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Examining community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects in Matobo Zimbabwe

Mbakisi Nyoni

A research report submitted to the faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in 50% requirement for the of Master of Management degree (in the field of Public and Development sector Monitoring and Evaluation).

December, 2023

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Abstract

Climate change in Africa has resulted in devastating food insecurity especially among rural households in the semi-arid regions. The purpose of this research was to examine the roles of the local community in the process evaluation of the Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre food security project that is intended to improve food security in Matobo District, Ward 18. One key finding from the study is that community engagement in humanitarian interventions was key to improving community participation in community projects. The study also discovered that major constraints to community participation includes: lack of community inclusion in project design and planning stages, inadequate knowledge of project planning and management and inadequate knowledge of monitoring and evaluation.

Declaration

I declare that report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

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Mbakisi Nyoni

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List of abbreviations

AGRITEX	Agricultural Technical and Extension Services
DAEO	District Technical and Extension Services
DC	District Coordinator
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
DSWO	District Social Welfare Officer
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPC REEWF	Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre Renewable Empowering Women Farmers project
FPC	Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRDC	Matobo Rural District Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PME	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
RDC	Rural District Council
RDDC	Rural District Development Committee
REEWF	Renewable Energy empowering Women Farmers
ZimVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

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Chapter one

1.0 Introduction, background, research questions

1.1 Introduction

1.1.2 Overview of the study

The problem of insecurity in Africa has resulted in severe hunger and starvation especially among the rural households who solely depend on subsistence farming as their source of food. Climate change has worsened this phenomenon in the semi-arid tropics of Sub-Saharan Africa especially in the developing countries like Zimbabwe where this study was conducted. The purpose of this research was to examine the roles of the local community in the process evaluation of the Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre food security project in order to improve food security in Matobo District, Ward 18. One of the key findings of the study was that community engagement in humanitarian interventions was an underemphasised factor. The study also discovered that some of the major constraints to community participation were lack of community inclusion in project design and planning stages.

This chapter presents a general overview of evaluation and food security situation in the semi-arid tropics and in particular, Matobo District, Ward 18. The focus of the study was in Ward 18 of Matobo District which is one of the 25 wards of the district.

This chapter highlights the background of the research and the main research problem. Also included in this chapter are the background to the study, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study. The overall layout and summary of all the chapters in the research report is included in this initial chapter.

1.1.3 Research background

The state of food insecurity in Matobo District as one of the most hard-hit districts in Zimbabwe gave the researcher the impetus to examine the role played by the community in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects in Matobo District, Ward 18

in Zimbabwe. Although the study was buttressed by data from humanitarian organisations implementing food security projects in the district focus was on the case of a food security program that was being implemented by a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) called Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre (FPC). This program is called Renewable Energy Empowering Women Farmers, abbreviated as (REEWF). The program had been running for over five years in the district.

1.1.4 Brief profile of Matobo district

The district is located in Matabeleland South province of Southern Zimbabwe. Matobo District shares a border with Mangwe District in the west, Gwanda in the east, uMzingwane in the north and Botswana in the South west. It lies in the Beitbridge South Western Lowveld Communal livelihood zone. This is a low-lying area with an average annual rainfall of 300-500 millimetres (mm) that falls between October and February of each rainy season. This marginal rainfall results in mid-season dry spells that affect crop growth leading to low yields that worsen food shortages in the district. According to the Zimbabwe land capability classification, it is under ecological Region IV. The map below shows the location of Matobo District.

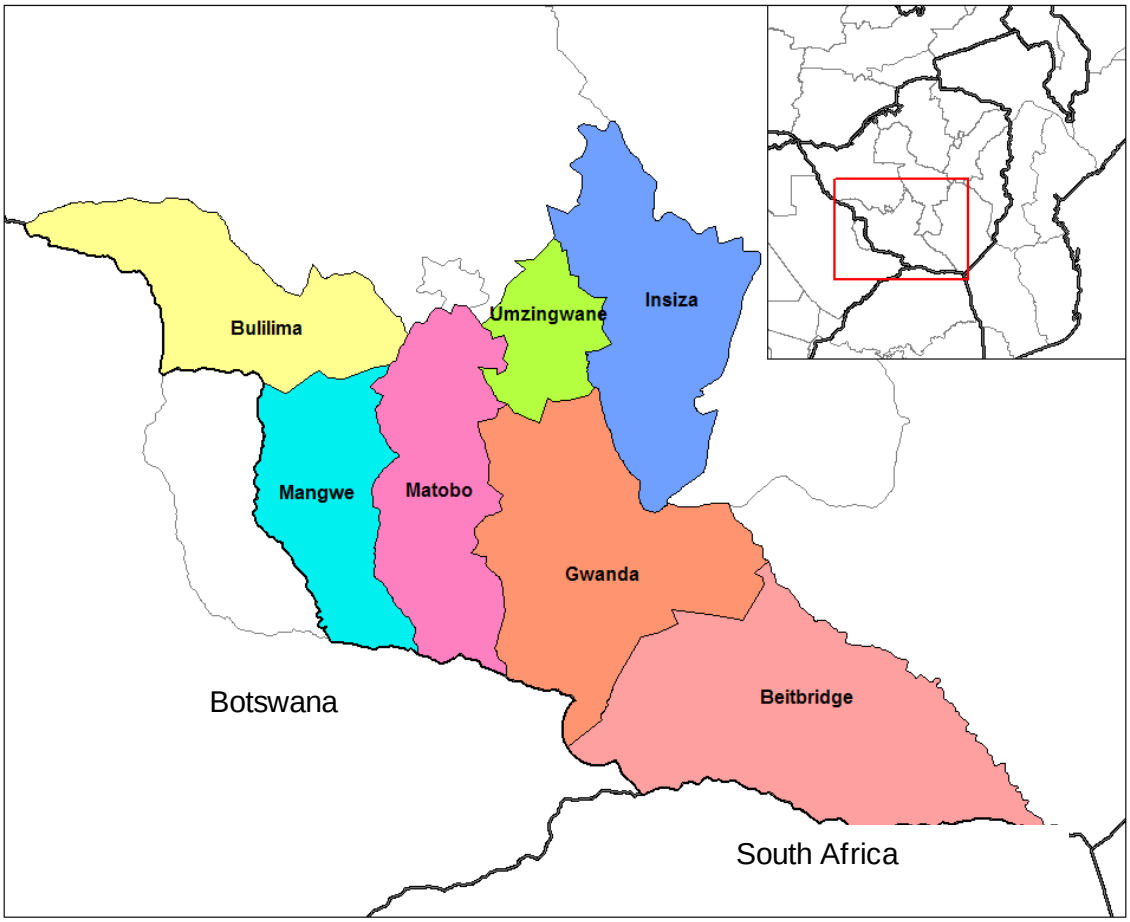


Figure 1.1 Map of Matabeleland South Province showing position of Matobo District. Source: OCHA, 2019

The predominant livelihood system in this district is mixed farming, combining crop and livestock production. Rain fed cultivation of millet, sorghum and maize is practiced on sandy loam soils that are infertile and marginal for agriculture. Ox-drawn ploughs complemented by hand digging tools such as hoes are the primary means of cultivation. Men and women share agriculture labour activities, with men performing more laborious land preparation activities, and women providing the weeding, threshing and harvesting labour. Quelea birds commonly attack the sorghum and millet crop, and are controlled by scaring them away providing extra labour to the already burdened communal farmers. Extended mid-season dry spells and poor soil fertility combine to make this a chronically food deficit area. Livestock production is important for access to food and cash income.

The main livestock reared are cattle and goats. Both livestock types provide milk for household consumption. Cross-border labour exports to Botswana and South Africa make a significant contribution to household income in form of remittances (ZimVAC, 2021)

1.1.5 Problem Statement

ZimVAC (2019) noted that in the Zimbabwean context, the problem of food insecurity had been of major concern especially in the semi-arid low rainfall areas of the southern part of the country. Food security projects have been implemented in the country by both the government through the Ministry of Agriculture and rural Resettlement and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) ZimVAC (2019). The study seeks to examine the role of community participation with particular focus in process evaluation of humanitarian projects because process evaluation gives the project direction during its implementation. It is during project implementation that project beneficiaries are involved physically in the project.

The study established that these projects had encountered different levels of success throughout their lifespan. The role of community participation in the conducting of process evaluation of food security projects was largely underemphasised. Farmers who participated fully in project activities and during project implementation had the potential to increase crop yields (Abdoulaye et al., 2012). Cummings (1997a) argued that it was important to include community participation in project evaluations considering the degree to which the need for true participation was possible. This research examined the role played by the community in conducting process evaluation of food security projects in Ward 18 of Matobo District. The results of the study are expected to inform the government, the donors and Non-Governmental Organisations to plan, design and evaluate projects to suit community needs and community dynamics. The study is expected to contribute to literature on roles of the community in process evaluation of humanitarian projects. The research is also expected to bridge the knowledge gap on the importance of community participation in improving of food security interventions at community level.

1.1.6 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research was to examine the role of the local community in the process evaluation of food security projects with focus on the case of Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre Renewable Energy Empowering Women Farmers (FPC REEWF) project. This research was done in order to establish how community capacities can be built for the improvement of food security in Matobo District, Ward 18. This research examined how the role played by the community project participants in process evaluation enhanced performance of food security projects in the district. The following section of the report discusses the research objectives and the research questions.

1.1.7 Research Objectives

The following objectives guided the study:

1. To examine the extent of community participation in process evaluation of Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre humanitarian food security interventions in Matobo District, Ward 18.
2. To examine the input of the community in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects.
3. To explore the implications of neglecting stakeholders within the community in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects.
4. To proffer strategies that enhance community participation in process evaluation of food security projects.

1.1.8 Research questions

The following research questions guided the study: -

1. How are communities involved in process evaluation of humanitarian food security interventions in Matobo District, Ward 18?
2. What input does the community have in process evaluation of food security projects?
3. What are the implications of neglecting community stakeholders in process evaluation of food security projects?
4. What strategies can be put in place to enhance community participation in process evaluation of food security projects?

1.1.9 Delimitations of the study

The study boundaries included geographical, timeframe, theoretical/ literature, limitation and study participants. Geographically the study was conducted in a semi-arid region of where the problem of food insecurity was of major concern. Due to time limitation the study was a single case study design focusing on one district and one ward. The study was conducted and confined only to FPC REEWF project in Matobo district, Ward 18. REEWF project beneficiaries were the ones targeted by the study. The theoretical framework of the study focused mainly on process evaluation which the study established was key to success of humanitarian food security projects.

1.1.10 Assumptions of the study

The researcher assumed that the current calm political situation prevailed up to the end of the study. It was also assumed that communities participate fully throughout the research. With the polarised political situation in the country the researcher assumed that the situation did not deteriorate further leading to field visits being dangerous to the researcher and the communities. Lastly it was assumed that the target population would be accessed at set times. Details on the study assumptions are discussed in chapter three of this report.

1.1.11 Justification of the study

Apanovich & Mazur (2018) stated that the main threat to food security had been deteriorating climatic conditions and a decline in soil fertility. This had led to perennial food shortages and resultant food insecurity among rural communities. A multi-stakeholder approach was adopted in a bid to address food insecurity among communities. These food security projects had been implemented by both the government and NGOs for some time in the district. Project evaluations had been conducted for these projects to ascertain their success. Process evaluation was observed to be key in determining whether the project was being implemented according to plan (Leontjevas et al., 2012). However, the role of the community in conducting process evaluation of food security projects remained underemphasised. Participation in community projects has been of major concern hence the study concentrated on talking

and getting ideas from people who participated in projects rather than the community at large.

This study was conducted to fill in the gap in participation in process evaluation which was the underemphasis of the role played by project beneficiaries during the conducting of process evaluation of food security projects. This study was also expected to also indirectly contributed to the primary stakeholders who are the Ward 18 community in particular and the Matobo district community in general by highlighting some of the key contributions process evaluation of food security projects can achieve towards food security. Other stake holders involved included Rural District Council (RDC), policy makers, and government departments like Agritex and research institutions. The University (Wits) was also expected to benefit as they might conduct similar research practices in an endeavour to expand their community-based programs.

1.1.11 Scope of the study

For the purpose of this study the researcher concentrated and focused on the FPC REEWF in Ward 18. The research seeks to establish the community's role in conducting process evaluation of food security projects. Process evaluations had been conducted before but mainly by the implementing organisation during their quarterly visits to the project area. For the period five-year period that covers the FPC food security project in Ward 18, process evaluations were conducted informally during monthly field visits to the field and those mainly targeted project committee members. Other forms of evaluation are not covered and are only mentioned as examples or in passing to illustrate certain points within the study because evaluation is broad and includes other types of evaluations which are not important for the study. Geographically the researcher focused on Matobo District in Natural Region IV. Other wards or areas are only mentioned as examples or where necessary to explain certain concepts. The study covered and made reference to the period as from year 2017 to 2022 which covers the period of the first and second phase of the FPC food security project in Ward 18.

1.1.12 Limitations of the study

Considering that the whole of Matabeleland South province is a semi-arid area, it would have been fair to carry out this study at district level and focus on multiple case studies

of projects in the district. However, time and resources were a limiting factor. Choosing Matobo's Ward 18 and the FPC REEWF project as a single case study was also convenient considering the transport network and the fact that the ward had several NGOs and government departments who were into food security projects in the area. The researcher funded the whole study from his own resources hence it would have been difficult to cover a large area. Journeys to the field were sometimes challenging both physically and financially as there was need to revisit some areas more than once at times especially where key respondents were not seen with the initial visit.

1.1.13 Organisation of the Dissertation

The research is organised into six chapters. Chapter one discusses the introduction, background to the study, the problem statement and research objectives. The research questions, justification of the study and limitations of the study are included in chapter one. Chapter two focuses on the literature review guiding the study and the discussion of key theories. Chapter three discusses the research methodology including the research approach and design. Chapter four presents the research data and presentation of key findings. Chapter five presents and discuss the data analysis and interpretation of results. Chapter six discusses the research conclusions, limitations and recommendations for further research.

1.2 Conclusion

Chapter one presented the research introduction and overview. In this chapter the research background and a brief profile of Matobo district were discussed. The problem statement, the purpose of the study and the study objectives were also discussed in this chapter. The research questions and the justification of the study were also discussed in chapter one. The chapter concludes by discussing the scope of the study, limitations and organisation of the research. The following chapter discusses the literature review of the study with key focus on the theoretical considerations and conceptual framework of the study.

Chapter Two

Literature review and key theories

2.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the literature review of the research. The literature review provides the context of the study and justifies the research problem of food insecurity by the analysis of process evaluation and its link to the problem of food insecurity. Literature was reviewed with regards to food security, participation, process evaluation and the systems thinking theory of evaluation. This research is embedded in the monitoring and evaluation sector, a key field in the implementation of humanitarian programs such as food security. The key concepts and terms are also developed and discussed in this chapter. Key theories for the study are the systems thinking theory, social capital, the participation theory of which the systems thinking theory is the key theory to community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects.

2.1 Global food security situation

(FAO; IFAD; UNICEF; WFP and WHO, 2021) note that the world had not been generally progressing either towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 2.1, of ensuring access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food for all people all year round, or towards SDG Target 2.2, of eradicating all forms of malnutrition. This had been exacerbated by the covid 19 pandemic that led to about 2.37 billion people not having access to adequate food in the world (FAO; IFAD; UNICEF; WFP and WHO, 2021). In the 2021 FAO report about food and nutrition security in the world, it was further stated that 3 billion people in the world did not have access to a healthy diet as a result there was higher level of moderate to severe food insecurity.

2.2 Regional food security situation

(Mekonnen et al., (2021) posited that climate change has affected agricultural yields adversely especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa, food insecurity had been a perennial problem that has left many countries in the region in serious state of economic collapse (Bogweh & Kweyu, 2021). (Giller, 2020) argued that Sub-Saharan Africa requires an abundant supply of cheap and nutritious food for the burgeoning

population. In 2022 in the horn of Africa that includes Somalia and Ethiopia a devastating drought in 40 years caused untold serious food insecurity concerns. Erratic rainfall and land degradation in Sub-Saharan Africa coupled with high population density has exacerbated the situation, (Nedessa and Wickrema 2010).

2.3. Food security situation in Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwe food security and Agriculture cluster noted that Covid 19 eroded people's income and resulted in serious food insecurity especially among the already vulnerable rural population (Hunger et al., 2021). (WFP, 2022) noted that according to the Second Crop and Livestock Assessment conducted in the country for the 2021/2022 Agricultural season, maize production had decreased by about 43% compared to the previous season and communal land productivity had shrunk by half, anticipating an early and harsh lean season for smallholder farming communities. Food production in the Natural Regions of Zimbabwe had dropped significantly and this had resulted in serious food insecurity among the communities in Zimbabwe. Matobo District where this study was conducted lies in Natural Region IV which is one of the driest parts of the country and crop and livestock production are mainly subsistence by communal farmers. Due to climate change and variability, Natural Region IV was found to have increased in size further exposing the already low productivity of the region to serious food insecurity concerns (Mugandani & Wuta, 2012).

Food insecurity is directly related to poverty and hunger (Mota et al., 2019). People suffering from chronic hunger in the world come from the developing countries where it is estimated that malnourished people are at 14.3% (Mota et al., 2019). Zimbabwe being one of the developing countries and located in the semi-arid tropics had been faced with these natural disasters with drought as the major disaster facing the country. The figure below shows the food security situation in Matobo district where this research was conducted.

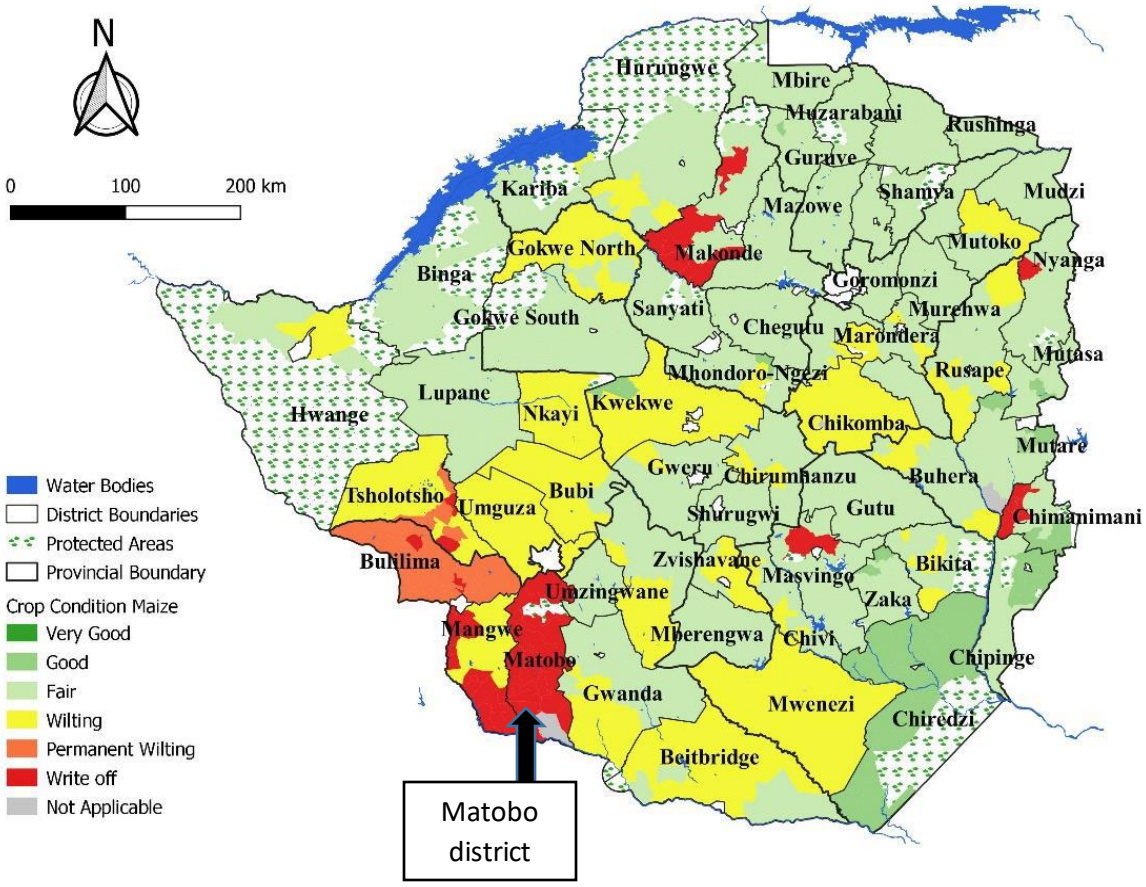


Figure 2.1 Map showing food crop situation in Matobo District in 2020.

Source: Nutrition Council of Zimbabwe 2020, pp 41

The REEWF humanitarian food security project is implemented by FPC and targeted Matobo district to alleviate hunger and poverty. Humanitarian food security projects have been implemented in Matobo district by both the government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The research established that project beneficiaries were more used to end of project evaluation. Process or implementation evaluation was not usually conducted during program implementation. The implementing partner focused mainly on field visits and field monitoring focusing on project committee members. This left the possibility of project failure and unsustainability very high.

2.4 Evaluation

(Posavac, 2016) defined program evaluation as an activity that organisations do routinely either formally or informally so that they know how interventions benefit the intended beneficiaries. Program evaluation is a valuable tool for program managers who are seeking to strengthen the quality of their programs and improve outcomes (Metz, 2007). Program evaluation answers basic questions about a program's effectiveness, and evaluation data can be used to improve program services. The two main categories of evaluation are process evaluation and outcomes evaluation (Stewart et al., 2022). This research focused on process evaluation as this is the evaluation that is conducted when the program is at the implementation stage and where communities who are the beneficiaries are expected to be fully involved (Ryan et al., 1998). The research was conducted focusing on the FPC REEWF humanitarian food security project that was being implemented in Ward 18 of Matobo district. The following section focuses on the importance of process evaluation in project implementation.

2.5 Importance of process evaluation in humanitarian interventions

(WHO, 2018) argued that process evaluations are recognised as a critical component in program development and evaluation. This is a type of evaluation that reflects the true state of the project as it is being implemented. This form of evaluation is sometimes referred to as implementation evaluation in some organisations. Process evaluations are aimed at enhancing understanding of the project as it is being implemented. Process evaluations measure what is done by the programme, and for whom these services are provided (Saunders et al., 2014). (Saunders et al., 2014) further noted that process evaluations assist in the identification of 'active ingredients' of treatment, and assess whether a programme is meeting accepted standards as agreed. Therefore, this argument reinforces that process evaluation deals with the coverage and the processes of the project. Process evaluation is also a form of formative evaluation (Bleijlevens et al., 2013). Any deviation from the initial plan is easily identified when a process evaluation is conducted to a project. The research focused on the role the project beneficiaries play in the conducting of process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects in particular

the project that was implemented by FPC. The study critically examined the importance of process evaluation especially by those to whom the project was intended for.

Conducting process evaluation during the life of the project is used for accountability, program development and improvement and setting up similar projects and programs in other areas. For accountability purposes process evaluation shows whether the programme is accomplishing what it is expected to accomplish. Governments and social agencies that sponsor projects sometimes require recipients of funding to provide evidence that the funds are being used as expected. These evaluations keep track of project progress and identify any challenges emanating during project implementation. Beneficiaries of projects expect managers of implementing organisations to be accountable for their use of resources and level of service provision (Chavez & Nam, 2020). However, the study established that there was a literature gap with regards to the role the project participants played in conducting these process evaluations.

(Silies et al., 2020) argued that although an effect or outcome evaluation is often the primary goal of intervention research, it does not provide insight into why and how an intervention was successful or failed. The findings of the study established that there was no clear system of evaluation within the community that was used to assess project implementation. A process evaluation can be conducted to collect data about how interventions were planned and implemented. A properly conducted process evaluation can help explain the success or failure of finding a relationship between the intervention and the outcomes of interest (Zarrett et al., 2020). (Zarrett et al., 2020) further argued that when an intervention is delivered and received as planned but no effect of the intervention is found on the project beneficiaries, the project is likely to be regarded as a failure. At project design a theory of change is developed to guide the project during its implementation. That theory of change is monitored through conducting of a process evaluation during the lifespan of the project. However, when an intervention is poorly executed (i.e., not delivered or received according to the protocol), “this indicates program failure and no conclusions should be drawn about the effectiveness of the intervention” (Goenka et al., 2010)

Process evaluation answers the question 'was the intervention implemented as planned?' (Grasso, 2003). (Leontjevas et al., 2012) argued that process evaluation is completed before impact and outcome evaluation which assess the intervention effects because it is pointless to expect successful intervention outcomes if the intervention had not reached the target group, involved the appropriate stakeholders or engaged with the community as intended. Process evaluation is an integral part of evaluation to assess whether the different program elements were delivered as intended. Therefore, the above argument concurs with this research that process evaluation assesses intervention implementation and is concerned with questions relating to intervention exposure, reach, participant satisfaction, delivery, fidelity, and contextual aspects of the intervention. When a process evaluation is conducted it is likely that the results will provide specific information to help improve the implementation of interventions.

Hughes et al (2008) argued that both qualitative and quantitative methods are used in process evaluation. Quantitative methods measure reach, delivery and exposure aspects of the intervention while qualitative methods assess participant satisfaction, fidelity and context elements of intervention delivery. This research was conducted using qualitative methods to establish the views of the beneficiaries with regards to the program. Hughes' argument enhances the point that process evaluation is also of managerial importance by providing rapid feedback on the quality and integrity of the implementation, identifying ways to improve delivery, resource adequateness and an understanding of the factors associated with success or failure.

Process evaluation techniques are also useful to monitor intervention delivery, even when there is confidence that the intervention is being delivered in its best form and running as intended. The research discovered that continued monitoring is a form of quality assurance. It ensures that the quality of the intervention meets standards of good practice. It can also be used to ensure that effectiveness of an intervention strategy is maintained when diffused into multiple environments. The next section of the report discusses key elements in process evaluation.

2.5.1 Elements of process evaluation

(Saunders et al., 2014) observed that most common elements of process evaluation are exposure, reach, satisfaction, delivery, context and fidelity. These elements were used during the research with regards to the FPC project that was implemented in Ward 18 especially satisfaction, fidelity, reach and context that are assessed by qualitative methods of research.

Exposure

(Skoruks, 2014) documented that exposure examines the extent that the target group are engaged, aware of their problem or receptive to and/or use the strategy, resource or message being implemented. Exposure means that people are aware of what is happening around them. The study was conducted to examine whether the beneficiaries were aware of process evaluation with regards to the interventions they were involved in. Monitoring exposure can enable intervention planners to take corrective action to ensure the target population and participants are receiving and using resources and services provided to them. (Leontjevas et al., 2012) revealed that describing or quantifying the awareness or the extent the intervention was received was very crucial, as failure to achieve recognition and awareness of an intervention can have a fundamental impact on subsequent participants and intervention reach.

Reach

(CDC, 2009) observed that reach considers the proportion of the target group who participated in the intervention. The targeted population or population reached is often measured by numbers. The research was conducted to also discover the project reach of FPC. During a process evaluation the exact numbers reached by the intervention are established and physical verification of those involved in the project is done. These figures can then be expressed as a total percentage of the community or district. Percentages are useful for graphical representation however ratios such as 1 in 25 are commonly used when describing an intervention (Nutbeam and Bauman (2006). Reach data can also involve assessment of recruitment procedures used to approach and attract participants at individual or organisational levels and understanding the barriers to participation or

reasons for dropping-out. The research used semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups to help identify challenges with access or attendance to the project.
Monitoring the numbers and characteristics of participants ensures sufficient numbers of the target group are being reached. Monitoring and documenting recruitment procedures can help ensure a protocol is followed or altered as required. Knowing the reach of the program is important for understanding and explaining the subsequent effects. (Lee et al., 2013) further noted that identifying and quantifying any sub groups that were less likely to attend showed low participation that will predictably lead to poorer results and indicated that additional services, different programs or recruitment strategies may be needed. (Burney, 2012) further concurs with (Okada et al., 2008) that process evaluation was conducted to identify strengths and weaknesses of the project, for quality enhancement, improved management and assisted in adopting local models.

Satisfaction

(Colman et al., 2007) posited that satisfaction examined whether the intended and targeted beneficiaries of the intervention both primary and secondary were happy with and liked the intervention. The intervention participants need to value and enjoy the intervention before the desired effects of the intervention can occur. During the research the communities expressed reservations about their satisfaction with the project. They cited inadequate consultation on key intervention issues such as the budget. In situations where the intervention was an idea of the intended beneficiaries, success rate was higher than in situations where the intervention was imposed. In Matobo district the study discovered that some projects had been left idle after putting a lot of resources in them due to poor need assessments on community needs (RDDC, 2022). (Carvalho & White, 2004) devised that there were three main areas of participant satisfaction that can be examined and these were: -

-Interpersonal issues – 'do the participants feel comfortable in the intervention? Do they feel listened to and understood? Is it easy to interact with other participants? Are the facilitators interested, approachable and sincere?'

-Service issues – 'Is the intervention venue convenient and comfortable? Is it easy to get to?'

‘Is the intervention strategy run at a convenient time? Are the facilities adequate? Is the intervention too expensive to attend?’

- Content issues – ‘Are the topics covered relevant and interesting? Is the information presented in the best way? Is the pace too slow or too fast? It is too complex/ easy? Are some things being left out or not covered in sufficient depth?’ Trainings are conducted extensively during project implementation and of great importance is to cover relevant topics at the correct levels of trainings.

Delivery

Delivery was discussed in this research to assess whether all the activities of the FPC REEWF project were being implemented as intended. Delivery usually involves writing down all the components of an intervention or intervention strategy then recording and tallying the components delivering and comparing to ensure all activities were delivered as intended (Worthen, 2013) .

The study assessed intervention delivery through recording and monitoring the number of sessions delivered, the location and completeness of intervention delivery at different sites. It also recorded ways that intervention delivery differed at different sites. In Zimbabwe organisations involved in humanitarian work sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the relevant authorities like the Rural District Council (RDC). These then ensure that delivery of the intervention is done correctly at different sites of the district. A memorandum of understanding document was signed between FPC and Matobo Rural District Council (MRDC). A Gant chart was then developed and shared among stakeholders to track delivery of the intervention at designated times of the year. The study also discovered that delivery was also important for ensuring quality of the project. Organisations involved in humanitarian work in the district engaged monitoring and evaluation officers to ensure programs were monitored and evaluated at agreed intervals. After several monitoring and evaluation sessions it is possible to see a picture of relative stability or instability and assess the emphasis given to each topic relative to the overall objective of the intervention strategy. Such monitoring can enable time adjustments and can lead to improvements in intervention design.

Context

Context was considered in the research as it took into account those aspects of the environment that may influence intervention implementation or outcomes. (Chavez & Nam, 2020; Leontjevas et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2014) argued that context also included describing the different settings and contexts in which interventions were delivered, and any contamination or exposure the control group had to the intervention. Context can be monitored by keeping a log of problems in the delivery of the intervention including differences in different settings, difficulties experienced or barriers to implementation. As the respondents were being interviewed issues about the environmental, social or financial factors came out that may have influenced the implementation of the intervention. For example, in their community garden project which was part of some of the projects implemented by FPC project beneficiaries were asked what happened when the resources were not available as required or the intervention was delivered to the target population in a way that was different from what was planned. (Burney, 2012; Lecina et al., 2011; Saunders et al., 2014; WHO, 2018) concluded that monitoring aspects of the physical, social and political environment and how they impact on intervention implementation enabled corrective action to be taken as necessary and ensured the environmental aspects that affected the intervention were described or quantified against the intervention impacts or outcomes.

Fidelity

Fidelity was discussed as part of the study to establish what monitoring and adjustments to the intervention were done. The project participants agreed that monitoring visits were being done by the implementing partners. They however, could not identify their role in monitoring during these processes as project beneficiaries. Nutbeam and Bauman (2014) mentioned that fidelity involved monitoring and adjusting intervention implementation as required to ensure theoretical integrity and quality of the intervention strategies and activities. This section concludes by focusing on the appropriate time to conduct a process evaluation and then leads to the next section on a detailed discussion on the systems thinking theory of evaluation.

2.5.2 When to conduct a process evaluation

(Brandon, 1998; Saunders et al., 2014) documented that process evaluation is an ongoing process. This concludes that as organisations often fall behind in conducting process evaluation, it is important to find a balance that allows at least some process evaluation to be conducted as a necessary step in assessing project progress.

2.6 Systems thinking theory of evaluation

The study discussed the systems thinking of evaluation as a theory that can be used to solve complex societal problems like food insecurity. The section covers the background to the theory, its origin and purpose of the theory. The strengths, limitations and application of the theory is also covered under this section.

2.6.1 Overview of systems thinking theory

2.6.1.1 Background and purpose

General systems thinking was developed as a new way of establishing new methods of thinking. Systems thinking was developed from the field of engineering by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in the early 1950s. The idea was then adopted by different scholars to induce new ways of thinking in various fields of study. Von Bertalanffy (1968) observed that the roots of systems thinking theory were complex as were the developments in science especially in the field of engineering. Desperation in the fields of interest culminated in the development of systems thinking theory (Boulding, 1956). In sub-Saharan Africa and in particular developing countries, agriculture has become a field of interest as a way to address food security to the most vulnerable households of the communities. New developments emerged in the world that warranted new ways of doing things especially after the Second World War. A “comparison of society to a biological organism spawned several generations of sociological theory and laid the groundwork for the systems idea” (Leighninger Jr, 1978, p.447). This then led to systems thinking theory evolving from the engineering field to biology. The complexity in microorganisms in biology led to systems thinking theory. This complexity cascaded to the complexity of development interventions such as food security requiring the use of systems thinking to evaluate such interventions. This research adopted the systems thinking theory due to its importance in evaluation of

complex interventions such as the humanitarian food security project that was being implemented by FPC in Ward 18 of Matobo district.

Jackson (1994) noted that systems thinking theory came up following events that happened during the Second World War from 1939 to 1945. The war caused devastating loses both politically, socially and economically including the surrounding environment. After the war, there was then a need to bring in new ideas of doing things and new ideas of negotiating conflicts. Systems thinking was a methodology adopted to enhance new ways of solving complex problems. These problems were realised in the political, economic, social and development fields. Economic development required stable and peaceful nations. Wars led to general infrastructure destruction and countries at war always lagged behind in development. The two world wars, the first and the second world wars were a lesson learnt to the countries that were at conflict. They realised that the world demanded new ways of solving conflicts and systems thinking was an option to avoid conflagration.

The growth in demand for evidence-based decision making among politicians and bureaucrats hastened the adoption of systems thinking in the modern world (Wotela, 2017). In Africa, most countries are suffering from political conflicts as a result of undemocratic systems of governance. Bureaucrats feel that they have a right to rule people and anyone who dares oppose their rule is labelled a traitor or a sell-out. This is common in countries which are ruled by revolutionary movements such as the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa and the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) in Zimbabwe (CZC, 2022). In the modern world, the continents and countries have become more democratic and citizens now demand accountability from their leaders. This has perpetuated the idea of systems thinking by the ruling elite to address complex issues such as food security in governing their countries.

Boulding (1956) argued that systems thinking was developed through model building which lies through pure mathematics and the specific theories of other specialised disciplines. Complexity has emerged across disciplines of science in the world and a new

level of solving complexities had to be adopted. With each emerging problem in sciences, researchers had to think deeper to come up with a solution.

Systems thinking was then developed along the way as a new methodology to deal with complexity. Components had to be assembled in engineering to form a 'whole'. This demanded thinking on how components originating from heterogeneous technologies can be assembled to form one usable machine (Von Bertalanffy, 1972). As science evolved, manufacturing industries also demanded new ways of enhancing production and minimising costs. This also led to major developments and adjustments to systems thinking. Lilienfeld (1975) consented with Bertalanffy (1972) and stressed that the methods that were used in physics were inappropriate to biology and this called for new ways of thinking in biology. As organic laws evolved, mathematics and statistics were not able to address complexities in these, hence, the development of systems thinking to address biological complexities.

Lilienfeld (1975) further observed that one of the functions of systems thinking was to develop broad linkages between all fields of study, and to be able to adopt new concepts transferable to other fields. Leighninger Jr (1978) posited that systems thinking was a totally new way of thinking whose purpose was to look at humans and their surrounding environment. This augments the notion that human behaviour is influenced by the environment. As humans interacted with the environment, new ways of thinking also evolved therefore, systems thinking became an integral part of environmental management. Humans needed to adapt to their surroundings and manage their surroundings through good decision making. The other purpose of systems thinking was "to solve complexities in the engineering field and enhance systems engineering" (Beasley, 2017, p.2). In engineering different components needed to be assembled to form a machine and that on its own becomes a complex exercise that demands a lot of thinking and decision making. Realities exist in life and systems thinking avail and illuminate those realities. Each existing situation is viewed and analysed with a second thought. Systems thinking purpose is to critique and give insight to an existing complex situation. Wotela (2017) noted that systems thinking is an attempt used to identify and see-through chaos and understand complexities of different fields of study.

2.6.2 Application of systems thinking in monitoring and evaluation

According to (Gharajedaghi, 2006) systems methodology is based on four foundations. These four foundations are holistic thinking, operational thinking, interactive design and self-organisation. Holistic thinking focuses on the structure, function and processes in systems thinking. Operational thinking explains the dynamics of multiple feedback systems. Interactive design redesigns the future and invent ways to deal with future challenges. Self-organisation relates to movement towards a predefined order. This part of the literature review focuses on interactive design as a foundation for systems thinking methodology. Interactive design describes how a problem, or a 'mess' is formulated and mapped. Gharajedaghi (2006) argued that a mess is neither an aberration nor a prediction, but it is rather an early warning system that illuminates impending undesirable consequences as a result of the present undertakings. Therefore, a mess becomes a system of problems. The elements of a mess are closely related and none can be dealt with independently without influencing the other. In this study food insecurity on its own becomes part of a mess. Hence systems thinking theory was adopted in the research.

Gharajedaghi (2006) further argued that the mess is formulated to give a perspective that sets the relevant hosts of problems and a shared understanding of why a system behave the way it does. Also, a mess is formulated to minimise resistance to change and identify possible areas of vulnerability. Formulation of the mess is in three phases whereby mapping the mess is the key stage of mess formulation. The other stages include searching and telling the story. Mapping the mess of interventions that require monitoring and evaluation like the FPC REEWF project was of paramount importance. Wotela (2017) posited that development is the broadest term encompassing other contextual and key terms. Mapping the mess becomes a foundation to structure the solution (Wotela, 2017). Identification of the mess in the research generated large volumes of data that required simplifying in order to understand it. The data needed to be synthesised into smaller categories so that it can be understood, and sense derived from it. Gharajedaghi (2006) asserted that the process of mapping the mess involves creating subsets of various phenomena and then identifying themes for each category. Identification of themes needed active participation among project participants who had a stake in the project.

This research focused on a humanitarian food security project. This intervention required monitoring and evaluation which on its own is as complex as the intervention which it intends to monitor and evaluate.

When mapping a mess in development interventions, each theme should be clear and well-articulated to identify exactly the underlying issues (Gharajedaghi, 2006). When all themes are identified and agreed upon by relevant stakeholders, interactions and relationships between these themes are identified and addressed. Gharajedaghi (2006) noted that themes can be minimising on their own or be broken into smaller components to ascertain their interactions with other elements of a whole.

2.6.3 Decoding complex interventions using systems thinking

Complex interventions like food security can be decoded better by using systems thinking. The most commonly used system to identify and solve complex problems such as food insecurity is the use of a problem tree (Norad, 1999). Norad (1999) stated that a problem tree was used to identify a major problem, its root causes and the effects the problem has on an existing situation. The study focused on food insecurity as the main problem affecting communities in Matobo district. The following section in this report discusses the theory or concept of social capital.

2.7 Social capital theory

2.7.1 Background and purpose

(Portes, 2010) noted that the theory of social capital began as early as the days of Karl Marx's distinction between an atomised class-in-itself and a mobilised and effective class-for-itself. (Naviaux & McGowan, 2000) argued that social capital gained prominence in the 1990s as it started to be used across all the science disciplines. For the purpose of this research the theory of social capital was discussed to examine how communities' social relationships can benefit individuals and organisations beyond their original context. (Huang, 2018) defined social capital theory as the benefits that communities derive from socialising with each other. The inclusion of social capital theory in the study seek to establish interconnected networks of relationships between individuals and groups in Ward 18 (social ties or social participation). The levels of trust that characterised

these ties, and resources or benefits that were both gained and transferred by virtue of social ties and social participation were also examined.

In a community people work together to achieve a common purpose or goal (Enoch Kwame Tham-Agyekum, 2015; Naviaux & McGowan, 2000; Portes, 2010). Through social capital a society or organisation function together as a whole through trust and shared identity, norms, values, and mutual relationships. (Huang, 2018; Portes, 2010) concurred that social capital theory arose from the human capacity to consider others so that they think and act generously together.

(Ruz, 2014) noted that social capital theory involves cognitive social capital that includes shared norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs. This type of social capital predisposes people towards mutually beneficial collective action. The other type of social capital is relational social capital which is based on the characteristics of social relationships between individuals and is commonly described as including trust and trustworthiness.

Social capital theory contends that social relationships are resources that can lead to the development and accumulation of human capital. This research was conducted in a community where social capital theory was key to the adoption and implementation of humanitarian projects such as the REEWF project that was being implemented by FPC in Ward 18 of Matobo district.

2.7.2 Application of social capital in monitoring and evaluation of projects

Communities are not homogenous by nature; hence, each community and its surroundings are identified by its beliefs and what they share as a community. Values and attitudes are also key in social capital. This concludes that communities will chose to participate depending on how they exist in that particular community. Disempowered communities have serious participation problems in community projects (Laudia & Iaz, 2020). This may result in isolation of communities and disengagement in the implementation of developmental projects. (Dudwick et al., 2006) noted that examining how groups and networks function in given community can reveal how people or households employ different relationships for survival and mobility.

When conducting an evaluation of a project the process can reveal the degree of how communities relate to each other within a particular community. Social capital theory when employed in monitoring and evaluation can also be used to identify the kinds of incentives that can encourage community members to collaborate on projects of shared interest. Monitoring and evaluation require communities to be united in purpose and ideology. Social capital theory emphasises on networking, trust and shared norms and values.

Donors and humanitarian organisations need to believe that high levels of collective action will contribute to greater adoption of projects and development effectiveness. These findings have a bearing on the targeting and selection of beneficiaries and the direction the project will take in order to enhance sustainability.

In communities where there are high levels of inequality, social capital theory when used together with monitoring and evaluation information can become a voice for the poor and most vulnerable. This can assist government officials and other development actors understand what lies behind survey numbers and thus craft more practical policies to increase sustainability of humanitarian projects.

Finally social capital theory has also improved the ability of development agencies to communicate project aims to local communities. A considerable body of qualitative data collection in monitoring and evaluation on patterns of inclusion and exclusion from informal social networks has also influenced the design of project communication strategies (Naviaux & McGowan, 2000). This has enabled project administrators to reach more members of a target community with humanitarian projects. The next section of the report focuses on the concept of participation.

2.8 Overview of participation theory

2.8.1 Background and purpose

(Sintara et al., 2020) argued that community participation has long existed in society but only came to prominence when the issue of human rights gained momentum in the nineteenth century. The participation concept emphasises that the community should be given an active role in programs and projects that directly affects their livelihoods (Hubley, 1990). The research examined the role of community participation especially in the process evaluation of food security projects where they are mostly involved during project

implementation and what capacity should be built to improve their participation thereby improving success of food security projects in the community.

Community participation is a prerequisite for project implementation (Cummings, 1997a) The study noted that community engagement at all stages of the project was key to community participation. This encouraged decision making between project implementers and the beneficiaries. (Wathome, 2013) identified that even though community participation was key to the success of projects, it might only work depending on the nature of that particular community and their belief in community participation. The research noted that community participation should be emphasised at the design stage of the project in order to achieve community buy-in towards the project.

2.8.2 Purpose of participation

(Ruiz-Villaverde & García-Rubio, 2017) noted that participation is a crucial element in project implementation and management. (Duncan & Claeys, 2018; Fullarton et al., 2003; Ruiz-Villaverde & García-Rubio, 2017) concurred that community participation in humanitarian projects enhances better use of knowledge and experiences from different stakeholders; increased project adoption and reduced delays and inefficiencies in project implementation. Community participation is important to both people and institutions (Campbell, 2008). Community participation plays a pivotal role in the success of projects whether it is in urban or rural setups (Campbell, 2008). Community participation is key in the success of food security projects (Madyaningrum & Sonn, 2011). This was also established by the study as the communities noted the unsustainability of projects that seize to exist beyond the life of the project itself. As the community participated in projects, it was still underemphasised as to what role they play as the recipients of aid (Madyaningrum & Sonn, 2011). The study concurred with (Madyaningrum & Sonn, 2011) as it was discovered that the role of community participation in process evaluation of projects in Ward 18 was underemphasised and insignificant. It was further noted by Liuzzo et al. (2018) that community participation includes various aspects in its entirety. These included advisory bodies, citizen involvement, partnerships and power of decision making. This indicated that participation cannot be considered in isolation of other community factors.

2.8.3 Importance of participation in monitoring and evaluation

To emphasise the role of participation in monitoring and evaluation (Chambers, 1994) identified and developed participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME). The history of participatory methods in development co-operation began in the late 1970s with the introduction of a new research approach called Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) (Chambers, 1994). (Lib, 1999) noted that participatory monitoring and evaluation immediately became popular with decision-makers in development agencies.

2.8.4 Purpose of participatory monitoring and evaluation

PME is important for guiding local decision making and promoting effective intervention implementation (CORE, 2006). PME act as an opium of the oppressed in community development. Interventions are usually implemented at community level and they target the poor and vulnerable members of the community. By virtue of their status these are often ignored during targeting and selection of project beneficiaries. Those who are often consulted especially the beneficiaries get the chance to be full partners in determining the direction and effectiveness of a project.

(Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014a) argued that participatory monitoring and evaluation is for those communities who have set their goals and would like to closely monitor them to achieve success of their projects. (DGP, 2011) documented that PME acknowledges that people who benefited from the project are the ones who know the most about their life challenges. PME strengthens relations between the implementing partners and the communities and trust is created (DGP, 2011).

As observed by (Onyango, 2018) PME focuses on monitoring and evaluation while strengthening and deepening participation including shared learning and joint decision making. (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014b) concluded that PME can be used effectively within development agencies' needs for accountability. Accountability in project management emphasises on accepting responsibility for the conduct and results of a specific program (Christopher, 2020). To sum it up the participation of communities in development projects solely lies on the nature of the relationship among community members and how they interact with each other. Figure 2.2 below illustrates the conceptual framework of the study.

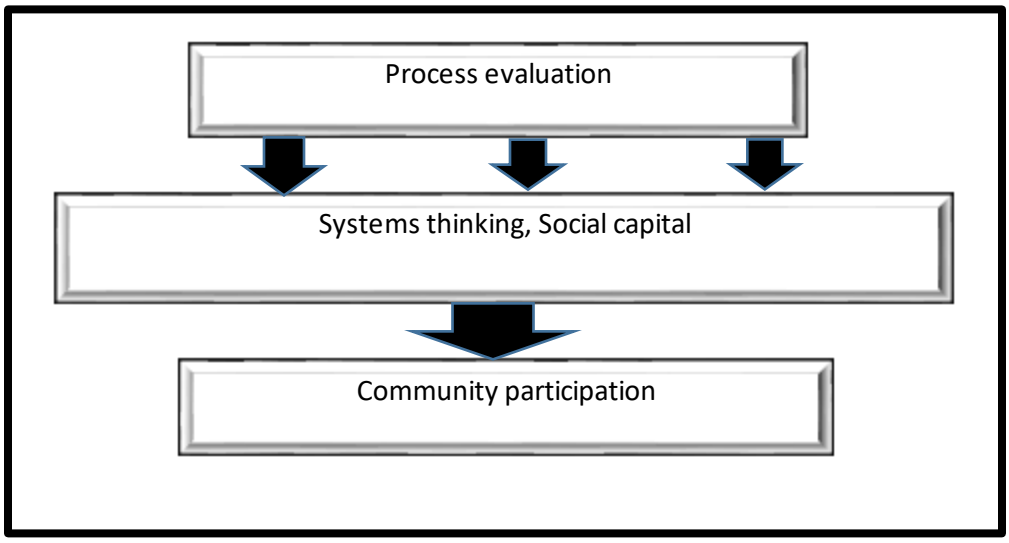


Fig 2.2: The theoretical framework: Source: Author ,2022

Process evaluation was the main concept of the study. This is a critical type of evaluation that involves a lot of community participation during project implementation. Systems thinking enhanced decision making of key managers in humanitarian organisations especially in evaluation of complex interventions such as food security. Social capital noted that communities would choose to participate in any projects depending on how they existed and related to each other. Finally, these concepts when discussed together, it is believed that community participation in humanitarian food security interventions will be improved.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter summarises literature in relation to chosen theories and conceptual framework. The conceptual framework of the study is presented in figure two of this chapter. The conceptual framework links the inferences of the literature to the research methodology discussed in the following chapter (chapter three). In chapter two the study concluded that process evaluation was key to project success but there was limited literature that link process evaluation and community participation. The chapter also concluded that the systems thinking theory improved organisations' management ability to make key decisions in evaluation of complex projects such as food security. The literature also discussed social capital as important in determining how communities relate to each other and take part in community projects. However, the literature reviewed underemphasised the role of community participation in process evaluation as they partake in these important food security projects. The following chapter discusses the research methodology and data collection of the research.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology and Data collection

3.0 Introduction

Chapter three gives a detailed description of the research methodology and data collection for this study. The chapter started with the research approach followed by the research design and then the research tools and their application. Selection of respondents and data collection are also discussed in this chapter. Validity, reliability and dependability of the study are also part of this chapter. The chapter concludes by focusing on data presentation and analysis procedures.

3.1 Research Approach

The research approach emphasised the way the study was conducted in order to provide a certain set of questions to be asked and how these map an inquiry the study will address (Chilisa and Kawulich, 2012).

One Non-Governmental Organisation, Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre (FPC) was selected purposively to conduct the study pertaining to their humanitarian food security project that they had been implementing in Ward 18 of Matobo district in Zimbabwe. The project was entitled Renewable Energy Empowering Women Farmers (REEWF). The organisation had been operating in the district for 5 years. Since its inception in 1988 the organisation had been implementing humanitarian work in the districts of Zimbabwe. Their current food security project on which the research focused was a two-year extension program that followed a three-year program that started in 2017 ended in 2020. The Organisation was funded by donors and was registered as a Non-Governmental Organisation in Zimbabwe. Its focus was mainly in livelihoods and food security projects of the vulnerable households in the rural communities.

3.2 Research design

The research was qualitative in nature because there was need to understand the study participants' lived experiences pertaining to the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2015; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016). The research examined the community's role in process evaluation of food security projects that they have been involved in with FPC.

The study was a qualitative case study focusing on the FPC REEWF project in Ward 18 of Matobo district of Matobo District. The main objective of the study was to examine the roles the communities play in conducting process evaluations of food security projects in order to address the problem of food insecurity in Ward 18 of Matobo District. Qualitative research emphasises on words and is usually constructivist and interpretivist in nature (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012). The research was conducted using a constructivist or interpretivist paradigm. It was interactive and conducted within the communities' natural surroundings. The researcher travelled to Ward 18 and spent 28 days collecting data in the field. Twenty-one days were spent conducting individual interviews while four days were spent on focus group discussions. A day was spent on each group. The other three days were spent conducting key informant interviews at district level. In total data was collected over a period of one month (28 days-). The researcher examined the role the beneficiaries of the REEWF project played as they participated in the process evaluation of the projects. The epistemological underpinnings of the research were based on the belief that truth lies within the experiences of the Ward 18 community beneficiaries of food security projects (Bagele & Kawulich, 2012). The ontological underpinnings of the study were based on the nature of the reality that existed on the ground with regards to community participation in process evaluation of food security projects. The nature of the reality was contextual to the research and the community participating in the study (Bagele & Kawulich, 2012).

3.2.1 Case study design

(Elizabeth, 2016; Margevičiūtė, 2012) defined case study research as an investigation of a single or multiple cases intended to capture the complexity of the object of study. A qualitative case study design was chosen for this study because the researcher wanted to understand the experience of the research subjects and also develop rich descriptions of the case. The case study of the REEWF project in Ward 18 enabled the researcher to understand the real-life phenomenon of the project beneficiaries under their natural conditions. The researcher opted for the case study design because the nature of the research was a bounded system and, in this case, it was the REEWF project in Ward 18 of Matobo district. The qualitative nature of the research and the selection of a single case study design allowed the researcher flexibility throughout the research.

The study delimited the area of study and focused on Ward 18 in the case of this research.

The next paragraph justifies the use of a single case study and a qualitative approach to the study to examine the role of community participation in process evaluation of food security projects.

Justification of Ward 18 as a single case study

The researcher wanted to suit the case under study and the research questions. The FPC REEWF project was the case which the study focused on. The study was concentrated in Ward 18 and studied holistically in its own entirety. In choosing a single case study the researcher wanted to concentrate the limited resources in one place and do justice to the investigation. Qualitative data collection requires time and resources and large volumes of data which are difficult to analyse were generated in this qualitative research. Ward 18 became a centre of focus taking into account that it was located where the road network was better and FPC had their interventions concentrated in that particular ward. Multiple case studies consume a lot of resources. The researcher was self-funding the study hence it was going to be very costly to conduct a multiple case study design. The following section discusses why the researcher combined qualitative research with a case study design.

3.3 Research tools and their application

Data collection tools used in the research were the individual interview guides, focus group discussion guides and the key informant guides. The interview guides for the research were all unstructured in order to collect as much qualitative data as possible. These questionnaires provided the researcher with adequate room to explore the research in detail and collect rich qualitative data. The data collection tools are attached as appendices at the end of this report as follows: Appendix I (individual interview guide), Appendix II (key informant interview guide) and Appendix III (focus group discussion guide).

Unstructured interviews were interactive in nature during the data collection process. These interviews collected large volumes of qualitative data. The conversation was free flowing between the researcher and the respondents and the questions were open en ded.

The respondent led the discussion and the researcher followed up issues as they arose through probing further. The following section discusses the researchers experience during the use of individual interviews in data collection.

3.3.1 Individual interviews

The researcher used individual interviews to collect in-depth data from individuals about their experiences. Individual interviews allowed the researcher to meet the respondents face to face and interact with them at individual level. Each interviewed individual was interviewed at the comfort of his/her household. During the interview the researcher learnt a lot about the respondent's answers to the questions. Qualitative research requires in-depth information and when the respondents were interviewed at their homes, they appeared relaxed and willing to engage more in the discussion.

Advantages of individual in-depth interviews

The researcher gathered that the interviews concentrated on the matter at hand and the interviewer and the respondent talked, responded and reflected. The interviews appeared to be focused, deeper and contained more detail when conducted at individual level. Although the questions were unstructured the researcher and the respondents took turns to speak and there was attentive listening among the researcher and the respondent. There was good acknowledgement of what each individual was saying. Individual in-depth interviews allowed the researcher to understand his own deeper self and see the world in the respondent's own perspective. Non-verbal communication was made clear during the individual interviews. Individual interviews indicated that the researcher and the respondent have heard each other either non-verbally by nodding or verbally by asking for clarity.

During the individual interviews the researcher and the respondents took turns to speak and when one was through, they would indicate to each other. Wrap up statements were used to indicate when one was through with the conversation. The researcher would wait a bit before continuing in order to give the respondent a chance to reflect on the thoughts. The researcher would pose the question and facilitated the discussion, going through stages by asking specific questions and then urged the respondent to answer in depth

and at length. The researcher observed that recording was easy during individual in-depth interviews as there was minimal disturbance from other individuals.

During individual interviews the researcher noticed that it was not difficult to create a natural environment with the respondent. The researcher would start with the overall climatic or weather conditions or simple crack a joke to make the respondent feel secure and get into the interview mood.

The researcher would acknowledge the knowledge the respondent had to participate in the interview. This allowed the respondent to gain confidence and competence in responding. At individual interview level it was important for the researcher to show keen interest in listening to what the respondent was saying. This was a good tone for the follow-up question that usually depicts that the researcher had understood or not understood the answer to the first question. Probing and follow-up questions were explored in detail during individual interviews.

The interviewer started with the most difficult questions to the least difficult to facilitate the easy flow of the conversation. After concluding the interview, the respondents were free to ask questions or clarity about the interview. The respondents appeared to be comfortable asking the researcher questions at individual level unlike during the focus group discussions that are discussed in the coming sections. On average each individual interview took about one and a half hours.

Challenges encountered during individual interviews

There were a few challenges experienced by the researcher during the conducting of individual interviews. The research was a qualitative study and was constructivist in nature. Purposive selection was used to identify the respondents who were part of the FPC REEWF project in Ward 18. These individuals were then interviewed until a certain level of saturation was reached. The individual interviews as stated before in this chapter took twenty-one days to complete and between two and three interviews were conducted per day. Individual interview respondents did not answer all the questions as some questions did not apply especially if the individual has answered ‘No’ to the previous question. The other days were covered for revisits for those respondents who were not

present at the first visit. Few respondents were covered per day to give the researcher time to clean and analyse the data collected for each particular day so that the researcher was going to be able to notice if he was now collecting similar data in the following interviews (saturation).

This posed a challenge of excessive travelling to the researcher who would move household by household to interview individuals. When interviewing respondents to a level of saturation it was difficult to make an appointment with an individual because it was never known how much time the researcher will spend at each household. Qualitative data collection included a lot of probing and discussion. Hence the researcher simply informed the community leadership that he will be collecting data from the ward at particular dates and places. The area under the study was a hilly area and some households were difficult to access using shorter routes so the researcher had to use longer routes to access them.

The other challenge with the individual in-depth interviews was that the researcher would arrive and find no one at home and if that person was deemed to be have important knowledge about the research the researcher would do a re-visit thereby impacting more on time and resources. Sometimes the researcher would arrive at home and find that the individual at home does not have adequate knowledge about the project or the respondents were children who could not be interviewed for the research. This led to the data collection taking longer than expected. Between two and three interviews were conducted each day starting at 0800 hours in the morning to 1200hrs. The rest of the day was reserved for data cleaning and initial analysis. As previously stated, the individual interviews took 21 days to complete. It was possible to complete three interviews per day if all the respondents were being found at home and there were no repeat visits The following section focuses on the use of focus group discussion as a data collection method used to collect qualitative data.

3.3.2 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions (FDGs) were used by this researcher to collect qualitative data in Ward 18. These were small groups of people that were assembled to informally discuss the specific topical questions pertaining of the study. These groups were interviewed

using a focus group discussion guide to collect data the FGDs were conducted at local village centres. This was done in order to minimise the distance travelled by each member of the group to the discussion centre. The Village Heads organised the meetings for the study. The researcher facilitated the discussions and made sure each participant was accorded an equal opportunity to participate. This kept the discussions focused on the main theme of the study. The questions were unstructured and explored and created deep discussions between the researcher and respondents on particular topics during the research. Four groups were interviewed over a period of four days. A day was reserved for each group and on average the discussions took between one and a half hours to two hours. These were conducted in the morning between 0800 hours and 1000 hours. The rest of the day was reserved for data cleaning and initial analysis to cater for data saturation in the following interviews. The following section discuss the strength and limitations observed by the researcher during the study pertaining to focus group discussions.

Advantages of focus group discussions

During focus group discussions the researcher observed that issues under discussion were explored in greater depth. The groups were homogenous groups of people who were part of the FPC REEWF project. The REEWF project had 75% women and 25% men hence the groups comprised of more women than men. There was positive exchange of ideas and group participants would thoroughly dwell on a particular issue if they feel it was an issue of importance with regards to a particular topic.

There was greater probing of issues of interest in focus group discussions. Individual interviews were conducted earlier than focus group discussions. Focus group discussions were then used as a platform to complement data collected through individual interviews. This was done through triangulation of the data to find interrelationships and linkages within the data.

The researcher observed that respondents tend to participate fully in FDGs if they observe others participating. Some information that the individuals felt was not suitable to be revealed to the researcher during individual interviews was discussed during FDGs.

It was noted by this researcher that information pertaining to the implementing organisation, FPC was only accessed through FDGs.

There was a lot of generation of new ideas about community participation and process evaluation in FGDs. There was a range of opinion about community participation in process evaluation of food security projects in Ward 18. During individual interviews some respondents were not quite sure about the researcher and the motive behind the study even though it was clearly explained to them. But when they observed almost the same questions administered to a group of other respondents from the same area, they started expressing confidence in the study and the researcher himself. The researcher advised the group members before the start of the discussions that the questions they were going to be asked were the same questions that were asked to the individual project participants and they were free to express their views and opinions. Since some respondents were not comfortable with writing, FDGs availed an opportunity for such respondents to express themselves verbally. The next section highlights the limitations of FGDs observed by the researcher during the study.

Limitations of FGDs

There was a high degree of moderation by the researcher in FGDs. Large volumes of data were received and it required a very skilled researcher to moderate and keep the group on track. Group participants should be carefully selected to avoid selecting members of the same families, religion or political party. Ward 18 is under an opposition party councillor politically hence for the researcher to conduct FGDs he needed to be wary of keeping discussions within the limit of the study and avoid political sentiments.

In summary FGDs generated rich data through interactive discussions although if not conducted well they can deviate from real important issues and lead to a large volume of data that are difficult to analyse. The following section discusses the use of key informant interviews as a method of data collection.

3.3.3 Key informant Interviews

Key informant interviews were used to collect data from the district stakeholders in Matobo district. These interviews were conducted in order to get stakeholder perspectives

with regards to community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects in the district. Strengths and limitations of key informant interviews were also noticed during the use of this data collection method to collect data among key stakeholders at district level. Three days were spent on the key informant interviews at district level. One key informant was not interviewed orally and the questionnaire was left at the office for completion. The researcher then went back to collect the data later on.

Strengths of key informant interviews

There were higher response rates to key informant interviews, almost 100%. The study targeted nine organisations that were implementing food security projects in Matobo district. The four organisations represented by the interviewed key informants were the ones that were operating in Ward 18 which is the area where the study was focusing. They provided more complete answers to open ended questions that were administered to them. These were hugely qualified individuals who were very comfortable with pen and paper and those who did not have time for the one-on-one interviews with the researcher managed to respond to the questions in writing and then the researcher went back to collect the responses.

The key informants provided rich and spontaneous replies to the open-ended qualitative questions. The interaction with the key informants was very fruitful. The key informants' insights and experiences provided an important logical starting point for the collection of data about Ward 18 and the FPC REEWF program. The key informants had good knowledge about the district as a whole and they also had knowledge about all humanitarian projects implemented by different partners in the district. The next section focuses on limitations encountered by the researcher during the administering of the key informant interviews.

Challenges of key informant interviews

The researcher did not face much challenges during the conducting of key informant interviews. One major challenge was that key informants, being head of departments and holding positions of authority, the researcher had to stick to the key informants' work schedule. They were always busy and in one instance, the researcher had to leave the

interview guide for completion by the key informant. This then meant going back again to collect the completed interview guide. In summary key informants provided very rich data about the research and expressed willingness to learn from the results of the study. The following section discusses the sampling framework of the study.

3.4 Sampling Framework

Qualitative sampling methods were used to select respondents during the study. Due to the intensity and in-depth nature of the study sample sizes for this study were generally smaller. The researcher considered certain points in the qualitative study before deciding on the size of the selected respondents and how to select it. The researcher took into account how many individual interviews and focus group discussions were to be conducted. The researcher also considered the number of key informants to be interviewed at district level. The time each interview was to take was also considered in deciding the sample size. Although sample sizes in qualitative data are smaller due to the intensity of data collection and analysis the researcher made sure the sample sizes were big enough to achieve data saturation and data adequacy. The sample size was also dictated by the data collection methods to be used by the researcher. These data collection methods were individual interviews, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. To achieve data saturation in individual interviews the researcher was working iteratively (back and forth) between data collection and analysis. This assisted the researcher to identify when no new information was coming up and when repetitive information was now coming up more frequently.

3.4.1 Sampling methods

Individual interviews

Ward 18 consisted of 5 villages. These were as follows: -

1. Phumuzamaphiko
2. Tungwana 1
3. Tungwana 2
4. Mazhayimbe
5. Mabundazulu

Non-probability sampling was used to identify respondents for the research. Purposive sampling was used to identify study respondents in the 5 villages. The researcher relied on his previous experience in the district to identify respondents in Ward 18 in such a manner that those were considered to be representative of the study population. During the interviews snowballing was used as a sampling method to identify more individuals involved in the project. A few individuals were approached within the relevant population and then those individuals were asked to approach more individuals relevant to the research.

The table below shows the sample size of individual interviews

Table 3.1 Sample size

Name of village	No of women	No of men	Total No of respondents
Phumuzamaphiko	5	3	8
Tungwana 1	4	2	6
Tungwana 2	6	2	8
Mazhayimbe	8	4	12
Mabundazulu	4	2	6

Key informants

For the key informants purposive sampling was also used to identify key organisations at district level who had rich knowledge of the projects in the district. Four key informants were identified and interviewed at district level.

The table below shows the Organisations interviewed at district level.

Table 3.2 List of key informants

Name of organisation	**Type of organisation**	**Individual interviewed**	**Designation**
Agricultural Technical and extension Services (Agritex)	Government Department	District head	District Agricultural technical and Extension Officer
Sizimele	Non-Governmental Organisation	District head	District coordinator
Department of Social Welfare (DSW)	Government department	District head	District Social Welfare Officer
Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre (FPC)	Non-Governmental Organisation	District head	Program Manager

Focus groups

Focus group discussions comprised of individuals who were identified through snowballing. The groups comprised between 9 and 12 people. Four focus group discussions were conducted to collect data for the study. The table below shows the distribution of focus group discussions by village and number of respondents.

Table 3.3 Focus groups

Name of village	No of groups interviewed	No of women	No of men	Total no of respondents per group
Phumuzamaphiko	1	6	4	10
Mazhayimbe	1	7	5	12
Tungwana	1	6	3	9
Mabundazulu	1	7	4	11
Total	4	26	16	42

The sampling methods used facilitated collection of large volumes of rich qualitative data. The proposed number of focus groups was three but the researcher ended up conducting discussions with four groups to do more triangulation of the data from the individual interviews. The following section discusses validity, reliability and dependability of the research.

3.5 Validity, reliability and dependability

Validity refers to the degree to which the research measures what it purports to measure. In this research the researcher enhanced the validity of the research by taking note of the research objectives, making sure the questionnaire addressed the themes highlighted in the objectives. Data was analysed and conclusions were made based on the themes obtained from the objectives. Internal validity of the research was maximised by administering data collection instruments that acquired the necessary information relevant to the study. A conducive environment was created by following research ethics while the study was in progress. The researcher made sure the results were attributed to the study. The research considered culture and norms of the community. This made the research not generalisable to other groups outside the district. Therefore, the research was kept as local as possible focusing in Ward 18 of Matobo District.

The research noted that any significant results from the research was not a more than a once-off finding and could not be inherently repeatable. The researcher made sure there was consistency in the study if ever a similar study was to be conducted elsewhere. This ensured the reliability of the research. Reliability is a matter that a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same object, would yield the same results each time it is administered. It means that, using the same method, the same information will be collected each time in the repeated study of the same intervention.

Dependability of the research was emphasised to make sure the research findings were trustworthy and consistent. Dependability was assured by sharing the research findings with the respondents and providing feedback. This made sure that even when similar data was analysed by different people, it came to the same results and conclusion.

3.6 Limitations, feasibility and positionality

The study focused on rural communities of Ward 18. It targeted those members of the community who were participants to the FPC REEWF project. Focus was on their role in process evaluation of the REEWF project which they were involved in.

The research was made feasible considering that the researcher came from the same province in which Matobo District fell under. The researcher was also familiar with the local culture and conversant with the local languages in the district. There was no relationship between the researcher and the organisation under study hence permission was sort and granted by authorities at FPC. The researcher had been involved in humanitarian projects before in the district but at different wards related to the one in which this research was conducted.

The positionality of the researcher in the study was that of an observer-as-participant. In this role the researcher identified himself as a researcher and interacted with the participants in the processes while making no pretense of actually being a participant in the study. The observer-as-participant stance enable the researcher to participate in the group activities as was desired, yet the main role of the researcher in this stance was to collect data, and the group being studied was aware of the researcher's observation activities. To sum it up being an observer-as-participant enabled the researcher to obtain rich qualitative data from the research. The next section is on data presentation and analysis.

3.7 Data Presentation and Analysis Procedures

Process of analysis

Qualitative data analysis was used to analyse the data collected because the interviews collected were in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and key informant interviews resulting in the collection of large volumes of qualitative data. This was done in order to get in-depth understanding of the of the community as they participated in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects. This also established how participation could be improved in order to obtain desired project outcomes. Thematic data analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. Meaning of qualitative data is understood by the

identification and analysis of themes (Kawulich and Holland, 2012). Pattern of responses were identified in the data and these patterns were then organised into themes which were either common words or phrases in the data.

Thematic analysis assisted this researcher to analyse the data. Accurate capturing of data was required in order to interpret the data meaningfully. Close attention was paid to what people said and how they said it. The researcher's immediate thoughts, interpretations and reactions were also captured to aid the interpretation of the data. Data analysis was qualitative and conclusions were drawn from what was said by the majority or minority of the respondents.

(Ostie-racine & Dagenais, 2013) suggested the use of qualitative data analysis worksheets in thematic qualitative data analysis. Each worksheet was used for each evaluation question. Each question was written at the top of the worksheet and a color code was used to identify the data. Themes were then identified for each evaluation question and coded under the themes section of the worksheet. Quotes were also identified and written under the quotes section. Findings for each question were then entered at the end of the worksheet. Proportion of responses were then used to give sense of magnitude and precision. An example of the completed qualitative data analysis worksheet for individual interviews is illustrated in appendix IV at the end of this report. Common words, themes, patterns and phrases were used to summarise the data.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The researcher explained to the respondents that their responses should be in the context of the district where necessary or other communities within the district and that the information is for study purposes only and not for any future food security interventions. This study was limited to the community of Ward 18 and their participation in process evaluation of the REEWF project that was implemented by FPC. The project was implemented for an initial three years then extended for the other two years that coincided with the conduct of this study.

The university granted the researcher permission to conduct the research. To maintain ethical issues, the researcher explicitly communicated the goal of the investigation to the participants. Participants were informed freely that the interviews were conducted only for academic purposes. Concerning confidentiality, the researcher guaranteed that the information submitted was only going to be utilised for study purposes. A participant information sheet was signed by each interviewed respondent to give respondents information on the research and an opportunity to provide consent. Consent forms were also administered to the research participants. During the course of the research, the researcher kept in mind that the goal of the research was to acquire meaningful data, not to modify or attempt to manipulate it. During mobilisation for data collection the researcher engaged the community leadership that included the ward Councillor and Village Heads. These assisted the researcher with community mobilisation for interviews and data collection.

3.9 Conclusion

Chapter three focused and discussed the research methodology of the study. Earlier in the chapter the research approach and design were discussed. This was then followed by the research tools and their application. Strength and limitations for each tool used was discussed in this chapter. The sampling framework and the sampling method used in the research were also included in the chapter. Strengths of the sampling methods used are also part of chapter three. Finally, the chapter focused on validity and reliability of the data and then concluded by discussing the data analysis procedure and presentation of results. The following chapter is based on the presentation of data, analysis and results.

Chapter four

REEWF project case study, Data presentation and findings

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the case study of the Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre Renewable Energy Empowering Women Farmers (FPC REEWF) project. The data is presented from primary data collection instruments which were used to collect the data. These instruments were in-depth interviews with key informants and focus group discussions. This chapter presents a summary of the findings derived from key themes established and findings from the administration of data collection instruments. The chapter starts by introducing the case study which was used in the data collection then followed by the presentation of summary of the key themes from the individual interviews. The key themes from key informants are also discussed in this chapter. The chapter then concludes by presenting a summary of key themes from focus group discussions. The data presentation summary was selected from interview scripts from individuals and group discussions. The following section of this chapter discusses the FPC REEWF project case study.

4.1 FPC REEWF case study

Profile of Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre

Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre (FPC), herein sometimes referred to as the 'implementing organisation' in this research, came into being in 1988 and it is registered as a trading trust private limited. FPC is registered as a Trust that is governed by a Board of trustees. FPC has been at the forefront of development organisations promoting food security through sustainable land use management (Permaculture) in Zimbabwe. It is one of the oldest Permaculture centers in Africa.

FPC has fostered the creation of four other development institutions namely, the Natural Farming Network (NFN), the Schools and Colleges Permaculture (SCOPE), Permaculture Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM). Since its inception FPC has paved the path for food security through sustainable land use management (FPC, 2018a).

FPC development interventions are characterised by skills training in sustainable methodologies, organic farming demonstrations, and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), and creating marketing opportunities for organic produce in irrigated community gardens. The Centre (FPC) is at the forefront of demonstrating the viability of Permaculture where agricultural production is practiced in harmony with nurture. Natural resources management also form core of FPC values. The vision of FPC is to envisage prosperous and self-sustaining food secure households practicing environmentally friendly permaculture. The mission of FPC focused on teaching and demonstrating relevant skills and knowledge to restore people's confidence in their ability to produce off-land working creatively in harmony with nature. Finally, FPC's core values emphasise on people development, gender mainstreaming, environmental awareness, transparency, accountability, commitment to action and results.

The following section describes and discusses the FPC REEWF project in Matobo district.

FPC REEWF project

FPC focused on implementing food security projects in Matobo district. The REEWF project was implemented in Ward 18 for an initial 3 years and then a two-year extension period. The project was being implemented from 2018 to 2022.

Overall goal of the project

The overall goal of the project was to contribute to economic empowerment of women smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe through access to clean renewable energy.

Project objectives

1. Increased access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services for agricultural production.
2. Improved Agricultural (crop) productivity
3. Increased access to finance and markets
4. Improved natural resource management (FPC, 2018)

The research focused on objective two of the project which was 'improved Agricultural productivity'. The objective seeks to address the problem of food insecurity in Ward 18

which was the problem that led to the conducting of the study. To achieve this objective the following activities were conducted in Ward 18: -

1. Three community gardens were constructed and installed with solar pumping system in Ward 18
2. Two sand-dams were constructed across two rivers to store water for the two gardens.
3. One borehole was drilled to supply water to the third garden.
4. Small grain seed distribution was conducted in Ward 18.
5. Distribution of domestic chickens to the garden members is the last activity that was implemented under the REEWF project.

In total the project covered 180 households in the Ward 18. Each of the three gardens had 30 members. Of those 30 members 75 percent were women and 25 percent were men. In addition to the three gardens 90 community members in Ward 18 received small grain seed for dry land production (FPC, 2018). Each project beneficiary received 5kg of sorghum, 2kgs of cowpeas and 2kgs of pearl millet.

Below is a summary of interventions and targeted beneficiaries in the Ward 18.

Table 4.1 Garden beneficiaries: Source: FPC, 2018

Intervention	Name of Village	No of women	No of men	Total beneficiaries
Community garden	Mazhayimbe	22	8	30
	Phumuzamaphiko	24	6	30
	Mabundazulu	23	7	30
Total		69	21	90

Each of the three garden groups received domestic chickens that comprised of two cocks and 10 hens. These chickens covered 30 households and were supposed to be the breeding stock and each household would then benefit from the offspring of those chickens.

Below is the distribution of beneficiaries who received small grain seed by village in Ward 18.

Table 4.2 Small grain seed beneficiaries: Source: FPC 2018

Intervention	Name of Village	No of women	No of men	Total beneficiaries
Small grains (sorghum and millet)	Tungwana 1	20	10	30
	Tungwana 2	23	7	30
	Mazhayimbe	19	11	30
Total		62	28	90

The following section of this chapter presents the summary of the research data and findings.

The data is presented as previously stated according to the data collection instruments used. These were the individual in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Thematic analysis of qualitative data was used to analyse the data collected because the interviews collected were in-depth interviews resulting in the collection of large volumes of qualitative data. This was done in order to get in-depth understanding of the intervention and how it could be improved in order to obtain desired outcomes. Qualitative data assisted this researcher to focus on non-numerical data but key expressions and experiences as lived by the communities. Accurate capturing of data was required in order to interpret the data meaningfully. Close attention was paid to what people said and how they said it. The researcher's immediate thoughts, interpretations and reactions were also captured to aid the interpretation of the data. Figure 4.1 below illustrates the distribution of respondents according to gender.

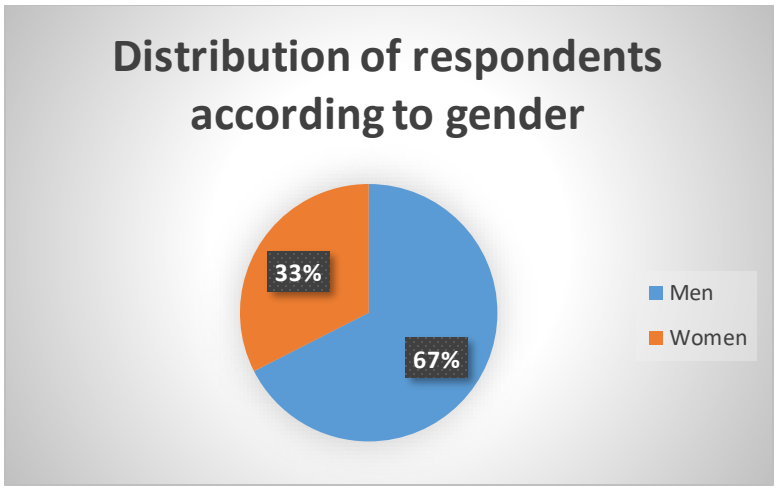


Fig 4.1 Gender of respondents

These were the beneficiaries of the FPC REEWF project in Ward 18. The majority of farmers in Matobo district is women. The district is located along the Botswana border and it is a mining district. Most man are working in the mines and in neighboring Botswana. This leave women in charge of the families and development projects are then implemented mostly by women. The responsibility of the family in this district is solely the burden for women and this makes them eager to engage in any livelihoods project that can enhance family food and or income. The study took into consideration the triple gender roles the women had in the community. The data collection was mainly conducted in the morning and few respondents were interviewed per day to facilitate respondents to attend to other roles in the community. The following section of this report focuses on the findings regarding the implementation of the project. These include the respondent's views on the plan of the project and their perception of the other component of the project which was the chicken project.

4.1.1 Project implementation

The research seeks to find out whether the REEWF project was being implemented according to its initial plan. This was done in order to establish if the project was going to achieve its intended objectives as initially planned. The majority of the interviewed respondents felt the project was not being implemented according to the initial plan. They felt a lot had been changed since the initial inception of the project. Figure 4.2 below

shows how the respondents expressed their views when asked whether the project was being implemented according to plan.

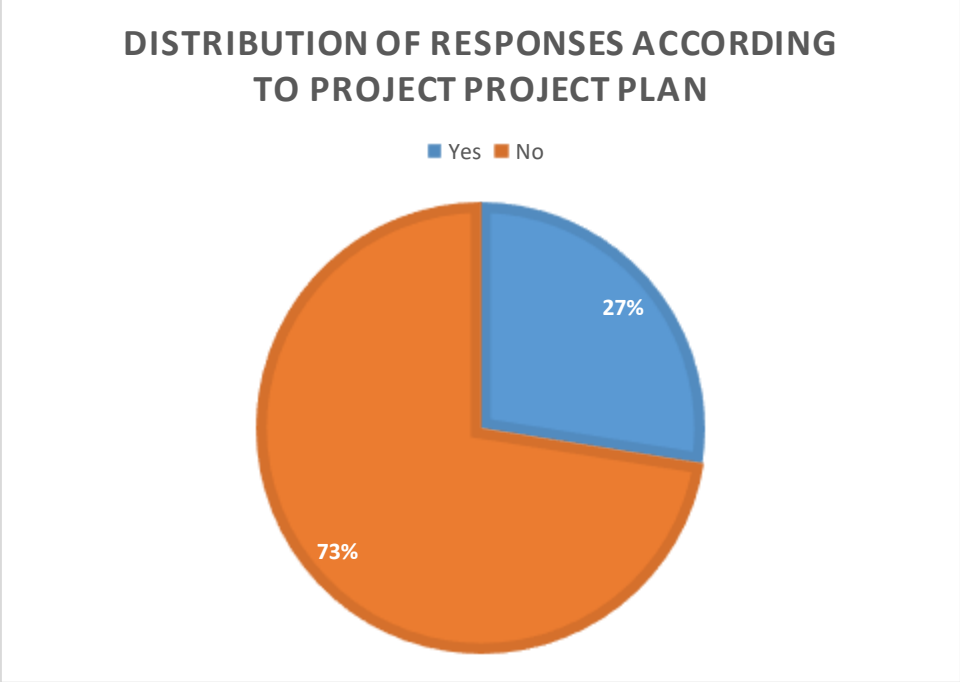


Fig 4.2: Project plan implementation

During focus group discussions participants expressed concern over the adjustments that were made along the course of the project without their consultation. 'Mikah' (not real name), (a 59-year-old, retired teacher) had this to say, "There are a lot of changes along the way… that are implemented without us being consulted especially along budget adjustments." Other participants also concurred with 'Mikah', describing the implementation of the projects as sometimes "unclear" and "frustrating". 'Samuel' (not real name concurred with 'Mikah' and said "Well… well… I do not want to appear as if I am not grateful to the ones who assisted us with projects… but there are some challenges with these projects especially the chicken project… what was agreed initially between us [beneficiaries] and the implementing partner is not what is happening now." 'Samuel' went on and said that "the implementing partner promised us feed from the chickens but they did not deliver that feed… now we were left to source feed for chickens from our own resources." 'MaMoyo' (not real name) weighed in and said, "Very true… what we were promised when we started the project is not what we are realising now… there is no

transparency on the side of the implementing partner… really we need to be informed on what the problem is." 'MaSibanda' (not real name) concluded and said "The projects have deviated from their initial plan… even gardens… we were promised that the constructors will provide back-up service of the pumping systems for one year but they are nowhere to be seen… we had a challenge with our solar inverter and we ended up engaging an electrician from our own resources." The following section discusses the respondent' views about the chicken project. Figure 4.3 below shows the views of the respondents with regards to the chicken project.

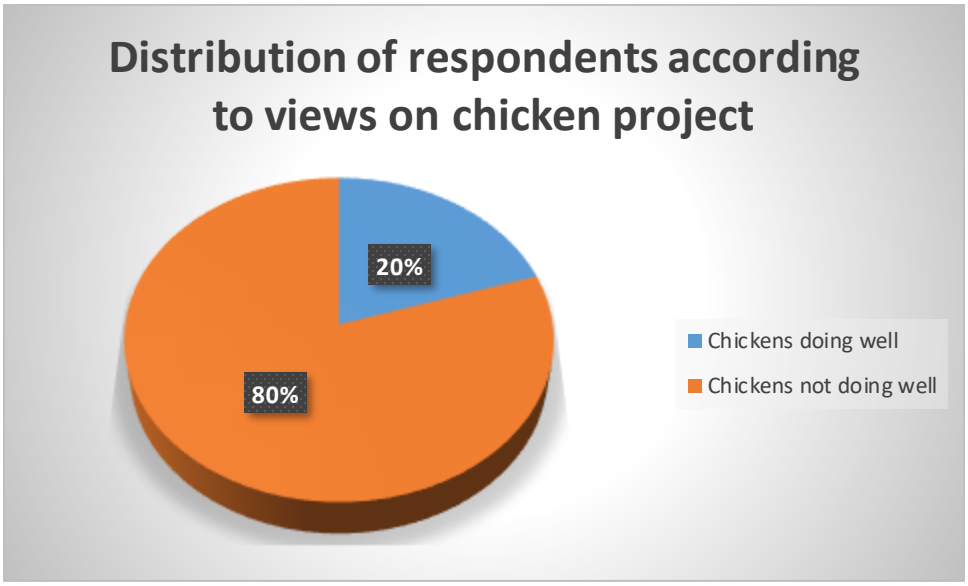


Figure 4.3 Chicken project performance

Davie (not real name) had this to say about the chicken project during a focus group discussion "Fine… thank you sir for giving me the opportunity to speak… I will speak about the chicken project… what we were told about that project is not what is being realised now… when we were given those chickens, we were told that there was going to be a start-up feed package but that was not done… we ended up going out of way to provide feed for the chickens which we could not afford anyway."

The respondents revealed that the chicken project was implemented without proper consultation between the beneficiaries and the implementing partner. The beneficiaries cited lack of chicken feed as key to the poor performance of the chicken project. They noted that they were promised start-up feed for the chickens by the implementing partner

but the promise was never honored leading to them stretching their resources to source feed for the chickens. The following sections of the report focuses on the finding from the key areas of the study which are process evaluation and participation.

4.2 Individual interviews data presentation and findings

Data is presented in this chapter in the form tables and graphs. In total 40 individual interviews were conducted in order to reach data saturation of the research. The individual interviews were conducted over a period of twenty-one days (3 weeks). The researcher collected the data himself. The scripts and quotations from the interviews were presented in the data presentation and analysis worksheet illustrated in Appendix IV at the end of this report.

The individual interview guide was used to collect data from the respondents. (IPDET, 2007) recommended the use of data presentation and analysis worksheets for presenting and analysing qualitative data.

The answers from the respondents and the quotations were captured and presented in the form of data presentation and analysis worksheet (Appendix IV) which this researcher used for the thematic data analysis.

Each question was written at the top of the worksheet and a color code was used to identify the data. Themes were then identified for each research question and coded under the themes section of the worksheet. Quotes were also identified and written under the quotes section. Aliases were used in the study to conceal the identity of interview respondents. This protected the study participants identity and any quotes used in the study cannot be linked to any of the participants. Findings for each question were then entered at the end of the worksheet. Number of responses were then used to give sense of magnitude and precision. Common words, themes, patterns and phrases were used to summarise the data.

Detailed discussion of findings is discussed in chapter five. The data analysis focused on what was said in the interview scripts and attention was paid to particular quotes and expressions. Particular words and phrases were the key components of the themes that came out of the interviews. These determined the direction of the flow of data and drew

particular conclusions with regards to certain issues discussed. The following section presents the key themes and findings from the individual interviews.

4.2.1 Key themes and findings from individual interviews

Key themes were established during the administration of individual questionnaires and these are presented in this section of the report as summaries of what actually transpired during the interviews. Key results of the study are discussed in detail in the following chapter of this study. The following section of this report presents data summary of the key findings from individual interviews. The key findings in this chapter focuses more on process evaluation and participation.

4.2.2 Beneficiary participation in project evaluation

The research seeks to know whether the respondents had ever been involved in any form of evaluation before. Less than half of the interviewed beneficiaries said they had been involved before especially in end of project evaluations. Figure 4.4 below shows the proportion of beneficiary involvement in project evaluation.

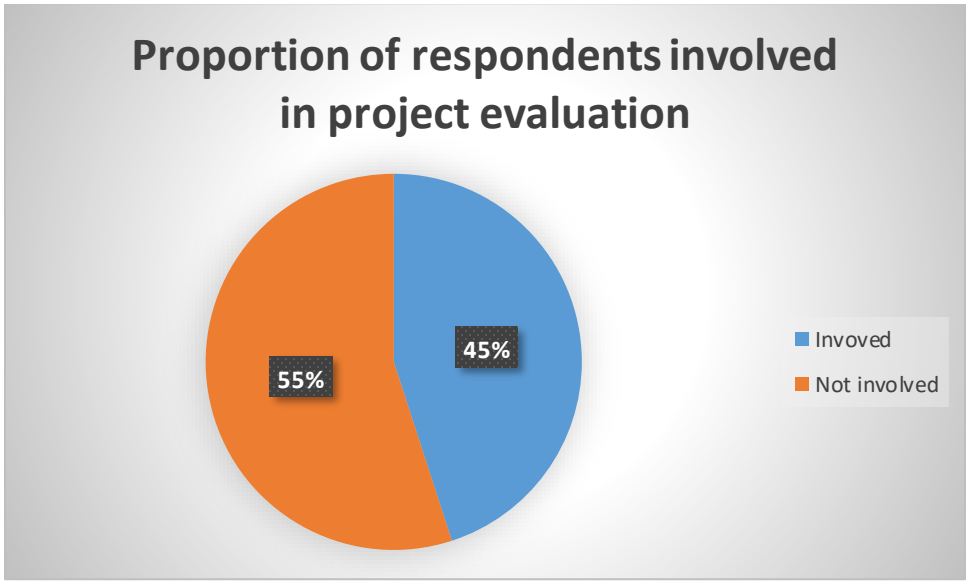


Fig 4.4 Proportion involved in evaluation

The study noted that the project committee members were the ones who appeared to have knowledge of being involved in evaluations before. The information from focus group discussions revealed that the majority of beneficiaries have never been involved in evaluation before. The respondents appeared not to be aware whether what the

implementing partner was doing were evaluations or not. ‘Mathew’ (not real name), (51-year-old man) mentioned that, “look here my son…a lot of things happen during project implementation and it [was] all up to the implementing organisation to tell [them] what it [was].” The research noted that there was still need for more capacitation on project evaluation at community level. ‘MaDube’ (not real name), (a 47-year-old lady) simply put it, “Sometimes… you are involved without knowing what it is exactly you are involved in.”

Those beneficiaries who said they were once involved in evaluations before were then asked the role which they played during their involvement. Two key themes came out from the interviews at individual level and during focus group discussions. These were whether one was simply as a beneficiary or as a key stakeholder. The majority of the respondents revealed that they were just involved as beneficiaries since they were never informed before on what really was happening. ‘Mathew’, (a 51-year-old man) came in again and said, “usually since [they were] the beneficiaries of projects, [they did] not have much to say…they [implementing organisation] just [came and told them] that they were conducting an evaluation to check whether the program was being implemented well in the ward.” ‘Zitha’ (not real name), (a 25-year-old youth) supported ‘Mathew’ and stressed that, “[they were] just beneficiaries of the project…[they] [could] not ask too much… because [they] might end up upsetting the donors and losing the little, they [had] provided to [them].” The research observed that project evaluation was the responsibility of the implementing organisation while beneficiaries acted as respondents to questions imposed on them. Respondents were then asked whether they had ever heard about process evaluation, with the findings discussed in the next section.

4.2.3 Participation in Process evaluation

The respondents requested the researcher to explain to them process evaluation. They noted that they might not have been aware of the name or type of evaluation but they might have experienced it once in a while from the implementing organisation. Figure 4.5 below shows the proportion of respondents who had previously participated in process evaluation.

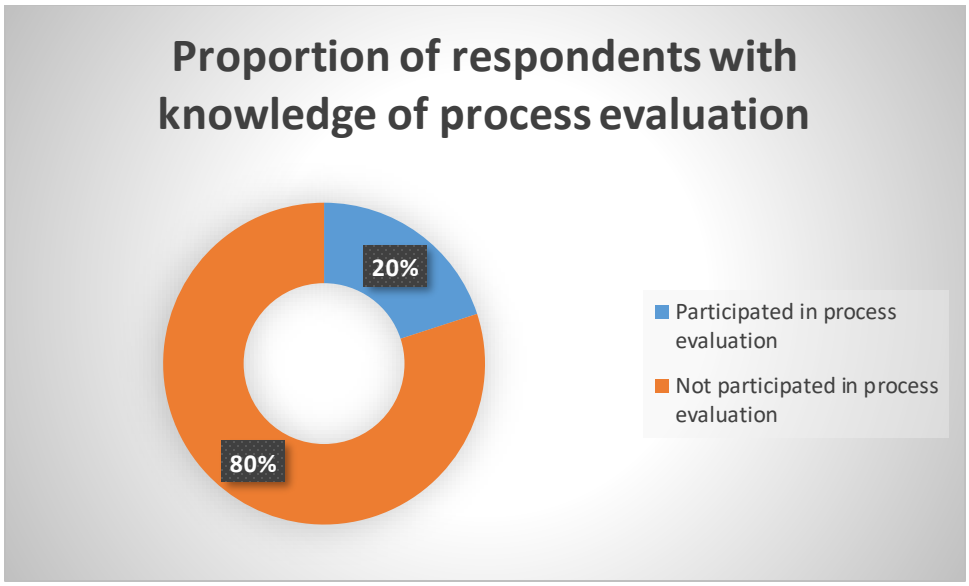


Fig 4.5 Knowledge of process evaluation

The researcher explained process evaluation to the respondents and noted that some organisations call it implementation evaluation. After the explanation 'Moyo' (not real name (a 62-year-old man, a garden member) a participant in one of the focus group discussions had this to say, "according to your explanation to us…I have heard about it from the implementing organisation." 'Mr. Sibanda' (not real name), (a 39-year-old man, a small grain beneficiary and garden member) mentioned that "[he had] never heard about it…to [him that was] something new but very important in [their] projects." Those beneficiaries who said they had heard about process evaluation explained that the implementing organisation would come once in a while during the course of the project and asked them how the project was doing. 'Mathew' had this to say, "They came to our garden… they then asked to talk to a few committee members and a few others… I was part of those who were asked the questions… like… 'what [were] the challenges we were facing?'… '[were we] happy about the way the project was being implemented?'… I think those were some of the questions."

'MaSibanda' (not real name) weighed in and pointed out and said, "*Eeeh*… no… I think those visits by the implementing organisation were just routine visits… but according to what you said… there is more to *eeeh*… what do you call it… *eeeh*… process evaluation."

The project committee members were the ones who appeared to be having some idea about process evaluation. The respondents felt process evaluation was key in the implementation of their projects. The respondents participating in the research felt if those visits done by the implementing partner could be intensified and encompass process evaluations at regular intervals, they could significantly improve the performance of the project on the ground. Those beneficiaries who said they had heard and taken part in process evaluation were then asked by the researcher about the role they played in those evaluations. The majority of them said they were just asked questions as the beneficiaries of the project but they did not play any influential role in those evaluations. 'MaDube' had this to say, "We were being asked questions and we were just expected to respond… and I just responded according to what I felt was relevant to what was being asked." 'MaSibanda' noted and said, "As beneficiaries we really feel we do not have much to say… when you are asked questions… you just respond… you can't ask why you are being asked because in the first place you do not know the purpose of being asked those questions." 'Nkosi' (not real name) concluded and said, "Our role is just that of being garden members [beneficiaries]… what else can we say?" The following section discusses the community's proposed strategies to improve process evaluation of projects.

4.2.4 Strategies to improve process evaluation of projects

At district level different stakeholders were involved in the implementation of food security projects. Those included in particular irrigated gardens and distribution of small grain crop seeds. The research established that district head of projects were more concerned about inadequate feed-back regarding project implementation. They observed that the beneficiaries were sometimes left guessing on what was the next step regarding their projects. 'Mr. Mpofu' (not real name) (the head of department for AGRITEX) mentioned that "if [they dreamt] of projects being a success…community feed-back meetings and engagement should be key in project implementation."

The key informants stressed that beneficiaries were the major stakeholders in the projects. As such they felt their involvement should be beyond that of being mere beneficiaries to 'important' stakeholders. The head of government departments noted that when the donors and NGOs leave the district, they find challenges when engaging

communities on what exactly transpired during project implementation. They also noted that sustainability of projects depended upon the beneficiaries themselves.

The key informants highlighted that field visits were important in keeping constant touch between beneficiaries and the implementing organisation. The research observed, during key informant interviews that implementing organisations both government and NGOs tended to conduct field visits when there had been a problem noted affecting the project. The next section focuses on strategies proposed by the community to improve participation in process evaluation of projects.

4.2.5 Strategies to improve community participation

Joint planning and monitoring among all relevant stakeholders were noted as the key strategies to improve community participation in process evaluation of food security projects. The key informants stressed that beneficiaries 'must' be involved during project design so that they understand how the program was started and how it was expected to end. The district heads noted that at the planning stage of the project cycle beneficiaries should take part and it should be an all-inclusive process where everyone should feel honored to be part of the project. In summary the key informants at district level emphasised that monitoring and evaluation should form an integral part of the project rather than stakeholders tending to conduct an evaluation only when there was an alarm raised about certain issues within the project. The following section of this chapter is a discussion on the research findings on the role of community participation in process evaluation of projects.

4.2.6 The role of community participation in process evaluation

In chapter two the study noted that the most common elements of process evaluation were exposure, reach, satisfaction, delivery, context and fidelity. These elements were used during the research with regards to the FPC project that was implemented in Ward 18 especially satisfaction, fidelity, reach and context that are assessed by qualitative methods of research. The study noted that satisfaction was key to community participation in evaluation of food security projects in the community. The project

beneficiaries revealed that they were not satisfied with the chicken project. The study examined whether the intended and targeted beneficiaries of the REEWF project were happy with and liked the intervention. The project beneficiaries needed to value and enjoy the intervention before the desired effects of the intervention could occur. The project beneficiaries can only fully participate in the project if they feel the project satisfy their needs. During the research the communities expressed dissatisfaction with their relationship with the implementing organisation. They noted inadequate consultation on key intervention issues such as the budget.

Another element of process evaluation that was examined in the study was fidelity. The study seeks to establish what monitoring and adjustments to the intervention were done during the implementation of the REEWF project. The project beneficiaries agreed that monitoring visits were being done by the implementing partner. They however, noted that their role in monitoring was underemphasised. Project participants participate in projects if their roles are clearly spelt out from the beginning of the project. The study noted that project beneficiaries were only involved in process evaluation as beneficiaries of aid and without any significant role to make them key stakeholders in the project. Integrity and quality of the intervention involves close monitoring and evaluation of the project to ensure necessary adjustments are done on time before they affect project outcomes.

Project reach was also considered as an element of process evaluation that was important in community participation. The proportion of the target group who participated in the intervention in Ward 18 were mostly women. The majority of the project beneficiaries were women. The study found that women were more comfortable to participate in projects when they were on their own without men being involved. Women revealed that men were not willing to take suggestions from women especially those in the committee and that caused conflicts within the project. The study concluded that the numbers and characteristics of participants reached have a bearing on how project beneficiaries participate in process evaluation of projects. Women were willing participate if only they were targeted on their own so that they can express themselves freely and their views as women were being respected in key decision making in the project. Reach as an element of process evaluation was discovered to reduce conflicts if the correct

target population was involved in the project. Finally, the key element of process evaluation that improved community participation discussed in the study was context. Context took into account those aspects of the environment that may influence intervention implementation or outcomes. The study focused in the context of Matobo district and in particular Ward 18. The study discovered that communities were willing to participate in projects if those projects were set-up in relation to their environmental settings. Context was studied in the research by focusing on problems in the delivery of the intervention including differences in different settings, difficulties experienced or barriers to implementation. The project beneficiaries gathered that issues about the environmental, social or financial factors influenced the implementation of the intervention. For example, in their community garden project which was part of some of the projects implemented by FPC communities were asked what happened when the resources were not available as required, or the intervention was delivered to the target population in a way that was different from what was planned (with particular reference to the chicken project. The project participants noted that this was one of the major contributors to project failure. They also emphasised that such a scenario resulted in reduced participation in projects as there was lack of confidence in both the project and the implementing organisation. The study concluded that monitoring aspects of the physical, social and political environment and how they impact on intervention implementation enabled corrective action to be taken on time. In summary the study concluded that process evaluation was directly linked to community participation because process evaluation was directly linked to project beneficiary involvement in project implementation. The study established that conservation Agriculture, irrigated gardens and chickens were the main interventions implemented by NGOs in Ward 18. The beneficiaries of the REEWF project participated in gardens and chickens. The chicken project was intended to supplement income and provide another additional source of livelihoods to the project beneficiaries. The study established that the chicken and the garden project were complimentary projects both intended to provide food security to the vulnerable members of the community. The study then concluded that not all farmers who were in the garden project took part in the chicken project as some farmers noted that they were more concerned about the irrigated gardens that appeared to provide

immediate outcome to their food requirements. Irrigated gardens were noted to be doing better than the chicken project and the reasons are discussed in detail in the next chapter. The study noted that NGOs were the major players in the food security sector in Ward 18. However, project beneficiaries revealed that they were not satisfied about the way the project was being implemented.

When the project beneficiaries were asked about the targeting and selection criteria that was used to get them into the project, there appeared to be a confusion on who exactly was supposed to be targeted by the project. Women revealed that the project was supposed to target them only without any men or youths. Most of the project beneficiaries could not outline the selection criteria and they were giving conflicting statements as to how they were selected to be part of the project. The project beneficiaries were then asked whether they had been involved in project evaluation before. The study noted that project beneficiaries had been involved in evaluations before although they noted they were mainly involved during end of project evaluations. The study discovered that the community played a passive role in project evaluation.

The project beneficiaries revealed that they were used as respondents when questions were asked but there was very limited evidence during the study of the community taking part in the designing of these evaluations and being regarded as important stakeholders in the project. When asked whether they had ever heard about process evaluation before, the study established that the majority of the project beneficiaries had never heard about process evaluation before. Those who said they have heard about process evaluation before said they heard that during routine implementing partner visit to project site and it mainly involved those who formed part of the project committee. The study noted that the project beneficiaries were not aware as to why process evaluation was being done to their projects. The project beneficiaries consented that they were being involved in the evaluation by virtue of being aid beneficiaries. Otherwise, their role was not that of being key stakeholders. Of particular note was that project beneficiaries expressed inadequate engagement between them and the implementing partner especially concerning the project budget. They reiterated that they needed training in project planning and management.

The project beneficiaries were asked how they thought projects should be designed in order to take into account key needs of the people and enhance participation. The beneficiaries noted that projects must start from the people who are affected by a certain problem and focus on changing lives of those people. The beneficiaries noted that they needed to have a larger say in how the project should be implemented at community level. They noted that sometimes along the way the project change course without them being consulted. Finally, during individual interviews, project beneficiaries were asked what they suggest needed to be done in order to improve success of food security projects. The project beneficiaries noted that they needed proper capacitation on how to manage projects on their own especially after the implementing partner has left. Most respondents consented that the solution to improve community participation in project evaluation was through proper stakeholder engagement at all levels especially at community level where real project implementation was taking place. A detailed analysis of the individual interview data is discussed in chapter five as previously stated at the beginning of the presentation of these key findings. The following section summarises the key findings from the key informant interviews. As previously mentioned in chapter three four key informants (head of NGOs and Government departments) were interviewed at district level as part of the data collection process.

4.2.3 Key informant data presentation and findings

The key informants were interviewed at district level and a summary of key themes and findings obtained from the key informant interviews are discussed in this section. A detailed analysis of the findings from key informant interviews is discussed in the following chapter of this report.

The study revealed that at district level input distribution, small livestock distribution and irrigated community gardens were the major food security projects being implemented by both the government and NGOs. The study also noted that government departments were operating in all the wards in the district while NGOs were focused on certain wards which were allocated to them by the Rural District Council (RDC). The key informants noted that ward allocation was the sole responsibility of the district authorities. The study discovered that if an NGO was allocated a certain ward that organisation was supposed to sign a

memorandum of understanding with the Rural District Council and it was expected to remain operating in that particular ward until the end of the project life cycle.

The key informants argued that this was done to facilitate accountability on the side of the implementing organisations. When key informants were asked about the measures that they thought could be put in place to enhance community participation in process evaluation of food security projects, the study noted that key informants were more concerned about inadequate community feedback meetings and stakeholder engagement and these were found to be the most important components of implementing humanitarian projects. The key informants concurred that at district level there are all stakeholder meetings conducted periodically but these did not cascade to the community level. The study established that organisations were willing to conduct regular field visits to facilitate constant project monitoring and identifying any challenges on time. The key informants explained that constant field visits and conducting regular meetings with project beneficiaries improved trust and enhanced communication between district stakeholders and the communities. The study noted that this also improved participation in humanitarian projects by the project beneficiaries.

Key informants conceded that to facilitate close monitoring of the projects field monitoring visits should form part of the key activities in project implementation. However, organisations, especially government departments that are key for project sustainability highlighted inadequate resources to do constant field monitoring visits. Key informants were also asked about the cross-cutting issues that that they believed could influence community involvement in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects. The study established that at district level gender and age were the major aspects that determined as to who participated and became involved in community projects. The key informants stated that men and women roles differ in society and this determines who is available to take part in community projects.

The key informants expressed concern about the low project participation of men and the youth. They revealed that Agricultural projects demand a lot of manual labour and it was of particular importance to see able bodied men and youths taking part in these projects. The study discovered that key informants believed that that the sustainability of projects

solely lay with the communities themselves. This, the study noted led to shifting responsibilities when projects do not deliver the intended outcomes. The key informants were asked about the implications of neglecting community stakeholders in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects. The key informants concurred that community participation enhanced project success, reduced conflicts, increased stakeholder accountability and also reduced corruption especially where it involved financial resources. Finally, the key informants were asked to suggest what needed to be done to increase community participation in process evaluation of food security projects. The key informants concluded that planning and monitoring were important strategies to be put in place to enhance community participation in process evaluation of food security projects

The following section presents the summary key themes and findings derived from focus group discussions. This was done to triangulate the data that was obtained from individual interviews and key informant interviews. As previously mentioned in chapter three, four groups were interviewed.

4.2.4 Focus group discussion data presentation and findings

Four project beneficiary groups were interviewed as previously mentioned to triangulate the data from the individual interviews and key informants. A detailed analysis of the findings from focus groups discussion is discussed in the following chapter of this report.

The majority of the respondents in the focus groups were members of community gardens and the chicken project. The group members were asked about the humanitarian food security projects that were being implemented in Ward 18. The group members concurred with the key informants that irrigated community gardens, chicken projects and conservation farming were the main livelihoods and food security interventions in Ward 18. The group members composed of mainly women as already mentioned in chapter three and men and youths were constituted the minority. As for men the study noted that the REEWF project targeted mainly capacitation of women farmers. The group members were then asked to express their general opinion about the projects. The focus group discussions revealed that irrigated gardens and conservation farming were making a

difference in the lives of the communities. The study established that the chicken project was considered to be performing below standard by the group members. Focus group members engaged in detailed discussions with the researcher and they revealed that that FPC projects were the ones popular with the Ward 18 community.

The project beneficiaries were asked whether they were consulted in key decision making about the projects. The study found out that communities were not adequately consulted about developments in the project at some point during its implementation. The group members were also asked about the direct beneficiaries of the project and how these were selected. The project beneficiaries were also, like individual interview project beneficiaries not aware of how the targeting and selection process were done. The majority of the project beneficiaries were women but those women revealed that they were not comfortable working with men at their projects. Women uncovered that men were undermining their decision-making powers. Asked about their previous involvement in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects, the group members concurred that they were not previously involved much in evaluation of the projects. The group members noted that the committee was the one that appeared to have some knowledge of what was happening with regards to project evaluation. When the group members were asked as to what role they played during project evaluation those who presented knowledge of evaluation admitted that they were involved only as beneficiaries of the project but not as key stakeholders who had a role to play in the project. This question created a heated debate among the group members who attested that they were being undermined by the implementing organisations.

The group members were then asked whether they knew or have heard about process evaluation before. The study found that the beneficiaries were not aware of process evaluation even though they felt something similar was being done by the implementing organisation at some point. The study found out that most of the capacitation was targeted towards the committee members of the projects with less cascading trainings to the rest of the beneficiaries. The group members noted that the committee members also had limited knowledge of evaluation and could not capacitate other members of the project adequately. The group members observed that there was more to process evaluation

than just being asked questions about the project. They also observed that process evaluation had never been done to their projects and they were not in a position to say how it is done and for what purpose. The beneficiaries stressed that they were not regarded as equal partners in the project but they were regarded as mere beneficiaries who benefited from the project. The group members were then asked to define their role in process evaluation of projects and they concurred that they needed a much influential role in the projects than simply being mere beneficiaries of aid.

When the group members were asked about what they thought could be done to enhance implementation of food security projects in their ward, they emphasised that they needed more training on project planning and management to enable sustainability of the projects after the implementing organisation has left. When asked to express their views on how f humanitarian food security projects should be designed, the study noted that the humanitarian projects implemented in the community should be designed with that particular community's needs at the center. The group members expressed concern on the imposition of projects and they continued to mention the chicken project as a case in question. Also, the study noted that communities felt they were the major stakeholders in all the projects implemented directly within their ward. The project members noted that projects implemented without proper community engagement can lead to conflicts at both household and community level as the outcomes might not be realised as was expected at the design stage of the project. To conclude the group discussions the project beneficiaries were asked what they thought could be done to improve community participation in process evaluation of food security projects. The study found out that beneficiaries were eager to learn if afforded that opportunity. The project beneficiaries emphasised on continuous engagement at all levels so that everyone would feel part of the decision-making process within the project.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented a summary of key themes and findings from the research data collection instruments. The chapter started by discussing the case study (REEWF) project. The brief profile of the organisation implementing the project (Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre) was also discussed in chapter four. Data presentation started by presenting a summary of data and key findings from the individual interviews. These included the composition of respondents and their perceptions about the performance of the projects in the ward. The individual interview respondents concluded that the project was not going according to plan. This was then followed by a summary of data and key findings from the key informant interviews. The key informants noted that stakeholder engagement was important in the successful implementation of projects. The chapter concluded by presenting the summary of the data and key findings from the focus group discussions. Focus group discussions triangulated the data obtained from the individual interviews and key informant interviews. Focus group discussions concurred with individual interview respondents that the projects were not implemented according to plan. The following chapter discusses in detail the findings from the data analysis and key findings.

Chapter five

Data analysis and discussion of results

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results from the data analysis and discussion of summaries from key findings from the research primarily from the interviews that were conducted. The results discussed here are presented in the form of the data analysis worksheets attached in Appendix IV, V and IV at the end of this report. Data was analysed using the thematic qualitative data analysis method and quantitative expressions are only used to express a certain opinion or validate certain points.

5.1 Discussion of key findings from individual interviews

5.1.2 Humanitarian food security projects in Ward 18

The research also seeks to find out the types of humanitarian food security projects in the ward under study (Ward 18) in order to establish the magnitude of the problem of food insecurity in that particular ward. The study established that irrigated gardens and small grain input distributions were the main food security interventions in the ward. The research uncovered that all the inputs used in the gardens were provided by the REEWF project. This was revealed by all the key informants interviewed and the individual interview respondents. When asked during individual interviews, 'which humanitarian food security project she was involved in,' 'Thobekile' (not real name)', (a 38-year-old mother of 3), stated that "we are in a very dry region… and this project… [REEWF] came in the very hour of need…small grain and irrigated gardens have made a difference in our lives." Sakhile, (not real name) had this to say, "Ok…ok…the garden [project] came at the very hour need…the community was in a very bad situation in terms of food security." She further went on and said *"Yaah…*there are other projects being implemented by other organisations [humanitarian]…in the ward…these projects have been faced with mixed successes…especially the conservation farming project which has faced labour shortage from the community since it has to do with manual labour…the chicken project [was] not doing well at all."

In focus group discussions participants expressed satisfaction with irrigated gardens. Maxwell (not real name) (43-year-old father of 4) stated that "small grain crops [were] a

lifeline to [them] …they do not easily succumb to drought." The research noted that if ever there should be any focus on expanding humanitarian food security projects it should be on irrigation and distribution of small grain seeds. This was also noted by the popularity of the REEWF project irrigated gardens and small grain seed distribution interventions within the community. The respondents were also asked to express their feelings about the humanitarian projects they were involved in with the implementing organisation [FPC]. The respondents agreed that the project was changing their lives for the better but more needed to be done on the chicken intervention which was not doing well at all. Davie (not real name) had this to say about the chicken project during a focus group discussion "Fine… thank you sir for giving me the opportunity to speak… I will speak about the chicken project… what we were told about that project is not what is being realised now… when we were given those chickens, we were told that there was going to be a start-up feed package but that was not done… we ended up going out of way to provide feed for the chickens which we could not afford anyway."

The respondents revealed that the chicken project was implemented without proper consultation between the beneficiaries and the implementing partner. The beneficiaries cited lack of chicken feed as key to the poor performance of the chicken project. They noted that they were promised start-up feed for the chickens by the implementing partner but the promise was never honored leading to them stretching their resources to source feed for the chickens.

The majority of the interviewed respondents were not satisfied with the chicken project. Asked to comment on chicken project, 'Qiniso' (not real name) (34-year-old man) exclaimed that, "I think these projects are just being dumped on us without proper planning… we were told that we were going to receive start-up chicken feed but up to now nothing has materialised."

5.1.3 Humanitarian Organisations in Ward 18

The research observed that NGOs were the most involved in humanitarian projects in the community. The projects supported by NGOs appeared to be better funded than those projects under government departments. The garden and chicken projects were both funded by an NGO (FPC 'Sihle' (not real name) (a 37-year-old garden member) had this

to say, “NGOs are the back bone of our survival in this ward…there was not even a single project for the community before…we started to see these projects when NGOs started working in our ward.” She further complained that “projects [government] …are too politicised and they leave a lot of deserving individuals outside the project.” ‘MaDube’ (not real name) concurred with Sihle and had this to say “*Mhhhm… eeeh…* to say the truth projects in Ward 18 projects are being mostly implemented by NGOs… FPC, Save the Children, Pro Africa etc… all these are the ones we work with in our projects. ‘Gladys’ (not real name) summed it up and said, “Very true… government departments are mostly involved in food distribution to the poor and vulnerable households who cannot even work in the development projects like gardens.”

The majority of the interviewed respondents mentioned that NGOs are the ones doing most of humanitarian work in the ward. This was also supported by focus group respondents who mentioned Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre, Save the Children UK, Pro Africa and Sizimele as the common NGOs doing in humanitarian work in the Ward 18.

5.1.4 Project implementation

As stated in the findings in the previous chapter the majority of the respondents agreed that the project was not being implemented as previously agreed. Due to the deviation from the initial plan the project beneficiaries pointed out that the project was not going to meet its intended objectives. The respondents noted a lot of challenges that involved not being consulted and unplanned changes that took place during the course of the project. The respondents cited the chicken project as a case in question where hey ended up buying feed from their own limited resources due to deviations from the initial plan. The respondents also noted lack of transparency in the garden project whereby they were promised back-up service for their solar irrigation system but that never happened. They reported that they ended up hiring private electricians to repair and maintain their pumping systems.

5.1.5 Beneficiaries of the project

The study observed that beneficiaries of the project were the key stakeholders in project success. The inclusion of the correct target group in the project results in higher chances of project success. The study participants were asked who were the exact project beneficiaries and how these were selected. Direct project beneficiaries needed to understand how they became part of the project. This was important to avoid project members leaving the project mid-way thorough the life cycle of the project when they felt their expectations were not being met. The majority of the respondents concurred that the majority of the beneficiaries were women. They observed that women were usually the ones at home most of the time taking care of the children and when projects came in to the community, they were the ones who were readily available to participate. What was of major concern was the recognisable percentage of respondents who were not sure who exactly the project was targeting. They mentioned women, men and youth as the targeted beneficiaries. They appeared not to be aware of the 75% women and 25% men philosophy in the project document. Few respondents (about 30%) of the respondents also expressed ignorance on how they were selected to be part of the project. They emphasised that they got into the program on their own on a voluntary basis.

This appeared to be some of the reasons why there were misunderstandings on the way the project should take going forward.

The following section of the report discusses the findings on beneficiaries' involvement in project evaluation.

5.1.6 Beneficiary involvement in project evaluation

The research seeks to find out whether the respondents had ever been involved in any form of evaluation before. As previously stated in Chapter 4 Less than half of the respondents said they had been involved before especially in end of project evaluations. This was mostly concentrated to the project management committee and those expressed knowledge of evaluation citing their previous involvement. The information from focus group discussions also noted the limited involvement of project beneficiaries in evaluations noting project committee members as the ones being involved more often.

Those beneficiaries who said they were once involved in evaluations before were then asked the role which they played during their involvement. The majority (over three quarters) of the respondents felt they were just involved as beneficiaries since they were never informed before on what really was happening. The research observed that project evaluation was the responsibility of the implementing organisation while beneficiaries acted as respondents to questions imposed on them. Respondents were then asked whether they had ever heard or participated in process evaluation, with the findings discussed in the next section.

5.1.7 Process evaluation

Process evaluation was one of the key themes of this study and respondents were asked about this form of evaluation. This involved their knowledge of this type of evaluation and whether they have been involved in this evaluation. The research noted that process evaluation, though a key form of evaluation during project implementation, was not common among project beneficiaries. The majority of beneficiaries expressed limited knowledge about process evaluation. This concern was then highlighted in the recommendations section in the last chapter of this research. Those beneficiaries who said they had heard about process evaluation explained that the implementing organisation would come once in a while during the course of the project and asked them how the project was doing.

The respondents revealed that process evaluation was key in the implementation of their projects. The respondents participating in the research noted that if those visits done by the implementing partner could be intensified and encompass process evaluations at regular intervals, they could significantly improve the performance of the project on the ground. The respondents noted that even though they were involved in process evaluation, they only acted as beneficiaries of the project with very limited input on the way the project was supposed to take. The majority of them said they were just asked questions as the beneficiaries of the project but they did not play any influential role in those evaluations.

In summary the majority of the respondents interviewed individually said they have never heard or participated in process evaluation. The following section discusses the key strategies that can be adopted to enhance success of food security projects.

5.1.8 Strategies to enhance participation in projects

This section focusses on the strategies that the research noted could be adopted by both the community and the implementing organisation in order to enhance success of projects in Ward 18. Respondents were given a leeway to suggest what they thought needed to be done to ensure success of humanitarian food security projects they were being implemented in Ward 18.

The majority of the respondents noted community engagement was the key strategy to enhance project implementation. Focus group discussion participants also buttressed the point on participation. They noted that sometimes projects collapse because of improper community engagement and incapacitation of beneficiaries. Several other focus group discussion participants agreed on the issue of engagement, describing the relationship between the beneficiaries and the implementing partner as "giver and receiver." Respondents noted that they needed capacitation in areas of project management especially on budget management. This led to the issue of transparency which respondents felt they were being left in the dark on how much was spent in the project in total and how much was left, if anything at all. 'Gladys' (a 30-year-old woman, garden member and chicken project beneficiary) summed it up and said "we need to be continuously involved in the project at all stages…it is our project and we do not want it to fail." The researcher then asked the respondents on their views on how they suggest projects should be designed to in order to achieve their desired objectives. The following section discusses the findings on views of the community with regards to project design.

5.2 Project design and participation

The research discovered that the beneficiaries needed projects to be community centered during their design. The respondents noted that the communities were not homogenous hence projects destined for Ward 18 should be designed together with the community of Ward 18. Over half of the interviewed individuals concurred that when projects "are" designed with the intended beneficiaries in mind, there were less chances of project

failure. Beneficiaries observed sustainability was much higher on community centered projects. Focus group participants stressed that the community leadership should be the one at the forefront of development projects as they knew what the people in their communities needed.

The research also noted that beneficiaries were more concerned about projects that would solve their main problems. 'Samuel' (not real name), (a 34-year-old man) emphasised and said, "I believe when projects come to us… they [projects] should try to alleviate the problem we have been facing as a community." 'Sihle' reiterated and said, "Ok…I think what is important is who… in the first-place designed those projects… because for us it came as a project already ready for implementation… how it was designed and by who… we do not know… maybe others have an idea… I don't know."

'Samuel' emphasised and said,"These projects should be designed with the people [project beneficiaries] in mind… projects should not be imposed on us… instead of assisting us alleviate poverty… they can end up being a burden on us… as we previously said about the chicken project… it is a good project but for a community like ours it is not suitable… we do not produce enough grain from our fields to supplement chicken feed and the implementing organisation… FPC should have consulted us before approving the chicken project." 'MaNdlovu' (not real name) concluded and said, "We should be the main decision makers for projects that are meant to assist us… that will make life easier for the other stakeholders as we would offer important information about the situation in our community."

The interview concluded by seeking the respondents' views on what they thought could be done to improve community participation in process evaluation of food security projects. The next section of the report discusses the findings on the respondents' views on improvement of community participation.

5.3 Key informant views on participation

Key informants were also interviewed at district level. As previously mentioned, four key informants were purposively selected to take part in the interview. These were the District Agricultural Extension Officer (DAEO) representing AGRITEX, the District Social Welfare

Officer (DSWO) representing the Department of Social Welfare (DSW); District Coordinator (DC) representing Sizimele and finally the Program Manager of Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre (FPC). The key informants were asked about the humanitarian projects they were involved in. In response Key Informant 2 (referred as to KI 2) in this research revealed and said, "we are a government department responsible for provision of extension services to farmers in the whole district (Matobo District) …basically we concentrate on input distributions for both crop and livestock." 'KI 2' went on and concluded and said that "we also offer farmer trainings and capacitation on sustainable Agricultural technologies."

The research also seeks to find out the areas they were covering with their projects and also how they viewed community participation with regards to conducting process evaluation of those projects. Key informants expressed limited resources to cover the district communities on time and assist with technical expertise. 'KI 2' had this to say, "*Yaah*…its quite difficult…very difficult indeed… as government we are not like the private sector… resources are very limited… and we are quite stretched in terms of resources… that's why we have a lot of NGOs assisting with almost similar interventions in the other wards."

Key informants expressed their views regarding evaluation strategies they were using and how those improved community participation in process evaluation of interventions they were implementing. The key informants noted that it was not easy to have a monitoring and evaluation strategy without the adequate resources to implement those strategies but they revealed that the use of Field extension Officers in each ward assist in covering and attending to community needs on time. The key informants also noted that the field-based officers monitor NGO food security projects in their respective wards.

Key informants were asked about cross-cutting issues and implications of neglecting community stakeholders in the process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects. Key informant 1 (referred to as KI 1 in this research) had this to say, "I think Matobo District is a very patriarchal society… and gender plays a key role on who does what and when… women are the most involved in development projects and they are the ones who are likely to take part in process evaluation of projects… men in this district are not usually

at home… they are mostly involved in artisanal mining and cross border casual work in South Africa and Botswana."

Finally, the Key Informants were asked to suggest strategies that could be put in place to improve community participation in evaluation of humanitarian projects. 'K I 2' concluded and said, "well… I think having Officers at ward level really keeps communities aware of what is happening in the field of Agriculture and food security… farmers [project participants] have a reference point to refer to when they need some assistance… but as I mentioned earlier on our officers are not well resourced to cater for all the needs of the communities… the wards are big."

The following section discusses the key informants' implemented programs and the measures they believed could be put in place to improve process evaluation of food security projects.

5.3.1 Key informants' views on process evaluation

As previously mentioned earlier in this chapter, key informants were more involved in food security projects management at district level. Those included in particular irrigated gardens and distribution of small grain crop seeds. The research established that district head of projects were more concerned about inadequate feed-back regarding project implementation. They observed that the beneficiaries were sometimes left guessing on what was the next step regarding their projects. 'Mr. Mpofu' (not real name) (the head of department for AGRITEX) mentioned that "if [they dreamt] of projects being a success…community feed-back meetings and engagement should be key in project implementation."

The key informants stressed that beneficiaries were the major stakeholders in the projects. As such they felt their involvement should be beyond that of being mere beneficiaries to 'important' stakeholders. The head of government departments noted that when the donors and NGOs leave the district, they find challenges when engaging communities on what exactly transpired during project implementation. They also noted that sustainability of projects lied within the beneficiaries themselves.

The key informants highlighted that field visits were important in keeping constant touch between beneficiaries and the implementing organisation. The research observed, during key informant interviews that implementing organisations both government and NGOs tended to conduct field visits when there had been a problem noted affecting the project. The following section of the report discusses the crosscutting issues raised by the key informants that they believed were important in community involvement in the conducting of process evaluation of projects.

5.4 Relationship between cross-cutting issues and participation

Gender was cited as key to community participation in projects. The district heads noted that in the communities, especially rural communities, men still commanded key roles within the community especially with regards to key decisions. Regarding participation in projects, the key informants concurred with other respondents discussed earlier in this report that women commanded a leading role. The majority of men in Matobo district were doing casual labour in South Africa and Botswana while others were involved in small-scale artisanal mining. This had left women and children at home. Those were the ones that were found to be taking part in farming activities such as irrigated gardens and weeding in the dry-land fields.

The key informants mentioned that youths were not keen to take part in development projects. This, they stated left the elderly men and women labour constrained in the wards. This was also confirmed by the study that observed that only 24% of the beneficiaries in the REEWF project were the youths under the age of 35. The following section discusses the implications of neglecting community stakeholders (beneficiaries) in conducting process evaluation of food security projects.

5.5 Stakeholder involvement and process evaluation

The Key Informants, as previously mentioned raised concern about sustainability of the projects after the funding had ended. They mentioned that unsustainability of projects and low community participation were the major implications of neglecting community level stakeholders in project implementation. The beneficiaries also mentioned that they were not treated as equal partners in the project. The research noted that the head of departments at district level had more information about the project than the beneficiaries

themselves. The head of departments interviewed explained the project exit strategy of the project yet the beneficiaries themselves could not explain clearly how the project will move forward after the funding had ended.

The government departments stated that sometimes some donor projects were implemented without proper needs assessments being conducted. That resulted in communities being reluctant to be part of the projects and such projects collapsed immediately after the funding had ended. The district head of departments were then asked about what they thought with regards to community participation in humanitarian food security projects. They emphasised that community participation in humanitarian projects reduced conflicts; improved project success; increased accountability and reduced corruption. 'Mrs. Ncube' (not real name), (the district head for Sizimele) stated that "communities should not feel they [were] not being included in key decision making of the project…this [could] create serious conflicts that [could] leave the community divided." 'Mr. Rungano' (not real name) (the district head for the Department of Social Welfare) summed it up and said, "when communities are part of the project…the implementing organisations become accountable to both the community and the donors or funders." The key informant interviews ended by asking the respondents what they thought were some of the strategies to put in place to enhance community participation in evaluation of humanitarian projects.

5.6 Community views on participation and process evaluation

As previously discovered and noted in the findings in chapter 4 the study noted that the community was not satisfied with how the food security projects were implemented in Ward 18. Satisfaction is one of the key elements of process evaluation and is also used to measure project success. The community revealed that they were not happy with how projects were implemented in the community especially those involving implementing partners. They noted inadequate consultation on key intervention issues such as the budget.

Another element of process evaluation that was examined in the study was fidelity. The study seeks to establish what monitoring and adjustments to the intervention were done during the implementation of the REEWF project. The project beneficiaries agreed that

monitoring visits were being done by the implementing partner. They however, noted that their role in monitoring was underemphasised. Project participants participate in projects if their roles are clearly spelt out from the beginning of the project. The study discovered that project beneficiaries were only involved in process evaluation as beneficiaries of aid and without any significant role to make them key stakeholders in the project. Integrity and quality of the intervention involves close monitoring and evaluation of the project to ensure necessary adjustments are done on time before they affect project outcomes.

Project reach was also considered as an element of process evaluation that was important in community participation. The proportion of the target group who participated in the intervention in Ward 18 were mostly women. The study discovered that women were more comfortable to participate in projects when they were on their own without men being involved. Women revealed that men were not willing to take suggestions from women especially those in the committee and that caused conflicts within the project. The study concluded that the numbers and characteristics of participants reached have a bearing on how project beneficiaries participate in process evaluation of projects. Women were willing participate if only they were targeted on their own so that they can express themselves freely and their views as women were being respected in key decision making in the project. Reach as an element of process evaluation was discovered to reduce conflicts if the correct target population was involved in the project. Finally, the key element of process evaluation that improved community participation discussed in the study was context.

Context took into account those aspects of the environment that may influence intervention implementation or outcomes. The study focused in the context of Matobo district and in particular Ward 18. The study found that communities were willing to participate in projects if those projects were set-up in relation to their environmental settings. Context was studied in the research by focusing on problems in the delivery of the intervention including differences in different settings, difficulties experienced or barriers to implementation. The project beneficiaries gathered that issues about the environmental, social or financial factors influenced the implementation of the intervention. For example, in their community garden project which was part of some of the projects implemented by FPC communities were asked what happened when the

resources were not available as required, or the intervention was delivered to the target population in a way that was different from what was planned (with particular reference to the chicken project. The project participants noted that this was one of the major contributors to project failure. They also emphasised that such a scenario resulted in reduced participation in projects as there was lack of confidence in both the project and the implementing organisation. The study concluded that monitoring aspects of the physical, social and political environment and how they impact on intervention implementation enabled corrective action to be taken on time. In summary the study found that process evaluation was directly linked to community participation because process evaluation was directly linked to project beneficiary involvement in project implementation.

5.7 Conclusion

In chapter five the research concluded that most of the beneficiaries of the REEWF project were women with less men and youth taking part in development projects. The study established that the majority of humanitarian projects in Matobo district were implemented by NGOs with government departments citing limited funding to implement key projects in the district. Generally, the beneficiaries were content with the REEWF project. The project beneficiaries cited lack of proper stakeholder engagement between them and the implementing organisation. The project beneficiaries also requested that they be capacitated in project management and monitoring and evaluation so that they can manage to do their own project evaluation in the future. The research established that the majority of the beneficiaries had limited knowledge about process evaluation. Those who said they had been involved at some point before played a passive role of being respondents and beneficiaries during interviews by the implementing organisation.

The stakeholders concurred with the beneficiaries that stakeholder engagement was very important in project implementation. The research noted that all the relevant stakeholders should be involved at all stages of the project cycle so that when funding ended there was sustainability going forward with the project. The chapter concluded by discussing the relationship between process evaluation and community participation. The study noted that process evaluation elements such as satisfaction, fidelity, reach and context were important in improving community participation in food security projects. Detailed conclusions and recommendations are discussed in the following last chapter of this research report.

Chapter six

Conclusions and recommendations

6.0 Introduction

This chapter summarises and concludes the research. The major findings of the research are briefly mentioned in relation to the literature review in chapter two. These were guided by the specific objectives that were stated in chapter one. The chapter then provides possible policy recommendations based on the results from the analysed data. Finally, the chapter concludes by exploring areas of further study.

6.1 Research Summary

The main purpose of the research was to examine the role of the community in the process evaluation of food security projects with focus on the case of Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre Renewable Energy Empowering Women Farmers (FPC REEWF) project. The research obtained data from the interviews conducted at community level and at district level. At community level individual and focus group discussion interviews were conducted. At district level key Informants were interviewed which included both government head of departments and head of NGOs.

Results obtained from the research indicated that the majority of beneficiaries taking part in community projects were women. The study concurred with Wathome (2013) as it was discovered that even though community participation was key to project success, it was only possible depending on the belief of that particular community in participation. The research noted that community participation should be emphasised at the design stage of the project in order to achieve community buy-in towards the project. (Cummings, 1997a) also discovered that community participation was a prerequisite for project implementation. Men and the youth were found to be less involved in community projects and the study established that these were not always at home due to the work which they were involved in such as artisanal mining and cross border casual work in Botswana and south Africa.

The research established that the REEWF project was not being implemented according to the initial plan as agreed between the NGO and the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries expressed concern over the adjustments that were made along the course of the project

without their consultations. The project participants said the implementation of the project was at times “unclear” and “frustrating.”

Participation in project evaluation

The research noted that beneficiaries were at some point involved in project evaluation. This was established after the beneficiaries had asked the researcher to explain evaluation to them. Less than half of the respondents interviewed at household level said they had been involved before especially in end of project evaluations. Even though (Duncan & Claeys, 2018; Fullarton et al., 2003; Ruiz-Villaverde & García-Rubio, 2017) argued that community participation in humanitarian projects enhances better use of knowledge and experiences from different stakeholders, the study discovered that the role of community participation in process evaluation of projects was underemphasised. The project committee members were the ones who were more involved in evaluations when they were conducted as they agreed that they were the ones who usually meet implementing organisation staff at field level. (Madyaningrum & Sonn, 2011) emphasised that food security projects required community participation to succeed. The information from focus group discussions revealed that the majority of beneficiaries have never been involved in evaluation before. The project participants were not aware whether the implementing partner was doing an evaluation or it was just routine field visit. The project beneficiaries revealed that they needed more capacitation on project evaluation at community level.

Those project participants who said they were once involved in evaluations before noted that they were just involved as beneficiaries since they were never informed before on what really was happening. They revealed that it all depended with the implementing organisation to conduct an evaluation and at what time. The research observed that project evaluation was the responsibility of the implementing organisation while beneficiaries act as responders to questions imposed on them. The following section summarises the project participants’ views about process evaluation.

Process evaluation

The project participants also requested the researcher to explain to them process evaluation. (WHO, 2018) argued that process evaluations were an important component in program development and evaluation. However, the project beneficiaries noted they might not be aware of the name or type of evaluation but they might have experienced it once in a while from the implementing partner. The study discovered that the project beneficiaries' knowledge of process evaluation depended mainly on the implementing partner. The researcher explained process evaluation to the respondents and noted that some organisations call it implementation evaluation. Very few of the respondents said they have heard and participated in process evaluation although they were not aware it was process evaluation.

They further maintained that they were just being asked questions by the implementing organisation at some point during the course of the project to find out whether the project was being implemented according to plan. The project committee members were the ones who appeared to be having some idea about process evaluation. The research observed that the project participants valued the importance of process evaluation in the implementation of their projects. The study concurred with (Silies et al., 2020) who argued that although an effect or outcome evaluation was often the primary goal of intervention, it provided less insight into why and how an intervention was successful or failed. The study noted that the implementing partner was more concerned about outcome or end of project evaluation. This was revealed also by the project beneficiaries who consented that they were mostly involved in evaluations at the end of the projects. The research discovered that if those visits done by the implementing partner could be intensified and encompass process evaluations at regular intervals, they could significantly improve the performance of the project on the ground. The research observed that those project participants who had taken part in process evaluation before never played any significant role except being respondents who were just asked questions and providing responses as per what they feel was the requirement of the question. In summary the study concurred with (Zarrett et al., 2020) that a properly conducted process evaluation can help explain the success or failure of finding a relationship between the intervention and

the outcomes of interest.The next section summarises the strategies that the project participants provided as key to enhance implementation of food security projects in Ward 18.

Strategies to improve projects implementation

The literature revealed that process evaluation, systems thinking, social capital and participation can improve project performance significantly. (Saunders et al., 2014) observed that most common elements of process evaluation are exposure, reach, satisfaction, delivery, context and fidelity. The study noted that satisfaction, fidelity, reach and context were key to the success of food security projects in Ward 18. The research also noted that community engagement was the key strategy to enhance project implementation. Community participation was also discovered to be a strategy of particular importance in improving performance of food security projects in Ward 18. The study concurred with (Ruiz-Villaverde & García-Rubio, 2017) who noted that participation was a crucial element in project implementation and management. The study discovered that sometimes projects collapsed because of improper community engagement and incapacitation of beneficiaries. (Duncan & Claeys, 2018; Fullarton et al., 2003; Ruiz-Villaverde & García-Rubio, 2017) posited that community participation in humanitarian projects enhanced better use of knowledge and experiences from different stakeholders. However, the study noted that there was inadequate stakeholder engagement in the implementation of humanitarian projects in Ward 18. Liuzzo et al. (2018) documented that community participation required a multi-stakeholder approach which was a cause for concern among project beneficiaries in the study who constantly emphasised the lack of proper stakeholder engagement in the project. The project participants noted that they needed capacitation in areas of project management especially on budget management. The research found out that the project participants needed projects to be initiated by them focusing on the particular problem the project was meant to solve. The majority of the interviewed respondents revealed that when projects were designed with the intended beneficiaries in mind, there were less chances of project failure. The research observed that project sustainability was much higher on community centered projects. Norad (1999) emphasised that complex interventions like food security projects required the use of

systems thinking theory to evaluate them. Norad (1999) further noted that key decisions need to be made in the implementation of such projects and these required the decisions of all relevant stakeholders.

The research concurred with Norad (1999) argument as the study noted that 'proper' stakeholder engagement; capacity building; project monitoring and gender mainstreaming were some of the initiatives to improve community participation in process evaluation of projects. It was also observed that project participants needed to understand the concepts of process evaluation first before they could practice that type of project evaluation on their own. The study discovered that project participants needed capacitation especially training on process evaluation so that they can even do it on their own.

The research established that district head of projects were more concerned about inadequate feed-back regarding project implementation. They noted that the project participants were sometimes left guessing on what was happening with the projects. The study revealed that project participants were the major stakeholders in the projects. As such the research documented that their involvement should be beyond that of being mere beneficiaries to 'important' stakeholders. The research also discovered that the head of government departments were more concerned about project sustainability after the donor funding had ended. The key informants concurred that there was a gap in literature about the role of community participation in projects hence there was need to build community capacities in project evaluation and their role to be emphasised at all stages of the project. The head of departments further concurred with (Campbell, 2008) that community participation was important to both [their] institutions and the community at large. These head of departments consented that sustainability of projects depended with the beneficiaries themselves.

The study also detected that field visits were important in keeping constant touch between beneficiaries and the implementing organisation. Of particular concern was to discover that implementing organisations both government and NGOs tended to conduct field visits when there had been a problem noted affecting the project. The next section is a summary

of research on the crosscutting issues that were observed to be of particular importance in community involvement in the conducting of process evaluation of projects.

Cross-cutting issues

Gender was cited as key to community participation in projects. The study noted that in the communities, especially rural communities, men still commanded key roles within the community especially with regards to key decisions. (Laudia & Iaz, 2020) posited that disempowered communities have serious participation problems in community projects. As previously stated in this report women were the majority participants in the food security interventions including the REEWF project. The study revealed that these women were not the key decision makers in the project and they felt disempowered. The research discovered that youths were not keen to take part in development projects. (Enoch Kwame Tham-Agyekum, 2015; Naviaux & McGowan, 2000; Portes, 2010) argued that in a community people need to work together to achieve a common purpose or goal. The study discovered that women were not willing to work with men as they noted that men would underestimate their decision-making capabilities. The youths constituted only the minority of the project participants in the REEWF project. This, the study observed, left the elderly men and women labour constrained in the wards. The following section summarises the implications of neglecting community stakeholders (beneficiaries) in conducting process evaluation of food security projects.

Community stakeholder participation

(Hubley, 1990) posited that the participation concept emphasised that the community should be given an active role in programs and projects that directly affects their livelihoods. The research noted, as stated earlier in this chapter that district head of departments were worried about sustainability of the projects after the funding had ended as result of low community participation. Basing on (Hubley, 1990)'s argument the study discovered that there was low and passive community participation in food security projects in Ward 18. The study revealed that unsustainability of projects and low community participation were the major implications of neglecting community level stakeholders in project implementation. The study also discovered that project participants were not treated as equal partners in the project. The research noted that the

head of departments at district level had more information about the project than the beneficiaries themselves. The study consented with (DGP, 2011) that the people who benefited from the project are the ones who know the most about their life challenges. The study also contributed into (Onyango, 2018) who emphasised that community engagement deepens participation including shared learning and joint decision making.

The research also discovered that sometimes some donor projects are implemented without proper needs assessments being conducted. This was noted to result in communities being reluctant to be part of the projects and such projects collapse immediately after the funding had ended. The research observed that f that community participation in humanitarian projects reduced conflicts, improved project success, increased accountability and reduced corruption. (Christopher, 2020) argued that accountability in project management emphasises on accepting responsibility for the conduct and results of a specific project. The next section of this chapter discusses the strategies to improve community participation.

Strategies in participation

(Chambers, 1994) identified and developed participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME). The study noted that this type of evaluation provides joint planning and monitoring among all relevant stakeholders. This was noted to be one of the key strategies to improve community participation in process evaluation of food security projects. The key informants stressed that beneficiaries must be involved during project design so that they understood how the program was started and how it was expected to end. The district heads noted that at the planning stage of the project cycle beneficiaries should take part and it should be an all-inclusive process where everyone should feel honored to be part of the project. The study concluded by noting that joint stakeholder engagement can be used effectively within development agencies' needs for accountability as observed by (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014b). In summary the Key Informants at district level emphasised that monitoring and evaluation should form an integral part of the project rather than stakeholders tending to monitor only when there was an alarm about certain

issues within the project. The following section of this chapter is the research's conclusion and recommendations.

6.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that community participation in process evaluation of food security projects required a multi-stakeholder approach. The research concluded that that beneficiaries were not fully involved in project evaluation and they had limited knowledge on evaluation of projects. It was also concluded that focus by the implementing organisation was mainly on the project committee members who did not fully cascade the knowledge to other members of the project. The research also concluded that the project participants were not aware of their role if ever an evaluation was conducted. They noted they were just being used as respondents to simply respond to what they were asked. The study also concluded that project evaluation was solely the responsibility of the implementing organisation.

The research found that the project beneficiaries had heard and participated in process evaluation although they were not aware it was process evaluation. The project beneficiaries were found to be eager to learn more about the importance of process evaluation in the implementation of their projects. It was also discovered that community engagement was the key strategy to enhance project implementation. To improve performance of food security projects the study concluded that community participation was also of particular importance. It was then concluded that if these strategies were overlooked in project implementation, those projects were likely to fail and not achieve their intended objectives. The project participants were incapacitated about project management and evaluation. This was discovered to be the main entrance to equip project participants about process evaluation and make it part of the project implementation process.

The research noted and concluded that there was a gap between district stakeholders and community project participants. There was no clear feed-back mechanism in place to keep the district and project participants appraised with the project deliverables.

The study also concluded that gender was also important to community participation in projects. The age of respondents was also discovered to be key in who participated in the projects. Those with more responsibility 'adults' were found to be more involved in food security projects.

The study concluded that unsustainability of projects and low community participation were the ultimate results if project beneficiaries were not fully involved in all stages of the project. Need assessment was found to be very important to establish what the communities needed and how they wanted those interventions to be implemented. The study then documented that as communities fully participate and play an active role in projects, conflicts were reduced and accountability was improved.

Finally, the research concluded that joint planning and monitoring among all relevant stakeholders were the key strategies to improve community participation in process evaluation of food security projects. The following section of this chapter are the research's recommendations.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the results drawn from the study it has been revealed that community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects was important in their success. However, the study highlighted that the major hindering factor affecting the role of community participation was inadequate engagement of the project participants at community level. This was happening before, during and after the project had ended. It is suggested that policies be crafted that enhance and encourage project participants' involvement in the planning process of projects.

Civic society organisation should take part in advocacy for community participation in drafting policies that govern the implementation of humanitarian projects.

Inadequate capacity on project implementation and evaluation was also noted to be of major concern. The study recommended that implementing partners should invest more in project participant capacitation. This should be in the area of project management, implementation and evaluation. It is also recommended that the implementing partner should train project participants in project evaluation as part of the strategy to improve

their participation in the projects. Before implementation starts it is recommended to that all involved project stakeholders should be involved at project inception and roles and responsibility clearly stated for every stakeholder.

Finally, this study recommended that there should be a joint project monitoring and implementation team comprising of the community leadership, government departments and the implementing organisation. This team would be responsible for facilitating constant track of the project and open feed-back mechanisms. The last section of this chapter discusses areas of further study and improvement.

6.4 Areas of further study and improvement

The study was conducted only in one district in Matabeleland South Province with one district and one ward being involved. In total 40 in-depth individual interviews were conducted to reach data saturation for individual interviews. Four focus group discussions were conducted. Four key informants representing district head of departments were also interviewed. However, the study can be expanded to incorporate a bigger sample size and draw some conclusions. Moreover, the study was also mainly focusing on the role of community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects. From a livelihoods point of view there are a lot of projects that can be included in the study such as health and water and sanitation projects. The study can also be expanded to include other forms of evaluation that can also improve community participation in development projects. Further studies can be conducted focusing on other districts and provinces since livelihoods and development projects are universal and have a direct impact on the day to day lives of the people especially rural communities. Such studies might investigate the possible benefits that can accrue as a result of increased community participation in evaluation of these projects. There is also need for development practitioners to work closely with policy makers to research more on community participation in humanitarian projects. This can provide an insight as to why donor funded projects sometimes collapse immediately after the end of the life of the project.

6.5 Conclusion

Chapter six discussed the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The chapter started by discussing the research summary. This was then followed discussing community involvement in process evaluation of food security projects. Strategies that were suggested by the study to improve performance of humanitarian food security projects are also discussed in chapter six. Cross cutting issues such as gender were also noted and discussed in this study in relation to community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects. Importance of community stakeholders in process evaluation was also covered in this chapter including key strategies to improve community participation. Finally, the chapter ended by discussing the research conclusions, recommendations and areas for further study.

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Appendix I: Individual interview guide

University of the Witwatersrand

Private and confidential

Individual interview guide

District…….

Questionnaire No……...

Ward……...

Date of interview……

Greetings!

My name is Mbakisi Nyoni.

I am a registered student at Wits University in South Africa. I am conducting research within your community. The main objective of the research is to examine your role as a community in participating in the process evaluation of food security projects.

Confidentiality

No information discussed with you will be shared outside the realm of this study. No descriptions of names or physical likeness (including age, appearance, etc.) will be needed for this study, so your participation in this research will not be identifiable. Interviews and focus group discussions may be audio recorded for the sake of attaining accurate information, but no identifiers will be associated with the recordings or quotations used in the study. Therefore, the information collected from this research will solely be used for academic purposes only in partial fulfilment of the degree programme and your views and opinions will remain confidential. The findings from this study will be shared with you at your request. As the key stakeholders and as the direct beneficiaries of food security projects your role in this research is of paramount importance

Right to Withdraw

You are free not have to take part in this study and you may stop participation at any time. You may skip any questions you prefer not to answer during interviews or focus groups

Statement of Consent

Participants to be in the study are expected to be 18 years of age or older. I would like to thank you for availing me this opportunity to discuss about food security projects in your area. Feel free to contribute as this information will be treated with confidentiality and each individual contribution shall be respected. I would like to ask for your permission to take some pictures and recordings as we discuss and take down some notes.

The discussion will take about 30 minutes to 1 hour.

1. Which humanitarian food security projects are you involved in?
2. May you please briefly tell me about food security projects being implemented in your ward?
3. Who are the implementing partners of these food security projects? (Government or NGOs).
4. In your own opinion are the projects being implemented according to plan?
5. Who are the direct beneficiaries of this project and how were they selected?
6. Have you ever been involved in evaluation of food security projects in your ward?
7. What role did you play in the evaluation of these projects?
8. Have you ever heard about process evaluation?
9. If yes, briefly explain.
10. According to your explanation do you feel this was once done to food improve security projects in your ward?
11. If yes, what role did you play in the process evaluation of food security projects you mentioned earlier on?
12. What do you think can be done to enhance implementation of food security projects in your ward?
13. How should humanitarian projects be designed to support livelihood strategies in order to end food shortages?
14. Last question but not least, what do you think can be done to improve community participation in process evaluation of food security projects?

Thank you for your participation. Do you have any questions?

Appendix II: Key informant interview guide

University of the Witwatersrand

Private and confidential

Key informant interview guide

Questionnaire No…….

District……

Date of interview…….

Name of respondent (Optional)……

Department or Organisation……

Gender of respondent…….

Greetings Sir or Madam.

My name is Mbakisi Nyoni

I am a registered student at Wits University in South Africa. I am conducting research within your district. The main objective of the research is to examine the of community participation in process evaluation of food security projects.

Confidentiality

No information disclosed with you will be shared outside the realm of this study. No descriptions of names or physical likeness (including age, appearance, etc.) will be needed for this study, so your participation in this research will not be identifiable. Therefore, the information collected from this research will solely be used for academic purposes only in partial fulfilment of the degree programme and your views and opinions will remain confidential. The findings from this study will be shared with you at your request.

Right to Withdraw

If you feel you do not have to take part in this study you may stop participation at any time. You may skip any questions you prefer not to answer during interviews.

Statement of Consent

Participants to be in the study are expected to be 18 years of age or older. I would like to thank you for availing me this opportunity to discuss about food security projects in your area. Feel free to contribute as this information will be treated with confidentiality and each individual contribution shall be respected. I would like to ask for your permission to take some pictures and recordings as we discuss and take down some notes.

The interview will take about 30 minutes to 1hour

May we start?

Interview questions

1. What type of humanitarian project is your organisation involved in?
2. Which wards are you operating in?
3. Which measures do you think can be put in place to enhance community participation in process evaluation of food security projects.
4. Which monitoring and evaluation strategies do you have in your organisation?
5. Which of these do you think enhance community participation?
6. What are the cross-cutting issues that you think can influence community involvement in process evaluation of food security projects?
7. What do you think are the implications of neglecting community stakeholders in process evaluation of food security projects?
8. a. Do you think community participation in humanitarian food security programs is important? If yes give reasons to your answer.

   b. Lastly what do you think are the strategies to put in place to enhance community participation in evaluation of humanitarian projects?

Thank you very much for your time. Do you have any questions?

The End

Appendix III: Focus group discussion guide

University of the Witwatersrand

Private and confidential

Focus group discussion guide

District……

Questionnaire No……...

Ward……...

Date of interview……

No. of men……

No. of women……

Total group number……

Greetings ladies and gentlemen.

My name is Mbakisi Nyoni.

I am a registered student at Wits University in South Africa. I am conducting research within your community. The main objective of the research is to examine your role as a community in participating in the process evaluation of food security projects. The focus group interviews will be conducted with respondents who would have participated in food security projects and those who are currently involved in the on-going humanitarian projects.

Confidentiality

No information discussed with you will be shared outside the realm of this study. No descriptions of names or physical likeness (including age, appearance, etc.) will be needed for this study, so your participation in this research will not be identifiable. Interviews and focus group may be audio recorded for the sake of attaining accurate information, but no identifiers will be associated with the recordings or quotations used in the study. Therefore, the information collected from this research will solely be used for academic purposes only in partial fulfilment of the degree programme and your views and

opinions will remain confidential. The findings from this study will be shared with you at your request. As the key stakeholders and as the direct beneficiaries of food security projects your role in this research is of paramount importance

Right to Withdraw

You are free not have to take part in this study and you may stop participation at any time. You may skip any questions you prefer not to answer during interviews or focus groups

Statement of Consent

Participants to be in the study are expected to be 18 years of age or older. I would like to thank you for availing me this opportunity to discuss about food security projects in your area. Feel free to contribute as this information will be treated with confidentiality and each individual contribution shall be respected. I would like to ask for your permission to take some pictures and recordings as we discuss and take down some notes?

The discussion will take about 1 hour 30 minutes to 2 hours.

1. Which humanitarian food security projects are you involved in?
2. May you please briefly tell me about food security projects being implemented in your ward?
3. Who are the implementing partners of these food security projects? (Government or NGOs).
4. In your own opinion are the projects being implemented according to plan?
5. Who are the direct beneficiaries of this project and how were they selected?
6. Have you ever been involved in evaluation of food security projects in your ward?
7. What role did you play in the evaluation of these projects?
8. Have you ever heard about process evaluation?
9. If yes, briefly explain.
10. According to your explanation do you feel this was once done to food improve security projects in your ward?

11. If yes, what role did you play in the process evaluation of food security projects you mentioned earlier on?
12. What do you think can be done to enhance implementation of food security projects in your ward?
13. How should humanitarian projects be designed to support livelihood strategies in order to end food shortages?
14. Last question but not least, what do you think can be done to improve community participation in process evaluation of food security projects?

Thank you for your participation. Do you have any questions?

Appendix IV: Individual interview data presentation and findings



Individual interview analysis.docx

APPENDIX V: Key informant data presentation and findings



Key informant analyisis.docx

APPENDIX VI: Focus group discussion data presentation and findings



Focus group analysis.docx

APPENDIX VII: Permission letter- Ward 18 Councillor



University of the Witwatersrand,
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050
Reference: Mr. Lehlogonolo Mmolotsane
Tel: 0027117173562
Email: Lehlohonolo.mmolotsane@wits.ac.za

Matobo Rural District Council
Weed Moyo (Councilor)
Phumuzamaphiko Village
Ward 18
Matobo District

Date: 11 August 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research in your Ward.

My name is Mbakisi Nyoni.

I am a student studying for a Master of Management degree in Public and development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation at Wits School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. I am seeking permission to do research in Ward 18.

I am conducting research titled (**Examining community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects in Matobo Zimbabwe).**

The purpose of this research is to examine the roles of the community in the process evaluation of food security projects in order to improve food security in Matobo District, Ward 18. Food security projects have been targeted at rural communities which, despite receiving government support and donor support, have continued to realise very low crop yields resulting in serious food security concerns. At implementation stage of the project that is where the project beneficiaries become more involved either as passive or active participants. This research examines, to some extent, the role the project participants play at implementation evaluation stage of food security projects in order to enhance performance of food security projects in the district.

The research will entail collecting data from the community in ward 18.

The interview will be oral. It will include conducting focus group discussions in selected villages.

The results of the study will be communicated as a dissertation for academic use and information sharing in the district. All research data will be preserved for use by the University and other academics and researchers.

I therefore request permission in writing to conduct my research in your Ward. The permission letter should bear the stamp of the ward, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Mbakisi Nyoni
Cell: 00263777018846
Email: 1761974@studentswits.ac.za

Supervisor: Dr. Angelita Kithatu-Kiwekete
Wits email address: angelita.kiwekete@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX VIII: Permission Letter-Department of Social Welfare



University of the Witwatersrand,
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050
Reference: Mr. Lehlohonolo Mmolotsane
Tel: 0027117173562
Email: Lehlohonolo.mmolotsane@wits.ac.za

Department of Social welfare
Mr. Tyson Runatsa (District Social Welfare Officer)
Department of Social Welfare
Matobo District Office
Stand No. 374
Maphisa

Date: 11 August 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research at the department of Social Welfare.

My name is Mbakisi Nyoni.

I am a student studying for a Master of Management degree in Public and development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation at Wits School of Governance at the University of the

Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. I am seeking permission to do research at your department.

I am conducting research titled (**Examining community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects in Matobo Zimbabwe).**
The purpose of this research is to examine the roles of the community in the process evaluation of food security projects in order to improve food security in Matobo District, Ward 18. Food security projects have been targeted at rural communities which, despite receiving government support and donor support, have continued to realise very low crop yields resulting in serious food security concerns. At implementation stage of the project that is where the project beneficiaries become more involved either as passive or active participants. This research examines, to some extent, the role the project participants play at implementation evaluation stage of food security projects in order to enhance performance of food security projects in the district.

The research will entail collecting data from the district head of department.
I will particularly request an interview with you as a key informant. The interview will be oral. It will not be video audio or video recorded.

The results of the study will be communicated as a dissertation for academic use and information sharing in the district. All research data will be preserved for use by the University and other academics and researchers.

I therefore request permission in writing to conduct my research at your organisation. The permission letter should be on your organization's headed paper, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Mbakisi Nyoni
Cell: 00263777018846
Email: 1761974@studentswits.ac.za

Supervisor: Dr. Angelita Kithatu-Kiwekete

Wits email address: angelita.kiwekete@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX IX: Permission letter- District Development Coordinator



University of the Witwatersrand,
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050
Reference: Mr. Lehlohonolo Mmolotsane
Tel: 0027117173562
Email: Lehlohonolo.mmolotsane@wits.ac.za

Office of the District Development Coordinator
Mr. Obey Chaputsira
Ministry of Local Government and Public Works
P.O. Box 507
Joana Mafuyana Government Complex
Matobo district Offices
Kezi

Date: 11 August 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research at your department.

My name is Mbakisi Nyoni.

I am a student studying for a Master of Management degree in Public and development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation at Wits School of Governance at the University of the

Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. I am seeking permission to do research at your department.

I am conducting research titled (**Examining community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects in Matobo Zimbabwe).**

The purpose of this research is to examine the roles of the community in the process evaluation of food security projects in order to improve food security in Matobo District, Ward 18. Food security projects have been targeted at rural communities which, despite receiving government support and donor support, have continued to realise very low crop yields resulting in serious food security concerns. At implementation stage of the project that is where the project beneficiaries become more involved either as passive or active participants. This research examines, to some extent, the role the project participants play at implementation evaluation stage of food security projects in order to enhance performance of food security projects in the district.

The research will entail collecting data from the District Development Coordinator.

I will particularly request an interview with you as a key informant. The interview will be oral. It will not be video audio or video recorded.

The results of the study will be communicated as a dissertation for academic use and information sharing in the district. All research data will be preserved for use by the University and other academics and researchers.

I therefore request permission in writing to conduct my research at your organisation. The permission letter should be on your organization's headed paper, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Mbakisi Nyoni
Cell: 00263777018846

Email: 1761974@studentswits.ac.za
Supervisor: Dr. Angelita Kithatu-Kiwekete
Wits email address: angelita.kiwekete@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX X: Permission letter- Sizimele Organisation



University of the Witwatersrand,
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050
Reference: Mr. Lehlohonolo Mmolotsane
Tel: 0027117173562
Email: Lehlohonolo.mmolotsane@wits.ac.za

Sizimele
Ms. Sibongokuhle Siziba
Sizimele District offices
Matobo District Office
Sikhethimpilo Complex
Maphisa

Date: 11 August 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research at the department of Social Welfare.

My name is Mbakisi Nyoni.

I am a student studying for a Master of Management degree in Public and development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation at Wits School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. I am seeking permission to do research at your Organisation.

I am conducting research on (**Examining community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects in Matobo Zimbabwe).**

The purpose of this research is to examine the roles of the community in the process evaluation of food security projects in order to improve food security in Matobo District, Ward 18. Food security projects have been targeted at rural communities which, despite receiving government support and donor support, have continued to realise very low crop yields resulting in serious food security concerns. At implementation stage of the project that is where the project beneficiaries become more involved either as passive or active participants. This research examines, to some extent, the role the project participants play at implementation evaluation stage of food security projects in order to enhance performance of food security projects in the district.

The research will entail collecting data from the district head of the Organisation.

I will particularly request an interview with you as a key informant. The interview will be oral. It will not be video audio or video recorded.

The results of the study will be communicated as a dissertation for academic use and information sharing in the district. All research data will be preserved for use by the University and other academics and researchers.

I therefore request permission in writing to conduct my research at your organisation. The permission letter should be on your organization's headed paper, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Mbakisi Nyoni
Cell: 00263777018846
Email: 1761974@studentswits.ac.za
Supervisor: Dr. Angelita Kithatu-Kiwekete
Wits email address: angelita.kiwekete@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX XI: Permission letter-AGRITEX



University of the Witwatersrand,
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050
Reference: Mr. Lehlohonolo Mmolotsane
Tel: 0027117173562
Email: Lehlohonolo.mmolotsane@wits.ac.za

Department of Agricultural Technical and Extension Services
Mrs. Francisca Ndlovu
AGRITEX
Joana Mafuyana Government Complex
Matobo district Offices
Matobo

Date: 11 August 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research at AGRITEX.

My name is Mbakisi Nyoni.

I am a student studying for a Master of Management degree in Public and development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation at Wits School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. I am seeking permission to do research at AGRITEX.

I am conducting research titled (**Examining community participation in process evaluation of humanitarian food security projects in Matobo Zimbabwe).**
The purpose of this research is to examine the roles of the community in the process evaluation of food security projects in order to improve food security in Matobo District, Ward 18. Food security projects have been targeted at rural communities which, despite receiving government support and donor support, have continued to realise very low crop yields resulting in serious food security concerns. At implementation stage of the project that is where the project beneficiaries become more involved either as passive or active participants. This research examines, to some extent, the role the project participants' play at implementation evaluation stage of food security projects in order to enhance performance of food security projects in the district.

The research will entail collecting data from the Agritex Officer responsible for ward 18. I will particularly request an interview with you as a key informant. The interview will be oral. It will not be video audio or video recorded.

The results of the study will be communicated as a dissertation for academic use and information sharing in the district. All research data will be preserved for use by the University and other academics and researchers.

I therefore request permission in writing to conduct my research at your organisation. The permission letter should be on your organization's headed paper, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.
Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,
Mbakisi Nyoni
Cell: 00263777018846
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Supervisor: Dr. Angelita Kithatu-Kiwekete
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APENDIX XII: Wits ethics clearance letter and certificate


Ethics Certificate Mbakisi Nyoni.pdf


Ethics Letter Mbakisi Nyoni.pdf