

# **THE IMPACT OF PROTRACTED FOOD AID ON CHIPINGE DISTRICT COMMUNITIES IN ZIMBABWE**

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## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this research to all the food insecure households of Zimbabwe who struggle to make food available in their homes and often times sleep on empty stomachs

## **ABSTRACT**

This study seeks to understand the impact of protracted food aid on household livelihood strategies. It assesses the negative impact of food aid on recipients which could also be called the disincentive effects or unintended effects. There has been a notion in the development discourse especially by donor organisations, governments and development agencies that donor aid can lead to negative dependency. Such arguments have been used to withdraw, or reduce aid. On the other hand the study assesses whether the design of food aid promoted livelihood strategies as a way of building resilience to further shocks.

A qualitative research design which used a number of methods was utilised. It made use of focus group discussions with local authorities of Chipinge district, local traditional leaders, government field workers and villagers as well as questionnaire interviews with individuals while observations became an integral part. A two stage sampling design was chosen in order to systematically sample the wards and then randomly sample individuals from those wards. A lot of secondary information was also obtained mostly from the World Food Programme and Christian Care.

The study found out that negative dependency on food aid does not occur because aid is given over a long period of time to the same communities. Rather it may occur if; (i) rigorous assessments are not done prior to implementation; (ii) it does not target the most vulnerable thereby including undeserving cases and excluding deserving cases; (iii) it is implemented at the wrong time and (iv) if the quantities given are more than the requirements.

It is concluded that the food aid which was implemented by Christian Care and World Food Programme from 2002 to 2009 was designed properly such that it did not encourage negative dependency. However, it fell short of attaining the objective of promoting or strengthening livelihoods.

In order to attain the objective of food security for the local people of Chipinge South it is recommended that both the public and private sectors revamp and expand the irrigation

developments in the region. Drought resistant crops such as millet and sorghum should be promoted. New farming technology of conservation farming is highly recommended to improve on crop yields. Finally it is recommended that food aid be combined with input support as a way of directly promoting production.



## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work, that all sources used or quoted, have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this dissertation was not previously submitted by me or any other person at any other university for a degree.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AGRITEX	Agricultural Extension
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CC	Christian Care
CFSAM	Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission
CHS	Community Household Surveillance
FAO	United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation
FDP	Food Distribution Point
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus/ Acquired Immuno Deficiency
HBC	Home Based Care
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
MERET	Managing Environmental Resources for Transition to sustainable livelihoods
MT	Metric Tonne
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
USA	United States of America
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WTO	World Trade Organisation
ZIMVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Committee
ZRCS	Zimbabwe Red Cross Society



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

Zimbabwe has been experiencing a high incidence of drought since the year 2000. Food shortages have been the major direct effect of drought. Drought as a slow onset hazard is ranked first among other natural hazards and it contributes to about 86.9% of hazard induced deaths (Wisner et al, 2004). According to the United Nations Consolidated Appeals Process the level of vulnerability in Zimbabwe is very high especially in the drought prone semi arid areas. Statistics on starvation are usually under-reported for political reasons.

Chipinge district lies in the south eastern part of the country and has a large area (more than 70% falling in the semi arid agro ecological region 5. The district has been experiencing widespread food shortages as a result of drought. Christian Care annual reports (2002 to 2006) show that since 2002 the local non governmental organisation, has implemented food aid programmes with the support of the United Nations World Food Programme. The number of people receiving food aid in the district has fluctuated in response to the level of vulnerability for that particular year. The World Food Programme indicates in its Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Programme (PRRO) 10310 Field Level Agreement with Christian Care that 80% of the Chipinge population will start to receive food aid from October 2007 to March 2008.

With this scenario it is obviously not sustainable in the long run to feed the Chipinge population almost on a yearly basis if the adverse climatic conditions persist. It is worth finding out how the food aid has affected the population in terms of livelihood strategies. One would also be interested to know whether the continued assistance has not instilled a sense of dependency by the communities.

## **1.2 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE STUDY**

According to the Consolidated Appeals Process 2007 food shortages as a result of drought is one of the major threats to the nation of Zimbabwe together with the high HIV and AIDS prevalence and unprecedented economic decline. As of 2007 more than 40% of the Zimbabwean population faced hunger and would required food aid. Chipinge District is among the worst districts affected by food shortages with about 200 000 people, representing 80% of the population currently facing hunger. Food aid is critical for alleviating suffering and starvation and has successfully done so for the said communities in the past 6 years.

Chambers (1997) however raises issues of dependency that may emanate from protracted assistance especially by nongovernmental organisations and suggests that affected communities should participate in identification of needs, planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes. This is important in ensuring capacity building for the communities and sustainability of the projects. In this regard communities should participate in strategies that help in ensuring food security.

The concept of dependency will be used as the analytical framework for the study. According to Harvey and Lind (2005) the term has been widely used but seldom defined or analysed in any detail. The two authors suggest certain assumptions and meanings that underpin its common usage in the discourse of humanitarian aid which are as follows:

Dependency is:

- 1 Generally seen as something negative and to be avoided
- 2 Associated with a provision of relief and contrasted with development approaches
- 3 Seen as undermining people's initiatives
- 4 Contrasted with a variety of positive values or terms notably independence, self sufficiency, self reliance and sustainability
- 5 Seen as a particular problem in contexts where relief assistance has been provided over a prolonged time.

Harvey and Lind further identify four main ways in which the term is broadly used;

1. Relief risks creating a dependency mentality or syndrome in which people expect continued assistance. This undermines initiative at individual or community levels
2. Relief undermines local economies, creating a continued need for relief assistance and trapping people into ongoing or chronic dependence on outside assistance.
3. Dependence on external assistance as one of the features of extreme poverty and associated with a sense of shame or defeat
4. Dependence of government at local or national levels warring parties or aid agencies or relief resources.

This study will dwell on the first two ways of conceptualisation. According to IRIN: Humanitarian News and Analysis report of 07 February 2006 titled Ethiopia: Struggling to end food aid dependency Ethiopia had been depending on food aid to feed about eight million people for the past three decades. The article chronicles how continued food aid had instilled a sense of continued expectation for aid by individual households at the expense of engaging in activities to increase food security. Regardless of harvests or rains at least five million people required food assistance for at least six months every year. The people got to a point where they were not concerned about poor rains but rather about food aid from America. Although some of the people interviewed were not happy with the state of dependency and preferred to produce food on their own they were in a situation where their production capacity had been greatly compromised. The Ethiopian government initiated strategies to break and end the dependency cycle but they did not yield the expected results.

Greste (2006) confirmed the same in his report titled Ethiopia's food addiction. "*Like a patient addicted to pain killer Ethiopia is hooked on to aid*", read the report. Woldu Menameno, a farmer in Tigre region of northern Ethiopia was quoted as saying, "*For years things were very bad. There was plenty of aid, but people were lazy. They just had the food and sat in their places. They didn't participate in anything, but just counted the days. They sat in their houses, dreaming of how to get more food.*"



Grassroots International (2000) reported that three years of US aid had greatly undermined the ability of Haitian farmers to grow and market their goods. According to the report US policies had interfered with production of local crops and created a dangerous dependence on US food imports further to a robbing of independence and community initiative. This conforms with Harvey and Lind' s second conceptualization of dependency.

### **1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The people in the communal areas of Chipinge district have been receiving food aid almost on a yearly basis for about six years yet there is no demonstrable capacity by the same to respond to drought using local resources. The Vulnerability Assessments carried out by the World Food Programme from 2002 to 2007 revealed that every year there was a drought the communities were found to be very food insecure or food insecure and required immediate assistance. It appears the same households have been receiving assistance and are likely to continue to require it every time drought occurs.

The aim of the study is to find out the effect of protracted food aid on livelihood strategies. It seeks to find out whether the continued food assistance programme has created dependency on donors by the communities.

### **1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

#### **The main objective:**

To assess the impact of protracted food aid on livelihood strategies of the Chipinge communities

#### **Sub-objectives**

- 1 To identify the main livelihood strategies or activities for the communities
- 2 To find out if the food aid was designed and aimed at strengthening livelihood and whether such an objective was met.
- 3 To compare the number and magnitude of livelihood activities with and without food aid

- 4 To find out why there may be a difference in 2 above
- 5 To propose food aid programming which strengthens livelihood strategies

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1 To what extent has the food aid promoted or destroyed initiatives on livelihoods?
- 2 Has protracted food aid created dependency of the benefiting Chipinge communities?
- 3 What is the role of the socio economic environment in the success of livelihood strategies?
- 4 What is the food aid threshold that would help to prevent starvation and assist in reducing vulnerabilities and building resilience to drought induced food shortages?
- 5 What other interventions could be made together with food aid to increase the capacity of communities to deal with food shortages?

### **1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This will be an empirical study and will use both primary and secondary data collection and analysis. Primary data will be gathered through a variety of methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observations, semi structured interviews. Primary data will be important to bring to the fore the local livelihood strategies and their current utilisation in the wake of food aid. It will also be important in determining a threshold for food aid as well as the other initiatives that may be supported to foster food security. Secondary data will be gathered from periodic and programme evaluation reports by the World Food Programme, Christian Care and Local Government as a way of trying to find answers to the research questions raised.

### **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

A qualitative research design using a variety of methods will be utilised. In-depth interviews will be held with randomly selected individuals, traditional chiefs, and other local leaders. These should provide information on livelihood strategies and help to assess the current behaviour in resorting to these strategies both for them as individuals

and for the community at large. Focus group discussions will be held with community leaders in doing timelines for their communities in order to identify the major crises that might have occurred in the past and then engage in discussions on what was done to cope. Key informant interviews and focus group discussions will also be held with professionals at district level including the District Administrator, Chief Executive Officer, Social Welfare Officers, and Agricultural Extension Officers and non governmental organisations' staff. These will generate data on what they have observed to be the impact of food aid on livelihood initiatives by Chipinge Communities and what they perceive to be the food aid threshold.

Secondary data from periodic and evaluation reports of the World Food Programme, Christian Care, other non governmental organisations and government departments will be used both as an alternative source and as a complementary source. They will provide quantitative data on the magnitude of the food aid in terms of number of beneficiaries, the percentage of the total population targeted and quantities of food distributed. The specific objectives, activities and achievements will be analysed in terms of whether due attention was given to enhancing the capacities of the communities to be self sufficient and self reliant. Their content will be analysed to determine trends in behaviour in terms of livelihood strategies. The sample size will be flexible to take care of issues on the ground.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

One of the major hazards that affect many parts of the world since the twentieth century is famine (Sullivan, s.a). According to him the incidence, severity and geographical extent of drought have increased over the years. Whereas droughts have been the primary cause of food shortages especially in the developing world, the developed world has over a long period of time been producing surplus food (Shelton ed., 2005). In order to fulfil the human right and need in the food deficit areas, food is shipped from surplus regions and distributed as aid. Food has been distributed in some countries for periods spanning more than 30 years. Such interventions have really saved lives and reduced suffering. However, according to Shelton ed., (2005) there are concerns that if food aid is implemented over prolonged periods to the same communities it causes disincentives in food production and ultimately dependency.

This chapter reviews literature on the impact of food aid on households and communities. It explores the meanings of food aid and how it can positively or negatively affect the recipients.

#### **2.2 BACKGROUND**

Sullivan (s.a) highlights a number of factors that contribute to food insecurity in certain regions of the world. The factors include global warming which is responsible for drought and flooding. Both factors negatively affect agricultural production. Other factors are persistent problems in cultivating food from lack of seed, arable land and tools, poverty, AIDS, globalise system of food production, and military conflicts. According to Wisner, Blaikie, Cannon & Davis (2004:3) the statistics which they gathered for a ten year period from 1990-9 indicated that drought or famine alone

accounted for more than 86,9% of the people that died as a result of disasters world wide. See Table 2.1 below.

By nature drought is a slow onset disaster and it affects people gradually through malnutrition and starvation. The worst recorded earthquake disaster caused the deaths of about 240,000 people in Tangshan (China) but in the twentieth century it is dwarfed by famines that have caused the deaths of more than a million people (Wisner *et al* 2004:127). Wisner *et al* give as examples 1,5 million people who perished as a result of famine in Bangladesh in 1974, between 900,000 and 2,4 million in North Korea between 1995 and 1999, and between 14 and 26 million in the Chinese ‘*Great Leap Forward*’ famine of 1958-61. From the statistics they assert that no other type of disaster has caused as many deaths as famine. The writer asserts that famine is therefore one of the major challenges for disaster management requiring appropriate and adequate intervention strategies which help both to save lives as well as to build resilience to further incidents of shocks. The strategies should therefore be able to address the short term survival needs as well as long term food security.

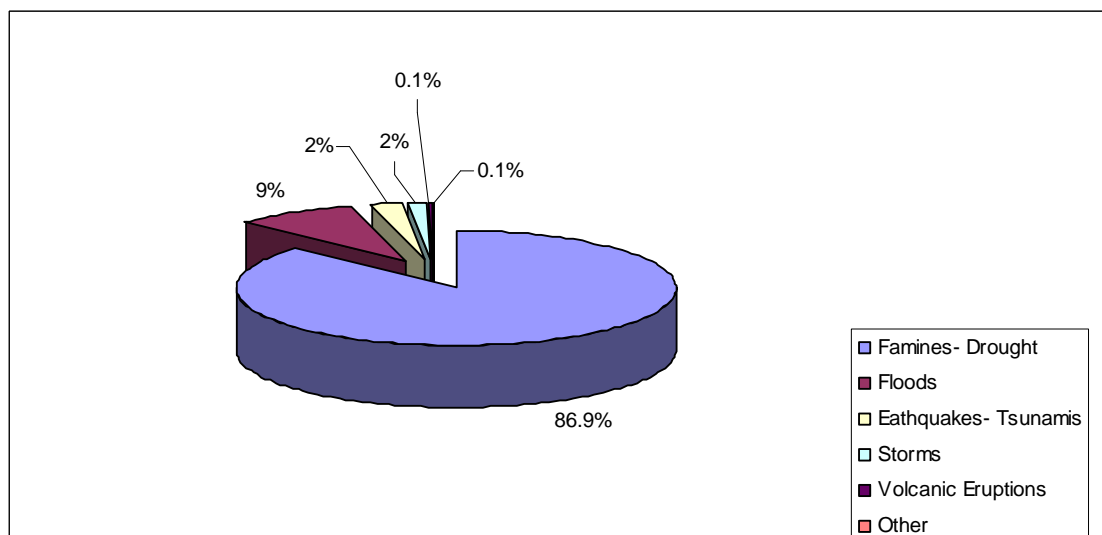


Figure 2.1 Hazard types and their contribution to deaths, 1990-1999

Source: Wisner, B., Blaike, P., Cannon, T. & Davis, I (2004:3)

Historically, South America, large areas of east, central and southern Africa and regions of South Asia have had high prevalence of hunger and starvation (Sullivan, s.a). As of 2006 the hot spots which were suffering the greatest degree of starvation were Niger, Haiti, Horn of Africa, Afghanistan, Pakistan, North Korea, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Southern Africa. Sullivan (s.a) argues that it is well known fact that there is enough food in the world to feed every human being on earth. The Cable News Network (October 17, 2003) quoted the United Nations World Food Programme as confirming the fact as well as the hot spots for hunger and starvation. *“Sadly malnutrition and hunger still afflict one out of every seven people in the world today. Or from a statistical perspective, the current world population is 4,712,200,000. The number of malnourished is 798,900,000. Therefore 17% of the world population is currently malnourished or starving.”* (Sullivan, s.a). According to the UN WFP report (quoted by CNN, October 17, 2003) an estimated 840 million people went hungry in 2002, a rise of 25 million in 2001. The African Green Revolution states that the UN FAO estimated that 200 million Africans were undernourished at the turn of the millennium compared to 133 million 20 years earlier.

There are disparities in the world in terms of climate, economic, industrial and technological development result in some countries or parts of the world producing food in excess while others experience shortfalls. FAO Trade Policy Technical Notes reveal that in the 1950s the accumulation of food (mostly cereals) surpluses in some developed countries gave way to the idea that those surpluses could be disposed of in such a way also to improve the food security situation in vulnerable countries. This led to the FAO Principles of Surplus Disposal (the Principles) *‘a code of International Conduct that encourages the constructive use of surplus disposal of agricultural commodities while at the same time safeguarding the interest of commercial exporters and local producers’*. In 1962 the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) was established under the joint auspices of the United Nations and FAO and marked the beginning of multilateral food aid. The Food Aid Convention was signed in 1967 by food aid donors and it aimed at enhancing the capacity of international community to respond to food aid needs by

guaranteeing a predictable flow of food every year irrespective of price or supply fluctuations.

The formation of the WFP and the signing of the Food Aid Convention instituted a framework for food aid, making it the only appropriate and immediate short term response to food shortages. There are countries which have received food aid for protracted periods spanning up to 30 years such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Haiti, and Swaziland. According to Kehler (2004) despite 30 years of food aid, Ethiopia's food security has steadily worsened, and relief food aid has become an institutionalised response. According to the African Green Revolution, a combination of low agricultural productivity and adverse environment has made Africa the prime recipient of food aid. The 1996 World Food Summit targeted to reduce the world number of hungry people by half by 2015 but eight years later nothing had happened (Shapori & Rosen, 2004).

The countries in the developing world usually experience food shortfalls and would require free food assistance to save the lives of their people. According to Harvey & Lind (2005) the negative effects of food aid are usually dubbed dependency yet the term itself is widely used but rarely defined. It has been used by humanitarian agencies and used as a justification for reducing or stopping aid. Greste (2006) asserts that direct long term impacts attributable to food aid on its own are difficult to establish.

## **2.3 FOOD AID**

### **2.3.1 Definition of food aid**

According to the WFP (1998) food aid refers to food assistance that is granted to governments, institutions or households to curb food shortages. FAO Technical Notes define food aid as international transactions that result in provision of aid in the form of food commodities in a country deemed in need of receiving such aid. It may be a government to government grant to make food importation cheaper or it may be a government or NGO grant or donation to another NGO for free distribution. Food obtained through the later arrangement may be accessed by households through general food distribution, vulnerable groups feeding, supplementary feeding or food for work.

### **2.3.2 Objectives of food Aid**

The Food Aid Charter presents the general and long term objectives of food aid. According to the Charter the general objective is to help support food security by addressing in a timely and appropriate manner problems arising from food shortages or deficits whether they are caused by structural deficiencies or crisis situations calling for emergency actions. The long term objective is to prevent crises and to correct structural deficiencies by supporting overall development and taking actions aimed directly at vulnerable groups. In this context food aid plays a positive role, whether it is supplied as food stuffs or through use of counterpart funds generated through local sales.

The workshop convened by Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Oxfam Canada and Oxfam Quebec in 2005 with the theme '*Food aid at Crossroads*' resolved that the effectiveness of food aid should be assessed against its impact in support of the Millennium Development Goal Number one which is to reduce hunger and poverty. It should therefore focus on the following objectives:

- (i) Saving lives
- (ii) Fulfilling a human right to food including that it should be nutritionally adequate
- (iii) Protecting assets especially human health
- (iv) Facilitate growth of productive assets where food availability and local market performance are limiting.

Shelton ed (2005) confirms these objectives when he states that the original objective of food aid is alleviation of poverty and hunger for the most vulnerable groups and consistent with agricultural development in those countries. According to Barrett (2006) the core intent of food aid today is plainly to relieve human suffering. He points out that about half the world's population lives on less than \$2/day and about 800 million go to sleep hungry on any given day, a child dies of hunger every 5 seconds and that the need to respond to the poor's need is ever present and widespread.



### **2.3.3 Types of food aid**

According to Bread for the World Institute (s.a:3) food aid is used for different purposes thereby bringing in different types of food aid namely emergency food aid, project food aid and programme food aid. Emergency food aid is intended primarily to respond to immediate humanitarian needs of people affected by man-made or natural disasters. It entails general distributions among displaced populations, or in areas experiencing acute food shortages or to communities affected by chronic food shortages. This type of food aid is highly targeted with the intention of ensuring that food reaches those most in need as well as mitigating potential market distortions resulting from competition between food aid and commercially available food. The Institute asserts that the United Nations World Food Programme administers the lion's share of emergency food aid which is estimated to be more than half of all the food distributed as aid in recent years.

Project food aid is provided in the form of grants and the resources are used in a variety of development projects. The projects range from rural road construction using food as payment for workers to school meals or health nutrition services designed for vulnerable groups. In many cases where food aid is provided in kind, some or all of it is sold in markets to generate funds to cover project costs and finance related development activities, a process which Bread for the World Institute calls monetization. Many non governmental organisations (NGOs) such as World Vision, CARE, and Catholic Relief Services routinely include food aid as a component of their relief and development activities.

Programme food aid is when food is given or sold from one government to another. The recipient government then monetizes the food aid to generate funds to finance domestic activities. Emergency food aid and project food aid have a direct humanitarian or micro economic focus while programme food aid has macro economic focus. According to Shelton (2005) emergency food aid represents 60% of food aid while project represents 20% and programme another 20%. He also states that of all food aid 60% is in kind and mainly comes from USA, Canada, Australia, Japan and Argentina while the remaining 40% is untied aid mainly from the European Union.

Food aid enhances short term food security by making food immediately available to the recipient households. Rations are usually on a monthly basis to targeted beneficiaries. Food is usually procured from regions where it is produced in excess and transported to deficit areas. According to Isenman & Singer (s.a.) food is a basic human need. In that regard they assert that food aid appears to be an obvious mechanism to help meet this basic human right. Food aid can be an important resource for furthering the development of poor food insecure communities provided that it is used appropriately or in a way that do no harm. There is therefore a need to integrate food aid into broader food security and development programmes in order to address the underlying causes of hunger.

## **2.4 LIVELIHOODS**

Livelihood strategies encompass activities that generate income and many other kinds of choices including cultural and social choices that come together to make up the primary occupation of a household (Brown *et al*, 2006). Brown *et al* (2006) points out that rural households earn income from diverse allocations of natural, physical and human capital assets among various income generating activities. They choose patterns of diversification so as to achieve the best possible standard of living. Musopole (2004) defines livelihoods as means of people's access to adequate stocks and flows of food, cash and other resources to meet basic needs in an environmentally sustainable way. According to Lentz, Barrett, and Hoddinott (2005) one approach to understanding the livelihoods conceptual framework begins with the idea that households hold a bundle of assets or endowments that include;

- (i) physical capital in the form of agricultural tools and livestock,
- (ii) natural capital such as owned land and access to common property resources,
- (iii) human capital in the form of knowledge, skills and health
- (iv) financial capital such as cash in hand, bank accounts and outstanding loans and
- (v) social capital such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitates coordination and cooperation.

In addition households can generate income through labour power. Households allocate these endowments to agricultural production, paid employment locally, or in other places through migration and remittances and non farm businesses activities (Lentz *et al*). Individuals and households do their allocations based on their perception of current and future returns to these activities, their variability and extent to which returns co-vary or diverge. Household livelihood strategy therefore refers to the chosen combination of assets and activities.

Livelihoods may become unsustainable when a series of livelihood shocks and or negative trends or processes erode the asset base of already poor and vulnerable households until they are no longer able to meet the minimum subsistence needs, they lack access to the key productive assets needed to escape from poverty and they become dependent on public and private transfers (Lind 2005).

This research focuses on the impact of food aid deliveries on household labour supply, production incentives, consumption patterns and natural resource use.

## **2.5 IMPACT**

### **2.5.1 Definition of impact**

The term impact refers to a change or set of changes that are brought about by a policy, programme, project or intervention. According to Barrett (2006) the change may be positive or negative, desirable or undesirable, anticipated or not anticipated. It is normally measured against the goal of the project and is done after the project has been implemented or midway through. Social impact assessment includes processes of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences; both positive and negative of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions (Wikipedia).

## **2.5.2 Impact of food aid: A conceptual framework**

### **Impact on recipient nations**

Mellor (2001) asserts that food aid can play a positive role in (i) encouraging low income nations to choose a strategy of economic development which will provide accelerated growth in employment. This is particularly relevant where project or programme food aid is implemented with beneficiaries engaging in food for work projects or employment in other development programmes. (ii) Effectively focus attention on increasing agricultural production. Food aid offered in cash by donors to the beneficiary government and used to buy food grain locally or regionally stimulates local food production and farm gate prices (Musopole, 2004). It promotes sustainability of future local production and livelihoods. (iii) reduce rates of population growth. “ *Such a role for food aid is consistent with the fact that the demand for food is as much subject to national policies of low income nations as the supply of food and the extent to which nations emphasize food production is substantially a product of their policies with respect to food demand*” (Mellor, 2001).

Mellor (2001) also points out that food aid has been maligned first for discouraging growth of agricultural production in receiving nations and secondly for encouraging the burgeoning world population. Food aid has been accused of depressing agricultural prices in recipient nations (as a result of increases food supplies) thereby reducing incentives for production of food and ultimately inhibiting long term food security. Some national governments may focus their attention on other aspects of development at the expense of agricultural development as they hope in food aid filling in their food deficit. Isenman & Singer (s.a.) argue that evidence may be found in a relative neglect of agriculture in regard to other sectors, in continuation of policies which do not provide adequate encouragement or support to farmers, in an unwillingness to take politically difficult steps such as land reform or in lower farm support prices. According to FAO, food aid is criticised as a donor driven response, serving interests of donors rather than food security needs of recipients, accused of creating dependency among recipients, undermining incentives for local agricultural development and distorting international trade.

Shelton ed. (2005) in his article titled '*Dumping food aid: Trade or Aid?*', is very radical about the motive of food aid donors and impact it has on recipient countries. He says that food aid sold in the local markets competes with local food production. It has the same effect as dumping of products below cost prices on the world and local markets. He argues that if this food aid in kind is the result of surpluses created by agricultural subsidies in the donor countries then subsidized food in kind is considered as dumping under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) chapter on export subsidies and subsidized export credits. This is a departure from the original stated objective of food aid which is to alleviate poverty and hunger for the most vulnerable groups and consistent with agricultural development in those countries. Shelton (2005) also points out that the United States of America and other in kind donating nations see food aid as a humanitarian deed of good will or '*the warm glow*'. "*These policies of dependency willingly and unwillingly result in large shipments of food aid into development countries over decades, long after disasters have faded*" Shelton (2005).

### **Impact on beneficiary households and communities**

Barrett (2006) identifies two broad ways in which food aid can have an impact on communities, namely intended consequences or positive dependency and unintended consequences or negative dependency. According to Harvey, and Lind (2005) the term dependency has been widely used but seldom defined or analysed in any detail. The two authors suggest certain assumptions and meanings that underpin its common usage in the discourse of humanitarian aid which are as follows: Dependency is :

- (i) Generally seen as something negative and to be avoided
- (ii) Associated with a provision of relief and contrasted with development approaches
- (iii) Seen as undermining people's initiatives
- (iii) Contrasted with a variety of positive values or terms notably independence, self sufficiency, self reliance and sustainability
- (iv) Seen as a particular problem in contexts where relief assistance has been provided over a prolonged time.

It is not always clear what is meant by ‘*dependency*’. The fact that dependency is notional makes it difficult to pin down its precise meaning. It refers to many issues and concerns. Despite the common usage of the term in aid discourse, there is no specific policy debate on the issue, its meanings and the implications of dependency arguments (Lind 2005).

Harvey and Lind (2005) however further identify four main ways in which the term is broadly used;

- (i) Relief risks creating a dependency mentality or syndrome in which people expect continued assistance. This undermines initiative at individual or community levels
- (ii) Relief undermines local economies, creating a continued need for relief assistance and trapping people into ongoing or chronic dependence on outside assistance.
- (iii) Dependence on external assistance as one of the features of extreme poverty and associated with a sense of shame or defeat
- (iv) Dependence of government at local or national levels warring parties or aid agencies or relief resources.

### **Positive Dependency**

According to Lentz, Barrett and Hoddinott (2005) positive dependency occurs when individuals, communities and organisations are assisted to meet basic needs when they otherwise could not. They argue that this kind of dependency is indisputably desirable. In this case food aid may supplement social safety nets by providing insurance for people who are not “*insured*”, that is without access to support during crisis. Barrett (2006) concurs with this idea when he asserts that food aid may become welfare enhancing when the alternative is destitution or worse for households which cannot support themselves such as those without able bodied. In this instance it will be supporting the social safety nets. According to FAO (date) food aid is credited for saving lives and is regarded as the only thing standing between starving people and death.

### **Negative Dependency**

The undesirable aspect, negative dependency, arises when current needs are met at the cost of reducing recipients’ capacity to meet their basic needs in the future without

external assistance (Lentz, Barrett and Hoddinott, 2005). They define alterations in behaviour of individuals, households or communities in immediate response to assistance as incentive or disincentive effects. Assistance may unwittingly create disincentives to undertake desirable behaviour, for example to grow a crop or to allocate time to work. Negative dependency is what is referred to by Barrett (2006) as unintended consequences of food aid. Micro level evidence of unintended consequences is reflected on household labour supply, production incentives, consumption patterns and natural resource use. However he argues that there is a pervasive and unguided claim that food aid makes people lazy and that it unintentionally discourages people from working.

Food aid flows can have either an insurance effect before the flow or a transfer effect after it. Both effects can alter behaviours by changing incentives and can trigger negative dependency. Lentz, Barrett and Hoddinott (2005) argue that expectations of assistance may induce changes in behaviour, notably increased risk taking, which Economists label “*moral hazard*”. “*Because the insurance will at least partially reimburse an actor if a low payoff event occurs, actual risk exceeds the perceived risk that guides behaviour, inducing individuals or organisations to take on more risk than they would if they fully internalised the consequences of their choices*” (Lentz, Barrett and Hoddinott, 2005). Insurance effects include crowding out, that is, displacing or filling in or adding existing safety nets as well as moral hazard. If crowding out undermines local safety nets through local institutions and government and leaves people more vulnerable to shocks it becomes an unintended outcome.

## **2.6 IMPACT OF FOOD AID ON COUNTRIES: CASE STUDIES**

A number of reports have been made on how food aid has created dependency among nationals or communities. According to Mason who quotes a report by Oxfam, food crisis in Africa continues to worsen. He points out that whilst the average developing world figure for under nourishment is 17%, in Sub Saharan Africa the figure is 33% while for Central Africa it is 55%. The number of food emergencies per capita since 1980 has trebled. On the other hand FAO argues that economic evidence from a number of case

studies shows that food aid does not create dependency because it is too small and too unpredictable for people to rely on. If this was true one then wonders why some communities are now trapped in chronic food insecurity in spite of weather conditions being favourable for agricultural production.

### **2.6.1 Ethiopia**

A lot of literature has been written on the disincentive effects which food aid has brought on the people of Ethiopia. The country seems to have received food aid over the longest period (over 30 years) compared to other African countries. The article by Kehler (2004) titled, *“When will Ethiopia stop asking for food aid?”* suggests that the country is trapped in a serious crisis of food insecurity. The BBC News (November 1, 2006) reported on the same issue and titled their article, *“Ethiopia’s food aid habit worsens”* and asserted that *“Ethiopia is locked into a vicious downward spiral of food aid dependency”*. Greste (2006) released an article, *“Ethiopia’s food aid addiction”* and comments, *“like a patient addicted to pain killers, Ethiopia seems hooked on aid”*. The titles give a very gloomy picture about the food security situation in Ethiopia and point out to negative dependency on and as a result of food aid. *“Yes, there is something like a ‘dependency syndrome’ here. There’s no denying that the food aid deters the farmers from using innovative techniques and relying upon themselves. They take the aid whether they need it or not.”* That is not the judgment of an arrogant European, but the assessment of Yibabe Adane, Extension Team Leader in the Department of Agriculture in South Gondar, an administrative district in northern Ethiopia’ (Elliesen, 2002:21). Elliesen points out that Amhara uplands where Gondar district is located has the highest chronic malnutrition or poor nutrition with about five million of its population being food insecure. IRIN (7 February, 2006) reports of a joke that is widely talked about in Ethiopia where it is said that farmers are no longer concerned whether it rains or not in Ethiopia but whether it rains in America or Canada.

According to Kehler (s.a.) in 2003, 13 million Ethiopians required *exceptional* food assistance just to survive. He states that despite 30 years of food assistance the country’s



food insecurity had steadily worsened and food aid had become an institutionalised response. Ethiopia had received an average of 700 000 tonnes of food per year for the previous 15 years. Kehler (date) points out that Ethiopia is the largest recipient of emergency aid per capita in Africa but receives the least investment in development for each citizen.

The same issues of 700 000 tonnes food aid per year and rising chronic food insecurity every year for Ethiopia are echoed by the BBC News (2006). It quotes the Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) as saying 10,4 million people were dependent on food aid. The article applauds aid for successfully saving lives, which is the immediate need but blames imported food for depressing prices paid to local farmers thereby reducing their incentives to invest in better agriculture. There was an observation that even with good rains Ethiopia's food production was stagnant.

Handino (s.a) carried out research in Southern Ethiopia in 2006 on why despite many years of food aid the number of food insecure households kept on increasing and the food security status worsening for each household. He carried out in-depth interviews with four wealth categories both beneficiaries and non beneficiaries. The poor households underlined that what they needed was not continued food assistance but support to their agricultural production through better access to land, draught power, seed, fertilizer and better farming techniques. Food aid was taking away their morale and dignity. He quotes one of the poor respondents as saying, *"I don't appreciate food aid and PSNP (Productive Safety Net Programme) as a solution for food shortages. Once you start receiving food aid you feel dependent on someone. It erodes your confidence and morale to work hard. So you always dream of support from somewhere whenever there is food shortage. It makes you helpless to food shortages."* The respondents in the better off categories who were also non beneficiaries said farming inputs were too expensive for them as subsidies had been removed at the prescription of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Those that used to be self sufficient sold their assets as a result of the shocks and as a result are failing to get back to their earlier production levels. According to Kehler (s.a.) the large food aid programme for Ethiopia saved lives but has

not halted decline in assets, improved malnutrition levels or mitigated vulnerability to shocks. Food shortages are becoming more frequent and are affecting more people.

Kehler (s.a.) points out that relief food aid, while effective in saving lives and relieving short-term hunger, cannot achieve sustainable food security. He argues that food aid, when well targeted and linked with other development inputs, can and is having sustainable impact. By 2002, WFP's development food aid programme in Ethiopia had reduced food shortages by 40% for about 1, 4 million people in 800 communities.

Barrett (2006) says that even the best designed and managed food aid programs suffer errors, primarily due to the inherent difficulty of targeting all of, but only, those who would otherwise be food insecure. He argues that errors of exclusion/omission – inadvertently missing intended recipients – often lead to unintended, adverse humanitarian impacts associated with poor health and nutrition of vulnerable subpopulations. Furthermore, errors of inclusion/leakage – inadvertently providing food aid to unintended beneficiaries – and food aid delivered at the wrong time or in an inappropriate form can often create unintended disincentives to desired behaviours.

### **2.6.2 Kenya**

Thielke (2006) provides an overview of the chronic food insecurity situation in Kenya and the behaviour which he labels a deadly dependence on food aid. According to him broad swathes of Northern Kenya are battling famine caused by government negligence which has allowed the country's infrastructure to deteriorate and foreign aid that has made thousands of people to depend on food deliveries. He states that there is over population in Northern Kenya which is the home of nomads. The area is drought prone and overgrazing has already destroyed 600 million hectares of land.

In contrast, the people in the west produce excess crop but have nowhere near to sell it. According to Thielke (2006) the roads to Nairobi are very bad and transport very costly such that the people would find it cheaper to leave their produce rotting. Moreover the price of grain has been dampened by inflows of free food from America. Aid agencies are

blamed for implementing food aid without accurate knowledge of the situation on the ground, that is, needs assessment which would help them properly target the beneficiaries to avoid inclusion of undeserving cases.

### **2.6.3 Swaziland**

According to Medilinks (May 9, 2008) Swazi government officials were making claims that a culture of food dependency was being created in the country. The officials were claiming that the indolent Swazis were refusing to plant crops because their food requirements were being provided by emergency rations of maize and other supplies. They further claimed that some people had even started selling their arable land as they believed there would be free food. IRIN (2008) confirms the same claims. According to Interpress Service (March 11, 2008) the number of people requiring food aid had risen to 665 000 out of a total population of 953 000. This figure was against the World Food Programme's projection of about 407 000 food insecure people. Good rains had raised hopes for fewer dependants. The government was blamed for not proposing any concrete solutions as they took comfort in the international community which was prepared to give them food.

The Interpress Service attempts to find reasons why people did not plant crops in spite of the good rains that had been received during the season: Firstly there was fear of what had happened previously when rains stopped mid way and crops wilted with 80% crop failure. Secondly there was expectation of free food distribution. Thirdly the high HIV prevalence of 34,3% affects mostly the middle age group leaving out the elderly and the children to farm. There is therefore inadequate labour on the farms, greatly compromising production.

The World Food Programme is said to have rejected the claims pointing out that the government officials had failed to provide evidence. It asserted that the stories about lazy farmers preferring food aid were an urban myth or a rural myth. However, contrary to this assertion the World Food Programme had in recent months cut food distribution from

80 000 recipients to 30 000 as a temporary measure countering speculation about food aid dependency.

#### **2.6.4 Malawi**

Malawi was affected by drought which led to acute food shortages in 2002/3. According to Musopole (2004), the country experienced a food supply gap of 485,000 tonnes of grain caused by growing levels of poverty and vulnerability, impact of HIV/AIDS, food reserve mismanagement, and unsound government policies. About 3,2 million people representing 28% of the population were affected and 208,000MT were needed for distribution as emergency food aid. Food aid was implemented both for relief and development objectives.

Musopole (2004) points out that agriculture is the dominant livelihood for 80% of the population which engage in subsistence agriculture and shows how this livelihood was affected by food aid. Malawi suffered from both chronic and transitory food insecurity and was increasingly depending on food aid from donors in spite of it being endowed with all (good soils, favourable weather, human resources, etc) necessary for agricultural production. Food aid had a positive impact on livelihoods:

- (i) It provided the energy for households to work in their fields.
- (ii) People who would spent a large proportion of their time looking for food used the time to cultivate their plots
- (iii) Nutritional improvements reduced death rates and saved funeral labour
- (iv) Productive assets which could have been sold in order to purchase food were protected.
- (v) Social cohesion was strengthened through food sharing mechanisms.

Although the food aid recorded a number of positive impacts it also had some aspects that were negative (Musopole, 2004). It dampened the food prices as it created temporal satisfaction and reduced food demand and market price. The low market price created a disincentive to food producers who then changed to cash crop production. Emergency food aid also reduced pressure on the government to address rural development and

undermined the political will needed to invest in domestic agriculture. The problem undervalues local food production, undermines commercial supplies and livelihoods.

### **2.6.5 Zimbabwe**

Gunjal, Shiferaw, Dradri & Rammala (2008) provide vast information on the food insecurity situation in Zimbabwe and its trend in the past ten years. They trace what has been happening which has transformed the country from a bread basket of southern Africa to a net recipient of food aid. Thorough analysis of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme, the economic melt down with inflation running into millions, adverse weather conditions, shortage of inputs and weak agricultural policies which have all contributed to a great reduction in food production is done. Gunjal *et al* give the following highlights:

- National production of main season maize in 2008 is estimated at 575 000 tonnes, some 28 percent lower than the production in 2007 (using the CFSAM estimate of 800 000 tonnes) which in itself was some 44 percent below 2006 government estimate. The Mission estimates the total domestic cereal availability for 2008/09 marketing year at 848 000 tonnes, about 40 percent below last year's domestic supply.
- Primary factors responsible for this 2008's decline, in addition to adverse weather, were untimely delivery of seeds and shortages of fertilizer, deteriorating infrastructure, and most importantly unprofitable prices for most of the GMB controlled crops which are maize and wheat.
- A decline in national agricultural production over the last 7-8 years is also due to the structural change. The newly settled farmers cultivate only about half of the prime land allocated to them owing to shortages of tractor/draught power, fuel, and investment in infrastructure/improvements, and absenteeism on the part of some new settler beneficiaries.
- The large-scale commercial sector now produces less than one-tenth of the maize that it produced in the 1990s.

- The maize yields of the communal farmers who used to produce the bulk of the crop in the country have also reduced to one-fourth in about 10 years due to the loss of their symbiotic relationship with former large scale commercial agricultural sector and a demise of healthy agro-input industries.
- With the total utilization of cereals at about 2.080 million tonnes including 1.875 million tonnes for direct human consumption for the projected population of 11.865 million, the resulting cereal import requirement is estimated at 1.232 million tonnes, of which the maize deficit accounts for about one million tonnes.
- The annual inflation estimated at 355 000 percent for March 2008, the world's highest level, erodes the purchasing power of households dramatically on a daily basis and greatly limits their access to the meagre supplies available.
- Given the acute shortage of foreign currency, the dwindling export base, and high prices of maize in the region and internationally, the Mission estimates that total commercial cereal imports could be about 850 000 tonnes, leaving an uncovered deficit of about 380 000 tonnes of maize.
- The Mission estimates that 2.04 million people in rural and urban areas will be food insecure between July and September 2008, rising to 3.8 million people between October and peaking to about 5.1 million at the height of the hungry season between January and March 2009.
- The food insecure population will require food assistance amounting to some 395 000 tonnes of cereals in 2008/09. Additional foods such as oil and legumes, as well as supplementary foods will also be required to augment the higher needs of most vulnerable groups.
- The market availability of cereals for households that have purchasing power will be crucial to avoid more people becoming food insecure due to scarcity and higher food prices that could result from such scarcity. In view of the GMB's limited capacity, the Mission further recommends that trading in cereals should be opened up to private traders to ensure that cereals can be imported and moved quickly to areas of need.
- The Mission also recommends emergency assistance by the Government and the international community to supply timely and quality seed and fertilizer, and

dipping chemicals for the control of tick-borne livestock diseases. Appropriate varieties of maize and small-grain seed also need to be sourced urgently for delivery in September 2008. Promotion of locally grown open pollinated variety seed and use of manure instead of imported chemical fertilizers needs to be considered.

- To deal with the structural food deficit and chronic shortage, it is recommended that the international community and the Government enter into a policy dialogue to mobilize the economic and other assistance needed to promote sustainable food production and overall food security by way of development assistance for investment in farm mechanization and infrastructure (tractor availability, rehabilitation of irrigation facilities, etc.) to enhance productivity and allow fuller capacity utilization by the newly settled farmers. The Mission also supports reforms of the grain marketing system.

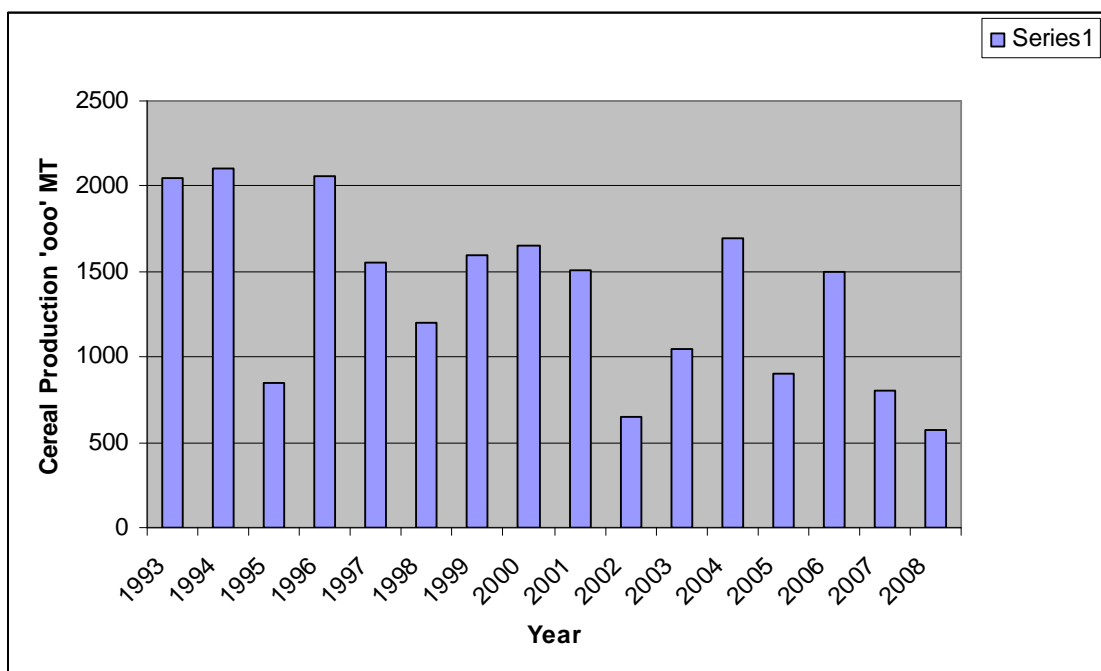


Figure 2.1 **Zimbabwe Food Production from 1993-2008**

Source: Gunjal, Shiferaw, Dradri, & Rammala (2008:9)

The UN WFP started operating in Zimbabwe in 2002 when production had reached an all time low of about 0.55 million tonnes against national consumption needs of about 2.02

million tonnes. Since then, production levels have never reached the national consumption requirements and the deficit has always had to be met by both government and aid agencies. The contribution of aid agencies particularly WFP has had to be increased as government failed to make significant contributions owing to economic constraints bedevilling the nation.

The highlights above facilitate an understanding of the macro socio economic environment which has a great bearing on the Chipinge communities and their livelihoods.

Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition (2009) provide the following statistical information on Zimbabwe which they call facts and seem to have been derived from Gunjal *et al* (date) They claim that 75% of the Zimbabweans were in need of food aid; the World Food Programme was set to provide food to 5,1 million people before the harvests in April while the Consortium for southern Africa Food Security Emergency (C-Safe) will provide to 2.1 million people. They also point out that Zimbabwe has the third largest food aid programme (7,2 million) after Afghanistan (8,82 million) and Ethiopia (8,67 million ). Percentage wise they assert that Zimbabwe has the highest, 75%, ahead of Afghanistan (25%) and Korea (18%). International donors were said to have contributed USD240 million towards food aid. Although there is high food insecurity in Zimbabwe the figures are likely to have been highly exaggerated reference. Monitoring reports by WFP indicated a lot of cheating by recipient households as they inflated their household sizes by up to more than 100% so that they could access more food. The true number of food insecure may be even about half of the presented figures.

## **2.7 IMPACT OF FOOD AID ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

### **2.7.1 Loiyangalani community in Northern Kenya**

According to Thielke (2006) the population of Loiyangalani has grown to 15,000 from 500 in 1980 in spite of the area being semi arid. A very small fraction of the population is employed. People have flocked to the area over the years as they are attracted by continued food aid by the World Food Programme. The organisation is said to have



distributed food even at times when the harvests were satisfactory and did not warrant any external assistance. One of its staff members was quoted as taking pride in the organisation being able to increase its beneficiaries to 20,000 and providing food free of charge.

The people value cattle as a wealth symbol, do not eat the meat but just milk and blood. The disincentive effects of aid on the communities have been that the people would rather keep hundreds of cattle than grow any crops as they are assured of free food. Other people who used to kill their cattle for meat during drought no longer do so as they anticipate food aid. And steady deliveries of food aid to the barren region have dramatically exacerbated its problems instead of alleviating them. "In the past, people slaughtered their animals for food during difficult times," says Okola. "But ever since the World Food Program began feeding us, hardly anyone does this anymore. Everyone just waits for the next delivery' (Thielke, 2006). People flock to areas where food aid is being provided doubling the population for the area in less than two decades.

### **2.7.2 Home Based Care Programme by the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society**

Mountfield (2004) in his report titled "*If you don't sow, how can you reap?*" chronicles how the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) managed to incorporate agricultural input distribution into a food aid targeted at home based care (HBC) clients. According to him ZRCS started implementing a home based care programme throughout the ten provinces of Zimbabwe in the late 1990s. This was in response to the high HIV infection rate and high death rate and the growing number of orphans. The HBC programme had a number of components inclusive of support to livelihoods, psycho social support and care. During the drought of 2002-3 the ZRCS expanded its programme to include food aid to its clients. The food aid programme was highly targeted on those affected and infected by HIV/AIDS including the care givers who in most cases were themselves infected by the virus as opposed to the general distribution to rural communities which many agencies were involved with at the time. The World Food Programme was invited by the Government of Zimbabwe and it started operating in the country that year. The food deficit was huge and vulnerabilities very high. The targeted group consists of social

welfare cases which Barrett (2005) referred as those who would die if not assisted. According to him, for this group to depend on aid is inevitable and positive.

Mountfield (2004) demonstrates in the report how although literature highlights the devastating effect that HIV/AIDS has on agriculture the project showed positive impact that agriculture can have on the lives of those living with HIV/AIDS. Seed and agricultural support was added to the livelihood support package. Usually agricultural input support programmes target those with adequate land to plant the seed, with labour needed to prepare, plant, weed and harvest the feed as well as those with knowledge on farming. Conversely the ZRCS programme targeted the chronically ill (characterised with inability to work) the child headed households (without farming experience) and the urban (without access to much land). It was based on the assumption that; households with depleted labour resources would find ways of accessing external labour, lack of knowledge does not mean lack of harvest and that people in urban areas have some access to land suitable for agriculture.

The households made much more from the inputs than would be expected. They pulled resources from their communities. Some relied on relatives while others depended on their immediate carers. Some child headed households benefited from agricultural extension services offered through schools. The indicators that were developed were productivity, duration and comparative cost. Productivity was measured against producer expectations. The result was 16% of producer expectations but other issues such as quality of soils, adequacy of inputs rainfall are likely to have contributed. It was noted that there was no difference between the fields of the HBC clients and those of their neighbours. The duration of the harvest in terms of how long the harvested food would take was found to be long enough to contribute significantly towards household food security. Comparative cost which measured the cost of distributing food inclusive of purchasing costs, transportation, warehousing and other distribution costs against the cost of distributing inputs showed that the later was 12 times cheaper than the former.

However, Mountfield (2004) notes that it is still possible that beneficiaries build a dependency on input distribution. To curb this open pollinated seed varieties may be

distributed which enable communities to produce their own food. However dependency on inputs is regarded as a lesser evil than dependency on food aid. Agricultural input schemes need to be complemented by alternative agricultural techniques such as conservation farming (CF). The report identifies the following investments that will reap benefits; changes in farming strategies, lower labour costs and techniques, labour sharing, communal granaries, homestead farming, and provision of water for agriculture. Although some beneficiaries of the programme failed to produce any meaningful harvest the project was an initial and successful attempt to foster dignity and sustainable livelihoods for the target group.

### **2.7.3 Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transition to sustainable livelihoods (MERET) Programme in Ethiopia**

According to Kehler (2004), 13 million people required exceptional food aid just to survive and despite 30 years of food aid food security had steadily worsened while relief food aid had become an institutional response. This scenario provoked questions in WFP as well as the Ethiopian government on whether food aid was the right way to address food insecurity in Ethiopia. It was generally accepted that relief food aid while effective in saving lives and relieving short term hunger cannot achieve sustainable food security. Rather, food aid when well targeted and linked with other development inputs can have sustainable impact.

Between 1994 and 2002 WFP implemented the MERET programme which assisted 1.4 million people in 800 communities of Ethiopia. The objective of MERET was to increase incomes for the poor through asset creation and rehabilitation using food for work. According to Kehler (2004) interventions included to:

- (i) Conserve, develop and rehabilitate degraded agricultural lands.
- (ii) Establish wooded lots and community forest plantations.
- (iii) Improve access to potable water and to enhance water quality.

- (iv) improve access to markets through construction of feeder roads.
- (v) Strengthen the capacity of communities and the government to plan, implement and manage project activities and assets.
- (vi) improve the availability of food through food distribution.

An evaluation of the programme was carried out in 2002 by a joint evaluation team which comprised of the Ethiopian Government and the WFP. It brought forth the following results of the programme on food security and livelihoods:

- (i) The average annual food shortage was down from five to three months, a 40% reduction.
- (ii) 60% reported an increase in the number of meals eaten per day.
- (iii) 85% indicated an improved ability to cope with drought.
- (iv) 84% reported a 150–400kg increase in crop production per year per household.
- (v) 72% enjoyed increased income from the sale of agricultural products.
- (vi) 73% had more money to spend on education, health and clothing.
- (vii) 88% considered that their livelihood situation had improved from ‘struggling’ (losing assets) to ‘doing okay’ (not selling assets) or ‘doing well’ (making some extra money and buying new assets).

Kehler (2004) gives the conclusions that were made from the evaluation of the MERET programme. Firstly it increased the availability of food and improved access to food for the majority of participants. Investment in assets, including soil, water harvesting, trees and vegetative covering, earned income for the poor.

Secondly, MERET lifted people out of destitution. Almost all of its most vulnerable participants have gone from 'struggling' to 'doing okay'. Thus, it has acted as a safety net, protecting 1.4m food-insecure people.

Thirdly, MERET did not reduce food shortages to zero, and would not do so unless more comprehensive food security packages were made available to these communities. These packages, including cash-based interventions, need to create alternative sources of income for the poor to reduce the current complete reliance on agriculture. This would enable the effective phasing out of food aid over an appropriate transition period is possible.

Lastly, MERET strengthened community-planning skills. This is a foundation that should be useful, particularly for supporting the government's policy of devolving more power to the grassroots.

During the 2003 drought the MERET participants were found to be remarkably less vulnerable, maintaining their productive assets and emerging more resilient than communities with only relief assistance.

## **2.8 CONCLUSIONS**

The following issues come out from the studied literature above with a lot of concurrence by many authors.

1. Food is a basic human right. The world produces enough food to feed every person on earth.
2. Food aid has noble objectives of saving lives in critical situations, protecting assets, promoting livelihoods and is a means for people to access food.
3. Food aid is very crucial for saving lives in disaster situations or chronic food shortages. It appears to be the only thing between starving people and death in certain emergency situations and for the most vulnerable groups. In such circumstances dependency on it becomes necessary and crucial and therefore positive.

4. Food aid is a way of transferring food from surplus producing countries in the developed world to deficit areas in the developing world particularly Africa. Whereas the developing world take it innocently (at times) as aid the developed world unfortunately is subtle and would take it as a way of getting rid of their surplus production brought about by the huge agricultural subsidies on their farmers. In that way they promote trade and dump the food even when it is not necessary. Food aid is therefore criticised as a donor driven response, serving interests of donors rather than food security needs of recipients,
5. Food aid is accused of creating dependency among recipients, undermining incentives for local agricultural development and distorting international trade.
6. Food aid may bring disincentive effects or negative dependency if:
  - There is no proper targeting of beneficiaries resulting in inclusion of undeserving cases or exclusion of deserving vulnerable people. Food then gets to unintended beneficiaries.
  - It is implemented at the wrong time; that is when there is no need for food assistance especially when there has been a good harvest.
  - The type and amount of aid is more than the requirement.
  - It is not complemented with aid or activities which promote agricultural production or recovery.
- 6 A number of methods can be used to assess the disincentive effects of food aid from questionnaire interviews, qualitative in-depth interviews to quantitative econometric analysis.

## CHAPTER 3

# INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY AREA AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 THE STUDY AREA

#### 3.1.2 Chipinge District Overview

The district is located to the extreme south of Manicaland province and shares borders with Mozambique to the east, Chimanimani District to the north, Buhera District to the North West, Chiredzi District to the South and Bikita District to the West (See Figure 3.1). The district capital is approximately 188km south of Mutare and only 48km from the border with Mozambique. According to WFP (2006) Chipinge District profile the district covers a total area of approximately 5,393 sq Kms of which 294,457 hectares is communal land, 2,598 hectares is forest land, 26,100 hectares is safari area, 83,200 hectares is under resettlement, 116,143 is under large scale commercial farms. Chipinge had the highest population density of 62.42 in Manicaland province in 1992. According to the Central Statistical Office (2002) it had a total population of 283,671 of which 52.5% of total population were females and 47.5% males and an average household size of 4.6.

Malnutrition for the under fives was reported to be high (10.8%) compared to national statistics (8-10%) and rate above ten is considered bad. Diseases such as kwashiorkor were reported to be high with 1,150 cases reported for kwashiorkor. Thirty five cases for pellagra were also reported. Malaria had the highest cases of 158,486; diarrhoea 15,247 and HIV/AIDS related cases were 382. (Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, 2003)

There are 78 business centres and the majority of population live in the rural areas and only approximately 4% of the population live in urban areas. It has 34 Wards which cut across natural regions I to V.

Region I: 9 wards

Region II: 4 wards

Region III: 3 wards

Region IV: 6 wards

Region V: 12 wards

The district is divided into eastern highlands and valley by height above sea level with

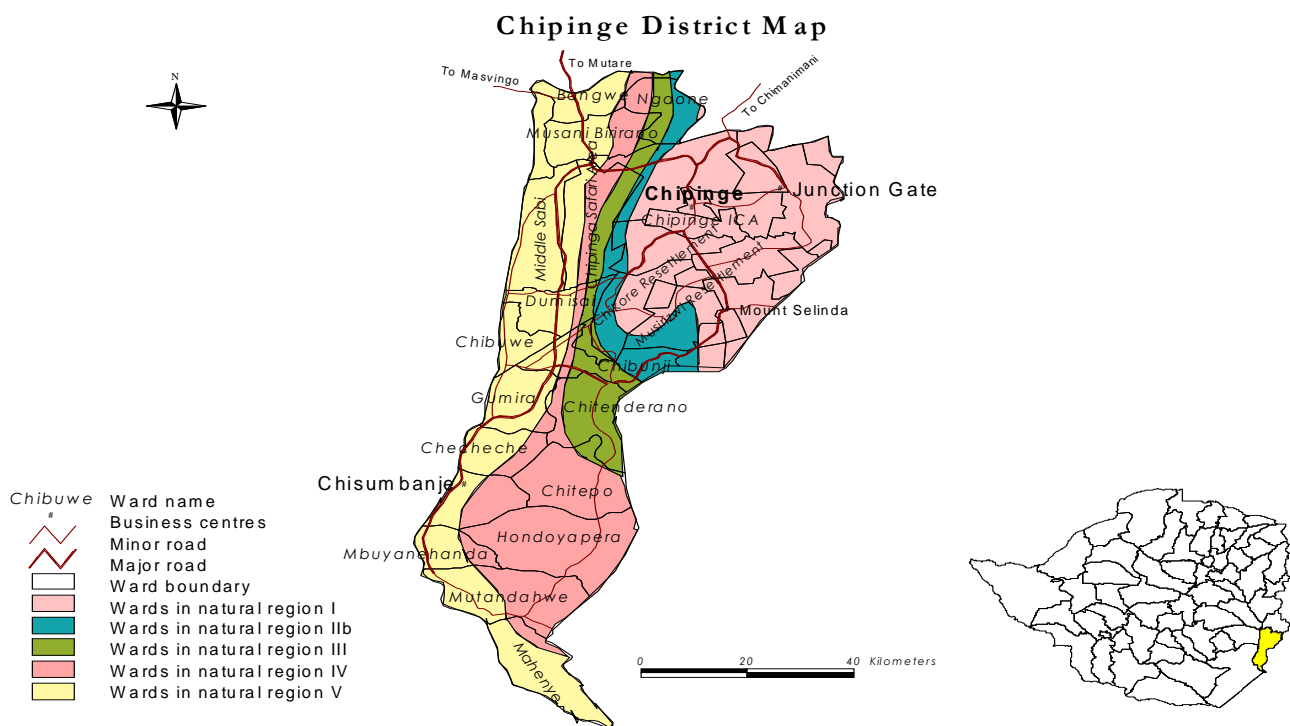


Fig 3.1 Chipinge District Map

Source: World Food Programme's Chipinge District Profile (2006)

The Eastern Highlands comprise of natural regions I, II and part of III and the Valley comprise of regions III, IV & V

### 3.1.2 Eastern highlands

This region houses ward 6 to 15 and 17, 18 & 19 has a total population of approximately ±150,000 people. It is generally mountainous and undulating. It has the highest agricultural potential in the district covering over 190,000 hectares and people in this area usually produce enough for own consumption. It houses the district capital and a number



of plantations and has the most employment opportunities in the district. Crops grown include maize, tea, coffee, sweet potatoes, potatoes, beans and sunflower.

### **3.1.3 The Valley**

The Valley extends for 311,196 hectares and covers all the low lying areas bordering Save River. It has 20 wards and a total population of approximately 134,000. Topography is generally flat and has the lowest agricultural potential in the district, with most of the people living in this area struggling to produce enough for own consumption. The region is reported to experience chronic food shortages. Crops grown include cotton, millet, sorghum and a little maize.

The majority of the population are communal farmers with land holdings of as little as 0.3 hectares per household. Most of the people living on Commercial farms are farm labourers. There are more settlements along the Save valley due to the existence of numerous irrigation schemes.

### **3.1.4 Characteristics of poor food insecure households**

Most food insecure households are in the valley where, according to the Zimbabwe Meteorological Department rainfall amount of below 450mm which made this area unsuitable for crop production. Their asset base was destroyed by cyclone Eline flood of 2000 and recurrent droughts. As a result, some households lost all their livestock and belongings and failed to recover them. They have no draft power hence are always late with cropping, which further reduces crop yields. Their fields are small, poor and usually covered by stones and gravel. They own small thatched huts and have large family sizes. They also have no access to irrigation facilities, limited income generating opportunities and limited knowledge of appropriate crops to grow in the region.

### **3.1.5 Irrigation schemes**

There are in excess of nine irrigation schemes in communal areas, most of which are supplied by the rivers and boreholes. The largest irrigation scheme is Musikavanhu with a

total area of 720 hectares and more than 660 plot holders. ARDA has large irrigation schemes in the district at Middle Save and Chisumbanje. Most of the households in irrigation schemes have asbestos roofed houses and more assets compared to others.

### **3.1.5 Food access by poor food insecure households in the Valley**

They usually do not harvest enough to see them through the year even in a good year. According to WFP (2006) besides several nuclei of settlements in irrigation schemes, an increase of people living in harsh climatic conditions of the district's natural region V has increased the number of people who rely heavily on food aid. They mainly rely on food aid or hunting for survival. The area is suitable for livestock production but due to cyclone catapulted by recurrent droughts most households lost their livestock base rendering them vulnerable. The ZIMVAC (2004, 2005, 2008) reports show that stress period for the people in the valley is from June until they harvest in April and thus need food assistance during this period. The poor in the valley get most (up to 60%) of their food from food aid since they can not produce enough and they can not afford to buy most of their food needs. Sources of income are limited to petty trading, sale of baobab fruit and sale of craft. Although people produce craft from trees such as the Baobab tree, it is illegal and they risk prosecution. The law on environmental protection forbids destruction of baobab trees. People in irrigation produce and sell cash crops such as tomatoes, onions, and butternut. A few families in the valley (region IV and V) produce cotton for sale.

## **3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.2.1 Data Collection**

A multi-method research methodology was adopted which made complementary use of conventional research methods and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). Secondary data analysis and structured questionnaires represented the conventional methods while focus group discussions, key informant interviews and observations are of the PRA domain.

#### **Secondary data collection**

Secondary data was collected from Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) Rural Food Security Assessment Reports for 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, and 2008, FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission Reports for 2004, 2007 and 2008. All these reports provided information on the food security situation in Zimbabwe as a country and for Chipinge as a district. They provided statistics for district, provincial and national cereal production, estimated population figures, food requirements, food availability, food access, estimated food deficits or surpluses, food insecure populations, crisis coping mechanisms, geographical and household targeting for food aid and period when interventions would be required. The above findings were linked with information obtained from Chipinge Christian Care/ WFP Emergency Operation (EMOP) Monitoring, Monthly and Terminal Reports from 2005 to 2009. Information obtained from these reports ranged from targeting, selection, registration and verification of beneficiaries, food distributions, tonnage of food distributed and the impact of the interventions on communities.

### **Primary data collection**

Primary data was collected using individual questionnaires, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. Questionnaires were administered to 103 respondents. One on one interview method was used in the administration of questionnaires. It involved moving from one village to the other to meet the respondents. This method was chosen over mailing of questionnaires because of its many advantages. Mailing of questionnaires would have been ideal in urban settings where there are definite physical addresses and was very inappropriate as there is a degree of illiteracy. Moreover, usually not all people who receive questionnaires by mail take time to fill them, nor to send them back. The rate of response therefore, is usually very low. In this case face to face questionnaire interviews although very expensive remained the only option. The method provides an opportunity for the interviewer to explain any question which may not be understood by the respondent easily or which may be ambiguous. The interviewer may also make follow up questions and is able to make assessments from the facial and other expressions of the respondent as well as make observations of the area. All this is not possible if questionnaires are posted.

The questionnaires generated information on how many times (years) the households have benefited from food aid since 2002, the contribution of food aid to total household food consumed, change in livelihood activities undertaken following the introduction of food aid, perception on capability of food aid to promote livelihood activities and anticipation for continued food aid. Questionnaires were essential in collecting quantitative data which are important in making deductions. Some open ended questions were incorporated especially on explanations which usually have a varied range and are difficult to quantify. Such questions were also important in collecting qualitative data. Responses to open ended questions were very useful in checking what would be common deductions from the quantitative data.

Focus group discussions were held with community leaders comprising of councillors, kraal heads, village heads, village community workers, AGRITEX workers, business people and other influential people. Issues for discussion centred around the main livelihood activities in their areas, the change in the range and magnitude of these activities since the introduction of food aid, reasons for such change, and suggestions on how food aid can be designed to support livelihood strategies. Focus group discussions were used as a quick way of gathering data in order to establish trends and perspectives especially from the view point of community leadership. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Christian Care and WFP staff as professionals who implemented the programmes over the years and have observed and established trends in community behaviour towards livelihoods. District level officials such as the District Administrator, the Chief Executive Officer, and the District AGRITEX Officer were also engaged in Focus Group Discussions separately.

### **Data Collection Error**

Data collection errors which could be lack of reliability of measurement or lack of validity of measurement may occur and would need to be minimised. Errors occur when for example a respondent gives different responses to the same question at different times or to different interviewers. Such deviations may arise from variations in how

respondents interpret ambiguous questions, interviewer mistakes in recording or tabulating data. To minimise these errors care was taken in the design of the questionnaire to ensure that all questions were clear, precise and unambiguous. Secondly the enumerators were trained on how to conduct the questionnaires including clarifications of all questions and were encouraged to be accurate in their recordings.

### **3.2.2 Sampling**

The ideal scenario in research would be to gather information from all elements of the population which is called census (Doodley 1995). Censuses are very expensive and time consuming such that they are normally done by governments especially when it involves a large population. Sampling involves getting a certain percentage of the population from which to gather data the results of which then can be generalised for the population. The chosen sample should therefore represent the population. A two stage sampling design was done for the questionnaire survey. The first stage was to sample the wards. Systematic sampling of wards was crucial in order to ensure that wards with different physical, and socio economic characteristics were sampled so as ultimately to have a fair representation of the population. The second and final stage was non probability sampling of respondents or households. Convenience non probability sampling was used to locate households for interviews. Villages were visited and respondents who could be found available were sampled and interviewed. Randomly sampling respondents from a beneficiary register could have been an alternative. However, since rural households in Zimbabwe do not have specific physical addresses with stand numbers and street names it would have been a mammoth task to locate the households. Convenience sampling made the process easier and faster as anyone available had a chance of being sampled. The two stage sampling design sought to minimise sampling error and bias by ensuring that the sample was as representative as possible.

All the 20 wards in Chipinge South (Valley) have benefited from the WFP/CC food aid programme from 2002 to 2009. Ten wards were systematically selected from the sampling frame of 20 representing 50%. This was done to ensure that the selected wards are scattered evenly throughout the area of study. It ensured that all micro characteristics were represented. At least 10 households were randomly selected from any of the villages

within that ward giving a total sample size of 103. According to Dooley (1995) it is generally accepted in the field of research that a sample size of 10% can be representative of the population. Increasing the sample size does not usually guarantee an increased representation of the sample or increased validity of the results. A ward in Zimbabwe is demarcated on the basis of a minimum of 100 households. The ten households were therefore targeted on the basis of 10% of 100 households. Respondents were randomly selected from a sampling frame consisting of food aid beneficiaries and non beneficiaries. WFP/CC believes that in 2007/8 food aid programme they reached out to more than 95% of the population. In defiance of the projected population statistics for the Valley (Central Statistical Office, 2002) which were 134,000 CC registered 200,480 beneficiaries. The beneficiaries were verified and found to be genuine.

### **3.2.3 Data analysis**

Content analysis and comparison techniques were used to analyse data from secondary sources. Collating and interpretations were used for focus group discussions as well as responses on open ended questions in the questionnaire. Quantitative data generated through questionnaires was analysed using an electronic data analysis package called SPSS (Statistical Products & Services Solutions) formerly called Statistical Package for Social Sciences. It was useful in presenting information using a variety of tables and charts. Unfortunately a later version could not be obtained and SPSS 13.0 was utilised.

### **3.2.4 Challenges faced in the survey**

Although the ZIMVAC has been institutionalised in Zimbabwe there are years when a lot of challenges were faced in either doing the survey or in producing a report. The committee has many members from different sectors and there are times when they failed to reach consensus on the figures to be captured in the report resulting in the report being delayed or not produced at all. As such reports for 2005 and 2007 could not be obtained. FAO and WFP did not carry out the Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions in 2005 and 2006. There was therefore a gap of that output. Whereas information on number of food insecure people, and amount of aid required for each district could be obtained from the ZIMVAC 2003, 2006 and CFSAM 2008, the ZIMVAC reports for 2002 and 2004 as

well as CFSAM for 2004 and 2007 gave the statistics aggregated per province. The statistics for Chipinge could not be obtained easily from those reports. In order to establish the trends, the gaps in information were filled from other reports for Chipinge by CC/ WFP.

The questionnaire survey was carried out without much hindrance. However since the enumerators were selected from CC staff that has been working in the area for a long time and are now well known biases may have been created. The survey was done just after terminating a food aid programme in March 2009. It raised expectations of the resumption of the programme and is likely to have influenced their responses to questions on the future of food aid and their capacity to provide food for themselves.

## CHAPTER 4

# RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### **4.1 SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS**

The literature reviewed in chapter 3 had consensus and it was concluded that food aid is a human right, is necessary to curb starvation and can yield positive results. However negative results of dependency or disincentive effects can come about if the food aid is not based on proper and extensive vulnerability or needs assessments, beneficiary targeting is not strict and allows errors of inclusion and exclusion, the amount of aid is more than the requirements and if it is implemented over too long a time than is necessary or required. This section analyses secondary data in light of the factors which influence dependency mentioned above.

#### **4.1.1 Vulnerability Assessments**

Zimbabwe has over the past decades engaged in crop assessments soon after planting to estimate the hectare that would have been put under cultivation for different crops. The second crop assessments are usually done when crops are mature enough to be able to estimate expected yield. The assessments are useful in identifying early, the areas that might experience food deficit as well as estimate expected national food crop production. Over the years they have been used in planning about the surplus or deficit by determining how much could be exported or imported. A number of government departments including the Department of Agricultural Extension, Department of Rural Resettlement, Central Statistical Office and the National Early Warning Unit have participated in the crop assessments.

The higher incidence of drought and chronic food insecurity saw the institution of the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Committee (ZIMVAC) in 2002. This committee comprises of the Ministry of Finance - Food and Nutrition Council, Ministry of Agriculture – National



Early Warning Unit, Civil Protection Unit, World Food Programme, FEWSNET, Save the Children (United Kingdom), Food and Agriculture Organisation, International Federation of the Red Cross, CARE, UNICEF. The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) Committee of the SADC oversees the operation of the ZIMVAC.

Since 2002 vulnerability assessments have been carried out every year. They focus on food security issues such as food production levels, food availability, food access, level of national food deficit, crisis coping mechanisms, and identify food deficit districts and wards, characteristics of the food insecure households, targeting and recommended interventions. The ZIMVAC reports have been very essential in mapping out strategies by all players in food aid particularly the Government, WFP, C-SAFE and NGOs in terms of estimating the number of people who need assistance in each district, the period the assistance is required, the characteristics of the target beneficiaries as well as the nature and level of assistance required. In 2004, 2007, 2008 and 2009 the Government of Zimbabwe invited the FAO and WFP head offices in Rome to carry out the Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions (CFSAM). The Missions have the same objectives as the ZIMVAC. They verify the findings of the ZIMVAC, the Community Household Surveys and any other vulnerability assessments that would have been carried out.

An assessment of the findings and recommendations of these major assessments and the food aid interventions indicates that the former played a great role in shaping the latter. The magnitude of the food aid intervention has in all the years been in line with estimated food security gap. See table 4.1 below. In some cases for example in 2002, 2005 and 2006 WFP distributed food below the requirement. It was largely because they failed to secure donations to the level required. Again other players such as the C-SAFE and other donors took a share of the deficit. Matching the magnitude of interventions to food security assessment results was a major step in weeding out disincentive effects of food aid in so far as it was directed towards the intended beneficiaries at the right time. Negative dependency comes about if food aid interventions are not done as a result of proper needs or vulnerability assessments.

**Table 4.1: Estimated Food Security Gap vs. WFP Food Aid Interventions 2002-9**

Year	Food Insecure Population (estimate) ZIMVAC/CFSAM	Food Deficit (estimate)	Actual Food Distributed
2002/3	7,218,200	345,000	316,000
2003/4	4,400,000	388,642	442,000
2004/5	2,300,000	177,681	149,000
2005/6	2,900,000	225,500	92,000
2006/7	1,400,000	91,000	77,000
2007/8	4,100,000	352,000	352,000
2008/9	5,100,000	395,000	

**Table 4.2: Chipinge CC/WFP Food Aid Interventions 2002-9**

Year	Food Insecure Population (estimate) ZIMVAC/CFSAM	Registered Beneficiaries CC/WFP	Food Deficit (estimate)	Actual Food Distributed
2003/4	131,184	131,184	11,187	9,840
2004/5	126,880	126,880	10,560	7,450
2005/6	200,480	200,480	14,427	8,213
2006/7	48,518	45,518	2,081	1,980
2007/8	200,480	200,480	14,455	12,200
2008/9	131,169	200,507	11,427	8,932

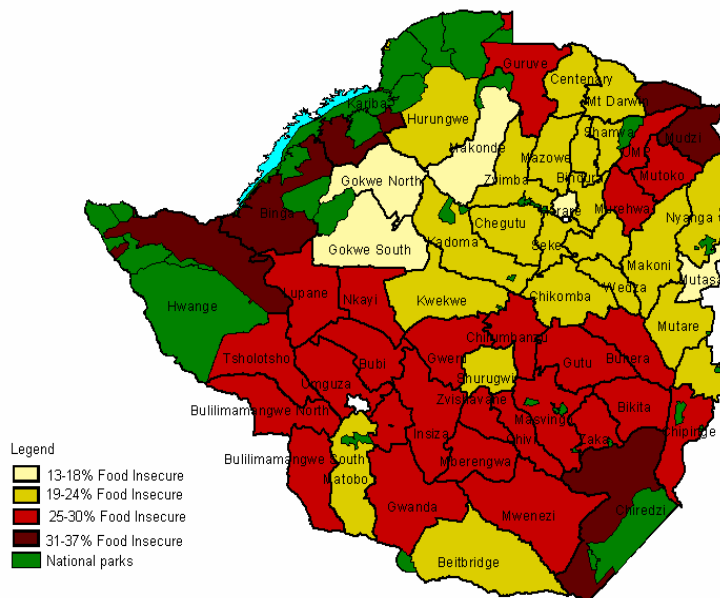
#### 4.1.2 Targeting and beneficiary selection

The ZIMVAC and CFSAM reports show that the district (geographical targeting) level food production and food availability estimates and ultimately food deficit levels in light of the population levels were used in targeting districts for food assistance. Zones were mapped indicating the very food insecure, the food insecure and relatively food secure based on the percentage of population that was food insecure. The ZIMVAC report of 2002 indicated that all districts had food shortfalls but would differ on the percentage of population that was food insecure. As such food aid operations targeted all districts although with different levels of assistance. In 2003, 2004, and 2006 some districts were found to be food secure and did not need any assistance. Map 4.1 below shows the different food security zones for 2006.

Targeting of food insecure wards is started by ZIMVAC and finalised by the District Drought Relief Committee. The wards that were found to be food insecure in Chipinge

from 2002 are those in the Valley (low lying region of Chipinge which falls in agro ecological zone 4 and 5) with very little variation. The area is less climatically favoured with very high temperatures of up to 40 degrees Celsius and erratic rainfall of less than 450mm per annum. The conditions are unfavourable for food crop production and the communities experience chronic food insecurity.

## Map 2: Food Security Zones



Source: ZIMVAC Report No. 6 (2006)

## Household targeting

Based on the characteristics of the food insecure households as identified by the ZIMVAC the WFP developed a generic beneficiary targeting and selection criteria which has the following social indicators of vulnerability:

- The Chronically ill headed house holds
- The Child headed house holds
- Households headed by the elderly
- Single Parent headed house holds
- House holds headed by the disabled.
- House holds overburdened by large numbers of orphans

- House holds overburdened by malnourished children.
- Harvested insufficient food to carry them to the next harvest
- No remittances from relatives either locally or abroad,
- No petty trading, cross border trading
- Have less than a defined number of cattle

The above selection criteria were used in Chipinge. For a household to qualify to be a beneficiary of food aid it has to be vulnerable and without means of self support. Vulnerability is locally defined and therefore the communities had to agree on how it is defined in their areas before households are registered. Vulnerability in Chipinge included the type of housing and other assets possessed by the household such as scotch carts, televisions, or ploughs.

Christian Care and WFP noted that the people were getting used to the selection criteria and were manipulating the system which resulted in some deserving cases being left out and some undeserving cases being included in the programme. In 2007 the system was reviewed to make it more participatory by making use of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques particularly community mapping and wealth ranking. Community mapping entailed the community drawing a map of their village during a village meeting which required 80% quorum. All homesteads would be identified and plotted on the map. Mapping ensured that those households who would normally be left out because they had no representatives to attend the registration meetings were all included. They failed to attend meetings because of old age or sickness or would not have heard about the meeting. Wealth ranking entailed classifying households into four wealth ranks (or categories) as defined in Chipinge. Category 1 consisted of very poor households with chronic (high) food insecurity and labelled as very food insecure. Category 2 comprised of households identified as food insecure, category 3 had relatively food secure households and category 4 had the wealthy group which did not require any support. Category 4 comprised of the elite group of businessmen, irrigation farmers, some professionals and politicians. After categorising households they would then be ranked according to vulnerability or food insecurity. The most vulnerable households were top

on the list while the wealthy households would be the last on the village registers which included all villagers.

### **Analysis of the beneficiary selection criteria and process**

The two major objectives of the Christian Care food aid programme which was supported by WFP were:

1. To save lives. This entailed preventing suffering, malnutrition and ultimately starvation to death through provision of nutritious food rations.
2. To protect disposal of productive assets. This is in line with the principle of the Code of Conduct of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and NGOs in disaster response which states that aid should help to prevent future vulnerabilities.

The objectives are very noble and the first one was met beyond any question. The second one proved to be difficult to achieve. The beneficiary selection criteria left out those with assets such as scotch carts, ploughs, four cattle and above, good houses or televisions. Suggestive in these criteria is that the households which own these assets should dispose them in order to buy food. As such many non-beneficiary households sold livestock as a coping mechanism and they simply are more vulnerable to future shocks in total contradiction to the second objective. It was pathetic to learn that many households let go their cattle for 100kg maize per beast. The elite in the region took advantage of the situation and bought hundreds of beasts.

Community mapping was theoretically very sound as it allowed a transparent and objective participatory process of beneficiary selection. It was successfully done in 2007/8 programme which ran from September 2007 to March 2008. In 2008/9 the communities were well acquainted with it and new the consequences of a household being classified in a certain wealth group. The level of vulnerability was worse off than the previous year yet the assessment results showed that fewer households were vulnerable. When households were registered, it was the name of the household head and their identity particulars that would be recorded while the other household members would be indicated by age and health status. At village level the members connived to make sure that almost 100% of them fell in the first 2 wealth categories which were target

beneficiaries, whilst they put ghost households in the non benefiting categories. At household level, for some households both the wife and husband registered as different households in cases where they did not share a surname or they simply inflated their household sizes. The cheating was done to ensure that the households got registered as beneficiaries and also so that they could access more food than their entitlements.

### **Beneficiary Verification**

Since 2002 beneficiary verification was an important and integral component of the food aid programme. It was done publicly at village level or through randomly sampling households and visiting their homesteads. The results of verifications actually prompted WFP to come up with a more rigorous and participatory method of beneficiary targeting, selection and registration. The component was intensified as more and more staff had to be recruited specifically and exclusively for that function.



Figure 4.1 Home visits Christian Care staff

In 2008 the CFSAM had indicated that 131,169 people in Chipinge were food insecure and required food assistance. This became the target for CC/WFP. However the registration process came up with 224,444 food insecure people in October 2008.

Verifications were done intensively which removed about 24,000 undeserving and ghost beneficiaries, leaving 200,507 deserving people but still way above the initial target of 131,169 people. The numbers that got food were 185,000 in December and January, which were further reduced to 179,000 in February and then up scaled to 200,507 in March.

The fact that less than 200,000 deserving people benefited from December to February means that a lot of deserving people were left out. These people experienced a lot of stress as they struggled to cope with the situation. With such a scenario it would be unfair to think that the communities in Chipinge could build a negative dependency on food aid which was insufficient to meet their needs.

#### **Adequacy and appropriateness of the response**

Ration sizes for cereal, vegetable oil and pulses were made using the SPHERE standards of 2100 kilocalories of energy requirements per day. As such each beneficiary was entitled to 12,5kg cereal, 0.6kg vegetable oil and 2kg pulses per month. Unfortunately for the 2008/9 operation, because of poor funding and food pipeline breaks the food rations were revised downwards from month to month. See table 4.3 below. The cereal ration which started as 12,5kg per person per month in October was reduced to 10kg and ended up for January to March as 5kg. The contribution of food aid to household food security therefore became highly compromised.

**Table 4.3: Cereal Rations October 2008- March 2009.**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Ration (KG)</b>
October	12,5
November	12,5
December	10
January	5
February	5
March	5

The ration was also based on the assumption that it would supplement what households already had or could access. However, monitoring exercises revealed that for most

households what they got from CC constituted about 100% of food consumed. They had no other sources of food and it meant that the food aid could not take them through the month. The inadequacy of the rations is what prompted most households to cheat by inflating their household sizes so that they could access more food which would probably take them through the month. When CC/WFP introduced capping in December where they would give food to a maximum of 6 people per household the food became even more inadequate for households that had more people than that. Because of the HIV/AIDS scourge many households are keeping orphans, increasing their household sizes to even more than 15. If a household of 16 people gets food for 6 people the ration becomes grossly inadequate and negligible. Moreover the reduction of cereal ration in December was done at the same time capping of household sizes was introduced. This became a double tragedy to many households as they had fewer people in their households getting smaller rations. For example a household of 10 people which received 125kg cereal in November got 75kg in December and only 30kg each month from January to March. Such a household would obviously not build dependency on aid. The aid would just be enough to prevent death.

Although the food aid aimed at protecting productive assets it did not incorporate food production objectives by availing crop inputs or assisting communities with better farming techniques. The food component would ensure that the people lived and also gather energy to work in their fields and use the time that they would otherwise use in looking for food. However, the people had the energy and time to work but unfortunately did not have the inputs. To get around this problem, through inflating households some would use the extra cereal (maize grain) to plant or sell the extra food in order to buy inputs. Monitoring exercises revealed that 60% of the beneficiaries used part of their maize ration to plant since they did not have any seed.

### **Programme Implementation period of food aid**

During the 6 year period from 2002 to 2008 the implementation period was always informed by recommendations of the ZIMVAC. The periods have ranged from 3 months (in 2006) to 9 months. It was based on projections of how long the harvested crop would



last. However in almost all cases, implementation was delayed by a month or two. The delays were caused by late signing of Memorandum of Understanding between WFP and Government of Zimbabwe, late or prolonged beneficiary identification, registration and verification or late arrival of imported food. In spite of the month food distributions started they have always been terminated in March or April. Timing of termination was based on the assumption that by that time households would have started harvesting their crops. Even when it was clear in the fields that there was no significant harvest to rely on, termination has been done uncompromisingly. Food aid would only resume after satisfying all the assessments mentioned above. No food aid (except for vulnerable groups such as chronically ill) has been implemented for a full year without a break.

## **4.2 PRIMARY DATA ANALYSIS**

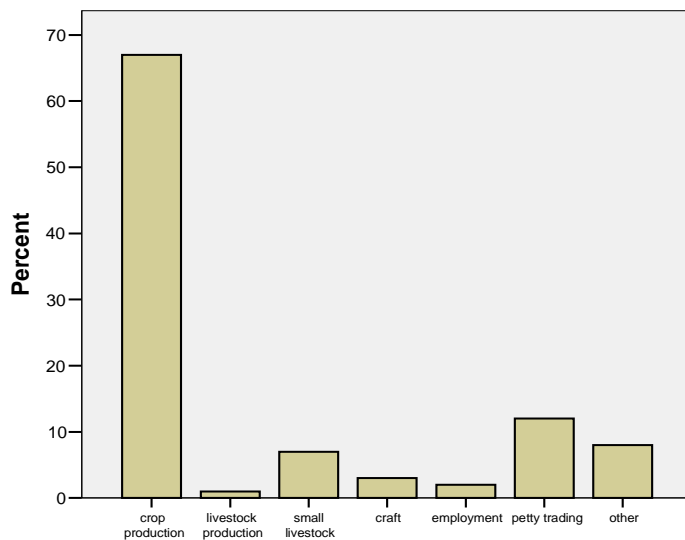
### **4.2.1 Livelihood activities for Chipinge communities**

The main livelihood activities for the people of Chipinge are:

- Crop production focusing on cotton, maize and small grains on small plots of about 0.3 hectares.
- Livestock rearing- cattle and goats
- Small livestock- chickens, rabbits
- Craft
- Petty trading
- Employment

It is interesting to note that 65% of the people have crop production as their main livelihood activity in spite of the climatic conditions of low (below 450mm) erratic rainfall and very high temperatures (up to 40 degrees Celcius) which are unfavourable for dry land cropping. Year after year they plant maize yet with very high probability of failure. They cited that they have very few alternatives for crops. Maize provides the staple food, sadza and they are better off trying it every time. They also encounter challenges with small grains such as millet or sorghum which are suitable for the climatic conditions for the area. The crops are usually destroyed by birds to such an extent that

they would not be able to harvest anything. The area is also suitable for livestock rearing but many households no longer have any cattle as the stock depleted through continuous drought episodes. Petty trading was said to be the main livelihood for about 12% of the respondents. Many of them engage in buying farm produce and other items from neighbouring Mozambique, or irrigation farms both in the Valley and in the Eastern Highlands.



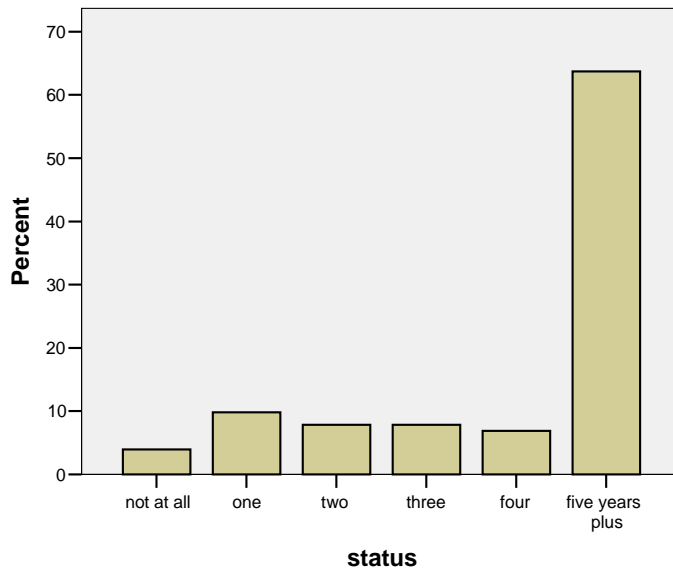
**Figure 4.2 Main Livelihood Activities for Chipinge South Households**

However, there is limited purchasing power by the villagers. I actually observed at a food distribution point a woman who had 2 crates of eggs which she had imported from Mozambique. At the end of the day she went back with her full crates because nobody had money to buy. Small livestock which represents about 8% involves rearing of chickens, rabbits or pigs. Other activities representing about 9% include market gardening, carpentry and building. Mat making using baobab bark is also important (main activity for about 3%) but the extraction of bark is illegal and poses challenges for those who might want to embark on it on a large scale. There seems to be a very limited variety of livelihood activities.

#### **4.2.2 Beneficiary Status**

More than 96% of the respondents indicated that they were beneficiaries of food aid programmes at least once while sixty five percent were beneficiaries for at least 5 years.

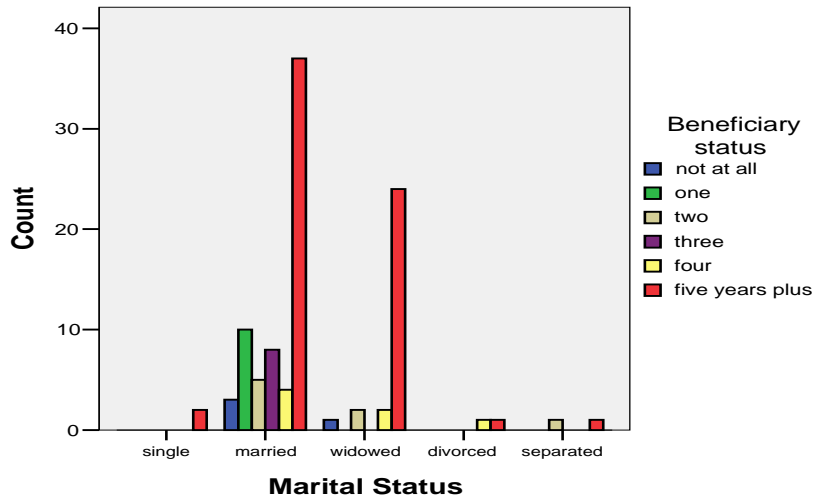
These percentages go hand in hand with the targeted beneficiaries for the district which were always above 50% of the population in the sub district.



**Figure 4.3 Food Aid Beneficiary Status**

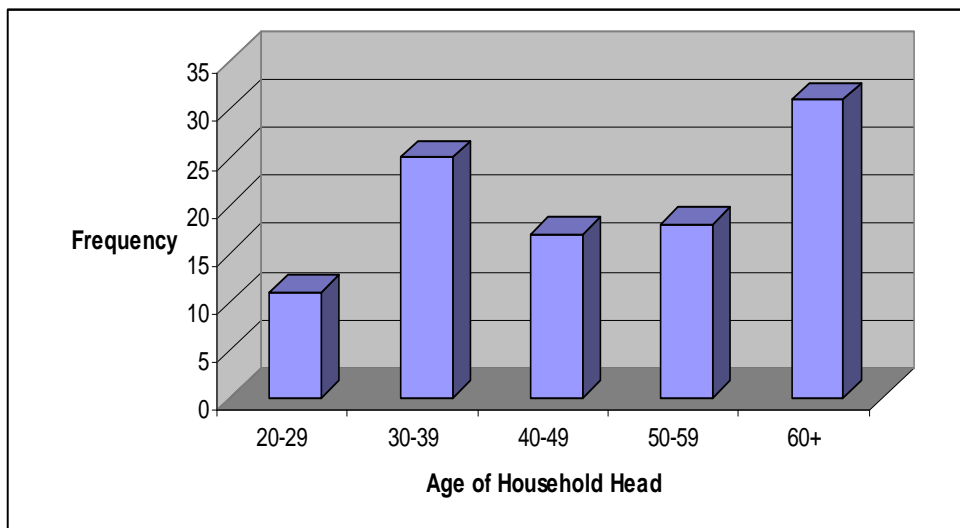
Source: Household Survey

If negative dependency has actually crept into the Chipinge villagers this category of people who have benefited every time there was a food aid programme are likely to have been affected. Concerns centre around whether this category of people would really exert their efforts on developing livelihood strategies that would foster food security and self reliance when they are almost sure that whenever there is a programme they would benefit. Figure 4.4 below presents a comparison of the number of times a family has benefited and the marital status of the household head. It shows that most of the benefiting households were headed by married people, followed by those headed by widows, singles, divorced and lastly by separated. This spread may simply show general trend of marital status in the area, with vulnerability cutting across all categories. Single headed households are usually of orphans who would have lost both parents probably as a result of the AIDS scourge. Their vulnerability is usually unquestionable as they sometimes need to go to school and at the same time fend for their siblings.



**Figure 4.4 Comparisons of Beneficiary Status and Marital Status**

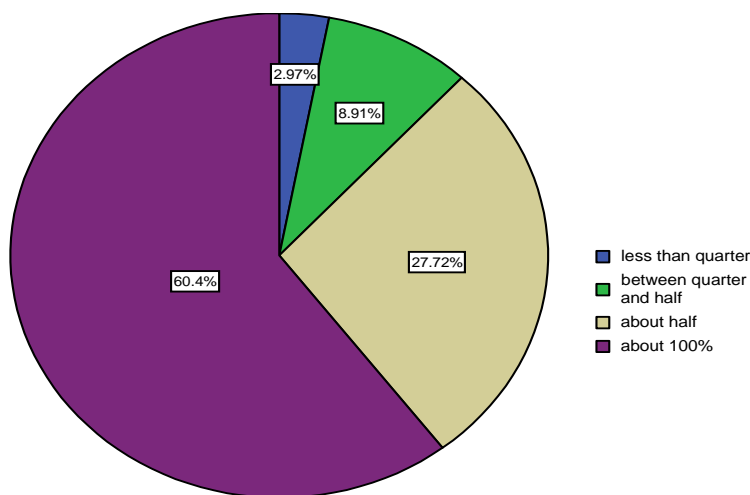
An analysis of the age of head of the beneficiary households is presented in figure 4.5 below. The majority (about 70%) of the household heads are aged between 20 and 59. This category consists of able bodied people who ideally should be able to engage in livelihood activities to foster self reliance. If they fail to exert themselves appropriately because they anticipate food aid then it can rightly be said that they have developed a culture of dependency. About 30% of the beneficiaries are headed by old people of 60 years and above. It is this category which would be assisted through social safety nets at community level. In the absence of social safety nets they would starve and for them dependency on food aid would be positive.



**Figure 4.5 Ages of Household Heads of Beneficiaries**

### 4.2.3 Contribution of food aid to household food security

Sixty percent of the respondents indicated that food aid contributed about 100% of the food consumed in their homes, 28% said it contributed about half, 9% between a quarter and a half while 3% indicated that it contributed less than a quarter. Since a large percentage had about 100% of their food needs met by food aid it may be concluded that there was proper targeting of those households which were actually in need. Food reached out to the intended beneficiaries and was used appropriately. If these people had not gotten the aid there were chances that they could have starved. Dependency for them was positive. These households appear to be those in category 1 of very food insecure people.

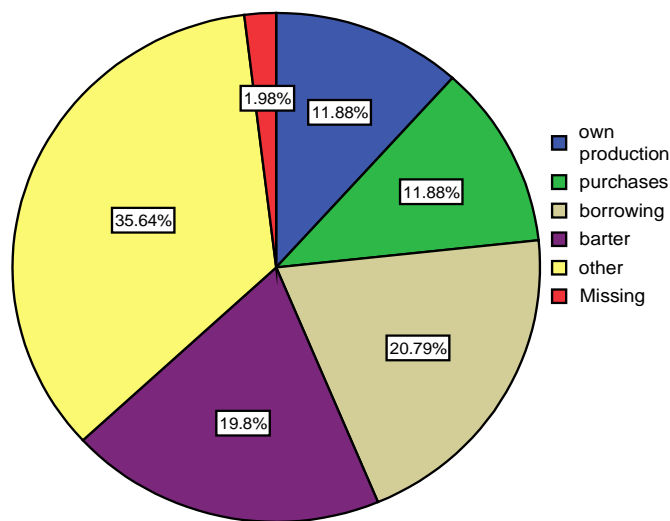


**Figure 4.6 Contribution of Food Aid to Household Food Security**

Almost 28% of the beneficiaries indicated that food aid contributed about half of the food consumed in their homes. These people could consist of category 2 of beneficiaries who are food insecure or experience transitory food insecurity as opposed to those in category 1 who experience chronic food insecurity. This group is still able to engage in certain livelihood activities in order to complement the food aid and therefore would certainly not starve if food aid is withdrawn. About 9% has food aid contributing between a quarter and a half of the total food consumed in their homes while 2.97% has below a quarter. The latter may indicate a targeting error where undeserving cases were included. If food aid contributed less than 25% of the food available in their homes then definitely they were not highly vulnerable. However this inclusion error has a small margin.

#### 4.2.4 Other Sources of food

The food aid which was provided was based on the assumption that the beneficiaries had some food from their own production or other sources. About 60% indicated that what they got from CC/WFP constituted about 100% of their food. It means that the food which was made available to them was not adequate to meet their household food requirements.



**Figure 4.7 Other Sources of Food**

Only 11.88% of the respondents indicated that the food which was available to complement the food aid was from their production, another 11.88% from purchases, 20.79% from borrowing, 19.8% from barter and the biggest percentage of 35.64% for other. These statistics confirm the limitations of crop production in the area. The small percentage of 11.88 for purchases, point to a scenario where other income generating initiatives such as craft, carpentry, gardening and trade are equally unviable. Barter is usually done exchanging cattle or other household assets for food. The other sources could actually be illegal and negative coping mechanisms. Seventy six percent of the respondents neither produced any food nor could they buy food from the market. These people had to resort to borrowing, barter and other coping mechanisms to supplement the food which they got from CC/WFP. The scenario confirms a high level of vulnerability.

#### 4.2.5 Impact of food aid on livelihood activities

The survey results show that 18% of the respondents dropped some of their livelihood activities since the inception of the CC/WFP food aid in 2002. None of those who were never beneficiaries dropped any activity while 17% of those who were beneficiaries for five or more years dropped some activities. It was important to measure this variable as it would give indications of whether the food aid had disincentive effects causing people to abandon their livelihoods in anticipation of aid.

**Table 4.4 Beneficiary Status \* Dropping off some activities**

Count		Drop off		Total
		Yes	No	
Beneficiary status (years)	not at all	0	4	4
	One	3	7	10
	Two	0	7	7
	Three	3	5	8
	Four	1	6	7
	five years plus	11	54	65
Total		18	83	101

It was found out that the main reasons for dropping some activities were that they had become unviable. For example those who live close to the Save River and used to engage in market gardening producing vegetables cited that they no longer had markets for their produce. The prices offered in the villages were just ridiculous and did not warrant the hard labour required to produce the vegetables. Since the informal introduction of foreign currency on the market in 2008 and the subsequent formalisation of the same money is simply unavailable in the rural areas. Producers also could not afford to transport their produce to markets in the district town of Chipinge or provincial capital Mutare which are about 60km and 200km away respectively. Shortage of fuel coupled with its high price made transportation a very expensive venture. As a result some watched their produce rotting and finally decided to drop the activity. For those who used to work at irrigation farms and others who provided seasonal labour at the same farms, dropping this activity became compulsory as most irrigation farmers including Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) which is a parastatal stopped farming on its irrigation estates in the area. No respondent indicated that they dropped some activities because they had enough food or income nor that they felt that the food aid was sufficient and

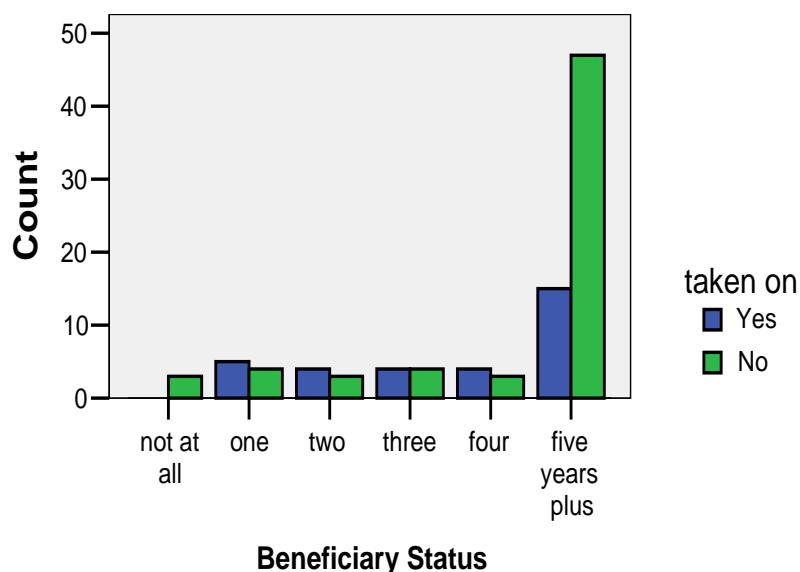
anticipated that it would continue. It may therefore be inferred that the beneficiaries did not build negative dependency on the food aid.

**Table 4.5: Beneficiary Status vs. Taking new livelihood activities**  
Count

		Taken on		Total
		Yes	No	
Beneficiary status	Not at all	0	3	3
	One	5	4	9
	Two	4	3	7
	Three	4	4	8
	Four	4	3	7
	Five years plus	15	47	62
Total		32	64	96

Some households actually took on new livelihood activities since 2002. (See table 4.5 above and figure 4.6 below). About 33% of the respondents indicated that they actually took on new activities and all of them have been beneficiaries for at least once. It is remarkable to note that the percentage of people which took on new activities (33%) is far higher than the percentage which dropped off (18%) some activities. The reasons given were that the food aid was inadequate to meet their needs therefore they needed to supplement the food. They also wanted to diversify their income. Others wanted to store food in anticipation of the period when aid would be terminated when communities harvest their produce. The inadequacy of the food aid to meet household needs actually motivated many to seek and pursue new livelihood strategies.





**Figure 4.8 Households that took on new livelihood activities**  
Source: Household Survey

#### 4.2.6 Food aid design

On whether the food aid programme was properly designed to support livelihoods (see table 4.6 below) 93% felt that it was properly designed. About 30% of those who said yes cited that it came at the right time when people were on the verge of starving.

**Table 4.6 Beneficiary Status \* Food Aid Design**

Count	Food aid design			Total
	Yes	no	4	
Status not at all	3	0	0	3
One	9	1	0	10
Two	8	0	0	8
Three	8	0	0	8
Four	5	2	0	7
five years plus	60	4	1	65
Total	93	7	1	101

It confirms that the interventions were made timely. The other reasons given to affirm that the design was proper were that:

- They were able to do other livelihood activities as the food provided them with energy.
- They would look for food whilst there was something to eat at home.
- The food they received prevented starvation.

- The programme targeted the most vulnerable.
- The little income from their livelihoods which they would have used to buy food was then used to pay school fees for their children.
- The programme was transparent and therefore no complaints were raised.
- The rations were satisfactory.
- The food acted as a supplement and there was a great improvement in the health status of beneficiaries.

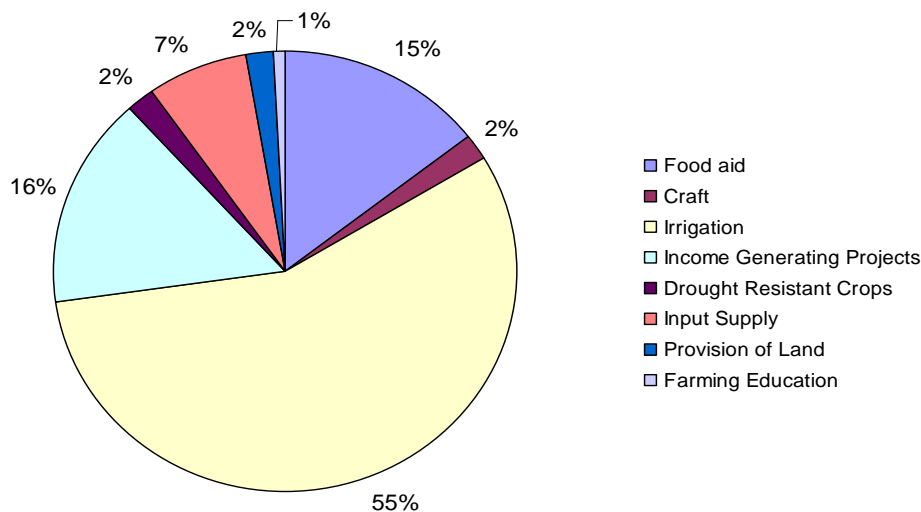
The 7% who felt that the programme was not properly designed gave the following reasons:

- Some people always did not benefit when they needed food and were as vulnerable as others who got it
- Big households (some even up to 17 people) got little food which was far below their requirements. The problem arose as a result of capping households to five or six. Capping meant that even if a household had more than six people it would receive food for a maximum of six people.
- The programme was not complemented with crop input supply or assistance. Many households could not access seed and fertiliser as they were in short supply in addition to the fact that they could not afford foreign currency priced inputs.
- Some households which had been registered only got food in the last month of the programme.

#### **4.2.7 Perspectives on what can be done to end food shortages in Chipinge South**

Community perspectives on strategies to be employed to end food shortages were sought through the questionnaire survey. (See figure 4.9 below). Such perspectives were important in making inferences on dependency syndrome or otherwise. Fifty five percent indicated that food shortages could only be curbed if communities were assisted to establish irrigation schemes. They recognised the adverse weather experienced in the area which hampers rain fed food production and at the same time notice the opportunity of abundant water in the Save river which flows through the area. The perspective

demonstrates that many households are cognisant of the role they should play in improving their food security. Of course they need assistance to establish the irrigations as they require a huge capital outlay, but they are the ones who would work on the irrigations to produce their own food.



**Figure 4.9 Perspectives on how Food Shortages may be ended**

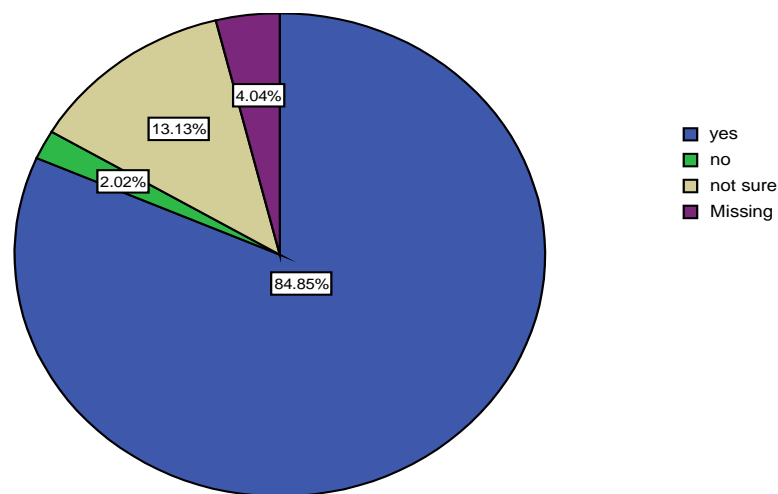
Sixteen percent thought that their plight of food insecurity could be history if they were assisted to start income generating projects. Seven percent felt that they needed assistance to access inputs. Smaller percentages thought that they should farm drought resistant crops, engage in craft, should be allocated farm land or get training on better farming practices. These groups combined represent a total of 85% of the respondents and considered that they had a role to play in ending food shortages. Although the respondents indicated that they needed support to roll out activities that would foster self reliance in food security the fact that they acknowledge that they should put in some effort suggests no sense of dependency.

On the other hand 15% asserted that they needed food aid to continue because their area experiences adverse weather conditions which are unfavourable for crop production. It may be argued that probably this group of people may be feeling unmotivated to engage in livelihood activities for their own sustenance. They are likely to have put in lots of

effort in crop production over the years but have not been able to produce significant yields. It may also be true that the group consists of the very vulnerable people who could be very old, chronically ill or orphaned and who also do not have the capacity to produce their own food. For such a category depending on food aid would definitely be very positive.

#### 4.2.8 Expectations for food aid in the future

A question on whether people expected that food aid would continue in the future was very important as it would determine their attitude towards activities for self sustenance. If people expect continued aid they may relax and not put requisite effort on livelihood activities as they would perceive their future to be secured. On the other hand people who are not certain on the future of aid would certainly put in some effort to fix their sustenance. About 85% of the respondents indicated that they expected food aid to continue in the future, 2.02% did not expect it to continue while 13.13% were not sure.



**Figure 4.11 Expectations of food aid in the future**

Since a large percentage of the population still expects food aid to continue it could be inferred they may not seriously engage in livelihood activities in anticipation of food aid. However as mentioned in chapter 3 on research constraints since the enumerators were Christian Care staff biases could have been created. They may have thought that by saying that they anticipate continued aid the organisation would be

influenced to continue the programme. It could also be because they observe that vulnerability and food insecurity continue to worsen in the area and that CC/WFP would be pushed by the humanitarian imperative to intervene and rescue lives. The 13.13% who were not sure, combined with the 2.02% who did not expect aid in the future are likely to try new ventures in livelihoods in order to sustain their livelihoods. They are not likely to develop an attitude of dependency towards aid. It is however striking that the percentage that expects food aid to continue is about the same as the combined percentage of people who perceive that with assistance they can engage in activities that foster self reliance.

#### **4.2.9 Self reliance after termination of aid**

Sixty percent of the respondents indicated that if food aid is terminated they would not be able to sustain themselves by making food available to their households. Interesting to note is the fact that about the same percentage (60.4%) indicated that food aid constituted 100% of food consumed in their homes (see figure 4.6 above) and 65% depend on agriculture as the main livelihood activity (see figure 4.2 above). Again 65% of respondents were beneficiaries of food aid for at least five years (see figure 4.5 above). It can therefore be inferred that the people who think that that they cannot sustain themselves apart from food aid are those who have crop production as the main livelihood and who also have been benefiting from food aid for many years. On the other hand 40% of the respondents indicated that they could sustain themselves if food aid got terminated. This percentage tallies with combined percentage of people who don't have crop production as their main livelihood activity.

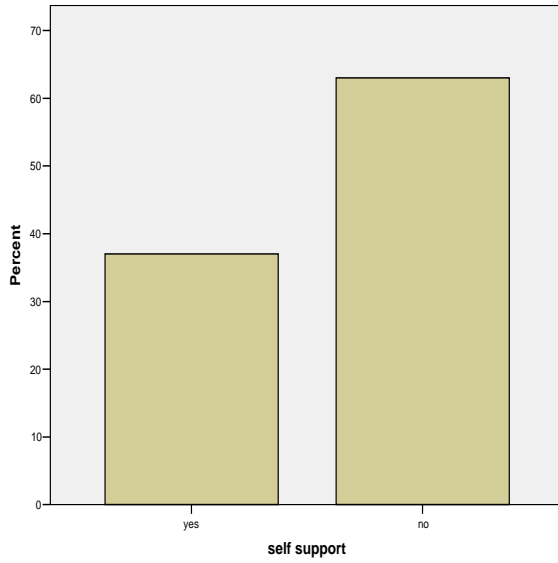


Figure 4.11 Ability to sustain self after food aid

#### 4.2.10 Plans after termination of food aid

It was important to get information on what plans for survival people have for the period after the termination of food aid. It was useful in assessing the attitude of local people towards own food production and self reliance. Ten percent of the respondents said that they wanted food aid to continue. In this category are some

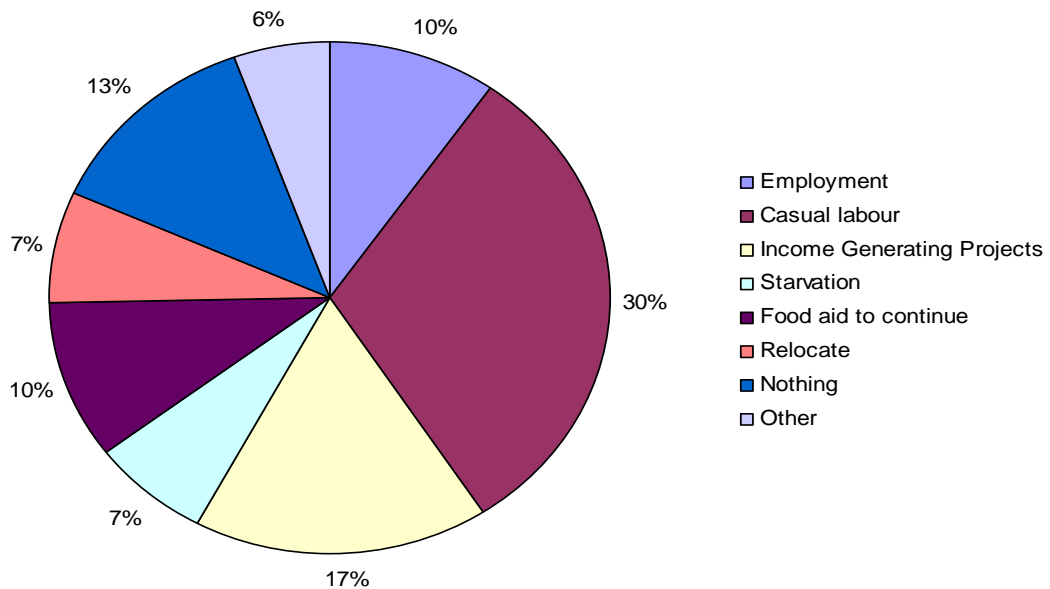


Figure 4.12 Plans when food aid stops

said there was nothing viable which could be done in the area therefore food aid had to be continued in perpetuity while others said that it had to be continued until they were assisted to establish irrigation schemes. Seven percent said if food aid was discontinued they would starve to death. Thirteen percent said that they had no plans at all. They would do nothing. All these groups which when combined represent 30% of the respondents seem to have something in common. They cannot do anything to ensure self reliance in food security either because they don't have capacity or because they are simply complacent. It may be inferred that this group consists of social welfare cases of the very old, chronically ill and orphans who don't have any means of self support as well as the able bodied who lack initiatives and have developed negative dependency on aid or a dependency syndrome.

Thirty percent indicated that they would provide casual labour to raise income, 10% said they would look for jobs while 17% had plans to start income generating projects. These categories of respondents which together represent 57% of the total number of respondents perceive that there are some alternatives to food aid which they have intentions of exploring when food aid finally ends. It can also be inferred that this group of people has not developed dependency on food aid. The remainder of the respondents indicated that they would relocate or sell assets. There is an opportunity in the country current where people are being resettled in formerly white owned farms or even other farms owned by blacks who own more than one or have demonstrated incapacity to fully utilise the farms. If they relocate to areas with better climatic conditions they might be able to engage in food production successfully.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

The chapter focused on presentation of the results of data analysis from both secondary and primary sources. It sought to verify for Chipinge communities what was concluded in the literature review to be the issues that promote negative dependency or disincentive effects of aid. It is generally agreed that negative dependency can occur if food aid is done before proper assessments are done, if the period of aid is longer than the period

when aid is actually needed, if rations are more than the requirement, and if there are errors of inclusion where undeserving cases benefit. Dependency can be said to have crept in if beneficiaries take risks as they consider cushioned by aid or do not do anything for self support in anticipation of aid.

The data that were gathered clearly shows that

- 1 Vulnerability assessments were carried out in Zimbabwe since 2002 and have now been institutionalised. These are Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) which is carried out at least twice every year and the Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission by United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation. These assessments focus on food security and vulnerability issues and have been the major sources of information for planning of food aid in Chipinge.
- 2 The period of food aid has always been as proposed in the assessment reports. On a number of occasions the programmes have started a month or two later but have always ended in March or April at the beginning of the harvest period. Termination of food aid has been done religiously whether or not a harvest was expected. Further programming would follow after assessments.
- 3 The rations which were distributed were derived from the minimum standards in the Sphere Project. There was never a time when rations were exceeded but many times when the rations could not be attained. This was because some commodities were not available during some months of the programme while others were in small quantities such that rations were sometimes cut to less than half the minimum prescribed. All of the food which was distributed was utilised within the household.
- 4 Monitoring activities did not reveal any inclusion errors of undeserving cases.
- 5 It can generally be accepted that because of the findings in 1 to 4 above that the programmes for Chipinge did not encourage dependency.
- 6 The responses of the survey show that there are some households who do not take or plan to take any initiatives for livelihood activities. However the reasons why they do so are not because they have become dependent on food



aid but because the socio economic environment and the climatic conditions are too harsh for anything to be viable.

- 7 Some of the people are still confident that if they can be supported to initiate something they will be self reliant.

## CHAPTER 5

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter seeks to tie up all the discussions that were made from chapter one to four. It provides a link on the objectives of the study in chapter one, the findings of literature study in chapter two and the findings in chapter four. It wraps up on the extent to which the objectives were attained and the conclusions that can be made. Recommendations are then made on the basis of conclusions from the findings.

## **5.2 CONCLUSIONS**

### **5.2.1 The main livelihood strategies for the Chipinge communities**

The main livelihood activity for Chipinge South communities is crop production complemented by petty trading, small livestock production, craft, employment and livestock rearing, in descending order of importance. See figure 4.2. Crop production is the main livelihood for about 65% of the population and the main crops grown are cotton, maize and small grains. However, the climatic conditions for the region are greatly unfavourable to rain fed crop production. The area falls in agro ecological region five which is characterised by high temperatures of up to 40 degrees Celcius and low erratic annual rainfall of below 400mm. There is a great opportunity for irrigation development. A major river (one of the biggest rivers in Zimbabwe) flows through the area. There are a number of irrigation schemes owned by the Government and a few private individuals but most of them have become dysfunctional as a result of economic hardships faced by the country.

### **5.2.2 Appropriateness of food aid design to strengthen livelihoods**

The objectives of the Christian Care food aid programme which was implemented with the support of WFP were spelt out in the proposal documents as: a) to save lives and alleviate suffering, b) to protect assets and promote livelihoods. The findings show that

the first objective was met as many people who did not have any food (60.4% of the respondents) depended totally on the food aid. See figure 4.6. The second objective was supposed to be met through a number of ways. Firstly, by providing food to the food insecure people it was hoped that they would then not need to sell their productive assets such as ploughs, hoes, scotch carts, cattle, donkeys or wheel barrows in order to buy food. Secondly, whereas the people would spend a long time looking for food, they would then spent the time in their fields or other livelihood activities in order to foster food security for themselves. Thirdly, the food provided especially during the cropping season would provide energy for people to work in their fields.

Literature shows that it is difficult to demonstrate whether food aid really has an impact on livelihoods in the sense described above. The case of Chipinge is no exception. In any case the selection criteria for food aid beneficiaries seemed to have been contravening this same objective. It left out those households with a defined number of cattle and other assets. The assumption was that they could dispose of the assets and buy food. Such sale of assets actually increases vulnerability to further shocks instead of increasing resilience. Since the food security situation of Chipinge communities seems to have remained high it can therefore be concluded that the objective of promoting livelihoods was not met.

### **5.2.3 Comparison of the number and magnitude of livelihood activities with and without food aid**

The range and magnitude of livelihoods before food aid and with food aid did not change. Many households maintained their livelihoods while the number of those who took on new ones (32) is much more than the number which dropped some (18). See figure 4.4 and 4.5. Those who took on new activities hoped to supplement their inadequate food rations while for those who dropped some activities it was because they had become unviable. There was no evidence of dropping of activities being linked to availability of food as a result of food aid.

#### **5.2.4 Assessment of negative dependency as a result of protracted food aid**

It can be concluded that although food aid was provided for a protracted period to communities in Chipinge South it did not encourage negative dependency because of the following:

- (i) Proper assessments (ZIMVAC, CFSAM, CHS) were done every year to ascertain the level of vulnerability or food insecurity. The level of response in terms of the number of people in need of food as well as the period when the food would be required were absolutely determined by the recommendations of the assessments. It guarded against providing food at the wrong time or to the wrong group of people. Nevertheless food aid programmes always started a month or two later than the recommended time. It started when food security had already become critical.
- (ii) A targeting and selection criteria was developed for each programming period. It helped to identify the real people in need. Monitoring activities throughout the implementation period helped to control inclusion and exclusion errors.
- (iii) Beneficiaries were selected at the beginning of each programme. Households were therefore not certain whether they would be selected the next time the programme would come to warrant them to relax in engaging in activities that ensure their food security.
- (iv) Food rations which were planned using Sphere minimum standards changed greatly throughout the programme period. See table 4.3. Rations were sometimes cut to less than half the initially planned and some commodities were not available in some months. Capping, which defined the maximum number of people to receive rations within a household was introduced on a number of occasions. For example a household with 15 members would receive rations for 5 or 6 people only. Although the fluctuations in availability of commodities and capping were a result of resource constraints, they had a great impact on availability and adequacy of food for the benefiting

households. They could therefore not build dependency on inadequate and uncertain food.

- (v) Although many people maintained their livelihood activities more people took on new activities than those who dropped some. Negative dependency could have been said to have crept in if households disengaged from their normal livelihoods taking security or insurance in food aid. After realising that food aid was inadequate they even ventured into new livelihood strategies albeit with minimal success.

### **5.2.5 Food aid threshold**

The project sought to ascertain whether there is a food aid threshold which would help to save lives and alleviate suffering but at the same time discourage dependency. It can be concluded from the literature and findings that such a threshold is determined by the amount of food distributed per person, the targeting and selection criteria, and the timing in relation to the hunger period. The amount of food distributed should not be more than is required. It should be given to the real people in need and should be given during times of need only. Proper assessments, planning and monitoring are all vital to the achievement of this threshold.

### **5.2.6 The role of the socio economic environment in the success of livelihood strategies?**

Zimbabwe has experienced a number of economic challenges since the turn of the millennium. The fast track land reform programme saw the demise of the agricultural sector in the country. The country which used to be the bread basket of Africa was transformed into a net importer of food with the highest dependency on food aid in the whole of southern Africa. Loss of both skilled and unskilled labour coupled with lack of capital saw the demise of both the agricultural and industrial sectors. High inflation and scarcity of fuel resources threatened the survival of any economic activities. Inputs were largely unavailable, access to markets was highly challenged while markets were greatly depressed.

The fact that there are households that dropped some livelihood activities can be attributed largely to the harsh economic environment. Some households which used to survive on providing labour on the irrigation farms in the area. They experienced shocks when farming operations ceased abruptly. They had no choice but found themselves unemployed. Other households which depended on market gardening or craft failed to sell their products. There was no money in the market. Others were hurt to watch their farm produce rotting as they could not afford to transport it to the market.

Such an environment is no good for any activities which might be intended to generate income.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the conclusions made above that Chipinge South communities depend largely on rain fed crop production although the climatic conditions do not favour such; the area is suitable for irrigation development and has a great opportunity for water; the design and implementation of food aid did not directly support livelihoods neither did it promote negative dependency the following recommendations are made:

- 1 Both the public and private sectors should take advantage of the opportunity in the area by resuscitating existing irrigation schemes as well as establishing more projects. This will contribute towards the revival of the economy by producing crops for local consumption and export trade thereby increasing food availability and generating foreign currency. People from the local area will get opportunities for employment, which will raise their income levels such that they will be able to buy their own food and pay for other basic household needs such as education, clothing and medication. When income levels are increased in a community their purchasing power is also increased such that small scale businesses such as craft, petty trading, small livestock will start to thrive.

- 2 Food aid should be coupled with direct support to livelihood strategies. Inputs for food crops which are suitable for the region such as drought resistant small grains of mhunga, rapoko and millet should be distributed to beneficiaries when they receive their food rations. This seems the only way of ensuring that the households produce their own food thereby building resilience to further shocks as a result of drought. Households need to desist from concentrating on producing maize crop which is unsuitable because of harsh climatic conditions.
- 3 New cropping technologies such as conservation farming should be introduced in the area. Conservation farming is suitable for households without drought power who also cannot afford fertilisers. The major equipment required are hoes used to dig holes. Small quantities of fertiliser and organic manure are put together with the seeds in the holes. Mulch is used to cover the ground in order to minimise moisture loss through evaporation from the ground. Digging of holes instead of ploughing helps to conserve the soil. Conservation farming if done according to guidelines can improve yields drastically. In areas where it has been implemented beneficiaries have managed to improve their yields by up to ten times. The other advantage with conservation farming is that it utilises open pollinated seed varieties (OPV) instead of hybrid seeds. Rather than buying seed every year communities can actually produce their own high quality seed. Advocacy is however needed to promote this noble farming technology for people to shift from the conventional technology.
- 4 WFP, Christian Care and other agencies should continue to support the vulnerable members of Chipinge South with food aid until their capacity to produce their own food is resuscitated. Vulnerability assessments should continue, the most vulnerable should be targeted, monitoring should guard against inclusion and exclusion errors, the rations should be appropriate and adequate and interventions should be done timely in order to discourage negative dependency.

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## **Annex i**

### **HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE**

*(To be administered in Chipinge South March 2009)*

Number.....

### **Summary of Objectives**

**The main objective:**

To assess the impact of protracted food aid on livelihood strategies of the Chipinge communities

**Sub-objectives**

- 6 To identify the main livelihood strategies or activities for the communities
- 7 To find out if the food aid was designed and aimed at strengthening livelihood and whether such an objective was met.
- 8 To compare the number and magnitude of livelihood activities with and without food aid
- 9 To find out why there may be a difference in 2 above
- 10 To propose food aid programming which strengthens livelihood strategies

*Questionnaire to be filled in by Household head or spouse or most senior person*

Ward Name.....
Village Name.....
Name of Enumerator..... Date.....

**A DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

- 1 What is the gender of the respondent?
  - 1. Male
  - 2. Female
  
- 2 What is the gender of the household head?
  - 1. Male
  - 2. Female
  
- 3 What is the marital status of the household head?
  - 1. Single
  - 2. Married
  - 3. Widowed
  - 4. Divorced
  - 5. Separated
  
- 4 What is the age of the household head?

.....

5 What is the size of your household?

.....

**B FOOD AID BENEFICIARY STATUS**

6 How many years have you been a beneficiary of food aid?

- 1. Not at all
- 2. One
- 3. Two
- 4. Three
- 5. Four
- 6. Five years plus

7 How much did food aid contribute towards your household's food security?

- 1. less than a quarter
- 2. more than a quarter but less than half
- 3. about half
- 4. about 100%

8 Do you think the food aid programme was properly designed to support your livelihood activities?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

9 Give reasons for your answer in 8 above

.....  
.....  
.....

10 What were your other sources of food?

- 1. Own production
- 2. Purchases
- 3. Borrowing
- 4. Barter
- 5. Other Specify

**C LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES**

11 What is your main livelihood activity?

- A Crop production
- B Livestock production
- C Small livestock production
- D Craft
- E Employment



- F Petty trading
- G Other (specify)

12 Have you dropped off some livelihood activities from the time you became a food aid beneficiary/ or when food aid started in your area?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Give details.....

.....

.....

.....

13 Have you taken on some livelihood activities from the time you became a food aid beneficiary/ or when food aid started in your area?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Give details.....

.....

.....

.....

14 What do you think should be done to end the food shortages in your area?

.....

.....

.....

15 Do you think that food aid is going to continue in your area in the coming years if food shortages are experienced

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure

16 Do you think you will be able to sustain your household if food aid is discontinued in your area?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

17 If the answer is Yes what plans do you have?

.....

.....

.....

18 If the answer is No what plans do you have?

.....

.....

.....

## Annex ii

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

*To be used for discussions with stakeholders at district and sub-district level i.e District Administrator, Chief Executive Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, Agricultural Research & Extension, District Education Officer, Council chairperson, councillors, chiefs and headmen.*

- 1 What are the livelihood activities for the Chipinge South communities?
- 2 To what extent do you think food aid affected these activities and in what ways.
- 3 Has the variety and magnitude of livelihood activities changed after the introduction of food aid in the communities.
- 4 What do you think are the reasons for those changes if any?
- 5 How should food aid be designed to support livelihood strategies in order to end food shortages?
- 6 What factors affect the success of livelihood strategies in the area?
- 7 What will people do if food aid stops