factors as pivotal determinants of resilience and independence (Fonner et al., 2019; Dehne & Irwin, 2021). Triangulating mixed perspectives within an analytic framework rooted in both empirical evidence and humanistic comprehension of multi-level structural determinants, as achieved through this research's methodology, offers a holistic portrait aligning with current conceptualizations of empowerment as an integrated socioeconomic phenomenon.

Volunteerism and participation in the community is a vital component that drives donor-funded projects toward sustainability. This will reduce reliance on local financing sources and promote a feeling of communal ownership. Collaborating with the community at the grassroots level facilitates project implementation within the constraints of available resources and opens the door for training aimed at enhancing capacity in areas where community members and local stakeholders may be deficient. The community's material, intellectual, and human resources will be drawn upon, understanding that the grassroots approach will be necessary to ensure the project's success.

It is envisaged that recipients will continue to function following initial support (sustainability), and input will be given in the plan for next donor-funded projects that operate in clearly defined institutional and socioeconomic contexts. This will address the criticism made by Mpofo (2012) and (Dochas) 2022 that NGO innovation is a rare occurrence because of the strictest funding controls donors impose on NGOs. As a result, NGO performance is evaluated primarily on compliance with donor priorities rather than on how well NGOs respond to the needs of the beneficiaries. According to a study by Chepkemai et al. (2021), community ownership of donor-funded projects can be achieved consistently with the support of beneficiaries and district representatives, as well as project sustainability which is a consistent approach towards attaining project's sustainability.

4.7 Conclusion

Chapter four has scrutinized the qualitative and quantitative findings on the sustainability of donor funded community empowerment projects for HIV positive women. It comprehensively analyzed and interpreted empirical and humanistic findings to evaluate sustainability of projects. Key findings showed project's impacts on empowerment of women, conditions influence sustainability levels, and how contextual barriers like access to services and stigma impact empowerment pursuits.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The findings of the research on the sustainability of donor-funded initiatives for HIV-infected women is concluded in this final chapter, which also offers recommendations for improving project sustainability.

5.2 Summary of findings

The findings indicated that the projects have a positive impact on the economic outcomes of HIV infected women, such as increased income and employment opportunities. The projects also improve the social outcomes, including enhanced social support networks and reduced stigma. The findings also show a positive effect of the projects on the health outcomes, including improved mental health and increased access to healthcare services. Interviews with beneficiaries revealed that skills training in baking, poultry, and gardening improved livelihoods and self-sufficiency.

The results also brought to light the difficulties that women had when their initiatives were turned over to the community for ownership, including a lack of funding, little community involvement, insufficient capacity building, and a lack of markets for the projects' completed goods. Financial support enabled income-generating activities. However, challenges were reported after donor funding ended, including project collapse and business struggles without continuity of support. Lack of market linkages also hindered enterprise success. The findings align with literature stating economic empowerment is important but requires sustainable, community-driven solutions for long-term impact. Emphasis on cooperative networks and institutional partnerships is needed to comprehensively meet needs beyond short-term assistance. Qualitative interviews revealed projects established livelihood skills and financial autonomy, strengthening feelings of empowerment. While projects were empowering, sustained donor commitments to developmental approaches and institutional frameworks were seen as crucial for leaving lasting legacies beyond isolated interventions.

Findings also suggest that prioritizing community empowerment, capacity building and sustainability planning is crucial for ensuring the long-term impact and sustainability of the projects. Conversely, stigma and isolation undermined self-efficacy.

5.3 Conclusions

The research's conclusion for Chapter 5 provides the following insights in light of the findings:

Donor-funded community empowerment projects have a noteworthy influence on the lives of HIV-infected women, by improving livelihood skills and self-sufficiency. However, the substantial drop-off in impact after funding ends underscores the need for sustainable, locally owned solutions. Without continuity of support, capacities and businesses built up cannot be maintained, negating gains achieved. This highlights the shortcomings of short-term aid in creating lasting, transformative change and emphasizes the critical importance of partnership models empowering communities to independently drive their long-term development. Sustainability is confirmed as pivotal for maintaining empowerment impact. Dependency risks as external support wanes highlight the need for graduated transfer of responsibilities to community ownership and control. Community engagement and participation are crucial for project success and sustainability, emphasizing the importance of inclusive and participatory approaches.

Despite positive impacts, the projects face significant sustainability challenges, highlighting the need for strategic planning and capacity building. The sustainability of these projects is contingent upon various factors such as community engagement, stakeholder involvement, and financial stability. To ensure the long term sustainability of these projects, it is essential to address these challenges effectively and establish a framework that promotes community ownership and women's participation.

5.4 Recommendations

The study's conclusion lead to the following recommendations to enhance the sustainability of donor-funded community empowerment projects for HIV infected women:

- ❖ Donor agencies should provide multi-year funding to non-governmental organizations for comprehensive capacity building and gradual weaning-off. This will help community projects transition to sustainable, locally-driven models with minimal dependence on external aid over time. Due to findings showing that projects are being affected by resources, project implementers should develop and implement sustainable strategies to ensure project continuity after funding ends.

- ❖ Community leaders and stakeholders should prioritize the empowerment and participation of HIV-infected women in project decision-making and implementation. It is recommended that local leaders champion participatory action research to better understand community needs and contextual barriers. Engaging qualitative citizen perspectives will inform integrated solutions tackling socioeconomic determinants of vulnerability in a holistic, people-centered manner aligned with reality on the ground.
- ❖ Project Implementers should prioritize monitoring and evaluation to assess project impact and sustainability and inform decision-making. They should foster mentoring networks pairing experienced businesswomen with new entrepreneurs. Providing dedicated one-on-one support will help build resilience against setbacks by cultivating life skills, troubleshooting challenges, and reinforcing social support systems crucial for independence.
- ❖ For Development Institutions which are into HIV-infected women, women should become their top priority and conduct capacity building initiatives. It is recommended that HIV support groups advocate for policy reform countering discrimination in health services, employment, and community participation. Eliminating stigmatizing barriers and fulfilling basic rights of marginalized groups is needed to promote dignity and maximize potential for sustained empowerment.

References

Abawi, K. (2013). *Data Collection Instruments (Questionnaire and Interview)*, available online at: <https://www.gfmer.ch/SRH-Course-2012/Geneva-Workshop/pdf/Data-collection-instruments-Abawi-2013.pdf>, accessed on 2 April 2018.

Agriculture Still the Key? ESA Working Paper No. 07-02. Food and Agriculture Organization. June

Aly, M. (2016). *A Manual for Selecting Sampling Techniques in Research*, Munich Personal RePEc Archi, University of Karachi, Iqra University

Anriquez, G and Stamoulis, K. (2007). *Rural Development and Poverty Reduction: Is*

Appel S. Reflection on sustainability and resilience in the NGOs sector *Adm Theory Praxis*. 2019, 41 (3): 307-17

Babbie, E. (2007). *The Practice of Social Research*. Wadsworth. Cengage Learning.

Bailey, K.D. (1982). *Methods of Social Research*. London. Collier Macmillan.

Balgis, O.E., Nagmeldin, G.E., Hanafi, H and Sumaya, Z. (2005). *Sustainable Livelihoods Approach for Assessing Community Resilience to Climate Change. Case Studies from Sudan*

Banks N, Hulme D, Edwards M. NGOs, states, and donors revisited: still too close for comfort? *World Dev*. 2015; 66:707-18

Bendell, J. (2006). *Debating NGO Accountability*. United Nations

Bhattacharjee, A. (2012). "Social Science Research: Principles, Methods and Practices", Textbooks Collection.3. Accessed online at: http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=oa_textbooks on 21 March 2018.

Cambridge Dictionaries Online. Cambridge University. Retrieved March 29, 2013

Carey, M, A 1995. Comments .Concerns in the Analysis of Focus Group Data. *Qualitative Health Research*.5 (4) 487-495.

Carney D, 2003, *Sustainable Livelihoods approaches: Progress and possibilities for change* .Department for International Development, London (2003).

Carney D. *implementing the sustainable rural livelihoods approach*. London: Department for International Development; 1998.

Chambers R, 1983: *Rural Development: Putting the Last first* Longman, Harlow (1983).

Chambers, R. and Conway, G.R. (1992) *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century, Discussion Paper 296*. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies.

Chawarika B (2011). Challenges faced by the NGO's during the political harsh climate of Zimbabwe: analysing the effects on Sustainability and promotion of human rights (Unpublished Master's Thesis). University of Gothenburg .Gothenburg.

Chepkemol YE, Kisimbii JM. Determinants of the sustainability of donor-funded poverty reduction programs in non-governmental organizations in Mombasa County, Kenya .Int Acad J Inf Sci Project Manag.2021, 3(7):18-42

Chepkemol YE, Kisimbii JM. Determinants of the sustainability of donor-funded poverty reduction programs in non-governmental organizations in Mombasa County, Kenya. Int Acad J Inf Sci Project Management. 2021; 3(7):18–42.

Chepkemol YE, Kisimbi J M. Determinants of the sustainability of donor –funded poverty reduction programs in NGOs in Mombasa County, Kenya. Int Acad J INF Science Projects Manage 2021, 3:18-42

Chiduzha C. On farm evaluation of sorghum (BiColor) Varieties in the Sebungwe Region of Zimbabwe, Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1987.

Chiduzha C. On-farm evaluation of sorghum (Bicolour) Varieties in the Sebungwe Region of Zimbabwe. Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1987.

Chiromo A.S (2006). *Research Methods and Statistics in Education: A Student's guide*, BETA Print.

Chizimba M. The sustainability of donor-funded projects in Malawi. Rome MCSER-CEMAS-Sapienza University of Rome; 2013. P.86.

Cresswell, J.W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 3rd ed London; Sage Publications Ltd, pdf, accessed online at: <https://vivauniversity.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/cresswell-2008-research-design-qualitative-quantitative-and-mixed-methods-approaches.pdf>, on 15 March 2018.

Daigneault, P.-M., Jacquet, J., & King, C. V. (2019). Linking development projects to local economic complexes: A view from project stakeholders. *World Development*, 116, 23–33.

De Vaus. D. A. (2001). *Research Design in Social Research*, London: SAGE: 2001 assessed at: <http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/researchdesigns>. On 19 March 2018.

Dehne, K. L., & Irwin, A. (2021). Community empowerment and comprehensive programming. *AIDS*, 35(Supply 1), S1–S2.

Division for Socio-economic Analysis.

DOCHAS. A wave of change: how Irish NGOs will sink or swim, a discussion paper on the future roles and relevance of Ireland's Development NGOs. 2008. <http://www.dochas.ie>. Accessed 3 Sep 2022.

Dube K. A review of the strategies used by non-governmental org NGOs use to reduce vulnerability to poverty in Zimbabwe. *Afro J Social Work* .2021,-11 (6); 371-8

Dube K.A review of the strategies used by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to reduce vulnerability to poverty in Zimbabwe *J Soc Work*.2021; 11(6):371-8

Dzinamaria T et al 2020 Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) response in Zimbabwe a call for urgent scale up of testing to Meet National Capacity

Eani, H., Sabuni, N. P., Mtenga, S., Mshana, G., & Changalucha, J. (2022). Determinants of Sustainability of Community-Based Interventions for People Living with HIV/AIDS in Southern Tanzania. *AIDS Research and Treatment*, 2022, 1–10.

Earnshaw, V. A., Quinn, D. M., Kalichman, S. C., & Park, C. L. (2020). COVID-19 Related Stigma Experienced by People Living with HIV. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 44(2), 228.

Ellis, F. (1998). *Survey Article: Household Strategies and Rural Diversification*. *Journal of Development Studies*, 35(1):1-38

Ellis, F. (1999). *Rural Livelihood Diversity in Developing Countries: Evidence and Policy Implications*. Paper 40.London: Overseas development Institute

Ellis, F. (2000). *Rural Livelihood Diversity in Developing Countries: Analysis, Policy, Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, F. and Biggs, (2001). *Evolving Themes in Rural Development 1950s-2000s*” *Development Policy Review*, 19(4):437-448.

Fern, E. F. (1992).Use of Focus Groups for Idea Generation Effects of Group Size, Acquaintanceship and Moderation on Response Quality and Quantity. *Journal of Marketing research*, 19 (1), 1-13.

Fine & Lapavistas, 2004.B, Fine, C Lapavistas Social capital &Capitalist economies .South-Eastern Europe .*Journal of Economics* (2) (1) (2004) pp17-34.

Fonner, V. A., Armstrong, K. S., Kennedy, C. E., O'Reilly, K. R., & Sweat, M. D. (2014). School based sex education and HIV prevention in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *PLoS ONE*, 9(3).

- Fruttero, A and Guari, V. (2005). *The Strategic Choices of NGOs: Location Decisions in Rural Bangladesh*. Journal of Development Studies, Vol.41. July 2005, pp. 759-787. Taylor and Francis Group Ltd.
- Gillen et al, 2022 J.Gillen, T.Bunnell, J.Rigg Geographic's of ruralisation.
- Haida, M. (2009). *Sustainable Livelihood Approaches. The Framework, Lessons Learnt from Practice and Policy Recommendations*. UNDP Dry lands Development Centre
- Holloway, R (2009). *Establishing & Running on Advocacy NGO*. Pact Inc.
- Holstein, J.A & Gubrium, J.F (1995). *The Active Interview*. Thousand Oaks. Sage.
- [http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hiv aids.htm.\(2005-03-14\)](http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hiv aids.htm.(2005-03-14))
- Huysmans, G.K. (1994). *Methodology for the Social and Behavioural Sciences*. Halfway: Southern.
- Kingry, M, J., Tiedje, L. B and Friedman, L. (1990). *Focus Groups .A research Technique for Nursing*. Nursing Research, 39 (2): 124-125
- Kollmair, M. and St. Gamper. (2002). *The Sustainable Livelihood Approach*. Development Study Groups. University of Zurich (IP6).
- Krantz L. *The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to poverty reduction SIDA*, 2001:44; 1-38
- Krantz, L. (2001). *The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction*. Sida
- Mago S, Nyathi D, Hofisi C. *Non-gvt Organizations and rural poverty reduction strategies in Zimbabwe: a case of Binga Rural District* ,J Governmental Regul, 2015;4 (4);59-68
- Magombedze J (2017) *Political influence and implications on NGOs management and development initiatives on NGO management and development initiatives :(A case of Mbire District)* (Unpublished Dissertation) Bindura University.
- Matovu, J. K. B., Sempeera, H., Mugumya, F., Makumbi, F., Serwadda, D., Kansiime, C., Njunvu, J. E., & Orwenjo, E. (2021). Fifteen years of antiretroviral treatment in rural Uganda: Impact on life expectancy and population-level changes in causes of mortality. *BMC Medicine*, 19(1), 1–12.
- Matsa M, Dzawanda B. *Dependency syndrome by communities or insufficient ingestion period by benefactor organizations? The Chirumanz C aritas Community Gardening Project experience /Zimbabwe*. J George Earth Sci.2014; 2(1):127-48
- McCandless E, Pajibo E (2003) *between perception and reality: are NGOs really making a impact*

Mgombelo, J., Courtenay-Quirk, C., & Lennon, D. (2020). Innovation in Community-based Responses to HIV: Lessons Learned From the Place-based Interventions. *JMIR Formative Research*, 4(9).

Ministry of Finance & Economic Dev. National Dev. Strategy 1: towards a prosperous & empowered upper-middle income society. Harare: Print Flow 2020.

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development National Development Strategy 1: towards a prosperous and empowered upper middle income society .Harare: Print flow, 2020

Moyo ,S, Chimbari ,M and Gavaza M,(2021).Challenges and Strategies for Ensuring the Sustainability of Donor-Funded HIV projects : perspectives from Women in Zimbabwe *Journal of Health Management* ,23 ,59-73

Mpofu P. The death of culture in sustainable development: The impact of NGO's agenda and conditionalities on cultural sustainability in Zimbabwe. *J Sustain Development* Fr.2012; 14(4):191-205

Muir, A and Riddell, R.C. (1992). *Evaluating the Impact of NGOs in Rural Poverty Alleviation: Zimbabwe Country Study*, ODI Working Paper No. 52, London, February 1992.

Muir, A. (1992).*Evaluating the Impact of NGOs in Rural Poverty Alleviation. Zimbabwe Country Study*, Harare.

Mutale Q (2016) .Factors affecting the success of NGO interventions in Social Service Provision for the rural Poor communities in Zimbabwe: Case of Lung Ward 1 in Binga District. (Unpublished Dissertation).Midlands State University, Gweru

Nakiyingi-Miuro,J and Musinguzi G (2014) .Sustainability of HIV/AIDS Programme in Africa ;A Review of the Literature from 2000 to 2013.*AIDS Patient Care and STDs* ,28 4 ,217-225.

Ndhlovu E. Relevance of sustainable livelihood approach in Zimbabwe's land reform program. *Africa insight*.2018; 47(4):83-98

Owen, M. B., Coffey, B., Ware, P. E., & Magaya, L. (2021). Community-Based Organizations Promoting Economic Empowerment and Health Behaviors for People Living with HIV in South Africa. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 68(3), 655–671.

Patton, M.Q (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* .Thousand Oaks. CA. Sage.

Rahman, M.S. (2017). The advantages and Disadvantages of using Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches and Methods in Language. "Testing and Assessment" Research: A

Literature Review, *Journal of Education and Learning; Canadian Centre of Science and Education Vol 6, No. 1.*

Rajasekar, S., Philominathan, P. and Chinnathambi, V. (2013, June 15). Research Methodology. Retrieved from Physics: www.arxiv.org

Rajasekhar, D. (2004), *Poverty Alleviation Strategies of NGOs*. Concept Publishing Company. India, New Delhi.

Rakodi, C. and Lloyd-Jones, T. (2002). *Urban Livelihoods: A People-centered Approach to Reducing Poverty*. London: Earthscan Publications Limited.

Riddell, R and Robinson. (1992). *The Impact of NGO Poverty Alleviation Projects: Results of Case Study Evaluations*. Working Paper November 1992. Overseas Development Institute, London

Rural Poverty Research Centre, (2004). *Places Matters: Addressing Rural Poverty*. Rural Policy Research Institute

Salamon L M Partners in Public Service, the Scope and theory of Government Non-Profit relations. In Powell WW, editors .*The Non-Profit sector, a research handbook* .New Haven, Yale University Press, 1987

Salamon, L.M and Anheier, H.K. (1998). *Origins of Civil Society: Explaining The Nonprofit Sector Crossy-Nationally*. *Voluntas* 1.9 (3), 213-281

Sally Z, Gaskin S J, Folifac F, Kometa SS. The Effect of urbanization on community –managed water supply: case study of Buea, Cameroon .*Community Development* .J, 2013.

Sally Z, Gaskin SJ, Folifac F, Kometa SS. The effect of urbanization on community-managed water supply: a case study of Buea, Cameroon. *Community Dev. J.*2013, 2013(49):524-40

Scoones, I. (1998).*Sustainable rural livelihoods, a framework for analysis*. Institute of Development Studies, Working Paper 72.

Shoko (2003), Establishing training guidelines on environment protection management for small scale mining .MMCZ, Zimbabwe.

Sporton, D. And Thomas, D.S.G,. (2002). *Sustainable Livelihoods in Kalahari Environments: A Contributing to Global*. Oxford University Press.

Tarisayi K (2014).Some Contemporary challenges faced by NGOs in disaster induced relocations at Chingwizi Transit Camp, Zimbabwe (July 4, 2014).

Tembo, M., Mudavanhu, V. J., Chipimo, P. J., & Mwale, T. (2022). Influence of participation in agricultural training programs on food security of people living with HIV/AIDS: Evidence from Zambia. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 14(7)

UN Economic and Social Affairs (2004, p11)

United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals 2017.

Welman, C, Kruger, F and Mitchell, B. (2005). *Research Methodology*. Oxford South Africa.

Wickermasinghe D, Hamza YA, Umar N, et al. A seamless transition: how to sustain a community health worker scheme within the health system of Gombe State, Northeast Nigeria. *Health Policy* 2021

Wilmot, A. (2012). *Designing sampling strategies for qualitative social research: With particular reference to the office for National Statistics' Qualitative Respondent register*. Retrieved from National Statistics: <http://www.adatum.com>

World Bank, Poverty, and shared prosperity 2020: reversals of fortune. Washington: World Bank; 2020

World Bank. Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2020; Reversals of fortune .Washington: World Bank, 2020

Zimbabwe Statistical Agency. Census 2012, National Report. Harare, Zimbabwe; 2012

Zinyemba A, Zinyemba R Service delivery of Non-Governmental Organisation in Zimbabwe: Challenges and strategies University of Zimbabwe Rev.2013, 22-31

APPENDIX 1: Interview Guide

Objective 1: To understand the effects of donor –funded community empowerment projects on the livelihoods of HIV infected women in Mazowe.

1. How has your livelihood changed as a result of participating in donor-funded community empowerment projects?
2. What specific project activities or interventions have helped improve your economic situation?
3. In what ways have the projects helped empower you or given you a sense of independence?

Objective 2: To identify challenges that hinder the sustainability of projects towards the empowerment of HIV infected women in Mazowe.

1. What difficulties, if any, have you faced in continuing project activities after initial donor funding ended?
2. What barriers exist in the community that make it hard for projects to be sustained long-term?
3. What kind of ongoing support is needed for past project gains to be maintained?

Objective 3: To assess sustainability of donor funded community empowerment projects in Mazowe District.

1. Do you think the projects' goals and benefits can continue now without ongoing donor funding? Why or why not?
2. What factors determine whether project outcomes are sustained over the long run?
3. In your view, how can projects in this area best be designed to ensure their ongoing impact and sustainability?

Objective 4: Examine conditions for sustainability of community based projects for HIV infected women.

1. What resources (financial, technical, etc.) must be in place for community-led projects to be self-sustaining?
2. What role should different stakeholders (community, government, NGOs, etc.) play to support long-term sustainability?

QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE

Instructions: Please select the answer by placing an (X) in the box with the most appropriate option or fill out the appropriate response to questions asked.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

A box represents an option, please tick the most appropriate answer where applicable. Please select the appropriate category that best describe you by putting an X in the Mark column.

Variable	Category	Mark
Sex	Male	
	Female	
Age (Years)	Below 25	
	25 to 30	
	31 to 40	
	41 to 50	
	Above 51	
Education Level	School Certificate	
	Diploma	
	Degree	
	Masters	
	Doctorate	

KEY QUESTIONS

The questions in the questionnaire were derived using a five-point Likert scale analysis measuring either positive or negative response to a statement where upon it is classified as follows:

Scale	Rating
1	Strongly Agree (SA)
2	Agree (A)
3	Neutral (N)
4	Disagree (A)
5	Strongly Disagree (SD)

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following items (tick the appropriate box)

ITEMS	SA	AG	N	DA	SD
Section B: The effects of donor –funded community empowerment projects on the livelihoods of HIV infected women in Mazowe					
The projects have improved food security for HIV infected women.					
The projects have improved income generating activities for HIV infected women.					
The projects have empowered HIV infected women to be self-reliant.					
Section C: Challenges that hinder the sustainability of projects towards the empowerment of HIV infected women in Mazowe.					
Adhering to ethical values such as transparency, honesty and fair trade positively impacts the brand image of telecom companies in Zimbabwe.					
Engaging in corporate social responsibility initiatives enhances customer perception and trust towards telecommunication brands in Zimbabwe.					
Upholding high ethical standards in business operations such as data privacy and security strengthens brand loyalty for telecom firms operating in Zimbabwe.					
Section D: The impact of economic responsibility on stakeholder relationships in Zimbabwe’s telecommunication sector					
Lack of funding is a major challenge to project sustainability..					
High staff turnover hinders project sustainability.					
Community dependence on donations hinders project sustainability.					

Section E: Sustainability of donor funded community empowerment projects in Mazowe District.					
The projects will continue after donor funding ends.					
Beneficiary communities are able to maintain project impact without outside support.					
Sufficient capacity building was conducted to enable communities to sustain projects.					
Section F: conditions for sustainability of community based projects for HIV infected women					
Clear exit strategies were developed by projects.					
Community ownership and participation in project activities was encouraged.					
Collaboration with local leadership supported project sustainability.					

Thank you for your participation! Your responses will be treated with the confidentiality that they deserve

