



**Scope for Empowering Women through Entrepreneurial  
Development in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable (FFV) Sector in  
Zimbabwe**

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## **Abstract**

This study investigated, the nature of women's agriculture entrepreneurship in rural development; obstacles and best practices of women's entrepreneurship in the FFV sector; key policies, institutions and drivers promoting or inhibiting women entrepreneurship. Critical questions concerning the nature of incomes generated through FFV entrepreneurship and the resultant living standards particularly among women were raised. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed to investigate inherent and overt processes hindering FFV entrepreneurs along the chain nodes. Key places for data collection therefore were production sites, marketing routes and the main FFV markets. The survey was largely done in two districts Mazowe in Mashonaland Central province and Goromonzi in Mashonaland East province. At the same time, FFV marketers from these two districts were tracked and interviewed in the market destination in Harare Metropolitan and surrounding towns such as Chitungwiza, Ruwa and Norton.

Results from the quantitative data show that while women constitute the majority of producers and marketers in the FFV sector; they face specific challenges that impede full beneficiation from FFV enterprises. On the production side, access to and control over productive resources such as land remains contested as evident in the varied tenure arrangements in Mazowe and Goromonzi. Development agencies and private companies have intervened by providing agronomy services to guide production of FFV intended for niche and export markets. However, contracting arrangements remain depressed among producers, because of past problems in the contracts. The key recommendations are on addressing land tenure, provision of microfinance, improving infrastructure, streamlining government regulations on FFV trading, and collective organisation of women entrepreneurs in the informal sector.

**Key words:** entrepreneurship, production, fresh fruit and vegetables, markets, policy.

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**Map of survey sites in Zimbabwe**



## **List of Acronyms**

AIDS	Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome
AGRITEX	Agricultural Extension
DA	District Administrator
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FFV	Fresh Fruit and Vegetables
FDGs	Focused Discussion Groups
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RDC	Rural District Council
SMEs	Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
USD	United States Dollar

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Background and the research problem**

Zimbabwe has undergone a major economic crisis from 2000, which was more telling in the agriculture sector. In Zimbabwe over 60% of the population depend on agriculture and the majority (80%>) are women, hence economic decline has negatively affected most. However, from 2009, agriculture has been on a recovery path, yet the sector continues to lag behind (Matondi, 2012). It is perhaps in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (FFV) that women smallholder farmers or entrepreneurs have a stronger hand, as this sector is hardly regarded as important by men. In fact, at the production level, men allocate land for FFV production to women, especially for family nutrition, and reserve land for field seasonal crops as their preserve. Women, also dominate the smallholder FFV markets, though new forms of competition are emerging, especially from the youths. Women, though continue to face structural constraints, which requires a close examination of the forces inhibiting their economic participation, especially in a sector they dominate. In fact, the emergence of small to medium scale farms after the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP), carried out from 2000 to date, could have provided scope for women empowerment with access to land for FFV production. The reality is that there are numerous barriers that affect women entrepreneurs in the FFV sector.

Women are a significant economic entrepreneurial force whose contributions to local, national and global economies are far reaching. Women produce and consume, manage businesses and households, earn income, hire labor, borrow and save, and provide a range of services for businesses and workers. Yet, the value of their contribution is either missed in economic accounting or simply suppressed in economic planning. This study sought to understand the role of women in the FFV, the production activities they are engaged in, the incomes they derive, the facilitatory or inhibiting factors they face and the meanings for people's economies with respect to the FFV. The study examined women entrepreneurship within the context of an institutional space with actors and rules, regulations as well as customs that govern women's entrepreneurship. This approach was adopted because the governance of agriculture in general happens within the context of a dynamic policy environment. This study uses the concept of competitiveness as a basis for providing options for upgrading women smallholder entrepreneurs. The FFV value chain is being shaped by the on-going contestation over the economy. Zimbabwe has seen the rise of a spontaneous

economy since the formation of the inclusive government in 2009. This economy, at the micro-end is now dominated by women as producers and traders of a variety of home grown and imported food and other goods.

The first observation is that common people and especially women are rising to establish and grow their own economies in response to the failure of the state and markets. This is giving rise to an embryonic smallholder, where households and communities have effectively designed their own small “businesses” by behaving in ways that differ from the assumptions common in economic models. A second development setting is the emergence of grassroots differentia organization manifesting through institutional transformation. In this case, people do what is practically possible to look after their families, with little reference to government and policy. A third relevant pattern hinges on the counter rise of markets as seen through supermarketisation deriving substantial reinforcement and benefits from the weakness of the state and the economic struggles of the majority.

These three patterns manifest themselves differently in both the source of the FFV to the end consuming markets. Through a multiple and comparative analysis at source, route and destination of the FFV, the study provokes questions why are smallholders rising and what needs to be done to make their work better. In an emerging spontaneous economy where 90% of the people are officially unemployed, a large percentage of the population is composed of marketers, many of them marketing FFV. However, Harare has experienced a sharp increase in the demand for food. The last population census (2002) shows the population to be around 2 million. Forecasts show that it may have doubled in the last decade. Yet, agriculture and in particular FFV have not grown in tandem to provide food and other related products. New market demands requirements have seen given rise to new demands for a wide range of fresh vegetables and fruit throughout the year. The Zimbabwean market of FFV has altered significantly in response to globalization, international shifts in the marketing, rapid also contributed to the current market features.

New forms of inequities are sprouting especially in the market space. This is seen through the lax import arrangements that provide space for foreign FFV produce than Zimbabwean produce. On the marketing front, large commercial entities with cheap financial clout tend to push out smallholder producers in Zimbabwe who largely cannot access cheap finance in the financial markets. It is imperative that government and other players address the question of expensive credit that has the effect of creating inequities in the FFV sector. The formal and

informal, existing in loosely implemented market regulations, limited intervention from the state and stiff competition among chain actors i.e. smallholders, transporters, retailers, market marshals, wholesale processors and retailers and regulatory authorities are negatively impacting smallholder women entrepreneurs.

Promoting women's economic and social rights requires that they have equal access to and control over productive resources as a means of production. However, women struggle to gain access to the means of production for a variety of reasons, particularly so for those who are rural based, and are dependent on agriculture for a living. Although agriculture provides the 'easiest' entry for women to access the means of production, it is often a contested terrain because men have overt control over land, and the other factors of production (capital, skills and labour), making it difficult for women to secure their livelihoods in this sector. In many cases, women have resorted to being purveyors of products from agriculture that they buy at a premium, and have ventured into setting up farm gate agricultural kiosks, while also exploring options of getting products to the markets under difficult circumstances as a means of livelihoods.

## **1.2 Context of the Study**

### **1.2.1 Defining women empowerment**

While considerable research has been conducted on the reasons why women dominate the informal economy and their inclination to operate small ventures (Mcpherson, 1998), less is known of the practical constraints they face at production and in the market place. While government has attempted to promote women, much of the interventions have been through micro-projects than full reforms of policies that hinder women's enterprises. A whole ministry specifically for women has been on the Zimbabwe map since 1980, but it remains on the periphery of policy making and implementation, and tends to be given to women to lead it. At the same time, development agencies have responded to the need for women to earn incomes by making relative small investments into income generating projects which more often than not fail because they are motivated by welfare and not development concerns (Mehra, 1997). The research therefore sought to establish the costs and benefits on women of an environment that remain unfriendly for women to do business.

The question then is what is the meaning of women empowerment? Women empowerment is defined as the ability to increase the capacity of women to become more self-reliant and act in

confidence. The term empowerment has different meanings depending on the socio-economic, political and cultural context in which it is presented. Overall empowerment can be perceived as a process or as outcome/goal and can take place at different levels (individual and community). The World Bank (2001) defines empowerment as the expansion of freedom of choice and actions and increasing one's authority and control over the resources and decisions that affects one's life. Empowerment is when women gain the ability to take ownership and control of their lives, in an environment that provides opportunities for making choices. While empowerment depends on women, through consciousness raising, participation, and self-organisation, it can also be facilitated through education, capacity building, training and other measures.

Empowerment conveys a psychological sense of personal control or influence, which gives individuals confidence. At a broader level, empowerment is concerned with the actual social influence, political power and legal rights of an individual. It should be noted that the capacity to make choices is influenced by agency (ability to make meaningful choices) and opportunity structure (formal and informal contexts within which actors make decisions for example regulations). Janssens *et al.*, (2006), showed that empowerment has often been confused with such concepts as development, social mobility, transformation and equality. Empowerment is associated with equality in terms of income, gender, class, race, earnings etc. Janssens *et al.*, adopted from Bromley (1995) puts emphasis on the institutional bases of development as a process of empowerment rather than on the reform of the institutions themselves.

Empowerment is not simply given because societies and individuals have had to struggle to be empowered (Bennet, 2002). While for men, it is easy for them to find space for their empowerment, the same cannot be said for women. Women have multiple roles: mothers, wives, farmers, and entrepreneurs. While each role requires interaction with diverse actors, it is their circumstances in African patrilineal customary set up that impose different demands and expectations on women. As a mother, a woman is expected to support her children and as wife she is required to support her husband. However, when it comes to the economy, women can only become an entrepreneur under their husbands. Given the multiple tasking, women's enterprises tend to be less effective, in terms of high income returns but highly productive for meeting the needs, especially food for the family.

The study sought to establish the constraints that women entrepreneurs face in the FFV sector from an empowerment perspective. This is because the sector provides a sustainable means

for livelihoods for many women, yet they face specific challenges that require to be addressed at a policy and practical level. The starting point being that the policy and regulatory environment often has a significant impact on the ability of women to engage in business activities (Matondi, *et al.*, 2012). The study therefore interrogated and problematized bureaucratic, legal and social hurdles women entrepreneurs' encounter in formalizing and running their business ventures towards possible reforms in policy and practice necessary to enhance women's full economic participation.

### **1.2.2 Entrepreneurial challenges for women**

Promoting women to be entrepreneurs in their production activities has been proven to have an impact on poverty reduction and therefore should be seen as the entry point in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (Mehra, 1997). When women are unable to access formal employment, they often seek livelihoods for themselves and their dependants in the informal sector. Some women choose to become self-employed or owners of small-scale enterprises. Their choice to start their own business is often not the result of a lofty entrepreneurial desire, but rather a necessity because they lack other viable means of income.

A study on women entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe concluded that Zimbabwean female owners have strong entrepreneurial competence but lack the ability and support to develop their firms to their full potential (Mboko *et al.*, 2009). While there was a high participation of women in the micro and small business sector (Mcpherson, 1998), their livelihoods remained weak. Most studies, have established that most of the businesses were very small and a very small percentage had grown in terms of turnover over a period of ten years (Mboko *et al.*, 2009). The question is why do women owned enterprises remain small and without sustainable growth?

Women in Zimbabwe at the national level have largely been prominent in fighting for their empowerment through advocacy, sharing knowledge, tools and techniques in order to change and improve the quality of their own lives and societies. The fundamental goal of empowerment is to help individuals within the society to improve the quality of their own lives and share equitably in the benefits of economic growth. The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) recognized the constraints faced by women, and provided a twin approach of supporting women directly through two ministries: women, gender and community development and Small and Medium Enterprises.

However, there still remains the need for the formulation and implementation of the pro women macro-economic frameworks that are supportive of sustained enterprise growth through an effective legal and regulative environment. The current laws that protect and uphold the rights of entrepreneurs are cumbersome and costly to access, more so for rural women (Doing Business, 2009). In addition there are structural problems that women face that include: lack of a means of production (particularly land and capital); difficulties acquiring resources such as human; inhibiting social capital in the form of beliefs, norms and practices; unfriendly institutions that govern the everyday business and generally inaccessibility of policies or not be aware of their policies and therefore their rights.

Yet, a number of factors mediate women's access to productive resources. The key ones include age, literacy, rural or urban location, health, and physical wellbeing and customary systems. In Africa, individuals with initial endowments of productive resources such as land wealth, and physical and financial capital, are better able to access additional productive resources and frequently face higher returns in existing markets. Most of the men tend to have access to these, whereas, women entrepreneurs are more likely to work in the formal economy. Women entrepreneurs with little more than their labor to sell, are likely to cluster in the informal economy, in small production units that are unregistered and where they may not pay taxes on income, labor, or capital. These women entrepreneurs face entirely different sets of opportunities and constraints scaling up their economic activities and entering new markets. Differentiating those factors that make some women entrepreneurs more vulnerable, or less able to take advantage of opportunities to expand and upgrade their activities, will prove essential for the appropriate design and delivery of policy, programs, and projects.

It should be noted that women entrepreneurs differ from their male counterparts in that they are less likely to have prior business experience or training, they choose entrepreneurship as a result of experiencing glass ceiling imposed by economic meltdown. The majority of the rural women in Zimbabwe are often ignored in economic production and growth. The study focused on rural women in the FFV sector, as these are generally not seen as entrepreneurs but mere subsistence farmers. The majority of women led FFV ventures remain small and informal because support for women entrepreneurs is often given through social welfare or community development initiatives that place greater emphasis on the provision of micro finance and not support for enterprise development delivered through economic ministries.

Zimbabwe is a patriarchal society, where men have rights to ownership of resources and decision-making. Using traditional culture that apportion rights to the resources, the customs then, cascades into attitudes that end as beliefs in the policy arena. Yet policies and laws should be equal for men and women. For instance, rural women rarely approach financial institutions with proposal for their businesses due to fear or ignorance as they regard these institutions as existing for some category of people and not them. This means that women tend to loose opportunities, which can grow and sustain their entrepreneurship. However, small entrepreneurs have developed a customary way of doing business in an informalised economy, which the study sought to establish. The study examined, the factors that limit or promote women's income generating activities at the source (farm level), the nature of their mobility, market information, effect of middle traders, how they access markets, the income they get and how the deal with institutional constraints in the FFV sector.

### **1.3 The FFV sector and its importance for entrepreneurship**

In Zimbabwe, agriculture contributed about 14% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) before 2000. Agriculture is composed of a smallholder and large commercial sector connected to domestic and international markets. Crop and livestock production have traditionally been the key agricultural activities, with production performance before 2000 having been of high standard and quality, making Zimbabwe self-sufficient in food matters. In the last decade, Zimbabwe has transitioned from being recognised as the breadbasket of the southern African region, to a bread bowl. This follows the fast track land reform programme which was aimed at redressing land imbalances which were skewed towards some 4500 white commercial farmers. This programme, coupled with extreme weather events resulted in a food deficit in the country. Zimbabwe political problems, have contributed to international isolation by some western countries, and this has been worsened by the inability to pay for balance of support from institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Funds for economic development, including agriculture from programme such as Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) from the United States of America have been inaccessible to Zimbabwe. The economic meltdown characterized by collapse of input and output markets had the most telling effect on the agricultural sector. This mostly affected the small-scale farmers, especially women as they lost out on the economic benefits that could be realised in agricultural activities.

The FFV sector was one of the fastest growing agricultural sectors in the 1990s (Moyo, 2000; Heri, 2000). At its peak during the late 1990s FFV was the second largest agricultural foreign exchange earner after tobacco, recording exports figures in 1999 of US\$144 million. During that period FFV contributed an average of four percent to Growth Domestic Product (Musarurwa, 2010). The size of the domestic market is estimated to be in excess of twice the size of exports (i.e. approximately US\$ 70 million per year in 2006). The Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development in 2010 noted that the FFV sector output reached 43,000 tonnes mark up from the 2009 figure of 35,000 tonnes This was in line with the 18,8 percent projected growth for the year (Musarurwa, 2010). Significant employment losses were experienced, as agricultural labour is less than 100,000 (or the whole agricultural industry from 230-350,000 workers), of which the FFV sector probably commands less than 50,000 from a peak of over 100,000 in 1996 (Moyo, 2000).

In Zimbabwe, production of fresh produce was fairly diversified, with smallholder farmers using mostly less than 1 hectare to produce a variety of produce such as brassicas, carrots, onions, tomatoes, butternut, sweet potatoes, water melons, mangoes, bananas, pineapples, avocado, and deciduous fruits, in addition to the vegetables consumed at household level. Most rural households maintain vegetable gardens and produce vegetables for domestic consumption and sell the surplus. Most of the crop is sold within the village, wholesale and municipal markets in towns. In the past (until 2000), the large-scale commercial sector was relatively strong in the production of high value crops such as peas, green beans, baby corn, lettuce, potatoes, Chinese cabbage, passion fruit, stingless mangoes, citrus, bananas, and pineapples.

The Fast Track Land Reform Programme implemented in 2000 broadened the production base, with smallholders now playing a significant role. The question is: Does such a broadened base contribute to entrepreneurship and what impact has it had on women? A key issue is what is the meaning of this significant change? Greenwood *et al.*, (2002) noted that jolts in the form of upheaval, technological disruption, competitive discontinuities, and regulatory changes can force the emergence of entrepreneurship as people try to survive trying times. There are new challenges that have emerged in productivity, outputs and marketing within the new agrarian system. From 2009, agriculture has been on a recovery path, yet the sector continues to lag behind (Matondi, 2012). The emergence of small to medium scale farms seem to be ideal for FFV production, yet in reality there are numerous

other variables that are critical for a farmer to be successful in this sector. The Kenyan FFV sector provides, critical lessons of how smallholders can be dominant in this sector. For instance only and when smallholders are fully integrated in both domestic and export markets that are highly responsive, and where the infrastructure is top range to allow for the speedier movement of the perishable goods will they succeed.

Following the agrarian transformation, a majority of smallholder farmers are not adequately or successfully demanding (or utilizing) the services provided by commodity chain service delivery institutions. This poor interaction between the service institutions and the farmers' microenvironment has resulted in smallholder farmers being trapped in a vicious cycle of low production and subsequent poverty, despite being on land that can provide the basis for their own economic empowerment. For this reason, one could argue that the major faulty line in the agrarian reform is that it largely killed the FFV sector, and in the process affecting women's entrepreneurship in that sector.

#### **1.4 Research objectives and questions**

The research was guided by the following objectives and research questions:

**Objective 1:** To identify key drivers for entrepreneurship in the FFV chain. Research questions under this objective include:

1. What are the key drivers? How have these evolved over time?
2. Do some women remain in the informal economy by choice because of what they perceive as disadvantages of running a formal business e.g. punitive tax regimes and what are perceived as cumbersome registration processes?
3. What is the influence of gender difference on the characteristics of entrepreneurship?
4. What motivates entrepreneurship for some women and not others?
5. What are the styles of the entrepreneur?
6. How do women entrepreneurs select the type of industry they venture in?
7. What is the size of the enterprises? How integrated are the enterprises?
8. What are the channels of financing?

**Objective 2:** To establish the nature of women's' agriculture entrepreneurship and role in rural development. The study identified and assessed how women farmers in FFV, in Mazowe and Goromonzi districts are conducting business and how the business model is structured. The research questions guiding this objective:

1. What is the meaning of ‘farming as a business’? To what extent do women incorporate business principles in their FFV activities?
2. What is the extent of business development within the context of a largely agrarian society? What are the forward and backward linkages?
3. Who are the main players in the agro-industry? What are the class and gender dynamics?
4. What institutions facilitate the linkages between business and industry, and particularly women?

**Objective 3:** Establish the nature of incomes generated through FFV entrepreneurship and the resultant living standards of participants, particularly women. The key research questions are:

1. Can low-income generating activities be classified as entrepreneurship? Why?
2. What are the income levels generated through FFV based entrepreneurship? Can families survive on those incomes? And can the income generate new business streams?
3. What risks do women face when they invest their incomes in the business? What measures do they take to limit the risks?

**Objective 4:** To identify obstacles and some of the best practices of women’s entrepreneurship in the FFV sector. The following key research questions applied:

1. What are the gender dynamics, norms and practices that grant access to resources and opportunities in the commercial arena?
2. What are the existing opportunities and how have these been exploited?
3. What best practices emerge from women entrepreneurship? What are the driving forces? To what extent have the best practices been adopted?
4. To what extent do the reproductive roles of women affect their entrepreneurship activities?
5. Are there significant differences between male and female entrepreneurs in their individual characteristics and in the characteristics of their ventures?
6. What are the individual characteristics (education, management skills, management style, motivation for start-up, perceptions of environment, values and attitudes, marital status, and growth intentions) increases the likelihood of entrepreneurs to be female owned or run?

7. What organizational characteristics (age, size, location, legal form, initial resources, and non-relatives among employees) increase the probability of SMEs to be owned by female entrepreneurs?

**Objective 5:** To identify the key policies and institutions that promotes or inhibits women entrepreneurship in FFV. Specific research questions were:

1. What current policies and laws affect women entrepreneurs in the FFV sector? What are the basis of these policies and laws at the local and national levels?
2. What specific policy hindrances do women entrepreneurs face?
3. What are the best policy practices that have facilitated the development of entrepreneurship in the FFV sector?
4. What is the nature of financing mechanisms for income generating projects? What is the source? What procedures are followed? And who largely are the beneficiaries?
5. What is the role of central government in agro-entrepreneurship? How does government identify the specific needs of rural entrepreneurs?
6. Are Rural District Councils playing any role in the supporting mechanisms for agro-entrepreneurship and what is the form of support?

**Objective 6:** Identify options for better inclusion of women in the value chain for sustainable food security. The following are the research questions:

1. How are development programmes initiated?
2. What approaches will best deliver women's entrepreneurship in the FFV sector? Should the focus be on a market or growth based approach and why?
3. What best practices from Zimbabwe and elsewhere can inform the growth and development of women entrepreneurship in the FFV sector?

## **2.0 Framing the issues**

A combination of theoretical constructs were used to frame the issues in the FFV sector, which enabled the identification of the challenges faced by small scale women entrepreneurs. An institutional approach (Meagher, 2006; Lund, 2006) to connect gender and entrepreneurship was used. The study borrowed from North (1990:) who pointed out that, *“Institutions are the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction”* and distinguishes between formal and informal institutions. Informal institutions comprise of codes of conduct, norms of behaviour, and conventions, while formal institutions include political and judicial rules, economic rules, and

contracts. Both formal and informal constraints might inhibit or prohibit entrepreneurship. Formal institutions create opportunity fields for entrepreneurship while informal institutions influence opportunity recognition of (potential) entrepreneurs. In the case of female entrepreneurship, relevant formal institutions are the laws for gender equality and regulations against gender-based discrimination, social security arrangements for maternity, tax regulations, etc. Informal institutions such as attitudes and beliefs about the roles of women in society may also influence female entrepreneurship.

The point of departure in this study is that local entrepreneurial practices are indisputably infused with resources access and control. However, much of the difference on men and women's empowerment is played in informal, clientelist and informal domains, where men have significant control. Given Zimbabwe's cultural roots, with gender-based division of labour, issues of resource control and beneficiation stand at the heart of resource contestation. It is perhaps in the agriculture value chain where there are contestations on resource control and usage. Access to resources such as land, water and technology, including capital can be treated as empowerment. However, agricultural policy should ideally guide the sector, while institutions oversee the implementation of the policy towards fostering broad based economic empowerment. This has been lacking in Zimbabwe, creating a situation where farmers and actors operate in a policy vacuum, meaning opportunities in the FFV are not being optimally exploited.

The institutional analysis was backed with a variety of approaches such as the grounded theory to generate empirical data to explain the institutional phenomenon. (Boettke and Coyne, 2009). We selected the grounded theory because it is ideal for exploring integral social relationships and the behaviour of groups where there has been little exploration of the contextual factors that affect individual's lives (Crooks 2001). This helped us to go beyond conjecture and preconception to getting data and analysing it to understand the underlying processes of what is going on, so that professionals can intervene with confidence to help resolve the entrepreneurs' main concerns'. The grounded theory was preferred because it allows participants to identify what they see as a problem in their area and how they manage the challenges that they face, which then became the basis for the practical recommendations we made from this study.

The study was also guided by feminist perspectives to explain the position of women in micro enterprises. Feminist theory is concerned with women's rights. Feminist theory comprises two

major distinct branches – liberal feminism and social feminism - with different assumptions regarding the nature and the reasons for gender differences (Clifford, 1996). Liberal feminism holds that men and women will behave differently because of situational factors, while social feminism assumes that gender differences in behaviour are caused by dispositional factors (Fischer, 1992). In simple terms, feminist theory is a theory on women's rights and gender equality. It involves the study of women's roles in society, which include their rights, privileges, interests, and concerns. It serves as an extension to feminism, which evaluates the rightful place of women in the society. Therefore the argument is that men and women exhibit fundamentally different views of the world because of differences in their socialization. Thus according to this perspective, male and female entrepreneurs might differ in their traits, behaviours, and experiences, while their ventures might differ in their characteristics and outcomes. In the last paragraph emphasis seemed to be on how tradition and culture influences gender dynamics and therefore women's inability to enter entrepreneurship.

A gender analysis, (Kabeer, 2003) was done as a basis for understanding gender stereotypes that exist in the informal sector as part of identifying obstacles that women experience when starting and running a business. Gender stereotypes are sets of attributes ascribed to the groups of men and women by the virtue of their sex. Stereotyping is a cognitive mechanism to simplify and organize the complex world (Malhotra, 2002). Empirical evidence shows that gender stereotypes are very difficult to change. The problem is that gender stereotypes are inaccurate and do not apply to individual group members. Therefore, gender stereotypes lead to faulty reasoning and biased feelings and actions. Thus, gender stereotypes in entrepreneurship may influence women's decisions regarding the starting and the running of a business. The study focused on the different gender roles of women and men and how these impact on women's entrepreneurial development and subsequent growth.

### **3.0 Methodology and Data Collection**

#### **3.1 General methodology issues**

The work builds on previous work in Mazowe district, which enabled the study to ride. The study identified changing entrepreneurship dynamics, which allowed a closer examination of the linkages and multiplier effect of FFV. Yet, there was need to examine how the broad and basic data on structure of production system(s) and land use, infrastructure, institutions, social relationships, patterns of state private sector, affect entrepreneurship. The study carefully examined how formal and informal rules and regulations were shaping the nature of

entrepreneurship. At the same time, the study was influenced by the defined geographical features that influence FFV production such as, soils, water, forests; cleared arable land, settlements in the study sites. In addition, the social features such as culture, attitudes, relations, were also examined as key facets that explains entrepreneurial behaviour. Entrepreneurship was also premised on some enablers in the form of services such as electricity, roads, bus stops, clinics, schools, growth points, general stores, farm supplies store, electricity connections and phone connections and usage. In this study, government and local authorities service provision was examined, because these providers were key in providing a platform for women entrepreneurship.

### 3.2 Primary data collection

The data was collected through several surveys at production level and marketing. Questionnaires were targeted at producers (land use and production related data). In Mazowe communal areas (19 respondents) which include Negomo Irrigation Scheme, and in the A1 resettlement areas (17 respondents). In Goromonzi: Communal areas the survey covered 4 Wards (Ward 1, 2, 3, 4), with the sample household interviews of 431 producers. The household survey responses are depicted in Table 3.1. The marketer survey had a sample of 65 FFV respondents sourcing primarily from the Showground market in Domboshava, which is in Goromonzi district. The quantitative data was qualified with qualitative survey. Key informant interviews were done through engaging informants from NGOs, private sector and relevant government ministries involved in the FFV value chain (in both Goromonzi and Mazowe) to appreciate the influence they exert on the different chain nodes - production, transportation and marketing.

**Table 3.1: Gender patterns of respondents**

Gender	Mazowe Producers /Marketers		Goromonzi producers		Goromonzi marketers	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Male	23	60	200	46.4	9	14
Female	15	40	231	53.6	56	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ruzivo WEH field survey (2012)

Notes: the sample survey had a lot of multiple answers that were also analysed, which means that the analysis of the response was far greater than the total number of respondents indicated in the table.

Key personnel in organisations and institutions such as the City of Harare, Government Ministries (Gender and Community Development and Ministry of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises), Several NGOs (Mercy Corps, Fintrac, SNV, International Rescue Committee,

Agricultural Partnership Trust), Government marketing Parastatals (Zimtrade, Zimbabwe Investment Authority), Private companies such as Selby, FAVCO, Matanuska, SunSpan and One farmer's union - Zimbabwe Farmers Union, a national representative body for smallholder farmers were interviewed.

In Mazowe, a total of 8 Focus Group Discussions were conducted, while several meetings were held at the village level with traditional and government leaders. Observation at the production site and at the market end was also an important approach used for verifying data and checking on key trends. The approach involved observing processes, things and phenomenon. Some narrative interviews were done, so as to elicit the detailed life histories of a selected few of the producers and marketers. A total of 15 narratives of producer/marketers in Mazowe District as well as 45 producer and 27 transporters from Goromonzi District were compiled to capture the personal experiences of the concerned producer/marketers and transporters servicing the FFV sector.

The data entry process involved transcriptions of field notes, key informant interviews and categorisation of emerging issues within the responses. Quantitative data capturing and analysis for the producer and marketer surveys was conducted using Epi-data and Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). The final analysis from both qualitative and quantitative data was tied to the initial concept notes, literature review to enable comprehensive analysis per working paper.

### **3.3 Study sites**

The study was carried out in Mazowe District; one of the seven districts in Mashonaland Central. Its administration office is found 60km out of Harare. The total land area is 453 892 hectares. The district lies in natural region IIa and thus has relatively high and reliable rainfall (750-1000mm per annum) and is favourable for intensive FFV. Mazowe is divided into 35 wards, 13 of which constitute Chiweshe communal area. Chiweshe communal area forms a block measuring 86 200 hectares which is surrounded by commercial farms. There are several irrigation schemes that are managed collectively (Negomo and Kanhukanwe) and others that are individually managed as small gardens.

Goromonzi District lies in agro-ecological Natural Region II (a) and II (b) characterised by high rainfall patterns ranging from 1000-1200mm per annum. However, variability within different parts of the district and within different years is very high. Climate varies in altitude

from between 1300m and 1550m above sea level. The district has a temperature range of 21 – 32°C, with an average temperature of 25°C per annum. Goromonzi consists of 25 administrative wards; the survey focused on 4 wards (Wards 1-4) with high concentration of FFV activity (production and marketing). The gardens are mainly located along main water sources such as rivers and small streams. Two major rivers called Masikandoro and Nyahuri supply water in the four wards although they dry up at some point in summer, which presents water-sourcing challenges for producers during that period. Regarding market access, a transport network exists along trunk roads leading to Harare although farmers residing further away from the main business centre are faced with transport challenges owing to poor road infrastructure.

Harare is the largest and capital city of Zimbabwe located in the north-eastern part of the country. Satellite towns of Norton, Ruwa and Chitungwiza surround the metropolitan city. Harare is the country's administrative, commercial and communications centre. Harare is the epicentre of the formal and informal marketing of FFV produced both in communal and commercial areas outside the city. Key markets have since been established including Mbare Musika, Lusaka market in Highfields and various retailers, supermarkets and wholesalers. Mbare is a high-density area in terms of population and accommodation. The FFV market forms the core of activities at Mbare Musika with other economic activities sprouting as offshoots from the main FFV market either to provide services or easier access to various commodities for producer/marketers. The market plays a significant role in FFV price determination and has been influential on FFV prices in other markets around the country.

Several traders from various parts of the country converge at Mbare Musika market on a daily basis with their produce. Most of these traders are farmers from outside Harare who bring their FFV commodities to the market, while middle persons including wholesale and supermarket owners, retailers, vendors and other marketers also come to purchase FFV at Mbare. FFV commodities from other countries such as South Africa, Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana are also being delivered at the Mbare Musika market. There is a bus terminus at Mbare, which makes it a central zone for the disbursement of various FFV commodities to various parts of the country. Thus, Mbare Musika is a major trading forte for the smallholder majority.

## 4.0 Key drivers for entrepreneurship in the FFV chain

### 4.1 Zimbabwe's FFV corridors

In Zimbabwe, there are dominant areas that provide a competitive advantage for FFV entrepreneurs, especially at the production level. While any land with water can provide the basis for success in FFV production, there are distinct FFV corridors in Zimbabwe that have emerged because they are traditionally associated with the production of FFV (Box 4.1). Corridor 1 has made a huge economic contribution to smallholder production of fresh vegetables and is dominated by 80 per cent of women as producers and marketers. Corridor 2 has largely been a preserve of large producers, though it has now been transformed with the land reform programme. The non-corridor zones of production are special irrigation schemes established by government or donors such as Negomo, Kanhukanwe, Nyota in Mazowe district and other schemes dotted throughout the country. The peri-urban zones also offer various types of greenhouse vegetable, flower and fruit production. From a policy perspective, investments efforts will be positive if and when financial and technical resources are invested in these corridors.

#### **Box 4.1: Commercial FFV production corridors**

- *Corridor 1: smallholder producers comprise those who have traditionally practiced vegetable types of FFV as a way of life. Such producers come from places such as Domboshawa, Seke, Murehwa and Mistook. The producers in these areas are not influenced by demand or market forces, but produce FFV because it is ingrained in their culture. They take advantage of abundant water resources and the production knowledge passed on from generation to generation within families.*
- *Corridor 2: The eastern highlands (Chimanimani, Nyanga and Chipinge) provides temperate conditions for the production of grapes, apples, banana, and potatoes. Honde Valley is popular for the production of Bananas that women market in Harare, and some NGOs such as SNV are facilitating product management for export.*

The abundant productive resources in Mazowe and Goromonzi Districts – land, water, favorable climate, organized production schemes – are yet to fully translate into high productivity as evidenced by depressed outputs across a very limited range of FFV products. In Mazowe, the majority of the 296 plot-holders at Negomo, for instance, have opted for a seasonal approach to FFV production. In this case, they use land suitable for FFV for the production of maize production and a few legumes to meet their food needs during the rain season (November to March). However, in the winter to autumn season (April to October), they invest in the production of mostly leafy vegetables. Yet women producers in Goromonzi

largely use their land and water for the production of fresh vegetable throughout the year. In general we found that the FFV varieties tended to be narrow, with much of the production devoted to tomatoes and leafy vegetables. There was high productivity in these ranges of vegetables because the essential technical knowledge and access to inputs is very high. However, in Goromonzi, there were phenomenal losses attributed to poor farmer planning and over production by all smallholders at the same time of the same products, which created a situation of oversupply.

FFV is highly sensitive to seasonality as can be seen in the case of Negomo irrigation scheme in Mazowe. In Goromonzi, the participants in Focused Discussions Groups (FDGs) in wards 1 to 4 (June, 2012) indicated that seasonality was a less risk factor, simply because the terrain being mountainous provides natural conditions of rainfall seepage, which allows for continuous production of fresh vegetables. In general, seasonality limits the period of crop cultivation and may easily cause a large surplus of products in the markets during a period of time. Seasonality can be addressed through adopting appropriate technology, and in the case of Zimbabwe such technologies are non-existent or unknown. Thus suffering from seasonality risk may infer disorganization in marketing planning management or disability in accessing current agricultural information, effective technical assistance, and insufficient farm capital. Women tend to be more worried by seasonality because, it affect their enterprises, for instance they have to abandon FFV production to grown rainfed crops to meet the household food security. Young respondents also seemed to be more sensitive to seasonality risk than the elders.

## **4.2 Characteristics of the entrepreneurs**

### **4.2.1 Gender characteristics of producers and marketers**

In this study women were considered as producers and marketers seeking to expand and scale up their existing market activities. Women and men often work in distinct activities that offer different rewards. In fact, opportunities also differ even though they may have similar education, entrepreneurial ability of skills. Women are relegated to what is regarded as low income earning. Based on this construct, the study sought to understand the position of women in the FFV sector. Men constitute the majority of producers in Mazowe District (60%) while women account for 40%. In Goromonzi, however, women comprise 54% majority of producers compared to 46% male producers (Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1: Gender patterns of Producers**

Gender	Mazowe Producers		Goromonzi producers	
	No	%	No	%
Male	23	60	200	46
Female	15	40	231	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

In both study sites men own and control the means of production. This has been repeated in the new resettlement area, as men largely own the A1 farms, but women mostly use the plots. This suggests household collective action in FFV production and marketing although varying in extent according to each household. Field observations showed husbands and wives often working together in the gardens/plots. On the other hand, divorced and widowed producers account for 3% and 12% respectively. This usually presents additional responsibilities within the households particularly in instances where decisions have to be made regarding income generation and provision of basic requirements for the household.

In terms of market entrepreneurs, in Goromonzi 84% of women were involved in FFV marketing in contrast to 16% of men participating in the same sector. While the study also purposively targeted women to understand their unique situation in the FFV sector, it was apparent from the market observations that more women are involved in fresh produce marketing. Women marketers who are married (76%) were actively participating in the market and bearing the primary responsibility for providing for the family's daily food and economic requirements (table 4.2). Also married women (66%) dominated in the marketing of FFV. This is in addition to the expected household responsibilities of women in the household such as investing time in chores, providing moral and social support to family members among other domestic responsibilities.

**Table 4.2: Marital status of respondents in Goromonzi**

Marital Status	Producers		Marketers	
	No	%	No	%
Single	39	9	11	17
Married	329	76	42	66
Divorced	12	3	6	9
Widowed	51	12	5	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

It can therefore be interpreted that in Goromonzi district, men (84%) tend to be highly mobile given the proximity of Domboshava to Harare the capital city. As such, male producers, while

retaining land for production of FFV, also had alternative and complementary livelihoods in the city or within their immediate locality. In such cases, women then assume the main responsibility for production and marketing of FFV. It was also observed in Goromonzi that social practices such as polygamy influence the increase in the number of female producers particularly in households where two or three women are married to one male producer. This was particularly noted in wards 2 and 4 of Goromonzi during the fieldwork as families, particularly wives tended to share household chores, as well as labour support in the gardens.

In the focused discussions carried out in Mazowe (16 June, 2012), married woman indicated that they worked with their spouse in both production and marketing of FFV. Decision making concerning the time spent at the market against expected responsibilities in the home are critical to any woman going to the FFV market. The market survey showed some women bringing along young children, of breastfeeding age with them to the market. In the FGDs held in Goromonzi as well as the In-depth Interviews, women emphasized complementarity than competition. For example Mrs Chikwamura (a communal area farmer) noted, '*I am a married woman aged 33. I stay in ward 2 in Chidavaenzi village. My husband stays in South Africa where he works but he recently brought me an engine that I can use for my irrigation of the crops*'. This was complemented by Mrs Kanyemba (Box 4.2) which shows that FFV was largely a family livelihood activity, with clear leadership of the women involved. Therefore activities beyond the farm, undertaken by men are crucial in the economies of families, just as the FFV engagement by women are valued.

**Box 4.2: Complementarities of men and women in FFV production**

*My name is Margret Kanyemba. I am 60 years old and I stay in Makuti Village in ward 2. I have 6 children and I started FFV in 1985 in the same village that I am staying now. My husband did not go to work so I decided that if I venture into FFV I could be able to sustain my livelihood. I have managed to build a three-roomed house. I bought a scotch cart, four cattle, lounge suit and other household items such as a radio. I have been employed in town but I don't think I would have bought the things that I got if I had been employed in Harare. FFV is our life, our parents raised us using money from FFV and we will continue raising our children using the proceeds from the FFV. Right now I am working with my husband in the garden as most of my children are at school. I work well with my husband and we manage our money well that is the other reason why we accumulate more assets than other members of our community because we are organised.*

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

#### 4.2.2 Age characteristics of producers and marketers

There is a general increase in farmer participation in FFV up to 49 years followed by gradual decline in participation as farmers from 50 years and above, as highlighted in Table 4.3. The trend exhibited in both districts follows a normal age distribution curve where there are more farmers (Goromonzi 42%) and (Mazowe 50%) in 31-49 year age range. This age group is comprised of “seasoned” FFV producers who have accumulated vast production experience having begun production at tender ages such as 16 or 18 years. There is rather a high representation of farmers who are in the age group of 16 to 30 especially in Goromonzi district (30%). In Goromonzi FFV is considered “a way of life”.

At least 30% (n=431) of the respondents in Goromonzi had acquired FFV production knowledge from their families. The trend also showed that as farmers get older they retire from FFV production given the labour intensive nature and amount of time required to tend to production and marketing of FFV. A small segment of the producer’s feature in the 16-30 age group with 30% in Goromonzi and 8% in Mazowe district. Reasons cited for the lower numbers include youths still in school or others who have opted to look for employment in the city and other towns as opposed to taking up FFV production and marketing.

**Table 4.3: Producer Age Ranges**

Age	Goromonzi Producers		Mazowe Producers	
	No	%	No	%
16-30	127	30	3	8
31-49	181	42	19	50
50+	122	28	16	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)

The study found that 60% (n=65) of the marketers in Domboshava engaged in marketing FFV, as a primary livelihood activity. The marketers were selling FFV at Chirodzero market in Goromonzi. Yet, in this category some of them should be in secondary school students. The marketers explained during the Key Informant Interviews that they could not get formal employment, and only had both production and marketing of FFV as a livelihood activity. The findings therefore demonstrates that there are more young adults involved in FFV marketing. FFV production and marketing is a high labor intensive activity, while also requires high mobility, carrying and transporting different volumes of produce from the place of production to the market. The old aged people found this to be physically difficult and as such only 6% in the 53-59 age group participated in the marketing of FFV.

We interviewed 65 women entrepreneurs involved in the marketing of FFV in Goromonzi district. A key question we asked was the period that the respondents were involved the marketing of FFV. Some 48% of the respondents indicated that the enterprise was recent, as they had spent up to five years in the trade (Table 4.4). This aligns with the broader economic developments, as many people, particularly the young who were affected by the dollarization of the economy from 2009, entered this sector as they left “foreign currency changing” activities.

**Table 4.4: Number of years in (FFV) marketing**

Number of years	No	%
0-5	31	48
6-10	19	29
11-15	6	9
16-20	6	9
21-25	0	0
26-30	2	3
31-35	0	0
36-40	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

The older group of marketers noted that they have been involved in FFV marketing for most of their lives having begun at tender ages of around 19-20 years. The respondents noted that it is through FFV marketing that they have sustained their families and taken their children through school while meeting daily requirements at household level. In Goromonzi some 34% respondents engaged in FFV marketing in the 36-52 age group (table 4.3). This middle-aged group also pointed that they have been involved in FFV marketing for a number of years and regard the enterprise as a main livelihood source. The market survey also showed that younger children under the age of 19 also engage in FFV marketing. In Focused Group Discussions, in Goromozi on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2012, they also pointed that often, these children assist their parents or guardians outside school hours or during school holidays.

Reasons for venturing into fresh produce marketing include the quick returns realised on a daily basis which assure marketers of an income; relative flexibility with regards to the time spent at the market depending on the target market. On the other hand, 29% of the respondents have spent between 6 and 10 years in FFV marketing while the 11-15 and 16-20 year categories each have 9% of respondents represented. The three categories point to relative stability and length of time invested in the FFV enterprise. Only 3% and 1% have been engaged in FFV marketing for at least 30 and 40 years respectively. This suggests that as

the years progress, a number of marketers move out of the enterprise for various reasons related to retirement, diversifying to other livelihoods, operational constraints among other reasons noted by respondents.

### 4.2.3 Educational level

The level of educational attainment has a bearing on the level of capacity to adopt and adapt knowledge of FFV. The FFV farmers have invested in skills training repeatedly in Goromonzi, and such skills acquisition are based on the desire to improve their production activities. At least 63% of producers have attained secondary level of education, whilst a significant number (23%) dropped out at primary level as shown in Table 4.5. However, despite the positives that come from education, the study found that farmers lack basic management skills such as record keeping hence compromising their entrepreneurial acumen.

**Table 4.5: Educational level of respondents in Goromonzi**

<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Primary	97	22.51
Secondary	272	63.11
Vocational	1	0.23
Tertiary	5	1.16
Standard	47	10.90
Never went to school	9	2.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

The study ascertained that while evidence of practising FFV commercially existed through efforts to participate in different markets, the extent to which producers penetrate the different market spheres was closely related to the level of education attained. For instance, in Goromonzi producers (63%) with at least secondary school education had a comparative advantage over other producers when engaging niche markets such as supermarkets. On the other hand, a few producers who have attained tertiary education (5%) have additional and specialised skills and knowledge in production and management of their FFV enterprise (table 4.5).

In Zimbabwe, vocational training institutions have suffered from years of under investment, and are no longer as effective as they used to be. In a FGD (18 June 2012), the participants lamented that they no longer received any form of training or refresher courses. It would be ideal to resuscitate vocational technical colleges, to address the training needs of producers with a basic education. Options of farmer field schools, regular extension support and development agencies training have been critical in building knowledge and skills in FFV

production and marketing. Albeit, the producers emphasised that through years of practising FFV production, they have been able to master the requisite skills to ensure crops of good quality, which they can take to the markets. In this regard, it is the hands-on experience that has ensured their continued engagement within the FFV sector as opposed to obtaining formal education.

### 4.3 Factors that facilitate entrepreneurship in FFV

#### 4.3.1 Land ownership

Land ownership is an important determinant of access to and control over FFV production. Table 4.6 shows at least 72% owning less than 1 hectare in Goromonzi district, which is typical of most communal areas where productive land is apportioned in smaller segments in contrast to resettlement areas in Mazowe district where producers (34%) have a maximum of up to 6 hectares, of which less than 1 ha is devoted to FFV production.

**Table 4.6: Size of land owned by FFV producers**

Land size	Mazowe Producers		Goromonzi Producers	
	No	%	No	%
<1 ha	4	12	303	72
1-5 ha	18	51	108	26
6-10 ha	12	34	12	2
10>	1	3	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

Typically much of FFV production takes place in small gardens in communal areas such as in Goromonzi. However, in new resettlement areas, FFV are also produced on less than a hectare. Table 4.6 shows the total land area owned for both rainfed agriculture and for irrigation/gardening. Therefore, actual production of FFV takes place on less than a hectare. However, a major issue raised in FDGs, is the process of ownership and allocation of land for any form of production including FFV. IN Goromonzi we found that while chiefs and village heads allocate land to families, and usually to the male head, it is in turn the male head who allocates gardens for FFV production. The access to land for FFV production is thus pre-conditioned through marriage relations, which means that women can only sustain production activities at the whims of men. Men retain the power over the land and therefore on women, with usufruct rights for the gardens. Yet, despite this key constraint, women try to manoeuvre or produce based on hope that the marriage circumstances do not change.

A woman who obtains land through marriage may hesitate to invest in it when she perceives her marriage as precarious. In Goromonzi we found on the contrary a woman invested in land that belongs to her husbands on continuous basis. When the husband returned on being laid off employment, the use of the land by wife did not change (Box 4.3). Therefore women's access to land is not static, nor is tenure over land, as this is determined by types and nature of family relationships. As circumstances change, women's' access and secure tenure to land may also change, but in the case of the women referred on box 4.3 there was no change.

**Box 4.3: Woman in control FFV as a livelihood for the family**

*My name Gaudensia Kazingizi. We have a big family with 7 boys and our parents are still living. Our parents are not working my father was a driver a long time ago. He stopped driving because he wanted to focus on agriculture but our mother took over because she has more knowledge than our father. Our mother and father help each other from production to marketing, my siblings also practice agriculture on our father's field. Our mother and father come together when it comes to expenditure of their returns from the market. Every season we plan as a family what to plant/grow, the land size to devote to that crop. We however, do not plan when it comes to where to sell their produce. Besides FFV our family grow maize for consumption. However, FFV is our source of living, whose proceeds have contributed to building a home, bought property i.e. wardrobes, kitchen unit etc., bought a water pump, bought a car but sold it later on and send their children to school. Our family have acquired livestock (3 cattle and chickens), our mother devotes effort in chicken broiler production.*

*Source: Ruzivo WEH field interview, Domboshava, (July 2012)*

With regards to utilisation of land and FFV output realised, land size was a limiting factor for producers, particularly in the communal areas, seeking to supply a larger market sphere. In the Domboshava area of Goromonzi for instance, growing population in urban centres such as Harare have increased pressure on land use in the area as more people seek residential stands. Resultantly, land allocated for FFV production may be sold off to residential seekers. To compound the challenge, portions of the land around Domboshava is hilly and rocky rendering it a challenge for FFV production.

#### **4.3.2 Land allocated to FFV**

At least 80% of the farmers in Goromonzi district allocate less than one hectare of the land to FFV production per year. This follows from the overall land sizes the producers own, which is at least 1 hectare. In Mazowe district, as Table 4.7 shows, A1 resettlement farmers constitute 74% of producers allocating between 1-5ha to FFV production.

**Table 4.7: Land allocated to FFV**

Land Allocated to FFV	Mazowe Producers		Goromonzi Producers	
	No	%	No	%
<1 ha	9	26	317	80
1-5 ha	27	74	81	20
6-10 ha	0	0	0	0
10>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

However, land allocation to FFV production does not necessarily relate to the output and level of investment into actual production activities and yields realised from the land allocated. The impact of land allocation and reallocation to women by men at household level is a constraint to their production. Yet, women farm as productively as men do, when they have access to the same resources. In both Mazowe and Goromonzi, they often do not have access to the improved technologies, credit, land and other resources. Women, indicated that subservience was a key game player, if they are to retain use rights on the gardens/plots that they are allocated, which at times forces them to be ‘group wives’ through polygamous relations, especially in ward 1 of Goromonzi. FFV production is heavily concentrated among the smallholder farmers in Goromonzi district than in Mazowe district. Further, the land allocated to FFV is utilised fully and optimally given that it is a small piece of land. Output is also determined by additional factors such as inputs and production practices that are employed by the producer.

#### **4.3.3 Key economic driver complementary to FFV**

Producers in Goromonzi are primarily focused on FFV production with 90% indicating such as presented in Table 4.8. This explains the high volume (93%) of marketers sourcing their produce from Goromonzi producers. Apart from FFV, producers are engaged in small-scale informal economic activities such as construction, livestock production, and local trading. The construction industry constitutes activities such as brick-moulding, welding, carpentry and building. Diversification to livestock production including poultry and goat enterprises are evident although at minimal levels.

**Table 4.8: Economic activities among producers**

Activity	Goromonzi Producers		Goromonzi Marketers	
	No	%	No	%
FFV	429	90	63	93
Civil service	4	1	1	1
Private Sector	1	0	0	0
Construction	11	2	0	0
Livestock	16	3	1	1
Transporter	4	1	1	1
Local trading	10	2	0	0
Security	1	0	0	0
Seasonal Work	0	0	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

For producers engaged in poultry production, income from FFV produce sales would have been invested into purchasing at least 100 broilers for marketing. In addition, the producers noted that manure from the poultry runs is used in the gardens. Livestock production is not a major undertaking, and the FFV producers indicated that the activity consume time and returns are not high or a far between on a comparative basis. When producers marketing fresh produce, they spend more time away from home, which militates against livestock production that requires time allocation for monitoring the herd.

The key economic activities (repairs, brick moulding, construction etc.) are usually conducted on-site which allows the producer to allocate time to the different activity or otherwise remain within the confines of their main livelihood i.e. FFV. Field observations also showed that a number of villages had homes under construction or renovation, which provided a market for those engaged in brick moulding and construction. Respondents also noted that the economic activities provide supplementary income that can cushion the households during low-peak production seasons. For example, during summer, producers utilise most of their land for maize production because high water levels at gardens/plots in close proximity to rivers are not conducive for FFV production. As a result, FFV production is transferred to the homestead gardens that are usually smaller hence likely to achieve lower yields.

#### **4.4 Acquired skills for entrepreneurship**

##### **4.4.1 Skills and training in FFV**

In Goromonzi district much of the fresh vegetable production are family owned enterprises, in which production and marketing knowledge is passed on from generation to generation. This is unlike in Mazowe where the irrigators are the still the first generation of producers since the

scheme was established in the 1990s. This means that a lot of capacity to produce irrigated crops had to be invested by government and donors in Mazowe. Skills in FFV production have been acquired primarily through the family and community (73%) while some producers learnt the skills through either primary and/or secondary education (Table 4.9). Extension officers provide very low contributions to production knowledge. The extension support is in the form of advisory support to producers – seasonal calendars, pest and disease control – although producers noted that they have always possessed the knowledge ever since they began the FFV production activities. Goromonzi has limited development agencies/NGOs imparting/sharing production skills with producers.

**Table 4.9: Skills and training in FFVs in Goromonzi**

<b>Acquisition of Agriculture Skills</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Family and Community	394	73
Primary & Secondary Education	104	19
Vocational Training	15	3
NGO Training	12	2
Private Sector	3	1
Extension	12	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

In Goromonzi, the 73% of respondents depended on family and community education systems, and in FDGs they pointed out that they found government extension systems to be weak and out of reach, especially with respect to FFV production. The study found high levels of post-harvest losses from the farm to the market, which pointed to limited knowledge on FFV value addition. In most cases, the losses were accounted by poor technical management, poor transportation that is not available on time, as well as market distortions. The producers acknowledged in FDGs that they needed to advance post-harvest skills and marketing efficiency. From an entrepreneurial perspective, the extension of produce storage life as well as the enhancement of supply chain connectivity will greatly help preserve the quality, quicken the delivery, increase the sales, and reduce the loss. Therefore, it is important to provide producers with useful technical knowledge and better market linkages.

Private sector actors are also involved in production skills transfer. In Goromonzi these are usually private contractors for different flower varieties teaching familiarising and training producers on standard methods for producing a specific flower variety given that producers are not accustomed to producing flowers. Vocational training contributed 13% towards agriculture skills acquired and this may account for producers who attained their skills during

the phase when vocational training centres were highly efficient and functional. In the current context, FFV production skills are passed down through family lines that have been involved in the sector for longer periods and through formal education. In Mazowe, skills and training in FFV are provided by development agencies such as Fintrac, Ruzivo Trust as well as private companies seeking to engage the producers in wholesale and export marketing of FFV produce.

#### 4.4.2 Training in agriculture

Producers in both Goromonzi and Mazowe have received training related to production (55% and 30% respectively) and marketing (21% and 25% respectively) as highlighted in Table 4.10. However, given that the majority of producers noted that they acquired their agricultural skills through family and community networks, the form of this production training is based on indigenous knowledge that has been passed down or shared among existing and emerging producers over time. The study revealed that producers have full knowledge of production cycles, pest and disease control, land preparation and related aspects.

In addition, other producers noted that they received production training through local agricultural extension services although producers from Goromonzi expressed concern over the limited support from and interaction with Agritex officers on the ground. They alluded to the fact that because they have been involved in production of crops such as covo, rape, tomatoes and potatoes, the officials do not have to build producer capacity for such crops. Instead, production training should be tailor made to suit the producers' requirements such as producing 'new and unfamiliar' crops for example baby marrow, mange tout among other vegetable types.

**Table 4.10: Training received by producers (Goromonzi and Mazowe)**

Training Received	Goromonzi		Mazowe	
	No	%	No	%
Production	267	55	20	30
Marketing	104	21	17	25
Management	53	11	13	20
No Training	66	13	17	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

Producers also observed that despite receiving production training, related factors of production present challenges such as lack of inputs, appropriate technology, and weather variability is thus limiting their ability to optimally produce a good crop. Translating

acquired knowledge and skills in production into actual practise thereby poses challenges to the producers. Producers with training in production outnumber those that have received marketing training. Producers with marketing training cited increased knowledge about accessing market information such as prices, buyers as well as designing marketing plans among other aspects. Concerns therefore arise when determining the extent to which those without marketing knowledge and intelligence can successfully manoeuvre the fresh produce supply chain particularly at the marketing node. This is also considering the highly perishable nature of the commodity, the producers are purveying to the market.

Regarding management, at least 20% in Mazowe and 11% in Goromonzi have received training. While knowledge of how to organize the FFV enterprise, plan activities ahead of time, maintaining records of activities remains critical to any successful enterprise; a small proportion of producers have such knowledge. However, there are producers who have not received any training in any one of the areas i.e. production, marketing and management in Goromonzi and Mazowe. These producers are currently running the FFV enterprise based on their own knowledge and skills yet this could point to existing need for FFV training for the farmers.

**4.4.3 Labour provision**

Family members provide labour for the gardens/plots (78%) (Table 4.11). This is due to the relatively small land sizes, which can be worked by available family members. Further, two of the four wards covered showed a high number of members of the apostolic sect whose doctrine allows for polygamy.

**Table 4.11: Source of Labour**

Source of Labour	Goromonzi		Mazowe	
	No	%	No	%
Family members	421	78	27	55
Seasonal employment	117	22	22	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

Therefore, it was observed that where a male producer has at least two or three wives, they are involved in supporting production activities (box 4.4). At the same time, extended family members residing within households also provide a source of labour.

**Box 4.4: Family labour**

*My name is Tayengwa Gatsi and I was born in 1935 in Goromonzi district. I went to school up to standard 6 and I got married in 1955 to my first wife. We had 7 boys and 3 girls. In 1976 I got married to my second wife and we had 4 boys and 3 girls. In 1982 I also got married to my third wife and we had 3 boys and 2 girls. Finally in 1982 I got married to my fourth wife. I support my big family, as I was educated on FFV by my father who was also a farmer that time.*

*As a family, we grow jam swash, baby marrows, cucumbers, carrots, pumpkins, peas, beans and potatoes. In the past I used to supply this to grocery shops during the Rhodesian period, until 1980. When the white people returned to their countries we had no markets so we decided to stop the production and we embarked on tomatoes, vegetables, onions and sweet potatoes. The production of these commodities have been decreasing year by year so we do not have much we are producing nowadays just enough to supply on a small scale to sustain the family.*

*The children normally do most of the production and marketing. Normally, we market our produce at Mbare Musika, Highfields and showground. The market place that we choose is determined by our products and the more the products the bigger the market we choose i.e. Mbare and the less the produce the smaller the market i.e. Showground/Chirodzero.*

*In the past the income was very good to the extent that we would be able to purchase houses. I purchased my house in Glenview 3 in Harare through FFV and 2 Lorries for the transportation of my produce. I was also able to build my homestead in Domboshava and send all my children to school through FFV. However, the money is only enough to give us some basic commodities as food, soap, and so on. As the father of the house, I am the one who controls the proceeds with the help of my four wives. Normally after every sale we bank our money and buy inputs. So to me FFV is life to us and we cannot do without it.*

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

Seasonal labour (*maricho*) constitutes 22% of the labour source. This is a temporary form of employment sought by producers requiring an extra hand in their garden/plots for various reasons such as expanding land under production, absence of family members to assist, or working towards a production target among other reasons noted. It can therefore be concluded that FFV products are attractive for small farmers with small land units, because there are few economies of scale in their production and small farmers may have a competitive advantage in labour-intensive FFV production because of their ability to call upon family labour.

## **4.5 Input resource for FFV entrepreneurship**

### **4.5.1 Inputs provision and utilisation**

Inputs affect the FFV in varied ways. Yet issues of inputs are caught in the debates of whether smallholders should use conventional agricultural inputs or should stick strictly to organic. Organic farming describes systems that work to optimize natural processes for the production of agricultural crops. Organic growers use a wide range of cultural practices and natural inputs to manage crops in ways that are safe for both the environment and the consumer. Use of synthetic pesticides and standard commercial fertilizers is avoided or, where necessary, minimized. Organic farming encourages the adoption of practices such as crop rotation, composting, use of livestock manure, cover crops, mulches and green manures. The study found out that in both Mazowe and Goromonzi producers were using conventional inorganic fertilizers and chemicals. There was only one case of flower production in Goromonzi, where

the contracting company exporting the flowers produced by smallholder farmers using organic means. In general, smallholder farmers have not taken organic farming seriously, hence they continue referring to access to fertilizers and pesticides as limiting their potential.

At least 54% of producers rely on animal drawn traction for FFV production as shown in Table 4.12. The main livestock used for traction are cows and some farmers indicated that they own the cows, while others have to hire. Hand practices account for 45% of the total responses. Reasons for adopting hand practices include failure to hire tractors or animal drawn traction, location of gardens on uneven terrain (steep, hilly, or in a valley). Furthermore, conservation agriculture has been encouraged through NGOs working in Goromonzi such as the Sustainable Agriculture Trust (SAT); hence producers who participated in such programmes are inclined to consider conservation agriculture. Only 1% of the farmers use tractors in land preparation and as noted by the farmers, this is usually more costly compared to the other options. This also points to limited availability of farming implements among smallholder producers.

**Table 4.12: Traction for FFV production in Goromonzi**

<b>Traction</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Animal drawn	331	54
Hand practices	279	45
Tractor	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

In Mazowe, further inquiries were made regarding access to production implements. A similar situation obtains regarding access to tractors for tillage where more respondents (73%) do not have access to tractors. The 27% that has access to tractors indicated that it is hired and expensive because a producer has to pay the fee for hiring and pay for the required fuel separately. Regarding irrigation, 65% have access to irrigation facilities and/or equipment as indicated in table 4.13.

**Table 4.13: Access to production infrastructure Mazowe**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Irrigation</b>		<b>Tractors</b>	
	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	24	65	10	27
No	13	35	27	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

For A1 producers, the irrigation equipment constitutes what remained on the occupied farms following the FTLRP. However, challenges noted by the respondents included electricity load shedding, high utility bills for electricity and water. Some farmers have resorted to purchasing water pumps to irrigate their plots. In Goromonzi, the landscape is characterised by steep hills and valleys, which allows for water to be drawn through gravity and they also purchase large plastic pipes and diesel pumps. This means that the producers should purchase adequate fuel which some noted as costly although cheaper when compared to electricity charges incurred by those involved in irrigation.

**4.5.2 Production inputs**

Inputs constitute a critical component of the production process as the availability and usage thereof determines the quality and quantity of yields. As highlighted in Table 4.14, producers in Goromonzi use a range of purchased and stored seed (20% and 18% respectively). Purchased seeds cover the wide range of commodities such as rape, potatoes, covo, tomatoes, baby marrow, onions, and beans among others, while stored seeds are kept for use over a number of seasonal cycles until a new variety has to be purchased. Commonly stored seeds are for covo and tomatoes.

**Table 4.14: Inputs for FFV production in Goromonzi**

<b>Inputs</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Purchased seeds	356	20
Stored seeds	316	18
Organic Fertiliser	361	21
Conventional Fertiliser	376	21
Chemicals	350	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>1759</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

Use of fertilisers is comprised of organic and conventional fertilisers. The same number of responses (21%) suggests relatively equal level of usage of the two-fertiliser types. Organic fertilisers comprise cow dung manure as well as decomposing leaves known as *murakwani* taken from surrounding forests. Composts are also maintained by the producers to provide consistent supply particularly for farmers that are involved in contract flower production where they indicated the contractor (KAITE NGO, Rob Fisher Ltd) stipulates strict adherence to organic production. However, instances of defaulting occur where some producers apply conventional fertilisers such as Ammonium Nitrate or compound D resulting in the rejection of their produce by the agronomists who conduct regular field monitoring trips. Chemicals used include pesticides and herbicides (20%).

Overall, producers noted that the greatest challenges lie in purchasing adequate inputs due to high costs. While a farmer anticipates high yields of good quality produce, they say the inputs are too expensive hence they resort to buying repackaged fertiliser, for instance 5litre tins (*magaroni*/gallons). The risk with such purchases as indicated by the farmers is that one may purchase fertiliser that has either expired or been tampered with. Related fears expressed by producers in relation to investing a lot of income into input procurement is that, upon marketing the producers risk realising losses especially when the prices are low due to gluts or poor quality.

### 4.5.3 Sourcing inputs

Sources of inputs for FFV range from agro-dealers situated in the local production areas or in nearby towns. General-dealer stores that stock seeds, fertilisers and chemicals are another source while community members also source produce for resale to producers. The findings in Table 4.15 show that producers purchase mostly from the local agro-dealers as well as town agro-dealers. Government subsidies for FFV inputs are low (1% in Goromonzi and 0% in Mazowe) while donor input support schemes are also low.

**Table 4.15: FFV Inputs Sources**

Input Source	Goromonzi		Mazowe	
	No	%	No	%
Neighbours	52	8	3	4
Government Subsidies	4	1	0	0
Local Agro-dealer	211	34	31	48
Local General Dealer	181	29	0	0
Town Agro-dealer	156	25	28	44
Contract Inputs	18	3	1	2
Donor Inputs	5	0.7	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

Agro-dealer companies usually stock the full range of farm implements, seeds, chemicals and fertilisers thus becoming a one-stop-shop for producers for example Farm and City. Others have developed market niches in specific products such as Zimbabwe Fertiliser Company (ZFC), National Tested Seeds, Agricura (for chemicals) to mention a few. Apart from the agro-dealers, producers also purchase inputs from local general dealer stores (29% in Goromonzi) who in addition to selling basic groceries, also stock inputs.

For government subsidies, inputs distribution is usually oriented towards production of cereal food crops such as maize and wheat, which are regarded as the major determinants of food

security. Donor input schemes likewise also target those involved in maize production although other NGOs involved in FFV and contracting programmes can provide inputs for the recipient farmer. Community members, on the other hand also provide inputs and these are usually sub-retailers who purchase in bulk for re-sale in smaller quantities. These sub-retailers position themselves strategically at the farmer's market anticipating purchases from farmers once they have finished selling their produce. The sub-retailers provide a channel of 'relief' for producers who at any given time may not afford to purchase larger quantities of fertilisers or chemicals. Associated risks include purchasing expired inputs.

#### 4.5.4 Contracting arrangements

The emerging spontaneous economy has altered perceptions of the market place. Local FFV producers with limited financial resources can opt for contracts, and a few have done so in Goromonzi and Mazowe districts. In Mazowe about 2.6% of the respondents (n=37) were in a position to secure inputs through contractual arrangements of donor input supply schemes, the rest are left in a precarious situation where no alternative means of securing finance or credit is available. None of the respondents had obtained credit from a formal institution in Goromonzi. The study also found that there a few pockets of women who are successfully contracting with different market players. Table 4.16 shows that more producers (83%) in Goromonzi are not involved in any form of contract farming while the remainder have either verbal (7%) or written (10%) contracts.

**Table 4.16: Contracting Arrangements in Goromonzi**

Contract Aspect		Goromonzi	
		No	%
<b>Contract Type</b> (n=264)	Verbal	19	7
	Written	27	10
	Not contracted	218	83
	<b>Total</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Contractor</b> (n=259)	Retailer	4	2
	Wholesaler	3	1
	Exporter	15	6
	Individual Broker	10	4
	NGO	9	3
	Not contracted	218	84
	<b>Total</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Contract Conditions</b> (n=86)	No side marketing	29	34
	Inputs Provision	28	33
	Specific payment plan	14	16
	Surrender Assets on breaching contract	6	7
	No conditions	9	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)

However, at Negomo irrigation scheme the members through formal contracts with Selby had at some point obtained inputs through contracts. Contractual issues are pertinent in smallholder production as they influence the ability of a producer to achieve optimal yields in the desired quantity and quality with the option of a guaranteed market. In Goromonzi, we found that a woman successfully ventured into contract farming (box 4.5).

**Box 4.5: A successful woman FFV contracted in Goromonzi**

*My name is Mrs G Mupariwa residing in Mungate village in ward 4. I went to St Michels in Mhondoro. I have worked for Unilever as a secretary I attend the ZAOGA church. I left employment in 2005 during the economic down turn. I have four children one is in Malaysia for university education.*

*I started FFV production during my working days; I would sell FFV products sourced from Mbare Musika to private company called Sunspun. Soon after I left employment I ventured into poultry and vegetable production. I sold the chickens at Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) boarding school and the vegetables in Borrowdale at TM. I would buy myself all the best food after selling my produce. I thought to myself that I wanted to build a green house so I needed something to supplement my income hence the green house project bought for \$9,400 for the whole kit. I have gained knowledge from Pedstock in Harare the company has helped me with ideas in the cultivation of cash crops using green house. They also helped in taking samples of the soil. The Agritex officers have not helped me though I value their help to the community. I employ two young men as gardeners whom I pay \$150 each per month.*

*My clients on contract include Bon Marche Chisipiti and Borrowdale Spar Ballantre in Harare. I supply a wide range of vegetables such as tomatoes, spinach, and lettuce among others. I source the produce from greenhouses and showground market. I supply Covo to ZRP with 200 bundles a week at \$2.50 a bundle, which gives me \$100. I also supply spring onion to TM, Born Marche wit 20 bundles a day for \$6 a day, and I also supply tomatoes to the open market at \$1/kg.*

*Through the green house I have English cucumbers and expect to realise \$1500 by October, through a contract I have with Valley Fresh. I also have contracts with private companies such as Selby, Favco, Fresh Pro, and the green house produce is targeted at these special markets.*

*I am succeeding because, of the planning that I do. All the activities are documented. Without a plan you cannot succeed in this venture and I take farming seriously as you can see. I am handle all activities that is happening in the production and marketing of my produce. The business has been growing, and I intend to employ a security guard to ensure that my green house and other properties are protected. Some of the challenges I face include: labour limitation; I need a borehole and water pump for irrigation; difficulties in accessing loans for expansion from banks. I feel that in this sector, help is only extended to white large farmers than us blacks*

*My main achievements are the investment in the green house, I have also managed to built a better house, and acquired household furniture and I bought a sedan car. I am looking forward to buying a truck after production in the green house. FFV has changed my life and I do not regret being made redundant from my previous employment. I now believe that to succeed you create your own employment. Through your hands and planning a business can provide a quick turn over. I get cash on daily bases and that is why I have all these things. I do not have stress because of the plans that I have and my project.*

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (June 2012)*

In Zimbabwe, contractors include export companies, individual brokers, NGO, retailers and wholesalers, and these participated in the contracting of farmers in Mazowe and Goromonzi. Export companies are mainly contracting for flower production and these include Rob Fisher while individual brokers vary in terms of the specific commodities they require, be it leafy vegetables, potatoes, tomatoes among others. NGOs entering into contracts with producers are mainly playing a facilitatory role within market linkage arrangements whereby an organisation such as KAITE brings producers on board to produce seed and fresh cut flowers

for export markets. It is under these contracts that producers are required to sign forms. Contractual conditions are binding and the producers reach an agreement on the specific terms.

More women are familiar with the project compared to male farmers in the district. Mr Rob Fischer has managed to contract farmers, mainly women in the district including ward 1, 2, 3 and 4. This has seen some women engaging in floriculture as an intervention that can generate income for their families and households in the community. Mr Fischer pointed out that women are more inclined to venture into FFV production activities compared to men. For this reason, the choice of contracting women was because the majority of them tend to spend more time in gardens doing production aspects such as land preparation, irrigating crops and basic crop management activities such as weeding whilst men are more involved in other agricultural activities.

Contracts tend to be attractive because the majority of these farmers are unable to mobilize larger operating capital through formal credit channels either because there are no credit programs available to them or because the transaction costs of obtaining a loan are high relative to their capacity. The cash or inputs supplied are subtracted from the crop payment made by the company, which provide an alternative arrangement to the farmer. Reasons for unsuccessful contractual arrangements include abuse of contractual terms by farmers, disputes over product quality and final price at time of harvest and defaulting on contractual obligations. As a result, wholesale FFV entities have lost interest in financing smallholder FFV enterprises.

#### **4.6 Transport from farm to market and beyond**

Transport costs often constitute a significant obstacle to reaching the market. The costs of the total logistic chain differ considerably between certain routes, even for the same product, having a large impact on the overall export performance. Key consideration for transport costs include bulkiness, distance, time taken, and lastly who the entrepreneurs are. As one transporter (Alister Ndlovu) noted *“It has been a challenge working with women in this industry because most of them do not want to pay. They always want to negotiate on the fares. This becomes very difficult for us to make a living from transporting their produce. With men it is a bit easy to make a plan in the event that they fail to pay”* (June, 2012). Transportation

and distribution of perishable FFV produce is expensive and difficult, made worse by poor roads, and also police roadblocks.

From production site to the local market, the study found that 42% of the respondents carry their produce by head as their homes are closer to the market place. Many of these are women, because cultural men do not carry goods on head. Women manage this because the quantities they sell per day are small. Scotch carts (37%) are also one of the key mode of transport used to carry produce from the gardens to the home or market as shown in Table 4.17. The scotch carts allow for a larger volume of produce to be carried to the market and ensuring that it is not damaged during transportation. Given that most gardens are located in hilly terrain areas that vehicles cannot access, the produce has to be carried by head or wheelbarrow to the nearest road where vehicles will be available for hiring. The producers observed that they prefer taking the produce directly to the market given that some of their homes are distant form the gardens.

**Table 4.17: Transportation of FFV produce from production to market and beyond**

Transport mode	Mazowe Producers		Goromonzi producers		Goromonzi Marketers	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Carry by head	0	0	157	29	33	42
Bicycle	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pushcart	-	-	-	-	2	3
Scotch Cart	3	7	198	37	-	-
Trays	-	-	-	-	2	3
Wheelbarrow	0	0	63	12	13	17
Hired Vehicle	29	67	66	12	-	-
Private vehicle	4	9	-	-	19	24
Public transport	7	16	-	-	8	10
Straight to the market	-	-	47	9	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)

Vehicles (24%) are also another important source of transport produce and marketers to various marketing sites but especially by marketers with more produce and those who supply to supermarkets and other niche markets. Public transport (commuter omnibuses) is used to reach various marketing destinations particularly in the CBD and outlier towns. It is also apparent that marketers continue to rely on public transport and private vehicles for hire to move their produce which suggests limited ownership of vehicles (trucks, sedans, small lorries) among the majority of the marketers. Women are most negatively affected and have to negotiate, as Bernard Nyakudya noted “It has always been a challenge working with women; they always negotiate for fares for they want lower fares all the time. Some of these

*women will end up crying when they fail to pay the required amount*”, (Interviews, June 2012). Low incomes realised make it difficult to invest in the acquisition of own vehicles. The few that have private vehicles have acquired them through engaging in large scale FFV marketing to raise the required income to purchase the vehicles.

Use of hired vehicles ensures reliability and efficiency when moving FFV produce to the market, as deliveries are timely. The costs for hiring a vehicle vary according to the volumes of produce being transported. Where possible, producers collectively arrange for transportation and contribute to the final costs negotiated and agreed on with the transporter. Public transport on the other hand, as noted by the producers may not be as reliable as numerous stops are made along the way which may result in delays while space for storing produce may be limited. However, given that the commuter omnibuses ply the routes often, producers are inclined to rely on them for transportation to the markets. Standard costs are calculated based on the route fares and volumes of produce. Other producers within close vicinity of the local markets use scotch carts and wheelbarrows to move their produce.

## **5.0 Women in agriculture and marketing entrepreneurship**

### **5.1 Women in the market place**

#### **5.1.1 FFV markets and proprietorship**

In Zimbabwe, markets for agriculture are frequently regulated. Trading is typified by anarchy, rather a set of norms and conventions are applied through rules that regulate participation and sales. Therefore, a variety of factors may impede access to goods markets or increase the cost of entry into the market sphere. For example, distance from the market may limit an individual’s ability to sell or purchase in that market. The lack of permission or certification to trade in certain markets will prevent market entry. Lack of permission, usually comes through authorities giving declarations of FFV market closures on health grounds, such as happened during the cholera outbreak in 2008.

In Zimbabwe, small farmers and marketers are typically confined to domestic markets, which when closed abruptly has a negative consequence on their livelihoods. Yet, entering the regulated niche markets has many challenges for smallholders. The volumes traded in some markets may be too large for small producers or buyers to enter—effectively precluding their access to large, centralized, domestic, and international markets. Information may not be readily available about the type of goods sold or the prices at which they are sold. In any

cases, collusive activity on the part of buyers or sellers may squeeze out competitors and prevent outsiders from gaining access to certain goods markets.

The study found that the marketing of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (FFV) produce is defined along single proprietorship. The marketers interviewed in Goromonzi and Harare (n=65) indicated they are sole proprietors of the FFV business, and the majority were individuals, with a few being a family concern. The individuals depend to a large extent on family and community networks for their marketing business to succeed. For instance, those who are married depend on relatives and community members for household chores. Evidence of proprietorship remains largely informal with a few identifying themselves through levies paid regularly to the local authorities while roadside marketers may also obtain hawkker's licenses.

### **5.1.2 Market types**

Women's FFV income generating activities are largely limited by access to markets. Women disproportionately experience limited mobility due to various factors linked to either their family responsibility or cultural practices. Because women often produce small amounts, they are limited to the local village markets, where the market for their products and services are already saturated. A range of markets, exist for FFV producers namely farm gate, open air, roadside and formal markets. The largest proportion of Goromonzi marketers sells their produce at open-air markets such as Showground in Domboshava, Lusaka Market in Highfields suburb and at Mbare Musika. The high concentration in Goromonzi is credited to the intense FFV activity, which led to the establishment of the Showground market. This has become the main hub for producers around Domboshava before proceeding to other open-air markets. In Mazowe, the main open market is Mbare Musika although other markets are found at Glendale, Concession and Bindura.

The survey established that in Mazowe, at least 53% prefer selling from the farm gate (Table 5.1). The road networks in Mazowe connect well with major trunk roads leading to Harare while the proximity to Harare could be another pull factor for buyers directly purchasing at the farm-gate. In Goromonzi, only 5% sell from the production site. Often these are marketers who have either entered into a mutual agreement with a producer to regularly purchase or marketers who are seeking better bargains by negotiating with a producer at the garden site.

**Table 5.1: Type of markets where FFV produce is sold**

Type of market	Mazowe producers		Goromonzi producers		Goromonzi marketers	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Farm gate	31	53	22	5	1	1
Open air market	20	34	413	88	–	–
Road side market	4	7	10	2	37	45
Retailers	-	-	-	-	3	4
Supermarkets	4	7	9	2	-	-
Contract companies	0	0	14	3	-	-
Mobile	-	-	-	-	2	2
Vendors	-	-	-	-	1	1
Any consumer	-	-	-	-	39	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

At least 46% of the marketers sell directly to consumers, while 45% sell at roadsides along the Domboshava-Harare highway (Table 5.1). Sub-retailers of fresh produce often enter into mutual agreements with the producers to buy directly from the field particularly when they require consistent supply at a competitive price. Buying at the farm gate is also effective when considering maintaining the quality of produce and minimising damage incurred from post-harvest handling and storage. These marketers often prefer buying and delivering directly to their customer bases or niche markets.

The open-air markets have a mixture of temporary structures such as asbestos roofed shades, wooden and plastic covered, open ground (with or without an umbrella to cover for sun or rains) or mobile (moving around with the produce in plastic containers). The open-air markets are the main assembly points for FFV marketers purchasing produce for resale from producers (table 5.2). As such, all FFV produce is procured from the open markets with marketers negotiating for prices with the respective farmers. Formal market stalls are also constructed around the open markets. The stalls are allocated by the rural district council which oversees the administration and maintenance of the stalls. Vendors/marketers pay a stipulated levy (currently \$2) towards securing the market stall. Shop verandas also provide marketing space for the FFV marketers accounting for 4% while 10% are mobile hawkers. The shop verandas are used by marketers targetting customers moving in and out of the shops and the space is often secured through mutual agreements with the shop owner/s.

**Table 5.2: Location of marketing activity of marketers**

Types of market	No	%
Open air market	26	36
Veranda shop	3	4
Hawking	7	10
Roadside urban	18	25
Roadside peri-urban	18	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

In Goromonzi, 63% of producers sell their produce to vendors or marketers at the local Showground market. This reduces transaction costs related to transportation of produce and spending more time at the market. The gate entry fees for the local Showground markets in June 2012 was \$3 per day, which entrepreneurs regarded as affordable when compared to the \$10 per day entry fee charged at Mbare Musika. At least 36% selling their produce in town seek competitive prices at markets such as Mbare and Lusaka (Highfields). These producer/marketers observed that selling produce in the city/towns comes with associated risks such as manipulation by tricksters and lack of security from the council officials regulating the market place. Not many producers are involved in export markets (less than 1%), which suggest that the producers are unable to produce FFV commodities sought on the export market while the strict criteria, which involves numerous paperwork, certification, and licensing disqualifies most smallholders from participating.

### **5.1.3 Market conditions**

Roadside markets are open spaces that are susceptible to wet weather conditions, dust and wind. FFV marketers on the roadsides place produce on upturned dishes and buckets where commodities are then arranged in either plates, 5 litre disused tins, boxes, with temporary packaging including plastic bags. They do not have proper market stalls and do not necessarily pay levies to the council. Marketers target commuters, private vehicles utilising this highway providing the potential customers with produce on strategic sites. Roadside FFV marketers usually reside in close proximity to the marketing point or have access to a vehicle which can be used to conveniently get to the selling point while ensuring the produce retains high standards. A major risk faced by roadside marketers is the susceptibility to accidents because the marketers often jostle and running across busy roads in a bid to gain a customer's preference for their produce.

Many of the smallholders are trading in the streets in both rural and urban areas. The infrastructure for trading is inadequate due to poor roads, lack of water, and toilets that are not

functioning. Women, indicated that marketing of FFV produce was one of the most risky exercises especially for road side vendor since they are always on the run from the municipal police officers who are mostly known along those circles as *vanatora mari united* (corrupt people), *vakomana* (the boys), *kanzuru* (council). Most of the roadside vendors have to spread some pieces of sacks on the tar mark or the pavements where pedestrians and motorist can easily see the produce. Among the produce sold on these markets the most common are tomatoes and onions. These FFV products, were said to sell quickly, as an interviewee noted that, “*madomasi anofaya every day bhururu*” (tomatoes on demand everyday my friend).

In Mazowe and Goromonzi, people also trade FFV on the roads without access to toilets or running water, which puts the consumers at great health risk. The respondents pointed out that the local authorities should put in place public sanitary infrastructure at a cost to the traders, so that they trade in a hygienic environment. In often cases, smallholders both marketers and producers feel the policy implementation through the ad hoc closures of market places for instance. Early in 2012, the outbreak of typhoid especially in Harare led to the closure of many market places creating a situation where municipal police and vendors where literally chasing each other creating conflict situations. In this case, it was only a few organized market places such as Mereki in Harare who lobbied council towards the reconstruction of their market space and putting pressure on council to open within a week.

#### **5.1.4 Preference for the informal markets**

The informal market is characterized by high levels of spontaneity in identification of buyers, selling points, pricing decisions and loosely enforced regulations particularly when it comes to product quality and procurement terms. During the survey we saw that the majority of women smallholder producers were pushing the bulk of their fresh produce volumes through informal marketing channels. The informal market remains the final preferred marketing point given the relative ease of entry particularly in comparison with the formal markets.

Each producer/marketer bears sole responsibility for finding customers and bargaining for a fair price amidst a host of other competing producers and middlepersons looking for produce. In Zimbabwean lexicon of the market is a dog eat dog affair "*mazvake mazvake*" (each trader for him/herself). It seems that the markets have broken down literary and no one is in charge, and the marketers have taken the market place by storm. The determination to be in the market place is unprecedented. Although Mbare Musika is the first port of call for many producers and middlepersons who bring their produce to Harare, a glaring gap in terms of

marketing infrastructure and systematic coordination of traders is apparent. The responsibility lies with the City of Harare who provides the space and services for marketing fresh produce.

The underlying conditions for entry and participation in each of the three markets are the main determining factor for the smallholders. Hence women smallholder producers sell their fresh produce within the districts. In Mazowe the markets are in Concession, Glendale and Bindura. In Goromonzi, the Showgrounds market is the largest. However, from both districts produces go an extra mile to access the open air markets in Harare. Distance to the markets also emerged as an important factor in determining the final market place considering the highly perishable nature of the produce.

### **5.1.5 Selling in supermarkets**

Large supermarket retail chains such as Thomas Meikles (TM), OK supermarket, Bon Marche and Spar supermarkets, dominate selling points for fresh produce with stringent conditions guiding procurement hinged on diverse product range of high quality, supply consistent and formalized contractual arrangements. These standards have been set in line with global requirements for trans-national supermarkets. Concern has been raised regarding the impact of rapid expansion and proliferation of supermarket chains in developing economies such as Zimbabwe –commonly referred to as “supermarketisation”. With smallholder FFV producers in mind, questions have arisen as to the implication of the supermarketisation phenomenon on the participation of smallholder producers and the nature of competition arising in light of issues such as high import levels of FFV, inhibitive entry requirements for marketing in corporate chains among others.

A total of 13% (n=65) have managed to enter into written agreements and this point to marketers that are largely supplying to niche markets such as supermarkets (Fruit and Veg, Bon Marche, TM), mission hospitals and boarding schools. Consistency also emerges as an important determining factor when establishing a relationship with FFV buyers as shown by the 6% that regularly take produce to a specified supplier. This group of marketers requires consistent supply to ensure that they keep their customer base. In this market, formalities around procurement, quality checks and payment methods are strict. Barriers to entry to supermarket chains are high and inhibitive for the marketers.

For instance, the respondents noted that they are not in control of the produce brought to the market. It seems that issues of health and quality are put aside for short-term income gains.

Therefore, the small women producers face difficulties of penetrating the supermarkets. Supermarkets always insist on quality and consistency, yet small producers are hardly able to meet the specification. Another challenge limiting the marketers from participating in the retail markets is the returns policy, which makes the marketer bear all the risk associated with non-purchases. The returns policy in supermarkets stipulates that perishable produce not sold within a given timeframe is returned to the supplier yet the procurement department of the supermarkets informs orders for supply. Once the wilted and unsold vegetables are returned, for example, the marketer bears the loss and has to decide on whether to throw away the produce or sundry into *mufushwa* for resale at a later stage and in a different market sphere. Therefore, the marketers noted that it is for some of the reasons cited that they are not too keen on participating in the FFV retail sector.

The supermarkets have not gotten away with the space, because women FFV entrepreneurs literary sell their produce on their doorsteps. There are a variety of sellers who work from the verandas of supermarkets, while those with movable vehicles of all types operates from the road. While the retail supermarkets have been invaded by FFV imports, the smallholders find their own space to sell. While the high end and class markets, have the broad choices of FFV, they also encounter the small street traders. The street traders thus extract a bit of value or can just being nonsensical to the mega rich shop-owners, much to their annoyance. The city authorities are not amused and so far they simply watch without doing anything.

#### **5.1.6 Export market**

Before 2000, many smallholders had broken into the lucrative markets in Europe at the back of support largely by large-scale farmers. Smallholders in irrigation schemes, located mostly in communal areas and the resettlements created before 2000 ventured into export FFV. Private sector companies such as Selby, Interfresh, etc. established outgrower relations that worked and were successful. The FTLRP reversed all the gains, as the mostly white large producers who had the European markets were removed from the land. Government, then tried to open new markets in Asia, and the new farmers did not sustain these because of the deterioration in the quality of the FFV.

However, there were common structural constraints in breaking in either the European and Asian markets. The total number of smallholders producing for export is almost non-existent, and trends in European retailing are shifting the advantage to larger producers. While there is still scope for smallholders to supply European wholesale markets, their capacity to supply

European markets has been eroded by the demanding increased standards for quality, traceability, and standards compliance. Large-scale producers can, only meet these criteria for the selection of the FFV, at this stage.

Irrigators at Negomo irrigation scheme in Mazowe, indicated in FGDs that they used to export mange tout and passion fruit to the European market. The irrigation scheme was previously certified according to the international Global GAP standards but ever since the economic crisis of 2008, they have not managed to renew the certification while falling out of the contractual arrangements. Presently, private companies such as Vegie Flora have attempted to revive the exporting of mange tout by sub-contracting the producers at Negomo. Another private company involved in citrus exports, Dodhill, initially established linkages with the producers but due to quality challenges the oranges were not successfully exported to the European markets.

## 5.2 Market behavior

### 5.2.1 Marketing roles

The responsibility for marketing FFV largely lies with the women. In Mazowe and Goromonzi, women comprise at least 46% and 49% of the marketers respectively. Table 5.3 also shows that the difference with their male counterparts is not too broad as 44% and 31% of the men in Mazowe and Goromonzi respectively participate in FFV marketing.

**Table 5.3 Person in the family responsible for Marketing**

Person	Mazowe producers		Goromonzi producers	
	No	%	No	%
Mother	27	47	308	50
Father	26	45	196	32
Sibling	3	5	61	10
Relative	2	3	9	1
Employee	0	0	1	0
Self	0	0	30	5
Wife	0	0	5	1
Husband	0	0	10	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

This suggests that marketing responsibility is shared between women and men and where a single household is involved; it is common to find both the mother and father coming to the market. Where women are involved in marketing, the study showed that there is a tendency to bring along their children of school going age to assist in marketing. In both sites, the

producers do not employ any external assistance to market the produce, which could be attributed to the levels of income realised that may not allow for payment of a salary to an employee. The producers also noted that marketing of FFV works better when they are directly involved because that way they are in control of the marketing process e.g. making decisions on prices and price negotiations with buyers.

**5.2.2 Time invested in marketing**

FFV marketing is normally conducted in the early hours of the morning due to the delicate nature of produce. Table 5.4 shows that more producers (88%) from Goromonzi spend a few hours at the market while the majority of producers in Mazowe (31%) spend at least a full day at the market. The group of farmers in Goromonzi comprise those that get up in the early hours of the morning to meet the opening time of the market which usually opens around 03:30hours.

**Table 5.4: Time invested in marketing**

Time	Mazowe producers		Goromonzi producers	
	No	%	No	%
A few hours	12	16	420	88
One day	23	31	50	11
Two days	2	3	5	1
Other time	38	50	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

In Goromonzi, these farmers always sell produce at the Showground market while those in Mazowe prefer the Mbare Musika market. The farmers market operates for a few hours until around 10:00 hours and the rest of the day are used to purchase inputs and basic commodities for home use. Another group of producers residing further away from the market put up at the market, which is opened at 3 am. Women with young children also put up at the market place. A male interviewee noted, that “*sleeping places at the showground market is a big challenge because women and men are mixed in the sleeping arrangements (vakadzi vanorara vakazangana nevarume)*” (Jonathan Zvichauya, June 2012). A key recommendation was for the Goromonzi Rural District council to build a shade and also to tighten security.

Concerns around security and safe accommodation arise as the producers find spots to put up in the open places where there are increasingly vulnerable to thieve and harassment. During the rainy season, the producers are not sheltered from the rains while sanitation is inadequate hence posing health hazards for the producers that sleep at the market.

### 5.2.3 Buyers of FFV

Buyers of FFV produce vary from wholesale companies and retailers to sub-retailers and direct consumers purchasing from the producers. The range of buyers is influenced to a greater extent by the location of the producer market or production site as well as other factors that include quality, consistency and pricing. Direct consumers constitute the majority buying from producers in Goromonzi (47%) and Mazowe (5%) as highlighted in Table 5.5.

**Table 5.5: Buyers and consumers of FFV produce**

Buyer/Consumer	Mazowe producers		Goromonzi producers	
	No	%	No	%
Direct consumers	25	51	286	37.43
Wholesalers	8	16	186	24.35
Retailers	15	31	177	23.17
Processors	0	0	9	1.18
Contracting companies	0	0	16	2.09
Takeaway operators	0	0	3	0.39
Vendors	1	2	87	11.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>100.00</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

Retailers also form a significant proportion of buyers of FFV from producers as shown in the 31% and 29 % in Mazowe and Goromonzi respectively. Wholesalers and private companies involved in FFV marketing such as Interfresh and Selby also purchase from the producers. In Mazowe these private companies and FFV wholesalers have engaged with the producers at Negomo irrigation scheme albeit several challenges that have led to the gradual decrease in the number of companies sourcing FFV produce from there. In Goromonzi, the buyers/consumers are small-scale retailers and marketers of FFV who purchase for repackaging and re-sale at identified market spaces.

### 5.2.4 Trading relationship between producers and marketers

The FFV value chain has many players engaged at different levels, and women are the majority who are at the lower end of the value chain as producers. However, in places such as Domboshava they have historically invested in both production and marketing. The current scenario is one where the base (production) and lower end market is dominated by women, but where now youths are invading the market place at all level, while merchants in FFV are in niche markets.

Producers have tried to go straight to the market from production. They face difficulties because such markets are very volatile, have high transaction costs as they have to pay fees to

council and to extra-legal groups that are political in nature that control these markets. In addition middlepersons (*makoronyera*) control, the markets above the production to the extent that marketers find it not worth it compete, as most of the time they loose their produce. The study found that for some producers, despite engaging in FFV marketing for at least 5 years, establishing formal business relations with producers particularly through contracts appears to be a major challenge. Table 5.6 depicts 87% of marketers without experience of entering into contractual arrangements for the supply of FFV.

**Table 5.6: Nature of trade relations of marketers and producers**

Type of Relationships	No	%
Constant suppliers	4	6
Fairly negotiated prices	31	46
Consistent	4	6
None	29	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Nature of contracts</b>		
Verbal	8	13
Written	0	0
None	55	87
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

A typical scenario therefore is a marketer buying from different suppliers guided by prevailing market prices and quality and quantity of available produce. For the 43% of marketers who do not have any trading relationship with producers, buying is strictly on an ad hoc and spontaneous basis depending on what the marketers require at a given time.

**5.3 Marketing FFV Produce**

**5.3.1 Source of market information**

Women who can travel usually lack the market information on products and inputs, thus become dependent on the middle traders who buy their products at relatively lower than the market price. Sourcing market information entails establishing real-time prices of various commodities, actual suppliers and transporting modalities. For marketers who target the Central Business District, additional information is sought related to presence of council officials who keep track of illegal vending on different streets in the CBD. Table 5.7 presents 7 possible sources of market information and at 80%, word of mouth channels emerge as the main source.

Access to and use of print and electronic media is relatively low. Instead transporters who work closely with marketers in ferrying their produce form the open-air markets to various

destinations appear to have some knowledge of prices and related aspects. Word of mouth entails dialogues held among marketers around the status of the market on a given day, which is direct or through the cell phones (calls and short text messaging). Over time, social networks of marketers are created as the marketers interact regularly which builds a platform for discussing market related issues. Marketers who have been involved in the enterprise for longer periods are able to ‘forecast’ possible prices based on volumes of produce arriving at assembly points (open markets). In addition, marketers also inquire about prices and quality of produce from the producers as this assists them in arriving at final pricing for the selling they will engage in.

**Table 5.7: Sources of marketing information**

Source of information	No	%
Word of mouth and cell phones	56	80
Media (radio, TV, Newspapers)	1	1
Extension worker	0	0
Social networks	10	14
Transporter	2	3
Observation	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

There is no question that the introduction of cell phones has revolutionized livelihoods in Zimbabwe. The proliferation of mobile networks and usage, as platforms for exchange of marketing information is highly invisible amongst the young marketers. People are no longer connected by physical means as they can easily communicate. In fact, stiff competition among phone service providers has significantly lowered the prices of the gargets, but also of the service charges. In all the study sites mobile network connectivity was available. An entrepreneur could check the availability and prices of goods they require before embarking to order. This has largely compensated for the physical transport form of relaying information. While traces of SMS price notification between individuals may exist, broader usage and reliance on cell phones for market prices, buyers and suppliers is yet to be popularised. Interviewees noted that they could potentially benefit if extension workers on the ground had access to cell phone information platform to reduce the gap in information provision on markets from their side.

### **5.3.2 Criteria used to determine the quality of FFVs**

Quality issues and photo-sanitary issues are critical when marketing FFV. Marketers develop standards for determining the quality of the produce they purchase. Within the informal

economy, criteria for FFV are not cast in stone although marketers and producers have mutually developed norms to guide checks on FFV produce. Table 5.8 shows that aspects such as size account for 34% of quality determination while the colour of the product is just as essential with a total of 23%.

**Table 5.8: Criteria to determine quality of FFV**

Criteria	No	%
Size of product	57	34
Colour of product	39	23
Quantity	41	24
Time since harvest	28	17
Cost of product	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

From the time of harvest, marketers are aware that the quality of produce begins a downward curve as freshness and turgidity are lost over time particularly in the absence of suitable post-harvest handling equipment (e.g. cold-storage facilities). The quantity of the produce is also important (24%) as the marketers seek to purvey produce in the right volumes and with similar quality. The cost of the product at 2% does not significantly impact quality issues as a marketer may negotiate for a fair price or decide after make a decision after being satisfied with the product they wish to purchase.

**5.3.3 Determining the prices of FFVs**

The study established that market forces influence the price for any commodity brought to and sold at the market place. Table 5.9 shows that marketers are price takers as suggested by the standard (34%), the wholesale (30%) and the retail (31%) prices they adopt. However, the marketers can bargain for a fair or cheaper price particularly when the market is flooded with certain produce such as tomatoes or leafy vegetables. In such instances, the marketer has the upper hand as the producers are often desperate to sell off as much volume as they can. When a product is in short supply, producers have the upper hand often dictating a price that suits them. For example, market observations showed that when tomatoes in Goromonzi flood the market, a box may sell for as little as \$1.50 a box yet the same can go for as much as \$10 per box when in short supply.

**Table 5.9: Setting of prices for the FFV**

<b>Pricing</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Standard price	24	34.29
Wholesale price	21	30.00
Retail price	22	31.43
Negotiating	3	4.29
Group discussion	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.00</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

Negotiating prices under such circumstances is not always possible as the same prices may obtain throughout the entire market place for the specific commodity hence the 4% refers to those that are able to agree on a negotiated price. The low response on price negotiations also suggests that this is hardly an effective strategy unless mutual relations exist between the producer and marketer. Group discussions to agree on a price are rare at the open-air markets although when one arrives at different selling points in the CBD or organised market stalls, there is a tendency to agree on quantities and price in order to remain competitive.

## **6.0 FFV incomes and livelihoods**

### **6.1 Income trends from FFV production**

A reason why both women producers and marketers venture into FFV is to make and spend money for their living. The study therefore examined the income trends in the FFV. In Goromonzi, income realised from leafy vegetable sales is concentrated in the \$1-50 category. The price range for a bundle of leafy vegetables (known locally as rape, covo, tsunga) often ranges from \$1 - \$2 per bundle or per two bundles depending on volumes brought to the market and subsequent demand for the vegetables. The study showed that during times of low market supply e.g. during the rainy season, the prices for leafy vegetables tend to increase. To realise higher income levels, a producer should be able to supply and sell more bundles. Income realised from FFV is not considerably high but can cater for the purchase of basic commodities such as sugar, salt and soap which producers often buy on their way back home.

The choice of the FFV crop, the demand, knowledge of producing it, and markets are the major consideration in the farmer's diversification. Price is also a key determinant. The study found that alliums, legumes and tubers are potentially high income earners depending on the season as in July 2012, they were fetching at least \$251 and above respectively. It is also apparent that cucurbits and corn (sweet corn, baby corn) are not commonly produced. This is also attributed to the market spaces where demand for these commodities is very low.

Diversity in FFV production in Goromonzi is thus limited to leafy vegetables and tomatoes, while tubers, alliums and legumes are occasionally produced. Only a few producers are able to penetrate niche markets such as boarding schools and supermarkets, were they can fetch prices up to \$250 depending on the season.

**Box 6.1: Woman producer blaming government for market failure**

*My name is Emily Chikwamura I am a married woman aged 33. I stay in ward 2 Chidavaenzi village. My husband stays in South Africa where he works but he recently brought me an engine that I use for irrigating my crops. As you can see the farms are packed with the harvest ready but it is very difficult to source the market for our FFV produce. The only market that we supply is the Showground/Chirodzero local market because at one time we used to go to Mbare Musika market in Harare but the council rates are very high for us, in addition to the cost of transport. So we aborted the Mbare Musika to avoid so many expenses. The Showground/Chirodzero market that we have is now flooded with so many producers and marketers.*

*Resettled farmers are now bringing their agricultural produce to our Showground/Chirodzero market yet they are supposed to source their own market. They just bring their mass produced product they are funded by the government from inputs such as fertilisers and seeds for free. They then came and sell their cheaply produced FFV at a lower cost and thus killing our market.*

*I started FFV agricultural practice from 2004 June to date but I have benefited something out of this practice that includes the purchase of 10 goats and 2 filters that I can use to spray the vegetables. I am the one who is responsible for controlling all the finances that I obtain from FFV production and marketing because my husband stays in South Africa and he can only come here once in a year and most of the time he does not send the money. Life sometimes hard for him in South Africa so I have to make sure that I feed that family. I also buy school uniforms and pay school fees for my 2 children from this activity.*

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (June 2012)*

The marketing of tomatoes in Goromonzi district and surrounding informal markets is considered a daily gamble by the producers involved. The market has stiff competition that the producers at time blame on government and also new resettled farmers (box 6.1). Market prices for tomatoes, like other FFV commodities are volatile and highly susceptible to the market forces. Income realised for tomato sales is largely influenced by the situation at the market on a given day and season. When the market is flooded with tomatoes, the prices are reduced to as little as \$1.50 a box yet on a good day when demand is high; they may fetch as much as \$10 a box. For this reason, producers are not inclined to stop producing the tomatoes when they fail to realise meaningful income opting instead to take their chance at the market place in the event that they encounter a gap in supply.

## **6.2 Income derived purely from FFV marketing**

An income analysis from FFV marketing was made to determine average daily, weekly and monthly incomes. Producers and marketers do not keep financial records of the income realised as a number of them had difficulty recalling their average incomes. Therefore calculating monthly incomes proved challenging for the producers as they alluded to the unstable market prices, which make it difficult to determine a working average. Based on the

incomes given, the survey established that because of high price volatility on the FFV markets, income levels are unpredictable particularly when combined with varying consumer demands and preferences over time. Average daily incomes range from \$1-\$80 depending on the market prices on a given day (Table 6.1). As the producers explained, when there are produce gluts, it is difficult to realise much income. The amounts will range between \$1-20 as noted by 27% of the respondents. On a fairly good day, a producer can earn more if their produce is in short supply and on demand, realising up to \$80 with a few even making \$100 on a single day.

**Table 6.1: Average incomes from FFV in Mazowe and Goromonzi**

Monthly Income ranges	Mazowe producers/marketers		Goromonzi producers	
	No	%	No	%
1-21	1	10	12	10
21-40	3	30	10	8
41-60	1	10	19	15
61-80	1	10	13	10
81-100	0	0	9	7
100+	4	40	64	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)*

An analysis of average monthly income from FFV marketing showed that 50% of the producers earn a maximum of about \$100 per month. However, producers noted that the quantities bought and sold at the market place impacted on the final income made. Incomes are determined by the number of times a producer is able to take produce or go to the market for selling. Producers in Goromonzi highlighted that on average they may go to the market once or twice in a week depending on the actual yields in their fields. Price depressions also discourage the producers from going to the market opting instead to go when competitive prices are anticipated.

Demand, was noted as a key determinant, which often impacts the final profit margin after the marketer has calculated their income. The choice of FFV produce to market is influenced by customer preferences in the final marketing sites. For instance, leafy vegetables are common in most households, unlike cauliflower, especially in rural markets. The marketers also purchase quantities based on an order, which allows them to prevent losses in the event of low sales at any given time. Further, depending on the handling and storage strategies (includes placing in a bucket with water), a marketer may take the same vegetables to the market over two consecutive days before they begin to show signs of wilting. The few that are able to

penetrate niche markets may realise the higher incomes because there are cold storage facilities. Yet, FFV street vendors also make significant income, if they quickly sell to consumers especially during late afternoons when they leave work for home.

Fruits sold by the marketers interviewed are not sourced primarily from the Showground market. Rather, the fruits are bought at other open air markets particularly Mbare Musika where produce from around the country and beyond (e.g. South Africa) can be found. Common fruits purchased include apples (41%) and oranges (39.1%). Apples and oranges have a longer shelf life if stored correctly thus are preferred to others such as avocados, bananas and guavas. Seasonal fruits are also sold such as wild loquats (*mazhanje*) and *masawu* sourced from surrounding forests in Goromonzi and other parts of the country. The marketers observed that having a wide variety of produce to sell increases chances of luring customers who will have different choices while at the same time widening the potential sources of income from the different commodities. As observed from the market analysis, some commodities sell faster than others e.g. lemons and oranges in winter.

### **6.3 Income multiplier effects of FFV**

Income generation is a priority for the rural and urban poor that is provided through the FFV window. However, we found that in the current economic environment, the FFV is absorbing a lot of people through self-employment, generating jobs for family members, and also increasing informal employment for the poor. FFV tends to be labour intense, and in Goromonzi, the study identified family employment being very high. In ward 2, there are a lot of polygamous families, with some household members of more than 10. The family members are then deployed into different tasks in the garden or plot (compost making, watering, cropping, weeding, spraying, selling, etc.). The off-farm employment effect of high-value commodities provided the scope for addressing employment challenges, while it also provided leeway to increase income earned. Given that FFV crops are more strongly interlinked with other sectors of the economy in terms of providing their outputs and receiving inputs from these sectors, and there is a stronger multiplier effect on employment on the FFV value chain.

### **6.4 Changing livelihoods from FFV production and marketing**

The financial performance of the small enterprises required more time to assess than this study. The income derived from different enterprises in particular FFV petty commodity trade

was exaggerated by the respondents for reasons to do with expectation based on the survey, as some of the areas have been over researched. However, further probing revealed a true reflection of financial performance. For instance a respondent would say that they were doing very well to the extent of getting \$800 to \$2000 per cycle of selling FFV, which is extremely high in the informal sector. However, when asked if they required outside support in the form of donation they would lament the absence of donors or government to support their activities.

In measuring the transformations in livelihoods among households involved in FFV production and marketing, inquiries were made across three main indicators namely, income, assets and food security. Both producers and marketers having limited options, hence by default they participate in FFV chain. The quick turnover in production and marketing cycle, provide an advantage that allows for continuity as different crops can be grown throughout the year depending on the availability of water and input sources. Despite maize being the Zimbabwean staple crop that most households produce in Goromonzi they invest more in FFV. This is because FFV has short production cycles meaning repeated earnings of income, unlike maize, which only has an annual income, which in any case is politically determined as a national strategic and food security crop. In fact, government determines the price of maize, though most of the time it has no money to purchase the crop.

In Goromonzi, incomes realised from FFV marketing are invested in various ways. Table 6.2 summarises investments made from FFV marketing proceeds where payment of utilities (41%) and purchasing of basic commodities (25%) account for the greater proportion of income use. Income was generally regarded as inadequate given the expenses they have to meet within the household. Often, the amount of money left to reinvest into FFV production is not sufficient. To supplement the income, the marketers contribute daily towards the '*rounds*', which group members abide by strictly. When income is not adequate, the money comes in handy when a marketer wishes to purchase more produce for sale or top up their income to increase usual orders. Given that this is the major source of income for most of the marketers interviewed, the income is used to plan for reinvesting into the enterprise, meeting various household requirements for food, utilities, clothes, school fees among other needs.

**Table 6.2: Income and assets for FFV in Goromonzi**

Basic uses of income	Producers (n=470)		Marketers (n=60)	
	No	%	No	%
Can pay school fees	-	-	27	45
Income for food and clothes	119	25	23	38
Payment of utilities	33	7	1	2
Basic utilities	193	41		
Rentals	7	2		
Income for rounds	2	0	2	3
Inadequate	113	24	7	12
Able to pay lobola	3	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)

Regarding food security, 44% noted that their households were food secure because the perennial production always ensures food on the (table 6.3). Women traders often pass through retail outlets buying food items for their families on a daily basis using proceeds from marketing FFV. The study established that 81% of the marketers were able to acquire household goods with proceeds from FFV marketing. Yet, 25% of producers invested in agricultural machinery (scotchcarts, water engines and irrigation pipes). In FDGs, marketers pointed out that food security was not an issue, as they were able to purchase their daily food needs. Other basic commodities such as sugar, mealie-meal, cooking oil and salt are purchased from the FFV proceeds.

**Table 6.3: Impact of FFV on assets and food in Goromonzi**

Changes in Assets and food stocks	Producers		Marketers	
	No	%	No	%
Household goods	111	12	35	81
Transport/Scotch cart	77	8	1	2
Water engines, irrigation pipes	161	17	--	-
Sewing machine	1	0	-	-
Livestock	132	14	-	-
Construction materials	40	4	4	9
Secure land for production	2	0	-	-
Residential stand or owns a house	1	0	3	7
Acquired vehicles	10	1	-	-
Food security	424	44	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)

Livelihoods transformation through FFV marketing is evident in the changes in income levels, food security and assets within a household. Household assets account for 81% of the income expended for marketers and only 12% for producers. FFV marketers point to the acquisition of household assets as a measure of success and gains from FFV marketing. Household assets purchased include, lounge suites, kitchen utensils, television sets, among

others. About 9% indicated they are able to purchase construction material to build or renovate their homes while 7% noted that they now own a home following years of investing income from FFV into building a home.

Other assets include wheelbarrows and pushcarts, which are useful in the movement of produce and are thus considered a direct investment into the FFV enterprise. Some producers have managed to use the income to acquire different assets in the form of farming implements such as diesel pumps, hosepipes, livestock (cows and goats). Scotch cart are also major purchases used for transporting FFV produce to local markets. Apart from these acquisitions, other producers have invested their proceeds into home improvement or purchase of household goods (kitchen units, televisions, lounge suites). Some had bought construction materials to renovate or build new homes. About 84% agreed that the enterprise has brought significant change to their lives while 16% indicated that they have struggled to cope despite being involved in the enterprise (Box 6.2).

**Box 6.2:** How FFV has changed the life of a widowed woman in Goromonzi

*My name is Tsitsi Ngoshi. In our family there are 10 people and my husband passed away in April 2004. When he passed away things became even tougher. We didn't have cattle but however out of agriculture, I managed to buy one cow, which has already given birth. My husband was not working so he spent all his effort on agriculture. We mostly grow crops that include maize for consumption, vegetables (150 bundles per 2 weeks), onions (40 bundles per month), beans (100kgs for consumption), tomatoes (30 boxes per 2 weeks) and maize (500kgs). We sell FFV produce but we also consume the remainder and therefore our family does not starve.*

*Last year the Agritex team helped us so much. We were taught to make composts out of maize residues and wet tree leaves. We developed two composts and out of them we had enough manure for our cereal and FFV crops. We then had to practice conservation agriculture and have been successful. At the same time, we actually plan production, and we depend on crop rotation, inputs are purchased on time.*

*To reach the market, we simply display our produce at the open-air market after we have paid our licence fees. We then have to adjust to market conditions for that day, if the produce you are selling is abundant then you have to lower the price but if it is limited then better prices.*

*The FFV has been very good for our family, and it means a lot. We have dug a very good well through the income derived from selling vegetables. We even have built our beautiful home out of the proceeds from FFV and sent our children to school. When my husband passed away we did not have an ox-drawn plough and a cultivator but we managed to raise the money from producing and selling FFV produce. Food is no longer a problem. Water is available but there is a distance from the water source and so we only have a Mark 15 type of water pump we bought but it is small and so cannot draw water for long durations and to supply over long distances.*

*The main challenges are: how to secure fertilisers, seeds and chemicals and a bigger pump that will bring water to the field at reasonable cost; our local authority should restructure our market giving permits to small scale producers only and expel commercial producers from big farms who are coming to flood our market thereby forcing prices down*

*I am now the decision maker, though when my husband was alive we supported each other. He took the lead in making decisions about our family. We were producing cucumbers, baby marrows, butternuts, and squashes apart from the vegetables we are producing now. We were helping each other and we used to sell at Interfresh and Favco where we were selling baby marrows and cucumbers, some squashes and butternuts. After selling, we had to plan together on how to use our money but as a man he would focus on buying food, paying fees and settling some inputs debts from town agro-dealers.*

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey, (July 2012)*

In conclusion therefore, entrepreneurs draw their modes of livelihood from quite distinct portfolios of activities. They have different asset bases, with the poorest households most limited in terms of capital assets. Those with capital asset bases and demonstrate flexibility in how they create positive livelihood outcomes and increased well-being. The ability to mobilize and use capital, skills and assets productively provides the biggest scope for wealth creation and offsetting any risk for both poor and better off households. On the other hand, the negative livelihood outcomes for the poor, means that they require long term and strategic intervention than just giving them free handouts. The respondents suggested long training in different thematic areas with start-up capital as key to changing their circumstances.

## **7.0 Obstacles to women's entrepreneurship in FFV sector**

### **7.1 The challenge of smallness in agricultural entrepreneurs**

In the agriculture sector, it is perhaps in the FFV production, where small farms have a competitive advantage over large commercial farms (World Bank, 1995; Moyo, 2000; Matondi, 2001). The advantage, lie principally in their low transaction costs in accessing family labour, intensive local knowledge. However, the study found that small scale also leads high unit transaction costs in almost all non- labour transactions, because of the need to access capital, markets and technical information, inputs and output markets. Further, smallholders are most difficult to monitor for the FFV buyers, as costs of trying to reach many of them are high. Therefore, it is rare, for buyers to penetrate distance areas to acquire, FFV produce, and it becomes the responsibility of the producers to go to the central market.

The result is that small farmers struggle to deliver reliable and regular supplies of a given FFV, particularly when quality is also tightly specified, and in responding rapidly to changes in buyers' requirements. Many of the producers from Domboshava do not penetrate the export market, however those in Mazowe at one time did export with the help of ZIMTRADE and Selby a private company involved in FFV. Yet, the European retail markets insist on crops that are produced with strict environmental regulations, free of child labour, free of labour exploitation. This provides a justification to exporters to sideline smallholders. Even, supermarkets chains have formulated their own standards, which sometimes may be even more stringent than government regulations.

## 7.2 Challenges with production factors

Challenges in the FFV sector are spread across the entire supply chain although mainly concentrated on the production and marketing nodes. At least 67% and 73% of producers in Goromonzi and Mazowe highlighted lack of farming implements such as fertiliser, herbicides, labour, draught power and working tools (Table 7.1). The producers observed that this affected the final quality and quantity of yields realised by the producers. Others mentioned unfavourable weather conditions and shortage of land (for Goromonzi producers in particular) affected the potential FFV yields. Once the crops are compromised at production stage, it becomes difficult to market them profitably as the quality is undermined. Once at the market place, the producers' commodities will have to compete with a wide array of similar produce, which could be of a better quality.

**Table 7.1: Challenges of production and marketing FFV**

Challenges	Goromonzi		Mazowe	
	No	%	No	%
Inadequate farming implements	398	67	19	73
Unfavourable weather conditions	44	7	4	15
Shortage of land and theft of produce	35	6	1	4
Flooded markets	114	19	2	8
Corrupt council officials	4	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

A key issue that also emerged was with respect to the challenges of getting finance. The study found that women in various enterprises have never had access to finance from formal institutions and that the money they get has been from their social networks or the previous employment activities. There was no difference in response between FFV producers and marketers. In general the response was they obtained their working capital from self-enterprises or social networks. This is no surprise given that in the field sites there were fewer and no banking institutions physically, which meant that access to bank was a problem in the first place. A variety of reasons why entrepreneurs shunned the banks were given as:

- Fear of the elaborate paper work requirement (typically noted as filling forms);
- Fear of failing to pay back loans and losing assets (collateral demands by financial institutions);
- The demand for 'viable' project proposals backed by collateral thus limiting lenders to only those with assets i.e. the rich; and

- Past experiences with hyperinflation experience until 2008, which created distrust and lack of confidence in the banking system, as entrepreneurs fear losing the precious US\$.

The answers above reflect concerns of people who have lost confidence in the banking sector and who are willing to work invest and look after their families outside formal channels. In fact, a new parallel cash based economy has emerged, which is difficult to account and trace in terms of its contribution to communities and the nation.

### **7.3 The skills gap**

In many conversations with FFV petty commodity traders, FFV businesswomen, the dominant undercurrent to succeed in any livelihood activity is when one has the skills in whatever enterprise one is engaged in. The issue of skills has been side stepped in FFV because there is a dominant view that women in the sector require inputs (seeds and fertilizer) or access to credit. While, this is critical in the short to medium, the women FFV are better off with greater access to skills to weave through the difficult markets. Yet, the training they received in the past tended to be short-term, narrowly focused on a just production, and thinly spread only to a few entrepreneurs. The people interviewed noted that skills training by NGOs were not comprehensive enough, as some had never received any form of training in their line of business. In Zimbabwe, the need for human capital development following more than 10 years of under investment by government, private sector and donors is imperative.

When respondents were asked on enterprise training received before and after venturing into the enterprises, there were a variety of answers. Therefore, the study envisaged that training was an important component of an enterprise in order to allow for productivity, efficiency and sustainability. There was no institutional structure in most places visited for people to solicit for training covering both management issues and technical knowhow on their line of business. The fact that some of the members could also impart knowledge to others is something that needs to be pursued to utilize the locally available talent on various experiences of running enterprises. Informal discussions to establish the kind of training that people received revealed that training mainly equipped people with technical skills (nutrition gardens) and did not do much to develop the managerial or marketing skills of people.

#### **7.4 Putting aside value addition for quick income**

Most small-scale farmers do not have the capacity to venture into value addition of their produce. Because most will be in need for cash by the time the produce is ready for the market, they prefer selling it in its raw state as value addition processes appear to prolong the time it will take to sell off to the buyers. The middlemen often influence their decision to sell since they go to the farmers with cash and ready to buy. Even for commodities such as green beans that can simply be packaged into plastic packs and sold off, the interest among farmers still lacks as they just sell directly from the field. This keeps them at the producer level within the value chain and limits their opportunities to also feature in the value chain as processors or retailers subsequently earning them more money. There is need for processing companies to find ways of going to the farmers to assist with value addition.

When commodity gluts occur, it is common to see dumped produce at the market as producers refuse to go back with produce that is still abundant in their gardens. For other farmers, drying becomes an option where leafy vegetables are dried into *mufushwa* before they are packed into plastics or sacks for resale. However, producers noted that dried vegetables are difficult to sell within the local markets as there is an abundance of fresh vegetables on a daily basis. Those that purchase, do so out of preference hence the target for the produce is in places where producing vegetables is difficult such as the semi-arid and arid locations. More recently, through branding and identifying niche markets, dried vegetables and sun-dried tomatoes are sold in supermarkets such as Spar, Thomas Meikles (TM) and Bon Marche. However, respondents interviewed did not indicate being engaged in branding of dried vegetables.

#### **7.5 Market information bottlenecks**

In both Mazowe and Goromonzi the study found that women producers would like information about the varieties of FFV, sources of inputs, prices of inputs and products in distant markets. At the market place, 19% of the producers noted that FFV produce gluts largely worked against their marketing endeavours as this automatically triggers price depreciations. In Goromonzi for instance, tomatoes and leafy vegetables are produced in abundance such that it is a common occurrence to find similar produce in large volumes at the local markets. As a result, the incomes realised are not inadequate with low profit margins. Further compounding these market challenges, the producers also noted increasing tendency

towards corruption among the council officials particularly at the main open markets such as Lusaka (in Highfields suburb) and Mbare Musika.

A majority of the farmers were depending on verbal information transmitted via intermediaries (usually marketers). Some found the information relayed to be unreliable for them to make decisions, and some had gone to the market based on this information and made bad sale of their FFV. Information about input price can assist farmers in farm management decisions, including where to get inputs with fairer prices and how much capital (or profit of one season) may be required to pay for inputs. The majority of the respondents also identified input price as one of the important information they needed. The analysis also showed a significant difference in information needs on input price between genders. Male respondents showed higher interests in input price information than females did. Therefore providing market related information will be pertinent.

## 7.6 Handling equipment and infrastructure

Storage and handling equipment for FFV produce is critical given its delicate and highly perishable nature. Upon harvest, producers use tree sheds (39%) to keep their produce while awaiting transportation to go to the market place. Cold rooms (1%) and Pack sheds (5%) are not a common site (Table 7.2). However, in Mazowe, the Negomo irrigation scheme has a cold storage facility although it is usually dysfunctional particularly when electricity is cut off. Producers noted that they strategically harvest their FFV produce to avoid lengthy waiting periods before going to the market. As such, producers opt to harvest and immediately go to the market (35%) to retain freshness and quality.

**Table 7.2: Handling and Storage Equipment (Goromonzi)**

Storage place	Type	No	%
<b>(n=475)</b>	Cold room	6	1
	Pack sheds	25	5
	Tree sheds	186	39
	Kitchen	93	20
	Straight to market	165	35
	<b>Total</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Handling Equipment (n=880)</b>	Crates	106	12.05
	Sacks	378	42.95
	Tin	33	3.75
	Baskets	20	2.27
	Boxes	334	37.95
	Plastics	4	0.45
	Buckets	4	0.45
	Pack directly into vehicle	1	0.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: Ruzivo WEH Survey (2012)

The type of handling equipment depends on the commodity. Some of these included plastic crates (popularly referred to as *sandaks*) are used for carrying tomatoes to the market. The crates carried the equivalent of 3 small wooden boxes often used for selling tomatoes at the market place. Leafy vegetables such as covo, rape and *tsunga* (mustard greens) are packed into sacks (*masafu*). The sacks (43%) are ideal as they can contain up to 200 bundles in one sack. The sacks are also used for packing sugar beans, sweet potatoes and potatoes for ease of handling particularly during transportation. Other equipment includes 25 litre plastic buckets, which are easier to carry when travelling on a commuter omnibus as it can be placed underneath the seat. However, producers noted that there are always risks involved with the equipment as some of the produce may be damaged during transportation thereby compromising on the final quality at the market.

The results show that there is almost market chaos in the FFV sector underpinned by lack of adequate infrastructure to handle FFV, which can be hazardous from a human health perspective. Issues of quality are being compromised at the expedience of making quick money. Traders and authorities literally chase each other in the streets and the same produce recollected is resold to the public. Yet, there are opportunities that could be explored for organising the marketers in particular. The respondents in Focused Group Discussions noted that it was expensive to build market related infrastructure. This because it requires huge capital investment for technology that does not come cheap. In the end, they noted that it does cost a lot of money just to get vegetables worth a few dollars to the markets. In the meantime, FFV producers in Mazowe for instance, produce vegetables for local markets (boarding schools, mission hospitals, service centres) with high populations that provide niche markets that does not require high-level infrastructure.

## **7.7 Operational challenges**

Producers travelling longer distances often travel during the evening to sleep over at the local Showground/Chirodzero market to ensure meeting the 3am or 4am market times the following day. Other producers who reside nearby wake up in the early hours of the morning to bring their produce to the market. The kitchen also serves as storage (20%) for produce that can be kept for a number of days before going to the market such as sweet potatoes, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, and oranges among others. However there are key challenges at distant markets such as Mbare. Yet some entrepreneurs were saying that “*pane garwe ndipo panobatika hove*” (crocodile infested rivers is where one can successful catch fish), meaning

that the difficult market places is where one can make money. The interviewees noted that at the Mbare Musika, there is some shelter, but the challenge they face is with respect with people who control and manage the market. They indicated that there is a lot of corruption and exploitation (*kudzvinyirirwa*) and the municipality of Harare does not intervene. It was further pointed out that unscrupulous middlemen impound their FFV produce (*Makoronyera vanobvutazvinhu*). *Complaints to the police authorities has not yielded any thin, and in fact they allege that when they complain the producers are the ones arrest instead. This is the reason why they appreciate the Showground/Chirodzero market.*

The FFV operates in dilapidated places, where hygiene is the last thing to be considered. However, social norms strongly influence men’s and women’s work and working environments. Some tasks and jobs are considered more appropriate for men or women, and overt or covert screening filters out applicants who defy these norms. These same norms and expectations also influence women’s access to productive assets and their ownership of wealth. Of the 65 interviews of transporters in Mazowe, there was no single woman in this sector. Yet, the sector largely depends on the efforts of women, who produce the FFV, or acquire them and require transports to the market.

### **7.8 The “groups” phenomenon in the FFV sector**

Collective organisation among marketers is not recognised as the study revealed that 77% are not affiliated into formal or informal groups. Such groups are usually useful for sharing information, lobbying relevant authorities to improve marketing conditions among other reasons. However, 23% of the marketers are informally organised to contribute to micro-finance schemes among themselves as a way of boosting their income. Table 7.3 shows that social networking is also regarded as a service among the groups and through these networks, members are able to agree on terms for engaging in the micro-finance schemes.

**Table 7.3: Service provision in marketer groups**

<b>Service</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Market information	12	29
Secure marketing space	9	21
Lobbying council	2	5
Sharing labour	10	24
Social networking	9	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

Despite these services, lobbying local authorities for improved market infrastructure or many with only 5% making that observation have not considered better service provision for marketers in the FFV sector. Where marketers are organised into groups, the services provided include sharing information -market prices, fast-selling commodities, local authorities' presence in the marketing area- (29%), sharing labour (24) and securing market spaces (21%). Labour sharing among the marketers occurs when they assist each other in loading and offloading produce as well as carrying it to the actual marketing point since in certain instances, other marketers will have more produce. The groups are formed from clusters of marketers operating from a specific place and are capable of mutually agreeing on forming such a group. Other women marketers group together when looking for transportation to the markets particularly in the early hours of the mornings and for security reasons. Apart from this, each marketer is responsible for their own decisions related to how to manage their enterprise, upgrading the business by identifying new market spheres as well as re-investing income in to the FFV enterprise.

Respondents in Goromonzi were asked if they worked together or if they desire to work collectively. There was generally a negative view of “groups” because: they were seen as problematic for managing resources; leaders were unwilling to leave posts on expiry of their terms; there is rent-seeking by leaders; they promote laziness; with other hiding behind groups and not meeting obligations such as payment of electricity or putting money to repair pumps. It was noted that NGOs have stylized approaches of working with groups on income generating projects. The general consensus was that beneficiaries only come into groups because they are asked by NGOs to do so, if they are to benefit from what they bring to them. Ideally, they would prefer individual projects. While it makes sense for the donors to reduce their transaction costs through this way, the beneficiaries prefers being on their own. The people feel that groups are not dynamic and are social welfare structures and not really business oriented. Firstly, the reason that people were not keen to join the cooperatives was that traditionally cooperatives have not succeeded as expected. Secondly, people who had joined initially did not seem to be doing any better than those who had not joined.

The limited collective action amongst the producers and marketers, limit their ability to master access to information and, in some instances, credit. Both credit and information are critical in accessing market opportunities. Smallholders reported that it is not economical for them to absorb the additional cost associated with collective action at Negomo Irrigation

scheme and in Goromonzi. Many did not appreciate the value of working together, and regard low-level competition among them as inhibiting collective action. Some noted that the people who lead tend to be undemocratic and rarely do they want to leave their posts when their time is up. The producers/marketers therefore needed training, but also mentorship on governance training on leadership, collective responsibility, working together, and mindset change. While constitutions do exist, they are not enough because those in leadership, which discourages producers/marketers to participate in collective action, do not follow them. Therefore, increasing social capital among the FFV producers and marketers in general can be of great value in enhancing the households' access to markets.

## **8.0 Policies and institutions affecting women entrepreneurship in FFV**

### **8.1 Government policy that affecting women entrepreneurs**

The government of Zimbabwe provides the space for producers and marketers of FFV produce production and marketing through policy and implementing legislation. The policy comes in the form of policy statements that come through fiscal or monetary policies as well as government plans such as the Medium Term Plan (2011 to 2015). The national budget is a key indicator of government priorities, and agriculture is always central. However, there is no specific sub-sector priority in areas such as FFV. The result is that there are no direct resources allocated to FFV in the government 'blue book', which is the national budget.

The policies and plans refer to agriculture in its broadest scope, meaning that FFV remains sort of privatized. However, government tries to equip small FFV producers with extension support, while encouraging parastatals such as ZIMTRADE to train farmers and link them to markets. However, the capacity is limited at 2 levels: training of specialists FFV extension was deprioritized as government narrowly concentrated on field crops and livestock; ZIMTRADE has little capacity and resources to reach the many people who are in the FFV sector at production and marketing.

The result is that FFV issues are then placed in the Ministry of Women's, Gender and Community Development or the Ministry of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises. The end result is that FFV issues tend to be promoted through a project approach. For instance, women once in a while are promoted to market their produce in different parts of the world in an *ad hoc* arrangement. The approach is to "projectize" FFV in the sense that there is no consistency in such interventions and the geographical origin of the women is also limited and they also

engage limited international markets. Thus for instance, producers and marketers from our case study are not aware of some of these government programmes that take a project approach which is the reason why there is a need for a programmed that feeds into the policy and plans of government are just getting by and are not engaged in optimal FFV production and marketing.

In Mazowe and Goromonzi, there are broader structural factors that inhibit women to participate positively in the market. The small entrepreneurs in the FFV survive on the margins of uncertainty. This is especially so for marketers, who literary are breaking the laws of vending willy-nilly. Therefore somewhat ironically, one of the most serious impediments to innovation and development of risk management markets for Zimbabwe may be highly unpredictable government intervention in markets. In the past they did intervene through operation clean-up (*murambatsvina*), which destroyed most “illegal” market places. In addition government implemented policy such as price prescriptions (in the retail sector) underpinned by heavy state enforcement through security code named “illegality is over” (*chikorokoza chapera*) remains a reminder to most marketers that FFV markets may burst. Therefore, if government interventions are discretionary and difficult to predict then they can add another layer of risk that individuals may find difficult to hedge.

A key recommendation of this study is that the private sector should carry out the main direct marketing functions – purchase/assembly from farmers, wholesaling, storage, transport, milling, and retailing, especially if the private sector is broad based and facilitate small marketers to participate. The role of the state should be confined to provision of public goods: market rules and regulations, physical infrastructure, regulatory oversight of finance, market information, investment in new technology, organizing farmers into groups for means of reducing costs and risks of accessing finance, inputs, and marketing.

## **8.2 Role of local authorities**

### **8.2.1 Mandate of local on FFV trade**

The city council and rural district council have the mandate to provide marketing space to vendors of FFV. When formal procedures are adhered to, council officials allocate a marketing stall City councils and local authorities are supposed to provide conditions for city entrepreneurial activities through infrastructure and managing trade spaces. for which an FFV trader pays levy towards on a weekly or monthly basis. Table 8.1 shows at least 32% of the

marketers having secured their marketing stalls through the local authorities while the 53% that pointed out to the marketing points being vacant are often selling from undesignated locations. These locations include streets within the CBD, roadsides in the urban and peri-urban areas, which lead to evasion strategies whenever council officials track them for flouting by-laws.

**Table 8.1: Allocation of FFV marketing place**

<b>Securing the market stall</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Vacant	33	53
Given by City Council	20	32
Just park my vehicle	1	2
Advised by neighbours	4	7
Allocated by village head	2	3
Shop owners	1	2
Allocated by council	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

Local authorities are responsible for service provision that entails enforcing by-laws related to FFV marketing, developing adequate infrastructure, and sanitation facilities. Evidence on the ground showed marketers working in potentially hazardous areas especially with regards to health. Infrastructure such as pavements and stalls to store produce are obsolete and inadequate particularly with the volumes of produce brought to the market.

**8.2.2 Entrepreneurs views on local authority services**

The respondents indicated that they do not generate sufficient income to contribute towards securing licenses and paying levies, which leaves them with no option, but to take the chance and sell produce in undesignated places. However, the respondents observed that the local authorities are not effectively identifying strategic marketing spaces as some of the designated sites are not located to cater for the entire customer catchment. As a result, marketers shun these areas to find strategic selling points. Fewer marketers noted that they were allocated market space by village heads (3%), shop owners for those selling on verandas (2%) and neighbours (7%).

Respondents noted that sanitation facilities are either not working or poorly maintained with absence of efficient waste management. As such Table 8.2 shows 63% noting that service provision is next to none. About 25% observed that sanitary services were provided but not adequate. Security (5%) at the market place is not guaranteed despite municipal police presence at the markets. The respondents elaborated by saying service provision remained

poor with an urgent need for improvement particularly when producer/marketers contribute levies towards the maintenance of the stalls at open-air markets.

**Table 8.2: Respondents views on services provided by the city council**

Service	No	%
None	48	63
Market stall	5	7
Security	4	5
Sanitary services	19	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

About 51% of the responses in Table 8.3 show that marketers are aware that they operate outside stipulated regulations. However, they justified themselves by blaming local authorities for being corrupt and disruptive to their enterprises as they continuously chase them away and arrest them for marketing from prohibited sites. The marketers end up paying bribes to avoid arrests, a situation they seek to avoid on a daily basis.

**Table 8.3: Regulations governing the market place (n= 76)**

Regulations	No	%
Don't stick to regulations	39	51
Sanitary requirements	14	18
Self-regulation	22	29
Market business hours	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Ruzivo WEH survey (2012)*

At the actual open markets and established market stalls, sanitary regulations pertaining to hygiene apply although there is little enforcement by the authorities who have largely been rendered incapable of delivering adequate services. Self-regulation allows the marketers to agree amongst themselves on conditions for creating a safe, healthy and friendly enterprise environment. For example women, allocated stalls at the Showground market, agree to sweep the area each morning and dispose of any waste that would have been accumulated. At the Hatcliffe open market, the marketers appoint a committee, which oversees the conduct of all marketers. The committee is allowed to dismiss any member who does not abide by the regulations set for the market place.

### **8.2.3 Plunging service provision**

The study found that local authorities are hardly fulfilling this mandate. Today, their job is now restricted to chasing vendors from the street. This is done in a sort of contradictory way. For instance they chase FFV vendors from the streets, and allocates open that are even more

unhygienic to the vendors to do business. The interest of local authorities is on extracting rents through charging vendors for using the open spaces. First, it means that the local authorities as the custodians of the health and public security have abrogated their responsibility on the altar of making money for themselves, which is not ploughed back to the improvement of that infrastructure.

Secondly, the 90% unemployed mostly educated youths now domiciled in FFV production and marketing are rising as a powerful force, creating problems for bona fide FFV entrepreneurs. While they seem to be unorganized, they have succeeded in invading public spaces to sell their produce be it in the streets or in official open air spaces. So far, they have won the battle seemingly because government is hesitant to implement another clean up programmed because of its political implications. Selling by roadside has its risks, most notably being challenges with unhygienic conditions that place the public at great health risks. For instance, in most roadsides, there are no toilets or running water, which is the reason why the sellers are regularly raided by the authorities. In addition, in competing for vehicle driving or passenger-customers, young children run the risk of being killed through accidents. Therefore planned vegetable kiosk could be useful in providing convenient selling points where the customers park their vehicles.

Thirdly, legislation in the form of national statutory instruments and by laws related to health and safety has gone asunder because they have largely been shelved as evidenced by:

- Producers and marketers literally doing what they want,
- Absence of a mechanism for or ability to enforce by-laws. It is only the city of Harare that has got a functional police force that interfaces with vendors in the city centre and surrounding locations.
- Limited capacity among the regulators from the ministry of health for instance to enforce safety and health regulations. There is no clear liaison between these regulators and city regulatory authorities.

The study found it surprising that informal groups have got the ability to organize these marketers and extract their own value out of them for personal benefit but not for the benefit of the producer, which is supposed to be the role of local authorities.

### **8.3 FFV Investment through Public and Private Sector Partnerships**

There is no question that the FFV sector in Zimbabwe requires investment for resuscitating infrastructure and for providing working capital. Neither government nor local private sector companies including financial institutions have been able to provide such investments. The end result is that the smallholder FFV has been taken as an area of philanthropy by NGOs and development agencies who provide small seed money for revival of irrigation schemes or formulating community gardens. Yet the smallholder FFV needs to be taken as a business entity requiring more than just philanthropy of which government and the private sector should play a prominent role.

There is a yawning gap in terms of infrastructure provision to the FFV sector as seen through the market conditions in Mazowe and Goromonzi as discussed earlier. While government has pushed for the formulation of large scale Public Private Sector Partnerships (PPPs) for large infrastructural development policy such as the one in Chisumbanje for bio-ethanol production, there is no attention to the PPPs that are appropriate for smallholders. Thus from a policy perspective, the PPPs being formulated tend to be large scale, requiring huge capital outlays that smallholders can hardly afford. There is no model for PPPs that apply to smallholder FFV producers; such kind of PPPs needs to be marketed to the private sector. A good example is the attempt by Selby, a private agricultural enterprise, to partner the farmers at Negomo Irrigation Scheme though it had no infrastructure support.

The desire to attract external investors has its advantages and pitfalls. In Zimbabwe, we have seen a total transformation of the meaning of the external investor. For instance, Egyptians, Brazilians, South Africans and Chinese are literally dumping cheap produce, much of it genetically modified, on the Zimbabwean market as a different breed of investors. There are a few, if not non-existent, capital or infrastructural investing international players in the FFV sector in Zimbabwe. At the same time, Zimbabwean FFV producers and marketers, smallholders in particular, face serious challenges in breaking into the international markets. In this scenario, questions of standardization, food safety, phyto-sanitary requirements and registration of producers from source of produce are key challenges that producers of FFV face. They are thus restricted to the domestic market.

## **9.0 Discussion of the key message from the study**

### **9.1 Transforming society**

The types of work ascribed to men or women have changed, as women break the barriers. In Goromonzi, women have taken a much more active role in the control of production because they have become not just housewives, but also, marketers and also producers. In the process they have silently carved out their tenure, as they are also involved in the decision making process of how the income obtained is used. In fact, women are undertaking a similarly wide range of diversification activities as men, but in many contexts, men are able to avail themselves to diversification opportunities (transport) that are not open to women due to cultural constraints. Personal accumulation and consumption are however still sanctioned by men to women to fulfil patriarchy. Women try to renegotiate this to protect themselves against the break-up of the household.

A key message from the study is that households and markets interact in ways that affect access to land, labour, and other assets. The household and its connection to local customary system reflect social norms that have a bearing on gender-differentiated labor force and social beliefs, e.g., inheritance laws and property rights that restrict women's ability to access and accumulate land and the production capacities they engage in according to gender categories. The study established that many women are engaged in the lowest levels of micro enterprise: household-based income generating activities. There are no substantial barriers to entry into this type of activity in terms of skills and capital, but they yield very low incomes even though such income may be critical for household survival. Therefore men spend less time on productive work than females. While men focus on livestock and dry land cropping, women focus on gardening and the FFV markets. This indicates that men do have more opportunities to pursue high income earning options, although this proposition must be further tested.

The results concerning market participation across FFV show that women have significantly lower production volumes and less market participation compared to large commercial producers of yesteryear. Women lag behind in use of productivity enhancing inputs such as fertilizers and improved seeds. In addition despite, the low use of these, they have not opted for organic FFV production. In fact, finance, skills to diversify, poor infrastructure at farm and marketing level, accounts for the poor performance of small FFV producers and markets. Though both men and women have basic literacy to manoeuvre especially at the market end, access to credit limit the capacity of the women to produce for the market. In both Mazowe

and Goromonzi, the results show that there are tremendous increases in market participation for various commodities. These results point to a strong relationship between market participation and economic difficulties, forcing many of the women to enter the FFV sector at various points.

At the same time, the study linked the reproductive roles or cultural expectations to the way women conducted their enterprises. Women find it most challenging to travel due to cultural attitudes of spouses. Those who can travel lack the market information on products and inputs, thus become dependent on the middle traders who buy their products at relatively lower than the market price. In Zimbabwe, men have almost virtually taken over the FFV market, because usually they have vehicles for transporting the produce. The majority of women are hindered, by asset constraints, which means they pay more to participate in both production and marketing. In many cases, women often produce small amounts, they are limited to the local village markets, where the markets are already saturated and prices are low relative to the production costs they incur.

## **9.2 Costs to the entrepreneur**

At the production end of the FFV chain, improving productivity among women is therefore critical, and needs to be considered alongside any measures aimed at reducing transaction costs that hinder access to markets. In terms of factors that could enhance market participation for women, the study found that land tenure security issues (at family level) rather than size will play a significant role in enhancing women to produce. This suggests that any hope for women to make any meaningful gains from FFV lies in improving productivity of their land as well as improving their access to land through tenure reform and mindset change, especially for men.

There is a need to develop strategies by both producers and marketers to promote the cost-effective sale of commodities in order to avert risks and poor sales, especially for FFV. These products are highly perishable such that the high value of the fresh commodity is easily eroded by losses during marketing, with serious consequences for downstream production. This was seen through expensively produced tomatoes lying idle because of the market glut. There is a need for vertical co-ordination in which farmers enter into contracts with large processors and retailers to at least recoup costs. This is despite the fact that such contracts are flout with inequities whereby farmers bear most of the marketing risks. Most high value

production processes are also expensive and knowledge intense, demanding substantial sophistication in production, planning and packaging techniques as well as marketing. For smallholders to depend exclusively on such ventures for survival is too risk because of the costs involved. For commercialization to work as a poverty reduction strategy there is need therefore to carefully select those high value ventures with less risk, low technical knowledge and low capital needs.

### **9.3 Market transformation**

The spot market is the default marketing option for FFV producers. This market is found everywhere be it in the villages, at local markets, in urban areas (streets and shops), which women in particular penetrate. Although most of the fruits and vegetables trade is executed through spot markets, the transaction costs in these markets are very high. Transaction costs are also high because fruits and vegetables are perishable products, and therefore cannot be stored until sufficient information on qualitative and quantitative demand has been obtained. Various institutional arrangements could potentially lower these transaction costs, although finding the right model is not easy.

The spot market is characterised by the absence or weakness of the institutional environment in various areas. One of the formal institutions that may be functioning is a physical market place such as Showground/Chirodzero, with a fence around it, and a gate to control who trades in it. The Goromonzi RDC is able to make traders pay, though some trade outside illegally. However, self-monitoring of traders, has been induced on traders, as those who pay try to discourage those who do not through setting council authorities on them. Setting up FFV market shades in Harare, can provide a framework for setting the rules of participation (such as allocating vendor permits and lots, perhaps including limitations on the specific products so that the market is not flooded). It may also be the case that this kind of formal market organisation enforces other formal rules, such as those concerning sanitary standards, or quality grading.

These findings imply that access to markets may no longer be meaningfully defined in terms of distance to town markets, but rather in terms of the number of buyers competing to buy farmers' FFV in the villages as well as markets closer to the production areas. The ability to negotiate and obtain a remunerative price that represents a high proportion of the maximum price is determined by how far one can penetrate the markets. Results showed great variation

in farm-gate price even for farmers within the same village and selling FFV within the same time period such as a week. Additionally, producer/marketer penetrating urban markets show that they had received training or are connected socially in markets, hence they received better prices on average. This implies that there is scope for training farmers in order to improve their understanding of market behaviour and gain both confidence and negotiation skills in interacting with traders.

#### **9.4 Income fallacy**

Income margins for FFV in particular tends to be highly volatile, while those of marketers who are usually middle persons tends to be stable and respond to prices based on production and consumer demands. However, a critical factor impacting margins are the imports coming especially from South Africa. For instance, hundreds of tonnes of onions are now found in markets that smallholders trade in, creating price distortions for the marketers and consequently the producers. The study found that there are huge differences in farm gate prices, local markets (Showground) and niche markets in Harare and outside. Transporters who mostly are men especially in Goromonzi embed themselves in the market routes, given that there is a proliferation of urban men and women, who now penetrate rural areas in search of FFV. Using farm-gate prices reported by farmers through the survey and farmer focus group discussions, the study found that FFV prices are considerably different from rural local markets and urban markets. However, the flooding of the retail sector with FFV imports, signal the narrowing margins and rents extracted by middlemen in the FFV supply chain.

#### **10.0 Options for better inclusion of women in the FFV value**

##### **10.1 Building women's property rights**

The study found that while, women lack of access to productive resources they are finding ways of manoeuvring such lack of ownership to increase their stake in the FFV sector. However, given that men traditionally regarded “gardens” as women’s enterprise, they tended not to interfere. The changing economic situation of Zimbabwe, where now most productive people are in the informal sector has tilted the issue of garden land ownership and elicited contestations between men and women. Women are finding it harder to retain their “garden” land rights, which means implies serious threat to their economy. New forms of denying women the opportunity to own and inherit land and other properties have serious implications on the productivity and income of households. The study therefore **recommends**: *that greater*

*attention needs to be paid in galvanizing efforts to ensure women's ownership of land and other properties through policy formulation reform, revision of the legal systems and changing customary practices. The current reform and possible national land policymaking after the FTLRP provides a very good opportunity to deal with property right matters.*

## **10.2 Collective action**

Building producer self confidence in addressing challenges faced in FFV production and marketing is critical to avoid perpetuating dependency on external assistance especially on challenges that can be resolved if producers work collectively. For this reason, the study **recommends:** *clustering of women producers to get services at a lower cost for transport, inputs supply, extension, technology etc. Groups of women producers may be able to access services collectively, which they might not be able to purchase as individual entrepreneurs. Clusters and networks of women can gain access to resources and achieve economies of scale when they work together. If they do so they are in a better negotiating position with potential suppliers or can bargain more effectively with buyers than they could alone.*

## **10.3 Improving capital investment climate**

Fresh fruit and vegetable marketers in Goromonzi and Mazowe face a number of challenges related to their enterprise. First, they cited inadequate capital to sustain production and marketing activities. In fact, the study established that there is hardly any private sector with significant intervention, leaving the sector largely informal and its potential untapped. If women are to be real entrepreneurs worthy of their efforts, then there is a need to intervene through improving the business climate. The study **recommends:** *microfinance to provide financial resources to the underserved and compensate for the absence of financial markets. Micro-credit can also provide an essential platform for graduating women's businesses and women's production to formal sector financial services. The provision of incentives to the private sector for active and innovative support for small-scale farmers through tailor-made credit facilities, alongside support for innovative commercial ideas that combine profitability with developmental and social impact (fund capitalisation for grants/loans to enterprises with qualifying investment ideas, including management and project implementation support costs) are critical enablers. For example, outgrowers in tobacco and cotton, that have attained scale of operations for commercial enterprises has shown positive results that can be replicated in the FFV. Offering products that include risk insurance, inventory, health, and insurance has proven to be particularly important for poor women. Working on policy, institutional, or*

*social change that addresses structural impediments to women's access to financial services can improve their ability to access markets. Among such projects are those that improve women's inheritance rights and their access to collateral resources such as land and other productive assets.*

#### **10.4 Market linkages**

Women are the greatest losers on the FFV value chain, because they do not fully understand the connected of the chain. When FFV commodities flood the markets, prices are depressed to the extent that they were not able to add a mark-up that yields reasonable profit. Secondly, when produce is expensive, the marketers do not realise much returns except what is sufficient for reinvesting into the business, while at times they may end up borrowing from colleagues to supplement the income. In the FFV sector, women noted tacitly that market imperfections, information bottlenecks, and the scarcity of capital (financial, physical and human) confer unequal power and access to markets. In fact, women when asked if they can account for their gains or losses, many were not able to tell. The result is that they are always at the base of the value chain, as producers of petty commodity street brokers. Yet, there are good opportunities to deriving value for women in the FFV participation when market imperfections and restrictions are removed, which can increase the ability of poor men and women to enter markets, raise their productivity and bargaining power, and scale up their activities. The study therefore **recommends:** *that the private sector and development agencies should work closely with marketers in facilitating market linkages, access to credit and finance among other possible interventions. Through capacity development in areas such as business management, market intelligence, the FFV entrepreneurs can be equipped with knowledge and skills related to identifying lucrative markets for their produce. Therefore focusing on economic activities that are owned or run by women, and supporting the development of more robust, complex markets, with extensive forward and backward business linkages has the potential to improve women's access to markets along the value chain. Linking smaller producers and buyers can minimize predatory pricing and monopsony impacts and overcome barriers that small women entrepreneurs face.*

#### **10.5 Infrastructure provision**

Closer consultation between marketers and the council officials is required to appreciate the challenges from either side. The respondents expressed the need for the city and rural district councils to prioritise resuscitation of market spaces particularly at the open markets where

most marketers and producers converge. The study recommends: *the construction of paved platforms and market stalls to place produce, of which the majority of petty FFV traders are willing to pay for. This can contribute to retaining the quality of produce while maintain high levels of hygiene. Sanitation facilities in the CBD for instance are insufficient and require refurbishment with clean water available from various points. Women marketers that sleep overnight awaiting early market openings, implored council officials to provide secure accommodation given that a number of women come with very young children and considering the vulnerability of women to theft, harassment and abuse at the unprotected open markets.*

### **10.6 Addressing institutional bottlenecks**

The role of local authorities has been heavily undermined by the inability to deliver adequate services to the marketers particularly with regards to market infrastructure, sanitation and waste management. The role of the council has been reduced to controlling illegal marketing within the CBD and along undesignated roadsides; a situation FFV marketers continuously seek to evade. Corruption levels have also increased as municipal police coerces marketers into paying bribes to avoid arrest and confiscation of produce. Yet farmers face institutional difficulties to market their produce, as markets are opened and closed willy nilly, affected the livelihoods of women (box 10.1). The study **recommends**: *that government support to FFV entrepreneurs through providing a level playing field for all entrepreneurs meeting the requirements to trade. A key area is to improve women's bargaining power through providing information and communications technologies that enable women producers to sell in higher value markets or purchase critical inputs that can raise productivity and incomes. Women engage in trade, being unaware of the laws and regulations. It is the responsibility of government to address the inconsistencies in the regulations targeting small FFV entrepreneurs to enable them to participate in the market freely.*

**Box 10.1: Mbare Market Closure Impacts**

*Fruit and vegetable farmers at Mbare Musika have appealed to Harare City Council to allocate them more time at the market so that they finish selling their produce. They told The Herald yesterday that they were allowed sell their crops between 6am and 12 noon. Bindura farmer Mr Richard Mangena said the time allocated was not enough. "Our situation is tricky. We come here in the morning and pay US\$10 to do our business and whether you have completed or not you have to leave at midday. Most of the time we would not have sold enough even to break even after hiring transport and paying the council fees so we end up incurring heavy losses," he said. Mr Mangena said transporters were charging US\$2 for every kilometre, which made it very difficult to remain in business.*

*Another farmer from Nyamuzuhwe in Mutoko, Mr Taedza Homwe said the time allocated for business was very limited. He said the trading period should be extended to cover the whole day. "As you can see I am selling green mealies but the market is depressed at the moment so I have to fork out more money to remain here than I will earn at the end of the day. "I came here yesterday and I have since paid US\$20 yet I have not sold anything meaningful. The mealies are fast losing their quality and soon I will be forced to dispose them at US\$1 for a dozen," he said. When he arrived on Thursday, the mealies were selling for US\$3 a dozen but yesterday they had slashed the price to US\$2 for 12 cobs.*

*Source: The Herald, (17 September 2012)*

**10.7 Removing meddling 'middlepersons' in the FFV chain**

A number of terminologies have emerged depicting how women entrepreneurs are prejudiced in the FFV market. Term such as *kukorokoza* (extracting income out of no labour effort), *kuwachiswa* (tricking produce to part with their produce), and *kuguma guma* (cheating) depict how the market place is a difficult one. The problems women face, range from manipulation of FFV prices by middle-persons, and robbing rural farmers at the sophisticated urban markets etc. *Makoronyera* (cheating loafers) tend to hoard produce or influence market prices to the disadvantage of smaller FFV marketers. Increasing competition is evident given the relative ease of entry into the FFV enterprise. The result is that marketers have to be continuously innovative in seeking niche markets to widen their customer base and establish networks of regular customers that purchase from them.

The study **recommends:** *that the elimination or undermining of market tricksters on the FFV value chain for women's broader participation. Educating women on how the FFV value chain work will help them to bring FFV product through the different phases of production and delivery to final customers. Women, should be able understand the economic, organizational, and coercive relationships among actors located along different points of the chain and to understand the different distribution of potential and actual benefits to different actors. Analysing the rents generated by actors provides opportunities to reduce the number of intermediaries, increase the bargaining power of producers, provide storage, and transport facilities enable women in FFV to capture the markets.*

## **10.8 Training and capacity development**

Training is not new in the FFV sector it has traditionally been done by government, private sector and donors with some level of success and failure. Women farmers are largely labour constrained, and resources such as water are going to wastage due to poor production practices, they also tend to rely on expensive inputs and could better depend on natural resources. The study **recommends:** *that skills training should be increased to increase their knowledge on managing the production of diverse FFV as well as marketing. Training will lead to potential diversification from traditional FFV, towards those that command higher incomes (baby marrow, mange tout, beetroot, garlicks, peppers etc.). At the same time, training in collective action as specified above is a key requirement.*

## **10.9 FFV quality development**

The organic movement provides the most competitive advantage for smallholder producer/marketers. In Zimbabwe, the relationship between the supermarkets and growers is infested with power asymmetries. The demand for international standards from the small producers has been the sore point, because the country has not been able to invest significantly in assets for such production. The situation at Negomo irrigation scheme shows the inability of the producers to meet the minimum local standards. FFV formal buyers (supermarkets and exporters) emphasize quality, which becomes the visible process of inclusion or exclusion of smallholders. In this case, lapses in hygiene and safety standards are not tolerated as suppliers are delisted. Most of the small farmers find these requirements are challenge, given Zimbabwe's state of the economy where agricultural support is weak. The study **recommends:** *that private companies and government find ways of identifying the quality pressure points, which producers should pay for. One way of improving quality it to invest in organic FFV with rigorous quality checks that producers are made aware of. This will enable small entrepreneurs to penetrate high value niche markets.*

## **10.10 Harnessing ICTs for Smallholder FFV enterprises**

Zimbabwe has close to 9 million people subscribed to mobile cellular networks accounting for up to 74% of the country's total population. The private sector has provided the infrastructure and gadgets to drive the economy. Places such as Mazowe and Goromonzi have complete network coverage from the three main service providers. Cell phone ownership is also high among urban and rural dwellers with 94% owning handsets hence, the probability to utilise social platforms available through these networks is high. It would be useful to

establish a FFV commodity exchange driven by farmers, and especially the farming organisations to take advantage of farmers. It is the role of farmers unions such as the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU), through its members, to establish platforms for information sharing on markets, production-planning issues among others. In this regard, a strong union with a mass of members is required to drive it and the ZFU is best placed to drive the process.

### **10.11 Development assistance**

The respondents noted that interventions and assistance provided through development agencies, the private sector and government departments at times fails to address the specific needs of the producers. In most cases development agencies fail to get it right because they prescribe solutions and hardly listen to the producers. Therefore development agencies assist the producers with irrigation schemes, without interrogating the aspirations of the beneficiaries. Many of the irrigation schemes are lying idle, despite having good infrastructure, and in a contradictory way despite the poor struggling with access to food and income. This has to be changed, if resources and efforts of agencies are to be translated to women economic development. The study therefore **recommends**: *that there should be improved consultation when designing programmes targeting women and men FFV producers is required to ensure tailor-made interventions. Projects that support women's micro and small entrepreneurship need to take into account the various gender related challenges including time burden, lack of intra-household decision making power, low technology, limited access to markets and resources and limited supportive environment. Efforts should be made to empower women through various leadership programs that build women's ability to progress in the businesses.*

### **11.0 Conclusion**

The Government of Zimbabwe has been a key player in redistributive governance through the land reform programme and the indigenisation and economic empowerment policy. These major policies have had a ripple effect on the FFV at two levels – production and marketing. Whole FFV production has been decimated, the FFV smallholder markets have grown, but face stiff competition from imports. Therefore, though the majority benefitted from the land reform programme, new forms of inequities are sprouting especially in the market space. This is seen through the lax import arrangements that provide space for foreign FFV produce than Zimbabwean produce. On the marketing front, large commercial entities with cheap financial clout tend to push out smallholder producers in Zimbabwe who largely cannot access cheap

finance in the financial markets. Women who are the majority in this sector are negatively affected at both ends. However, they suffer doubly because their enterprises are hardly supported and they do not have access to enablers such as credit, technology, or productive assets such as land and water. This is in addition to the limitations they have at household level, where they have to negotiate participation in the FFV with their spouses, who strongly put customary rules at the forefront.

At a national level, the production and marketing of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables in Zimbabwe presents opportunities for livelihood improvement for women. The FFV sector is emerging as important for the livelihoods of many families domiciled in the informal sector, in view of Zimbabwe's inability to create jobs. While the large-scale commercial production of FFV has largely declined, the smallholder shows signs of resilience despite limited government, private sector and donor support. Growth in the smallholder FFV from production to marketing is based on the sectors relatively easy entry because the requirements for production or marketing tend to be accessible to the smallholders. Therefore the main producers of these commodities are smallholders who depend on them for incomes, food security and employment. The survey tacitly shows women occupying a central position in the production and marketing of FFV. However, this does not fully translate to the realisation of access to and control over critical success factors in entrepreneurship

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