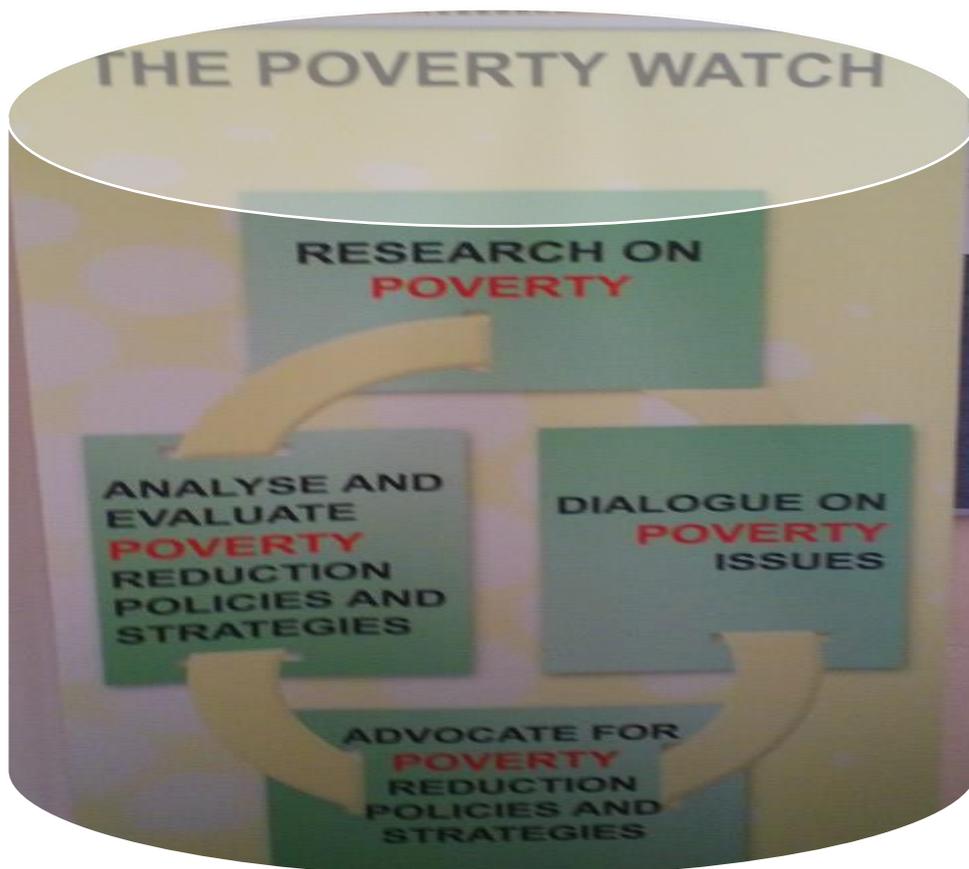




**Our Journey, Their Story: Lessons from implementing The Rural and Urban Basic Needs Basket Survey (BNB) Programme (2015- 2017)**

**Research Areas: Rural areas: Dora (Ward 35 and 5), Zimunya, Mutare Rural  
Urban Areas: Mutare, Masvingo, Bindura, Bulawayo, Shurugwi and Gweru**



## **About the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust**

### **Vision**

A Zimbabwe free from poverty

### **Mission**

To inform and influence poverty reduction and sustainable human development through research, advocacy and public dialogue

### **Goal**

Our Goal is to influence the formulation and implementation of pro poor policies through carrying out research on poverty related issues, engaging with policy makers, promoting broad based consultative dialogues and processes, as well as advocating for sustainable human development in Zimbabwe

For more information about our work, feel free to contact us and visit our website on details below:

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## Executive Summary

This report chronicles PRFT's poverty story, key successes, challenges and policy lessons from implementing the Rural and Urban Basic Needs Basket Survey (BNB) Programme (2015- 2017). Over the past three years, PRFT has continued on a trajectory of defining a Zimbabwe free from poverty through the provision of research and policy analysis, promoting dialogue amongst all stakeholders and advocacy interventions. As part of its mandate to respond to the social and economic challenges affecting provision of basic services through research, PRFT launched the Basic Need Basket (BNB) project in 2010 to regularly track the cost of basic day-to-day necessities and services required by a family of five to live an acceptably decent and healthy lifestyle. The Basic Needs Basket survey was adopted with the aim of generating timely local specific qualitative and quantitative information on urban and rural poverty to inform participatory and broad based formulation and implementation of pro-poor policy intervention and programming. Since 2010, PRFT has been working with residents associations, community leadership, and government departments in seven (7) urban towns namely, Harare, Mutare, Gweru, Bulawayo, Shurugwi, Masvingo and Bindura to undertake research, policy dialogues and advocacy on access to basic services by poor urban households. As PRFT continued to dig deeper on poverty over the years, PRFT established a poverty story linking urban poverty with the rural economy. This saw the same BNB tool initiative being scaled to Dora, a rural community under Zimunya District, Mutare rural, in Manicaland Province. The RBNB focused on monitoring local specific information on household food security and accessibility to other social services with the aim of informing pro poor policies and bottom up human development. The activities that PRFT undertook as part of the pilot project included RBNB community meetings, household data collection and price tracking, data analysis and report writing, dissemination and advocacy meetings targeting communities, community based organisations, traditional leadership and Mutare Rural District Council.

Given the journey that PRFT has travelled thus far with the Basic Needs Basket programme, it is important for us consolidate the key lessons and tell the lived poverty stories behind the figures that have been generated from the past three years. The tool has generated a mutual understanding on the challenges faced by ordinary residents both in the urban and rural areas. At policy and social accountability level, the programme has also managed to draw critical policy insights that are very important in delivering development to both rural and urban areas. As part of the key findings from its interventions, PRFT noted that Zimbabwe's agricultural sector has a pivotal role in sustaining the livelihoods of more than 70% of Zimbabweans living in rural areas if the quality of policies is improved. The sector could successfully perform its role in driving economic transformation and rural development in Zimbabwe if it is transformed in a sustainable manner. This means that agriculture will need to become more productive and diversified in terms of its products, more market – oriented, while ensuring inclusivity and avoiding damaging environment. PRFT noted that policy tools that focus on agricultural productivity provide a necessary but not sufficient condition for sustainable development. Improved productivity can happen without negative impacts on the poorest that are facing enormous socio-economic inequalities and are still struggling to access even the most basic services. There is need to create an enabling environment that ensures that agricultural productivity happens with poverty

reduction and increased access to basic social human rights among marginalised groups living in rural and urban areas. The key lesson generated from PRFT's rural BNB research tool is that if poverty reduction and sustainable human development is to be achieved, there is need to harmonise agricultural policies and ensure that rural development is at the centre of all policy interventions. Specific interventions that need to be supported include increased investments in rural industries and supply side interventions on education and training. While the need to diversify our rural economics both in the agricultural and non -agricultural sectors has become very important, there is need to for the government to leverage on its natural resources to support market development and production of non-agricultural assets such as roads for the diversification to become a reality. It is the duty of government to establish fair markets that will foster realization of social and economic rights of women, children and other marginalized groups both in agriculture and non-agricultural sectors.

To reduce gender inequality in agricultural productivity policies, there is need to implement targeted women economic empowerment programmes and policies e.g

- Equal access to public services,
- Provision of reproductive health and childcare,
- provision of affordable clean energy, water and sanitation infrastructure,
- Provision of legal and policy reforms to give women equal right to land tenure and ownership,
- Decent employment conditions and access to credit, skills and inputs needed for a transition into a more commercial agricultural production and agricultural linked small business

PRFT also found out that whilst it is important for government to promote agricultural diversification that result in a shift to more productive, diversified in terms of products, market-oriented agricultural activities. There is also need to assist the poorest residents who face enormous socio – economic inequalities and struggling to access the most basic services in the society. Government should pursue a holistic approach which entails investing in new job opportunities and eradicate precarious employment whilst at the same time supporting social protection as part of the strategies for poverty reduction in both rural and urban areas. PRFT's results from the calculation of rural cost of living through the minimum income approach revealed that poor households are increasingly in need of a sizeable income to mitigate the negative effects of poverty induced by seasonality changes, crop failure and natural disasters. These reflections are very useful in engaging on the implementation and evaluation of social policies in the country.

The results confirmed the fact that a huge number of households are increasingly depending on social transfers for their livelihood. The key challenge is on sustainability of these programmes as the government is resource constrained to support a growing number of people who are falling into abject poverty. The other challenge is that the current social protection mechanisms (e.g food transfers) are not diverse and short term focused (they are only limited to consumption only) and are limited to only a few people hence even the lowest people can hardly afford the Rural Basic Needs Basket. Social protection interventions based on consumption have not realised far reaching impacts on poverty reduction due to lack of agricultural productivity based on social safety nets. PRFT learnt that in the context of climate change, poor rural households would need to engage in small-scale investments or

businesses to generate income for assets accumulation. This means that poor households should be supported with opportunities for pro poor investments.

On the other side, undertaking the Urban Basic Needs Basket has revealed that in the context of economic collapse, many ordinary households and formally employed workers are involved in survivalist's strategies to earn a living. Vending remains one of the survivalist's strategies that continue to be affected by changes in policy environment and economic failure. The profits which are derived from such activities are not capable of sustaining households in terms of access to basic goods and services such as food.

PRFT joined hands with other like-minded civil society organisations to recommend adoption of policies that will promote growth of "informal" sector activities that have the potential to create decent jobs and reduce poverty for youth and women. Whilst there is still need for local authorities to put in place policies and laws that promote the realisation of social and economic rights in vending business, it has become important for communities and local authorities to put more energy towards influencing the government to expand the development of informal activities with more opportunities. We noted that cross border trading is one of the sectors that should be supported and not suffocated. With more and more people being pushed into the informal sector due to deindustrialization; cross border trading became one of the most trending informal sector occupation and common amongst Zimbabweans in both rural and urban areas. The sector is largely dominated by women, mostly widows and single mothers, and youths who has taken up cross border trading as a livelihood opportunity.

As part of its research and advocacy through the Urban BNB, PRFT noted that there is need to promote enterprise development, decent work and living wages for people working in cross border trading business. As part of the lessons generated from implementation of the urban BNB project, PRFT noted that there is need to support development opportunities in other sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy and tourism to expand employment opportunities in both rural areas and urban areas. The informal sector, despite its growth, has its own challenges considering that the majority of the informal traders are doing survivalist's jobs such as street vending. The national policies should take cognizance of the changes taking place in the socio-economic setup to cushion the vulnerable. Energy and effort should be placed towards uplifting the lives of poor people and ensure access to basic utilities such as water, energy, food and shelter is improved. Government policies need to be informed by community engagement in-order to craft policies and laws that address community needs.

PRFT also noted that despite the observed efforts by local residents to demand social accountability in local service delivery, interface with communities in the urban areas visited revealed that there are cross-critical issues that are undermining full adoption of best practises in social accountability and realisation of the benefits. The major key gap is that there are no specific laws and capacity building initiatives that support adoption of best practices in citizen participation. Formulation and implementation of good practises in social accountability have become an integral component of economic and sustainable development. Part of the recommendations that PRFT has pushed forward include the need for the legislation of Participatory Budgeting (PB) on local budgeting to ensure effective citizen participation in local service provision and planning. The government should develop

and cultivate a strong political will at both national and local level to steer the participatory processes such as participatory budgeting.

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

BNB	Basic Needs Basket
RBNB	Rural Basic Needs Basket
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CCZ	Consumer Council of Zimbabwe
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EMA	Environmental Management Agencies
EESCR	Environmental, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FPL	Food Poverty Line
HRT	Harare Residents Trust
IMF	International Monetary Fund
EMA	Environmental Management Agency
JCTR	Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflections (Zambia)
KII	Key Informant Interviews
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MURRA	Mutare Residents and Ratepayers Association
NANGO	Non-Governmental Organisation of Zimbabwe
OSISA	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa
PICES	Poverty Income Consumption and Expenditure Survey
PRFT	Poverty Reduction Forum Trust
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
SHRA	Shurugwi Residents Association
SI	Statutory Instrument
TCPL	Total Consumption Poverty Line
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank
ZIMSTAT	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency
ZIMVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee
ZIMASSET	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
ZINARA	Zimbabwe National Agency for Roads Administration

## 1.0 Chapter 1: Introduction

The Zimbabwe Government has been a signatory to several international and regional instruments that oblige it to deliver development to all its citizens. Examples include Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a successor to 2000-2015 MDGs; the Convention of the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979; Abuja Declaration budget benchmarks on Education and Health; United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on HIV and AIDS, 2001; World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), 2002; Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948; International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ECOSOC), 1966; Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD); Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China, 1995 and Beijing Platform for Action, 1995; World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), 2002; the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (C100); Convention on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (C182); and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender, among others. At the national level, the country's 2013 Constitution very explicitly through the Bill of Rights outlines the Government's obligations towards its people. These commitments demand therefore that the day-to-day operations of Government and all its structures should aim to bring about sustainable human development for its entire population.

Human development is the expression of people's freedoms and capabilities to lead lives that they value. Under this concept, the purpose of development is to improve human lives through expanding the range of things a person can do and be, that is, expanding choices, functions and capabilities to function. These include, being healthy and well nourished, being knowledgeable, and being able to participate in the life of the community. Thus, human development is about removing the obstacles to the things that a person can do and be in life, such as, illiteracy, ill health, and lack of access to resources including income and employment opportunities, lack of access to a clean and safe physical environment, lack of human security, lack of political freedoms, and lack of general human dignity. Inequalities in human development amplify poverty and vulnerability.

While the process of achieving sustainable development is the responsibility of all citizens, Government has the mandate to provide conducive environment characterized by a thriving broad-based and inclusive productive sector, where people can be engaged in wealth creation, thus making positive contribution to national development.

According to the United Nations Development Programme (1997), the concept of sustainable development should be guided by the following key concepts.

- i. Empowerment – the expansion of people’s capabilities.
- ii. Co-operation – the acknowledgement that a sense of belonging brings personal fulfilment, a source of well-being, enjoyment, purpose and meaning. In that case, human development embraces ways in which individuals cooperate and interact.
- iii. Equity – capabilities and opportunities, and not only income, all of which should be accessible and attained by all.
- iv. Sustainability – meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- v. Security (especially of livelihoods) – freedom from threats like disease, repression, or dislocations.

This way of looking at development has implications in terms of the role of the State. Under the human development strategy, the State ought to play a leading and strategic role in expanding capabilities and opportunities, and in ensuring that growth is broad-based and shared. In September 2015, leaders of the world including our own government of Zimbabwe signed up to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, inequality and address climate change. All the 17 SDGs are interlinked and their agenda speaks to the daily experiences of Zimbabweans and it articulates specific needs and constraints of Zimbabwe including but not limited to poor access to food security, health, jobs, income, safe water, food and inequality in services delivery and economic opportunities among marginalized groups, women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, older persons, and indigenous populations. The 2030 agenda presents a new opportunity for government to re-dress the human development challenges that have persisted beyond the MDGs era. The promise to “leave no one behind” within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development means that its implementation is going to be informed from below, by the participation of marginalized populations, especially women and girls, persons with disabilities, youth, indigenous populations and older people in decision making processes.

The Zimbabwe development trajectory has been marred with challenges that make the realization of sustainable human development a pipeline dream. The drivers of poverty in Zimbabwe have been structural and transitory, including, policy, human induced and environmental. The enclave job market has failed to provide enough decent jobs to keep families out of poverty. An example of this structural failure is low minimum wages combined with a significant number of insecure part-time and casual jobs which many Zimbabweans are now exposed to, which offer no benefits, hence, making families remain in poverty and vulnerability.

Social structural failures are demonstrated by the minimum amount of social safety nets especially in the rural areas where economic and social services such as agriculture are disintegrating. Government is struggling to devote resources that assist the poor through poverty reduction measures and programs. The issues of inadequate budgetary resources, mismanagement of national resources, corruption, and lack of political will have become a cancer that is bleeding the economy. Those hardest hit by all the negative developments and persistent economic hardships are the ordinary people who rely on public goods and services, which unfortunately are disappearing at an alarming rate.

As the country implements the SDGs agenda, it is within PRFT’s interest to see government, development partners and other stakeholders put more energy towards bottom up and rural led driven development so that there is increased access to basic services by both the rural and the urban poor.

The human development challenges in Zimbabwe necessitate the increasing need for evidenced based policy interventions that cushion vulnerable groups and increase household socio-economic dignity.

As part of the its poverty watch framework, PRFT launched the Basic Need Basket (BNB) project in 2010 to regularly track the cost of basic day-to-day necessities and services required by a family of five to live an acceptably decent and healthy lifestyle. The Basic Needs Basket survey was adopted with the aim of generating timely local specific qualitative and quantitative information on urban and rural poverty to inform participatory and broad based formulation and implementation of pro-poor policy intervention and programming. The BNB tool gathers information on the minimum amount of money required by a family of five to access their social and economic needs by monitoring the prices of commodities and services that constitute the ideal food and non-food basket on a monthly basis. The BNB methodology was first piloted in Harare and Mutare in 2010 and 2011 respectively. Over the years, the social research tool was expanded to other five urban areas namely Bulawayo, Gweru, Shurugwi, Masvingo and Bindura. With the view to make comparisons and informed engagements on the cost of living and poverty between rural and urban areas, the year 2015 saw PRFT piloting the BNB methodology in Dora, a rural community area which is located in Zimunya District, Manicaland Province.

Through its Basic Needs Basket programme, PRFT has gathered evidence on a myriad of social and economic challenges that the urban and rural people are facing. Apart from generating a mutual understanding on the challenges faced by ordinary residents, the programme has also managed to draw critical policy insights that are very important in delivering development among ordinary citizens. This publication summarises and brings to the fore these issue, lessons learnt and policy issues gathered through the implementation of the Rural and Urban Basic Needs Basket project. The main objective of the chapters in this publication is to provide an analysis of factors that are contributing to regressive development and the recommendations proffered. The first chapter of the paper covers the background on Human Development trajectory in Zimbabwe. The second chapter looks at rural poverty and the role of agriculture in promoting sustainable poverty reduction in the rural economy. The third chapter and the forth chapters present results from primary data analysis on monitoring rural cost of living and poverty patterns through the Rural and Urban Basic Needs Basket survey.

## **1.2 Background on Human Development in Zimbabwe**

The poverty situation in Zimbabwe has its roots in the enclave and dualistic economy, inherited from the colonial era which is characterised by majority dispossession, and carried forward into the post-independence era, which had a formal sector bias. The trickle-down effects from the formal sector are too weak to transform and absorb the non-formal sectors into formal activities. Market forces on its own would simply perpetuate this dualism, even in the presence of some growth. In this regard, a proactive role of the state is needed to integrate the non-formal economy and indigenize the growth process in a manner that allows the majority of the labour force to be engaged in productive activities. The strategy recommended involves targeted supply-side measures to resolve market failures through redistribution of productive assets.

This structural poverty was exacerbated by the cumulative effects of the protracted economic decline that the country experienced during the period 2000-2008, with a near collapse of both the economic and social sectors in 2007 and 2008. Overall, the economy cumulatively declined by 55 percent during the period 1999-2008, with the worst decline in real annual gross domestic product (GDP) of -14.7

percent being recorded in 2008, see *Figure 1*. Most firms faced viability problems and the result was massive closure and retrenchment of workers. The imposition of economic sanctions on the country by the West and USA after the implementation of the controversial Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in 2000 further incapacitated the Government to manage the economic crisis as the entire productive sector experienced a sharp drop in production.



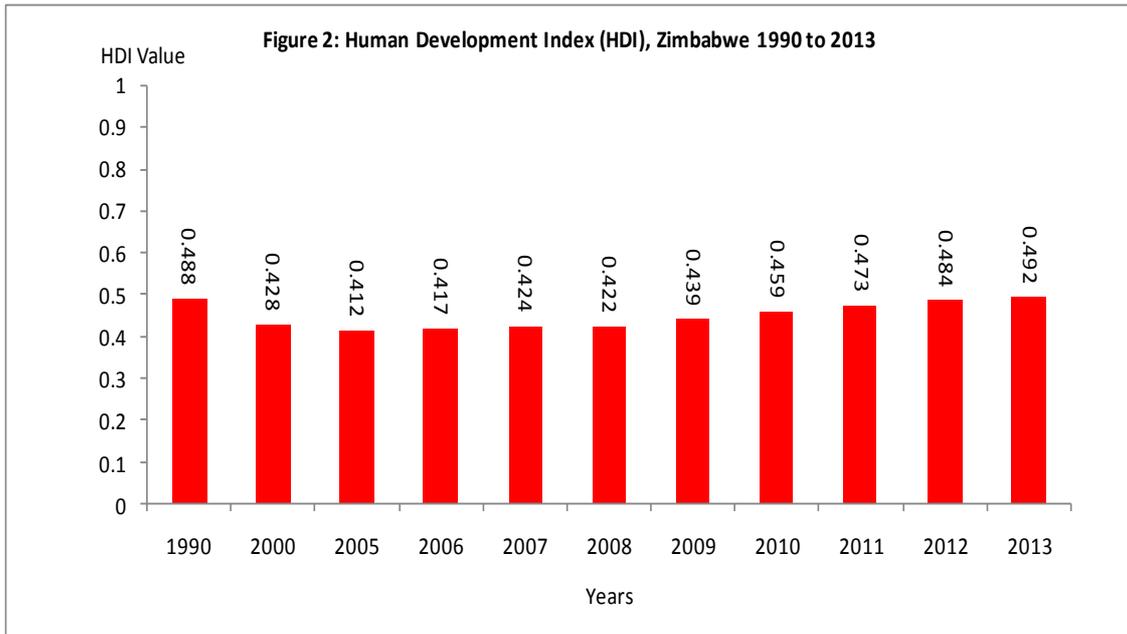
Source: Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, 2015.

Inefficient public service delivery systems and the debilitating impacts of the raging HIV and AIDS epidemic further compounded the hardships. Zimbabwe’s HIV and AIDS prevalence rate was recorded to be double-digit and high during the period 1997 -2008 and this led to a reduction in life expectancy to 37 years for men and 34 years for women during the same period<sup>1</sup>. The socio-economic decline left Zimbabwe with huge development challenges across all sectors of the economy. Overall, the country witnessed regression in both income and non-income dimensions of human development.

Before the crisis, Zimbabwe had made significant progress towards the achievement of the MDGs and human development as measured by the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI). Figure 2, presents the corresponding human development trend since 1990, which shows that Zimbabwe has remained in the low human development category<sup>2</sup>. For example, the HDI, which peaked at 0.517 in 1985, declined to 0.412 in 2005, and improved to 0.492 in 2013.

<sup>1</sup>UNDP (2008).

<sup>2</sup>HDI above 0.900 is very high, 0.800 to 0.899 is high, 0.500 - <0.800 is medium and 0 - <0.500 is low human development.



Source: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report (HDR), Database 2014.

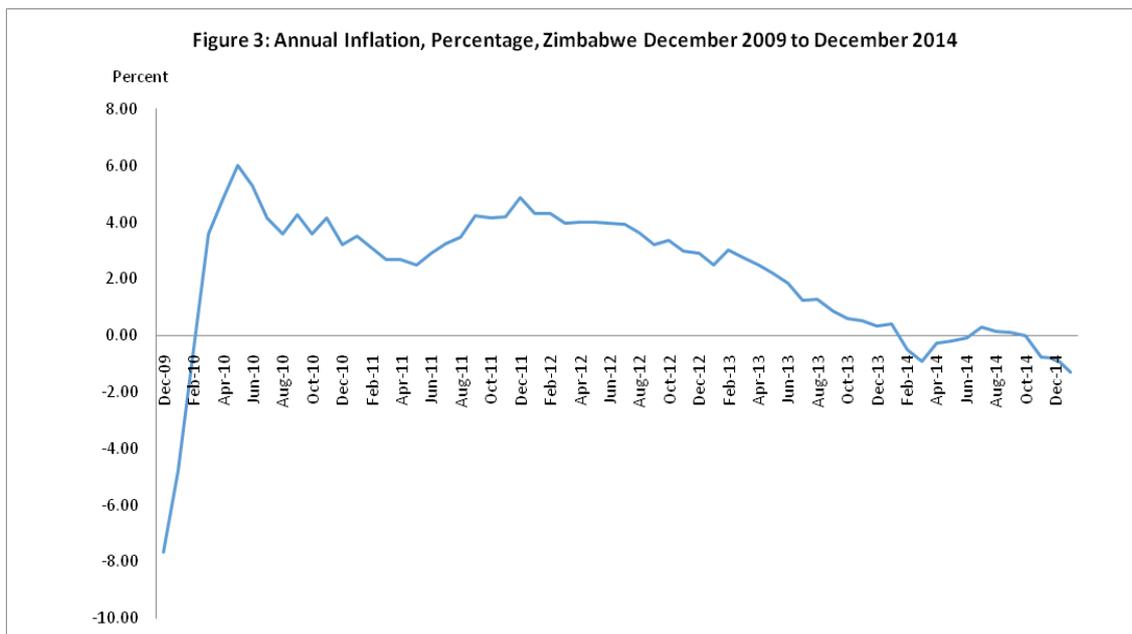
The crisis significantly slowed down and in some cases even reversed the MDG achievements and caused extensive capacity erosion and deterioration of structures and systems that support effective economic management and strategic planning. The frequent Government interventions after the failure of the *Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP)*, 1991-1995 and the *Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST)*, 1996-2000, failed to reverse the deepening economic crisis as the economy continued to witness real negative growth rate and escalating hyperinflation fuelled by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe's quasi-fiscal activities. The Government's interventions included the implementation of knee-jerk short-term macro-economic programmes such as the ***Millennium Economic Recovery Plan (MERP) 2001-2002; Ten Point Plan, 2002; National Economic Recovery Plan (NERP) in 2003; National Economic Development Priority Programme (NEDPP), 2007; and the Zimbabwe Economic Development Strategy (ZEDS) 2008; which was abandoned at drafting stage.***

The Government's policy stance to adopt the dollarization regime in 2009 and the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) stemmed hyperinflation and brought confidence into the country and this positioned the country onto a stable macroeconomic recovery path (See *Figure 1 above*). The introduction of the *Short Emergency Recovery Programme (STERP I)*, March, 2009 to December, 2009 and the *Three Year Macroeconomic Policy and Budget Framework (STERP II)*, 2010-2012, sought to address issues of macroeconomic stabilisation and social recovery. Under *STERP II*, the economy grew by 11.4 percent in 2010, 10.6 percent in 2012 before declining to 4.5 percent in 2013. The *Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2011-2015* which became the national development strategy of the Government of National Unity (GNU), aimed to reduce poverty through inclusive growth by creating decent employment and promoting entrepreneurial development. The MTP, which marked the return to medium term planning, sought to buttress the gains of the *STERP I*, and *STERP II*, and continued guiding the economy on the recovery path. The MTP's main goals were to transform the economy, reduce poverty, create jobs, maintain macro-economic stability and restore national capacity to produce goods and services competitively. The implementation strategy for the MTP was to achieve economic growth through transforming the economy from largely being producer of primary commodities to

producer of value added commodities through the development of new knowledge based industries through a private sector led model.

Unfortunately, just like its predecessor economic blue prints, the MTP was never fully implemented, and was soon replaced by the *Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimASSET, 2013-2018)*, following the return of ZANU-PF as the ruling party in 2013. The country's positive growth trajectory witnessed between 2009 and 2011 was largely due to increased confidence in the Zimbabwean economy and peace after the introduction of US dollar regime and the subsequent formation of the Government of National Unity (. However, the sad story is that the macro economic recovery path did not translate into shared growth, poverty reduction, employment creation and improved welfare of the majority of ordinary citizens.

The economic recovery after a decade of economic collapse could not be sustainable because of the country's huge infrastructural deficit and other macroeconomic fundamentals which remained unaddressed, hence the onset of economic decline. The positive gains achieved between 2009 and 2011 were reversed as evidenced by downward trend in the average annual growth rates and the onset of deflation in the economy. Annual inflation which was contained at 3.5 percent in January 2011 had dropped to 0.33 percent by 2013 amidst fears that the economy was fast sliding into a deflationary mode<sup>3</sup>, (see Figure 3). The Minister of Finance and Economic Development's 2014 mid-term Fiscal Policy review statement, showed evidence of further economic depression with annual projected real GDP growth rate for 2014 revised downwards from 6.1 percent to 3.1 percent<sup>4</sup>.



Source: Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, February 2015

The continued liquidity crunch in 2013 coupled with policy gaps and policy uncertainty further propelled economic decline through lack of investment and continuing de-industrialization especially in the manufacturing sector. The onset of disinflation as indicated by the year on year inflation rate which stood at -1.28 percent in January 2015 shedding off 0.48 percent points on the December 2014 rate of 0.80 percent. This deterred investors due to declining returns on investment and the situation has a

<sup>3</sup>ZimStat, 2014.

<sup>4</sup>Mid term Fiscal Policy, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), 2014.

negative impact on production and availability of goods in the future. The Confederation of Zimbabwe's (CZI) manufacturing surveys statistics indicated that the capacity utilization has been declining since 2012. The statistics show that the capacity utilization dropped to 44 percent in 2012 from 57.2 percent in 2011. The 2014 surveys indicate that the capacity utilization further declined to 36.3 percent from 39.6 percent in 2013<sup>5</sup>, 36.3% in 2014 and 34.3% in 2015 as the sector continues to battle with challenges of under capitalization, competition from cheap imports, high operational costs and declining aggregate demand.

The macro economic stagnation has further compounded human development challenges as witnessed by high levels of unemployment and deteriorating social service delivery. The structural unemployment level, which is closely linked to income generation and expenditure patterns, has been estimated to be above 80 percent. The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) indicated that 9 617 job losses and 75 company closures were recorded in 2013. According to 2014 ZimStats's labour Force Participation Survey, 94.5% of the currently employed persons 15 years and above were informally employed, up from 84.2% in 2011 and 80% in 2004.

Since the onset of the economic crisis in 2013, the government has not been able to adequately fund national development as the national budget remained skewed towards employment costs. From the 2013 national budget, about 73 percent of the total budget was allocated to the employment costs (wage bill). This means the remaining resources which constitute about 27 percent of the budget were shared between other recurrent and capital expenditure. The health sector was allocated 8 percent of the national budget expenditure, a figure that is less than both the 15 percent as outlined in the Abuja Declaration and the 10 percent that was allocated to the same sector in the 2012 national budget. The recurrent expenditure allocations from the 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 national budgets reflected the incapacity of the Government to adequately fund social protection programmes such as the Basic *Education Assistance Module* (BEAM) which was introduced to support vulnerable and marginalised children.

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<sup>5</sup> Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries Manufacturing Surveys, 2014.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review: The Role of Agriculture in Promoting Sustainable Poverty Reduction and Human Development

### 2.0 Global and African Context

Poverty reduction remains a major challenge for African governments and climate sensitive agriculture continues to be the source of livelihood for 70% of the population in SSA. Many of them including Zimbabwe government believes that agricultural development (increased agricultural productivity – agricultural transformation) provides a key role in achieving rapid sustainable poverty and broader economic transformation<sup>6</sup>. The economic transformation trajectory for most developing countries has been underpinned by the old development theory and neoliberalism. The theory conceptualises development as a process whereby rapid and sustainable poverty reduction requires “transformative” economic growth which stems from shift from labour and capital in less productive agricultural activities to more productive manufacturing and services sectors of the economy. This type of economic transformation argues that development takes place when there is an increase in the contribution of non-agricultural sectors (Services and manufacturing) to gross domestic product and employment than agriculture (Staatz, 1998). It is important to note however, that the overall size of the agricultural sector does not necessarily decrease. Instead, through the process of economic transformation, agricultural growth is slower than growth in other sectors such as manufacturing and services. Despite these changes, agriculture needs to continue to perform an important function in the economy (Staatz, 2012).

The notion that agricultural development is an integral component and catalyst of wider structural transformation is widely accepted (DBSA, 2012). Staatz (1998) defines agricultural transformation as “the process by which individual farms shift from highly diversified, subsistence-oriented production towards more specialized production and market oriented or other systems of exchange (e.g., long-term contracts)”. The process results in an increase in agricultural productivity which creates a surplus that raises economic output and employment in other sectors. Agricultural transformation, the process of shifting from highly diversified, subsistence-oriented production towards more specialized and market-orientated production, is often viewed as the first step towards broader economic transformation (Staatz, 1998) Available literature argues that under the right conditions, agricultural transformation can contribute to poverty reduction at rural, urban and national levels in four ways: (a) reducing food prices; (b) employment creation; (c) increasing real wages; and (d) improving farm income

The important role of agricultural transformation (agricultural development) on poverty eradication in Africa is undoubted given the high percentage of people depending on natural resources such as land for agricultural activities. Its importance in economic transformation is derived from its role as a major provider of livelihoods and employment for the majority of the populations in Africa.

Literature and previous studies suggests that growth in the agriculture sector is consistently associated with faster and deeper poverty reduction than growth in any other sector – it is twice as likely as any other sector to reduce poverty, mostly due to the direct income raises for farmers, but also as a result of

lower food prices and the creation of self-employment and wage employment opportunities (Economic Commission for Africa Report 2003).

#### Role of farm/non-farm linkages

Agriculture's contribution to economic transformation and poverty reduction through multiplier effects can be enhanced by strengthening farm/non-farm linkages. Strengthening farm/non-farm linkages can be an important pathway to income and employment creation for the poor in both the farm and non-farm sectors of developing countries. This is especially so when the linkages benefit small farmers and micro and small businesses as these tend to involve poor people. Business linkages between small and large agribusinesses can contribute to the growth of the latter in various ways. These include (a) increasing the ability of small businesses to access loans from formal financial institutions; (b) provision of a market for products of small businesses; and (c) provision of business advice to small businesses (buyer-mentoring).

There is documented literature on the successes of the role of smaller holder farming on poverty alleviation in African countries. Historical reviews have shown many instances where periods in which substantial increases in marketed output of both food and cash crops have taken place based on smallholder farming. During the colonial era, export crop production in West Africa came almost entirely from smallholder farmers. In the second half of the twentieth century, agricultural booms were seen with the smallholder production of export crops in Kenya and Zimbabwe. Smallholder farmers in Kenya with farms of less than two hectares increased their share of national agricultural production from 4% in 1965 to 49% in 1985. Zimbabwe's remarkable increase in maize production by smallholder farmers in the 1980's is another example (DBSA, 2012).

Despite the observed success stories recorded in developing countries in terms of the overall contribution of agricultural transformation (improving agricultural productivity and agricultural commercialization to economic development), agricultural transformation is not however without costs. Although African countries have witnessed the production transformation described above, there is an observation that in some cases, Sub-Saharan Africa labour has migrated from a stagnating agricultural sector into a similarly stagnant informal services sector with low productivity levels. Growth in the industrial sector has been zero to negative making the informal sector a reservoir of underutilized labour (DBSA, 2012). Furthermore, the pattern and quality of growth during structural transformation have not mitigated against negative impacts of economic growth e.g. environmental degradation and social dislocation, which characterised capitalist development in the advanced and newly industrialised countries.

The overall realisation that has been made is that an economy that is undergoing transformation whether at the back of agriculture or any other primary sector may experience 'islands of successes' rather than a broad distribution of benefits. Hence, concepts such as 'shared growth' and 'inclusive growth' have emerged in response to the realisation that economic growth does not necessarily lead to poverty reduction or higher income and social equality. Against this background, there is need to interrogate how agriculture performs its function while mainstreaming issues of inclusiveness and sustainability. There is need for agricultural transformation and importance of inclusiveness and sustainability to generate inclusive growth and sustainable poverty reduction. For agriculture to

successfully perform its role of driving economic transformation in Africa, the sector itself needs to be transformed. This means that agriculture will need to become more productive, diversified in terms of its products, more market-oriented, while ensuring inclusivity and avoiding damaging the environment.

## 2.1 Zimbabwean Context

The Zimbabwe agricultural sector contributes on average 15-18 % of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Kanyenze et al. 2011). The sector forms the basis of direct and indirect livelihoods of almost 70% of the population therefore; it has remained strategic to the country's economic stability and growth (DBSA 2012). At independence, the sector contributed 17 % but declined to less than 12 % during the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) period and rose to 20.1 % after dollarization but has currently dropped again to 13.62 % (CIA World Fact book. 2015). The new agrarian structure of Zimbabwe is tri-modal, with a majority being small-scale farmers (in the communal, A1 and old resettlement areas), but there are also medium scale commercial farms (A2) and the large-scale estates.

From independence in 1980, the agricultural policy of the Zimbabwean government aimed at reducing inequality and achieving food self-sufficiency and food security and at the same time improving the welfare of the long marginalised rural population (Makamure et al. 2001; FAO, 2003). The first decade, from 1980 to 1990, was characterized by a strong extension service, access to credit and a programme of subsidized inputs for communal farmers together with a network of marketing depots in rural areas such as the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), Cold Storage Company, and Cotton Marketing Board (Kanyenze et al. 2011). Government viewed the agricultural sector as the centre of its development strategy and highlighted this in the First Five-Year Development Plan (1986–1990) (Zimbabwe, 1986). The policies in the first decade attempted to address equity issues by focusing on support to smallholder farmers. However, the major challenge was in sustaining the subsidy component which proved to be a burden to the fiscus.

However, this was followed by the “structural adjustment market-oriented reforms”, of the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP), which was adopted in 1991. This policy aimed at market deregulation, liberalisation and export promotion. ESAP contributed to the growth of export-oriented commercial farming such as horticulture, especially floriculture at the expense of the smallholder farmers who were ill-equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities presented by the market reforms (Kanyenze et al., 2011). Budgets in several ministries were cut and measures were instituted to curtail losses of parastatals resulting in the reduction of government interventions that had been aimed at further development of the agricultural sector. Agricultural services such as extension, research, finance and market outlets deteriorated in real terms throughout the 1980's (Makamure et al. 2001, Kanyenze et al, 2011). The economic reform programme implicitly made an incorrect assumption that production in the sector is homogeneous, therefore farmers in Zimbabwe have equal opportunities to enter and gain within this capitalist liberal market system (ZCTU, 1996). As a result the ESAP period removed gains made in the small holder sector and only benefited a minority of smallholder farmers with better resources, entrepreneurial skills, locational advantages or access to the development

programmes of NGOs (Moyo, 2000).

The programme of “fast-track land resettlement and redistribution” which started in 2000 had further profound implications for the sector. Although some smallholder farmers benefited from land distribution under the programme, production remained low because of uncertainty and insecure land tenure. There was also a mismatch between land use and the interests of the newly resettled farmer. Kanyenze et al. (2011) points out that there were many different reasons why many resettled farmers have not been productive and include, “... hurried survey and demarcation (which led to mistakes), inadequate state support at individual farmer level, lack of farming resources (especially tillage and harvesters), shortage of labour, inadequate extension when new farmers needed to manage large landholdings, inadequate irrigation support, poor pricing of products controlled by government (especially maize and wheat), transport bottlenecks, as well as the effects of global warming – for instance, lack of planning to mitigate droughts.” The government attempted to correct this by commissioning land audits (Flora Buka in 2002, by the Uteete Commission in 2003, and by the Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement and SIRDC in 2006). The audits were meant to address various issues among them land disputes, cases of multiple farm ownership, account for land that is being used unproductively as well as investigate reports that some resettled farmers are leasing out their farms to white commercial farmers. Overall, this period was therefore characterized by lack of confidence in the land ownership arrangements and low investment in the resettlement areas by financial institutions, as many anomalies identified at the policy level and in the field were not addressed.

Rebuilding the agriculture sector after the land reform process was attempted in the inclusive government's Short-Term Emergency Recovery Programme (STERP, 2009). The policy had four objectives for agricultural recovery and rural development, namely: i) Agriculture must improve food security and the livelihoods of the poor, ii) Agriculture for community and self-employment, iii) Enhancing agricultural efficiency to better the yields and increase output, and iv) Rebuilding agricultural assets and infrastructure. All these four objectives fit very well within the scope of agricultural transformation. However, the inclusive government and its policies were short-lived and implementation was impeded by party political frictions.

Soon after the inclusive government, the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimAsset) (2013 to 2018) was crafted with the aim of achieving sustainable development and social equity anchored on indigenisation, empowerment and employment creation. These were to be propelled by the judicious exploitation of the country's abundant human and natural resources (Zimbabwe, 2013). ZimAsset has four strategic cluster; Food Security and Nutrition; Social Services and Poverty Eradication; Infrastructure and Utilities; and Value Addition and Beneficiation. The government's economic blue print, ZimAsset (2013-2015) puts agricultural development at the forefront in driving economic growth and sustainable development. Within ZimAsset, there are 4 strategic clusters around which the Results Based Agenda is built. The agricultural sector is the critical pillar in attaining the national goals and outcomes and is enshrined in 2 of the 4 clusters; specifically the *'Food Security and Nutrition'* and *'Social Services and Poverty Eradication'* clusters. Through the ZimAsset Framework, the government aim to regain and transform the sector to improve productivity

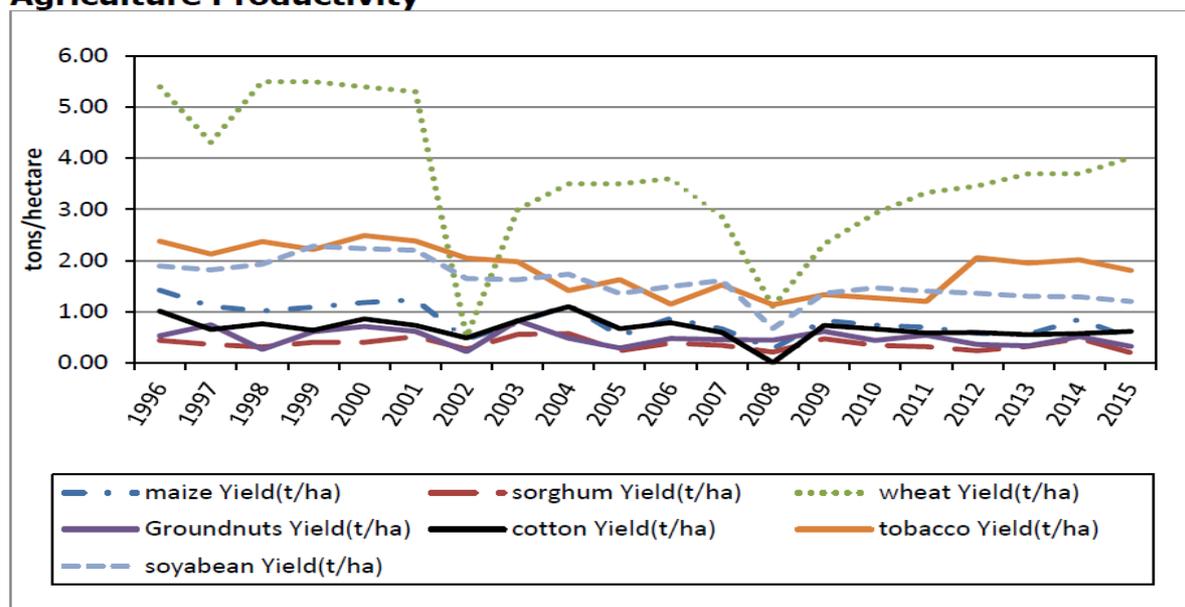
with the aim of producing more food to ensure food security and to moderate any hikes in urban food prices and insecurity, supply raw materials for processing in industries, increase exports to pay for wider economic transformation and enhance the domestic market for industrial products. Through the ZimAsset strategy, the government talks about the need to develop the agriculture sector so that it provides a catalytic role for a wider employment creation and economic growth and social transformation.

## 2.2 Analysis of the role of agricultural transformation to sustainable poverty reduction in Zimbabwe

Agricultural transformation is an important issue within the Zimbabwean context. Zimbabwe's has an opportunity to turn around its economic fortunes at the back of agriculture and mining sectors. The country is highly endowed with natural resources such as land and underground minerals resources and these resources give it more latitude to foster sustainable economic development. There is a renewed commitment by national policy makers towards transforming the agricultural sector to stimulate economic growth and poverty reduction in Zimbabwe. Both the ZimAsset Economic Blue print (2013 – 2018) and the recently adopted 2016-2018 Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy paper (I- PRSP) strongly recognize the role of improved agricultural production and productivity in addressing food security, revitalising and reducing poverty. This was confirmed by the I – PRSP national, provincial and district level consultation held in May 2016. Improving smallholder farmers' agricultural productivity in the context of climate change and other challenges is one of the government's major strategies to attain food security and poverty eradication in the country (I- PRSP, 2016-2018). In recent years, the country has witnessed a decrease in both agricultural productivity and production against the background of the effects of seasonality and climate change and lack of investment in the agricultural sector. In the past, Zimbabwe has had a thriving agricultural sector and the best agricultural yields in the region.

**Table: Agricultural productivity trends (1996- 2015)**

### Agriculture Productivity



Source: Ministry of Agriculture

The table above shows that production of the major cereal crop (maize) has been declining in recent years and this has resulted in an increase in the food insecure population and increased malnutrition. The government's Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy (I- PRSP) strongly links poverty with the under-performance of the agricultural sector and the two main challenges are;

1. **Declining Agricultural production** - Total agricultural agriculture production increased (from 970 000 tonnes in 2012 to 1.5 million in 2014 before declining to 742 000 tonnes in 2015) however with some notable improvements in crop production levels, especially maize (Maize production increased from 471 000 tonnes in 2008 to 1.5 million tonnes in 2014) I- PRSP (2016- 2018).
2. **Declining productivity** – productivity is generally declining on livestock and across all crops especially grains as evidenced by decline in maize productivity from around 2.0 tonnes per hectare in the 1990s to 0.7 tonnes per hectare in 2013)

In 2015, Zimbabwe was listed among countries requiring external assistance for food because maize production had decreased by 49 % to 742, 000 tonnes compared to the previous five-year average (FAO GIEWS, 2015). In future, cereal production is likely to be further reduced because of climate change and variability. The 2014 Zimbabwe Vulnerable Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) estimated that 5% of the rural population is currently food insecure and it will carry on beyond September 2015. This figure is further expected to increase to 1.5 million people who will be food insecure during the months of January to March 2016. The effects of low productivity, high food deficits and malnutrition in the country are more pronounced in the rural sector where over 70% of the population living in rural areas is heavily dependent on agricultural activities for their livelihoods. Poverty remains relatively high in the rural areas as the ZimStats' current rural and urban household poverty statistics are estimated to be at 76 percent and 38 percent, respectively. Food insecurity and lack of sustained income opportunities in the face of climate change remain key livelihood challenges being faced by the rural poor in Zimbabwe. Against this background, it is important for transformative agricultural development agenda to put improved food security (a more secure rural livelihoods) and access to other rural social services as key objectives. PRFT confirmed this through its consultations on agricultural transformation held in February 2016, in Harare.

A review of researches that have been done in Zimbabwe reveals that agricultural performance is strongly correlated with the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth and the diagram below clearly shows this.

#### **Distribution of GDP by Industry - % (Periodical Averages: 1980-2012) (current prices)**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>1980-90</b>	<b>1991-96</b>	<b>1997-2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Agriculture, Hunting and Fishing and Forestry	14.0	14.1	20.6	16.9	15.6	13.8	14.0
Mining and Quarrying	4.8	3.4	5.8	7.7	9.6	10.4	10.7
Manufacturing	21.4	21.1	13.5	15.5	15.7	15.9	15.6
Electricity and Water	2.2	2.8	3.4	4.5	4.8	4.9	4.7
Construction	3.1	2.5	1.6	0.5	0.8	0.8	0.8
Finance and Insurance	5.7	7.4	8.0	3.6	3.2	5.4	5.4
Real Estate	1.7	2.1	1.3	1.8	1.7	2.2	2.2
Distribution, Hotels, and Restaurants	14.2	16.6	16.6	10.0	9.9	8.5	8.4
Transport and Communication	6.1	5.4	6.7	13.9	12.2	12.2	12.4
Public Administration	6.3	4.6	4.3	3.0	3.9	3.6	3.6
Education	5.8	5.7	5.0	3.4	4.1	4.8	4.6
Health	1.6	1.4	2.0	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5
Domestic Services	1.5	1.1	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.4
Other Services	4.6	3.7	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.4	4.4

Source: Table compiled using data from ZimStats

### **Sectorial Distribution of Employment, Selected Periods, 1980-2014**

<b>Sector/Year</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>	32.4	24.3	26.3	32.9	29.6
<b>Mining</b>	6.6	4.3	3.6	3.0	3.4
<b>Manufacturing</b>	15.8	16.5	14.7	11.5	8.4
<b>Electricity &amp; Water</b>	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.3	1.7
<b>Construction</b>	4.2	6.4	4.3	1.8	1.8
<b>Financial Services &amp; Real Estate</b>	1.2	1.5	2.8	6.0	4.6
<b>Distribution</b>	7.0	8.1	8.4	6.5	7.4
<b>Transport &amp; Communication</b>	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.4	3.2
<b>Public Administration</b>	7.0	7.8	4.7	7.9	9.9
<b>Education</b>	4.1	9.1	11.3	10.2	13.3
<b>Health</b>	1.5	2.1	2.3	4.0	4.2
<b>Private Domestic Services</b>	10.7	8.6	8.3	8.1	7.6
<b>Other</b>	4.3	6.2	9.0	4.3	5.0
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100

**Source:** Calculated from ZIMSTAT data.

Low levels of agricultural productivity in most crops is depicted to significantly explain structural regression trends shown through witnessed decline in the manufacturing sector's performance (especially in the agro based manufacturing industries), employment creation and its overall

contribution to GDP. The share of the manufacturing sector in GDP peaked at 26.9% in 1992 before collapsing to 7.2% by 2002 and averaging 11.7% between 2009 and 2014. The two graphs above indicate an economic regression characterized by declining contribution of agriculture to economic growth and collapsing manufacturing sector. Structural regression is also evidenced by increased informalisation as there are more than 50% of women participating in informal jobs as a source of livelihoods. (ZIMSTATS's Labour Force Participation Survey, 2014). The current development trajectory witnessed in Zimbabwe reflects a critical departure from the transformative development that has potential to unlock social and economic benefits for the poor.

The 2015 Mid-Term Fiscal Policy Review statement acknowledged that the annual projected real GDP growth rate for 2015 has been revised downwards from 3.2 percent to 1.5 percent against the background of El Niño drought induced agricultural decline. The severe drought witnessed in the 2015/2016 agricultural seasons significantly worsened food security and the country's economic performance. However, the country is recording a recovery in the agricultural production post the El Niño drought witnessed in 2015/2016 with the sector projected to make a sizeable contribution to GDP growth in 2017 (Mid-term Fiscal Review statement 2017, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development). The World Bank estimated that the economy will grow by 2.8% in 2017 against a backdrop of favorable rains received during the 2016/2017 agricultural season<sup>7</sup> and the positive performance in the mining sector. Although the 2016/2017 has brought a reprieve/relief to the economy in terms of availability of food, this has not translated into increased access to food as the country still records a huge number of people who are food insecure on yearly basis. Zimbabwe and Africa's major food concern has been on lack of access, that is, people's inability to purchase good food and enjoy nutritious, diverse and balanced diets as well as people's inability to produce and enjoy adequate and nutritious food of their own (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's African Climate Policy Centre, 2016). This points out the need for policy makers to balance both improved agricultural productivity and access to food by the marginalized groups during designing of agricultural and rural development policies.

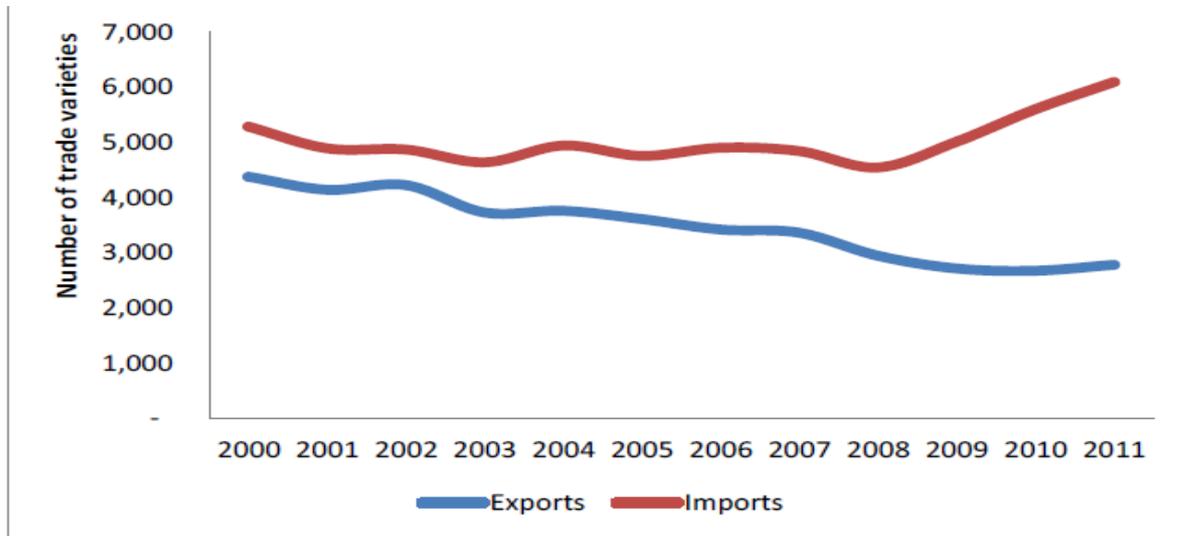
Overall Zimbabwe has also failed to diversify its economy over the last 20 years and this has seen the country experiencing a structural regression, characterised by increasing dependence on natural resources, declining productivity across sectors, de-industrialisation; informalisation, widening the gap between exports and imports, declining domestic resources for development (DBSA, 2012). African countries like Zimbabwe need more diversification, export competitiveness, increased productivity, technological upgrading and improvements in human well-being (DBSA 2012). The structural regression depicts a complete departure from the situation back in early 1980's where the export base was relatively broad with agriculture accounting for 41% of export earnings in 1984, followed by manufacturing at 32% and mining (27%).

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.chronicle.co.zw/wb-reviews-zim-2017-gdp-to-2-3/>

## Zimbabwe's export performance and economy diversification status

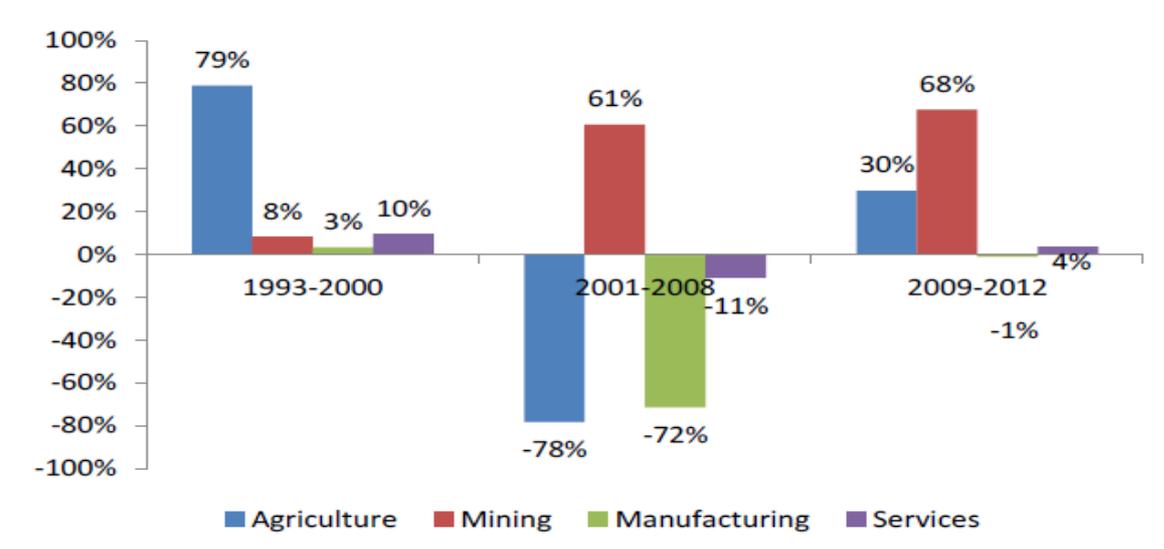
### Export portfolio is less diversified (World Bank, 2012)



Source: World Bank (graph compiled by Kanyenze *et al*, 2011)

The large trade deficit reflects the country's over-dependence on imports, most of which can be produced locally. Exports were projected at US\$3.4 billion in 2015, against imports of US\$6.3 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of US\$2.9 billion compared to US\$2.7 billion in 2014. Of the US\$2 billion export earnings during the period January to October 2015, at least 80% were primary commodities (agricultural products and minerals), while imports amounted to US\$5 billion. A current account deficit of US\$2.6 billion was projected in 2015 against US\$2.8 billion in 2014; 18.7% of GDP against a SADC macroeconomic convergence target of under 9%. Under the current macroeconomic framework, Zimbabwe records weak export performance and there is only one cylinder that is firing, that is the mining sector. The table below demonstrates this.

**Graph: Structural Regression in Zimbabwe - Mining drives export recovery post-2009  
(contribution to export growth - %) - one cylinder is firing (mining)**



Source: Graph compiled using data from Zimstats

Economic rebound since 2009 was anchored by mining and agriculture, with mining emerging as the most dynamic sector in terms of its contribution to the country's GDP, replacing the role of agriculture in the pre-crisis Zimbabwe. Growth in the manufacturing sector appears more dependent on the internal demand generated by the two main driving sectors, agriculture and mining. Given the positive correlation between the two sectors and the country's export performance, it is important for the government to consider implementing quality policy interventions in the two sectors to derive maximum social and economic benefits for the citizens. Whilst the economic benefits of the mining sector can be easily observed (See graph above) pre and post 2009, it is worth noting the sharp increase in the contribution of the agricultural sector to the country's exports earnings since 2009. Overall, the analysis of the graph above demonstrates that agricultural sector has supply-response to improved economic environment as was observed after dollarization.

Zimbabwe like other African countries faces a big challenge of limited domestic resources for development. Due to weak domestic resource mobilisation base, the government has been failing to fully fund agriculture and commit to the African level political agreements on agriculture-based development. As a percentage of total vote, Agriculture, Mechanisation & Irrigation Development in Zimbabwe received 8.3% in 2014, 5.3% in 2015 and 3.6% in 2016 against international standard (the Maputo Declaration) of 10% towards agriculture. In 2016, the government channelled 96.8% of its revenues to employment costs, mainly salaries and operational costs. In order to upgrade agriculture value chains and infrastructure, African countries should spend at least between 20% and 40% of the budget on agriculture. Strong endogenous financing is essential for Zimbabwe if it is to achieve inclusive economic development. Looking within for answers to our development challenges is indispensable to sustainable and inclusive development as we know that self-generated solutions will provide policy space and latitude to define and engineer our own development paths. Government should seriously think about the role of agriculture, particularly small scale farming on domestic resource mobilisation and endogenous growth. The small scale agricultural participants are often seen as subsistence level

survivalists who would prefer and need to be employed elsewhere for better development outcomes; instead they are the backbone of our local food systems and key to national food sovereignty (DBSA, 2012). An adequate support to this sector would significantly contribute to transformation of the agriculture sector in a more sustainable manner. Increased support and productivity among small scale farmers in Zimbabwe will not only grow the economy but will reduce poverty as more people will be food secure and have more incomes to support their families. Zimbabwe has a significant number of small and medium entrepreneurs within the food system who could contribute to the economy and our domestic resource base if they were supported by the government. The labour surplus is an asset that the government could leverage on with proper and supportive policies.

PRFT's engagement with key stakeholders<sup>8</sup> during its research on agricultural transformation, stakeholders noted that linking smaller holder farmers to large scale farmers provides an important opportunity for the promotion of community resilience and sustainable income streams for the rural population. The key lesson learnt was that bottom up approach to agriculture commercialisation (where markets and value addition industries are established where the factors of production are located) targeting women as actors is showing positive results on poverty reduction. The discussion revealed the need to support smallholder led strategy with linkages to large-scale capital investments in core estates or farms as an essential element for agricultural transformation. Out grower and contract farming arrangements for farmers who have been trained in farming as a business should be promoted to allow for market connections, quality control and upgrading. The current level of dualism in agricultural production and commercialisation forces small scale farmers to compete with large producers in selling of agricultural produce like maize, yet they face unique production costs and constraints (PRFT's Background Paper on Securing Rural livelihood through Agriculture, February 2016 accessed on <http://www.prftzim.org/download/securing-rural-livelihoods-eco-transformation-in-agriculture/>). The key challenge faced by small holder farmers is that they are involved in less diversified agricultural activities and they cannot be competitive enough when participating in global value chains especially in tobacco and cotton.

In order to adopt an inclusive agricultural commercialisation, there is need for deliberate efforts to establish structured and fair markets for rural farmers. Markets need to be seen as a means to an end and 'free markets' are not a goal in their own right. Market forces on their own would simply perpetuate dualism, even in the presence of some growth (Kanyenze at all, 2011). PRFT's background paper has shown that stabilisation of the GDP can be achieved by enhancing productivity growth in smallholder farming in an integrated approach across farm scales which avoids the old dualism- a separation between peasant agriculture and modern commercial agriculture. In this regard, there is need for a proactive role of the state to integrate small scale agriculture businesses in a manner that allows the majority of the rural labour force to be engaged in productive activities. It is important to protect local industries and small scale farmers from global value chains through targeted subsidies, warehousing, storage and fair markets. To reduce gender inequality, there is need to implement targeted women economic empowerment programmes and policies e.g

- Equal access to public services,

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<sup>8</sup> Stakeholders included Ministry of Macro - Economic Planning and Investment Promotion, Central Bank of Zimbabwe (CBZ), Ministry of Agricultural, Mechanisation, Irrigation and Extension, Department for International Development (DFID) among others

- Provision of reproductive health and childcare,
- provision of affordable clean energy, water and sanitation infrastructure,
- Provision of legal and policy reforms to give women equal right to land tenure and ownership,
- Decent employment conditions and access to credit, skills and inputs needed for a transition into a more commercial agricultural production and agricultural linked small business

Further to this option, it is important in Zimbabwe's case to interrogate how mining and agricultural sectors can complement each other to drive endogenous growth and generate internal resources needed for broader sustainable development. Zimbabwe is rich in mineral resources and the country can leverage on this finite resource base to contribute to sustainable agriculture through the production of non-agricultural assets<sup>9</sup> such as development of road infrastructure. PRFT's background paper on Securing rural livelihoods ( accessed on <http://www.prftzim.org/download/securing-rural-livelihoods-eco-transformation-in-agriculture/>) has revealed that disintegration and collapse of rural institutions (e.g District Development Fund ( DDF) and Agricultural Rural Development Authority ( ARDA) and other supporting non-agricultural infrastructure such as road construction has increased community vulnerability and poverty in rural areas. Poor resource support from national budget, corruption and mismanagement of resources and lack of transparency and accountability over revenue flows from Community Share Ownership schemes (CSOTs) are among the challenges that have negatively impacted on rural diversification and social transformation. Agricultural transformation would bring positive results if government invests in rural non agriculture infrastructure like roads network as a way of supporting both agricultural and non-agricultural production in the rural economy. PRFT's 2016 research on economic transformation has shown that investment in non-agricultural sectors such as transport plays an important role in agricultural productivity. Rural livelihoods are dependent on farm and non-farm income activities which are both linked to markets and provision of infrastructure. Furthermore, engaging rural communities in the production of non-agricultural assets such as infrastructure to get income has ripple positive effects on rural transformation and improved access to basic services such as food.

As part of the strategy to realise social and economic transformation in the rural economy, it is important to ensure that the lowest residents and vulnerable groups are socially protected. The country's rural population consists of ordinary households whose productivity and comparative advantage in the agricultural sector is very low because of different barriers including high resource costs of practising and adopting sustainable agriculture strategies in the context of climate change and decline in soil fertility. For instance, a rural household would need a sizeable income to purchase fertilizers and other agricultural equipment needed to improve agricultural production. Poor households also face limited income and unbearable costs to engage in diversification process that involves shifts to other agricultural productions options such as livestock production.

Lack of income security perpetuates vicious cycles of poverty and inability to access other basic necessities by ordinary residents and these include food. Against this background, there is need to support ordinary households who are at different levels in terms of access to social and economic

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<sup>9</sup> Non agricultural assets here refers to resources that are not necessarily direct inputs into agricultural production but their adequate provision increases both farm and non farm incomes

opportunities/ ladder. To break the cycles of poverty, people who are extremely poor and hungry have to be assisted through social protection. A well designed and adequately supported social protection would enable poor people to quickly overcome poverty. PRFT noted that a huge number of households are increasingly depending on food transfers for their livelihoods yet there is too little that is being done to improve income advancements in these households. PRFT's view is that a sustainable social protection policy should support both food consumption and productive safety nets. There is overwhelming evidence that recommend a combination of social protection (consumption based) and pro-poor investments (production based) as a strategy to provide an enabling environment for most of the rural poor to escape poverty and hunger sustainably, both in the short and long term (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2015). In this view, there is need for a country to evaluate the current government's programmes on social protection and see to what extent it has deployed resources to promote consumption and productive capacities of the poor. Of greatest importance is the need to ensure that social protection policies are extended beyond consumption safety to include production safety nets an important tool to fight poverty and hunger.

There is an opportunity for Zimbabwe to leverage on natural resources to support broad based social protection for the vulnerable households and communities. Besides the importance of the mining sector in the production of non-agricultural assets and markets such as road rehabilitation and provision of employment opportunities for locals, it is important for the government to leverage on mining revenue to support social income grants as a strategy for assisting the poorest who are facing enormous socio-economic inequalities and are still struggling to access even the most basic human rights (ZIMCODD's 2016 National Budget analysis). Social support for vulnerable groups is non-existent in Zimbabwe; pensioners are receiving paltry monthly payments whilst other vulnerable groups like the people with disabilities, the elderly and orphans do not receive any government support<sup>10</sup>. The establishment of the grant will go a long way to cushion households against effects of climate and structural changes in the country.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.zimcodd.org/2016-budget-analysis>

## **Chapter 3: Results from Rural Basic Needs Basket survey analysis: Monitoring rural poverty through analysing Rural Household Food consumption levels, expenditure patterns and Cost of living**

### **3.0 Introduction and Background on the Rural Basic Needs Basket (RBNB) - Why the Basic Needs Basket Survey Tool?**

In Zimbabwe, poverty largely torments the rural areas where the majority of the nation's population resides. According to the ZIMSTATS's Poverty, Income, Consumption and Expenditure Survey (PICES) report of 2011/12<sup>11</sup>, 76% of rural households were poor compared to 38.2% of urban households. The challenges that affect the rural population include hunger, inadequate infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, well equipped schools, lack of irrigation facilities, unsustainable agricultural practices, and poor access to credit facilities. The poverty situation in rural areas of Zimbabwe is compounded by many factors, including weak macroeconomic performance, high unemployment levels, poor access to health care, education and nutritional food for their well-being. In the past, the Government of Zimbabwe uplifted the lives of those in the rural areas through various programs including building of schools post-independence. Zimbabwe's improved education system post-independence has seen the nation rising to have one of the highest literacy rates in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, some gains have since been lost due to 1998 – 2008 economic crisis and the onset of recent economic collapse in 2013. Specifically, the rural population is recording high schools drop outs, decrease in quality of education and an increasing number of unemployed rural youth.

As we try to put more energy towards poverty reduction and reversing the social regression, it is important to ensure that there is poverty data which is comprehensive to meet the needs of policy interventions. The rural population must be able to relate to the causes and solutions of poverty in their communities. PRFT recognises both rural and urban poverty as essential components of economic governance that must be given full attention in research, policy analysis, advocacy and campaigns. Although the Zimbabwe government has been using poverty statistical tools such as Poverty Datum Line (PDL) and PICES's Food Poverty Line (FPL) and Total Consumption Poverty Line (TCPL) to guide economic and human development policies, more has to be done especially around generation of poverty information that is more local specific and disaggregated to really inform policy interventions that can effectively impact on poverty reduction in rural areas. Furthermore, there is need to compliment ZimSTATS statistics by telling the poverty story through effective participation of the communities that are affected by poverty.

Poor access to basic services such as food, health, transport, water and sanitation, information and knowledge places the rural people in a different world. With 68% of Zimbabwe's population living in rural areas, and heavily dependent on climate sensitive agricultural sector and rural food systems, it is important to use evidence based participatory approaches to interrogate and understand the steps that

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<sup>11</sup>The 2011/12 Poverty Income and Consumption Survey (PICES), Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

need to be followed to improve rural livelihoods. In order to create a framework for the development of the rural economy that will have long-term benefits for the country and for citizens, there is a need for a critical look at how agricultural and rural economic policies are impacting on the access to basic human rights such as food, health, clean water and sanitation. There is also need to monitor cost of accessing basic food and non-food items in a rural set up so as to come with a discussion on the various social challenges and inequalities limiting the realisation of these human rights concerns of the rural population. In an attempt to contribute toward addressing these challenges, PRFT introduced a Rural Basket Needs Basket (RBNB) survey project to deepen and widen the understanding of poverty and vulnerability of rural households. The RBNB survey is a tool which uses the participatory approach to provide local specific information on household food security and accessibility to other social services with the aim of informing pro poor policies.

The RBNB survey tool was first piloted in Dora in 2 wards (Ward 35 and 5) of Dora area, Zimunya District, Mutare rural, Manicaland province. The RBNB methodology was premised on the following major objectives;

1. Regularly collecting local specific information on various facets of the rural household situation such as food and nutritional security and consumption patterns, information that can help in facilitating appropriate decision making at all levels (household, community level and rural district council levels among others)
2. Having prudent forecasting which sustainably address rural development challenges by government agencies, donors, policy makers, and civil society organisations
3. Raising awareness and empower households with information so that they can effectively participate in pro-poor policy formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.
4. To raise the poverty profiles of rural communities and help stakeholders such members of parliament, ward councillors to remain connected to present living conditions of the people and assist them in responding to the immediate poverty conditions in the communities
5. To present factual evidence of the rural livelihoods conditions on seasonal basis
6. To advocate for policy shifts that improve rural livelihoods and a fair environment that promotes a dignified human existence as enshrined in the new constitution of Zimbabwe.

### **3.1 Rural Basic Needs Basket (RBNB) Methodology**

The RBNB makes use of the Food Energy Approach and this makes the tool slightly different from the urban BNB which uses the cost of Basic Needs Approach. The RBNB methodology is borrowed from other organisations such as the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) in Zambia and the Centre for Social Concern (CfSC) in Malawi. The tool has been widely used in measuring poverty and its dynamics in rural areas in Africa countries.

### **3.2 Development of RBNB household sample and delimitation of the survey**

The selection of the household sample size was done using the ZimStats's enumeration points (EAs) with the help of local leadership and local agricultural extension departments. A household was defined as "all people who live under one roof and who take or are subject to others taking for them, joint financial resources". Through the consultation with the local leadership, PRFT mapped the wards and villages from which the households were going to be chosen from. A multi-stage cluster sampling method was considered to select 70 households for the RBNB pilot project. During the sample planning, PRFT selected two wards (Ward 5 and 35) that constitute the largest area of Dora. Each ward has an average of ten (10) villages. From each ward, PRFT selected five (5) villages randomly. Thirty (30) and forty (40) households were selected from ward 35 and 5, respectively, using systematic random sampling. PRFT allowed a household to be replaced in the event that it is unable to provide information in a particular month.

### **3.3 Mapping of the livelihoods activities and development of the specific Rural Basic Needs Basket**

PRFT employed a participatory methodology which allowed residents to come up with the list of essential food and non-food items which they require on a monthly and seasonal basis. The participants for the consultations were drawn from wards 5 and 35. This was done in July 2015. There were 51 people present; 31 males and 20 females who ranged between the ages of 20 to 68. According to the ZimStat Poverty and Poverty Datum Line Analysis report for 2011/12, the rural household is made up of 4.7 people. Therefore PRFT's RBNB would be representative of a family of 5.

The grouping of the participants was done according to villages in order to come up with area specific agricultural products. In their groups, participants discussed the list of basic food and non-food items that rural families require per month for a family of five. This also included the seasonality of the foods that they grow. The groups presented and compared their work in plenary sessions. With the help of the PRFT programme team, participants debated and agreed on the list of food and non-food items and quantities that are required. The distances travelled to access social services such as schools, clinics and hospitals were noted and presented as well. The final consolidation of food basket was then done to reflect the nutritional guidelines as provided by the Food and Nutritional Council of Zimbabwe. The nutritional information from the Food and Nutritional Council of Zimbabwe gives an indication on the nutritional values of all common food items which are consumed by people living in the rural areas.

### **3.4 Assumptions**

- The RBNB gives the average consumption per food item for a family of five. This number (5) was reached as a result of taking from ZIMSTAT's<sup>12</sup> findings which state that an average family in the rural areas has 4.7 people. The 4.7 was rounded up to 5. Average calories were calculated on the basis of food consumption from randomly selected households within Dora.

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<sup>12</sup>Poverty and Poverty Datum Line Analysis in Zimbabwe 2011/12, Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

- The hypothetical family (assumed by PRFT) consists of 1 adult male above the age of 60, an adult female between 30-60 years, a male between 14- 16 years, a female between 16-18 years and a boy between 7-10 years. All these family members are assumed to undertake vigorous work. Further justification is given as follows; the rural area under survey is characterized by significant manual work such as carrying water from wells or boreholes, gathering firewood, gardening and walking fairly long distances to seek medical attention or to go to school. This resulted in PRFT opting for daily average requirements for people undertaking vigorous work.

### 3.4 RBNB Data Collection and analysis

The basic method for data collection used in this survey where the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and interviews. These approaches incorporate the knowledge and opinions of rural people in the planning and management of development projects and programmes. Initially, a consultative workshop was carried out in July 2015 to bring together villagers from wards 5 and 35 in order to understand the community, livelihoods and leadership structures. This guided the creation of the questionnaire that was used in interviews. There was flexibility for the further interrogation of various issues that were not included in the questionnaire such as proposed recommendations to the poverty situation as well as daily living experiences. PRFT engaged community leaders, one female and one male to assist PRFT with household data collection. The two community leaders and PRFT staff received an intensive training on the RBNB methodology framework and data collection tools from JCTR Zambia.

The first survey was carried out between 19 and 30 October 2015. It covered 70 households; 30 in Ward 5 and 40 in Ward 35. The survey also entailed collection of prices of the food and non-food basket. Another two weeks were spent entering the data in Excel and analysing it. We also did follow up on the same households and RBNB price tracking in November 2016 and January 2017 to find out on the changes in food consumptions, social services expenditure patterns and rural cost of living. Additional information was collected from rural health centres and schools. Further to the analysis of the household data from the household surveys carried out, PRFT also did the following local interventions as part of its participatory research; community policy dialogue and RBNB engagement meetings with the rural communities, advocacy meetings with councillors and Mutare Rural District Council. PRFT also undertook consultations on climate change and seasonality in Zimunya District with the aim of understanding local awareness, perception of climate variability and trends related to climate change, adaptations strategies and effectiveness and impacts of coping strategies on poverty.

Overall, the RBNB research and analysis sought to provide answers on the following key questions

1. What is level of food security and nutritional status of communities in ward 35 and 5 using the RBNB survey data tool?
2. What is the level of access to social services in Dora area, Zimunya District
3. What is the cost of living (cost of ideal nutritious food and non-food items) of Dora community?
4. What are the coping strategies that the communities in ward 35 and 5 are employing to secure livelihoods in the context of climate change?
5. What is the extent of effects or vulnerability of climate change effects to household food demand and consumptions among peasant farmers and households

6. What are social and economic challenges or constraints that are affecting the realisation of the ideal food and non-food basket in rural areas?
7. What are the resources (ie policy, legislation, training and institutions) needed to foster a sustainable rural livelihoods in the area?

### 3.5 Presentation and Analysis of RBNB results

#### 3.5.1 Background information on the area

The area under which the research was carried out (Ward 5 and 35 in Zimunya District) falls in Agroecological region III of Zimbabwe based on the classification by Vincent and Thomas 1960 (Vincent and Thomas 1960). In terms of population, ward 5 has a total population of 3822 while the total population of ward 35 is 6545 (ZimStat, 2012). Table 1 shows the population of the two wards based on the population Census of 1992 and 2012. In general the two wards have more females than males with the female population constituting more than 50% of the population in the two wards (Table 1) (ZimStat 2013).

Table 1: Population in the study area from 1992 to 2012

Year	Ward	Male	% Male	Female	%Female	Total
1992	5	2487	46.29	2886	53.71	5373
1992	35	2512	49.04	2610	50.96	5122
2012	5	1831	47.9	1991	52.1	3822
2012	35	3118	47.6	3427	52.4	6545

As a result of the higher number of females in both wards, the sex ratio is also high with ward 5 having a sex ratio of 92 while ward 35 has a sex ratio of 91 based on the 2012 census (ZimStat 2013). From 1992 to 2012, ward 5 experienced a 40% negative population growth while ward 35 was characterised by a 21.7% increase in the population. The population density of the ward 5 and 35 of Mutare rural is 0.00009 and 1.042 based on the population census of 2012.

#### 3.5.2 Access to Social Services in the area

##### Water

The general consensus from the two wards is that there is inadequate clean water due to the pollution of Sakubva River as a result of toxic waste from Mutare Urban. This makes it difficult to provide clean water for livestock. Most families have their own shallow wells close to their homes, but of late, these wells are no longer perennial and therefore there is need to make use of boreholes.

##### Education

Consultations with communities and rural teachers revealed that there is high level of school drop outs. Food insecurity at household level and a huge school fees burden are among the factors that are forcing a lot of children in Zimunya out of school.

## Health Care

There are two clinics for the two wards that were surveyed. Consultations with communities revealed poor access and availability of Anti-Retroviral Drugs, medication for common ailments especially for the elderly such as HBP, diabetes, arthritis, chronic back pain etc.

### 3.5.3 Composition of Food basket and Food system in Dora under Zimunya District

PRFT also analyzed the kind of food and non-food items that constitute the Basic Needs Basket for Dora. We found out that despite the fact that households produce and consume food such as cow peas and sweet beans as part of their diet, the field produce is also being used as a source of income when sold to other households and value chain actors. The production of crops is beneficial to many households as they offset deficits in income and food although on a temporal basis. Consultations with communities indicated that cow peas and other indigenous crops constitute a large proportion of the food production system in Zimunya. However, the income and food security benefits derived from the production of these crops are seasonal.

#### Dora consolidated Basic Needs Basket

ITEM	Quantity Required
Mealie meal	50kg
Sugar	6kg
Cooking oil	5l
Salt	2kg
Bread	30
Tea leaves	500g
Sugar Beans	harvest
Margarine	2kg
Peanuts/Peanut butter	harvest
Eggs	
Chicken	harvest
Fresh Milk	
Beef	
Rape/Covo (vegetables)	harvest/buying
Onions	
Tomatoes	
Black jack (vegetable)	harvest
Mbova (vegetable)	harvest
Nyevhu (vegetable)	harvest
Mufushwa (rape,covo,nyemba etc)	harvest
Sweet potatoes	harvest
Cow peas	harvest
Sugar cane	harvest

Cassava	harvest
Round nuts	harvest
Mangoes	harvest
Avocados	harvest
Mufarinya (vegetable)	harvest
<b>Non-Food Items</b>	
Washing powder	1 kg
Washing soap	4 bars
Bathing soap	4
Petroleum Jelly	500g
Lotion	500g
Toilet paper	2 packs of 4
Tooth paste	200ml
Pads/Cotton Wool	1 pack of 10 pads
Shoe polish	100ml
Candles	
Matches	1 carton
Batteries for torches	1
<b>Primary Schools</b>	
Matika	Ward 5
St. Elizabeth	Ward 5
Kuhudzai	Ward 35
Mutukwa	Ward 35
Mhandambiri	Ward 35
<b>High School</b>	
Dora Secondary	Ward 35
<b>Clinics</b>	
Dora Clinic ( ward 35)	\$1
Chitaka Clinic ( ward 5)	\$1

The issue of access to health is important to discuss under rural livelihoods because it has a role in social and economic development of women and men. We found out that the community require a \$1 as a minimum amount or average amount required to access health services at a local health facility (Dora Clinic). This expense normally tends to affect women and the elderly who need to do routine check-ups on their health. However, the key challenge is that there is poor access to income because of recurrent droughts and crop failure.

#### 3.5.4 The Rural Basic Needs Basket analysis on patterns of food security and nutritional status

PRFT's data analysis from the first household survey undertaken in July 2015 revealed minimal failure by households to access and utilize food requirements. This was mainly due to the fact that over 90% of the households surveyed were still utilizing food stock from their previous harvest at the time of survey. The daily deficits in energy consumption per person were -8.4% and -2.4% for wards 5 and 35, respectively. Although PRFT recorded a situation where some households were buying maize meal for consumption in the reference period, the number was very insignificant. Most families recorded an average harvest of between 3 to 4 bags which is between 150-200kg of their annual harvest. The analysis of the expenditures revealed that the ordinary households needed to meet their ideal food basket through complimentary food purchases of \$15 on average. On non-food requirements, the results reflected failure by households to attain an ideal non-food items expenditure of \$31 per month, on average, for a family of five (5). The analysis indicated that 60% of the households spent below \$31 despite being able to access and utilize food.

The results from data collection and analysis that was done in October 2016 and January 2017 reflected serious failure by most households to meet key nutritional requirements and food consumption especially in the fourth quarter (September – November) and first quarter (December – February) of the agricultural calendar<sup>13</sup>. Out of the 70 households who were tracked in October, approximately 89% of them expressed that they were buying food since their own food sources had dwindled. Tracking the same households in January 2017 revealed a worse scenario as over 98% of the households revealed that they were depending on food purchases for their survival.

The results further showed that even though there was food availability and utilization<sup>14</sup>, there was lack of food stability because households have had to buy staple food (mealie-meal), continuously. With very low rural household incomes, it is difficult for households to buy food that meet required calories. Hence food consumption has become very unsustainable in this time period. Furthermore, the results from the two follow - up surveys showed serious failure by households to meet the ideal non-food basket when compared with results of the survey that was done in the first phase, soon after harvest. On average, households in wards 5 and 35 consumed non-food items that amounted to \$16.54 and \$15.25, respectively. This significantly fell short of the ideal average cost of \$32.43 for an average family of five in the community. This was likely as a result of the diversion of funds to purchase foodstuffs such as mealie-meal, a key necessity for human survival. Effectively this means that households have become not only nutritionally poor as a result of poor production but also income impoverished as reflected by their failure to meet non-food items like washing soap. Consultations with households indicated that food insecurity at household level and a huge school fees burden are among the factors that are forcing a lot of children in Zimunya out of school.

### **3.5.5 Cost of living based on calculating the cost of ideal food and non-food items) in a rural set up**

PRFT went beyond analysing food consumption and nutritional deficiencies to come up with a deeper understanding of the social and inequalities challenges that rural communities face. Through the Rural

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<sup>13</sup>Agricultural calendar for Dora community consists of four phases and seasons ie planting, harvesting, winter agriculture (and vegetable gardening) and preparation of fields for subsistence crop production.

<sup>14</sup>This was measured on the basis on the food the households would have consumed in the reference period.

BNB pilot project, PRFT computed the cost of accessing a basket that allows a household of five to meet ideal food and non-food requirements<sup>15</sup> (see appendix for the breakdown of the cost of ideal food and non-food items). PRFT thought of calculating rural poverty by estimating the monetary cost of accessing a rural basket after its follow up surveys had revealed most households were depending on food purchases for survival in most months of the agricultural calendar. Hence the calculation of the cost of living using the monetary approach reflects the minimum income that is required by a family of five living in a rural area, specifically in Dora (ward 35 and 5) to access the ideal RBNB. These figures could be compared with the urban BNB to have an in depth understanding between rural and urban poverty. The below table summarises the results obtained from the analysis.

Time period	Cost of ideal Food basket	Cost of Ideal non-food basket	Total Cost of the RBNB
July 2015	\$68.83	\$30.14	\$98.97
October 2016	\$88.46	\$32.43	\$120.89
January 2017	\$91.57	\$32.43	\$124

The results from the table above shows that a household composed of five members in Dora (specifically in ward 35 and 5) in July 2015 needed a minimum amount of \$46, on average, to meet the ideal cost of the food and non-food requirements while the costs of the basket were \$121 and \$124 in October 2016 and January 2017, respectively. Our key lesson from the pilot project is that a true reflection of social deprivation in households is enhanced by factoring seasonality in the calculation of cost of living basket. The most striking lesson generated is that a household would need income security to mitigate the negative effects of hunger and income poverty. Increased vulnerability to hunger and poverty stem from seasonality changes, dynamics in market prices, crop failure and natural disasters. The analysis of the cost of RBNB at different times reflected that seasonality changes have a bearing on the estimation of cost of living for rural communities.

### 3.5.6 Coping strategies and the socio- economic challenges affecting the cost of accessing the RBNB basket

In this participatory research, we also sought to investigate the current adaptation and social strategies that people in Zimunya are using to mitigate the negative effects of climate change and poverty. The results also revealed a discussion around the social and economic challenges that are fuelling inequality in terms of coping with the effects of climate change. Despite the general observed decline in rainfall in ward 5, our results show that farming remains a key option for rural communities in Dora.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
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<sup>15</sup> The consolidation of food basket was then done to reflect the nutritional guidelines as provided by the Food and Nutritional Council of Zimbabwe. The nutritional information from the Food and Nutritional Council of Zimbabwe gives an indication on the nutritional values of all common food items which are consumed by people living in the rural areas.

Males	Farming	Piece jobs	Brick moulding	Buying and selling	Selling firewood
Female	Livestock production	Farming	Wetland farming and buying and selling	Chicken production/ brick moulding	Selling firewood
Youths	Selling river sand,	Buying and selling second hand clothes	Brick moulding and selling	Selling firewood	Field crops production

Table 2: Livelihood Options in ward 35

Social Group	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Elderly >60 years	Field, garden crops and livestock production	Selling sand to Mutare	Making bricks	Selling firewood	Crashing and selling concrete stones.
Adult males	Field and garden crops	Making bricks	Selling sand in Mutare	Selling firewood	Gold panning in Odzi River
Adults females	Buying and selling field and garden crops	Voluntary savings and lending /internal lending and savings (Mikando)	Garden crops production	Casual labour	Brick making and selling
Youths	Brick moulding and selling,	Field crops production	Selling river sand	Selling firewood	Buying and selling second hand clothes

From the analysis of livelihood strategies in Zimunya, we found out that households depend mainly on (1) crop production and selling of agricultural produce such as maize, vegetables and tomatoes; (2) tree cutting and firewood selling; (3) brick moulding; (4) selling river sand selling, rearing chickens and livestock; (5) Mikando (voluntary savings and lending); (6) wetland cultivation and; (7) food aid and transfers from NGOs. The results indicated that farming activities remain a viable option and source of livelihoods for 68 percent of the households engaged during the RBNB surveys. However, the RBNB analysis indicated that households and communal farmers are complementing their subsistence farming with other non-farm activities that unfortunately do not support environmental management. These activities include river sand and firewood selling. The results also established that despite the fact that these activities are increasing environmental degradation, the income derived from activities such as firewood business is too little to contribute towards sustainable food security provision because they are just survivalists' strategies.

Below are figures that PRFT collected on the survivalist strategies being employed in Dora;

- Brick making (\$40/1000 bricks)
- Digging up pit sand (\$5/7 tonne truck)
- Digging up river sand (\$10/7 tonne truck)
- Selling firewood (\$2/stack)
- Selling vegetables (\$0.50/bundle)

- Stone crushing (\$70-\$80/7 tonne truck)
- Selling chickens (\$7/broiler, \$8-\$10 free range chicken)
- Selling manure (\$1/20litres)



The picture above relates to one interview that PRFT had in ward 5 where one woman (on the left) had to say the following;

*“ Kuti tiwane mari yebasket rinodiwa pakurarama tinotofanira kuti timhanye- manye kuita zvemukando or kana kutema huni tichinotengesa ku Mutare Urban. Tine dambudziko guru revana vasiri kuenda kuchikoro nemhaka ye school fees. Saka tinotofanira kuita zvese zvinoita kuti tiwane mari kunyange iri shoma hayo. Kurima hongu tinorima asi kuti tirame ne kuchengetedza environment pamwechete zvinoda mari, isu tiri varombo”*( For us to afford the basket, we have be juggling several income generating activities such as buying and selling. Our biggest challenge is school fees for our children. Although we do farming but for us to have a good harvest while at the same time maintaining the environment, it requires money yet we are poor)

On the other side, the results from an analysis of household level diversification revealed that besides maize being produced and consumed as a staple food, it is also being sold by households to get income for survival. Maize selling is disadvantaging households as the produce is normally sold just after harvest when the prices are suppressed by excess supply. Households would need to sell almost all of their produce to get substantial income to finance their basic social expenses and are left with little food reserves to sustain them before the next harvest. This is increasing food consumption instability as the households later fail to buy the same maize when they need it due to hiked prices. Life in rural areas such as Dora has become expensive as most of the rural households are increasingly depending on purchases of food stuffs yet they face limited income opportunity to achieve stability in food consumption.

PRFT's RBNB results call for an adoption of a comprehensive social protection framework that response to the short and long term needs of the vulnerable households. The design of broad based social policy strategies should be guided by an in-depth assessment of community and households' needs. PRFT is cognisance of the fact that the country has recently adopted the SDGs agenda under

the principle of leaving no one behind. In order to guide allocation of resources towards realisation of SDGs on zero hunger, elimination of poverty and inequality, there is need to generate both quantitative and qualitative Information on the extent to which human rights and needs will be improved or worsened by policy implementation. Progress towards full realisation of human rights should be measured based on the ability of rural households and communities to move from extreme hunger and worse human conditions to a more dignified and decent lifestyle.

The previous project revealed projects that are being implemented in rural communities in response to high incidences of poverty, hunger and vulnerability. These interventions include sustainable agriculture, climate change awareness and planning, agricultural diversification, and input transfers projects. Although these interventions are very necessary, PRFT learnt that the sufficiency of these strategies depends on the extent to which they are promoting and protecting people's human rights, especially those who might not be able to participate in viable agricultural labour productivity projects because of different constraints. Although the results confirmed the fact that a huge number of households are increasingly depending on social transfers for their livelihood, the key challenge is on sustainability of these programmes as the government is resource constrained to support a growing number of people who are falling into abject poverty. The other challenge is that the current social protection mechanisms (e.g food transfers) are not diverse and short term focused (they are only limited to consumption only) and are limited to only a few people hence even the lowest people can hardly afford the Rural Basic Needs Basket. Social protection interventions based consumption have not realised far reaching impacts on poverty reduction due to lack of agricultural productivity based social safety nets.

PRFT learnt that in the context of climate change, poor rural households would need to engage in small scale investments or businesses to generate income for assets accumulation. This means that poor households should be supported with opportunities for pro poor investments. Households in Dora are already involved in pro poor businesses that are assisting them in offsetting food and income deficits. Some examples of these activities include vegetable gardening, brick moulding and rural loan and savings schemes (Mikando). However, PRFT noted that these activities are undertaken by a few since there are resource constraints that are limiting inclusive participation and full beneficiation from these necessary activities. PRFT's dialogue meeting on climate change adaptation in the last cycle revealed that women faces a huge burden during food deficits months as they are supposed to set up vegetable gardens and sell vegetables to Mutare urban for household survival. Accessing affordable and convenient transport was discussed as a key determinant in the promotion of small scale income advancement at household level. PRFT proposes to upgrade its seasonality RBNB methodology by factoring pro poor investments in the computation of the Cost of living figures. There is overwhelming evidence that recommend a combination of social protection (consumption based) and pro-poor investments (production based) as a strategy to provide an enabling environment for most of the rural poor to escape poverty and hunger sustainably, both in the short and long term (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2015). Furthermore, PRFT learnt that households and communal farmers are complementing their subsistence farming with other non-farm activities that unfortunately do not support environmental management. These activities include river sand and firewood selling. There is need to support households to embark on small scale investments that are environmentally friendly. Feedback from households during the dissemination meetings revealed limited opportunities for agricultural diversification in the area. One of the reasons is that most of soils in Dora are no longer

productive. On the other side, agricultural production is failing due to climate and seasonality changes. While the literature review on securing rural transformation had revealed the need for the promotion of agricultural diversification that should result in a shift to more productive, diversified<sup>16</sup> in terms products, market-oriented agricultural activities while ensuring inclusivity and avoiding damaging the environment. The results from Dora are quite unique as there are few opportunities for agricultural diversification for most vulnerable. Most of the households are poor to engage in livestock production which is considered to be a viable livelihood option in the area. Most of the rural poor end up engaging in environmentally damaging activities such as tree cutting.

### 3.5.7 Coping strategies of households and peasant farmers in small scale farming

Through the surveys, PRFT also reached out a smaller segment of peasant and small holder farmers to establish their level of vulnerability to poverty. The results revealed few households and peasant farmers who were on better position in terms of pursuing agricultural diversification activities such as livestock production and small crop production and marketing. The results found out that small holder farmers in the maize production are becoming poorer as a result of multiple factors. Firstly, there is very little diversification as they regard maize as their only cash crop yet it is supposed to be a source of food for the family. Secondly, they would dispose of their maize at a government's producer price, competing with large scale maize producers who tend to benefit because they sell large quantities. The market price is out competing them yet they have potential to offer a huge contribution to job creation and food security within the agric business sector. This indicates a regression in terms of the contribution of small holder farmers to food security as more of them are falling into more poverty. PRFT strongly argues that the government has a sole role in curtailing these challenges through inclusive agricultural policies. Adoption of an agricultural policy that promotes sustainable livelihoods should be anchored on a shift to more productive, diversified in terms products, market-oriented agricultural activities while ensuring inclusivity and avoiding damaging the environment. What is undermining inclusive diversification is lack of policy environment to promote production and value addition of smaller agricultural produce such as nyemba, (cow peas) and onions (garlic). These crops are part of the food system as they are produced, sold and consumed not only in Dora, but in the whole of Manicaland Province including the peri and urban areas. The production of these crops is already beneficial to many households because they offset deficits in income and household food. Rural agriculture has an important role in unlocking employment creation, food and income sources for both rural and urban households if deliberate policies are implemented to target small crops production. Tobacco and Cotton remain key crops that have generated income for households and the government through export trade. However, there is need to augment domestic resource mobilisation and sustain agricultural led economic growth through a shift to crops that are not affected by changes in the external market. PRFT recommends the implementation of a pro poor industrialisation strategy that balances both increased contribution of agriculture to GDP and creation of jobs and income opportunities at rural community level.

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<sup>16</sup> Agricultural diversification refers to the process of increasing agricultural productivity by promoting farmers to engage in new high value crops to existing crops or by adding value to the existing crops.

### 3.5.8 Resources needed for sustainable livelihoods

PRFT also did an analysis on the key resources that are required to sustain rural livelihoods. Our results show that non-agricultural assets (eg road networks), water availability, natural resources (including forestry resources- NTFP), environment sustainability, markets access, access to financial resources, agricultural training, policy and government institutions as some of the key resources that are needed for improved sustainable rural development. The role of non-agricultural assets such as roads has become very critical in rural diversification and improved agricultural productivity. Besides being able to provide employment and income to rural households, construction and maintenance of rural infrastructure such as roads is quite important for rural small agricultural businesses to easily access local markets. In the past, rural roads used to be rehabilitated well through the Department of District Development (DDF). However, in recent years, mismanagement of resources and corruption by both the local and national political elite has largely affected the realisation of the objective of this government programme. The discovery and extraction of diamonds by mining companies in Marange should have provided the resources to improve rural social service delivery and incomes through employment creation in Marange and Zimunya which are among the areas that have been affected by mining. However, evidence on the ground shows that there is little contribution of the mineral resources in the transformation and development of livelihoods for the poor (ZELA, 2013).

The report also argued that lack of progress towards ensuring access to affordable clean energy in both rural and urban areas presents a big challenge to poverty eradication and sustainable agriculture than before. PRFT noticed the fast rate of deforestation in Dora and this is mainly driven by two factors. The communities continue to rely on firewood as a source of energy as most households are not connected to electricity despite the area's close proximity with Mutare urban. On the other side, tree cutting is a common livelihood strategy for many households. Poor energy in urban areas has further worsened deforestation as more trees are being cut and supplied to Mutare urban where firewood is increasingly used as an alternative source of energy. However, such activities are not promoting environmental sustainability and they are a threat to short term and long term access to essential basics such as food security. Advocacy to completely stop deforestation is proving to be difficult since there is no progress on availing cheaper and renewable energy to urban and rural communities. This indicates that a holistic approach to natural resources management should be undertaken whereby enforcement of laws is done with deliberate efforts to create affordable and environmental friendly energy such as solar. This will sustain both the environment and poverty reduction at local level as more employment opportunities will be created in non-agricultural sectors.

#### **Advocacy message from the RBNB analysis**

In order to secure a sustainable rural livelihood, there is need to increase the level of income for rural households within and outside agriculture but not at the expense of the environment. In this view, markets are very important. It is the duty of government to establish fair markets

that will foster the realization of social and economic rights of women, children and other marginalized groups both in sustainable agriculture and non-agricultural sectors.

### **3.6 Summary and Key Recommendations from agricultural transformation study and pilot project on RBNB**

Agriculture can successfully perform its role in driving economic transformation and rural development in Zimbabwe if it is transformed in a sustainable manner. This means that agriculture will need to become more productive and diversified in terms of its products, more market – oriented, while ensuring inclusivity and avoiding damaging environment. From the RBNB and agricultural transformation analysis, PFT recommends the following

1. The government should increase its support to small holder farmers and rural food systems in terms of financial resources and skills, availing adequate quality inputs and services, extension services and affordable financial arrangements.
2. There is a need to take a holistic approach towards to agricultural transformation i.e. agricultural policies should single out the promotion of ecosystem management in agriculture, a key element for agricultural transformation.
3. Policies should be put in place to compliment agricultural led economic growth through supporting rural agricultural diversification. This should entail increasing investment in small crops and other agricultural produce that are not affected by changes in the external market.
4. Government should adopt a sustainable social safety net policy that is anchored on consumption and productivity safety nets in order to mitigate against effects of climate change and crop failure. Social protection policies should support pro poor investments as part of strategies to uplift the vulnerable from hunger and poverty sustainably.
5. PRFT underscores the need to evaluate the current social policy framework of the country and engage the different policy makers on social integration based on articulation of socio - economic, seasonality and geographical inequalities at rural community level. The design and implementation of social protection programmes for households which are not productive should be guided by an in-depth assessment of community and households' needs and social deprivation
6. Trading in agricultural markets should be taken as a means not an end to itself, hence there is need to facilitate more policy inclusion that makes it possible for agricultural businesses and value chains to improve access to food and other social services at community level.

6. There is need to reduce gender inequality in rural agriculture and economic development through targeted programmes and policies. Examples of such interventions include women's economic empowerment programmes, equal access to public services, provision of targeted services such as reproductive health and childcare, provision of infrastructure such as affordable clean energy, water and sanitation infrastructure.

7. Economic policy should not only provide markets and open trade to small holder farmers but there is need for government to invest in the production of non-agricultural assets and supply side resources such as skills, education, irrigation, and roads so that communities are able to benefit from economic policies.

8. The mining sector has a key role in sustaining agriculture and rural diversification. Revenue from mining sector activities should support the production of non-agricultural assets such as road infrastructure, local value addition and employment. These resources are critically important in poverty alleviation both in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

## 4.0 Key Successes of the Rural BNB Project

### Local level

PRFT also investigated the extent to which its work had strengthened bottom up social accountability towards realisation of social outcomes such as improved food security. PRFT equipped local structures (communities, marginalized groups, women, local leadership, councillors, Chiefs and Mutare Rural district officers) with essential information and training on poverty. The project contributed towards creating an enabling environment for mutual understanding between councillors and communities on the causes of food insecurity and poverty in Zimunya and in Mutare rural at large. PRFT witnessed an increase in participation and strengthened capacity of grassroots structures and councillors from across the political divide to evaluate policies that are affecting them. Whereas generally ordinary residents usually only engaged at village and ward level, PRFT created the platform for direct interface between the villagers and their councillors. The work that PRFT has done in the past 2 years is beginning to show positive impact as there is increased reception of policy dialogues on poverty by community leaders who include the chief of the area (Chief Zimunya) and Rural district councillors.

### National level

As a further step towards complimenting the RBNB surveys on influencing pro poor agricultural policies and rural development, PRFT continued to underpin its advocacy around securing rural livelihoods through agricultural transformation on key findings from the research paper produced on the same in the previous project cycle. As feedback from the policy dialogue meetings that included Ministry of Macro Economic Planning and Investment Promotion, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Ministry of Gender and Community Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Extension and Irrigation development, participants agreed that the country needs to review its economic policies so that they put

rural development at the centre of all efforts. There is a realization that Zimbabwe has several economic policies<sup>17</sup> on agricultural development and poverty alleviation but there is need for a review of these policies so that they are in line with the key tenets of agricultural transformation. Feedback from Ministry of Gender and Community Development alluded to the fact that bottom up approach to agricultural development (i.e. - creating markets, value addition and employment creation where resources are located specifically targeting women as actors) should be adopted, buttressing the findings from our research on agricultural transformation.

#### **4.1 Challenges of the Rural Basic Needs Basket Project**

Despite the progress realized towards creating a mutual understanding on rural development challenges among participants in Dora and the district at large, as a result of PRFT's participatory RBNB survey project, communities felt that legislators are not fully aware of their issues. There was a general feeling that the legislators are not easily accessible at local level hence they are not effectively representing them in parliament. The general sentiment was that parliamentarians only come to engage grassroots when they seek re - election. There is need to be fill this gap by creating both downward and upwards accountability platforms to engage policy makers and legislators outside the national budget consultations phase and political gathering.

At national level, we noted that lack of knowledge on agricultural transformation among parliamentarians is one of the key challenges affecting bottom up accountability on food security governance. This undermines the capacity of parliament in holding the government to account on the implementation of agricultural and economic policies such as the national budget. It was noted that the government is in the process of developing policies on economic recovery through agriculture value chains but concerns given were related to the usual policy challenges on ensuring that all spin-offs from agricultural led growth are sustained and felt by the 70% of the population living in rural areas.

#### **4.2 Key lessons learnt during the Rural Basic Needs Basket Project**

PRFT observed that its RBNB work undertaken both at community and national level in the past 2 years was very pivotal in understanding rural poverty dimensions and actions that must be taken to cushion vulnerable people from abject poverty. Key lessons generated include:

- PRFT has learnt that working with local governance structures in participatory research is very important in amplifying the voices of marginalized groups on poverty reduction policies. Through PRFT's interventions on research and advocacy in Dora, we have contributed to the revival of dysfunctional VIDCOs and WADCOs on development issues. However, for the results to be sustained, there is need for continuous capacity building on the local governance system so that they are able to effectively hold the duty bearers to account on their commitments. We realized that more energy should be put towards strengthening the projection of the agricultural transformation work to national policy level.

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<sup>17</sup> Some of the policies and legislation include indigenisation act

- There is need to work with legislators at community level so as to contribute towards a shared and coordinated advocacy that promotes collaboration between communities and parliament to hold the government to account.
- In order to guide allocation of resources towards realisation of SDGs on zero hunger, elimination of poverty and inequality, there is need to generate both quantitative and qualitative Information on the extent to human's rights and needs will be improved or worsened by policy implementation. Progress towards full realisation of human rights should be measured based on the ability of rural households and communities to move from extreme hunger and worse human conditions to a more dignified and decent lifestyle
- Leaving out pro poor investment may tend to under estimate the true cost of living and social deprivation among households. This justifies the need to come up with an estimation of pro poor asset investments that can be supported so as to realise social development that is anchored on leaving no -one behind and environment sustainability.
- PRFT also learnt that programmes on social protection should be informed by cost of living data that is disaggregated to capture inequalities induced by differences in geographical locations and production opportunities.
- There is need to come up with estimates of the amount that will be required for households to engage in pro poor income creating opportunities that support environmental sustainability. There is need to cost the alternative sources of energy that can be used in an environmentally friendly manner, (environmental degradation cost/firewood, solar costs.) while those issues have been researched, the cost element has been missing.

## Chapter 5: Urban Basic Needs Basket Project

### 5.0 A snapshot of key challenges faced by urban areas

Sometimes we may think that life in rural areas is tougher than life in urban areas, urban life is also becoming expensive than before with the poverty statistics showing that urban poverty has been increasing over time. Failure by government to address rural agriculture and the whole economy has had negative impacts on the urban communities. The government of Zimbabwe has a mammoth task of fighting urban poverty which is manifesting in a multiplicity of ways including lack of sustainable livelihood opportunities; poor access to social services; food insecurity; violation of social and economic rights in public resource allocation. Most of Zimbabwe's urban cities have experienced both increased urban growth and urbanisation and this has not been driven by improved economic opportunities in the manufacturing sector. There is high mobility among residents in Zimbabwe at the moment and this is seen mostly in the case of youths. High urbanisation rates are good for a country that is stable and growing as more labour will be availed for industries. Zimbabwe cannot benefit from high rural – urban migration in the face of declining industrial production and increasing unemployment. High urbanisation and the increase in the number of people living in peri urban areas has only amounted to more pressure on available social and public amenities and there is need for a sustainable strategy to solve this challenge. Formal industries have collapsed and most urban residents cannot access social and economic safety nets. This is culminating into higher incidences of urban challenges such as food insecurity and ill health. The persistent social and economic challenges, higher degree of informalisation of the economy, political decisions and government's response to economic collapse and service delivery among other factors have presented both risks and opportunities in establishing infrastructure and cities for economic development. For example, government's response in addressing housing deficits has produced peri-urban settlements without adequate provision of social amenities such as water and sanitation. This situation is impacting negatively on the broad based human development agenda. To unearth the real poverty dynamics in urban poor communities, PRFT analysed the BNB data collected through surveys and validation meetings with residents. The data presentation is essential in determining policy interventions that directly address poverty in its multiplicity of ways.

### 5.1 Urban BNB Methodology

The PRFT tracks prices of basic goods (food and non-food items) on monthly basis in major retail shops and shopping centres across the 7 sites in seven urban districts<sup>18</sup>. The prices are tracked twice during the first week (between 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>) and the last week (starting 25<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> /31<sup>st</sup>) of every month). PRFT use the average of the two price collection of the same month to determine the price at which people bought the respective goods and the cost associated with accessing social services during that given month. PRFT also collects household income and expenditure data periodically after every 2 months as part of the Basic Needs Basket survey. The household income survey identifies household

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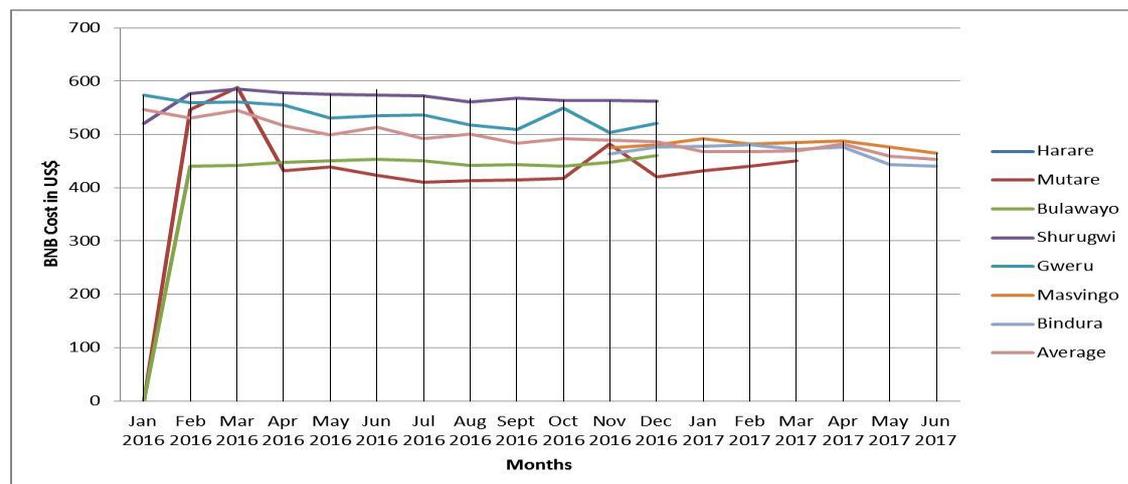
<sup>18</sup> Masvingo ( Mucheke and hillside), Bindura ( Chipadza), Gweru ( Mkoba, Senga and Ascot), Bulawayo ( ), Shurugwi (

sources of income and tracks spending patterns on items such as payment of rentals, electricity, water, transportation, communication, school fees, health services and funeral services among other basic household requirements. The data is collected by trained community based data clerks who then submit the data to PRFT for analysis and report writing. PRFT produces policy briefs informed by in-depth BNB household surveys and Price tracking surveys.

### 5.1.0 BNB Trend Analysis and Presentation of Results

Through the Urban BNB surveys, PRFT carried out a trend analysis of the prices of basic commodities (food and non-food items such as cooking oil, washing soap) in 7 towns (Bindura, Masvingo, Mutare, Gweru, Bulawayo, Harare and Shurugwi) to ascertain costs of basic food and non-food items required by a family of five (5) people to live a healthy and dignified lifestyle. The cost of basic living has been steadily rising beyond the reach of the majority poor Zimbabweans between June 2016 and June 2017. The month to month Basic Needs Basket cost has been declining over the past 18 months per town. In-depth analysis indicates a steady increase especially on basic food items and a general decline in basic utilities such as housing. The graph below depicts BNB costs per town as from January 2016 to June 2017 which shows figures per town slowly declining in a deflationary direction over the period covered.

Figure 1: BNB Monthly Trend Analysis: January 2016-June 2017

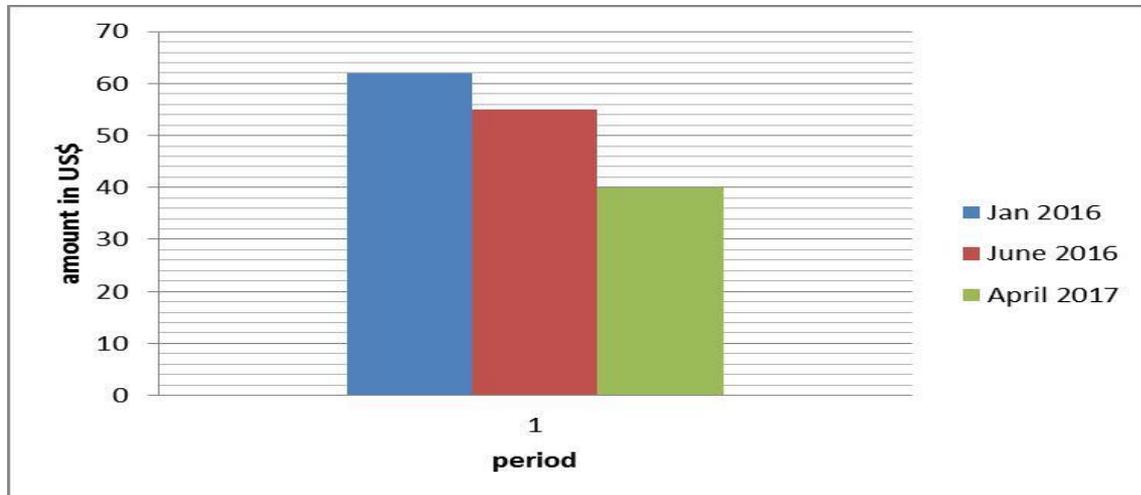


Source: PRFT's Basic Needs Basket Price Survey Report: BNB Data 2016 -2017

The average BNB cost per district plummeted from US\$547,34 in January 2016 to US\$452,72 in June 2017 despite increases in the prices of basic goods such as cooking oil, washing powder, laundry soap and milk products. This variance was largely attributed to the reduction in rentals and money spent on utilities such as electricity. The price of housing per room has been on a gradual decline since 2016. The average price per room in the towns surveyed by PRFT was \$62.00 in January 2016, \$55.00 in June 2016 and gradually decreased to \$40.00 in June 2017. This has resulted in significant drop of the basic needs basket for the respective towns. Since the inception of prepaid electricity meters more and more people are diverting towards the use of cheaper alternative sources of energy such as gas for much of their domestic energy requirements such as cooking. Electricity is generally used for lighting

only. This drastically reduced the basic needs basket cost for the surveyed towns albeit an increase in prices basic food items.

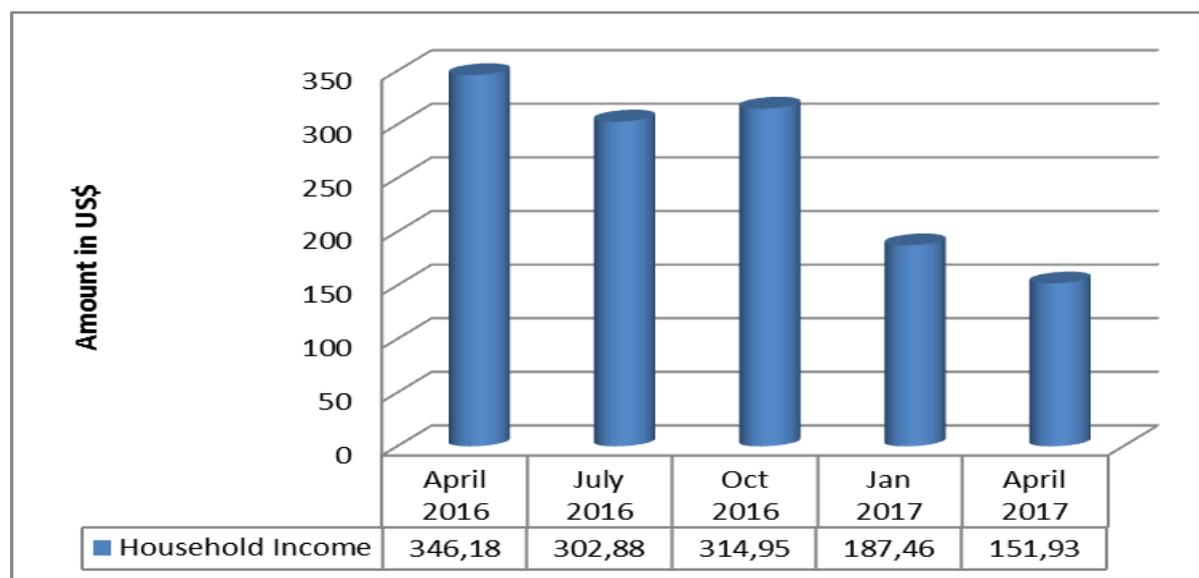
Figure 2: Rent Decline



Source: PRFT's Basic Needs Basket Household Survey Report: BNB Data 2016 and 2017

The decline in rentals has been largely attributed to the movement of people from the urban into the peri-urban areas in search of cheaper accommodation. Supply has exceeded demand for housing in inner suburbs. House owners have also been forced to reduce the rentals in order to attract and retain tenants as the demand continues to drop. This gave rise to a situation where tenants and landlord are constantly negotiating rentals and in most cases it's a win-lose outcome for the landlord. The BNB Household survey for October 2016 revealed that 11% of Households surveyed relied on rentals as a source of income. Given the foregoing, most of the landlords are thus deprived of their only source of income. The economic collapse and subsequent decline in housing rentals has plunged the medium class into poverty as most of their properties have been left unoccupied due to declining demand. The country is left with mainly two classes, elites group and the poor, with the latter being the largest constituency. In a normal economy, the medium class should be seen contributing more to national savings which are essential for industrialization and economy growth. Despite the slump in BNB costs, majority of ordinary Zimbabweans remain unable to meet their daily food and non-food requirements as their disposable incomes continue to dwindle due to limited livelihood opportunities and viability. The average household income plummeted by 44% over a period between January 2016 to June 2017 as depicted by figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Household Income Trend Analysis April 2016-April 2017



Source: PRFT's Basic Needs Basket Survey Report: BNB Data 2016 - 2017

The negative trend in household income as shown above, against a relatively high cost of living (BNB), entails that people have to design and adapt to new coping strategies in order to live through the month. This translates in changes in diet (eating habits) and spending priorities. The BNB survey unmasked that only a fraction of the people constituting 21% were subscribers to medical aid insurance whereas 59% were on funeral insurance and only 20% having both medical and funeral insurance policies. The cost of medical insurance is beyond the reach of the majority poor whilst funeral insurance seems affordable averaging a mere \$14.40 per month. This revealed that the people are foregoing other important needs such as health insurance in-order to meet their daily food and non-food requirements.

## 5.2 The implications of Economic Policies on Urban Poor: The Case of Cross border traders and informal traders

### 5.2.0 Introduction and Background

Both the Rural and Urban BNB surveys confirmed that the majority of the households are subsisting on informal trading. However, this is against a background where Zimbabwe continues to suffer from industrial regression resulting in loss of economic livelihoods within the formal sector and growth of the informal sector. The growth of the informal sector is not lucrative as it is dominated by retailing rather than manufacturing. The collapse of Industry was exacerbated by a couple of viability challenges which include low levels of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), low levels of business competitiveness, low savings, structural regression characterized by increasing dependence on natural resources (mining sector), trade deficit, high levels of corruption and poor public resources management. The issue of competition from cheap imported products has been singled out by policy makers as a major challenge which is resulting in low demand for locally produced goods leading to low economic growth. This is happening at a time when the economy is experiencing low industrial capacity utilization, exportation of jobs, high local unemployment and closure of local industries, income leakages, high trade deficits, decreasing revenue tax base for the government. Despite this staggering reality, the government recently indicated in its final Interim Poverty Reduction strategy Paper (I- PRSP) in September 2016 that it is targeting an average annual economic growth rate of 7.3%, low and stable inflation of 1.4%, reducing the current account deficit from over 20% to below 10% of GDP and reducing budget deficit of 1.2% of GDP between 2017 and 2018.

In a bid to revive the manufacturing sector and improve revenue tax -base for the government, in 2015 the Minister of Industry and Commerce invoked the Import Control Act and made several changes to importation of goods from neighbouring countries such as South Africa. Since December 2015, the government through the Ministry of Industry and Commerce published and gazetted two (2) statutory instruments namely the Statutory instrument (SI) 148 of 2015 on Travelers Rebate and statutory instrument (SI) 64 of 2016 which restricted the importation of a wide range of goods. The various goods that the SI imposed restriction on include basic households' food and non-food stuffs such as cooking oil, washing powder and washing soap, building materials, metal fabrics and agricultural inputs. Furthermore, the SI 64 required the possession of an import license for any person or business from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, intending to import any of the goods listed under these trade restrictions. The import license is valid for 3 months. Without a valid import permit, it is not possible to procure certain quantities of goods from outside the country.

#### 5.2.1 Advocacy on the implications of S1 148 of 2015 on cross borders and the poor

In 2015, PRFT made an intervention to respond to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development's adoption of a policy instrument (SI 148 of 2015) which was meant to revise travellers rebate from \$300 to \$200 for travellers in private vehicles and removed rebate on goods imported by a traveller and being transported by a transport service vehicle, which is drawing a trailer and is used for conveyancing of goods through a port of entry. While attribution to policy advocacy remains a

challenge, however PRFT is happy to report as a result of collaborative efforts with other CSOs, especially Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust (YETT), Cross Borders Association (ZIMCROSS) and the Informal Traders Association, there was a reversal to this policy instrument (<http://www.herald.co.zw/latest-update-on-travellers-rebate/>).

#### **Advocacy Message from the consultations**

***“By specifying that the rebate shall not apply to ‘goods imported by a traveller and being transported by a transport service vehicle, which is drawing a trailer and is used for conveyancing of goods through a port of entry’, the government is prejudicing and socially discriminating the poor genuine people, and informal traders (who use such transport facilities like the omnibuses and pick-up trucks, in ferrying their goods across the borders) and transport sector employment”.***

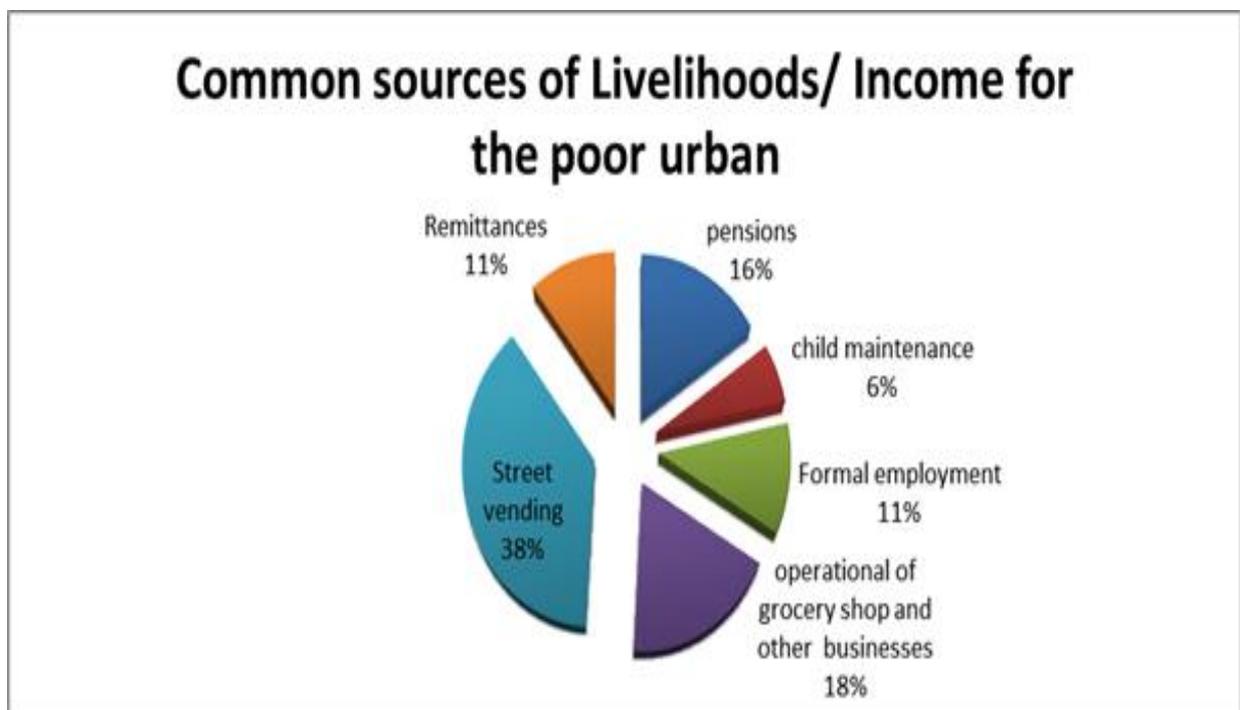
A comparison of Basic Needs Prices and incomes had revealed a decline in the welfare of the cross boarders through increase in cost of cross boarder business. Others who were involved in the business had since stopped giving rise to multiplier effects on limited livelihood opportunities.

#### **5.2.2 SI 64 Effects and Implications on the cross-borders and Informal Traders**

The period saw PRFT going a further step to interrogate another Statutory Instrument (SI 64 of 2016) that the government introduced after repealing its first statutory instrument (SI 148 of 2015) on cross boarder rebates. In its research and advocacy on the implications of the statutory instrument 148 of 2015 carried out in 2015, PRFT had argued that the revision of travellers rebate from \$300 to \$200 for travellers in private vehicles meant an immediate loss of livelihoods by many cross boarder traders who have been buying these basic commodities (e.g. cooking oil, washing powder) in South Africa and reselling them in Zimbabwe’s local market. The current Statutory Instrument (SI) 64 of 2016 which was introduced on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2016, restricted importation of a wider range of goods. The various goods that the SI imposes restriction on include basic households’ food and non-food stuffs such as cooking oil, washing powder and washing soap, building materials, metal fabrics and agricultural inputs. Furthermore, the SI requires the possession of an import license to any person or business who intends to import any of the goods listed under these trade restrictions from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

The adoption of statutory instrument meant an immediate loss of livelihoods by many cross boarder traders as business opportunities were transferred from the informal to a shrinking formal sector. With more and more people being pushed into the informal sector due to deindustrialization; cross border trading became one of the most lucrative informal sector occupation and common amongst Zimbabweans. The sector is largely dominated by women, mostly widows and single mothers, and youths who have undertaken up cross border trading as a livelihood opportunity.

The Urban Household survey results on common sources of livelihoods illustrate dominance of street vending as the major source of income in urban areas. The surveyed households reported to be operators of small informal business (18%) and vendors (38%). The major sources of livelihoods are illustrated diagrammatically below;



The Urban Household survey results on common sources of livelihoods illustrate dominance of street vending as the major source of income in urban areas. The surveyed households reported to be

operators of small informal business (18%) and vendors (38%). The major sources of livelihoods are illustrated diagrammatically below;

The prevailing economic hardships have plunged residents into the deeper poverty. Instead of supporting the informal traders so that they can also employ others in their enterprises, the government made life difficult for them

### **Government's Policy Interventions Rationale**

The Government of Zimbabwe imposed the two policy interventions for one or more of the following reasons;

- To maximize on non-fiscal benefits (such as improving local enterprise development through local content development) that can accrue to a country, the Buy Zimbabwe benefits.
- To increase capacity utilization local industries which was officially recorded at 34% at the announcement of SI 64 in June 2016 with the capacity utilization projected to go as high as 60% as a consequent of the policy intervention
- Job creation through increased industry capacity utilization which will increase the demand of labour for local manufacturing industries.

### **5.2.3 Socio-economic challenges**

#### **Failure to pay rentals**

As the Statutory Instruments destroyed the only source of livelihood for most people, the immediate impact was their failure to meet basic needs especially paying rentals as most of the informal traders do not own urban houses. PRFT's community engagement meetings in Masvingo, Gweru, Bindura, Bulawayo and Shurugwi confirmed this scenario as evidenced by the community voices below.

### Community Voices

‘vanhu varikutiza mudzimba umu vatadza kubhadhara mutero wemba kumuridzi wemba, munhu anongotora zvinhu zvake zvishoma nezvishoma kusvika atoenda zvachose iwe muridzi wemba usingazive wozongoona munhu asisimo mumba’ – Mai Magara, Mugari we Old Railways, Masvingo

#### Translation

Tenants owing their landlords are in a tendency of collecting their belongings slowly without the knowledge of the landlord until nothing is left and they eventually leave for good without paying up their debts’ Mrs Magara, Old Railways resident, Masvingo

Landlords have had to deal with large debts of rents owed by their residents. A new phenomenon was witnessed in Bindura where most landlords are accepting rental instalments (even as little as US\$ 5 instalments) towards settlement of US\$ 35-40 rent per month.

## Vending No-longer profitable

The loss of economic opportunities within the informal sector has been worsened by the advent of cash crisis mitigated by the use of plastic money “new money”. The communities engaged noted the drastic reduction in business transactions of their vending enterprises. The use of plastic money has locked vendors out of the e-money transacting system since they do not possess plastic money vending machines. The small amount transaction nature of their business transactions involves US0.10c to US\$1, making the use of plastic money virtually close to impossible. The majority of people who possess electronic money preferred buying their fruits and vegetables in retail shops depriving vendors the economic opportunity.

### Community Voices

Kutengesha kwavakunetsa mazuvaano ne ma swipe akadai kuuya, vanhu vese vava kungotenga zvese mumashops mahombe anobvuma swipe hapana arikutitengera nekuti mari haisi kuwanikwa ,zvese zvakungotengwa neswipe kusanganisira mavegie ne matomatoes’ – Mai Mashava, Masvingo

#### Translation

“Business has now gone down, our customers are now buying everything even vegetables and tomatoes in big shops which accept swiping because cash is not accessible and we are now out of business” – Mrs Mashava, Masvingo

## Debt trap

The reduction in livelihood and economic opportunities has engulfed the majority of people in debt traps. The community engagement meetings unearthed that informal traders are failing to meet their domestic obligations such as paying for education and medication. Residents in Bindura raised concern at the rate schools and council clinics are hiring debt collectors instead of engaging parents in order to draw up payment plans for outstanding balances. This development has enraged residents who then claim that the use of debt collectors has further impoverished them. It was noted in Bindura that Government hospitals and clinics are putting interest on medical bills of patients treated on credit. Citizens turned to borrowing from family and friends to settle debts they have in schools and clinics. Bearing the huge debt, residents have reduced their consumption levels in-order to finance their debts. They are trapped in a cycle of debt which involves borrowing to finance existing debts. With the current level of incomes obtained from the informal sector, informal traders are faced with a huge challenge of getting themselves out of the debt cycle.

### Community Voices

“ndakamboenda kuchipatara ndichida kurapwa zvikanzi mapiritsi hapana asi biri randakapihwa rainge rakakurisa, ndokubvavawedzera ma debt collectors pamusoro zvakabva zvawedzera mutoro wangu kuti unyanye kurema” – VaNyarumbe, Bindura

**Translation**

**“I once went to a hospital seeking treatment and I was told there were no pills but I was given a huge bill which I failed to pay in time because I had no money and they added debt collectors to my case which made my situation unbearable” – Mr. Nyarumbe, Bindura**

## **Migration – Rural to Urban and Increased Urban to Peri-Urban Areas**

Through the analysis of literature review and Household Income and Expenditure survey data generated from 6 districts in 2016, PRFT gathered evidence on the dimensions of urban - peri urban migration, underlying causes and their impacts on ensuring safe and sustainable cities in Zimbabwe

An analysis of migration trends in the surveyed urban districts revealed different types of migrations with the urban – peri-urban migration being the dominant one across all districts. Zimbabwe has been experiencing urban growth with smaller towns recording the highest growth rates. Through its findings, PRFT noted that the growth of urban areas and establishment of more peri-urban settlements is attributed to the collapse of industries, loss of formal employment and limited opportunities within the informal sector. These factors have pushed people to look for cheaper housing or stand for home ownership in peri-urban areas. The cost of Basic Needs Basket has always been higher than incomes earned by the urban poor and housing rentals have been a major cost driver. More opportunities for home ownership in peri-urban areas have contributed to a decline in inner suburb rentals as supply is exceeding demand. Houses have ceased to provide a commensurate income due to demand linked devaluation. Results from the PRFT's Household Income and Expenditure analysis show a reduction in proceeds from rentals by 50% between 2014 and 2016 in households who have been letting out their houses (either partly or in full). This impacted on the economy in different ways. The economic collapse and subsequent decline in housing rentals plunged the medium class into poverty as most of their properties are been left unoccupied due to declining demand.

### Case study

#### Urban - Peri Urban Migration across Districts: Masvingo case study

Engagement meetings with residents validated the data collected by the PRFT in the Basic Needs Basket Household Analysis with regards to the pattern of Urban-Peri-Urban migration by establishing the following;

- People are migrating from urban residential areas of Masvingo into the Range- which is an area just outside Masvingo Urban under Nemangwe Rural District Council -Motivated by the need to have cheaper accommodation. It was noted by residents in Masvingo that people who are moving into this area are tenants who are moving into this area as custodians of stands since the area is currently under development. Given such a scenario, tenants in this areas pay very little or none at all in rent under the stand custodianship agreement with the owner of the stand
- Migration from urban areas to peri-urban growth points and mining communities around urban areas was also confirmed by communities as a common form of migration. Youths and women are commonly associated with this form of migration as they search for economic opportunities. This has also brought along social ills such as prostitution in the receiving areas. In Masvingo Youths and women are moving to areas like Nemamwa and Mashava Old mine area in anticipation of affordable accommodation and economic opportunities in small scale gold mining.

As a follow up to government's statutory instrument 64 of 2016 in 2017, PRFT analysed households' income and expenditure patterns between July 2016 and July 2017. From the analysis, we found out that households continued to sell the restricted products in Zimbabwe although the general observation was that business and income opportunities had gone down. Generally, the adoption of the instrument largely meant transferring businesses opportunities from the informal traders to formal enterprises given the fact that most of the cross borders and informal local traders are yet to be formally registered to acquire licenses to import these products under the new regulation. Following this scenario, we would have thought that there will more creation of employment in the formal sector but that is not the case. The continued existence of imported basic goods such as Delite Cooking oil (South African product) on the local market, restricted under the SI 64/2016 points out to the issues of smuggling and corruption on the country's borders. Increased cases of smuggling as reported in media<sup>19</sup> after the introduction of the instrument presents a big blow on the success of the policy instrument on business development and formal job creation.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.thestandard.co.zw/2016/12/04/face-face-beitbridges-daring-smuggling-syndicates/> reported that there are well organized smuggling syndicates working in cahoots with villagers living along the Limpopo river to smuggle a wide range of goods from South Africa. The same report noted the existence of over 200 illegal crossing points along the Limpopo river, making it difficult for the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority Border patrol officers to keep smuggling in check

### 5.3 Recommendations

PRFT joins hands with like-minded CSOs to recommend adoption of policies that will promote the growth of “informal” sector activities that have an opportunity to create decent jobs and reduce poverty for youth and women. Whilst there is still need for local authorities to put in place policies and laws that promote the realisation of social and economic rights in vending business, it has become important for communities and local authorities to put more energy towards influencing the government to expand the development of informal activities with more opportunities. The government should come up with legislation and policy framework that supports informal businesses so they contribute to economic development. PRFT noted that cross border trading is one of the sectors that should be supported and not suffocated.

In order to increase the benefits that can be derived from the informal sector, the following suggestions have to be considered;

- The government should implement complementary policies which directly target and support the informal sector so that they improve livelihoods economic opportunities through integrating them into within the local economy
- There is need to promote enterprise development, decent work and living wages for people working in cross border trading business. Consultations with cross boarder traders in Masvingo and Bindura revealed that most youth are engaged in cross boarder business as workers and they face unique social challenges. Among them include failing to attain a living wage to meet the average cost of Basic Needs Basket which stood at \$455 and \$480 in July 2017, in Bindura and Masvingo, respectively,
- The national policies should take cognizance of the changes taking place in the socio-economic setup to cushion the vulnerable. Energy and effort should be placed towards uplifting the lives of poor people and ensure access to basic utilities such as water, energy, food and shelter is improved. Government policies need to be informed by community engagement in-order to craft policies and laws that address community needs. Policy gauging and testing to assess the impact of a policy pre-implementation is an important function government has to undertake.
- There is need for the government to come up with legislation and policy framework on local content development and create ways of supporting informal businesses so that they can benefit from these policies especially on procurement. There is need for capacity building on quality standards not only to the oil industry but to various small businesses in the production value chain.
- Other problems facing the industry such as uncompetitive business environment, high costs drivers such as electricity, lack of policy consistency and certainty among others should be looked into in-order to realize broader impacts of economic policy on poverty reduction
- As part of the lessons generated from implementation of the urban BNB project, PRFT noted that there is need to continuously engage policy makers with evidence regarding supporting development opportunities in other sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy and tourism

to expand employment opportunities in both rural areas and urban areas. The informal sector, despite its growth, has its own challenges considering that the majority of the informal traders are survivalists jobs such as vending which do not sustain the economy.

## **5.4: Lessons and Experiences on the Applicability of Best Practices in Local Governance as a Resource of Fostering Sustainable Local Human Development – Case Studies of Bindura, Masvingo, Gweru, Bulawayo and Shurugwi**

### **5.4.0 Introduction**

Community driven action plans and budgets regarding social service delivery, local economic development and poverty reduction are forerunners of participatory based democracy and decentralized governance. This calls for a local governance framework that promotes local level bottom up participatory planning and budgeting through development of practical tools, techniques and competences at the local authority level. Research has established that it is through participatory practices that voices and needs of the marginalised are in-cooperated in development planning and forms the basis for sustainable all-inclusive decision making at local level. The global socio-economic and environmental problems have challenged the mind-set of development actors and state actors alike to appreciate the fact that participatory governance, particularly, planning and budgeting has the potential to significantly improve the provision of basic services and ultimately improves the quality of life. This requires platforms for sustained advocacy, awareness campaigns, community capacity building initiatives and engagement with local service providers. This section will focus on participatory budgeting as one of the approaches vital for decentralized and inclusive governance. The section highlights cases recorded by the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust (PRFT) during its Participatory Budgeting Capacity Building and Advocacy meetings with Residents Association in Masvingo, Bindura, Gweru, Bulawayo and Shurugwi to illustrate the potential of participatory approaches in establishing sound decentralized governance.

### **5.4.1 Background**

The collapse of the public service delivery has challenged development practitioners and public service managers to rethink the resource allocation and priority setting process within the service delivery model. The rationale being the direct link between access to public services and poverty as poor people depend more on them. The poor are the least serviced by the public services and exposed to health risks such as water borne diseases. The need for participatory approaches, especially, budgeting has been heightened by the following factors.

- ✓ The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The global development framework, Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations and signed by member states in September 2015 pushes for inclusive development. The clarion call of the 17 SDGs 'Living No-one Behind' in pursuit of ending poverty, while protecting the planet and the environment appeals for inclusive approaches to development. The

achievement of the global goals is hinged on inclusive governance and inclusive growth through the participation of previously marginalized groups in development processes.

✓ Citizen Apathy

The decline in service provision has cultured citizens to be apathetic demonstrated in various ways such as but not limited to; non-involvement in community development issues, lack of interest in public affairs, attitudes of despair and hopelessness, attitude of resignation and withdrawal. Apathy is caused by a number of factors that include imposed decisions, real or perceived corruption, and unfulfilled promises.

✓ Urbanization

With many people, especially in Africa still considering cities as engines of economic growth and an escape from rural poverty, rural-urban migration remains a dominant form of migration. Globally, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas, with 54 per cent of the world's population residing in urban areas in 2014. In 1950, 30 per cent of the world's population was urban, and by 2050, 66 per cent of the world's population is projected to be urban<sup>20</sup>. This means that more than half of the World's population will be living in cities by 2050. The UN-HABITATS's State of the World Cities Report 2006/7 warns that whilst cities are becoming engines of economic growth and centres of opportunities, the problems created outweigh their attractiveness and significantly lower the quality of life for residents to a level below that enjoyed by their rural counterparts. Thus there is need for strategies that counteract such outcome.

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<sup>20</sup> UN (2014) World Urbanization Prospects

#### 5.4.2 Why is Participatory Budgeting (PB) Important in the Zimbabwe Context?

The foundation of participatory budgeting is that local government budgeting should not be treated as a piecemeal initiative, whereby residents are involved at a later stage, but from the initial stages of the budget process. As a tenant of democracy, PB provides citizens with the platform to plan and prioritise their needs in relationship with available resources. Real and perceived corruption resulting in poor decisions and investments accompanied by dwindling resources and decaying infrastructure in Zimbabwe has generated significant mistrust between public officials and their citizens. This trend has propelled civic organisations to demand space in identifying needs, setting priorities, and determining resource allocations. Increased community participation in public decision making at both the national and local level has the potential to improve the capacity of Local Authorities to understand better the complex demands of their communities. This enhances coordination, transparency and accountability in action planning, priority setting, expenditure allocation and it subsequently strengthens social networks and solidarity. The Participatory Budgeting framework is underpinned by the following principles and justification;

- Active citizen participation (Voice) - PB programs offer a model of active participation that permits citizens to deliberate amongst themselves and with local authority officials over the allocation of public resources and the use of state authority. Participatory Budgeting can also strengthen and enhance good governance systems. It includes the adopting and use of participatory decision-making processes where the value of people, especially of the poor, is recognized through the consensus building process. Marginalized groups in society such as women, youths and disabled are empowered through effective participation by articulating their needs and priorities. Participatory budgeting can be used to give increased political power to those with the least economic influence through creating new relationships between the local government and disadvantaged citizens.
- Increased citizen authority (Vote) - Having real decision-making authority acts as a powerful 'school of democracy' because citizens are forced to make difficult choices regarding where resources were allocated. By involving citizens to make policy decisions, government spending can be allocated in new ways because their direct participation legitimizes spending in new areas. Participatory budgeting promotes inclusiveness with equal access to essentials like shelter, safe drinking water and sanitation, with institutional priorities focusing on actions that support the poor, such as preferential pricing policies for water and other public utilities.

The identification of priorities by citizens collectively and allocation of budget spending based on the perceived needs of the people ensures that resources are channelled where they are needed most. By including the informal sector in the budgetary process and sharing of power, all members of a community, irrespective of age, sex, ethnic and religious affiliation, or physical disability, participate as equals in all service delivery decision making, priority-setting and resource allocation processes.

- Reallocation of resources (Social Justice) - PB programs were initially designed to promote social justice, as they were geared toward using public resources and state authority in new ways, in new places and on new policies. PB has a redistributive component and this reduces potential upsurge of conflicts over resources. For many PB programs, social justice involves harnessing the resources, expertise and authority of the Local Authority to provide public works in poor areas. Participatory Budgeting can be used as a good governance tool to resolve conflicts, confrontations, reduce objections that are usually associated with the budget process through a process of consensus building and open discussions. By advocating inclusiveness, participatory budgeting also contributes to a reduction in violence against the economically weak and other disadvantaged groups as well as nurturing a culture of peace, multicultural and multi-ethnic governance.
- Improved transparency and accountability (Oversight) - PB programs seek to reform how the state functions by increasing citizen oversight on local authority programmes and projects. Accountability is enhanced by the increased citizen involvement in Local Authority business. The empowerment of citizens in the participatory budgeting process evokes citizen interest in council programmes and this reduces corruption and mismanagement of resources by council officials. Corruption can undermine Local Authority credibility and can deepen urban poverty. Accountable governance tends to improve the effectiveness of revenue collection and led to reduction in the destruction of municipal public property. Harare City Council realized an increase in public understanding of council cash flows and payment of user fees and rates 2 years after introducing PB approach in 2012.

### 5.4.3 Legal and Policy Interventions

Participatory budgeting is an approach (management tool) to budgeting that Local Authorities are adopting to address challenges in their respective budgeting processes. In Zimbabwe, there is no specific law enforcing community participation in the budgeting process and this presents a major challenge towards advocating for its full adoption. Lack of appropriate and clear legal backup resulted in piece meal implementation of the PB approach. The current constitutional provisions for citizen participation are obscure and vague. The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act of 2013 section 264(2b) recognises the need to give powers of local governance to the people and enhance their participation in the exercise of the powers of the state and in making decisions affecting them as an objective of devolution. Section 264 (d) also recognises the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development as an objective of devolution. These provisions by virtue of being objectives of devolution are conditional since Section 264(1) states that “Whenever appropriate”, governmental powers and responsibilities must be devolved to provincial, metropolitan councils and local authorities which are “competent” to carry out those responsibilities efficiently and effectively .The Local Government Amendment Laws Act of 2016 Gazetted on 26th August 2016 is silent on issues of devolution which remains a challenge to the activation of constitutional provisions on devolution and the ultimate realization and full adoption of participatory budgeting in Zimbabwe.

Local councils are currently using Section 288 of the Urban Councils Act 29:15 which states that budget estimates are published in three issues of the newspaper so as to give the public a chance to scrutinize the budget. There is a ministerial directive to local authorities requiring proof that citizens were consulted by the local authorities in coming up with the annual budget. This requires a mayoral certificate and an attendance register written and signed by citizens in their own handwriting certifying that citizens were in fact consulted and consented to increases in rates, tariffs, and fees. This provision alone is not requisite and does not translate in the promotion of participatory budgeting. To demonstrate commitment to PB, Harare City Council institutionalised PB by setting up a Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) comprising of fifteen members from different sectors (Civic Groups, the Disabled, Faith Based Organisations, Senior Citizens, the Media, Commerce and Industry, and Council Officials) to spearhead the process. Other councils around the country should adopt a similar approach to show commitment to PB.

Cross reference can be given to South Africa which established a framework of cooperative governance in section 152 of its Constitution of 1996. Subsections (1e) of the same section encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government. The South African Government has

passed several pieces of legislations on Local Government that demand community participation and these include Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) section 16 (1), Municipal Structures Act (Act 117 of 1998) Section 73 (3) and the Municipal Finance Management Act 2002. All these pieces of legislation promote citizen participation and build the support base for active citizen participation.

#### 5.4.4 Capacity Building Issues

The European Union described capacity building as the process aiming to facilitate, in conjunction with the stakeholders, a consolidation of their capacities at an individual, organizational and sectoral level to allow them to evolve and adapt to the new contextual requirements and fulfil their role within a governance structure. Given the above, capacity building in participatory budgeting can be described as a process of strengthening key actors in local service delivery's capacity to identify their community challenges, ascertain their differential values and priorities. The process therefore incorporates developing public awareness, acquiring knowledge and skills and developing tools and frameworks which enhances meaningful participation.

There is need for capacity building initiatives aimed at strengthening the capacity of both communities and councillors. There is need to expose public officials and communities to participatory approaches and methods in order to improve the quality of interaction. More specifically, there is need to improve competencies in areas such as public relations, negotiation, mediation, listening, consensus building, confidence building, priority setting that come into play in participatory management and which are not part of the curricular in traditional planning and budgeting practices<sup>21</sup>.

On the other hand local civic groups, namely, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and residents are seriously lacking in advocacy, planning and budgeting as well as policy analysis skills. Skills development at this level is fundamental in building community led self-advocacy and organization.

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<sup>21</sup> G. Matovu, (2006) Capacity Building For Participatory Planning and Budgeting In Africa: Initiatives and Strategic Perspectives, MDP-ESA

#### **5.4.5 Challenges Affecting Civic Participation in Local Authority Budgeting in Zimbabwe**

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust gained insight on the issues affecting citizen participation in local authority budget formulation process in Zimbabwe through its advocacy dialogue meetings with Residents Associations and their structures in Gweru, Shurugwi and Bulawayo in September 2016; Bindura in June 2017 and Masvingo in July 2017 and the challenges are summarized as follows;

- Budget consultations are being carried out as a way of rubber stamping the already formulated budget. In Shurugwi, residents indicated that the budgeting process is always done ineffectively and only revenue figures are revealed to the residents during the consultation meetings. Councillors are not making deliberate attempt to reveal the expenditure figures, which are also very important. The time for consultations is also limited for residents to scrutinize the budget. Interaction with residents in Gweru revealed that they were only involved at a later stage of the process rather than the initial budget planning stage. Residents in Masvingo noted that Council Budget Consultative meetings dates are not known to members of the public and Residents Associations making it difficult for them to prepare in time and to effectively participate in the budget consultation meetings.
- Politicization of participation has also derailed the progress of participatory budgeting. Politics has affected the whole local governance system even beyond participatory process in Zimbabwe. PRFT's meetings with residents and councillors unearthed that residents tend not to attend ward based budget consultation and feedback meetings if they are not politically affiliated with the serving councillor. It was also established that councillors are also conducting these meetings on party basis, excluding ward members affiliated to opposition political parties, yet a councillor is expected to execute their duties in a non-partisan manner the minute he/she is elected into office. The councillor is expected to represent the interests of the whole ward irrespective of the existence of different political affiliations in the ward. Failure to be non-partisan on the part of the sitting councillor accelerates citizen apathy in PB processes. This has largely been attributed to the highly polarized, undemocratic and unpredictable political environment. PB system as a tenet of participatory democracy is difficult to implement in an undemocratic political environment as currently experienced. Participants revealed that service delivery and developmental issues are always politicized yet they are issues that cut across the political divide and affect everyone irrespective of their political affiliations.
- Lack of appreciation and capacity building for councillors with regards to PB and its benefits to both council and residents are a major drawback. The councillors are not conversant with the participatory budget approach and sometimes they do not have the appreciation of what they are expected to do or have limited capacity to comprehend budgets and other issues. Residents in Gweru indicated that they had a situation where local councillors had problems in articulating budget issues to the residents during ward consultation meetings. This can largely be attributed to the fact that no educational qualifications are a conditional entry requirement to councillorship. There is no local government legislation that specify certain qualifications as a pre-requisite for the assumption of office by an individual as a councillor except that an individual is supposed to be registered voter in that ward and he/ she must be aged 18 and above. This problem becomes serious if there are no deliberate attempts to train councillors on their

duties. To curtail challenges posed by incapacity and knowledge gap, Shurugwi Town Council entered into partnership with Midlands State University's Department of Local Governance Studies where the department is providing capacity building programmes for Council to enhance the knowledge of councillors in conducting their duties and obligations.

- Limited fiscal space is also crippling execution of participatory budgeting. With the current macro-economic challenges being experienced in the country, very few resources are availed by councils towards the implementation of the PB process.
- Legislative flaws are a major drawback to participatory budgeting in Zimbabwe. Local Government laws are heavily tilted towards serving the interests and priorities of the Council and in favour of the Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing at the expense of those of the citizens. The Urban Councils Act 29:15 is silent on time the Minister should approve the council budgets. Councillors in Shurugwi expressed dissatisfaction after a budget they had submitted on 5 November 2015 was approved in August 2016. This meant that Shurugwi town council lost considerable amount of revenue due to delays in budget approval.
- There is general lack of transparency, accountability, legitimacy, openness and stakeholder participation. It was noted in Gweru that the Local Authority is not responsive to calls from the public to involve them and tap experiences of the residents in their strategic planning process. The residents perceive the Council's lack of engagement as a reflection of their fear of exposing their bad practises to the public. Residents in Bindura reiterated the need to track council budgetary processes since they were not conscious of the public consultations timetables. A bilateral relationship should be harnessed between residents and Council for the effective and efficient delivery of public services and the shared mutual understanding of duties and responsibilities of both Residents Associations and Council are crucial for the fruition of this relationship.
- Corruption is adversely undermining local budget processes in the sense that the funds allocated for implementing budgetary activities such as participatory planning, formulation, monitoring and evaluation are gobbled by the hefty salaries earned by the executives, undervaluation of stands and flouting of tenders. This was noted in Bulawayo where Council lost a considerable amount of money due to selling of undervalued stands to councillors and issuing of tenders and advance payment to contractors without due diligence being undertaken on their capacity to deliver. The Council also failed to invoke the liquidated damages in the respective clauses of the contracts issued and failed to utilize the advance payment guarantee facilities to recoup the advance payment. This indicates tendencies of corruption in awarding the tenders and monitoring of the projects. The residents in Bindura claimed that Councillors and members of council are bribing a group of citizens that will be vocal during the meetings and help council rubber stamp the budget.

- Poor communication and mobilization of stakeholders is a challenge being faced by Local Authorities. Poverty and apathy levels are high in Zimbabwe (as noted during advocacy meetings in Bindura, Masvingo, Gweru, Shurugwi and Bulawayo) and for participatory budgeting to happen it requires enough mobilization and communication capacity to obliterate citizen apathy and enhance participation. The Residents in Masvingo alluded that the meetings are carried out in English depriving most of the understanding thereof. Residents clamoured for the use of vernacular languages in these meetings since the constitution recognizes 16 vernacular languages as official languages in Zimbabwe.

#### 5.4.6 Good Initiatives Supporting PB: PRFT Experiences

PRFT through its capacity building Initiatives recorded a number of benefits following capacity building meetings with residents in Masvingo, Bindura, Shurugwi, Gweru and Bulawayo that are inclined towards the promotion of Participatory budgeting in Zimbabwe and these include;

- Shurugwi Town Council (STC) signed an MOU with Midlands State University 's Department of Local Governance Studies to continuously capacity build councilors on performing their duties effectively and on Participatory Budgeting
- Shurugwi Town Council agreed to rope in Shurugwi Residents Association into the Local Budget Committee with plans underway to formalize the agreement through an MOU.
- Gweru Residence and Ratepayers Association embarked on post budget civic engagement to lobby council and advocate for people centred resource allocation and service delivery

#### 5.5.0 Recommendations

In-order to improve the delivery of public services through inclusive governance the following suggestions should be considered.

- PB should be legislated to ensure effective participation in local service provision and planning
- Government should design programs aimed at strengthening the Institutional Capacity of LAs and invest in continuous capacity building for the councillors to bridge the knowledge and capacity gaps.
- Local Authorities must commit financial resources to the PB process and ensure that the process is inclusive and involve all major stakeholders
- Government should develop and cultivate a strong political will at both national and local level to steer the participatory processes such as participatory budgeting.
- The Government through the Ministry of Local Government must align Local Government laws to the Constitution with regards to Devolution (Limit Ministerial Powers) and craft subsidiary legislation that activates provisions of the constitution on devolution
- CSOs should create or demand space to engage local authorities in local budgetary processes
- CSOs should raise awareness among the public on the importance of engaging in local budgeting. CSOs especially Residents Associations should spearhead public awareness and education beyond their membership and structures for the residents to realise their specific

duties and roles. Awareness raising programmes are necessary to demystify partisan politics in budget process so that people are encouraged to participate.

- There must be more projects to capacitate local authorities and other key stakeholders on the role of Residents Associations in local service delivery governance. Residents associations' role should not be viewed from only an angle of providing watchdog but also from an advisory perspective where residents associations can lobby councils with alternative strategies and solutions to deplorable service delivery.

#### **5.5. 1 Key Lessons and Recommendations from the Urban Basic Needs Basket Program**

The PRFT learned that women and youth's participation in local governance issues is largely limited due to a socially construed myth that disregards the importance of their participation. The women and youth that PRFT interfaced with during the advocacy meetings hinted that they were not aware of their rights to participate in local development issues. The knowledge gap with regards to rights to participation is huge in local communities. Awareness raising, simplification and interpretation of local government laws at this level is critical in unlocking the potential of women and youth participation in local governance and development processes.

The relationship between local duty bearers and residents is strained, setting tone for the continuous service delivery failures. Community confidence in local leadership is remarkably low whilst on the other hand local leaders are not extending their reach to address this challenge. There is a huge gulf between service providers and residents in terms of collaborating and partnering in the improvement of local service provision. Business as usual approach which is widely used by duty bearers in addressing local community challenges has alienated certain constituencies within the community. Duty bearers need to restore community confidence in community participation through extending programs to the people and providing spaces for civic engagement. There is an opportunity for PRFT to bridge that gap through dialogue and policy interventions that will demystify the specific duties and expectations from all the actors in the service delivery matrix.

The PRFT observed that communities are receptive to development issues and are eager to participate in the development process of their areas. The awareness raising and advocacy has stimulated communities to participate in community advocacy and engagement, joint action plans to demand accountability. This presents opportunities for further engagements with communities and their local leadership in future programs.

The BNB program has been significant in unearthing socio-economic and environmental problems that grassroots people can relate to. There is need for the BNB as a tool to be broad in terms of incorporating different societal set ups such as farm workers, Artisanal mining communities, peri-urban areas for comparison purposes with Urban and Rural areas that are already covered under the BNB program. This is significant in explaining some of the developments trends that are taking place in migration, area cost of living, labour demand etc. The BNB program should include community self-advocacy tools within its framework for sustainability purposes. This entails training communities to self-design and administer BNB tools as per needs require and develop community action plans, advocacy issues that can be used to engage or petition local authorities and service providers. Disaggregation is

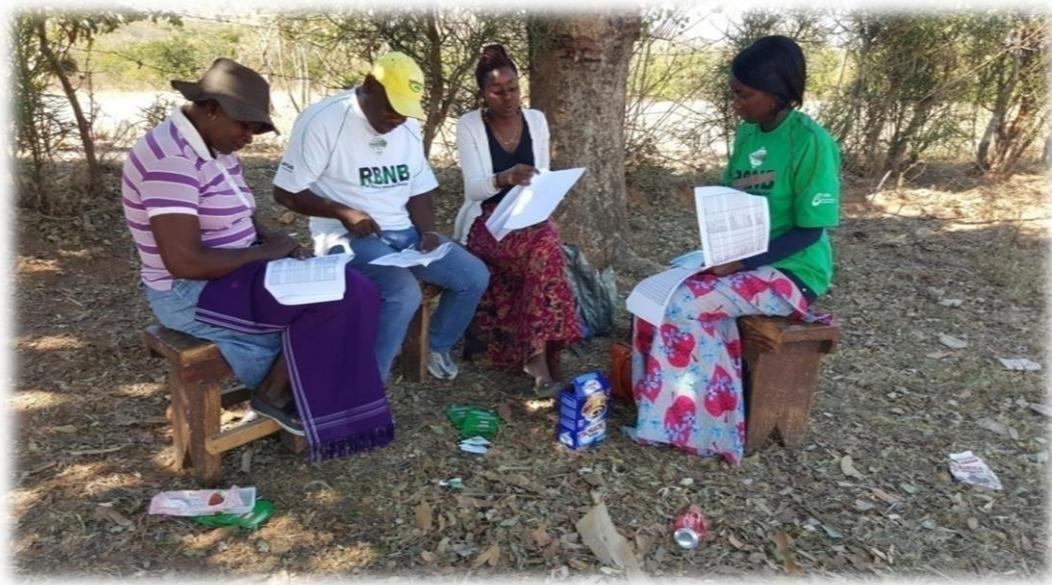
also important in disinterring how different sectors within society are affected differently by the same prevailing socio-economic conditions at given time periods.

## 6.0 APPENDIX



Picture showing households and community leadership who attended PRFT's dissemination meetings in July 2017 in Dora ( Ward 5)





## NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

### Ward 5: Section A

Item	Avg. Cost / Family*	Avg. Quantity Consumed (KGs)	Common Means of Access		
Maize (Meal)	25.16	47.18	Buying		
Fresh maize		6.00	Harvest		
Rice	8.63	9.86	Buying		
Chicken		3.98	Harvest		
Meat(Beef)	9.15	2.20	Buying		
Fresh Fish	3.60	2.24	Buying		
Dry Fish	2.00	0.34	Buying		
Beans	2.31	2.03	Harvest		
Groundnuts (fresh)		4.70	Harvest		
Nyemba	3.00	2.74	Harvest		
Sweet Potatoes	3.00	11.92	Harvest		
Tomatoes	4.47	10.72	Harvest		
Onions	3.00	2.34	Buying		
Rape	1.67	2.37	Buying		
Covo	6.05	5.81	Buying		
Sweetpotato Leaves		4.00	Harvest		
Nhungumira		6.00	Harvest		
Musoni	1.17	1.58	Harvest		
Cabbage	3.30	4.00	Harvest		
Tsungu	2.29	2.62	Harvest		
<b>Processed Foods:</b>					
Sugar	6.88	6.49	Buying		
Salt	0.88	1.42	Buying		
Oil	6.91	3.93	Buying		
Avg./person/day	Consumed Amount	WHO* Recommended Amount	Status	Actual Surplus	Percentage Surplus (%)
Calories (Kcal)	2 225.61	2 430	Deficit	-204.39	-8.4
Protein (g)	66.56	42.20	Surplus	24.36	57.73
Calcium (mg)	428.40	510	Deficit	-81.60	-16
Iron (mg)	22.77	13.70	Surplus	9.07	66.20
Vitamin A (ug)	655.37	680	Deficit	-24.63	-3.62
Thiamin (mg)	1.80	1.02	Surplus	0.78	76.47
Riboflavin (mg)	1.13	1.51	Deficit	-0.38	-33.63
Niacin (mg)	14.29	16.76	Deficit	-2.47	-14.74
Vitamin C (mg)	167.81	28	Surplus	139.81	500

\*WHO – World Health Organisation

## SECTION B: Essential Non-Food Items

Non-Food Items	Ideal	Ideal Cost	Actual	Actual Cost (\$)
Washing powder	1 kg	3.35	0.5	2
Washing soap	4 bars	4.80	2.5	2
Bathing soap	4	3.60	2.45	2.52
Petroleum Jelly	500g	2.58	279.88ml	1.85
Lotion	500g	2.95	322.44	3.67
Toilet paper	2 packs of 4	1.25	-	-
Tooth paste	200ml	2.40	100ml	1
Pads/Cotton Wool	1 pack of 10 pads	3.00	-	-
Shoe polish	100ml	1	-	-
Matches	1 carton	1	1 Carton	1
Batteries for torches	6	4.50	3	2.50
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30.43</b>		<b>16.54</b>

- Data unavailable

## SECTION C: Essential Services

Service	Cost	Distance	Comment
<b>Water</b>	Time		
Garwi		500m	3 boreholes in use
Magodyo		20m	3 boreholes, 2 not in use
Matika Pri. School	-	-	
St. Elizabeth Pri. Sch	-	-	
Secondary School	-	-	No School in Ward 5
Chitaka Clinic	-	-	
Hospital	Between \$2- \$4	+40km	No Hospital
Transport to Mutare	From Villages: Magodyo - \$2, Nyadongo - \$2, Garwi - \$3 Chikukurume - \$3 Ziyera - \$ Matika - \$2	23km	
Hammer Mill	1		

Agricultural Extension	-		
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- Data not available

#### SECTION D: Prevailing Livelihoods of select households in October

	Vegetable Gardening	Brick moulding	Chicken rearing
Input Costs	-	-	-
Sales	-	-	-
Profit/Wage	-	-	-

- Data not available

#### SECTION E: Minimum annual food production for household food security in Dora

	Maize	Groundnuts	Beans
Total Quantity	600 Kg	-	-
Cultivation Area	-	-	-
Required Inputs	Seed/Fertiliser	-	-
Total Input Cost	-	-	-

### WARD 35

#### SECTION A

Item	Average Cost/ Family	Average Quantity Consumed (KGs)	Common Means of Access
Maize (Meal)	23.75	48.75	Buying
Fresh maize		15.00	Harvest
Rice	7.30	9.60	Buying
Chicken	8.00	4.27	Harvest
Meat (Beef)	4.92	1.58	Buying
Fresh Fish	4.30	4.86	Buying/Harvest
Dry Fish	1.83	1.18	Buying
Beans	2.73	3.69	Harvest
Groundnuts (fresh)	6.00	4.82	Harvest
Nyemba	3.50	2.81	Harvest
Sweet Potatoes	3.33	11.13	Harvest
Tomatoes	4.24	7.83	Harvest
Onions	1.36	3.41	Buying
Rape	4.06	2.93	Buying
Covo	4.00	4.41	Buying/Harvest
Musoni	1.00	1.65	Harvest
Cabbage	0.88	0.97	Buying
Tsunga	3.23	3.52	Harvest

Matohwe		2.33	
Processed Foods:			
Sugar	7.75	6.39	Buying
Salt	1.03	1.46	Buying
Oil	9.03	2.56	Buying

## NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Avg./person/day	Consumed Amount	WHO Recommended Amount	Status	Actual Surplus	Percentage Surplus (%)
Calories	2371.60	2 430	Deficit	-58.40	-2.40
Protein	76.77	42.20	Surplus	34.57	81.91
Calcium	305.49	510	Deficit	-204.51	-40.1
Iron	22.53	13.70	Surplus	8.83	64.45
Vitamin A	288.97	680	Deficit	-391.03	-57.50
Thiamin	1.95	1.02	Surplus	0.92	90.2
Riboflavin	0.94	1.51	Deficit	-0.57	-37.75
Niacin	15.77	16.76	Deficit	-0.99	-5.91
Vitamin C	104.45	28	Surplus	76.45	273.04

## SECTION B: Essential Non-Food Items

Non-Food Items	Ideal	Ideal Cost	Actual	Actual Cost (\$)
Washing powder	1 kg	3.35	0.2	1
Washing soap	4 bars	4.80	3.3	4.31
Bathing soap	4	3.60	2.75	2.10
Petroleum Jelly	500g	2.58	292.38g	1.93
Lotion	500g	2.95	358.96g	2.24
Toilet paper	2 packs of 4	1.25	-	
Tooth paste	200ml	2.40	50.5	1
Pads/Cotton Wool	1 pack of 10 pads	3.00	-	
Shoe polish	100ml	1	-	
Matches	1 carton	1	1 carton	1
Batteries for torches	6	4.50	4.67	1.67
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30.43</b>		<b>15.25</b>

## SECTION C: Essential Services

Service	Cost	Distance	Comment
<b>Water</b>	Time	+1km	Jan- July wells
Chisamba	-	-	8 boreholes (to be verified)
Mambondiani	-	-	3 boreholes

<b>Primary Schools</b>			
Kuhudzai	-	-	
Mutukwa	-	-	
Mhandambiri	-	-	
<b>Secondary School</b>			
Dora	-	-	
<b>Clinic</b>			
Dora			
Hospital	\$2	+25km	No Hospital in Dora
<b>Transport to Mutare</b>			
From Mutukwa	\$4	-	
Mambondiani	\$4	-	
Hammer Mill	-	-	
Agricultural Extension	-	-	

- Data not available

#### SECTION D: Prevailing Livelihoods of select households in October

	Vegetable Gardening	Brick moulding	Chicken rearing
Input Costs	-	-	-
Sales	-	-	-
Profit/Wage	-	-	-

-Data not available

#### SECTION E: Minimum annual food production for household food security in Dora

	Maize	Groundnuts	Beans
Total Quantity			
Cultivation Area			
Required Inputs	Seed 15kg /4	20kg seed/ha	5kg

	hactares@\$33		
	Compound D 50kg @\$38	manure	20kg fertiliser
	Top Dressing AN 30 Kg \$38	-	-
	manure	-	-
Yield	150kg	-	-
Total Input Cost	-	-	-

- Data not available

## Structure of RBNB Questionnaire

The RBNB tool has 5 sections. **Section A** provides information on the macro- (protein, carbohydrates and fats) and micronutrients (vitamins such as Vitamins B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub> and C, and minerals such as Iron, Calcium and Niacin) consumed by an average household. This information was obtained from the food nutrition tables compiled by the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the Food and Nutrition Cooperation programme between East, Central and Southern African Countries (ECSA) in 2011. For uniformity, these tables are also used by the Food and Nutrition Council of Zimbabwe. From the food consumption information the households provide, the foods macro- and micronutrient quantities are calculated using these tables. Deficiencies of these nutrients are likely to result in severe health problems. The nutrients in the RBNB are defined below.

**Protein** – vital in building and maintaining body tissue. Deficiency causes severe malnutrition especially in infants and children.

**Calcium** – builds strong bones and teeth.

**Iron** – this is an essential component of red blood cells. Deficiency mainly affects women and children and causes tiredness and lowered performance. The iron present in animal products is absorbed by the human body better than the iron found in plants.

**Vitamin A** – this is needed for healthy eyes and for speedy recovery after an infection or injury. Night blindness is a result of mild deficiency while severe deficiency leads to permanent blindness and the increased severity of pneumonia and diarrhea. Measles infection increases the need for Vitamin A.

**Thiamin** (Vitamin B<sub>1</sub>), **Riboflavin** (Vitamin B<sub>2</sub>) and **Niacin** (Nicotinic Acid) - these vitamins play a key role in many reactions in the body. These reactions include those which make it possible to use the energy in food.

**Vitamin C** – one of its most important functions is in connective tissue (wound healing). Deficiency of Vitamin C results in Scurvy.

**Section B** of the RBNB highlights the cost of non-food essentials such as the cost of milling maize, soap, batteries for torches, paraffin etc. This cost is juxtaposed against the ideal quantities of the non-food essentials.

**Section C** provides information on the availability of services including medical, educational, transportational, agricultural extension, milling and the provision of water.

**Section D** gives a summary of the prevailing livelihoods of households in the area and finally **Section E** provides information provides the minimum annual food production for household food security in Dora.

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