

## Title

# Foreign funded poverty reduction programmes in rural areas: local alternatives for Murewa district, ward 10, Zimbabwe

Lloyd Dzapasi and Moffat Chitapa Tarusikirwa

Lloyd Dzapasi, *The Friendship Bench, Research Support Centre, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Zimbabwe, Email: lloydzapasi@gmail.com*; Moffat Chitapa Tarusikirwa, *Department of Teacher Development, Faculty of Education, Zimbabwe Open University.*

## Abstract

Zimbabwe has in the past implemented multiple foreign funded poverty reduction programmes in a bid to reduce poverty in rural areas. Despite the positives recorded, these programmes have not done much to increase the growth of locally designed and driven interventions in these areas. Not much is known in terms of local opportunities that can be pursued in these rural areas despite the urgent need to explore local resource endowments to empower local communities. This study therefore sought to establish other alternatives that can be employed to reduce poverty in rural communities through qualitative research. The study utilised a case study design guided by a semi-structured interview schedule to generate data through in-depth interviews with participants purposively selected. The data was thematically analysed through deductive identification of themes emerging from the data. Alternatives identified by the study participants include irrigation schemes, devolution, value addition and strengthening inside-out rural development approaches. Informed by these observations, the study concluded that development actors must promote joint efforts with local communities to identify development goals, pathways to achieve them and empower indigents to champion their own progression. A paradigm shift is recommended to help local communities to help themselves and avoid over-reliance on external help.

## Key words

alternatives, foreign funded, poverty, rural communities, Murewa, Zimbabwe

## Key dates

Submitted August 2022; Accepted December 2022

## How to cite this article using ASWNet style

Dzapasi, L. and Tarusikirwa, M. C. (2022). Foreign funded poverty reduction programmes in rural areas: local alternatives for Murewa district, ward 10, Zimbabwe. *People centred – The Journal of Development Administration (JDA)*, 7(4), 119-127.

### Indexing



## Introduction

At the attainment of Independence Zimbabwe inherited a system riddled with various challenges including worrisome rural poverty. In a bid to address some of the gaps fomenting poverty, the government of Zimbabwe has implemented several poverty reduction strategies including partnering with both state and non-state actors such as Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs). The influence of these NGOs has grown exponentially threatening the promotion of self-drive due to over reliance on such programmes. This study sought to establish the existence of possible alternative poverty reduction opportunities in Murewa district, ward 10 emanating from ideas of the local community. This was motivated by the need to increase self-reliance because there is no divine instruction for Africa to be aid dependent for eternity even without being forgetful of the aid challenges towards liberating local communities from the shackles of rural poverty. Not much is known about indigenous opportunities that can be pursued in the interests of local community development in Murewa district. This has been worsened by the publication bias in favour of those activities undertaken by NGOs at the expense of locally driven achievements. It is strongly believed that information generated through this research will be of significant utility to both state and non-state actors by highlighting different options available to increase locally driven poverty reduction efforts. The study also reduced the knowledge gap whilst contributing towards the academic ambitions of the authors.

The paper comprises of the background to the study and research methodology. This is followed by the sections on findings, discussion, conclusions and recommendations derived from the study targeting diverse stakeholders such as the local communities themselves as well as policy makers. Recommendations for further studies are also given.

## Background

Zimbabwe's drive towards an Empowered and Prosperous Upper Middle-Income Society by 2030 is anchored on her desire for an improved life and welfare for her populace as outlined in National Development Strategy 1 (NDS 1). This empowerment drive calls for more than charity engagements, but more productive and sustainable initiatives driven by the local people themselves. This is not pursued in isolation but jointly through collaborative efforts such as the Plan of Action on Employment and Poverty Alleviation or Agenda 2063. Regardless of the eloquence of such plans, a central pillar towards the true meaning and realisation of these efforts is that economic development must have a human face to it. Whilst jointly constructed agendas involving both state and non-state actors such as NGOs are desirable, development and poverty reduction efforts must be people centred. This calls for intense and

intentional efforts to promote the role of local communities in defining their development pathway.

Aid can be broadly defined into emergency or humanitarian aid and systematic aid both of which have penetrated the continent beyond Africa's desire. Focus has been drawn towards immense donations made with the conviction that fortunes of recipient communities can be turned around despite growing misgivings and discrepancies. Whilst some bemoan aid conditionalities as stifling innovation, aid proponents express their own concerns in the absence of effective monitoring systems. The solidity of the incongruencies and merry go round make it both unconceivable and unwise for African communities to solely build their trust upon aid steered interventions for poverty diminution. Mago, Nyathi & Hofisi (2015) opined that some foreign funded poverty reduction programmes implemented through NGOs are not the panacea to the problems bedevilling rural societies today and they will not be in the future. Stakeholders must deliberately pursue home-made remedies to compliment the role being played by these programmes through NGOs.

The face of aid has been shifting over the years as it sought to address a succession of various challenges or to fill holes perceived as critical during specific times. This shift can be traced from the 1950s where focus was on technical skills and infrastructure, savings and investment gaps in the 1960s, basic needs in the 1970s, private sector in the 1980s and now the focus has shifted towards Sustainable Development Goals (Riddell, 2014). Despite these shifts, one of the most important pillars of development is that it must be situated in the context of the country or community concerned through imbedding indigenous knowledge as the foundation upon which people can establish firm convictions about their own future (Andrews, 2009). This is not a call to ignore helpful modern innovations from other societies but emphasises the need to insert modernity into what is locally known and available rather than wholesome importation of solutions just because they have worked elsewhere (Gogo, 2011).

Local communities have been castigated in the light of the perceived growing dependency syndrome due to handouts parcelled to them by various aid agencies as if they are helpless societies. Some Zimbabwean communities have also been reprimanded for shunning productive engagements in anticipation of handouts from foreign funded programmes perceived as angels of benevolence (Matsa & Dzawanda, 2014). It is against this background that calls for economic independence have deepened seeking locally mooted innovations for Africa to influence her development agenda. Apart from the lassitude associated with aid driven interventions, reliance on such programmes signals a sorrowful exodus from the development appetite of some Sub-Saharan countries. Most of these countries enchanted development policies hinged upon their own capital and human resources upon the attainment of independence,

and yet today looking back they are miles away from those promises (Kwemo, 2017). In 2004, the African Union (AU) began forging a new pathway which placed greater demand upon Africa to detect and institute measures aimed at resuscitating the spirit of ubuntu through the Plan of Action on Employment and Poverty Alleviation. Gleaning through the declaration gives a sense of a continent hungry to institute self-driven poverty reduction and development measures.

The call for localisation and innovation is not new as Barakat & Milton (2020) noted that such calls have been expressed in diverse guises in humanitarian, development and peace building exercises. One of the major contending reasons for looking internally is the role of culture in development efforts. Culture has played a huge role in drawing a comparison between countries such as Korea and Ghana believed to have been at the same level in the 1960s and yet today Korea has grown into a global force to reckon with economically. Even though some have labelled culture as vague, Andrews (2009) is convinced that there is no opacity to talk about when it is simply accepted that culture means the beliefs, knowledge, customs, morals and habits of a people. On this basis, it is acknowledged that even though there is a host of other reasons why Ghana still relies on aid including that from South Korea, culture plays a significant role to the explanation. Whilst South Korea prioritised the culture of hard work, education, discipline and organisation, Ghana had different values. Even though aid is helpful, the most effective cures are sourced from within engendered through a critical rethinking and not to be enslaved to developmental and state policy approaches. African countries have received more aid than Asian countries yet they remain poorer whilst Asia is developing faster. One of the even more worrisome observations is that due to manifold reasons those countries whose development is aid driven need more of it yet achieving so little.

Contrary to the generally held belief that foreign funded poverty reduction programmes have enticed the generality of Africa's population to rely on aid, evidence suggest that some local communities remain determined to be masters of their own destiny. Various studies such as Mawere (2013) have highlighted how rural communities can pioneer their own development agenda by utilising existing assets such as land. In this regard, the Mukonoweshuro Cooperative was used to demonstrate that rural communities can organise themselves to start income generating projects that can easily transform lives of a whole community if they receive the necessary support. Whilst such interventions may suffer from deficiencies such as diminished project management skills, they form a foundation upon which further support can be rendered. To bolster the position of Zimbabwe in this regard, the government has designed various blueprints such as Agenda 2030.

## Research methodology

This study employed the qualitative research methodology to generate meaningful and rich data by utilising the case study design to understand the perspectives of local communities towards poverty reduction. Qualitative research methodology offered variation between the variables that were studied helping to eliminate researcher biases. The case study design was also useful towards establishing a measure of progress through locally mooted development initiatives by focusing on a case. An in-depth and intense exploration of the perspectives of local communities in the drive towards poverty reduction was also enhanced through the case study design by analysing the embedded units (villages) within the ward as sub-units. Purposive sampling was used to identify participants knowledgeable about the research topic, this helped to filter out irrelevant responses whilst gaining a holistic and real-world perspective as proffered by Marshall & Rossman (2016). The sample of the study was 21 participants being 13 village heads, Chief, headman, ward councillor, representatives from three NGOs in ward 10 and two government representatives.

Data for this study was generated using an interview schedule. The interview schedule consisted of main open-ended questions as well as anticipated follow up questions. The interview schedule was shared between the investigators, and this aided towards eliminating emotional and psychological harm. All participants were asked identical questions to generate comparable data. The interviews were conducted in English or Shona (the local language) through respecting one's choice of language and they lasted between 45-60 minutes which were recorded. The data generated was thematically analysed through deductive identification of main themes as they emerged from the data following the process of reading the transcripts multiple times. This is where central themes were identified in line with research objectives. Whenever new or ambiguous terms were used, clarity was sought whilst member checking was utilised to clarify unclear information. This ensured shared learning and joint construction of knowledge. Various ethical requirements were considered including authorisation from the University to conduct the study, approval from Murewa Rural District council and traditional gatekeepers. The researchers also observed local cultural protocols such as respecting dedicated days for meeting the traditional leadership such as the Chief, relevant communication channels and time frames as encouraged by Khupe and Keane (2017). In line with ubuntu research values, there was no deception, harm, disrespect or injustice against any of the study participants. All study participants were interviewed separately after debriefing and reading the consent form.

## Findings

The study established that rural communities are replete with opportunities and ideas that can be pursued successfully to uplift them out of perennial poverty instead of eternal dependency on aid driven programmes. These opportunities are driven by the appetite to establish locally designed and funded programmes, value addition, irrigation schemes, devolution as well as committees set up to steer and monitor progress of these initiatives. Such efforts can be instrumental in stamping out dependency, debt trap, promote community cohesion and are sustainable if they are well coordinated at the micro, meso and macro levels as recorded below.

### Locally designed and funded programmes

The participants of this study revealed a strong belief in spearheading locally designed and funded programmes which they can control. Some of these programmes were already under way whilst some of them were still being designed. Below are some of the responses.

*Yes, one of them is the current programme the government is implementing which is climate proofed. That one has no NGO involved in it. It is simply a government programme funded by the government using its own resources. Who are the people who are going to do the programme? It is the individual with the land, it is the Extension Officer on the ground, it is the Councillor who is in the ward and the traditional leadership in the ward (ADDC).*

*People are now given a chance to raise their own concerns for onward submission to the government but we have not yet reached a stage where we can request an NGO for a specific service (WC).*

*For me, from the way I see things I think the major problem we have particularly third world countries especially here in Africa even here in Zimbabwe, we are not able to look into our environment to see what is best suited for us. This is because poverty is a result of failing to look at what is surrounding you and see what you can do to benefit from it. So, for us the major problem is the inability to utilize what we have in our environments (DAEO).*

*In January we had a meeting at the ward level with the Councillor coming up with what they call the 5-year plan where all these things were planned and written down. We agreed on things like local road networks, foot bridges and even big bridges for our scotch carts to use. We even requested for gum trees seeds so that we deal with galleys in the community. All those things are development oriented which we included in our 5-year plan...(VH3).*

### Value addition

The study revealed that generally, people in Murewa district are hard working through farming which sees them produce different crops in excess including horticultural products such as tomatoes and vegetables. They also have various fruits such as mangoes and guavas in abundance. Unfortunately, most of this goes to waste as they cannot process these products locally. Some of these products even have ready international markets as captured in some of the responses recorded below.

*When we talk about rural industrialization, we are talking about value addition. If they grow tomatoes in Murewa, why can we not have a factory to value add those tomatoes? Yes, and is also coming up with the concept of rural industrialization at district level. And the government is now not only looking at GDP at national level but also at local level to say what value are you adding to the national GDP? That is the concept (ADDC).*

*Yes, we can have a canning factory or drying process. This is because if you look at it, people work very hard in gardens producing things like tomatoes but they just end up getting rotten. Even if you look at mangoes, they just end up getting rotten (WC).*

*We must also have factories for processing our crops. At one point someone wanted to build us a factory for processing sunflowers, but unfortunately they did not manage to finish and ended up giving us manualized machines (VH3).*

*Sure, it is like now I mentioned the fact that meat is expensive right? A farmer cannot afford to go and buy meat but right now even if you look at buy-products which you can get from the chickens like manure which I said can be used as fertilizer right? One can also do garden projects where you just need to dig your well and water your vegetables, green beans and your carrots using what... manure from the chickens. Secondly, there is fish farming. Fish farming you can use the manure from the chickens to feed your fish. You do not need to buy any feeds but you just dig your pond and put your fish there then take the manure from the chickens (NGO2Rep).*

### Irrigation schemes

The study participants felt Murewa district can make significant progress towards poverty eradication if they increase the utilisation of the water bodies they have through irrigation schemes. Below are some of the responses generated.

*The alternatives which are available which can uplift the better part of rural communities out of poverty they are open and clear cut. The first one being, for example in*



Murewa there are many water bodies/rivers which can sustain irrigation. If a community gets an irrigation scheme where those who are able can go and work there in groups, receiving intensive trainings we take these people out of hunger. So, the resuscitation of irrigation schemes that are being destroyed in the communities. It must be done and bringing in new irrigation schemes will rescue Murewa. When we talk about Murewa, if holding all factors constant, in Murewa they are hardworking and there is horticultural production. So, if they can get an area fenced out and have an irrigation facility those people are good to go (NGO1Rep).  
The government is also trying to resuscitate dams...(ADDC).

...things like constructing dams which we can use for things like horticulture. So that means even though people may not have certain things, at least they can go and work to sell their produce to earn whatever they can (VH3).

### Local trainings and committees

Eeh yah not focusing on the NGOs. Yes, if it was possible for us as village heads to have workshops as people who lead the community because some of us are educated, some are not. Some are now old whilst others are young so if you get an opportunity you can learn fast and be able to train the people that you lead because you will have adequate knowledge (VH8).

Yes, my own thinking is that if possible, starting at district level we should set up committees. Let us say as Murewa District they should train people on what needs to be done to uplift the community. From there it goes to the ward level then from there to the village where the actual people are there on the ground. I think if that is done it will help people to do successful things because it would have reached everyone and then the programmes will be well accepted and maybe help people (VH12).

### Successful projects without external support

#### Community hall and clinics

Yes, we also have a community hall at the ward center in Duku village. Yes, there is a hall which was built by the local community (WC).

You see the Chief declared to the MP that people here in Murewa are good at farming we want silos. Here we are today, they were built. They were built because of that agricultural show” (laughs with pride and excitement) (VH3).

We have our own clinic at Kambarami here, yes it was built by one of us here. Yes, he outside the country but he is from ward 10 here...He built the clinic and also assisted with the electrification of the clinic and school there. At Ngwerume there last year we contributed about

8 000 bricks from this village and at Kambarami about 2 000 bricks (VH13).

## Discussion

The study revealed the need to promote locally designed and funded programmes as one of the key alternatives in poverty reduction efforts. This requires local communities to be proactive in matters affecting them. This hands-on stance is synonymous with the climate proof Pfumvudza programme launched by the government as a way of empowering households to achieve food security. The Pfumvunza programme provides inputs (seeds and fertiliser) to farmers who must first dig and mulch their pieces of land so that the inputs are concentrated on a small and manageable piece of land. It is highly envisaged that household food security will cut the import bill of the country enabling resources to be channelled towards other productive sectors instead of annual grain imports. Muhoyi, Mukura, Ndedzu, Makova, & Munamati, (2014) noted that Zimbabwe has battled persistent household and national food insecurity since the early 2000s. This was due to factors such as unfavourable economic conditions, input shortages and hostile weather. By targeting increased grain production, the country can to a larger extent achieve food sufficiency because maize availability is synonymous with food security in Zimbabwe.

Nakasone & Suvedi (2017) pointed out challenges associated with poverty and agro-based economic activities arguing that economic systems and food production feed into each other. The government must therefore synchronise economic policies and how they affect productivity in farming communities by developing frameworks which prevent the demise of food production at the hands of prevailing economic activities. Even if farmers achieve bumper harvests yet they battle with poor market prices, it is unlikely that they will be able to get enough income from their produce. Inopportunately, they may not be able to meet other household costs and even to support themselves during the next farming season. Zimbabwe has in the past introduced various programmes meant to boost agricultural productivity such as the Targeted Command Agriculture Programme (Mazwi, Chemura, Mudimu, & Chambati., 2019). It is therefore imperative that stakeholders learn from previous experiences and improve future interventions so that the country does not continue sliding back into the same traps.

For the locally designed programmes to see the light of the day, the study revealed that they must also be set on the participatory approaches (inside-out development). It was noted that the government has already set such programmes in motion through devolution. Devolution is a concept where the government seeks to embrace development agenda as set by affected communities instead of centralised national planning and decision

making. To achieve this, the ADDC noted that the government will rely on the local governance structures that have for long served as vehicles for many other national socio-economic and development activities. It is critical to appreciate that the success of devolution is also dependent upon the shared objectives that are supported by the general citizenry. The path to shared objectives is an inclusive, consensus driven and participatory process which ultimately shapes the administrative, legislative, institutional and constitutional reforms. Devolution borrows desirability from the fact that African governments, international development agencies and civil society believe that it advances citizenry participation in human development. This brings governments closer to the people, making it more responsive to their needs (Moyo & Ncube, 2014). Doing away with aid means restoring Africa's rich legacy and culture of working together as communities in addressing common problems instead of waiting for donations. Locally designed development has been exercised in many Sub-Saharan African countries such as Ghana, Zambia and Kenya.

This study also established a strong appetite by local communities for the introduction/resuscitation of irrigation schemes. It was noted that Murewa district is largely an agricultural community with most households depending on crop production for their sustenance. Deplorably, their livelihoods have remained under constant threat due to unreliable weather and rainfall patterns. This uncertainty requires government and development agencies to pursue other options such as irrigation schemes. Through such initiatives farmers can form different groups and venture into horticultural farming to supplement income from grains as most wards in Murewa district are replete with water bodies. Such initiatives also build platforms for sustainable development as pointed out by Moyo's Dead Aid theory which points out how infrastructural investments such as dams can sustain farming instead of waiting for grain imports that support economies of the aiding countries.

Irrigation schemes are not uncommon in Zimbabwe as they have been introduced in other provinces and districts to easy rainfall challenges. Examples such as the Musena irrigation scheme have greatly enhanced livelihoods thus reducing the vulnerability of farmers in Chirumanzu district (Munyati & Chitongo, 2017). The history and evolution of irrigation farming has shown that it is also a livelihood strategy through expanding grain output whilst reducing the cost of grain for both rural and urban dwellers. Mutiro et al., (2015) argued that most of the poor rural communities directly or indirectly rely on agriculture and smallholder irrigation is a key strategy in mollifying their plight. Studies have shown variations in agrarian land irrigation in developing countries as there is 37% in Asia, 15% Latin America, 6% in Africa and 4% in Sub-Saharan Africa (Munyati et al., 2017). This globality of irrigation requires a multi-sectoral approach to build giant enhancements in thwarting future food

challenges by increasing crop water supply in drought prone regions (Darko, Yuan, Hong, Liu & Yan, 2016). In Zimbabwe, it is placed beyond reasonable doubts that the country can benefit from irrigation as approximately 80 % of agricultural land lies in arid or semi-arid regions (Jacobs, Chitima, Klooster & Bwanali, 2013). Hope can be borrowed from China's experience where rural poverty declined from 31.6 % in 1978 to 2.3 % in 2006 through farming. This signals how smallholder irrigation farming can significantly blanket farmers against the risks of inadequate rainfall especially considering that 50 % increase in food production is needed by 2050 with much of this increase expected from Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia (FAO, 2017).

Despite the potential benefits of smallholder irrigation farming, Africa battles considerable defects and has performed below her desire. Mujere, Chazovachii, Chifodya, & Mashuku, (2011) noted that most irrigation schemes in developing countries underachieve due to complex factors such as diminished technical capacity, pitiable institutional provisions and clumsy market linkages. Zimbabwe's irrigation schemes' failure has been ascribed to factors such as weak market integration, inadequate inputs, degradation and abandonment of irrigation land. Weak water governance structures and substandard infrastructure have also contributed to this diminished and tired performance (Jacobs et al., 2013). To highlight the importance of resuscitating irrigation infrastructure to enhance rural economy activation as outlined through the NDS1, Zimbabwe will drill more than 35 000 boreholes countrywide. This means the government is not blind to the needs, aspirations and potential of the rural communities and this will be set in motion through reviving the Irrigation Development Fund.

Participants in this study expressed the centrality of value addition within rural communities so that rural folks can realise more benefits from their labour. The appetite for the establishment of factories such as fruit canning stems from the fact that most rural households have different fruit trees such as mangoes and guavas in abundance. Since these are seasonal fruits, they tend to ripen at the same time across the whole district and province without enough markets to absorb them. As a result, farmers are forced to watch these fruits rot whilst they wallow in poverty. The failure to realise maximum value from their fruits is worsened by the absence of equipment for fruit processing which could help them preserve them for exports and local supply when they are out of season. Participants especially village heads believed that if factories can be established it will go a long way in helping them to earn more income and create jobs. These ideas are well in sync with the devolution plans which seek to transform rural development centres into economic hubs capable of halting the rural-urban migration. Even private entities such as Schweppes Holdings Africa Limited are also moving in the same direction as they seek to empower rural households

through fruit beneficiation programme. The DAEO buttressed this point noting that such products have a huge foreign market in countries such as Japan. It was noted that a certain NGO once tried to introduce a vegetable processing programme which unfortunately failed to take off for various reasons including failure to engage communities and other development structures. The ambitions of the local communities are very much within the appetite of Africa as a continent to transform African economies through beneficiation, industrialization and value addition as expressed through Agenda 2063. Increased productivity and competitiveness will create pathways for rural communities to develop the necessary industrial muscle to compete on the global market thus significantly reducing rural poverty. As the country moves towards value addition through NDS1, it is anticipated that value addition and beneficiation industries will be in the provinces and districts where the resources are in abundance.

Contrary to the misleading belief that most rural communities have become trapped by the dependency syndrome, this study made encouraging observations. It was established that Murewa district ward 10 carries a good record of locally mooted and completed projects without external support. These projects include the construction of a community hall, a clinic whilst plans to improve schools in the ward were afoot. This was achieved through self-organisation to mobilise resources to register such tremendous success. One of the clinics in the ward was built as a way of giving back to the community by an individual from the ward who was living outside the country. These observations are in sync with Ofuoku (2011) who noted that African communities are designed in such a way that they can register such progress collectively using locally available resources. Participants added that such oneness and unity of purpose helps them to escape the disappointment caused by outsiders including some NGOs and those in high offices who tend to get excitable in front of people as they make false promises. This suggest that whilst some communities might be used to handouts from outsiders this must not be generalised to everyone because hard work and self-reliance has not evaded everyone.

## Conclusions

Rural communities are not void of solutions, neither are they incapacitated to alter their own destiny. Participants highlighted diverse poverty eradication alternatives some of which have driven large economies such as China out of poverty through organisation, commitment and shared responsibility. Whilst not all of them might be viable there is sufficient justification for observing what the local conditions offer, what they lack and what extra support might be needed. It is not possible to find solutions for a community you do not know, and local communities are better placed to share their own

narrative. Their past records should motivate relevant stakeholders to look within and seek collaboration where necessary. Empowering the local communities could uplift them out of poverty in a sustainable manner through efforts such as irrigation schemes, rural industrialisation and encouraging locally designed programmes responsive to their needs, expectations and demands

## Limitations

Murewa district, ward 10 is not representative of the entire Zimbabwean rural terrain. This study was conducted in this ward only thus affecting the generalizability of the results. The findings of this study therefore serve as a foundation upon which more studies can be built. This does not in any way erode the usefulness of this study since qualitative studies serve diverse purposes such as understanding what is happening to a particular population regardless of whether it happens elsewhere. Research must also mean something to the community it is situated in.

## Recommendations

Recommendations for local stakeholders and NGOs  
Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are advanced:

1. Local communities must be given an opportunity to proffer their own development ideas which could be incorporated into district and provincial plans.
2. External stakeholders must build their interventions upon what is locally available because solutions are already there in local communities, what is needed is improved harmonisation and orientation so that the home-grown solutions are first able to meet local needs then become competitive globally.
3. Government must promote exchange programmes with other countries/communities whose history and resources are compatible with local conditions to increase the effectiveness of programmes such as irrigation schemes to avoid needlessly re-inventing the wheel.
4. There is need for increased lobbying for those in prominent positions, government, businesses and those in the diaspora to give back to their rural communities in ways that promote rural industrialization to grid-lock rural urban migration.

### Recommendations for further studies

This study is not enough to be used as a basis for decisive action in poverty reduction efforts as there are many variables that need to be studied such as the work being done in other wards in the same district. More studies should be carried out targeting variables such as household income levels and diet for those that might be engaged in various poverty reduction activities locally

mooted to establish the capacity of such programmes to reduce poverty. This study should therefore act as a foundation to motivate more research in the district. This can be done using different research methodologies.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study are reflective of the wide endowments and opportunities from across the African continent. Natural resources, collective actions such as cooperatives, construction of public infrastructure jointly and the belief that local communities can chart their own development pathway are the flagships to be cherished. Mobilisation and coordination of such resources and opportunities could gradually awaken the general populace to begin looking within with a solid conviction and intent. No other nation has broadly relied on aid to climb out of poverty and Zimbabwe will not conjure such a miracle. When external stakeholders participate in local development initiatives, they must uphold collaborative spirits with readiness to listen and be listened to.

## References

- Andrews, N. (2009). Foreign aid and development in Africa: What the literature says and what the reality is. *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 1(1), 008-015
- Barakat, S., & Milton, S. (2020). Localisation Across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 15 (2),147-163.
- Darko, R. O., Yuan, S., Hong, I., Liu, J. & Yan, H. (2016). Irrigation, a productive tool for food security-a review Acta Agriculture Scandinavia, Section B. *Soil and Plant Science*, 66 (3), 191-206).
- Food and Agricultural Organisation (2017). The Future of Food and Agriculture-Trends and Challenges; Rome, Food and Agriculture Organization.
- Gogo, K. K., (2011) The Impacts of the World Bank and IMF Structural Adjustment Programmes on Africa: The Case Study of Cote D'Ivoire, Senegal, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. *Sacha Journal of Policy and Strategic Studies*, 1(2), 110-130.
- Jacobs, C., Chitima, M., Klooster, C. E. V., & Bwanali, K. (2013). Determinants of the productivity and sustainability of irrigation schemes in Zimbabwe and pre-investment framework. *Final report 30 May*.
- Khupe, C. & Keane, M. (2017). Towards an African Education Research Methodology: Decolonising New Knowledge. *Educational Research for Social Change*, 6, 25-37.
- Mdemu, M., Mziray, N., Bjornlund, H., & Kashaigili, J. (2017). Productivity barriers and opportunities at the Kiwera and Magozi irrigation schemes in Tanzania. *International Journal of Water Resources Development*, 33 (5), 725-739.
- Kwemo, A. B. (2017, April 20). Making Africa Great Again: Reducing aid dependency. *Brookings*.
- Mago, S., Nyathi, D., & Hofisi, C. (2015). Non-Governmental organizations and rural poverty reduction strategies in Zimbabwe: A case of Binga rural district. *Journal of Governance and Regulation*, 4, 47-56.
- Matsa, M., & Dzawanda, B. (2014). Dependency Syndrome by Communities or Insufficient Ingestion Period by Benefactor Organizations? The Chirumhanzu Caritas Community Gardening Project Experience in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Geography and Earth Sciences*, 2 (1):127-148.
- Mawere, M. (2013). Coping With Poverty In Rural Communities Of Third World Africa: The Case Of Mukonoweshuro Cooperative Gardening In Gutu, Zimbabwe. *The International Journal Of Humanities and Social Studies*.
- Mazwi, F., Chemura, A., Mudimu, G. T., & Chambati, W. (2019). Political Economy of Command Agriculture in Zimbabwe: A State-led Contract Farming Model. *Agrarian South: Journal of Political Economy*, 8 (1-2), 232-257.
- Moyo, P., & Ncube, C. (2014). Devolution of power in Zimbabwe's new constitutional order: Opportunities and potential constraints. *Law, Democracy and Development*, 18, 289-304.
- Mujere, N., Chazovachii, B., Chifodya, G., & Mushuku, A. (2011). Evaluating factors influencing the variation of irrigated wheat yields. A case study of Chinyamatumwa irrigation scheme in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 13 (4), 177-188.
- Muhoyi, E., Mukura, T. J., Ndedzu, D., Makova, T., & Munamati, O. (2014). Determinants of Household Food Security in Murewa District, Zimbabwe. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 5 (3), 84-92.
- Munyati, R., & Chitongo, L. (2017). Irrigation Schemes and Poverty Reduction in Zimbabwe the Case of Musena Irrigation Scheme in Chirumanzu District, Zimbabwe. *The International Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*, 5 (7), 322-329.
- Mutambara, S., & Munodawafa, A. (2014). Production challenges and sustainability of smallholder irrigation schemes in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Biology, Agriculture and Healthcare*, 4 (15), 87-96.
- Mutiro, J., & Lautze, J. (2015). Irrigation in Southern Africa: Success or failure? *Irrigation and Drainage*, 64, 180-192
- Nakasone, K., & Suvedi, M. (2017). Small Farmers and Market economy: A Case Study of Dangomba in Northern Ghana. *Journal of Food Security*, 5 (4), 134-147.



Niyonkuru, F. (2016). Failure of Foreign Aid in Developing Countries: A Quest for Alternatives. *Business and Economics Journal*, 7, 1-9.

Ofuoku, A. U. (2011). Effect of community participation on sustainability of rural water projects in Delta Central agricultural zone of Delta State, Nigeria. *Journal of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development*, 3 (7), 130-136.

Olum, Y. (2014). Decentralisation in developing countries: preconditions for successful implementation. *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance*, (15), 23-38.

Riddell, R.C. (2014). Does Aid Really Work? *Keynote address to the Australasian Aid and International Development Workshop*.