EFFECTIVENESS OF DECENTRALISED VILLAGE INSTITUTIONS IN LEADING RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHIMANIMANI DISTRICT OF ZIMBABWE

By

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Development Degree (PHDRDV)

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September 2015

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DECLARATION

I, Oswald Dirwayi, hereby declare that this thesis for the Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Development Degree (PHDRDV) submitted to the Institute for Rural Development, School of Agriculture at the University of Venda has not been submitted previously for any degree at this or another university. It is original in design and in execution, and all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

In this case study, grassroots community perceived characteristics of effective and strong village development institutions in Chimanimani District of eastern Zimbabwe were investigated. The aim of the study was to develop an intervention framework for improving the effectiveness of decentralised local institutions such as Village Assemblies, Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) and traditional governance structures in championing rural development. This entailed building a better understanding of the underlying causes of the observed poor performance of these institutions in villages within Mhakwe and Chikwakwa wards. A semi-structured guide was used to conduct 40 face to face interviews and facilitate 11 focus group discussions in which 60 respondents participated.

Thematic content analysis of qualitative data was carried out using the NVivo software version 8.0. With regard to quantitative data, cross tabulations and Chi-Square tests were carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 for Windows. The multiple constituency model framework was used to assess the perceptions on effectiveness of the grassroots community institutions.

The results show that community members defined development in terms of economic and social parameters. There were no statistically significant differences in perceived development among the social groups ($P > 0.05$). Nor were there significant differences among the social groups with respect to their perceptions on effectiveness of VIDCOs ($P > 0.05$). Dearth of civic awareness on institutional arrangements for local government especially among women, was observed. Apart from ward level institutions that spearhead development, more than 70% of the participants in focus group discussions did not know any others. All interest groups regarded the ability to put in place and implement long-term programmes, transparent management and administration, and demonstration of people-centred leadership qualities or skills as the key attributes of an effective VIDCO. No significant inter-social group differences in the perceived key attributes ($P > 0.05$) were observed.

Taking into account the leading roles that the village institutions played in achieving political independence, it is questionable why the same institutions continued to fail to facilitate people-centred economic and social development. It was concluded that there were major bottlenecks that made it impossible for the intended decentralisation to effectively take root. The apparent neglect of the village as a nucleus of development was found to be deliberate and purposeful.

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Thus, the commitment of those in power to 'hand over the baton stick of leading development' was questionable. Inadequate capacity of local elected institutions should not be embraced as an excuse for continuously side-lining them. Although traditional leaders were important, their ability, commitment and relevance in leading democratic development institutions such as VIDCOs was also questionable. An approach that does not do away with them and also not put them at the centre seemed to be the most appropriate way forward. In this regard, an improvement framework that recognises the centrality of capacity as a non-negotiable on-going process was proposed. The proposed improvement framework is anchored on building consensus; mass civic conscientisation; institutional restructuring; resourcing; and effective development facilitation mechanisms

The study recommends the need for further research on how traditional and democratically elected institutions should co-exist in driving the development agenda. The nature, form and roles of party politics in village democracy as a unifying or divisive indulgence should be further interrogated using appropriate techniques that deepen social inclusion and genuine participation.

Key words: Decentralised village institutions, effectiveness, improvement framework, leadership and rural development

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The words "thank you" may not be sufficient to express my gratitude to the following people: Professor Joseph Francis and Dr. Jethro Zuwarimwe. Yes, I could call you slave drivers, but this slave is very honoured to have been driven by you. The inspiration to attempt PhD studies came from my mentor and former boss, the deft Professor Mandivamba Rukuni and admirable Professor Lovemore Mbigi. Thank you. As Kraaijenbrink (2006) aptly put it, pursuing a PhD can easily keep you busy day and night, seven years long by a continuous cycle of confrontation, confusion, construction, and confidence. The four Cs, as I later coined them, were there in my journey, but confusion was the most poignant. These cycles never end until the very last day. But as the saying goes, the pain of any change is forgotten once the benefits of that change are realised.

The support I got from my colleagues, Dr. Mable Munyuki -Hungwe, Dr. Prosper Matondi and Dr. Morgan Jeranyama for reading and re-reading my scripts was unwavering. I salute Dr. Sithole and Mr. Tarambavamwe for your statistical input. Thank you to Africa University and University of Venda library staff for timely availing literature. Mildred and the team at the Institute for Rural Development, I say *ndo livuwa* (than you). To my colleagues at IIDF, thank you for your tolerance to my endless presentations, special mention to Dr.P Tirivanhu (PT), Mataruka, *soko*, M Jazi, Precious Annie, and the support staff. Thank you W K Kellogg Foundation for your benevolence in providing the initial funding to pursue these studies. I also humbly acknowledge the professional and moral support I received from staff at Africa University, Central Government staff and friends within the local government sector.

To the communities of Mhakwe and Chikwakwa, your passion for development was the source of inspiration which drove me to put our story in writing. What a wonderful data collection team comprising, O Shayamano (*Chihwa*), P. Musakaruka, C. Chikavhanga, C. Manzou, P.Rusinga, and A. Mutambanengwe. We share this outcome.

As I pursued my PhD studies I learnt the importance of family. Thank you to my brother in law, *Mukwasha* Dennis and Auntie Majory and to my adorable niece Jane Buckland. You were the providers when it seemed totally impossible to continue. Your gestures, when I was going through some very rough patches can only be summed up from The Philippians 4 vs 10-14. I will not rest until I complete what should have been my first PhD thesis, viz, the research on the origins of the Dirwayi family. I therefore dedicate this thesis to my family and the whole dynasty.

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I would be negligent not to mention my late grandfather, Ernest Cheurombo Muchesa and grandmother, Catherine Munhawa *nee* Zengeni for bearing Oswald Dirwayi (Senior), who after God had claimed all his brothers, shouldered on to look after a total of more than 20 orphans from his late brothers and single handedly managed to send all, including his own biological children to school. Every child managed to pursue studies according to his or her ability. I am one of the products of this great man, thank you Chihwa. This work could not have been possible without his vision and hard work. Thank you to *amai, mbuya* Lucia Dirwayi, for teaching me that hard work always pays.

My heart warms up to the support I got from my dear wife Sibongile, *Makoti, (Chirandu changu)* and our understanding children, the boys, Tino, Zviko, Kuda and Munashe and of course Papa's daughter Ruvarashe Mazvita, yes, **P**apa **h**as **D**one it!

Tinotenda vanaChihwa, *Bonga*, *Sigauke*, *Tusa Vantu*, *Dehwe Rehosi, Tusa Vanthu, Karimera Mutete, Zvaitwa Ngonyam*u, today is our turn.

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To Sibongile, my beloved wife, my family, my community, my country and my Africa. Let us move to the frontline as we fight poverty and underdevelopment. Indeed Mandela's wisdom is relevant here for our pride lies not in falling but in rising each time we fall.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Appreciative Inquiry
ANCL	African Network of Constitutional Lawyers
AU	Africa University
ChiDA	Chikwakwa Development Association
CODESRIA	Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
CA	Commission for Africa
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DA	District Administrator
DC	Developing Countries
DFID	Department for International Development
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IIDF	International Institute for Development Facilitation (IIDF) Trust
ILGI	Informal Local Government Institutions
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Program
LBDA	Lessons Before During and After
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MDT	Mhakwe Development Trust
MLGRUD	Ministry of Local Government Rural and Urban Development
NPO	Non-profit Organisations
OCAT	Organisational Capacity Assessment Tool
OD	Organisational Development
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PR	Principal Researcher
RDC	Rural District Council
RDCCBP	Rural District Councils Capacity Building Program
SA	Study Area
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UN	United Nations
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence.
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UV	University of Venda
VA	Village Assembly
VH	Village Head
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WA	Ward Assembly
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WKKF	Will Keith Kellogg Foundation
ZimStats	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Given the ever increasing rates of poverty in both urban and rural areas in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), the region still faces major challenges in fighting poverty and underdevelopment (Carr, 2008; Commission for Africa (CA), 2010; United Nations, 2012). The UNDP Human Development Report (UNDP, 2003; 2009) reveals that Africa and the rest of the developing world should do more to improve the living conditions of people in rural areas. Moreover, the reports assert that unless sustainable and effective institutions or systems are built in rural communities, development assistance and initiatives are unlikely to yield the desired results. The Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) (1991), Helmsing (2003), Mbigi (2005) and UNDP (2012) point out that without effective local level support systems and institutions manned by confident and able leaders, communities in most rural areas in Africa are likely to continue to be recipients of unsustainable development programmes, instead of taking charge of the search for appropriate solutions to their own livelihood improvement challenges. Effective leadership must have the power to transform individuals, societies, communities and institutions by providing role models (Mbigi, 2005). In order to reverse the "development recipient" mode, some drastic changes are required (ALF, 1991; Wittenberg, 2003; Commission for Africa, 2005; UNDP, 2008). It may be time to assign the responsibility for crafting solutions to those who are most at risk, in line with the Chinese belief in "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime".

Throughout the world people residing in rural areas are regarded as poorer than their urban-based counterparts (Hope, 2004; Elliot, 2006; Piece, 2006; Chukwuedozie and Onokala, 2013). More than 70 % of the people in Africa live below the poverty datum line, with the majority of them residing in areas that are associated with weak institutions (Uphoff, 1986; World Bank, 2011). It is argued (United Nations, 2007; 2011; Sachikonye, 2009; World Bank, 2010) that in Zimbabwe about 35 years into independence, life in rural areas has not improved enough to reverse the persistent rural-urban migration. The outward migration occurs because urban areas have, skewed in their favour, perceived or real opportunities, overwhelming wealth, assets, purchasing capacity and various services (Chukwuedozie and Onokala, 2013; Ramukumba, 2014). As a result, rural areas and the communities therein, tend to be less attractive and inferior when compared to towns and cities, a situation which creates the "Urbanisation crisis" (Tibaijuka, 2005;

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United Nations, 2007; UNDP, 2009; Commission for Africa, 2010). This fact seems to cement the stigma associated with being "rural", which supports the views of other scholars such as Bekele-Tesemma (2005) and Chambers (2006). Perhaps remedies to reduce this urban bias may lie in improving the attractiveness of the rural set up.

Alternative approaches to rural development which go beyond those anchored on a few isolated community-based projects have been proposed (Helmsing, 2003; Easterly, 2005; Sachs, 2008). There is a belief that emphasis should be placed on development that has strong institutions as its main pillars (Uphoff, 1986; Deng, 1998; Cleaver, 2006; Forje, 2011). Presumably, approaches that focus on building on what community-based institutions are already doing might lead to sustainable rural development (Elliot, 2006; Francis, Dube, Mokganyetji and Chitapa, 2010; Ramukumba, 2014). President Barrack Obama of the United States of America (USA), in his inaugural address, underlined the importance of strong institutions when he remarked that "Africa does not need strongmen, it needs strong institutions" (Obama, 2009). This view echoes the ever-increasing worldwide sentiment that a new path towards Africa's development is needed, with institutional strengthening being a critical building block. Thus, it is not surprising that "strong institution" has become an important feature of the development lexicon especially in Africa.

Proponents of strategies to get the developing countries (DCs) out of poverty have suggested many possible interventions such as the "poverty trap", "Big Push" on all fronts "take off" (Easterly, 2005; Sachs, 2005) and "catching up" (Mkandawire, 2011: Moyo and Gonye, 2011). These strategies propose a combination of investments well suited to the realities of grassroots communities (UN, 2005). However, the specific roles of community-based institutions in these strategies have not been well defined and thus are inadequately understood (UNDP, 2004; Ribot and Oyono, 2006; Samson, 2007; Carr, 2008; Mukoro, 2009). Decentralisation has commonly been highlighted as a viable strategy (Mukoro, 2009). For example, the desire to strengthen local government and make it a veritable organ for development has a long history throughout the world (Mandondo and Kozanayi, 2006; Crawford, 2014). However, it is worth noting that this desire has remained more rhetoric than practice. Ribot (2002) and Cameron (2014), believe that the purported benefits of popular participation and improved governance achieved through decentralisation have so far proved to be elusive. Prior to this, (Rondinelli and Cheema, 1983; Wunsch and Olowu, 1990) argued that most African decentralisation programmes had failed to deliver on their mandate. Wunsch and Owulo (1990) point out that despite the tendency to over-centralise the initiation and management of development programmes, decentralisation remains

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a noble cause. Taking these facts into account, it can be observed that decentralised community-based and run institutions are central in leading development efforts. Thus, efforts that can potentially enhance the capacities of these institutions to deliver on their mandates might considerably contribute to local development.

According to Cleaver (2006), grassroots institutions can be regarded as both structures and codes of practice within a community. In addition, all development activities occur through institutions, whether they are governmental, business or community and customary in nature. Participation of people at grassroots level can be enhanced through strengthening the effectiveness of institutions within communities (Thomas, 2002). Such institutions protect and facilitate self-organisation (Wunsch and Olowu, 1990; Jalata, 2008). Mukoro (2009: 1) contends that effective institutions existed in pre-colonial African states and points out that "These states, under hereditary monarchies, were characterised by complex institutions such as age-based military conscription, taxation, advisory structures, an education system, a judicial system, and markets and so on". Institutions can be regarded as both organisations and rules of the game (Wunsch and Olowu, 1990; Ellis and Mdoe, 2003). Cleaver (2006: 2) posits that as organisations, institutions "...might be political (political parties), economic (firms and businesses) and social (churches and schools). At the community level these could be Village Councils, Residents Committees, Farmer Associations, women's groups, clubs and societies". This study, on village institutions, focused on institutions such as Village Development Committees (VIDCOs), Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) and traditional leadership structures.

Using experiences from other independent African states, Zimbabwe at independence in 1980, adopted a decentralisation strategy designed to promote rural development (Hamma, 2003; Ribot and Oyono 2006; Chakaipa, 2010; Chatiza, 2010). In order to implement the decentralisation policy, various legislative and institutional reforms were introduced. These aimed to broaden and strengthen local government and deepen democracy (Musandu-Nyamayaro, 2008). The strategies encompassed decentralisation of authority for service delivery to the local government sector, consolidation of authority for rural development planning and democratization of local government, participatory planning and capacity development (Mandondo and Kozanayi, 2006). Although decentralisation has been the focus of government since 1984 through the Prime Minister's directive which was promulgated to The Provincial Councils and Administration Act of 1985 (Government of Zimbabwe, 1985), there is still limited evidence from implementation that

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shows commitment towards it. This emanates from the realization that government has continued to adhere to a top-down approach to development (De-Valk and Wekwete, 1990; Mandiyanike, 2013). Musandu-Nyamayaro (2008) explains this state of affairs by pointing out that the main limitation has been the underlying colonial, dual and highly fragmented structure of government, which has never been critically questioned and challenged. While this situation applies to all decentralised structures from the *meso* and district levels it is particularly dire at the grassroots level, which was the focus of this study.

The Provincial Councils and Administration Act of 1985 introduced a distinct hierarchy of decentralised institutions and established the Village Assembly (VA) as the lowest basic local government unit in Zimbabwe. The VA brings together all the residents of a village who are at least 18 years old (Government of Zimbabwe, 2000). Each VA elects the VIDCO to serve a four year term of office. In addition to the Chairperson, the VIDCO comprises five other elected members, namely a secretary, women and youth representatives, vice chairperson and committee member. The Traditional Leaders Act of 2000, Chapter 29 Section 17, mandates the VA to provide "good governance" at the village level and "to consider all matters, including cultural matters, affecting the interests and wellbeing of all inhabitants of the village". Village secretaries render documentation and record keeping services to the VIDCOs. The Village Head (VH) chairs both the VIDCO and VA. Traditional leaders are not elected office bearers, implying that their tenure as chairpersons of the VIDCO and Village Assembly is as long as they serve as VHs. Clearly, there is a challenge here and conflict of two superimposed systems of governance, namely the democratically elected and traditional systems (Matondi, 2008). While the attempt to blend or modernise is recognised, there are serious questions regarding the co-existence of these systems of governance (Dore, 2001; Koelble and Lipuma, 2011). This issue is analysed and discussed in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

Above the VA in the decentralisation set up is the Ward Assembly (WA), with either the local chief or Headman (sub-chief leading several VH) as the Chairperson. Other members of the WA are VIDCO Chairpersons and their secretaries as well as any development agencies operating in the area. The Ward Development Committee (WADCO) is the working structure of the WA, with the Ward Councillor chairing it. The WADCO is responsible for development planning, taking into account submissions from the villages. This process is envisaged to promote bottom up participatory development planning and local governance. All the Wards in a District make up a Rural District Council (RDC). Chapter 29 Section 13 of the RDCs Act (Government of Zimbabwe,

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1998) stipulates that the Ward Councillor represents the ward in the RDC. The RDC is the local governing institution and has devolved authority (Chatiza, 2010). This study focused on the village structures as the roots of the local government system in Zimbabwe. To date, research in this sector has largely been ignored.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Although decentralised local governance institutions at sub-District level such as WADCOS, WAs, VIDCOs and VAs were established by law more than 30 years ago, at best they exist in name in many of the districts in Zimbabwe (Matondi, 2008). The fact that some fail to execute their functions puts into question why they exist at all. Apart from this, it is also crucial to understand why they are regarded as ineffective and distil strategies for enhancing their performance. There is room to search for answers to these fundamental questions mainly because there has not been adequate research on them. Most efforts to improve the effectiveness of decentralised local governance structures have been focused at provincial and district levels (Healy, 2011; Mandiyanike, 2013) irrespective of whether they were rural or urban based. Thus, this study sought to determine from a community perspective why these community-based institutions remained ineffective and determine whether they should play any role in championing development. In addition, the study examined the communities' perceptions on what constituted effective development institutions at village level and the mechanisms that could be put in place to develop the requisite capacity.

1.3 Research Objectives and Questions

The main objective of this case study was to develop an intervention framework for improving the effectiveness of decentralised local institutions such as VAs and VIDCOs in facilitating rural development in Chimanimani District of Zimbabwe. In this regard, the specific objectives and related questions of the study were to:

a) Examine the perceptions of rural community members on the meanings of development and local governance;

Research question 1: What do men, women, youth and leaders in village communities regard as development and local governance?

b) Compare the perceptions of community interest groups on the effectiveness of VIDCOs;

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Research question 2: Do the perceptions on the effectiveness of VIDCOs differ due to social status, gender and age?

c) Determine the key attributes of an effective VIDCO;

Research question 3: What are the key attributes or characteristics of strong village development institutions?

d) Propose a strategy for use in improving the capacities of VIDCOs to execute their roles and responsibilities.

Research question 4: How can the capacities of VIDCOs be improved?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses tested in this study were:

a) There are no significant social status, gender, educational levels and age differences in community perceptions regarding the meaning of development.

b) There are no significant social status, gender, educational levels and age differences in community perceptions regarding the effectiveness of VIDCOs.

c) There are no significant social status, gender, educational levels and age differences with respect to community perceptions on the key attributes of effective VIDCOs.

1.5 Operational Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts

Key terms and concepts used in this thesis are effectiveness; decentralized village institutions; rural development; and District. These terms are explained here below.

Effectiveness refers to a measure of goal achievement (Hyden, 1998). In the context of this study, VIDCOs and VAs were expected to be effective in their work towards achieving their mandates as set out in relevant statutes such as Traditional Leaders Act of 2000, through Chapter 29 Section 17.

Decentralised village institutions encompass Chiefs, Headmen and Village Heads, community organisations, practices and development-focused structures such as VIDCOs, VAs, WAs and WADCOs.

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In this study, *rural development* refers to a conscious effort to make the rural areas more attractive and liveable in a manner that improves the quality of life of the local inhabitants. The Elliot (2006) definition, which clarifies rural development as a process through which vulnerabilities in local areas are reduced and capacities increased, is adopted.

A *District* is a subdivision of a province in Zimbabwe. In this study, Chimanimani District which is found in Manicaland province was the case study area.

1.6 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis is made up of six chapters as follows;

Chapter 1 Introduction

The chapter introduces the study. In this chapter, the context or rationale and objectives of the study are articulated.

Chapter 2 Review of Literature

This chapter focuses on the past and current discourse on the strategies for achieving rural development. The chapter discusses some approaches to measuring institutional effectiveness. Special emphasis is placed on the actualization of the theory of decentralisation especially as it applies to local community institutions such as VAs and VIDCOs. The perceived benefits of decentralisation are reflected on in light of poverty eradication as well as how some countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have addressed this challenge. Part of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of the literature on decentralisation in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

A detailed outline of research methodology is provided in this chapter. Also included is an outline of the research strategy adopted for the study, a detailed description of the study area and a full description of the data analyses processes.

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Chapter 4 Perceptions of Grassroots Community Members on Local Development and Governance.

In Chapter 4, the first set of empirical accounts and explanations of the results of the study are presented. The chapter distils an understanding of development and local governance through the lenses of leaders, youth, women and men of various educational status within the villages.

Chapter 5 Perceptions of Communities on Essential Attributes of Village Development Institutions

Chapter 5 presents the second set of empirical accounts and explanations of the results of the study. It is dedicated to a comparison of the perceptions of the various interest groups with respect to what constitutes effective VIDCOs. Community perspectives on an improvement plan for the VIDCO are also discussed.

Chapter 6 Proposed Conceptual Model for Improving the Effectiveness of Village Institutions

This is the last chapter of the study wherein a synthesis of all the study findings is presented. The chapter draws from the community perspectives presented in Chapters 4 and 5. It also draws from the body of literature on decentralization and capacity building of community institutions to present a proposed strategy for improving the capacities of VIDCOs so that they become more effective vehicles of rural development. The chapter concludes the study by proffering some recommendations for policy, practice and research.

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CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

*If there is any evidence that power in contemporary developing countries is moving to the people it is **not** because of any thought-out-policy or government program, but rather because of the **widespread failure of the state (Curtis, 2001).***

Literature is awash with various concepts and theories relating to development. In this chapter issues relating to development in general and rural development in particular are discussed. A survey of past and contemporary thoughts, strategies and approaches to rural development and sustainable development is provided. Special attention is given to the concepts of decentralisation and local governance, which are central to the study. The theoretical framework of decentralisation as an empowerment and development strategy with specific focus at village level decentralised institutions is examined. All this is done taking into account that many developing countries have at one time or another pursued the concept of decentralisation. Some countries were sampled and discussed so as to provide a wider overview of the concept, mainly due to the fact that it impacts on village level development. A theoretical framework on assessing institutional effectiveness is reviewed. The conceptual framework of the study is provided. A summary of the chapter is articulated at the end.

2.1 Development

Development is a process that should lead to increased capacities and reduced vulnerabilities. It entails people's freedom to lead lives they choose (Matondi, 2008; United Nations Development Programme, 2009). Ake, (1995) concludes that most of Africa is not developing and the general populace has limited or no choice. There is a general agreement among development practitioners that the various approaches at African development have not significantly improved the livelihood of the ordinary people in Africa (Mkandawire, 2011; Moyo and Gonye, 2011). There is a general belief that these approaches have impoverished ordinary African people (Ake, 1995; Deng, 1998; Forje, 2011). As a result, there is a strong view that Africa is in a poverty trap (Easterly, 2005; Storm, 2008). Thus, for Escobar (1995) in Mkandawire (2011: 6) development has been a disaster: 'instead of the kingdom of abundance promised by theorists and politicians in the 1950s, the discourse and strategy of development produced its opposite: massive underdevelopment and impoverishment, untold exploitation and oppression'. Sachs (1992) in Mkandawire (2011: 6) concurred and stated this proposition most forcefully thus, 'The idea of development lies as a ruin in the intellectual landscape and the time is ripe to write its obituary'.

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The United Nations development agenda referred to as MDGs was made up of 18 targets and 48 social and economic indicators designed to improve the well-being of people in developing countries by the year 2015 (Easterly, 2005; Storm, 2008). It can be argued that through the MDGs, the 'big push' approach to development (Easterly, 2005) was reactivated. The UN Millennium Project report of 2005 (UN, 2005: 19) revealed that poor countries were in a poverty trap and escaping this trap required:

> ... a big push of basic investments between now and 2015 in public administration, human capital (nutrition, health, education), and key infrastructure (roads electricity, ports, water and sanitation, accessible land for affordable housing, environmental management.

The preceding arguments show that in terms of development, there is a huge gap between developed and developing countries and the latter may never "catch up" (Mkandawire, 2011). Without these huge investments, Least Developed Countries (LDC) will never escape from the poverty trap. This is due to the fact that the countries are too poor to grow and the poverty trap affects even the well governed ones (Sachs, McArthur, Schimidt-Traub, Kruk, Bahadur, Faye and McCord, 2004). As shown in Table 2.1, some countries in sub-tropical Africa are in a serious poverty trap when compared to other regions.

The World Bank (2003, 2014) used a "dollar twenty-five cents" a day line as a basis for measuring poverty. Extreme poverty refers to a situation when a person lives on less than a $1.25 per day. General poverty occurs when a person lives on more than a dollar and twenty five cents per day but less than two dollars a day (World Bank, 2014). Table 2.1 shows that despite progress in poverty eradication, millions of people in Sub-Saharan Africa, still remain in extreme poverty. The percentage projections of the people living in extreme poverty, while decreasing in major parts of the world are increasing in Sub-Saharan Africa. Table 2.2 shows the development indicators for various regions of the world. Clearly Tropical sub Saharan Africa had the lowest Gross National Income (GNI) per-capita, negative GNP per-capita over a decade, the lowest life expectancy, the highest mortality rate for under-fives and the least projected growth. This clearly shows that the region economically and socially remains the poorest.

2.2 Rural Development

Around 60% of the people in Africa live in rural areas (World Bank, 2003; Sachs *et al.,* 2004; (World Bank, 2014). The World Bank still considers these people to be among the poorest in the world. The figures projected in tables 2.1 and 2.2 refer mostly to rural areas. In most African states, certain features distinguish urban areas from rural areas. Rural Africa is where the

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poorest, most vulnerable people reside (Sachs, 2008). Though arguments are rising on the ever increasing levels of urban poverty, rural Africa still bears the brunt of poverty (Commission for Africa, 2010). The distinctive features of urban and rural areas are mostly to do with the level of services and development infrastructure which is skewed in favour of urban areas (Chambers, 2006; Sachs, 2008). Rural areas are also characterised by a low skills and resource base (Ramukumba, 2014). According to the World Bank (2014) in Sub-Saharan Africa 83 percent of the urban population has access to an improved water source compared to 51% of the rural population, while access to improved sanitation facilities in urban areas is almost twice that in rural areas. This shows the widening rural urban dichotomy in essential services provision. Resultantly "rural" has been regarded as backward (Moyo, 1991).

Most countries in tropical Sub-Saharan Africa have an average annual income of $271 per person or a mere 74 cents a day (Sachs *et al*, 2004) (see: Table 2.1). Projections in table 2.1 indicate that between 1990 and 2015, there will be a paltry 14.2% decrease of people living in extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is the lowest change across all the regions. The region will remain with the overall highest percentage of extremely poor people in the world at 42.3%. Rural development concerns itself therefore with the pursuit of strategies towards the reduction of poverty pervasive in the rural areas (Chukwuedozie and Onokala, 2013).

Policy makers and African intellectuals are faced with the mammoth challenge of crafting an African model of development (Coetzee, 1994; Deng, 1998). This implies that the demand for appropriate strategies and approaches that could eradicate rural poverty and underdevelopment continues to grow (Francis and Moyo, 2008). Perhaps a starting point could be a critical review of the efficacy of current approaches to development.

Earlier models of development, classified as economic growth models, tended to equate growth to development (Lewis, 1955). These models have been criticized on the fact that they do not consider issues relating to distribution and level of happiness and human progress (Deng, 1998; Moyo and Gonye, 2011). They also look at capital investment and savings as the main drivers of development (Lewis, 1960). Preston (1987) in Deng (1998: 25) argues that "the growth models made planners to think that capital investment is something like a development vending machine, you put in the money, press a button and you get growth".

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Table 2.1 Share of population living on less than $1.25 a day (%)

Region	1990	1993	1996	1999	2002	2005	2008	2010	Estimate for 2015
East Asia & Pacific	56.2	50.7	35.9	35.6	27.6	17.1	14.3	12.5	5.5
Europe & Central Asia	1.9	2.9	3.9	3.8	2.3	1.3	0.5	0.7	0.4
Latin America & Caribbean	12.2	11.4	11.1	11.9	11.9	8.7	6.5	5.5	4.9
Middle East & North Africa	5.8	4.8	4.8	5.0	4.2	3.5	2.7	2.4	2.6
South Asia	53.8	51.7	48.6	45.1	44.3	39.4	36.0	31.0	23.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	56.5	59.4	58.1	57. 9	55.7	52.3	49.2	48.5	42.3
Total	**43.1**	**41.0**	**34.8**	**34.1**	**30.8**	**25.1**	**22.7**	**20.6**	**15.5**

Source: World Bank (2014)

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Table 2.2 Selected development indicators for major developing regions of the world

Region	GNI per capita 2001 (US$)	Average annual growth in GNP per capita, 1980–2000 (%)	Life expectancy at birth 2001 (years)	Under-five mortality rate, 2001 (deaths per 1000 live births)	Average annual growth in population, 2001 (%)
Tropical sub-Saharan Africa	271	-1.1	46.0	172.5	2.3
South Asia	449	3.3	62.6	95.3	1.7
Latin America	3.669	0.5	70.6	32.7	1.4
East Asia and the Pacific	3.710	6.4	70.2	38.3	0.8
Middle east and North Africa	2.207	0.9	68.4	49.8	2.0

Source: World Bank (2003)

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According to Ward and Hite (1998:246) there is no theory on rural development as there is "...no single, broadly accepted and formally defined model that is codified..." However, they agree that there are various models/approaches which are mostly informal since no empirical tests have ever been carried out on them. Many authors have voiced their concerns on this situation. Ake (1995) argues that the lack of a model has led to Africa's development to be a journey without maps, while Isserman (1998) concluded that there is an urgent need to codify experiences to develop an appropriate rural development theory. Several strategies aiming to improve the well-being of people in LDCs, in particular people living in the rural areas have been tried. Table 2.3 is a brief summary of previous and contemporary approaches and strategies for rural development. From the table, it can be observed that there has been a shift from stereotype and externally driven approaches (1950s – mid 1990s) towards sustainable development approaches.

2.3 Sustainable Development

The sustainable development approach looks towards the development and progression of human beings (Deng, 1998; World Bank, 2003). Given that development is regarded as the improvement of the welfare of all people on earth, this entails helping them to realise their human potential, to reduce insecurity and increase opportunity, and ensure that the benefits secured in the current generation are sustained and augmented in the next (Pretty and Scoones, 2001; World bank, 2003). Poverty leads to a considerable dependence on natural resources for subsistence (Elliot, 2006, Tesemma, 2006; Frost, Campbell, Luckert, Mutamba and Kozanayi, 2007) for the betterment of total life of community/society. Reducing poverty is one way of increasing the sustainable use of natural resources. Preston (1987) argues that society or community is not an individual, for the life of the individual comes to an end with death. In this light Preston (1987) captures the need to acknowledge that although the individual dies, society does not, hence the need to sustain development benefits for posterity.

Frost *et al* (2007) conclude that effective alleviation of poverty requires integrated, multi-tiered and long-term interventions that expand economic opportunities and empower people to drive their own development. It was after they observed that the focus on management of natural resources alone cannot be an effective strategy to poverty alleviation. Frost *et al.* (2007) thus assert that "... we failed to uncover practical ways of significantly reducing poverty through an integrated approach to catchment management". Through a similar study focusing on biodiversity conservation in Malawi, Hecht (2008: 28) also concludes that community-based forest

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management can only be sustainable " ... if the total community demand (for the resources) is less than sustainable yield... and introducing a community management without finding alternative sources of energy or other resources cannot solve the problems in the long-run". Similarly, World Bank (2001) reveals that at any level of interjection, be it national or local level, there is a general confirmation that when aid supports a country or community-owned development strategy, it can lead to sustained growth and poverty alleviation. From the preceding discussion, it can be observed that local community participation and ownership of any intervention is an essential ingredient for sustainable development.

2.4 Decentralisation and Development

The study was also anchored on the concept of decentralisation and its perceived benefits of empowerment and development (Rondinelli, 1993; Wunsch, 2013). Decentralisation is perceived to have far reaching benefits for poverty alleviation, community participation and conflict resolution (Chinsinga, 2008; Crawford and Hartman, 2008; Schelnberger, 2008). The concept of decentralisation has been widely regarded as an effective approach for improving local governance and accountability (Ribot, 2002 and 2006; Datta, 2006; Chinsinga, 2008; Crawford and Hartman, 2008; Aslam and Yilmaz, 2011). The concept has however been implemented with varying degrees of success especially in Africa where some central governments see it as a risky endeavour (Cameron, 2014). For this and other reasons, the form of decentralisation embarked on by various states has differed. The following section discusses the various forms of decentralisation and provides some empirical evidence on various attempts at decentralisation.

2.4.1 Forms of decentralisation

Democratic decentralisation

Democratic decentralisation's main objective is to institutionalise the participation of grassroots in the policy making and implementation process (Chinsinga, 2008). Further to this, Chinsinga (2008) posits that democratic decentralisation heralds a permissive and enabling atmosphere for communities to effectively realise their full potential for dignified and fulfilling lives, as it is not only an institutionalised but also a legally underpinned form of participatory development. Also referred to as devolution, democratic decentralisation refers to the transfer of power and resources to sub-national authorities that are both (relatively) independent of central government and democratically elected (Crawford, 2008).

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Table 2.3 Summary of approaches and strategies for rural development

Period	Approach
1950s and 1960s	The growth approach (establishment of strong central institutions and narrow definition of development as economic growth)
1969 – early 1970s	Employment approach increasing jobs or the number of people under paid or wage employment would translate into development.
Early 1970s – early 1980s	Income distribution or poverty oriented approach (Ceding little power to local institutions)
Mid 1980s - mid 1990s	Structural adjustment approach (Power ceded to local institutions but with no resources)
Mid 1990s to date	Sustainable development and capacity building approach (Emphasis placed on enhancement of capacity of community institutions to champion development)

Sources: Coetzee and Ligthelm (1994); Eade (2003)

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Deconcentration

The second form of decentralisation, referred to as deconcentration or administrative decentralisation entails the transfer of authority to sub-national branches of the central state, often to line ministry officials based in local areas (Crawford and Hartman, 2008).

Fiscal decentralisation

The third form of decentralisation, referred to as fiscal decentralisation refers to authority over budgets ceded to deconcentrated officials and/or or unelected appointees or to elected politicians. Some controversy has been on whether fiscal decentralisation is actually a third type of decentralisation (Crawford and Hartman, 2008). For instance, Ribot (2002) argues that fiscal decentralisation is a cross cutting element of deconcentration and devolution, rather than a separate category, an analysis which is accepted for this study.

There is resounding agreement among development practitioners, government technocrats, politicians and general civic organisations that political decentralisation especially to local, village level institutions, is an effective strategy for poverty reduction (Datta, 2006; UNDP, 2010). Poverty, according to Datta (2006) is defined as more than material deprivation, but a complex phenomenon involving issues such as lack of choice and voicelessness. Some perceived development benefits that have been attributed to effective decentralised local development institutions are discussed in following sections.

Resource mobilisation - It has been argued theoretically, that when people are given greater control over local development structures and institutions, they may be motivated to commit more assets to the common good (Datta, 2006; UNDP, 2011)

Delivery of basic social services – Local elective political institutions are effective instruments for the delivery of basic social services. The lack of basic services leading to inhuman living conditions is the primary cause of poverty (Datta, 2006; UNDP, 2011). Many common causes of poverty such as illness, decrepit economic infrastructure and illiteracy can be removed with the provision of basic social services.

Mobilisation of masses – Local government institutions at village level can be an effective instrument for mass mobilisation. They play an important role in conscientising poor people through rallies, campaigns, group meetings and many others

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Although decentralisation is very prevalent, its form and extent varies greatly across countries. While decentralisation's popularity has been evident from the early 1980s (Conyers 2003), it has itself undergone a shift in emphasis from deconcentration in the 1980s to devolution in the 1990s. Difficulties in understating and comparing decentralisation policies have been intensified by the multitude of definitions used by practitioners and scholars (Crawford and Hartman, 2008). Controversy has also emerged since the early 1980s on the question of whether the concept of decentralisation should be restricted to the vertical process of shifting competences and resources from the central state level to the territorially defined sub-national levels of government, or whether the concept should also include the horizontal process of decentralising competencies and resources at a given level of government through such processes as delegation and privatisation. Rondinelli (1993) first proposed the comprehensive typology encompassing both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of decentralisation. This study adopted a comprehensive typology. The focus of the study was on the institutions at village level, which in relation to this theory, is a vertical dimension of decentralisation, but with mostly delegated responsibilities

2.4.2 Some decentralisation experiences

Decentralisation gained prominence in the developing world with over 90% of the developing countries adopting it as an important part of political and administrative reform (Wunsch, 2013). The following section outlines some selected experiences on decentralisation from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In Malawi the adoption of multiparty democracy in 1995 recognised a decentralised and viable local governance system as an integral building block of a functional and potentially vibrant democracy (Chinsinga, 2008). A decade after the adoption of the decentralised policy in Malawi, (Chinsinga, 2008) noted that there was an apparent lack of progress in the implementation of the decentralised policy.

Ellis and Mdoe (2003) observed that the creation of village and sub-village local government structures in Tanzania did not translate into any development as these structures did not instigate any processes or events that would materially improve the lives of their citizens. Just as in South Africa, Malawi, Uganda, Senegal and Zimbabwe, the same issues of capacity and resources are cited in Tanzania (Ellis and Mdoe, 2003; Juul, 2006). However, despite acknowledgement of this capacity and resource limitations, there has been little attempt to build or improve such capacity at the crucial village level. The assumption in Tanzania, for example, which holds for some of the countries quoted above, was that strengthening the capacity of Rural Districts will trickle down to

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development at village and sub-village structures (Chatiza, 2008). This is reiterated by Ellis and Mdoe (2003: 1379).

> Tax revenues collected by village executive officers is forwarded to District revenue departments, and the village is later supposed to receive a share of this revenue back for village development fund. This share was stated as 7.5% for villages in Kilosa District and 10% for villages in Morogoro Rural District. But not a single one of the study villages had ever received back a portion of the revenue delivered according to these shares.

It will be argued in chapter 6 that the revolutionary drive in most African states that helped to bring about independence was abandoned at independence and subdued mass organisation of economic and socio-political development. The abandonment of the revolutionary "spirit", has a direct bearing on the lack of effectiveness of the decentralisation approach as a development strategy. Ugandan decentralisation is one case where the revolutionary drive was taken to the development perspective (Green, 2008; Muhumuza, 2008; Manyak and Katono, 2010). As Green (2008: 16) observes:

> "As more [sic] generally with Museveni's rule, which has turned sour for both Ugandans and donors in recent years, the initial expectation that the Local Council system transformed from the highly effective Resistance Councils, would radically transform local politics in Uganda has not been fulfilled".

The Ugandan decentralisation has been termed as shallow and a "sham" (Muhumuza, 2008). Very little benefits have been achieved at the village level thus Muhumuza (2008: 67) concludes:

> There are increasing reports that people shun council meetings, mobilization meetings and local elections, and avoid paying taxes. Few people attend council meetings at the village level because they are viewed as time-wasting since participation has not translated into improved government responsiveness and service delivery.

Similarly Green (2008:34) notes; "… the cash-strapped sub-counties do not have enough funds to send the legally mandated percentage of their revenues to the other levels of local government". Some villages receive funding once in three years and can be as low as an equivalent of USD52 per year (Francis and James, 2003; Green, 2008). Francis and James (2003) concluded that the poor financial resources and capacity to plan for the meagre finances has rendered local decision making meaningless.

In South Africa, the Constitution Act 108 of 1996 emphasises the involvement of communities and community organisations in local governance (Nel and Binns, 2001; Cameron, 2013). South Africa, applies a relatively uniform classification of municipalities for both urban and rural areas having merged predominantly white and black areas to build a strong local government

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(Hartmann, 2008; Wunsch, 2013). Decentralised local municipalities have been given a prominent developmental role in the South African Constitution. Despite being given the necessary financial capacity and institutional set-up, the predominance of the local elite, corruption and growing social unrest have led to dismal performance of the South African municipalities (Crawford and Hartman, 2008). This raises questions on the necessary ingredients for successful decentralisation.

The existence of legislation and financial capacity, it can be argued, is however not sufficient because issues such as institutional capacity, support and facilitation still need to be addressed (De Valk and Wekwete, 1990; Nel and Binns, 2001; Matondi, 2008). Most community-based institutions and organisations simply do not have the available trained personnel to initiate and oversee local socio-economic development (Rogerson, 1998; Nel and Binns, 2001; Mosiane, 2000; Helmsing, 2003). There is therefore a need to have the right mix of financial capacity and trained personnel for local institutions to be effective.

In their assessment of decentralisation in Bangladesh, Goel and Paul (2010) conclude that despite several decades of decentralisation, the structure of government remains highly centralised. There is limited independence of units at the sub-national level in terms of expenditure responsibilities and transfer of funds. Local government units do not play a significant role in delivering public services, such as education and health services. It is still controversial whether devolution of power to local authorities would enhance the quality of public goods, promote local resource mobilisation or raise local voices in public service decisions (Goel and Paul 2010). From the above discussion, decentralisation in Bangladesh does not seem to have delivered the intended benefits.

Datta (2006) observes that decentralised local community institutions are still weak in India and most of the developing countries because there is a general reluctance on the part of higher level government to devolve adequate functions, funds and functionaries. For many local institutions participation of the poor at community level is undertaken through the *gram sabha*, a forum which is supposed to plan and implement poverty alleviation programmes. Effectiveness of local *gram sabha* performance has been done against the theoretical formulations such as poverty eradication through improved participation and responsiveness; local resource mobilisation; delivery of basic social services; and as instruments of mass mobilisation. In the state of West Bengal, local elective political institutions have been effective in delivery of basic social services, mobilisation of masses, but have not been effective in local resource mobilisation and poverty eradication (Datta, 2006). However these formal structures face problems in that formal meetings

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are not regularly held, participation is very poor and the meetings are not given enough publicity. Where such meetings are held, decisions are often taken outside meetings and in some cases, appropriate party structures play a crucial role. Despite the creation of these formal decentralised local government structures at the village level, *panchayats* or Informal Local Government Institutions (ILGIs) are still functional and progressive (Datta, 2006: Ananth Pur, 2007). This entails that communities still uphold the role informal structures play in local development.

In Zimbabwe, the creation of the village development committees was an attempt to bring the formal development structure in tandem with the informal traditional leadership institutions that exist at every village (De Valk and Wekwete 1990; Makumbe, 1998; Chatiza, 2008). The harmonisation of the traditional and elected leadership structure through the Traditional Leaders Act of 2000, was the realisation of the continued influence and strengths of the informal traditional institutions. These traditional structures are similar to the Indian *panchayats* cited above.

A study on the Latin American Countries of Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Mexico, revealed that the perceived benefits of the devolution of power to sub-national government do not always occur (Falleti, 2005). The unpacking of the concept of decentralisation in its administrative, fiscal, and political dimensions reveals that certain types of reforms decrease the powers of sub-national officials.

The above cases demonstrate that the rhetoric for decentralisation has far surpassed practical realities especially at the local community level. This means that the theoretical formulation does not appear to hold water in many developing countries. Much of the blame for the failure of decentralisation has been labeled on the dirigiste tendencies and patrimonial politics of the post-Independence state. Muhumuza (2008: 62) argues:

> Contrary to the usual rhetoric that decentralization is aimed at bringing people aboard, the reality on the ground is usually different. Decentralisation is frequently used as a pretext to pursue centrally determined objectives.

Such cases have been cited in Uganda (Francis and James, 2003; Green 2008), Tanzania (Ellis and Mdoe, 2003) and Zimbabwe (Mandondo and Kozanayi, 2006) to mention a few. Despite these pitfalls the attention on decentralisation as a development strategy especially for the lower rungs of society continues to grow. Perhaps it is the view of democratic decentralisation as 'incontournable' to the promotion of participatory democracy at the village level as suggested by Forje (2011: 353):

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> The first stage in the journey of a thousand miles begins with the process of deepening the democratic process and empowering the people, especially at the grassroots level to be active participants in the development process. Empowerment generally is understood in a variety of ways. The Human Development Report (1995) stresses that empowerment entails participation. Empowerment of the people means development must be by the people, not only for them. People must participate fully in the decisions-making and implementation processes that shape their lives. Investing in people's capabilities and empowering them to exercise their choices is not only valuable but is also the surest way to contribute to economic growth and overall development.

Ribot and Oyono (2006:2) also echo similar sentiments:

> True enough, decentralisation reforms are irreversibly transforming rural governance and local democracy across Africa. Governments and their line ministries are marching ahead across the unknown terrain from legislation to practice. While the legislation is now an 'incontournable' fact, there are still many detours and deviations along the poorly marked paths to implementation.

This statement underscores the fact that proponents of decentralisation are still optimistic of decentralisation as a noble strategy for development. To state therefore that decentralisation is a mechanism of choice in aligning governmental powers among different levels of social organisation is but to state the obvious.

2.5 Institutional Set-up for Rural Development in Zimbabwe

According to Musandu-Nyamayaro (2008), the policy and legislative framework for increasing democratic participation and involvement in development planning and decision-making in independent Zimbabwe, was instituted, respectively, in 1984 and 1985. Firstly there, was an executive presidential policy directive (Chatiza, 2010), which was followed by legislation to increase decision-making power and transfer functions and responsibilities to local authorities and make them respond effectively to community needs and the electorate (Chatiza, 2010; De Valk, and Wekwete, 1990). The Prime Minister's Directive of 1984 (Government of Zimbabwe, 1985) was meant to enhance the democratization of development and create active involvement of communities in planning, implementation and coordination of development projects and programmes at the district and provincial levels. This was achieved through creating sub-provincial committees for participation and decision-making. The directive gave birth to the Provincial Councils and Administration Act of 1985 (Government of Zimbabwe, 1985), resulting in the creation of structures for provincial; (Provincial Councils (PC) and Provincial Development Committees (PDCs); District Development Committees (DDCs); Ward Development Committees (WADCOs); and Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) for consultation and coordination. The Act, among others, established the office of the Provincial Governor with the intention of

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increasing political accountability and coordination of the decentralised planning process (De Valk and Wekwete, 1990). The practical experiences seem to show that the intended objectives of these legal provisions have not been achieved.

The creation of the VIDCOs to superintend over village developmental and land issues among other responsibilities under an elected chairperson was largely unsuccessful. These institutions were ignored completely (Andersson, 2002), faced serious legitimacy and credibility problems (Ncube, 2011) and were considered void and meaningless (Madondo, 2000). These structures worked in the mid to late 1980's when they were established but people became discouraged as they never saw any uses for attending VIDCO meetings except to discuss politics. In later years, individuals became known as VIDCOs (*Amuvhidhiko*) (Rukuni, 2004). In most cases, VIDCOs and ZANU (PF) party structures were one and the same thing as the VIDCO chairman was in some cases also the chairman of the ruling party cell or branch (Rukuni, 2004). The distinction between the structures of the ruling political party and government was blurred. Implications of this scenario will be discussed further in chapters 4 and 5.

At the inception of VIDCOs in the mid-80s, serious conflict resumed between these elected structures and traditional leadership institutions. The latter felt their powers had been usurped (Madondo, 2000). This conflict was partially addressed with the transfer of convening powers of the VIDCO and the VA to the traditional leadership through the Traditional Leaders Act of 2000.However this did not materialise in any efficacy or relevancy of the VIDCOs. As will be shown in the following chapters, evidence gathered from the communities of Mhakwe and Chikwakwa testify to a high level of respect for the traditional institutions. The main challenge remains the juxtaposition of the developmental agenda and the traditional leadership role.

At the village level in Zimbabwe local government is made up of three decentralized hierarchical systems existing side by side (Ncube, 2011). Firstly there is a decentralized local government system encompassing provincial development committees, rural District development committees, WADCOs, and VIDCOs (see Figure 2.2). Secondly there exists a customary chiefly system encompassing chiefs, headmen and village heads and thirdly a multi-sectoral hierarchy of government ministries. All these span from the state to the grassroots. (Mandondo, 2000; Ncube, 2011). Added to such a scenario is a plethora of civic sector participants encompassing NGOs and other local community based organisations.

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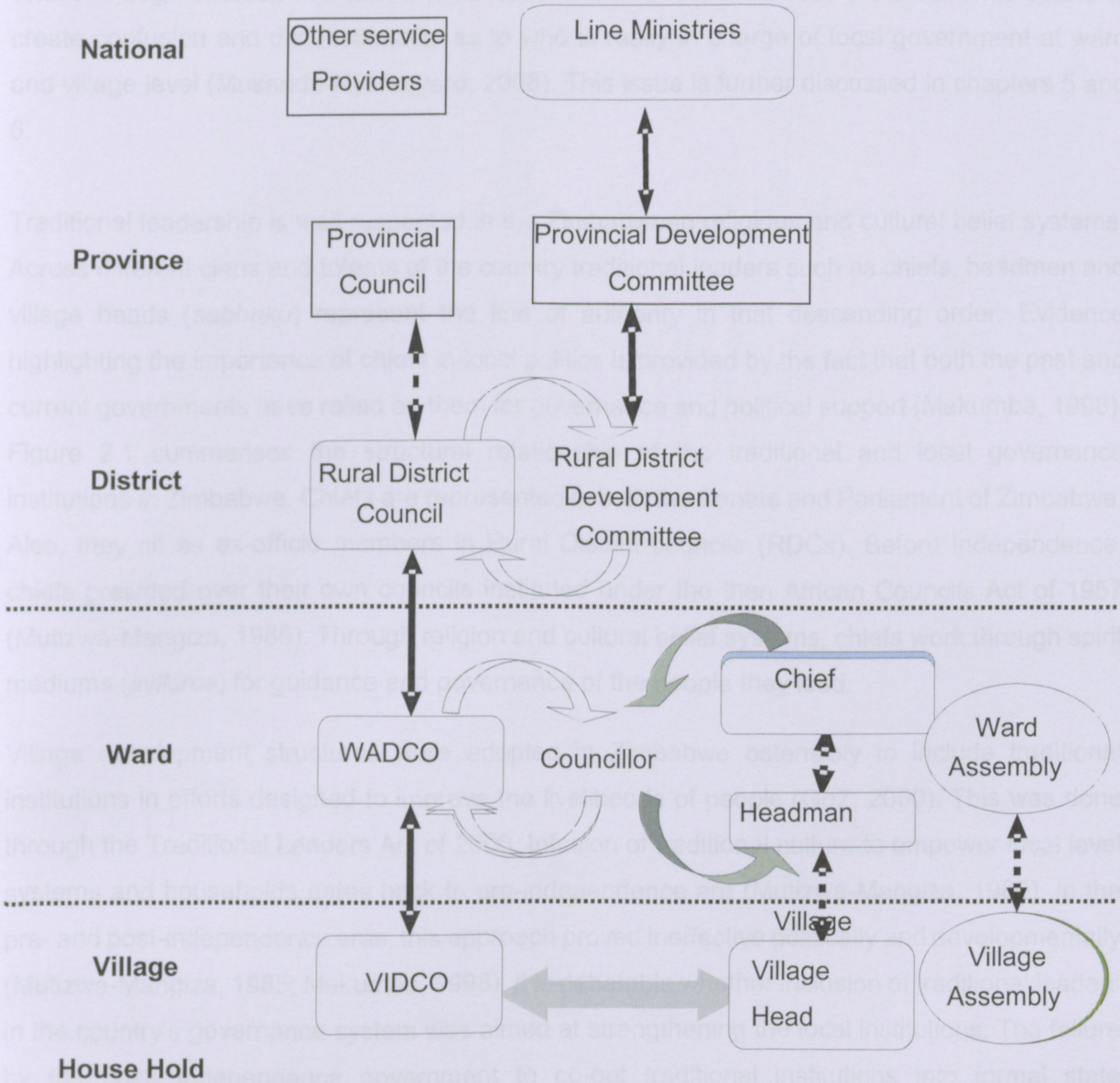

Figure 2.1 Development and planning institutional set up in Zimbabwe (Adapted from GOZ, 1999)

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With this fragmentation and lack of clear functions and responsibilities the situation is bound to create confusion and disfunctionality as to who is really in charge of local government at ward and village level (Musandu-Nyamayaro, 2008). This issue is further discussed in chapters 5 and 6.

Traditional leadership is well respected in the Zimbabwean religious and cultural belief systems. Across different clans and totems of the country traditional leaders such as chiefs, headmen and village heads (*sabhuku*) represent the line of authority in that descending order. Evidence highlighting the importance of chiefs in local politics is provided by the fact that both the past and current governments have relied on them for governance and political support (Makumbe, 1998). Figure 2.1 summarises the structural relationship of the traditional and local governance institutions in Zimbabwe. Chiefs are represented in both the Senate and Parliament of Zimbabwe. Also, they sit as ex-officio members in Rural District councils (RDCs). Before independence, chiefs presided over their own councils instituted under the then African Councils Act of 1957 (Mutizwa-Mangiza, 1985). Through religion and cultural belief systems, chiefs work through spirit mediums (*svikiros*) for guidance and governance of the people they lead.

Village development structures were adopted in Zimbabwe ostensibly to include traditional institutions in efforts designed to improve the livelihoods of people (GoZ, 2000). This was done through the Traditional Leaders Act of 2000. Infusion of traditional culture to empower local level systems and households dates back to pre-independence era (Mutizwa-Mangiza, 1985). In the pre- and post-independence eras, this approach proved ineffective politically and developmentally (Mutizwa-Mangiza, 1985; Makumbe, 1998). It is debatable whether inclusion of traditional leaders in the country's governance system was aimed at strengthening the local institutions. The failure by the post- independence government to co-opt traditional institutions into formal state institutions in the first two decades of independence gives value to the argument that the Traditional Leaders Act of 2000 was more of a political expediency than a decentralised development thrust (Madondo, 2000; Ncube, 2011). Using the same analogy, Makumbe (1998: 21) aptly summed it up:

> The escalation of African nationalism in the late fifties and early sixties forced the colonial and settler rulers to attempt to galvanise support of white rule from among African traditional leaders- chiefs and headman. The Tribal Trust Lands Act (1967), for example, restored land allocation powers to traditional leaders in order to obtain their support for the unilateral declaration of independence (UDI). Similarly the rising opposition and civic unrest also led the post independent regime to enact the traditional leaders Act of 2000.

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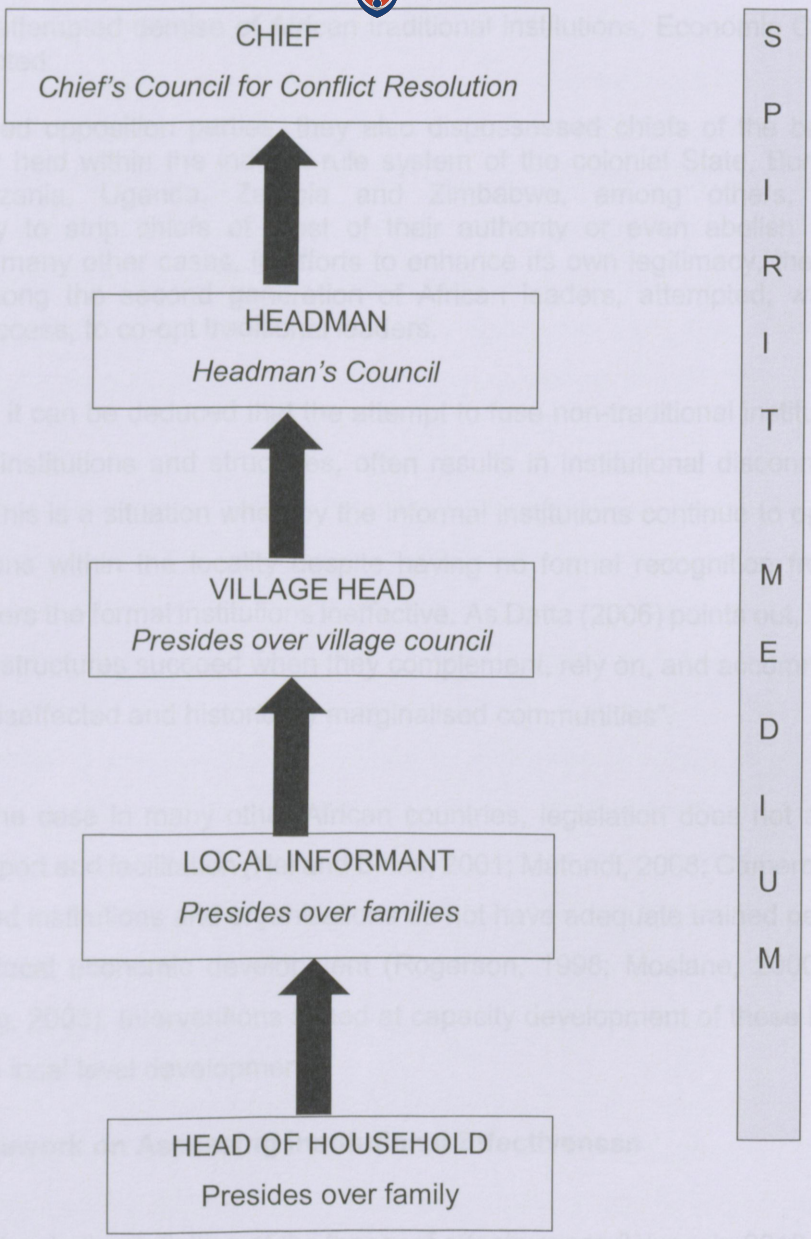

Figure 2.2 Hierarchy of traditional institutions in Mhakwe ward, Chimanimani (Adapted from Matondi, 2006)

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Commenting on the attempted demise of African traditional institutions, Economic Commission for Africa, (2007:8) noted:

> As they banned opposition parties, they also dispossessed chiefs of the bureaucratic positions they held within the indirect rule system of the colonial State. Burkina Faso, Guinea, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, among others, attempted unsuccessfully to strip chiefs of most of their authority or even abolish chieftaincy altogether. In many other cases, in efforts to enhance its own legitimacy, the new elite, especially among the second generation of African leaders, attempted, with varying degrees of success, to co-opt traditional leaders.

From this discussion, it can be deduced that the attempt to fuse non-traditional institutions, with formal decentralised institutions and structures, often results in institutional disconnectedness (Ogbaharya, 2008). This is a situation whereby the informal institutions continue to operate and make binding decisions within the locality despite having no formal recognition from central authorities. This renders the formal institutions ineffective. As Datta (2006) points out, "... reforms in formal governance structures succeed when they complement, rely on, and accommodate the social institutions of disaffected and historically marginalised communities".

In Zimbabwe, as is the case in many other African countries, legislation does not adequately address capacity, support and facilitation (Nel and Binns, 2001; Matondi, 2008; Cameroon, 2014). Most community-based institutions and organisations do not have adequate trained personnel to initiate and oversee local economic development (Rogerson, 1998; Mosiane, 2000; Nel and Binns, 2001; Helmsing, 2003). Interventions aimed at capacity development of these institutions would greatly improve local level development.

2.6 Theoretical Framework on Assessing Institutional Effectiveness

There is no agreement as to the definition of the theory of effectiveness (Wunsch, 2013: Campbell and Lambright, 2014). For Campbell and Lambright (2014), organisational effectiveness is a values-laden concept. Effectiveness has often been used interchangeably with performance. Taysir and Taysir (2012) however argue that effectiveness is a broader construct that captures performance. Two approaches stand-out for measuring effectiveness, the one-dimensional approach, and the multi-dimensional approach. Assessing effectiveness of resource dependent organisations, using the one-dimensional approach for example, has been done from the funder's perspective, (Campbell and Lambright, 2014). On the other hand, the multi-dimensional approach, takes into consideration perspectives from different stakeholders be they internal staff, community members and other service beneficiaries. Both the one-dimensional and

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multidimensional advocates confluence on the definition of effectiveness as goal attainment. They diverge in terms of the perspective of defining the goal. The disparate goals and interests of multiple constituencies shape their understanding and definition of effectiveness. Hyden (1998) observed that definitions of effectiveness and evaluations for resource dependent entities was defined from the point of view of the funders who did not include such elements as innovation and morale. This is an example of the disadvantages and inconclusiveness of the one-dimensional approach. In this study, effectiveness was regarded as the ability of an institution to meet its goals and formulate and implement strategies defined from a broader community perspective with multiple stakeholders.

The study adopted the multidimensional, Multiple Constituency Model (MCM) as a framework for assessing village institutions' effectiveness. Despite there being no inclusive and agreed concept on institutional effectiveness assessment, several attempts have been made to apply the MCM model (Taysir and Taysir, 2012; Jun and Shiau, 2012; Campbell and Lambright, 2014) in assessing the effectiveness of Non-profit Organisations (NPO). The model is based on three aspects, firstly the need to use various dimensions or indicators to measure effectiveness, secondly, the need to take different stakeholders expectations and finally the need to take into consideration differing definitions by stakeholders of effectiveness and accepting it as a social construct and thus such a measure of effectiveness to reflect this social construct.

2.7 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of the study is as depicted in Figure 2.3. The framework uses a theory of change approach[1] (Connel and Kubisch, 1998), to move from a current, and undesirable, to a futuristic desirable state of affairs. Different opinions among social groups based on gender, age, leadership position and educational level, on understanding the status quo were obtained and analysed. Similarly the divergent opinions on how to get to a desired state of affairs were analysed to craft an intervention framework for capacity enhancement.

[1] The approach states the how and why an intervention works. It can be used in project evaluations or planning. Connel and Kubisch (1998; 2) define it as "...a systematic and cumulative study of the links between activities, outcomes, and contexts of the initiative".

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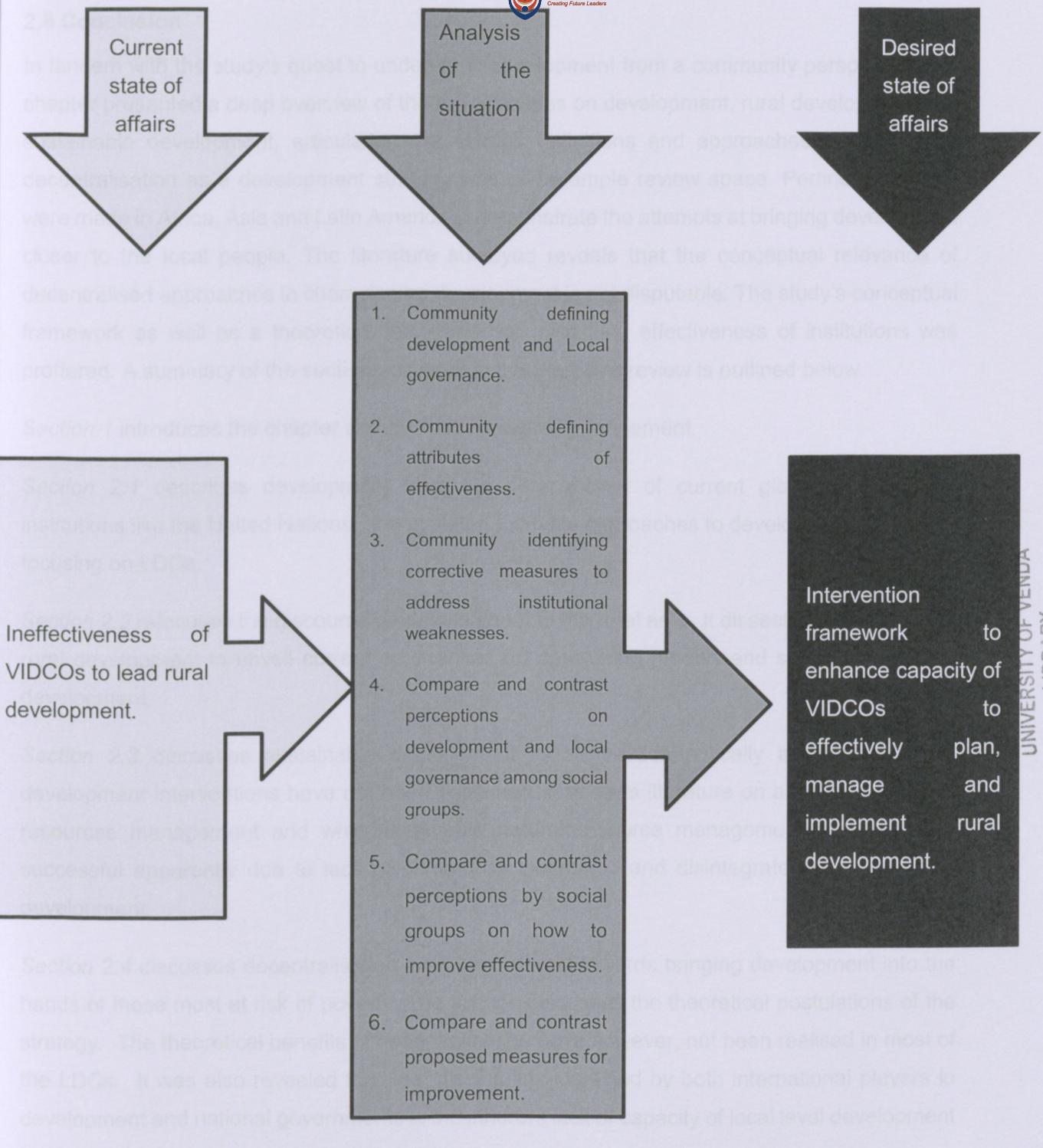

Figure 2.3 Conceptual framework of the study on effectiveness of village development institutions

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2.8 Conclusion

In tandem with the study's quest to understand development from a community perspective, the chapter presented a deep overview of the topical issues on development, rural development and sustainable development, articulating the various definitions and approaches. Literature on decentralisation as a development strategy was given ample review space. Pertinent citations were made in Africa, Asia and Latin America to demonstrate the attempts at bringing development closer to the local people. The literature surveyed reveals that the conceptual relevance of decentralised approaches in championing development is not disputable. The study's conceptual framework as well as a theoretical framework for assessing effectiveness of institutions was proffered. A summary of the sections covered in this literature review is outlined below.

Section 1 introduces the chapter and outlined its logical arrangement.

Section 2.1 describes development from the perspectives of current global development institutions like the United Nations. It articulated the futile approaches to development especially focusing on LDCs.

Section 2.2 refocuses the discourse on development to the rural area. It dissects the literature on rural development to unveil current approaches on developing models and strategies on rural development.

Section 2.3 discusses sustainable development. The section critically asks why all the development interventions have not been sustained. It reviews literature on attempts in natural resources management and why sustainable natural resource management has not been successful apparently due to lack of community ownership and disintegrated approaches to development.

Section 2.4 discusses decentralisation as a major thrust towards bringing development into the hands of those most at risk of poverty. The section discusses the theoretical postulations of the strategy. The theoretical benefits of decentralisation have however, not been realised in most of the LDCs. It was also revealed that the missing link identified by both international players in development and national governments is the inherent lack of capacity of local level development institutions.

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The main question to be addressed in Chapters 4 and 5 is how men and women at the community level perceive these weaknesses and how their perceptions match with the theoretical postulations.

Section 2.5 narrows down the decentralisation critique nearer home (the study area) to Zimbabwe. It provides ample space to discuss the Zimbabwe development scenario, navigating through the history of local governance in the country.

Section 2.6 discusses the theoretical framework for measuring effectiveness. The multiple constituency framework has been postulated and relevant in dissecting the various views from the social groups identified in the study.

Section 2.7 provides a conceptual framework of the study providing a simulation of the progression from the current status to a desired status using the theory of change approach. Figure 2.3 provides a summary of the framework.

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In this chapter, the research methodology used in this study is presented. A detailed description of the study area is provided. The research design is discussed. Some sections are devoted to an articulation of the research approach, an outline of the community entry process, research team formation and data collection techniques, triangulation, strategies to ensure honesty, replication and data analysis and interpretation procedures. An overall pictorial overview is presented which summarises the research methodology.

3.1 Description of the Study Area

The study was carried out in two adjacent wards of Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe, namely Mhakwe and Chikwakwa. Although there may be disagreements on the nature and extent of background information in an inquiry, there is little debate on the need for "a full description of all the contextual factors impinging on the inquiry" (Shenton, 2004: 70). It should be noted that the "thick" description of the setting, the study area, the processes and participants is provided in order to improve the credibility of the mixed approach adopted for the study, in conformity with the Creswell and Miller (2000) advice.

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country whose economy is agro-based. In general, rain-dependent subsistence farming is practiced in the largely rural country where arable land is limited both in size per household and quality of soil. This type of farming is exposed to various natural, epidemiological and human-induced hazards which have occurred in the country with increasing frequency in at least the past 15 years (United Nations: UN and Government of Zimbabwe, 2010). Zimbabwe has a population of 13 061 239 with at least 60 % of the people residing in rural areas and making a living from agriculture (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZimStats), 2012).

The country is divided into 10 administrative Provinces. Manicaland Province is found in the eastern part neighbouring Mozambique. There are 1 752 698 people in the Province, which is approximately 13.5 % relative to the national population (ZimStats, 2012).Seven administrative Districts make up Manicaland Province, namely Buhera, Chimanimani, Chipinge, Makoni, Mutare, Mutasa and Nyanga. The Province covers a geographical area of 36 459 km^2 and has a population density 42 people/km^2 compared to the national average of 31 persons/km^2 (ZimStats, 2012). Figure 3.1 shows the position of Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe, including Mutare City the provincial capital and Chimanimani District.

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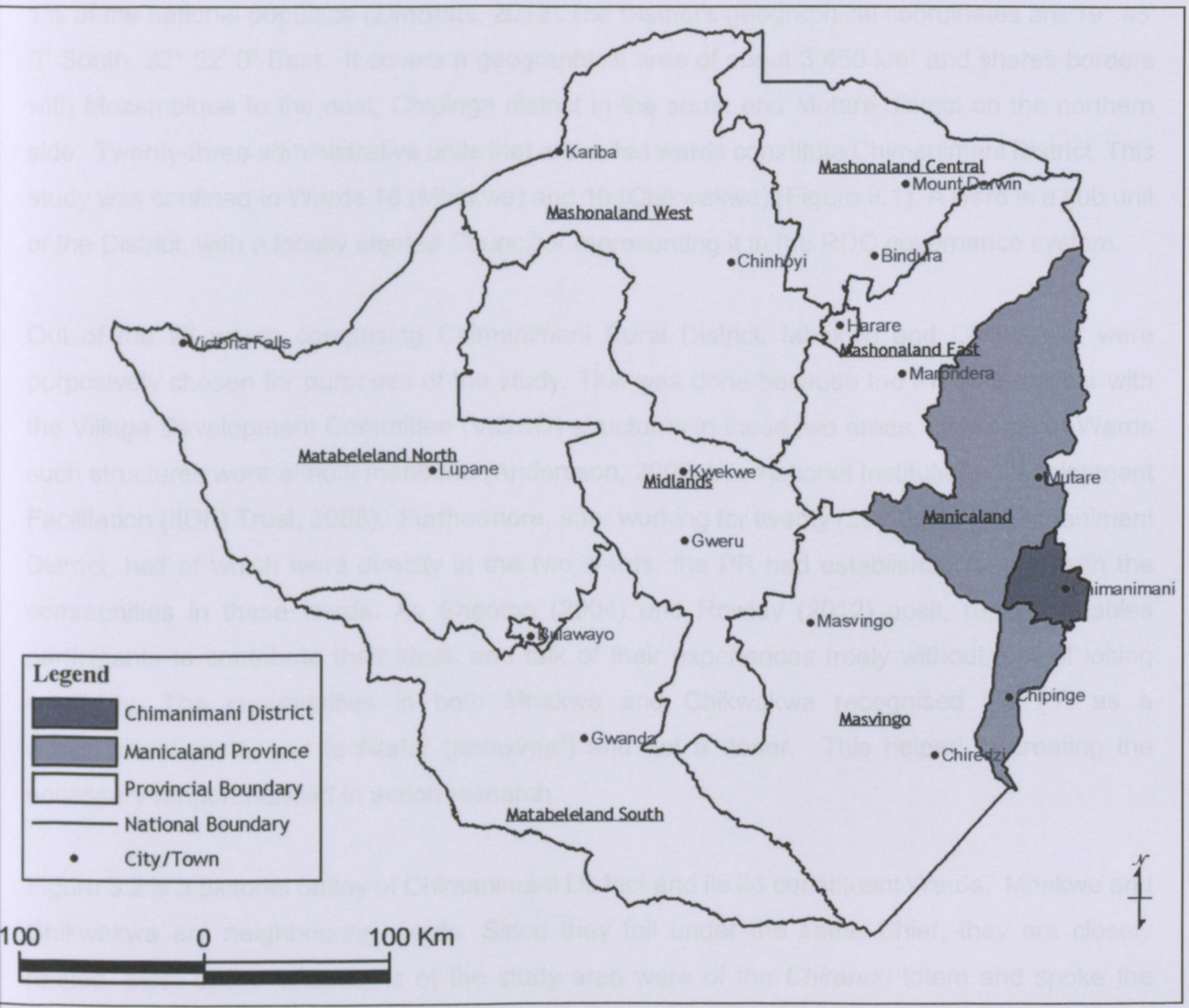

Figure 3.1 A map of Zimbabwe showing Manicaland Province and Chimanimani District (adapted from Matondi, 2006)

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Chimanimani District is predominantly rural and is located almost 155 km south east of Mutare. There are 134 940 people in the District which translates to 7.7% of the provincial total and only 1% of the national populace (ZimStats, 2012).The District's geographical coordinates are 19° 48' 0" South, 32° 52' 0" East. It covers a geographical area of about 3 450 km^2 and shares borders with Mozambique to the east, Chipinge district in the south and Mutare district on the northern side. Twenty-three administrative units that are called wards constitute Chimanimani District. This study was confined to Wards 18 (Mhakwe) and 19 (Chikwakwa) (Figure 3.1). A ward is a sub unit of the District, with a locally elected Councillor representing it in the RDC governance system.

Out of the 23 wards comprising Chimanimani Rural District, Mhakwe and Chikwakwa were purposively chosen for purposes of the study. This was done because the PR was familiar with the Village Development Committee (VIDCO) structures in these two areas. Unlike other Wards such structures were almost moribund (Andersson, 2002; International Institute for Development Facilitation (IIDF) Trust, 2008). Furthermore, after working for twenty (20)[2] years in Chimanimani District, half of which were directly in the two wards, the PR had established rapport with the communities in these wards. As Shenton (2004) and Rowley (2012) posit, rapport enables participants to contribute their ideas and talk of their experiences freely without fear of losing credibility. The communities in both Mhakwe and Chikwakwa recognised the PR as a development partner or facilitator (*sahwiras*[3]) and not a donor. This helped in creating the necessary rapport needed in action research.

Figure 3.2 is a pictorial outlay of Chimanimani District and its 23 constituent Wards. Mhakwe and Chikwakwa are neighbouring wards. Since they fall under the same Chief, they are closely related. Most of the inhabitants of the study area were of the *Chirandu* totem and spoke the *Chindau* dialect. The following sections provide some important background information and statistics of the two Wards.

---

[2]The Principal Researcher first worked in Chimanimani District in 1993 as an Administrative Officer with the then Ministry of Local Government Rural and Urban Development (MLGRUD). In 1996 he joined MLGRUD's DFiD/World Bank-funded Rural District Councils Capacity Building Programme (RDCCBP) as a Facilitator responsible for Chimanimani and Nyanga Districts. In 2000, he joined the W. K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF)-funded Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) as a District Facilitator for Chimanimani, specifically working with communities in four wards that included Mhakwe and Chikwakwa. Later, the IRDP was transformed into a partnership program involving Africa University (AU), Chimanimani RDC and WKKF before finally becoming the International Institute for Development Facilitation (IIDF) Trust in 2009.

[3] Shona name referring to a close confidant, usually a close family friend.

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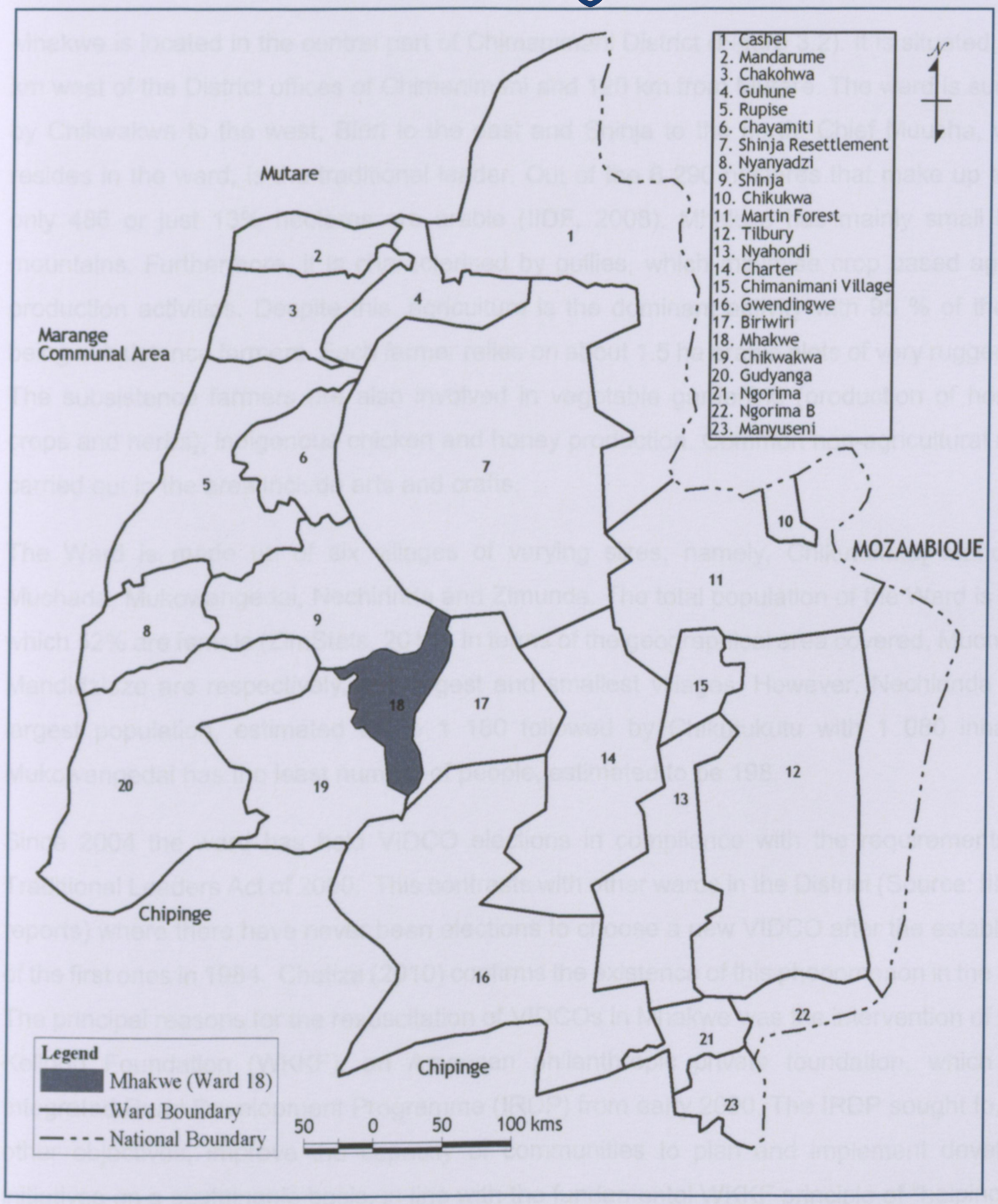

Figure 3.2 A sketch map showing wards 18 and 19 in Chimanimani Rural District Council (adapted from Matondi, 2006)

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3.1.1 Description of Mhakwe ward

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Mhakwe is located in the central part of Chimanimani District (Figure 3.2). It is situated about 50 km west of the District offices of Chimanimani and 120 km from Mutare. The ward is surrounded by Chikwakwa to the west, Biriri to the east and Shinja to the north. Chief Muusha, who also resides in the ward, is the traditional leader. Out of the 6 290 hectares that make up the ward, only 486 or just 13% hectares are arable (IIDF, 2008). Mhakwe has mainly small hills and mountains. Furthermore, it is characterised by gullies, which minimise crop based agricultural production activities. Despite this, agriculture is the dominant activity with 95 % of the people being subsistence farmers. Each farmer relies on about 1.5 ha arable plots of very rugged terrain. The subsistence farmers are also involved in vegetable gardening (production of horticulture crops and herbs), indigenous chicken and honey production. Common non-agricultural activities carried out in the area include arts and crafts.

The Ward is made up of six villages of varying sizes, namely, Chikutukutu, Mandidzidze, Muchada, Mukowangedai, Nechirinda and Zimunda. The total population of the Ward is 2419, of which 52% are female (ZimStats, 2012). In terms of the geographical area covered, Muchada and Mandidzidze are respectively, the largest and smallest villages. However, Nechirinda has the largest population, estimated to be 1 180 followed by Chikutukutu with 1 080 inhabitants. Mukowangedai has the least number of people, estimated to be 198.

Since 2004 the ward has held VIDCO elections in compliance with the requirements of the Traditional Leaders Act of 2000. This contrasts with other wards in the District (Source: IIDF Field reports) where there have never been elections to choose a new VIDCO after the establishment of the first ones in 1984. Chatiza (2010) confirms the existence of this phenomenon in the country. The principal reasons for the resuscitation of VIDCOs in Mhakwe was the intervention of the W K Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), an American philanthropic private foundation, which funded Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) from early 2000. The IRDP sought to, among other objectives, improve the capacity of communities to plan and implement development initiatives on a sustainable basis, in line with the fundamental WKKF principle of "helping people to help themselves". This entailed building the capacity for self-organisation and instilling a mindset of self-drive. An attempt was made to revive village development structures so that they could spearhead the planning process. Because there was no development coordination mechanism in the Ward, the community established Mhakwe Development Trust (MDT) in 2006 to "help the development of the community" (MDT, 2009).

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Table 3.1 Demographic characteristics of Mhakwe Ward

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Village	Number of households	Population		
		Males	Females	Total
Chikutukutu	215	543	541	1084
Mandidzidze	49	126	134	260
Muchada	134	367	252	719
Nechirinda	208	501	677	1178
Mukowangedai	40	93	105	198
Zimunda	42	133	143	276
Ward Totals	**688**	**1955**	**1852**	**3715**

Source: IIDF (2008)

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3.1.2 Description of Chikwakwa ward

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Chikwakwa Ward is Mhakwe's southern neighbour and also part of Chief Muusha's area. Most of the residents of the Ward are of the Chirandu totem. The total population of the Ward is estimated to be 2 787 spread across nine (9) villages, namely Hanganyi, Mutendadzamera, Nechiora, Munengerwa, Nechigonda, Netsundwa, Nyeredzawanda, Ruchiyo and Tabara. Each village is led by a *Sabhuku* (village head). Headman Ngirosi Nechiora oversees the nine village heads and he reports to Chief Muusha. The Ward is found approximately 60 km South/West of the Chimanimani District administrative centre.

Chikwakwa is semi-arid, with a mixture of rugged terrain and small portions of flat lands characterising it. A per capita cereal production of about 7.345 kg was recorded in the 2007/2008 agricultural season (IIDF, 2008). This was much lower than the expected 12.5 kg cereal consumption per person in each month, thus confirming its characteristic critically food-insecure reality. Communities often report that at times, not so long ago, they used to realise higher yields of maize and other small grains. Perhaps a result of the effects of reduced rainfall due to the climate change phenomenon.

Economic opportunities in Chikwakwa are limited (IIDF, 2008). The same IIDF (2008) survey revealed that vegetable gardening, bee-keeping, fruit selling and crafting were the sources of family income. Approximately, 2.2 % of the total population is gainfully employed as school teachers and other civil servants. The fact that sources of income are land-based and reliant on rainfall poses serious challenges with respect to addressing environmental issues of land degradation through unsustainable utilisation of natural resources.

There is no tarred road in the Ward. A 20 km stretch of poorly maintained dirt road links Chikwakwa to the main tarred road leading to Chimanimani. This poses a serious challenge with respect to accessing reliable transport. There are no postal services and landline phone connections. The radio, television and cell-phone signal receptions are not reliable. Moreover, there is no access to newspapers and internet services. This implies that the residents of the Ward do not readily access conventional sources of information.

Chikwakwa ward's closeness to Mhakwe triggered a strong anticipation among local residents for development in the area (IIDF, 2008). After the 2008 national elections, village elections were concluded for all the nine VIDCOs in the ward. It set up, as was the case with Mhakwe, a

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Chikwakwa Development Association (ChiDA) with a mandate to spearhead development in the area. The Association works closely with the Ward councillor, traditional leaders and VIDCOs in all the villages. Its leadership includes a chairperson, treasurer, secretary and some committee members. Teachers at the two local secondary and three primary schools actively participate in ChiDA.

3.2 Research Design

A Case Study design was adopted for the study since the study focused on a particular case occurrence in two wards of Chimanimani District. The study is based on an intervention which was undertaken in the particular setting. Since the main objective of the research was to contribute to the design of a framework for improving the capacity of VIDCOs, the inputs of communities and other stakeholders in the study area were regarded as crucial to solicit. One such stakeholder was the IIDF headed by the Principal Researcher where participatory action research processes were applied in building community capacity for self-drive. To achieve self-drive, communities went through the diagnosis, action and reflection stages with the IIDF facilitators. The study incorporated elements of Participatory Action Research (PAR) techniques. Participatory Action Research allows for an iterative process between participants and researchers to generate a deeper understanding relating to the why dimension of a phenomenon (O'Brien, 2001). Researchers and participants act together on a particular cycle of activities, including problem diagnosis, action intervention, and reflective learning (Avison, Lau, Myers and Nielsen, 1999). This approach can be regarded as collaborative inquiry, emancipator research, action learning and contextual action research which embraces "learning by doing" (O'Brien, 2001). The communities in Mhakwe and Chikwakwa were acutely aware of the problems bedevilling their development structures. The study therefore afforded them an opportunity to narrate their experiences in working with the development structures and their collaboration with development facilitators in an attempt to search for development solutions.

3.3 Community Entry

Despite the fact that the PR had been working in the study area for several years, government regulations dictated that any investigation should be officially cleared. The Provincial Administrator, for the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing (Appendix 2), granted the official clearance letter for the study to be undertaken. Thereafter, the letter was used to engage the Chikwakwa and Mhakwe ward councillors as well as traditional leaders. The engagements sought to explain the proposed study and obtain permission to carry out the study.

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Table 3.2 Demographic characteristics of Chiwalwa Ward in Chimanimani District of Zimbabwe

Village	Number of households	Population		
		Males	Females	Total
Hanganyi	42	112	111	223
Munengerwa	88	219	317	536
Mutendadzamera	101	260	263	523
Nechigonda	81	138	143	281
Nechiora	97	219	229	448
Netsundwa	214	389	427	1021
Nyeredzawanda	53	172	170	342
Ruchiyo	188	457	455	912
Tabara	140	320	303	623
Ward Totals	**1004**	**2286**	**2418**	**4909**

Source: IIDF (2008)

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3.4 Team Formation, Training and Pre-testing Procedures

A team of research assistants, hereinafter referred to as the research team, was constituted. It was a mixture of development practitioners and undergraduate students. There were five staff members from the Ministry of Education, comprising two school headmasters from Chikwakwa ward, one deputy headmaster from Mhakwe Primary School, and two ordinary teachers. All the team members had a minimum university degree qualification and 5-15 years of experience in working with various types of communities in rural areas. There were two undergraduate students from Mhakwe. The two worked directly with the IIDF in spearheading rural development work. Four of the team members were women. This allowed for women participants to be forthcoming during the interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). Constituting the research team in this way was an attempt to reinforce the participatory nature of the study, which ensured that trust was of paramount importance. Muzvidziwa (2004: 312) articulates this view memorably thus, "Genuine research is founded on mutual respect and trust between researcher and research participants." The Headmasters and Teachers were highly respected members of the communities that participated in this study. Prior to this study, the Principal Researcher had worked with the headmasters as facilitators in community workshops. Thus, it was important to take advantage of the strong bonds between them and the communities in question.

The Team was divided into two groups of four members each, one for Mhakwe and the other for Chikwakwa. A group team leader was appointed to act as a point of reference and be responsible for field logistics like availing stationery. Each team made two contacts a day. Data collection was done simultaneously in the two wards. The Principal Researcher shuttled between the two wards and attended at least a contact for each team per day. At the end of the day, a review session was conducted to discuss field observations and make corrections where necessary.

Prior to field data collection, the research team participated in a two-day induction workshop in which the data collection tools and techniques were discussed in detail. Following the Rowley (2012) advice, the team of research assistants were trained in interviewing techniques, facilitation of focus group discussions as well as observation and active listening skills. The background, rationale and objectives of the study were also explained and discussed. Two pre-testing interviews and two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted during the training. This process enabled the team to have a feel of the real interviewing process and helped them to internalise the tools. Some changes were made to the data collection tools to improve clarity.

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During the induction workshop, a set of the major demographical and other attributes/descriptors or variables to collect from each participant were developed. These included: age, sex, marital status, position in the VIDCO, highest level of education, ward and village. These participant attributes or variables formed the basis of data analysis to satisfy objectives 1 and 2 of the study.

The induction underscored the importance of ethics in field research. Morality as described by Muzvidziwa (2004) as to be at the "… heart of good social science research…" was accepted as such. The University of Venda's ethical research guidelines (Appendix 1) were discussed with the team to reinforce adherence. Each member was advised to observe ethics and good moral conduct. These included, asking for permission to interview; dressing appropriately; not interviewing minors and observing local traditional practices. These would go towards creating good rapport and respect with the participants.

A participant consent form (Appendix 3) was discussed with the research team. Each participant needed to be assured of full confidentiality. The consent form outlined to the community members the purpose of the research, their rights and obligations. It assured respondents of confidentiality and freedom to refuse to disclose any information without giving reasons.

3.5 Sampling Procedures and Data Collection

The PR previous working experience in the rural development sector for about 20 years in Chimanimani District influenced the purposive selection of the study area. Chikwakwa and Mhakwe Wards represented an ideal area that could help achieve the research objectives since there were initiatives to resuscitate the development institutions in the two wards as explained above. The PR was also aware that the VIDCOs in the two wards existed and were functional through contact meetings during the implementation of the development interventions mentioned above. This study utilised data from the participatory action research process in the two wards. Data mining involved obtaining secondary data from IIDF, RDC, Local institutions and Government records. It involved reading through field visits reports, evaluation reports, video recordings, local community newsletters[4], community reflection workshops and informal interactions. The two wards were therefore purposefully sampled as they had the decentralised institutions that this study sought to investigate.

[4] The community newsletter ran under the title, "The Voice of Mhakwe" was a quarterly production whose content was largely written by trained "community reporters".

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Table 3.3 presents a summary of the methodological approaches used to collect data. Respondents were drawn from all the 15 villages in the two wards. In-depth interviews and FGDs, underpinned by semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 4) were used to collect the data. On average, each focus group had 5-6 people. It was also observed that each group discussion or contact took 1.5-2 hours, which highlighted the deep discussions that took place. The discussions in FGD and interviews were conducted in local Shona language to allow for free expression. Some participants though preferred to interspace with some English terms. There were 11 FGD (Table 3.3). As Onwuegbuzie (2009) noted, the size of the focus group should be small enough to avoid domination and big enough to allow for active participation. Onwuegbuzie (2009:3) opines further, thusly:

> *The rationale for this range of focus group size stems from the goal that focus groups should include enough participants to yield diversity in information provided, yet they should not include too many participants because large groups can create an environment where participants do not feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and experiences.*

In general, focus groups range from 3 or 4 participants (mini focus groups) to 12 participants (Onwuegbuzie, 2009). This study settled for a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 to ensure that the groups would neither be too small nor too large. Consideration was also taken that some members invited to participate were likely to fail due to various reasons. Thus, up to 10 people were invited to participate.

A rich mixture of probability and non-probability sampling techniques were applied. All the 11 FGD respondents (5 mixed[5]; 2 for youth[6]; 2 for women and 2 for men) were selected randomly from village registers. A total of 60 participants took part in the 11 FGDs. Only those persons who were not members of VIDCOs were selected. For the 5 FGDs for mixed group of participants, 5 villages were picked, 3 in Chikwakwa and 2 in Mhakwe through the casting of lots. Participants for the 2 FGDs each for youth, men and women were selected randomly from registers of villages that had not participated in the mixed community members' FGDs.

Forty (40) interviews were held. Fourteen (14) interviews were held with traditional leaders, comprising village heads in their capacity as chairpersons of VIDCOs. All village heads were

[5] Mixed group comprised men, women and youth combined in one FGD.
[6] As defined by the Zimbabwe National Youth Policy, youth or young people shall refer to every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years.

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selected. One out of the fifteen village heads failed to participate owing to illness. All the fourteen village heads were interviewed individually. Four (4) interviews, two from each ward, involved secretaries of VIDCOs purposively selected from the villages. Four (4) interviews, two drawn from each ward, involved women representatives from the VIDCOs who had not participated in interviews for VIDCO secretaries. Sixteen (16) interviews were held with ordinary community members from villages that had not participated in any of the interviews for secretaries and women representatives. These were randomly selected from the village registers. Two key informant interviews were held with the respective Councillors for the two wards.

Cognisance was taken of the major weakness in qualitative data collection that a sample may not be the best since the Principal Researcher did not have control over the choice of informants and there were possibilities of selecting quiet, uncooperative or inarticulate individuals (Shenton, 2004). Despite this weakness it was also equally possible that cooperative and articulate informants could also be selected. Some measures, as discussed below, were however taken to maximise collecting as much data from the informants. A discussion guide or simple "ground rules" were spelt out at the onset of each FGD or interview. For FGDs, these included allowing each respondent a chance to contribute his/her views before others spoke twice on an issue under discussion; respecting each members' contribution; and avoiding or limiting use of terms such as "I agree with the previous speaker". Probing and prodding were used for both interviews and FGD. This was also improved through the use of open ended questions.

In the sampling process for interviews and FGDs, the principle of saturation (Marson, 2010), which is common in qualitative research was observed. In this type of research, collecting a lot of data does not necessarily lead to more information. Nor does less data lead to inadequate information. What is important is to realise the point of saturation, meaning when and where data become repetitive and eventually, superfluous. During the pre-testing exercise it was observed that by the time the second FGD was held, similar responses were already evident. In this regard there was no material loss of data by excluding half the villages from contributing in the mixed group (any community member who did not hold a post in the VIDCO, irrespective of sex and age) FGDs.

There was need to balance and be guided by the Marson (2010:2) view that:

> *Within any research area, different participants can have diverse opinions. Qualitative samples must be large enough to assure that most or all of the perceptions that might be important are uncovered, but at the same time if the sample is too large data becomes repetitive and, eventually, superfluous.*

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Table 3.3 Summary of the methodology used in the study

Research Objectives	To examine the perceptions of rural community members on the meanings of development and local governance.	To compare the perceptions of community interest groups on what constitute strong and effective VIDCOs;	To determine the key attributes of an effective VIDCO;	To propose a strategy for use in improving the capacities of VIDCOs to execute their roles and responsibilities.
Research Question	What do men, women, youth and leaders in village communities' regard as development and local governance?	Do the perceptions on the attributes of effective VIDCOs differ due to social status, gender and age?	What are the key attributes or characteristics of strong village development institutions?	How can the capacities of VIDCOs be improved?
Research Hypotheses	There are no significant social status, gender, educational levels and age differences in community perceptions regarding the meaning of development.	There are no significant social status, gender, educational levels and age differences in community perceptions regarding the effectiveness of VIDCOs.	There are no significant social status, gender, educational levels and age differences with respect to community perceptions on the key attributes of effective VIDCOs.	
Data Collection Methodologies	Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, Reflection Circles, Observation, Data mining.			
Target Group and Sampling Technique	a) 14 Village Heads and 2 Councillors and 4 VIDCO Secretaries - Purposive sampling b) 16 ordinary community members interviews - Stratified random sampling c) 11 FGD, - community members - Stratified random sampling d) 1 Reflection Circle (feedback) – Purposive Random sampling e) 2 Key informant interviews with councillors – Judgement sampling			
Variables	Gender, Age, Marital status, Level of education, Leadership position, Ward, Village,			
Data Analysis	NVivo – Thematic content analysis SPSS – Chi-square Test for Independence and cross tabulation frequency distribution	NVivo – Thematic content analysis SPSS – Chi-square Test for Independence and cross tabulation frequency distribution	NVivo – Thematic content analysis SPSS – Chi-square Test for Independence Frequency distribution	NVivo – Thematic content analysis SPSS – Frequency distribution

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3.6 Triangulation

Creswell (2012) described triangulation as obtaining data from different sources in order to reinforce the credibility and validity of research through use of various ways of verifying data. Marson (2010: 65) further clarified triangulation as, "… the use of different methods, especially observation, focus groups and individual interviews, which form the major data collection strategies for much qualitative research". It includes data triangulation, whereby the documents obtained from the study site are used for verification purposes. Data from various surveys conducted in the wards were used. These included baseline and periodic reports, project proposals and community reports such as minutes of meetings of MDT and ChiDA. The documents were used to obtain the background information needed to corroborate the responses obtained during the interviews in the study. A cross-section of participants was drawn from youth, leaders, women and men in mixed, individual and group sessions. This constituted another form of triangulation. Some questions were repeated in the interview guides with the aim of checking for consistency. Member check (Creswell 2012) or reflection circle, where a feedback session was held with the participants to discuss preliminary findings was also used as a triangulation method.

The use of the diary notes and rapporteur record of proceedings constituted triangulation and was designed to reduce researcher bias. It was crucial to reduce researcher bias as this helped to improve the objectivity of the study findings (Chambers, 2006; Shenton, 2010). Biases were expected during interviews. There was also a possibility of bias originating from translation from the local *Chindau* vernacular to English. During translation, it was possible that researchers would choose English terms that confirmed their biases rather than what the respondents actually meant. The submission of team members' diary notes as attachments to the rapporteur record was done to minimise such biases.

3.7 Strategies to Ensure Honesty

In order to ensure that participants willingly shared their honest perceptions and also with background knowledge that several studies had been conducted in the two wards, there was need to ensure that community members did not merely regurgitate what was already known for the sake of it. One way which was used was what (Mason, 2010) claims would give participants opportunities to refuse to participate in the interviews so as to ensure that the data collection sessions involved only those who were genuinely willing to take part and share their views freely. The research team explained to the participants before they signed a consent form the purpose

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of the research and that they had the freedom to participate or disclose any information without giving reasons for doing so. These measures could however not ensure freedom of expression and guarantee honest disclosure on issues with a political inclination[7].

It was necessary to ensure that the data collection process had internal validity. Thus, for FGD one team member led the discussion and asked follow up questions while the others took notes, probed issues and collected non-verbal data such as gestures, pauses and eye contact. Each team had a scribe or rapporteur who recorded the proceedings. In addition, each member of the research team kept a separate diary entry for each FGD or interview. The team regularly met at the end of each day, and using a Lessons, Before, During and After (LBDA) approach, reflected on what had been achieved and prepare for the next contacts. The LBDA enabled the PR and the team to compare notes and verify the record of proceedings. Depending on the respondent preferences, interviews and FGDs were conducted at nearby schools or village centres.

3.8 Replicability and Generalisation of Study Findings

One measure of effective qualitative research is transferability or replicability of the process and its findings (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Creswell and Miller, 2000; Kline, 2000; O'Brien, 2001). There is no general agreement regarding whether the findings of one study can be applied to other situations. However, despite the uniqueness of a situation and its particular environment, it is important to leave room for some generalization. This study was a quest to build a framework for strengthening the capacities of village development institutions to lead development. For this to be realized, the results should be generalisable. The detailed process presented in this chapter is likely to help ensure a degree of generalisability of the results of the study. A major undertaking in the study was to make its context and process as clear as possible to allow the reader to make an informed transfer, or to borrow from Creswell and Miller (2000: 129) to create "... verisimilitude, statements that produce for the readers the feeling that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being described in a study".

3.9 Data Analysis and Interpretation

A mixed method approach was applied in analysing the data. The templates for the semi-structured questionnaires for FGD were designed using Microsoft Word computer software prior

[7] From field observations, after the 2008 harmonised elections, communities expressed fear in openly discussing political issues.

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to exporting to NVivo. The Principal Researcher conducted data cleaning together with the rapporteur of each of the two research teams. Data cleaning involved scrutinising the records for consistency. Participants' attributes were linked to their names/codes to avoid mistakes when analysing the data. Data verification was carried out in order to minimise the possibility of producing misleading results. For example, verification of the record of a 70 year old female with secondary school education was necessary since it was rare to have black/African educated females born in the 1940s. African women are still regarded as uneducated (Kapasula, 2010) as they are frequently denied (UNDP, 2012) an array of rights including the right to an education. If this is the obtaining trend in the 21st century then it should have been worse in the 20th century. The questionnaires were also checked for consistency to ensure that a similar questionnaire template was used for all interviews.

Preliminary exploratory analysis as used in Grounded Theory (Creswell, 2012) was conducted. It involved categorisation, theming and memoing, using the NVivo version 8 software. The latter software allows for coding sources of data from interviews and FGDs into any required concept or themes. As Anderson (2007: 1) described it, themes "...give expression to the communality of voices across participants".Through conceptualising the research problem, research questions and hypothesis, some themes were identified. Examples of the themes were understanding and definition of concepts such as development, participation; effectiveness of VIDCO and VIDCO attributes, among others. The classification of data into responses and perceptions on the basis of variables such as village, ward, gender, age, sex, position, level of education, enabled the comparisons of responses from various data sources. Furthermore, this enabled analogous procedures to be undertaken to determine if relationships or disagreements existed and test the hypothesis of the study.

Using NVivo software, the data were grouped and further disaggregated into themes and nodes (linking and connecting issues) for ease of synthesis for analysis and interpretation. Linking of the data enabled the creation of various matrix combinations such as what the youth (age below 35) responses on participation and attributes of effective VIDCOs were. Scoping through phrase and text searches enabled many combinations to be made. Some trends were noted as the data was processed. Stories or issues were synthesised through interpretation of the trends. In FGD and interviews, in vivo codes (from actual words spoken by the participants), were used as themes and as quotes in text boxes in the following chapters.

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With these themes, it was possible to classify interview responses for the 40 interview participants to enable analysis using SPSS. A data set was created in Microsoft Excel and exported to SPSS for analysis and testing of the hypothesis using Chi Square test for independence (Pallant, 2011). The variables used for the tests were, sex, age, leadership position and level of education. The theoretical framework discussed and the relevant research questions presented in chapter 1 guided the synthesis of the information generated in this study. A general concern raised about the descriptive nature of much qualitative research designs is that they define the *what* and *how* and not the *why* (Charmaz, 2012; Creswell, 2012). However, recent attempts to bring more rigour (Anderson, 2012) in analysis and go beyond the "what" and "how" to the "why" was achieved in this study through borrowing from such approaches as the Grounded Theory and the use of thematic content analysis as described above.

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CHAPTER 4: PERCEPTIONS OF GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE

In this chapter, the perceptions of the residents of Chikwakwa and Mhakwe on local development and governance issues are described and explained. This is done taking into account differences due to leadership status, gender, educational level and age. All names of respondents revealed in this and subsequent chapters are pseudonyms. This is meant to protect them from any harm should their actual identities be known.

4.1 Defining and Understanding Development

It was essential to understand the communities' perception of development before discussing their perceptions on the functions and attributes of VIDCOs whose key mandate is development. Communities described their reality and own understanding of what it entails to be developed. For many respondents, irrespective of social group, development and change were synonymous. The key words that emerged in their definition were; change, improvement, work and uplifting. Male participants in a FGD, described development as more of a movement to a better life than how much one is earning. "By uplifting[8] is meant I take it (development) as upward movement from one stage to another stage for the good, to improve our standard of living. Uplifting of our way of thinking from one level to another" (Interviews, 5 March 2012, Mhakwe). Uplifting was also not taken only at the individual level but also at the community level; "development to me means uplifting the community" (Interviews, 13 March 2012, Mhakwe). Indicators of uplifting were given as tangible, material things, building a house, a borehole in the village and intangibles such as training to acquire new skills and knowledge. Male participants did not differ much from their female counterparts.

In FGD for older women (36 years and above), the source of development was identified more as the effort of the individual. "Development can start with me using surrounding resources and those from other areas, and then pass them (resources) on to others in the community" (Chikwakwa, Women FGD, 6 March 2012). A female leader brought in the dimension of an enabling environment for development when she remarked, "development means working in our area so that there is progress. We work on our projects peacefully and not hinder progress. To me

[8] Communities used the Shona term *kusimukira* literally translated to mean "uplifting" referring to a rise or any positive upward mobility or change in the way they leave.

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development is any change brought about through how you work in your village doing different activities for your own benefit". (Interview: 12 March 2012 with a VH in Mhakwe).

Youthful respondents (aged below 36 years) defined development as a process. Munashe a male youth, defined development as starting from the individual in a household. "They say development starts from inside your home before it goes out to the village. People will then see that you are working. It starts from the family so that everyone will know how you did it – thus it must be from the hut to the village. It is sharing of ideas for the better" (Interviews, 13 March 2012, Mhakwe).

In a FGD for youths, participants identified donor support as the source of development. Mukudzeyi defined the source of development as: "It is when poor people are given assistance by other people e.g. donors" Tinashe concurred. "It is when donors provide us with resources which we do not have e.g. boreholes. Adding to the discussion Kelleb said, for example when Kellogg[9] came, it provided knowledge to the people" (Mhakwe Youth FGD, 3 March 2012).

The elderly community members aged 36 and above, identified development more with production and work output. Examples were given such as learning new farming techniques and methods of rearing chickens in as far as it increased production. "Development is doing things such as rearing chickens and goats, even growing crops in gardens and then selling them" (Chikwakwa, Women FGD, 6 March 2012).

The leader's position did not differ much with those not in leadership, herein after referred to as the followers. The leaders concurred that the source of development was hard work. They emphasised that development is always a forward mobility. Development, "Can be defined as an upward mobility from one stage to another one which is better e.g. from hand cultivation to ox drawn cultivation. (Interview; 15 March 2012 with a VH, Chikwakwa).

In addition to material development, the followers also added mental development. Chipo, aged 38, defined development as, "… a positive change in mindset and attitude" (Interview 13 March 2012, Mhakwe). For 70 year old Chiwoniso, "Development is about removing ignorance. People can no longer be ignorant; they know what they can do in life and are able to be productive". (Interviews, 15 March 2012, Chikwakwa).

[9] Communities in the study area generally referred to the IRDP and successor programs facilitated by Chimanimani RDC/AU partnership and IIDF simply as Kellogg since the WK Kellogg foundation was the funding agency.

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A closer analysis of these definitions shows that they were in agreement with some of the definitions discussed in Chapter 2. Though not in precise terms, from a close inspection of the definitions and understanding, one can distil that communities were referring to livelihoods, reducing vulnerabilities, poverty and making choices ((Matondi, 2008; United Nations Development Programme, 2009). These community definitions also resonate with findings from Mutapuri (2008) in his research on exploring local conceptions of poverty in Mashonaland West province of Zimbabwe. In his research, participants considered lack of projects such as chicken and goat, community gardens, and water pumps for irrigation as impediments to development. Cameron (2009) also discovered that in the rural Andes, development was equated to small infrastructural development projects. For the Andes community, development became synonymous with a bag of cement. The definitions also coincided with the theory of endogenous development espoused by Millar (2014) as development from within and the call from Africa's development "think tanks" such the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA, 2002), who made similar calls for a developmental state which should, among other things, deliberately integrate peoples control over decision making at all levels. Communities in the study area identified themselves as the nucleus of development and coined the dictum, "development starts with me".

With these community definitions, two distinct categorisations or themes, economic and social, were derived, for further analysis using SPSS. There were definitions with a social theme like giving assistance, providing knowledge, caring for others and those with an economic theme, referring mostly to tangible things like infrastructure, finance and production. 32.5% of the interview respondents defined development in social terms while 67.5 % defined it in economic terms. Within the youth group 33.3 % defined development in social terms, while 66.7% defined it in economic terms, while in the non-youth group, the figures were 32.1% (social) and 67.9% (economic). Men shared their understanding of development with women, with 67% of women and 72% of men defining development in economic parameters. For those with primary level education, 73% defined development in economic terms while 63% of those with secondary and tertiary training agreed. For the leaders the majority, (76%) defined development in economic terms. A Chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) indicated no significant statistical association between social groups and defining development ($P < 0.05$). Table 4.1 shows the tabulations of the probabilities within the social groups.

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4.2 Understanding the Legal Environment for Development

The respondents narrated their understanding of the legal framework that governs development. A significant number (over 90%) of respondents in interviews and FGD demonstrated their knowledge of local traditional laws only. This was across the board with youths, men and women not only expressing their knowledge of such traditional laws but also of their importance. Most commonly mentioned were traditional laws that prohibit working in the fields, special offerings, mourning holidays etc. Table 4.2 summarizes these traditional laws. "I only know of our traditional laws, *musoso, chisi* and others", remarked one VH during an interview

Communities were asked to cite specific policies or Acts of Parliament which govern or regulate development. Despite failing to mention the specific laws, by name, the leaders (members of VIDCOs) mostly displayed knowledge of some of the provisions of these laws. Commonly cited were laws to do with natural resources conservation, prohibition of thefts and vandalism. The understanding of specifics of Acts of Parliament particularly those to do with Local Governance and traditional leaders was very varied.

Only one participant in the 11 FGD mentioned the specific Laws. Specific laws mentioned included the Traditional leaders Act of 2000 and Rural District Councils Act, Chapter 24:13. Village Head Tichaona (Interview with VH Tichaona in Chikwakwa, 18 March, 2012) had this to say;

> I am aware that in terms of development, the Village Head should hold meetings quarterly, should draft village development plans yearly and submit to Council. He must attend all meetings and should be apolitical. Communities must conserve available natural resources. The village head must also write and submit reports to the headman, monthly. Headman submits to chief and then chief to council. I have forgotten the name of the Act from which I have extracted this information.

Communities outlined their traditional ritual practices (Table 4.2) as the laws that govern their development. While some were described as ceremonies the community regard them as *mitemo* (laws) which had to be observed if the community was to be uplifted, or improved in terms of their well-being. The logic was that if no rain making ceremonies were performed, then there would be no good rains; if there were no good rains, then there would be droughts and hunger and therefore no development. If the ceremonies were conducted and there were good rains and such laws as *makarani*, *chisi* and *zvitenguro* (see table 4.2) were not observed, then the good crop would be destroyed by pests and animals and there would be hunger and therefore no community well-being.

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Table 4.1 Hypothesis test results on the meaning of development in Chikwakwa and Mhakwe Wards of Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe

Hypothesis	Chi Square value*	Decision
a) There are no significant leadership status differences in community perceptions regarding the meaning of development.	0.0146	Reject
b) There are no significant gender differences in community perceptions regarding the meaning of development.	0.659	Accept
c) There are significant educational levels differences in community perceptions on the meaning of development.	0.812	Accept
d) There are significant age differences in community perceptions on the meaning of development.	0.993	Accept

*testing at 0.05 significance level.

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Using NVivo software thematic content analysis, two distinct categories were derived from the participants' knowledge of the legal environment. The first category was for those who knew only their traditional laws as listed in Table 4.2. The second category was for those who knew the traditional laws and one or more state laws. Knowledge of the state laws was not by citing specific titles but aware of some general provisions in those pieces of legislation. Using SPSS, these two categories were further analysed to asses any statistical relationships among the social groups based on gender, age and leadership status.

Results from interviews indicate that 83.3 % of the women and 40.9% of men were aware of only traditional laws. Only 16.7% of women interviewed could identify at least one specific law that governs development. 59.1% of men could identify at least one specific law that governs development. A Chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) indicated a significant statistical association between gender and knowledge of laws that govern development ($P < 0.05$). 51.7% of those in leadership position mentioned at least one law. When asked to mention the state laws that govern development, 48.3% of leaders and 90.1 % of followers interviewed confessed that they were aware of only traditional laws. A Chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) indicated a significant statistical association between leadership status and knowledge of state laws that govern development ($P < 0.05$). When youth were asked to mention the state laws that govern development, 83.7% confessed that they were aware of only traditional laws. A Chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) indicated no significant association between age and knowledge of state laws that govern development ($P > 0.05$). Appendix 5 shows the SPSS Chi-square tests and cross tabulation results.

The statistically significant difference in awareness of laws governing development between leaders and followers could perhaps be explained by the fact that most leaders were exposed to training during the WKKF funded development interventions. Hence even in their definition of development, some leaders included the acquirement of knowledge. A survey of secondary data from IIDF indicated that there were several training workshops conducted targeted at the local leadership. Some topics covered during the training workshops included an understating of the laws governing the operations of VIDCOs. Prior to this training, it was also observed that local leadership were not aware of the legal provisions that governed their operations. For many leaders it was at these training workshops where they had first sight of such Acts as the Traditional Leaders Act, Rural District Councils Act and others. It is highly questionable why an important institution such as a VIDCO would operate in full ignorance of the statutory provisions governing

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its mandate. This phenomenon could act as a [illegible] to gauge the seriousness of central authorities in improving the effectiveness of local decentralised institutions. If VIDCOs and their constituency, the VA do not have the "tools for the trade" such as the relevant statutes detailing their mandate, expecting effectiveness from such institutions could be far-fetched.

Perhaps the male bias (Chambers: 2006) could explain the fact that women were less knowledgeable of the laws to do with development. Out of the 14 village heads interviewed, only 2 or 14% were female. The results vindicate studies elsewhere which showed that there is lack of knowledge and information among the poor and especially women (Lange, 2008; African Network of Constitutional Lawyers (ANCL), 2012).

4.3 Understanding Local Government Development Framework

Similar to understanding the legal framework discussed above, it was also important to get a community understanding of the national development institutional framework. NVivo analysis revealed that close to 70% of the participants in FGD indicated ignorance of the local government structures. As alluded to by Munyuki-Hungwe (2011), for those who knew the RDC which they normally just refer to as "council", it is a levy collector with no service provision. A significant number of respondents thought the councilor reports to the District Administrator (DA) and the DA is head of council. To them the RDC is the invisible local authority and is synonymous with levy collection. Close to 70% of the participants in FGDs could not spell out the institutional framework for development planning in Zimbabwe (as depicted in Figure 2.1) beyond the ward level. Box 4.1 shows the kind of responses given on national development structures.

In some instances the structures were confused with political party structures, which themselves seem also redundant, "From village to branch, there is the branch chairman then ward, District and province. From village to branch, to VIDCO to District then parliament". (Chikwakwa mixed FGD 18 March, 2012). From FGD, 53% of participants, thought the DA heads Council and that the Councilor, VHs and the Chiefs all report to the DA.

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Box 4.1 Extracts of FGD on national development structures

Chenai- "We start with VIDCO with chairperson and vice women representative, youth representative. That's how far I know".

Rudo - "Umh I only know sa*Bhuku*[10] *for* Chikutukutu VIDCO"

Anna - "Ward level- (laughing doubtfully) there is the WADCO"

Chenai -"Structures start with the chiefs, then to village head then to villagers"

John-"Headmasters, teachers, committee then to pupils. From President then Prime Minister, then Member of Parliament then Chiefs then to villages. In the villages there are the VIDCOs"

David-"I-ii-ii (rather stammering in confusion) we only know about the word PROVINCE. All we know is that there is a committee".

Anna- (Laughing) "I know there is security then… (pauses). We no longer have ideas, we will include everyone then you can remove".

Box 4.2- Extracts from related comments on DA/RDC relations

Jacob- "From village head we go to the Chief who reports to the DA who also reports to higher offices somewhere there in Harare. Please help me I don't know".

Job- "From the village we go to the WADCO chaired by the councilor. May you help me because I don't know these things"

Jane- "WADCO is made up of the headman and the village heads, Councilor takes issues to the DA. From there I do not know to whom the DA reports"

[10] The VH is called *saBhuku* in shona language. This means, the one who keeps the book/register. *Bhuku* is the shona word for book. The VHs were by colonial law required to keep a book/register containing all the people under their jurisdiction for tax purposes. This system has been maintained by the post-independence administration.

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Table 4.2 Summary of traditional laws and ceremonies in Mhakwe and Chikwakwa

Traditional law/ceremonies	Brief Description	Purposes	Responsible Authority
Protection of natural resources	Traditional leaders are managers of the natural resources on behalf of the ancestral spirits, with whom they consult and seek advice. Permission has to be sought from the traditional leader to harvest natural resources such as trees, digging for water and even killing wild animals like baboons.	Reduce deforestation and improve rainfall.	Chief, and implemented by Headmen and village heads.
Chisi (holy day)	A resting day declared by the VH every week. Fixed to a specific day or announced during the cropping season only when his/her subjects are prohibited from tilling of the land for agriculture. Doing other chores like fetching firewood and preparing meals is allowed. Monitored by the village head's security.	To allow people to rest the soil.	Village head.
Makarani (mourning days)	Six mourning days declared by the traditional leader when there is death in the chieftainship family. For nephews and nieces of the chieftainship, four days will be observed.	Respect for the chieftaincy.	Chief
Musoso (rain making ceremony)	A ceremony to request for rains from the ancestors where beer brewed by elderly women who are in menopause is shared with community elders. Carried out around September or October every year.	To reduce droughts and food deficiencies	Village head
Zviteguro (Offerings)	These are special offerings made in specific places marked by the village head, where produce like maize, millet are sacrificed as offerings made to. This procedure is done just as the crops ripen and before they are consumed.	Reduce the destruction of crops by pests and wild animals.	Village head.

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Only two interviewees could clarify the difference between the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of council and the DA. During one FGD, after an explanation from one of the participants, one of the group members remarked, "There is no one else who can go further than that because we did not know about what he has talked about" (Chikwakwa mixed FGD 18 March, 2012).

Using NVivo thematic content analysis, four broad themes or categories were derived from the interview and FGD responses on institutional set up. The first category was for knowledge of institutions up to ward level. The second category was for knowledge of institutions up to district level. The third was for knowledge of institutions up to provincial level. The last category was for knowledge of institutions up to national level. Using SPSS, these four categories were analysed to asses any statistical relationships among the social groups based on gender, age and leadership and educational status. Appendix 6 shows the SPSS results for the tests on knowledge of planning institutional set up.

Of the females interviewed, 50% were aware of structures up to District level, whereas the majority of their male counterparts, 54.5% were aware of structures up to national level. A Chi-square test for independence revealed that there was significant association between gender and knowledge of development structures or institutions ($P < 0.05$). For the youth, 41.7 % compared to 32.1% of non-youth were aware of development structures up to national level. The percentage of those in leadership positions who were knowledgeable about development institutions was higher than that of followers. In the leaders sector, 41.4 % were aware of development structures up to national level, compared to 18.2% of the followers. 45% of the followers knew of the structures existing at ward level only compared to 10.3% of leaders. A Chi-square test for independence indicated no significant association between leadership position and knowledge of development structures ($P > 0.05$). For those who had primary level education, 27.8% could articulate development structures up to national level compared to 4.9% for those who had secondary and tertiary level education. Chi-square test for independence also revealed that there was no significant association between the level of education and knowledge of development structures ($P > 0.05$).

That leaders and followers did not resemble any significant difference in their knowledge of governance structures is a serious handicap on local governance at the village level. For effective development, local leaders ought to have a deeper understanding and appreciation of the country's governance system. All the 14 village heads interviewed had primary school qualifications only. The leadership quality and level of education is of primary importance as it has

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a bearing on one's ability to acquire and assimilate new knowledge in a world that has become highly sophisticated. Their ability to transfer such knowledge acquired in trainings becomes limited. As the followers indicated, there was little or no feedback on development issues from the leaders through meetings and other channels.

The average person in the community does not know the difference between the DA and the CEO of council and cannot narrate the development structures beyond the ward level. There is visibly lack of information necessary to improve people's awareness of their roles in development planning and implementation. The level of policy awareness is strikingly very low. The RDC and the structures above it, i.e., Provincial Council (PC) and Provincial Development Committee (PDC) up to national level structures which Rukuni (2007:60) rightly refers to as "Unidentified Foreign Objects" have not been visible to the communities. If communities were not aware of such important development structures and institutions one wonders how they could demand development accountability and related services from the same system. Demanding accountability entails checking on the effectiveness of institutions. This was observed to be non-existent at this level, rendering VIDCOs ineffective. By not demanding same accountability from higher institutions, this similarly renders even higher institutions and district level equally ineffective as well.

4.4 Participation in Development

While the VIDCO may be disjointed and dysfunctional as a planning unit, communities are still very active in various development projects and services as depicted in Table 4.3. These development projects, many of which come through the VH are, however, not coordinated by the VIDCO as a planning and implementation arm of the VA. The main forms of participation are through attending project meetings which are called from time to time by the VH and donors. From the results 80% of the FGD respondents perceived project meetings as a planning platform. Setting of priorities is done within specific project groupings. "We sit down to discuss the issues, if it is building a school, we agree on what needs to be done, if it is paying, we decide how much should be paid". (Mixed group, FGD 16 March, 2012).

The collapse of some of the projects initiated by donors was testimony that the VIDCO was not active. "I do not see what it [VIDCO] is doing for us. Nothing tangible is seen. No meetings are held to plan for development" (Youth FGD 16 March, 2012).

"Personally as I see it, we are not developing. Yes the committee is there but there is no

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development (laughs).They bring politics into development and there is also poor coordination. There is no unity in the VIDCO" (Mixed group FGD 18 March, 2012). Muhumuza, 2006: 67 makes an important observation on community participation in grassroots structures.

> There are increasing reports that people shun council meetings, mobilization meetings and local elections, and avoid paying taxes. Few people attend council meetings at the village level because they are viewed as time-wasting since participation has not translated into improved government responsiveness and service delivery.

The above quotation, referred to village participation in Uganda can equally apply to some of the villages in both Mhakwe and Chikwakwa. "*Hatingadi zvedu kutaura zvakawanda*. (We do not want to say a lot). We only get to be consulted by the VH when there is need to make some payments. (Mhakwe, mixed, FGD 3 March, 2012.) This corroborates the above citation that local politics play an important part in encouraging or discouraging participation.

According to the four Ps + C[11] concept on participation (Kauzya, 2003), effective participation in local governance takes place at four levels of priority setting, planning, production, paying and consumption. All five should be intricately linked. The communities in the study complained that they were not consulted in the other four levels save for paying, hence the low participation. Simpson, Wood and Daws (2003) point out that the needs of communities are here, present and immediate, they are struggles for daily survival. Consequently, the poor often feel that development participation is only for a few local elites. Communities in both Mhakwe and Chikwakwa showed a keen interest to participate in their local development. They however cited various obstacles obviating their full participation. "There is also intimidation, you cannot tell the truth. Other villagers are sidelined, they are not included in village development, the less privileged are disadvantaged and yet they are the ones who should benefit in family projects for example" (Mhakwe, mixed, FGD comments, 3 March, 2012).

The above statement clearly reflects a quest for dialogue at community level. The aspect of dialogue which the participants highlighted so much, with such comments as, "we need feedback; we need to be consulted; we are not involved", shows the quest for inclusiveness in the development process. Wholesome inclusiveness is what is needed at the VA. As Mbigi (2005:107) echoes:

[11] The concept states that complete participation in local governance, occurs at five levels based on four Ps: Priority setting, Planning, Producing and Paying (financing) and Consumption. The concept asserts that there is high participation in C.

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> In the indigenous African cultures, freedom of expression was an important characteristic of the village assembly, to the extent that even outsiders –such as visitors and strangers – were also allowed to express their views. Dissent was open and free, with sensible ideas being applauded and inappropriate ones vocally opposed

This kind of vigorous dialogue is what is needed for political decentralisation to work. These debates by the citizens - the community, are the essence of democratic decentralisation and the root is in Village not District level democracy. As Carell (2001: 132) puts it, "...people do not seem to realise that democracy is robbed of the oxygen it needs when citizens cease to participate in vigorous public debate" The lack thereof of such debates at the village level renders the institution of the VA to be ineffective.

There was general consensus that local development was more and more being identified with donors than with central or local government and the community institutions. Within the two wards, when a donor comes with a project, a responsible committee is quickly set up to manage that project. From the Principal Researcher's experience with these communities at times these committees tended to be identified with individuals. This was observed to be one of the most contributory factors towards unsustainable development. As long as there was a donor behind a project it was regarded as a donor's hence there were gardens, deep wells and boreholes which were named after donors. This tended to scare away other villagers who were not part of the project. It was therefore very possible to watch a project collapse and people maintained a conspiracy of silence because they did not have a hand to play in such projects.

One respondent commented:

"We built our own schools as a community and they still stand up to now, because we know they are ours. Why does the RDC not come first and take our grievances then they request donors to assist us then people will identify with the RDC not the donors?" asked a woman from Mhakwe. (Participant comments at feedback meeting, 27, September 2012).

Whether this suggestion would create ownership and sustainability is a subject for further debate. The above statement from the participant indicates that the communities regard, VIDCOs as imposed structures. From the discussions with the communities, their adherence and participation to local community initiated practices and organisations as outlined in table 4.2 is higher than in VIDCOs and VAs. Suffice to note that communities were equally concerned about the demise of the local development structures as they were concerned about the invisibility of the higher tiers of local government. Communities therefore retreat to passive participation in development. As observed by Samson (2007), development cannot be delivered to a passive citizenry irrespective of the State's ability to deliver essential services.

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Table 4.3 Some community organisations and their activities in the two wards

Organisation/ Group	Functions
a) Burial Societies	Afford members decent burial through provision of cash, food, cooking utensils, labour and other requirements during bereavements.
b) Orphans support groups	To create an awareness on orphans and vulnerable children upbringing. Carry out projects like gardening and fostering, counselling and financial, and moral support.
c) HIV and Aids supports groups	To share ideas and awareness to those living with HIV and Aids. Carry out joint projects such as herbal gardens and peer counselling.
d) Culture preservation support groups	Awareness on cultural norms and values to the children, traditional counselling to married couples and youths.
e) Youth empowerment associations	Youth peer groups. Voluntary community work such as road maintenance, help to the elderly through fetching water and firewood. Capturing events and reporting community activities.
f) Conservation committees	Awareness campaigns on conservation practices.
g) Ward Development Trusts or Associations	Overall development of the ward, through projects such as community revolving funds, electrification and proposal development.
h) School development committees	Established at each school to manage the development of the school in close liaison with the school heads. Activities include construction of classroom blocks, pegging pupils' development levies fund raising and management of the proceeds.

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4.5 Conclusion

Communities exhibited an inward understanding of the source of development. For them development meant a personally driven agenda. For them development referred to hard work. It was a network of their local organisations and groups, each with a role to play in uplifting their standard of living. There was no significant differences within social groupings on understanding development. The lack of knowledge on local government development institutions appeared to be a drawback on civic responsibility. The issues will be dealt with in detail in the last two chapters. Discussions with communities reflect that VIDCOs had several weaknesses. The findings above indicated that there were institutional weaknesses at all levels in local government structures and the VIDCO was no exception.

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In this chapter the various perceptions of the leaders and other interest groups regarding the effectiveness of VIDCOs are discussed. These perspectives are examined using the multiple constituency model. A summary of community inputs towards an improvement plan for improving effectiveness of village democratic institutions are discussed. Using chi-square test for independence, perceptions of the various social groupings are also compared.

5.1 Community Perceptions on Institutional Effectiveness. Are VIDCOs Effective?

The multiple constituency model (MCM) provides a framework for assessing different stakeholders' perception of organisational effectiveness (Jun and Shiau, 2012). Results show that perceptions on VIDCO effectiveness varied among the various social groups disaggregated according to leadership status, gender, educational level and age.

In FGDs, respondents were asked their perceptions on the performance and effectiveness of their VIDCO. The objective was to obtain a community assessment of the performance of the VIDCO. Different groups within the community expressed different opinions on the performance of the VIDCO in their area. The perceptions on performance and effectiveness were divided into two broad categories; those who felt the VIDCOs were effective and performing well; those who thought they were not performing and were not effective in leading development. In FGD, there were no absolute cases of "yes the VIDCOs are effective". The responses were always capped by a "yes but" the (*yeah buts*).

Starting with the yes buts, it was interesting that every grouping, expressed reservations. A VIDCO secretary in Mhakwe remarked, "Yes the VIDCO is doing well at this level but it needs leadership skills training e.g. as a secretary I don't really understand my role." Another secretary in Chikwakwa had some reservations as well, "As I see it, I am satisfied by the performance of the VIDCO but not happy with the chairperson" A VH in Chikwakwa commented, "In my VIDCO, some members are doing well but others are not. Some members absent themselves from meetings. Lack of respect is common among members".

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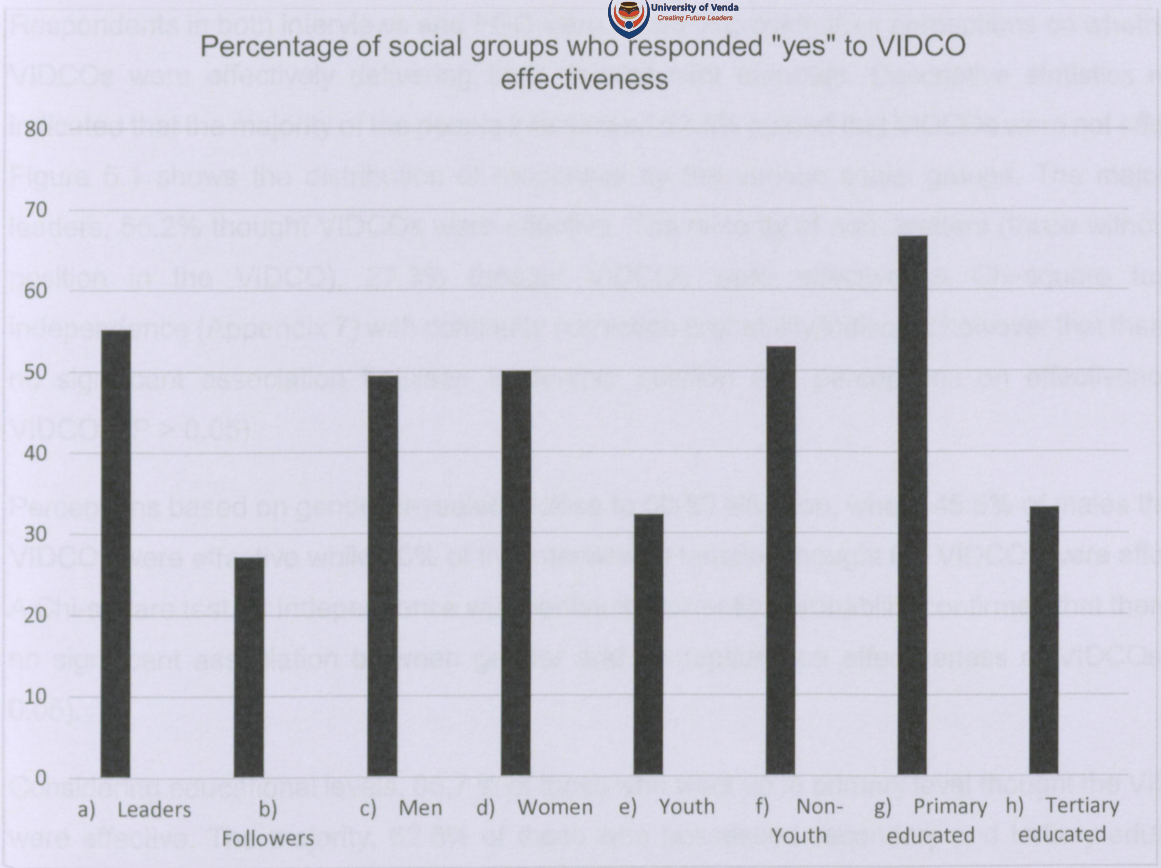

n = 40

Figure 5.1 Percentage distribution of the "yes" responses to effectiveness of VIDCOs

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Respondents in both interviews and FGD were asked to provide their perceptions on whether the VIDCOs were effectively delivering their development mandate. Descriptive statistics results indicated that the majority of the people interviewed 52.5% opined that VIDCOs were not effective. Figure 5.1 shows the distribution of responses by the various social groups. The majority of leaders, 55.2% thought VIDCOs were effective. The minority of non- leaders (those without any position in the VIDCO), 27.3% thought VIDCOs were effective. A Chi-square test for independence (Appendix 7) with continuity correction probability indicated however that there was no significant association between leadership position and perceptions on effectiveness of VIDCOs ($P > 0.05$).

Perceptions based on gender revealed a close to 50-50 situation, where 45.5% of males thought VIDCOs were effective while 50% of the interviewed females thought the VIDCOs were effective. A Chi-square test for independence with continuity correction probability confirmed that there was no significant association between gender and perceptions on effectiveness of VIDCOs ($P > 0.05$).

Considering educational levels, 66.7 % of those who went up to primary level thought the VIDCOs were effective. The majority, 62.8% of those who possessed secondary and tertiary education thought VIDCOs were not effective. In this category, chi-square tests with Yates continuity correction probability for a two by two test revealed that there was no significant association between levels of education and perceptions on effectiveness of VIDCO ($P>0.05$).

Within the youth category, (67.7 %) stated that VIDCOs were not effective, while 32.3 % thought they were effective. Comparing to the non-youth (36 years and above), the majority, 53% thought VIDCOs were effective against 47% who thought they were not effective. In this category, chi-square tests with Yates continuity correction probability for a two by two test revealed that there was no significant association between age and perceptions on effectiveness of VIDCO ($P>0.05$).

The four constituencies based on leadership position, gender, level of education and age had their own different perceptions on VIDCO effectiveness. The differences were however not statistically significant to warrant analysis of why the difference but rather why the lack of it among the different constituencies. Reading through the discussions in the FGD the contention on effectiveness of the VIDCO is a tussle between the VH and their followers. The followers may be further dissected into two groups, those they lead in the VIDCO and the ordinary community member in the village. The relationship between the VH and their committee is, according to the recordings not conducive to building effectiveness of the VIDCO, see comments in boxes 5.1 and

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Box 5.1 Village X, Chikwakwa, Youth FGD on effectiveness and performance of the VIDCO

Panashe: "The VIDCO does not hold meetings so it is not working. We hear of developmental issues from other villages"
Dune: "While the VH is the right person he is not doing anything".
Hazvi: "We hear of most development issues during ward meetings"
Dune:" As I can see, the VIDCO members should be inducted on their duties because they are weak in performance. Some do not know their responsibilities starting with the chairperson himself".
Damba: "They do not call for meetings. They have never called for the meetings. VIDCO has never met. The problem lies in the chairperson- the village head who is weak and not co-operative and appears not to know his roles hence does not call for meetings. If given ideas he does not accept. If anyone represents him at meetings (which he does not attend) he accuses them of trying to snatch/ grab his powers".
Panashe: "Therefore he is not approachable".
Dune: "You become afraid of giving feedback to him".

Compared to extracts of interviews with VH from the same village X of Chikwakwa.

Box 5.2 Extract of interview with Chikwakwa, village X, VH

(Hesitantly) "…those who are present [project members] do their work effectively e.g. recently Caritas called for an emergency meeting and members came. There is control of indiscriminate cutting down of trees. Community contributions are made e.g. for building at the clinic. There is effective delegation of duties e.g. I often send my vice chairperson to meetings".

"Development levies are collected. I authorize and oversee legal sale of cattle. I report theft cases to the police. I carry out routine checks in the village"

"I prepare agenda and call for meetings".

On the performance of his VIDCO he said;

"In my VIDCO, some members are doing well but others are not. Some members absent themselves from meetings. Lack of respect is common among members. Sitting on information hinders performance of the VIDCO. I end there".

5.2. In box 5.1 the complaint is targeted at the VH and in box 5.2 the VH is complaining about his members' "lack of respect". The second main concern is the relationship between the VH and his

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subjects in the village, the common man and [illegible] The VH contends that the general community does not attend VIDCO meetings when there is nothing for distribution like food handouts. The subjects on the other hand contend that the VH do not know their duties and are afraid of delegating responsibilities to other capable community members. Further analysis on the situation points to the issues of ineffective communication between the VH and their followers (within the VIDCO and outside). Based on observations form the study area, there is in some villages, bad blood between the leaders especially VH and followers based on political differences (disparate interests). In some cases, development meetings are turned into political platforms as VH are perceived to be sympathetic to certain political parties. Reading through IIDF literature, cases have been documented where some VHs refuse to work with elected members of the VIDCO due to political differences (disparate goals). Efforts centered at narrowing down this communication gap could yield consensus and improve on the effectiveness of VIDCOs among the different groups. The next section provides more facts on the communities' perceptions of their expectations of what an effective VIDCO ought to be doing. The attributes of effective VIDCOs are discussed and an analysis of the results is also given.

5.2 Community Perceived Attributes of Effective VIDCOs

Despite the divergent views on the effectiveness of the VIDCO, when presented with the option of removing VIDCOs, one of the responses was, "...we need VIDCOs. They may not plan and implement projects, but when Donors come they are very useful" (Participant in a feedback (reflection circle) meeting, Mhakwe 27 September 2012). This response highlighted that the need for clarifying the attributes of an effective or relevant VIDCO. This is covered in the sections that follow.

A plethora of attributes or characteristics were suggested by respondents in FGDs. Sifting through the interview and FGD responses using the NVivo software, the attributes were sorted into various categories or themes. The perceptions of the leadership of VIDCOs were also compared with those of all respondents who were not members of the VIDCO (referred to as followers). Comparisons were also based on other social groupings like gender, age and level of education. Three broad variables were crystallised for analysis of interview responses in SPSS. These were; Long term planning and execution; Transparent management and administration; Competent staff and skills. Table 5.2 gives a summarised or global picture of the attributes of an effective VIDCO derived from interviews and FGDs. Detailed SPSS statistical cross tabulations and Chi-square test results on VIDCO attributes are shown in Appendix 8.

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Put in simple ranking, based on percentages, (figure 4.1) leader's order of importance were; long term planning (37.9 %), competent staff (37.9 %) and transparent management and administration 24.1 %. Followers on the other hand ranked transparent management and administration (45 %) followed by competent staff (36.4 %) and lastly long term planning (18.2 %). A Chi-square test for independence indicated however that there was no significant association between leadership position and attributes of an effective VIDCO ($P > 0.05$).

Men put the order of key attributes as; long term planning and execution (45.5 %), competent staff (37.9 %) and transparent management and administration (24.1 %). Females ranked the key attributes as; competent staff (44.4 %), transparent management and administration (38.9 %), and long term planning and execution (16.7 %). A Chi-square test for independence indicated however that there was no significant association between gender and key attributes of an effective VIDCO ($P > 0.05$).

For the youth (aged between 18 and 35) the priority order was as follows; competent staff (58.3 %), followed by transparent management and administration (25 %) and lastly, long term planning and execution with 16.7 %. A Chi-square test for independence indicated however that there was no significant association between age and perceptions on key attributes of effective VIDCO ($P > 0.05$).

Participants who obtained only primary level education ranked important attributes of effectiveness as long term planning and execution (44.4 %), transparent management and administration (27.8 %), and competent staff (27.8 %). Those educated from secondary up to tertiary level ranked transparent management and administration (31, 8 %) and Long term planning and execution (22.7 %). A Chi-square test for independence indicated however that there was no significant association between level of education and perceptions on key attributes of effective VIDCO ($P > 0.05$).

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Table 5.1 Hypothesis 2 test on perception regarding effectiveness of VIDCOs in Chikwakwa and Mhakwe Wards of Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe

Hypothesis	Chi-square value*	Decision
a) There are no significant leadership status differences in community perceptions regarding effectiveness of VIDCOs.	0.221	Accept
b) There are no significant gender differences in community perceptions regarding the effectiveness of VIDCOs.	0.994	Accept
c) There are no significant educational levels differences in community perceptions regarding the effectiveness of VIDCOs.	0.060	Accept
d) There are no significant age differences in community perceptions regarding the effectiveness of VIDCOs.	0.407	Accept

*Testing at 0.05 significance level.

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The four constituencies based on leadership position, gender, level of education and age had their own different perceptions on the key attributes of an effective VIDCO. Differences existed though being statistically insignificant. The use of mixed approach in data analysis shows that while quantitatively the difference is insignificant, qualitatively the opinions show a need for further analysis. For example, the leaders, were not interested in transparent management and administration yet their followers ranked it as the key attribute. Communities raised concern regarding how VH as the leaders both traditionally and in development did not show transparency especially in distributing resources.

The problem, according to the villagers, was that no one could approach the leaders since they were both the offenders and the judiciary. Some respondents went on to even suggest that the leaders should not be involved in development issues and should remain as father figures. This issue is debated further in section 5.3.

It would appear from Table 5.4 that the key attributes as determined by villagers were that an effective VIDCO ought to have competent members, with the knowledge, skills, and character to lead development. This was a crucial suggestion considering especially that while the other members of the VIDCO could be elected on that basis, the chairperson was a given entity. This increased the chorus for a relook at the role and suitability of a non-elected chairperson to lead the VIDCO. The tendency by patrimonial village heads who felt insecure due to low level competency was to crowd out the competent among the community members. These were the sentiments of the respondents which were in agreement with an observation by Francis and James, (2003) who argue that in such cases, democratic decentralisation equated to bringing oppression closer to the traditional leader's subjects. It was evident in interviews and FGDs that there was a general fear of the VH. As observed during one FGD, some members did not want to say it all, "we know that they (VH) will be told what we said" remarked one lady. It would appear that some VHs exercise excessive control over their subjects. Reports from the interview teams (see Appendix 9) on their experiences in data collection, reflect that some villagers would opt to remain silent for fear of victimization by the VH especially in distribution of government food handouts. Most beneficiaries for government assistance programs targeted at orphans, widows, the elderly, disabled and other disadvantaged groups are selected through the village head. One is cautious to conclude therefore that having a weak development structure is to the benefit of the village head as already cited above. There exists no systems of checks and balances at the village level. This conspiracy of silence is a serious drawback on improving local democracy and development.

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Table 5.2 Community defined attributes of effective VIDCOs

Attribute	Brief description
a) Long term planning and execution	Shared sense of unity of purpose. Development planning, priority setting, implementation and monitoring of development projects, achieving tangible results
b) Transparent management and administration	Accurate records of activities, upholding a culture of transparency, open financial systems, accounting for financial and other resources, communication and feedback through regular meetings.
c) Competent staff	Traditional Leadership and other VIDCO members with requisite skills and style to lead, and execute programs, and honesty and apolitical. There should be clear roles and members should be aware of these roles and responsibilities with a spirit of volunteerism.

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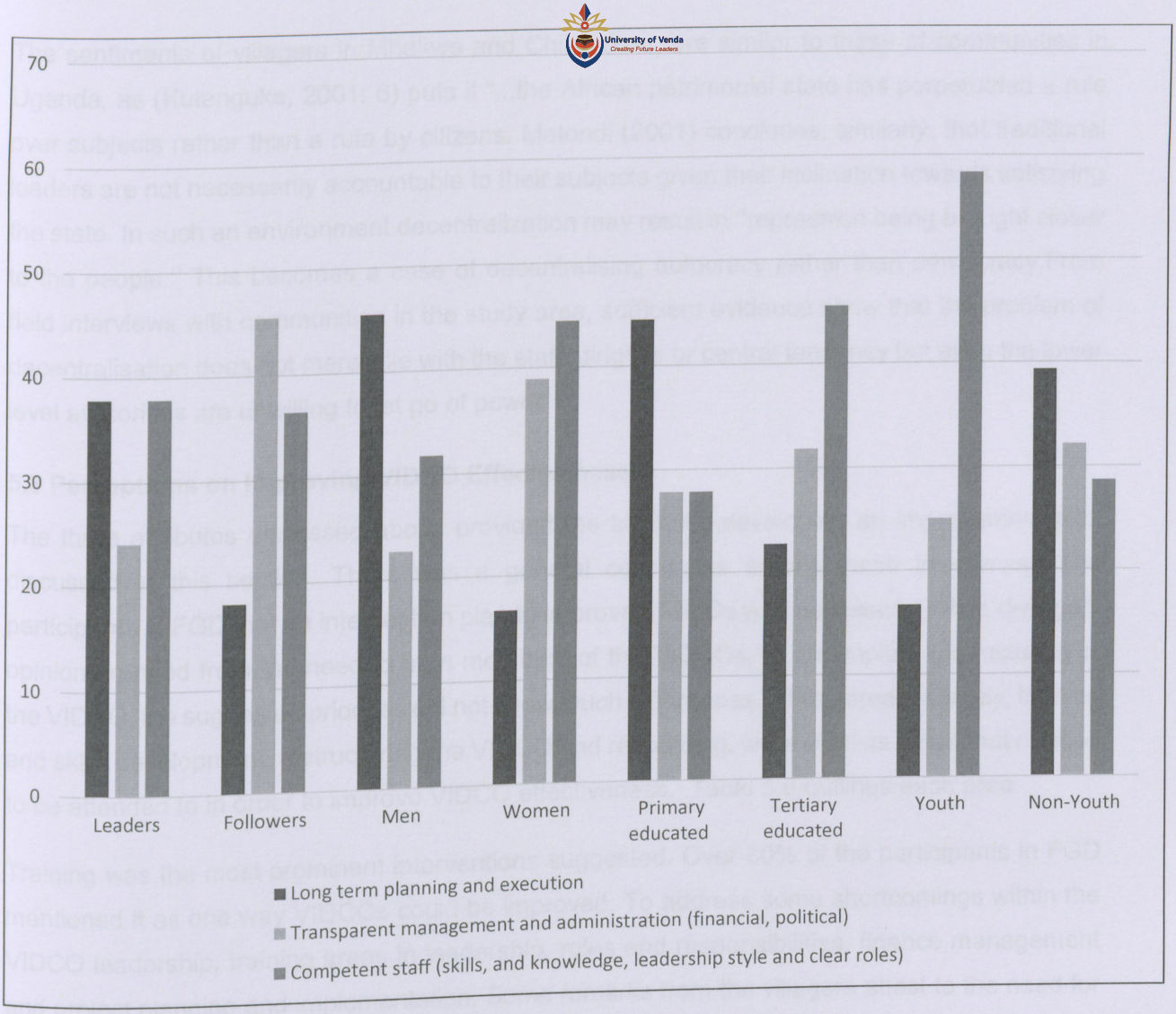

Figure 5.2 Ranking of key VIDCO attributes by social groups.

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The sentiments of villagers in Mhakwe and Chikwarwa, are similar to those of communities in Uganda, as (Kutenguke, 2001: 6) puts it "...the African patrimonial state has perpetuated a rule over subjects rather than a rule by citizens. Matondi (2001) concludes, similarly, that traditional leaders are not necessarily accountable to their subjects given their inclination towards satisfying the state. In such an environment decentralization may result in "repression being brought closer to the people." This becomes a case of decentralising autocracy rather than democracy.From field interviews with communities in the study area, sufficient evidence show that the problem of decentralisation does not merely lie with the state dirigiste or central tendency but even the lower level authorities are unwilling to let go of power.

5.3 Perceptions on Improving VIDCO Effectiveness

The three attributes discussed above provided the basis for developing an improvement plan discussed in this section. There was a general consensus among those interviewed and participants in FGD that an intervention plan to improve VIDCOs was necessary. While divergent opinions ranged from the need to train members of the VIDCOs, to a complete restructuring of the VIDCO, the suggested priorities did not show much differences. Three areas, namely, training and skills development, restructuring the VIDCO and resourcing, were cited as areas that needed to be attended to in order to improve VIDCO effectiveness. Table 5.6 outlines each area.

Training was the most prominent interventions suggested. Over 80% of the participants in FGD mentioned it as one way VIDCOs could be improved. To address some shortcomings within the VIDCO leadership, training areas in leadership, roles and responsibilities, finance management and project planning and implementation. Some remarks from the villagers attest to the need for training. "We need you outside people to help us", was a remark from one of the villagers. "We only see development when we go to other wards". "We need help to put things right". "We have educated people in the area but they also need to be trained and advised of their duties".

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Table 5.3 Proposed interventions to improve VIDCO effectiveness as described by the community

Intervention to improve VIDCO effectiveness	Description
a) Training and skills development	Training areas to include: • Leadership training, • Roles and responsibility, • Finance management and, • Project planning and implementation.
b) Restructure the VIDCO	• VH to become ceremonial leader and not lead development structures, • Strict Monitoring and Evaluation of VIDCO by community and government • More frequent and regular elections
c) Resourcing the VIDCO	• Budgetary allocation • Infrastructure such as offices • Equipment for improving service provision • Attach skilled staff • Office equipment and ICT technology • Incentives to VIDCO members

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In a community reflection session, where the preliminary results were presented to the community, the need to clarify roles and responsibilities received major highlights. One participant commented that, "When the VHs and Chiefs were given these new responsibilities; we do not recall, not even once, when central government or the RDC gave them training and then some job description of their new roles. Trainings have been done by donors only, though haphazardly. (Community feedback session, Mhakwe 27 September, 2012).

Secondary data analysis reveal that some trainings had been held for the leadership as disclosed above. Communities however associated these donor led training programs with some projects and in cases where projects did not materialise, elements of fatigue began to emerge (IIDF; 2012). Comments such as "…we want tangibles" and "...there is too much software" were made by some quarters within the community. These statements correspond to the definitions of development by communities discussed in chapter 4. The question then becomes, how do you build such capacity for communities to self-organise and be responsible without delivering the projects? For Ellerman, (2006; 15):

> A key to getting communities organized and helping themselves is often an outside community organizer, animator, or facilitator. Organizing efforts start with mobilizing community capabilities and "assets" to see what people can do for themselves without significant external resources. If Foundation X funded an organizer or team of organizers, then it would be crucial that the organizers not be a conduit for the communities to have access to Foundation X's money. Otherwise, the community will constantly see the organizer as a source of outside money. When and if the community does need to raise outside resources, then the organizer(s) could help it raise funds from other foundations or government sources—but never from the sponsoring foundation.

Personal experience by the PR in working with the two communities, agrees with Ellerman's observation. The tendency to be looked at as a conduit of funding not as a development facilitator was very high as the implementing partner IIDF was connected to a funding source, the WKKF. Facilitation of development and funding for development projects should be made separate if communities are to participate for the sake of participation and not participate as Chambers (2001) put it "for cosmetic purposes". Capacity building of strong community institutions should be separated from project based development. It is, however, also noted that in each project an element of capacity development must be in built.

Communities also felt that to improve effectiveness, the VIDCOs needed to be restructured. The submissions for restructuring were made by all groups and a few of the VHs at a reflection session. The restructuring intervention was premised on three key areas, namely; VH to become ceremonial leader and not lead development structures, setting of strict monitoring and evaluation

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systems of VIDCO by community and government and the holding of more frequent and regular elections. A major restructuring option was the removal of the VHs from chairing the VIDCO and replacing them with an elected chairperson. The VH would continue to head the VA. Some of the contributions on this issue are shown in Box 5.3 below.

The respondents' suggestion on the separation of functions between governance and traditional roles of VH underlined the importance they attached to traditional institutions. The VH should remain a "…close guardian of our cultural values and systems". The suggestion dovetails with the thinking from renowned scholars such as Mbigi. He argues, (Mbigi, 2005:191) that, "… we are in danger of having our African leaders being reduced to undertakers of our dying institutions, communities and societies." Removing them from the hectic VIDCO would help maintain their dignity and would not subject them to the practice of interparty democracy with its name calling, of "corruption", "unfair", "theft" etc. The traditional leaders should remain above this level. There has not been much written on the subject. However a policy paper by the Zimbabwe Institute (2005) corroborates the idea of revisiting the governance arrangements at the village level.

At a community reflection session, VHs were given an opportunity to comment on their dual roles of chairing both the VIDCO and the VA. Generally the VHs were agreed that the load is rather heavy for them. Various reasons were put across. Some of the VH were simply interested in trying their cases and getting some payments through fines like chickens and goats, and some cash for assessing cases. They were not, therefore, interested in development issues (different interest). Some of them admitted they were not articulate due to their low level of education. One VH commented thus:

> Our people respond to development meetings called by donors. If I call for a meeting to discuss development issues without a donor they will ask me "*pane chaunoda kutipa here zvaunodaidzira musangano"* (Why do you call for a meeting as if you have something to give us). For me to be entangled in these development issues ends up belittling and compromising my position. Its better it be left to those who have the guts to do it. (Village Head at a community feedback session, Mhakwe 27 September, 2012).

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Box 5.3 Suggestions on restructuring the VIDC

a) "Set a policy to separate roles for the village head as traditional leader and not chairperson for development. Village heads should be overseers of VIDCO activities being chaired by an elected member from the community"

b) "If VHs head chairs the VIDCO it's a problem because they may not have the skill to lead people. If he steals donated materials who will stand up and accuse him?"

c) "The chairman is the village head. The chairperson should be someone who is neutral. The village head should only supervise and advise".

Communities also proposed the holding of regular elections to enable the VIDCO to function properly. There were suggestions that the VH as chairperson of the VA, should be given the powers to call for elections to remove non-performing members. There was a suggestion that the term of office for the VIDCO should not be as long as the current 5 years. In terms of the decentralisation thrust discussed in chapter 2, local level democracy can be exercised if there are regular elections for people at grassroots level to choose and replace leaders as they feel necessary. The habit of democratic participation at this level would eventually create a culture of tolerance which would go a long way in reducing violence during major plebiscites like presidential and parliamentary elections. As one community member asked, "...how do you expect me to vote for an MP whose input I do not see and is far when I do not vote for a local councillor or VIDCO member who stays in my village?" Local level democracy allows the communities to question the performance of their leadership from time to time, thus expressing their voice. After one of the FGDs an elderly woman remarked, "We waited for quite a long time to speak to you but after this discussion, I feel so relieved, we have things to say concerning our village but we do not know who to talk to..." (FGD Mhakwe, 23 March, 2012). These are community voices (Munyuki-Hungwe, 2011) which are not finding space.

But what form should village level democracy take? As discussed in section 5.2, participants remarked that one attribute of a VIDCO is that it must be apolitical. This is debatable. If the VIDCO is created through political elections, then expecting it to be apolitical or expecting non-partisan politics may be expecting too much. Is it possible to have an apolitical political creature? Manyak, and Katono (2010: 5) remarked that "...political parties are now viewed as a fact of life and local

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governments need to cope with their new environment. The issue of encouraging democratic participation at the village level has no debate. What is debatable and may need further research is whether multi-party politics should be practiced at village level or it would be better off if left nonpartisan.

The third element of an improvement plan suggested by the grassroots communities was the need to resource the VIDCO. As alluded to elsewhere, VH felt the VIDCO had nothing to offer in the form of services due to lack of resources. Suggestions for resourcing the VIDCOs were; the provision of a budgetary allocation; provision of infrastructure such as offices; provision of tools and equipment and Information Communication Technology (ICT) for improving service provision.

With adequate resourcing, the VIDCO could also monitor and evaluate community projects in the area to ensure sustainability. Strict monitoring by the communities and government on VIDCOs was also proposed as this would improve accountability. Moving with technology communities felt that ICT was necessary. Only two participants mentioned ICTs and these happened to be village secretaries. There was also a suggestion on giving incentives or rewards to members of the VIDCO. One VH said in an interview, "Whoever put the VIDCO should make sure that the members are paid" (Interview with VH in Mhakwe, 25 March, 2012)

Some community members suggested the need for VIDCOs to have offices from which to operate. A study by IIDF (2012) revealed that VIDCOs as institutions had no physical location. Some communities took it upon themselves to build structures to hold their VA and VIDCO meetings. Field reports from IIDF and informal field discussions indicated that few development meetings were convened by the VIDCO and VA which by law is expected to meet at least once in three months. No evidence of minutes of meetings existed for the majority of VIDCOs. As discussed elsewhere in this study, VIDCO meetings were found to be held in response to donor initiatives. On their own, without donors, VIDCOs have no services to offer and at most serve as distribution points for food relief, an activity also highly politicized according to respondents. This was summarized by a woman participant at a reflection circle meeting:

> The VIDCO is only useful when a donor comes with a project or for special government programs like drought relief. The VH asks the secretary to call for a village meeting to select beneficiaries. The VH never calls a meeting for just planning without any donor support or special government program. (Participant comments at feedback meeting, 27, September 2012).

The need to resource the VIDCOs, as expressed by the communities resonates well with the thinking within the development community. There is growing consensus within the development

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discourse that grassroots institutions must be strengthened and empowered to become effective (Francis and James, 2003; Forje, 2011). Francis and James (2003: 332) go further and argue that the suggestion that capacity to plan should exist first before empowerment is a lame excuse. They put it simply and elegantly, thusly:

> While frequently identified as a constraint, the lack of local capacity for planning on the part of local politicians and administrators is less a problem than the lack of resources that could make local decision making meaningful.

The perceptions discussed reflect the social constructs within the study area. Applying the MCM framework to defining and understanding institutional effectiveness clearly reflects that leaders, followers, women and men have disparate goals and interests hence their expectations, definitions and indicators of VIDCOs effectiveness reflect a qualitative difference. A Chi-square test for independence confirmed the difference but that there was no significant association between any social grouping and perceptions on VIDCO effectiveness, attributes and improvement plan ($P < 0.05$).

5.4 Conclusion

Communities, in their different social groups tackled the issue of VIDCO effectiveness. To define effectiveness three key attributes of an effective VIDCO were identified. Using the MCM framework, different social groups ranked the attributes differently though a chi-square test indicated no significant difference in perceptions on these key attributes among the different social groups be it on gender, leadership position, age and level of education. A general consensus was noted on the need to improve the VIDCO performance. Three broad interventions were proposed. These were, skills development, improved resourcing and restructuring the VIDCO. Chapter 6 will conclude by attempting to answer the research questions, present an improvement framework from the community suggestions and draw recommendations from these findings.

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In chapters 4 and 5, various perceptions of residents of both Chikwakwa and Mhakwe Wards regarding development in general and the VIDCOs and traditional leadership structures in particular, were presented and discussed. The respondents outlined their desire for development and how it should manifest itself in their lives as individuals and collectively. What could be distilled from the results of the study was that there was a disconnection between the upper tiers of government and the village. There is a serious lack of access to information in rural areas.

A synthesis of the research questions underpinning this study is presented in this chapter. Conclusions are drawn from the findings discussed in chapters 4 and 5. The first part of the chapter draws conclusions based on the empirical evidence from the study. The next part is devoted to the proposed framework for improving the capacity of the village-based development institutions, which serve as the crucial building blocks of democracy and development. Lastly, some policy recommendations and suggestions for further research are made.

6.1 Synthesis of the Results

The main objective of this case study was to develop an intervention framework for improving the effectiveness of decentralised local institutions such as VAs and VIDCOs, through a case study in Chimanimani District of Zimbabwe. Table 6.1 provides a schematic analysis of the study which leads to the development of a framework or strategy for use in improving the capacity of VIDCOs to implement their functions. The analysis provides a basis for the design of the proposed framework for strengthening the capacity of VIDCOs. The following conclusions were drawn from the research questions.

Research question 1: *What do men, women, youth and leaders in village communities regard as development and local governance?* For communities, development means improvement in their day to day living for the better. From the perceptions, what can be distilled is that even though one can develop at an individual level, development for the whole community requires some mechanism which goes beyond the individual aspirations. For communities, local governance refers to benefits derived from services provided on the ground. It is about understanding the relevance of structures such as the VIDCOs to their daily needs. Despite the VIDCOs' lack of capacity there was a strong belief among the respondents that it was still an important vehicle for

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development. The study concludes that the lack of capacity should not be used as an excuse to sideline this important local governance structure. From the research findings, the first hypothesis of the study that there are no significant social status, gender, educational levels and age differences in community perceptions regarding the meaning of development was therefore accepted.

Research question 2: *Do the perceptions on the attributes of effective VIDCOs differ due to social status, gender and age?*

Consistent with the multiple constituency model for assessing institutional effectiveness, there were differences among the social groupings. Though differences existed, they were not statistically significant. It was difficult to obtain a consensus on why the VIDCO was ineffective particularly between the leaders and followers. This difference regarding the causes led to extreme suggestions for restructuring aimed mainly at removing the VH from chairing the VIDCO. The second hypothesis that there are no significant social status, gender, educational levels and age differences in community perceptions regarding the effectiveness of VIDCOs was accepted.

Research question 3: *What are the key attributes or characteristics of strong village development institutions?*

The three major attributes of an effective VIDCO were listed as; long term planning; competent staff; and transparent management and administration implying that the respondents were concerned about building open and transparent democratic systems, with regular feedback and information flow. With a general consensus on the need to have strong and vibrant VIDCOs, the third hypothesis that there are no significant social status, gender, educational levels and age differences with respect to community perceptions on the key attributes of effective VIDCOs was accepted.

Research question 4: *How can the capacities of VIDCOs be improved?*

There was a serious concern on who should be doing what among the VIDCO members. This scenario shows the serious dearth of legal information as some respondents were not aware of the legal framework governing activities of the VIDCO. If decentralisation is to deepen democracy and development in Africa, then it should be founded on a solid foundation of capacitated institutions. Governments in Africa should concentrate efforts to first get the foundation right, they show no interest in strengthening or building these institutions of family or community. The

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following section is devoted to answering the objective of the study to propose a strategy for use in improving the capacities of VIDCOs to execute their roles and responsibilities. Table 6.1 provides an analysis of the main issues derived from the study.

6.2 Proposed Framework for Strengthening Capacity of VIDCOs

The capacity improvement framework for VIDCOs proposed in the study is as depicted in figure 6.1. The proposed framework is based on three important assumptions of effective facilitation and training, existence of the VIDCO and acceptance of facilitation and training. It is based on four leavers of change as major components. These are; Civic Conscientisation, Consensus Building, Restructuring and Resourcing. The entry point involves institutional diagnosis of the VIDCO. A hybrid tool combining several capacity assessment tools is recommended for institutions such as VIDCOs which do not exhibit all the attributes or characteristics of established organisations.

Civic conscientisation is the process of becoming a critical thinker and unpacking dominant thought and oppressive thought which results from the cycle of socialization. Civic conscientisation results in the community being aware of their civic responsibilities. It is asserted that there has not been, since independence, any drive and motivation to raise civic consciousness to the level attained during the fight for independence. In as much as the liberation wars in Zimbabwe and other African states were fought on the basis of the "right to freedom", the development war must be fought on the basis of the "right to development". The framework proposes policy awareness training to communities in relevant rural development policies and laws. To instill these capacities, the framework proposes capacity development through training and facilitation in the areas of advocacy and rights based approaches to development planning to create massive civic conscientisation.

Elements of consensus building through consultation, dialogue and inclusion already exist in African traditional settings. The framework proposes equipping communities at Village Assembly and VIDCO level with the capacity to self-analyse, craft a shared vision, identify values and map clear objectives. The process involves identifying the multitude of stakeholders in the form of institutions existing in the community. In Chapter 4, several community groups and organisations were identified, whose interests and vision have to be recognised and aligned to build consensus on a shared vision for the Village

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Table 6.1 Synthesis of the study leading to the key components of the proposed conceptual framework for strengthening the capacities of VIDCOs

Component of study	Study 1- Examination of the perceptions of rural community members on the meaning of development and local governance	Study 2- Comparison of the perceptions of community interest groups on what constitute strong and effective VIDCOs	Study 3- Determining the key attributes of an effective VIDCO.
Research Question	What do men, women, youth and leaders in village communities regard as development and local governance?	Do the perceptions on the attributes of effective VIDCOs differ due to social status, gender and age?	What are the key attributes or characteristics of strong village development institutions?
Methods and Techniques	Appreciative Inquiry, Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, Reflection Circles, Observation, Data mining.	Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, Reflection Circles, Observation, Data mining.	Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, Reflection Circles, Observation, Data mining.
Major Results & Conclusions	a) Development defined using social themes like giving assistance, providing knowledge, caring for others. b) Also defined from an economic perspective, referring mostly to tangible things like infrastructure and finance. c) Local governance equated to ability to participate and execute, mainly development projects, such as constructing schools. d) Over 80% of communities do not understand the local government development structures beyond the village level. e) Communities exhibited ignorance of the policy framework regulating development.	a) Members of VIDCOs particularly traditional leaders opined that VIDCOs were effective. b) The non-leaders in various categories such as women, men and youth opined that VIDCOs were not effective. c) Major contribution towards ineffectiveness was observed to be lack of knowledge on roles and responsibilities. d) There was a general consensus among all social groups that the VIDCOs are desirable and necessary institutions.	a) The distinction between the institution and the players in the institution is blurred from the community perspective. b) Communities highlighted more on the attributes of the VIDCO members than the VIDCO as an institution. c) There were no statistically significant differences among social groups perceptions regarding the key attributes of VIDCOs d) Key attributes defined were Long term planning and execution; Transparent management and administration; Competent staff and skills.

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Component of study	Study 1- Examination of the perceptions of rural community members on the meaning of development and local governance	Study 2- Comparison of the perceptions of community interest groups on what constitute strong and effective VIDCOs	Study 3- Determining the key attributes of an effective VIDCO.
	f) Communities understand development to be at both individual and community institutional level. g) No statistically significant difference was observed among groups on their perceptions regarding the meaning of development and local governance. h) This conclusively means that irrespective of any social grouping that one might belong to, the meaning of development and local governance is the same.	e) There was no statistically significant difference among social groups regarding perceptions on effectiveness of VIDCOs. f) This conclusively means that there are no disagreements among community groups regarding the ineffectiveness of VIDCOs.	e) There is a general acceptance at all levels and among all social groups of the need to build strong development institutions f) The conclusion arrived at was that community social groups share similar perceptions regarding the key attributes of VIDCOs.
Implications for Capacity of VIDCOs & Rural Development	a) VIDCOs do not exhibit capacity to drive development. b) Availing of funding to VIDCOs to provide services at a local level could lead to their increased visibility. c) Civic engagement forms a major component of any capacity development interventions.	a) A training component on roles and responsibilities is crucial for any capacity building interventions. b) Need to clarify traditional and developmental roles of traditional institutions. c) VIDCOs need to be appropriately structured to deliver on mandate.	a) Civic apathy in rural development participation weakens development institutions. b) Communities lack ownership of VIDCOs- regarded as government institutions. c) Communities attach greater value to local self-initiated organisations and practices. d) There is high dependence on external drive to initiate development. e) Development facilitation, can bring a new mindset of self-drive.

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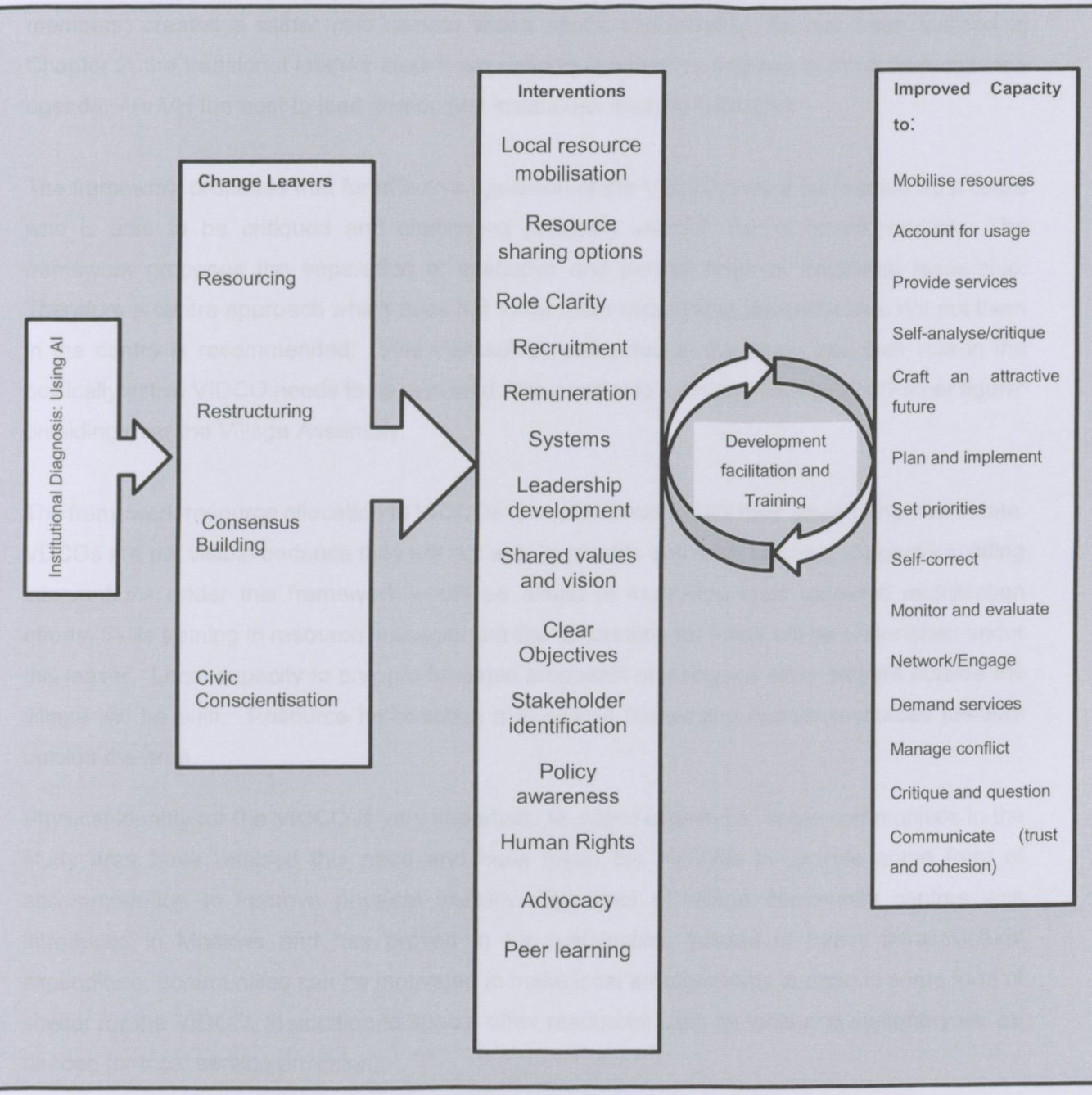

Figure 6.1 Proposed framework for strengthening capacity of VIDCOs

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The restructuring aspect of the framework involves a critical analysis of how the VIDCO is structured or organised to lead development. The mix of the old (VH) and the new system (elected members) creates a rather cold climate which needs shepherding. As has been outlined in Chapter 2, the traditional leaders have been used by successive regimes to drive their master's agenda. Are VH the best to lead democratic institutions such as VIDCOs?

The framework proposes that for effective operation of the VIDCO it must be headed by a cadre who is able to be critiqued and challenged politically without fear of future reprisals. The framework proposes the separation of executive and judicial roles of traditional leadership. Therefore a centre approach which does not throw them away yet at the same time not put them in the centre is recommended. VHs themselves concurred in the study that their role in the politically active VIDCO needs to be reviewed. They prefer to maintain the role of a "Father figure" presiding over the Village Assembly.

The framework resource allocation to VIDCOs to enable them to fulfil their development mandate. VDCOs are not visible because they are not able to provide any local services. Capacity building interventions under this framework would be aimed at improving local resource mobilisation efforts. Skills training in resource management like accounting for funds will be undertaken under this leaver. Local capacity to prepare fundable proposals and engage other players outside the village will be built. Resource mobilisation also entails harnessing human resources resident outside the area.

Physical identity for the VIDCO is very important. As noted elsewhere, some communities in the study area have realised this need and have taken the initiative to provide some form of accommodation to improve physical visibility. The idea of village community centres was introduced in Mhakwe and has proven to be sustainable. Instead of heavy infrastructural expenditure, communities can be motivated to make local arrangements to provide some form of shelter for the VIDCO. In addition to space, other resources such as tools and stationery will be needed for local service provision.

Despite the existence of policy pronouncements for the distribution of locally generated revenue between local government levels, not much has materialised. The tendency in African decentralisation has been that each hierarchy seeks more powers from above but becomes reluctant to devolve the same powers to the lower hierarchy especially regarding revenue sharing.

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As far as decentralisation is concerned, it would appear every level is a decentralisation bottle-neck, it asks for more from above and passes very little (especially resources) to the lower level and so on. The ultimate loser is the village which cannot even access the little levy they pay to the authorities. This tends to weaken village institutions. It can be concluded from such observation that this is deliberate and intentional. As outlined above village institutions, when given the sufficient space and voice, can champion struggles.

6.3 General Conclusions

The study findings, based on empirical evidence reveal that though not as effective as would be desired, communities regard VA and the VIDCO as very important and inalienable foundations of local level development and democracy. Through such institutions the communities' desire for an improvement in their lives can be estimated. Despite some qualitative differences, communities know the cardinals of strong development institutions and proffered some improvement strategies. To this end, the major stakeholders of this study, the rural grassroots communities, not only of Mhakwe and Chikwakwa, will identify with the study findings as setting an important milestone for achieving self-driven community development.

A mass-based approach to development is proposed in this study. If the war of liberation had been fought on such weak institutional base, it would never have been successful. Unfortunately the impetus was abandoned after attaining independence. The thesis provides a clear framework for improving the capacity of the VA and VIDCO to lead development. The framework provides a model for use by institutions of higher learning such as universities, research centers, the private sector and NGOs who need to step up their role in facilitating development in Africa. Therefore, this study must be viewed in the context of its strength in fuelling the development debate on developing a theory for rural development, whilst also providing some answers to pertinent questions.

In addition central and local governments, will find the study useful in providing empirical evidence for input into policy formulation and implementation. The use of findings of the study could help to improve visibility of state institutions in their mandate of providing essential services.

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6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Recommendations for Policy Consideration

a) It is recommended that the current structure of VIDCO where the VH chairs both the Village Assembly and the VIDCO be revisited. It is proposed that the VIDCO be headed by an elected leader.

b) Central government should consider putting a policy on resource sharing between the district and ward development institutions. One approach may be allowing VIDCOs to retain a certain percentage of household development levy contributions to fund community planned interventions.

c) Information flow to the communities should be critically considered. Initiatives for improving the flow of information to rural communities using modern technologies, such as internet and community radios should be seriously considered to close the information gap between urban and rural communities.

6.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research

The study generated some issues that it did not fully address. The following are some areas that may still need further attention.

a. Testing and validating the intervention framework proposed in the study.

b. How can the traditional leadership institutions and the democratically elected institutions coexist within a shared vision of improving local level service provision?

c. How can democracy be deepened at the village level? To what extent should party politics, divisive as it is, be tolerated?

d. What strategies can be used to resource local level institutions such as VIDCOs in human, infrastructural and financial terms?

e. The human resources in the village includes retired professionals who are willing to offer their time voluntarily for the welfare of the community. How can such a resource be mobilised to improve the effectiveness of democratic institutions such as VIDCOs.

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Appendix 1 University of Venda Ethical Clearance Letter

S159

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:
MR. O. DIRWAYI

PROJECT TITLE: EFFECTIVENESS OF DECENTRALISED VILLAGE INSTITUTIONS IN LEADING RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHIMANIMANI DISTRICT OF ZIMBABWE

PROJECT NO: SARDF/12/CRD/27/0912

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Prof J Francis	University of Venda	Supervisor
Dr J Zuwarinwe	University of Venda	Co-supervisor
Mr O Dirwayi	University of Venda,	Investigator - Student

ISSUED BY:
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, HEALTH, SAFETY AND RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date Considered: September 2012
Decision by Ethical Clearance Committee Granted
Signature of Chairperson of the Committee:
Name of the Chairperson of the Committee: Prof. X.G. Mbhenyane

University of Venda
PRIVATE BAG X5050, THOHOYANDOU, 0950, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA
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Appendix 2 Provincial Administrator Letter of Permission.

Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development

Correspondence should not be addressed to individuals

ZIMBABWE

Office of the Provincial Administrator
(Manicaland)
P.O. Box 535
Mutare

Telephone: 020-62514, 62589, 62594
Telefax: 020-63726, 61388

Reference: ADM 55

8 October 2012

University of Venda
Private Bag X5050
Thohoyandou
Limpopo Province
R.S.A.

Attention: Director – Research and Innovation

Dear Sir/Madam

LETTER OF PERSMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH: OSWALD DIRWAYI : EFFECTIVENESS OF DECENTRALISED VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT IN LEADING RURAL DEVELOPMENTIN ZIMBABWE

I refer to the above subject matter.

This office has no objection to the conduct of the above research in Chimanimani District of Zimbabwe. It will be highly appreciated if after the research this office is favoured with a copy of the findings for our information and use.

Yours sincerely

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATOR
MIN OF LOCAL GOVT AND
NATIONAL HOUSING
9 OCT 2012
P.O. BOX 535, MUTARE
ZIMBABWE TEL: 020-62514

F.S. Mbetsa
PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATOR
MANICALAND

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Informed Consent form

University of Venda

EFFECTIVENESS OF DECENTRALISED VILLAGE INSTITUTIONS IN LEADING RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHIMANIMANI DISTRICT OF ZIMBABAWE

Principal Investigator: Oswald Dirwayi

Thank you for taking your time to meet with us today. We are local researchers carrying out a study commissioned by the University of Venda; Center for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation in the area where IIDF has been doing some work with funding from WK Kellogg Foundation.

We would like to talk to you about your experiences in community development and in particular the operations of Village Development Committees (VIDCOs).

You have been chosen randomly from the village register to participate in this discussion. Your input will be very valuable and all you say will be treated confidentially. Feel free to participate. You don't have to talk about anything you don't want to. The interview will take about an hour, but you are free to stop it at any time.

I ..... of

..... village am willing/not willing to participate in the interview.

Interviewee/Team Leader .....

Witness .....

Date .....

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Appendix 4 Discussion Guide for FGD and Interviews

Ward .....

Village Name: .....

Name .....

Sex .....

Age.....

Highest level of education.....

Position in VIDCO .....

Focus Group Discussion Guide: To determine perceptions of rural community members on what constitutes strong village development institutions

1.0 Defining development.

How do you define development?

2.0 Understanding national development structures

Can you explain the development structures in the country and their composition and leadership.

3.0 Knowledge of law.

List any laws that govern development and local government in Zimbabwe?

4.0 Participation

How do you participate in village development activities?

5.0 Perceptions on VIDCO performance

Explain your feelings or perceptions on the performance of your VIDCO.

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6.0 Effectiveness of VIDCO

How effective is your VIDCO in doing what it is supposed to do?

7.0 VIDCO attributes.

What are your suggestions on the attributes of an effective VIDCO

8.0 Awareness of roles

What are the roles of each member of the VIDCO?

What roles should male and female (and youth) play in community development?

9.0 What do you think should be done to make VIDCOs and WADCOs more effective?

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Age * AwareLaws Crosstabulation

			AwareLaws		Total
			Does not know any, knows traditional laws only	Knows one or more	
Age	18-35	Count	10	2	12
		% within Age	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	41.7%	12.5%	30.0%
		% of Total	25.0%	5.0%	30.0%
	36-75	Count	14	14	28
		% within Age	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	58.3%	87.5%	70.0%
		% of Total	35.0%	35.0%	70.0%
Total		Count	24	16	40
		% within Age	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.889(b)	1	.049		
Continuity Correction(a)	2.624	1	.105		
Likelihood Ratio	4.211	1	.040		
Fisher's Exact Test				.079	.050
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.792	1	.052		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table

b 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.80.

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Education * AwareLaws Crosstabulation

			AwareLaws		Total
			Does not know any, knows traditional laws only	Knows one or more	
Education	Primary	Count	8	10	18
		% within Education	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	33.3%	62.5%	45.0%
		% of Total	20.0%	25.0%	45.0%
	secondary and tertiary	Count	16	6	22
		% within Education	72.7%	27.3%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	66.7%	37.5%	55.0%
		% of Total	40.0%	15.0%	55.0%
Total		Count	24	16	40
		% within Education	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.300(b)	1	.069		
Continuity Correction(a)	2.226	1	.136		
Likelihood Ratio	3.328	1	.068		
Fisher's Exact Test				.106	.068
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.217	1	.073		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table

b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.20.

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Sex * AwareLaws Crosstabulation

			AwareLaws		Total
			Does not know any, knows traditional laws only	Knows one or more	
Sex	Male	Count	9	13	22
		% within Sex	40.9%	59.1%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	37.5%	81.3%	55.0%
		% of Total	22.5%	32.5%	55.0%
	Female	Count	15	3	18
		% within Sex	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	62.5%	18.8%	45.0%
		% of Total	37.5%	7.5%	45.0%
Total		Count	24	16	40
		% within Sex	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.424(b)	1	.006		
Continuity Correction(a)	5.762	1	.016		
Likelihood Ratio	7.854	1	.005		
Fisher's Exact Test				.010	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.239	1	.007		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table

b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.20.

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VidPosition * AwareLaws Crosstabulation

			AwareLaws		Total
			Does not know any, knows traditional laws only	Knows one or more	
VidPosition	vidco members	Count	14	15	29
		% within VidPosition	48.3%	51.7%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	58.3%	93.8%	72.5%
		% of Total	35.0%	37.5%	72.5%
	none	Count	10	1	11
		% within VidPosition	90.9%	9.1%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	41.7%	6.3%	27.5%
		% of Total	25.0%	2.5%	27.5%
Total		Count	24	16	40
		% within VidPosition	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		% within AwareLaws	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.040(b)	1	.014		
Continuity Correction(a)	4.394	1	.036		
Likelihood Ratio	6.971	1	.008		
Fisher's Exact Test				.027	.015
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.889	1	.015		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table

b 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.40.

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Appendix 6 SPSS Results: Test Results on Understanding Local Government Structures

VidPosition * LcalgvStrctres Crosstabulation

			LcalgvStrctres				Tota
			Understands up to ward level only	Understands up to district level only	Understands up to provincial level only	Understands up to national level	
VidPosition	vidco members	Count	3	10	4	12	
		% within VidPosition	10.3%	34.5%	13.8%	41.4%	100.0
		% within LcalgvStrctres	37.5%	83.3%	66.7%	85.7%	72.5
		% of Total	7.5%	25.0%	10.0%	30.0%	72.5
	none	Count	5	2	2	2	
		% within VidPosition	45.5%	18.2%	18.2%	18.2%	100.0
		% within LcalgvStrctres	62.5%	16.7%	33.3%	14.3%	27.5
		% of Total	12.5%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	27.5
Total		Count	8	12	6	14	
		% within VidPosition	20.0%	30.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0
		% within LcalgvStrctres	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0
		% of Total	20.0%	30.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.950(a)	3	.073
Likelihood Ratio	6.534	3	.088
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.483	1	.062
N of Valid Cases	40		

a 5 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.65.

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Gender * LcalgvStrctres Crosstabulation

			LcalgvStrctres				Total
			Understands up to ward level only	Understands up to district level only	Understands up to provincial level only	Understands up to national level	
Gender	Male	Count	3	3	4	12	22
		% within Gender	13.6%	13.6%	18.2%	54.5%	100.0%
		% within LcalgvStrctres	37.5%	25.0%	66.7%	85.7%	55.0%
		% of Total	7.5%	7.5%	10.0%	30.0%	55.0%
	Female	Count	5	9	2	2	18
		% within Gender	27.8%	50.0%	11.1%	11.1%	100.0%
		% within LcalgvStrctres	62.5%	75.0%	33.3%	14.3%	45.0%
		% of Total	12.5%	22.5%	5.0%	5.0%	45.0%
Total		Count	8	12	6	14	40
		% within Gender	20.0%	30.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0%
		% within LcalgvStrctres	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	20.0%	30.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.020(a)	3	.012
Likelihood Ratio	11.849	3	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.494	1	.004
N of Valid Cases	40		

a 4 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.70.

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Education * LcalgvStrctres Crosstabulation

			LcalgvStrctres				Total
			Understands up to ward level only	Understands up to district level only	Understands up to provincial level only	Understands up to national level	
Education	Primary	Count	5	5	3	5	18
		% within Education	27.8%	27.8%	16.7%	27.8%	100.0%
		% within LcalgvStrctres	62.5%	41.7%	50.0%	35.7%	45.0%
		% of Total	12.5%	12.5%	7.5%	12.5%	45.0%
	secondary and tertiary	Count	3	7	3	9	22
		% within Education	13.6%	31.8%	13.6%	40.9%	100.0%
		% within LcalgvStrctres	37.5%	58.3%	50.0%	64.3%	55.0%
		% of Total	7.5%	17.5%	7.5%	22.5%	55.0%
Total		Count	8	12	6	14	40
		% within Education	20.0%	30.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0%
		% within LcalgvStrctres	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	20.0%	30.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.592(a)	3	.661
Likelihood Ratio	1.599	3	.660
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.016	1	.314
N of Valid Cases	40		

a 4 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.70.

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Age * LcalgvStrctres Crosstabulation

			LcalgvStrctres				Total
			Understands up to ward level only	Understands up to district level only	Understands up to provincial level only	Understands up to national level	
Age	18-35	Count	1	4	2	5	12
		% within Age	8.3%	33.3%	16.7%	41.7%	100.0%
		% within LcalgvStrctres	12.5%	33.3%	33.3%	35.7%	30.0%
		% of Total	2.5%	10.0%	5.0%	12.5%	30.0%
	36-75	Count	7	8	4	9	28
		% within Age	25.0%	28.6%	14.3%	32.1%	100.0%
		% within LcalgvStrctres	87.5%	66.7%	66.7%	64.3%	70.0%
		% of Total	17.5%	20.0%	10.0%	22.5%	70.0%
Total		Count	8	12	6	14	40
		% within Age	20.0%	30.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0%
		% within LcalgvStrctres	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	20.0%	30.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.480(a)	3	.687
Likelihood Ratio	1.677	3	.642
Linear-by-Linear Association	.895	1	.344
N of Valid Cases	40		

a 5 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.80.

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Appendix 7 SPSS Results: Tests on Perceptions on VIDCO effectiveness

VidPosition * VidcEffect Crosstabulation

			VidcEffect		
			Not effective	Effective	Total
VidPosition	vidco members	Count	13	16	29
		% within VidPosition	44.8%	55.2%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	61.9%	84.2%	72.5%
		% of Total	32.5%	40.0%	72.5%
	none	Count	8	3	11
		% within VidPosition	72.7%	27.3%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	38.1%	15.8%	27.5%
		% of Total	20.0%	7.5%	27.5%
Total		Count	21	19	40
		% within VidPosition	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.489(b)	1	.115		
Continuity Correction(a)	1.496	1	.221		
Likelihood Ratio	2.569	1	.109		
Fisher's Exact Test				.163	.110
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.427	1	.119		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table
b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.23.

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Gender * VidcEffect Crosstabulation

			VidcEffect		
			Not effective	Effective	Total
Gender	Male	Count	12	10	22
		% within Gender	54.5%	45.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	57.1%	52.6%	55.0%
		% of Total	30.0%	25.0%	55.0%
	Female	Count	9	9	18
		% within Gender	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	42.9%	47.4%	45.0%
		% of Total	22.5%	22.5%	45.0%
Total		Count	21	19	40
		% within Gender	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.082(b)	1	.775		
Continuity Correction(a)	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.082	1	.775		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.512
Linear-by-Linear Association	.080	1	.777		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table

b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.55.

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Education * VidcEffect Crosstabulation

			VidcEffect		
			Not effective	Effective	Total
Education	Primary	Count	6	12	18
		% within Education	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	28.6%	63.2%	45.0%
		% of Total	15.0%	30.0%	45.0%
	secondary and tertiary	Count	15	7	22
		% within Education	68.2%	31.8%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	71.4%	36.8%	55.0%
		% of Total	37.5%	17.5%	55.0%
Total		Count	21	19	40
		% within Education	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.821(b)	1	.028		
Continuity Correction(a)	3.525	1	.060		
Likelihood Ratio	4.916	1	.027		
Fisher's Exact Test				.055	.030
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.701	1	.030		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table

b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.55.

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Age * VidcEffect Crosstabulation

			VidcEffect		
			Not effective	Effective	Total
Age	18-35	Count	8	4	12
		% within Age	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	38.1%	21.1%	30.0%
		% of Total	20.0%	10.0%	30.0%
	36-75	Count	13	15	28
		% within Age	46.4%	53.6%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	61.9%	78.9%	70.0%
		% of Total	32.5%	37.5%	70.0%
Total		Count	21	19	40
		% within Age	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcEffect	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.380(b)	1	.240		
Continuity Correction(a)	.687	1	.407		
Likelihood Ratio	1.402	1	.236		
Fisher's Exact Test				.311	.204
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.345	1	.246		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a Computed only for a 2x2 table

b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.70.

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Appendix 8 SPSS Results: Test on key attributes of VIDCO.

VidPosition * VidcAttributs Crosstabulation

			VidcAttributs			
			Long term planning and execution	Transparent management and administration (financial , political	Competent staff(skills, and knowledge, leadership style and clear roles)	Total
VidPosition	vidco members	Count	11	7	11	29
		% within VidPosition	37.9%	24.1%	37.9%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	84.6%	58.3%	73.3%	72.5%
		% of Total	27.5%	17.5%	27.5%	72.5%
	none	Count	2	5	4	11
		% within VidPosition	18.2%	45.5%	36.4%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	15.4%	41.7%	26.7%	27.5%
		% of Total	5.0%	12.5%	10.0%	27.5%
Total		Count	13	12	15	40
		% within VidPosition	32.5%	30.0%	37.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	32.5%	30.0%	37.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.170(a)	2	.338
Likelihood Ratio	2.193	2	.334
Linear-by-Linear Association	.369	1	.544
N of Valid Cases	40		

a 3 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.30.

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Gender * VidcAttributs Crosstabulation

			VidcAttributs			
			Long term planning and execution	Transparent management and administration (financial , political	Competent staff(skills, and knowledge, leadership style and clear roles)	Total
Gender	Male	Count	10	5	7	22
		% within Gender	45.5%	22.7%	31.8%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	76.9%	41.7%	46.7%	55.0%
		% of Total	25.0%	12.5%	17.5%	55.0%
	Female	Count	3	7	8	18
		% within Gender	16.7%	38.9%	44.4%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	23.1%	58.3%	53.3%	45.0%
		% of Total	7.5%	17.5%	20.0%	45.0%
Total		Count	13	12	15	40
		% within Gender	32.5%	30.0%	37.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	32.5%	30.0%	37.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.807(a)	2	.149
Likelihood Ratio	3.977	2	.137
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.374	1	.123
N of Valid Cases	40		

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.40.

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Education * VidcAttributs Crosstabulation

			VidcAttributs			
			Long term planning and execution	Transparent management and administration (financial , political	Competent staff(skills, and knowledge, leadership style and clear roles)	Total
Education	Primary	Count	8	5	5	18
		% within Education	44.4%	27.8%	27.8%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	61.5%	41.7%	33.3%	45.0%
		% of Total	20.0%	12.5%	12.5%	45.0%
	secondary and tertiary	Count	5	7	10	22
		% within Education	22.7%	31.8%	45.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	38.5%	58.3%	66.7%	55.0%
		% of Total	12.5%	17.5%	25.0%	55.0%
Total		Count	13	12	15	40
		% within Education	32.5%	30.0%	37.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	32.5%	30.0%	37.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.315(a)	2	.314
Likelihood Ratio	2.332	2	.312
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.148	1	.143
N of Valid Cases	40		

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.40.

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Age * VidcAttributs Crosstabulation

			VidcAttributs			
			Long term planning and execution	Transparent management and administration (financial , political	Competent staff(skills, and knowledge, leadership style and clear roles)	Total
Age	18-35	Count	2	3	7	12
		% within Age	16.7%	25.0%	58.3%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	15.4%	25.0%	46.7%	30.0%
		% of Total	5.0%	7.5%	17.5%	30.0%
	36-75	Count	11	9	8	28
		% within Age	39.3%	32.1%	28.6%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	84.6%	75.0%	53.3%	70.0%
		% of Total	27.5%	22.5%	20.0%	70.0%
Total		Count	13	12	15	40
		% within Age	32.5%	30.0%	37.5%	100.0%
		% within VidcAttributs	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	32.5%	30.0%	37.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.449(a)	2	.178
Likelihood Ratio	3.483	2	.175
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.222	1	.073
N of Valid Cases	40		

a 3 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.60.

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Appendix 9 Research Team Composition and Reflections

Name	Sex	Qualifications	Research Team	Reflections on data collection
Chikavhanaga M	M	Graduate	Chikwakwa Team, secondary school Headmaster	What an experience. A lifetime opportunity to learn. For real development to take root, communities need to be enlightened on their roles and responsibilities.
Rusinga P	F	Graduate	Chikwakwa Team. Primary school Headmistress.	A very taxing exercise but worth the effort. The data collection exercise will help me in my own future research.
Manzou C	M	Undergraduate	Mhakwe Team. University student	What a wonderful experience. I was surprised at the amount of knowledge within the communities of Mhakwe.
Musakaruka P	M	Undergraduate	Mhakwe Team. University student and development worker with IIDF.	People have knowledge that is not put to good use. If people are given room, they can initiate development.
Mutambanengwe A	F	Graduate	Mhakwe Team. Primary school teacher.	I benefitted immensely from the research. I realized that people have a general fear of their village heads.
Shayamano O	M	Graduate	Mhakwe Team. Deputy primary school headmaster.	An enlightening experience. There is vast wealth of knowledge and experience in the villages. It needs to be tapped.

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