VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE IN CRISIS: URBAN HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE

GODFREY TAWODZERA

Thesis Presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in the

Department of Environmental and Geographical Science

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May 2010

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of the university or other institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

Signed by candidate

Signature Removed

Godfrey Tawodzera

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Main Supervisor: Dr. Bruce Frayne

Co-supervisors: Dr. Jane Battersby-Lennard

Prof. Jonathan Crush

"There is a communion of more than our bodies when bread is broken and wine drunk. And that is my answer, when people ask me: Why do you write about hunger, and not wars or love?"

M.F.K Fisher (1943) in
'The Gastronomical Me'

Abstract

Within the context of demographic growth, rapid urbanization and rising urban poverty which characterizes much of Sub-Saharan Africa in the 21st Century, this thesis examines the urban poor's vulnerability to food insecurity and analyses the strategies that households adopt to enhance their resilience in this challenging environment. Harare is the study site, providing an acute example of a city (and country) 'in crisis', and a context in which formal food markets have failed to meet the needs of the urban poor, within a generalized collapse of the economy. The central question, then, is how do the urban poor meet their food needs under such conditions of extreme material deprivation? In addressing this question, the study usefully combines qualitative and quantitative research methods, consisting of in-depth household case studies and key-informant interviews, and a standardized survey questionnaire. The literature on food security and livelihoods has mainly focused on the rural sector, with limited attention being paid to those strategies that poor households use to feed themselves under conditions of adversity in the urban environment. This thesis therefore locates itself within the nascent urban livelihoods literature, and contributes to the emerging field of *urban food security* in the following important ways: First, the persistence and vitality of the informal sector underpins the household urban economy, thereby challenging orthodox development perspectives that consider this economy as 'saturated'. Second, urban-rural remittances no longer dominate the social economy, and the predominant flow of resources is now from rural to urban households in Harare. This is creating 'new' forms of linkages where food and even money transfers from the rural area have become key to the survival of households that are vulnerable to economic fluctuations in the urban environment. Third, urban households employ demographic coping strategies to reduce their food requirements by sending some members to the rural areas, despite the more limited availability of social and physical infrastructure outside the city. Fourth, international migration is an important new survival strategy for urban households that traditionally have not been known to have strong linkages with the outside world. These linkages facilitate the movement of goods, food and monetary remittances, which are increasingly becoming important safety valves for urban migrant households. Thus migration has become a key dimension of urban livelihoods, with household members moving both domestically and internationally. Fifth, in light of these findings, the study makes a methodological contribution by engaging in the discourse on re-defining the concept of the household, particularly with relevance to food security. In contrast to the view of a monolithic co-resident household of shared tasks and decision-making theorized by earlier writers, the struggle for survival and livelihood in the city has split the urban household into separate, but mutually supportive units whose activities, composition and location remain highly fluid – it is this fluidity which enables the household to construct multi-spatial livelihoods that are key to survival of the urban poor.

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Dedication

To the memory of my late mother, Alma Sewa Tawodzera – gone too soon, but will always be remembered;

To my father, Albert Mutizwa Tawodzera – parent, teacher and philosopher – a rare combination indeed;

To my wife Mazvita Cecilia – For walking with me into the future - believing that all things are possible – as surely as they have been!

And to my children:
Alma-Nyasha-Vimbiso and Sean-Themba-Takudzwa
You are the reason - now and forever;
May the guiding hand of the LORD be with you
ALWAYS!

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abbreviations

CSO	Central Statistical Office (Zimbabwe)
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning System Network
FSLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OM	Operation *Murambatsvina*
PASS	Poverty Assessment Study Survey
RBZ	Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZimVac	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

Glossary of Terms

Hupfu	Maize meal in the local *Shona* language.
Maguma-guma	People who earn a living by engaging in any activity that shows potential of generating an income, even if it may involve deceit and corruption.
Maputi	Popcorn
Mufushwa	Dried vegetables of any kind.
Muriwo	Generically used to refer to any kind of relish, but more specifically to mean vegetables.
Sadza	A staple food made from maize meal and served with relish.
Shona	A local language spoken by most people in Harare and a greater proportion of the country's provinces.
Tsaona	Literally translated to 'emergency food pack', the term refers to food that is sold by street vendors and hawkers in highly negotiable quantities.

CHAPTER ONE

URBAN GROWTH, POVERTY AND HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY

1.1 Introduction

> *George Mushipe*[1] was retrenched in 1995, having worked for the same company in Harare for 12 years. 'I was probably one of the first victims of ESAP,' he says. He has been unemployed ever since and 'life has always been a struggle'. Together with his wife, son and two daughters, he lives in a two-roomed backyard cottage in Epworth. One room is the bedroom with his wife and the other serves as a kitchen, lounge and bedroom for the children. They have been living here for five months now, having changed residence six times in the past two years for failing to pay rent in the country's hyper-inflationary environment. His family survives by trading 'any products that may be selling well at the time'. Although returns are low and highly variable, it is this 'business' which is sustaining them. Even though his eldest son is now employed as a part-time security guard, their combined monthly income is insufficient to pay for rent, food, medical bills, clothes and school fees for the other children that are still in school. George therefore occasionally engages in odd jobs to supplement their income. There is barely any food in the shops, but on those rare occasions when *hupfu* or sugar is available, it is sold in 50 kilogram bags that they cannot afford to buy. The only people who are able to purchase these huge quantities are *maguma-guma* who then sell to street vendors who in turn repackage and trade the food on the streets. For *George's* household and many others, the informal market has therefore become their major source of food. Here whatever little money they have can buy them enough *tsaona* for a meal until the next day when they expect to have raised a little more to come back to the streets for another *tsaona*. The past four years have particularly been difficult and the family may not have survived as it has were it not for Uncle Nixon (George's brother) who occasionally brings them *hupfu* and meat from the farm. Of late, they have been trying to save some money for the son to get a passport so that he can go to South Africa to search for a job. They believe that this will solve most of their problems, especially as their neighbours who have children working outside the country seem to be surviving better. If this fails, George plans to send his wife and daughters back to the village. They will live there temporarily while he and his son remain in town until the situation improves.

The situation depicted in this story is typical of the hardships and survival strategies of poor households in Harare and Zimbabwe's other urban centres. Although it is just a snapshot in the life of one household, it is nevertheless an apt portrayal of the way in which the majority of the poor live daily in a tough urban environment where they face multiple challenges and have to contend with the persistent threat of hunger and several other urban deprivations. Having a limited ability to earn sufficient income, the poor's survival in the city is therefore an epitome of struggle in which they continuously grapple to find enough resources to purchase adequate food and to pay for a variety of other expenses that

[1] A pseudonym used to protect the identity of a household interviewed in Epworth during the in-depth case study interviews, Case Study No. 11, 25th March 2009, Ward IV, Epworth, Harare.

are necessary for life in the city. The food security status of most of these households therefore, more often than not, remains precarious.

Food security has been defined as a state 'when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life' (FAO, 2009:8). Embedded in this broadly accepted definition are three major components of food security, namely: food availability, access, and utilization. A fourth, cross-cutting dimension of 'vulnerability' is now widely recognized and accepted as being fundamentally important. Vulnerability generally refers to susceptibility to unfavourable conditions that place people at risk of becoming food insecure. It describes the reduced ability of households and communities to cope with stresses that they are exposed to. Thus, it is defined in this study as 'the insecurity in the well-being of individuals, households or communities in the face of a changing environment' (Moser, 1998:3).

As *George Mushipe*'s story above clearly demonstrate, the environmental changes that increase vulnerability in the urban area include, among other things: job losses, poor or inadequate housing conditions, persistent price escalations, hyperinflation and collapsing formal food systems. Hence, in an urban context such as that of Harare, it is not just poverty that places households at risk of becoming food insecure. Rather, it is a whole range of conditions that prohibit the poor from participating fully in the urban economy thereby limiting their access to resources and information that could afford them protection during times of crisis and heightened needs. Using vulnerability to understand household food security in the urban area therefore has the advantage of helping to draw attention to specific contextual factors which influence exposure and the capacity of households to respond to environmental change. This further helps to explain how and why some households experience greater negative outcomes from shocks and stressors than others. Hence vulnerability provides an appropriate platform for interrogating the factors, conditions, connections, power-relations and claims that make it easier or more difficult for households to maintain viability and/or mitigate the impacts of food insecurity when threatened by negative urban environmental changes.

Within the context of the Zimbabwean crisis, an unfavourable economic environment characterized by a negative Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate[2], rising unemployment[3], increasing poverty[4], hyperinflation[5] and recurrent national food shortages[6], has served to decimate livelihoods and increase vulnerability to food insecurity. While this deleterious economic environment has affected the whole country, the vulnerability of the urban poor to the economic meltdown has been more severe given that urban residents primarily depend on food purchases, often pay money for goods and services that may not necessarily be paid for in rural areas (hence leaving them with little income for food) and rely more on imported foods. This renders them more vulnerable to external food shocks such as rising world food prices. The central question, then, is how do these poor urban households survive and what strategies do they adopt to meet their food needs and cope with food insecurity under conditions of extreme material deprivation? Providing adequate answers to these questions requires an in-depth assessment of the urban poor's coping strategies.

Coping strategies[7] are activities that households resort to in order to obtain food, income and/or services when their normal means of livelihood[8] have been disrupted. They are defined in this study as 'an array of short-term strategies adopted in response to a crisis' (Davies, 1993:60). Most coping activities are based on the household's endowments and

[2] By 2006, GDP had contracted by over 40 percent from the 2000 levels (Government of Zimbabwe, 2006:4).
[3] In March 2009 when field work for this research was being undertaken, unemployment was estimated to be at 80 percent (Chimhowu, 2009).
[4] Although data from the Income, Consumption and Expenditure Survey of 1991 and the Poverty Assessment Study Surveys of 1995 and 2003 are not directly comparable due to methodological differences, it nevertheless suggests that the proportion of households living below the food poverty line rose from 35 percent in 1995 to 63 percent in 2003 (Government of Zimbabwe, 2006). By November 2008, up to 80 percent of the population was estimated to be surviving on less than US$2 per day (Chimhowu, 2009:1).
[5] The last official statistics for hyperinflation in the country put the figure at 231 million percent in October 2008 (RBZ, 2008). Independent statistics however indicate that hyperinflation peaked at 500 billion percent in December 2008 (Chimhowu, 2009:1).
[6] Since the beginning of the fast-track land reform programme in 2000, the country has experienced severe food shortages: maize deficits of 1.0 million tonnes for the 2006-07 season and 840 thousand tonnes for the 2008-09 season. Production estimates for the 2009-10 season indicate that over 680 thousand tonnes will be needed to meet the maize deficit (USAID, 2009; ZimVac, 2009; FEWSNET, 2009; Richardson, 2007; Tibaijuka, 2005).
[7] When times are normal, these activities are called livelihood strategies. In times of crisis, they change into coping or survival strategies, while in situations of continuous stress, these coping strategies further change into adaptation strategies, which become part of the normal way of everyday life (Griep, 2001).
[8] A livelihood is a way of making a living (Rakodi, 2002) (An engaging discussion on livelihoods is pursued in Chapter 2, section 2.3).

constraints as well as the availability of opportunities (Bird and Prowse, 2008). The ultimate aim of coping is to maintain its various objectives including food and livelihood security as well as health status and overall well-being. However, in order to fully address the question of coping with regard to food insecurity, there is also a need to understand the notion of resilience, which underlies coping.

Resilience denotes the capacity of a people to maintain functionality in the presence of disturbances by drawing upon their resources and competencies to manage change. In circumstances where constraints exceed a critical threshold, as is characteristic of Zimbabwe's crisis situation, one of the ways in which households manage to cope is to switch from their normal daily operation to survival strategies that allow them to continue existing, even at a lower level of sufficiency than they are normally accustomed to. In this sense, resilience therefore relates to a process rather than being an end in itself. For this reason, this study adopts the definition of Klein *et al*., (2003:40) who conceive resilience as 'the functioning and interaction of systems rather than to the stability of their components or the ability to return to some equilibrium state'. In Harare's case, household resilience therefore signifies the continued existence and survival of poor urban households under the onslaught of the country's socio-economic meltdown.

While the coping strategies employed by rural households under conditions of distress are well documented[9], little is known about how poor households cope with food insecurity in the city. This is because the greater proportion of food security work in sub-Saharan Africa has been concentrated in the rural areas, traditionally perceived to be the epicenter of poverty, hunger and malnutrition. As a result, the struggles that poor households go through in order to feed themselves and cope with adversity in the challenging urban environment have not yet been sufficiently articulated and information on the subject remains largely fragmented. This thesis, then, is a study about *urban household food security*. It examines the urban poor's vulnerability to food insecurity and analyzes the strategies that these households adopt to enhance their resilience under conditions of

[9] There is a great deal of literature available that deals with rural coping strategies (e.g. Bhandari and Grant, 2006; Maxwell *et al*., 2003; Barrett *et al*., 2001; Ellis, 2000; de Waal, 1989; Kinsey *et al.,* 1988; Watts, 1983).

adversity in the urban environment. The study argues that the survival and resilience of poor urban households during a crisis situation such as that of Harare is a result of three factors: first, the remarkable creativity and innovativeness of the poor in eking out a living within the informal sector; second, the existence of stronger social links to rural households and their resources; and third, the increasing viability of international migration as a survival strategy where remittances are becoming crucial in urban household food security and well-being.

In order to demonstrate this thesis, the study explores four major themes, which emerged from dialogue with the urban poor in Harare. The first theme discusses the importance of coping strategies adopted in the urban informal sector and their role in enabling poor households to feed and sustain themselves. The second theme explores urban-rural migration and the extent to which urban households are employing demographic coping strategies to reduce their food requirements and other urban expenses by sending some of their members to the rural areas. The third theme, which is closely related to the second, centers on social relationships and networks between the urban and rural areas, and the significance of these networks in facilitating the movement of food and money, which are becoming critical in maintaining food security in poor urban households. The fourth theme focuses on international migration and discusses the extent to which remittances of goods, money and food contribute to the survival and resilience of the urban household. By exploring these themes, the study provides in-depth insight into the ways in which poor urban households reduce vulnerability and enhance their resilience to food insecurity in their environment. Collectively, these themes demonstrate the complexity of urban livelihoods and the highly evolved systems of urban coping, which conventional livelihood models based on rural realities, fail to show.

To explore these themes, the study employs a grounded theory approach. This is a 'bottom up' approach where concepts and generalizations are built by exploring basic social processes and interactions in order to inductively understand a phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The approach, which emphasizes the involvement of the researched in the research process, allows the food security processes and coping strategies employed by

households in Harare to emerge from, and be 'grounded' in the poor's own experiences and struggles rather than being identified *a priori* by the researcher. It is these experiences that yield important information on how poor households experience food insecurity and strategize to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience in the city's unfavourable economic conditions. To put these themes and the whole food security debate into proper perspective, it is first necessary to explore how the rapid transformation of society from rural to urban settings has given rise to the food insecurity problems that are currently besetting Zimbabwe's urban centres and most cities in Southern Africa more generally.

1.2 Urbanization in Southern Africa

While urbanization has been occurring in isolated parts of the world since 5000 BC (Sjorberg, 1960), worldwide urbanization is a recent phenomenon (Annez and Buckley, 2009). Currently, more than 50 percent of the world's population lives in urban areas, up from only 14 percent in 1900 (Maxwell et al, 2008; UNFP, 2007). The world is certainly changing from a 'global village' to an 'urban globe' (Jones and Nelson, 1999:1) as the greater proportion of expected population growth between 2000 and 2030 will be concentrated in urban areas (Tienda *et al,* 2006). No country can therefore afford to ignore this phenomenon, which will continue to be one of the strongest social forces in the 21st Century, particularly in the developing world (Ruel *et* al., 1998). Although the developed world is currently more urbanized, the highest urbanization rates are being experienced in the developing world: about 5 percent in sub-Saharan Africa, 4 percent in Asia and the Pacific; 3.3 percent in Northern Africa and 2.5 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-Habitat, 2008; Tettey, 2005). Based on such growth rates, it is projected that around 80 percent of the global urban population will be living in the developing world by 2030 (UNFP, 2007; Khan, 2008).

For sub-Saharan Africa, the 5 percent average urbanization rate is historically unprecedented and will result in over 300 million new urban residents (twice the rural population increment) between 2000 and 2030 (Kessides, 2005; United Nations, 2004). This could result in the continent's urban population doubling every 12 years (Njoh, 2003). Such urbanization rates have considerable implications for hunger and malnutrition of

urbanites and raises serious concerns about household food insecurity, as well as other issues of inadequate urban services. Southern Africa is no exception to these general urbanization trends. The proportion of people living in urban areas of the region increased from about 16 percent in 1960 to 40 percent in 2007 (United Nations, 2007). The region's population is growing three times faster than its rural counterpart and predictions are that over half of its population will live in urban areas by 2015 (Crush *et al.,* 2007; UNEP, 2004). The sheer magnitude of these population increases makes it almost impossible for urban authorities to provide adequate infrastructure and guarantee adequate urban services. Given the evidence that 'the poor are urbanizing faster than the population as a whole' (Ravallion *et al*., 2007:693), the ability of the poor to feed themselves in a cash-sensitive urban environment becomes doubtful and raises questions of food insecurity that are fundamentally different from those in rural areas.

Exacerbating Southern Africa's situation is the fact that urbanization is taking place in a context of severe constraints that did not face other regions in their urbanization process (Zlotnik, 2006). Such constraints include exposure to global competition resulting from the liberalization of global trade regimes, very limited outlets for external migration, and the decimation of the productive workforce due to HIV/AIDS (Garland *et al.,* 2007; Tienda *et al.,* 2006). Thus, the challenges posed by urbanization in the region are greater than those that were faced by the developed nations where slower urbanization rates and high GDP enabled a smoother adjustment of political and economic institutions to meet the needs of the day (Henderson, 2002). Despite this apparent problem of urban poverty and the enormity of the challenges that it poses to the poor's ability to access food, 'little is still known about the extent of food insecurity in the cities and towns of Southern Africa' (Frayne and Pendleton, 2009:2).

Urbanization in Southern Africa, in most of the developing world, is a result of the combined effects of rural-urban migration and natural population increase, as well as the reclassification of rural as urban areas (Grant, 2007; Potts, 2006). With respect to migration, factors such as population explosion, declining agricultural yields, environmental stress, rampart wars and natural disasters continue to push people from

rural into urban areas (Meertens, 2006; World Bank, 2000). Juxtaposed with increasing unemployment and declining economic opportunities in cities, the migration of the rural population to cities has resulted in the urban areas accumulating more than their fair share of the jobless, the poor and the vulnerable. Considering that urbanization in Southern Africa has 'almost been universally followed by pockets of concentrated poverty' (Caldas de Castro, 2006:92), the continued movement of people to urban areas in the region raises serious concerns about the transfer of poverty to urban areas with little or no amelioration. Yet studies on food security in the region continue to be dominated by work in the rural areas (Oyefara, 2007). Even famine early warning systems have a largely rural focus owing to 'a limited appreciation of hunger problems in urban areas' (Moseley, 2001:81). This situation has resulted in the dearth of information on how the urban poor access their food and cope with food shortages in adverse urban environments.

The neglect of urban areas in the literature on food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa can be traced to the influence of development theories whose underlying assumption is that cities are inherently better off economically than rural areas (Maxwell, 2006). Most prominent among these theories are the modernization and urban bias theories[10]. Modernization theory postulated that urbanization would drive development and improve people's lives as had happened during Europe's industrialization. In Southern Africa, however, urbanization has often taken place independent of industrialization (Bryceson, 2006). Whereas in the developed world, migration and the consequent urbanization was linked to a rise in agricultural productivity and industrialization, the African scenario has mostly seen migration being 'fuelled by a failure of agricultural policies or regional conflict' (Commission for Africa, 2005:219). In the cities, the few job opportunities that have been created have been dwarfed by the sheer magnitude of urban population increase. Most migrants have therefore ended up being unemployed or underemployed with little or no income to meet their daily food requirements (Stevens *et al.*, 2006). Thus, while the improved urban lives implied by the modernization theory have largely been absent for the

[10] While these theories are just highlighted here, a more detailed and engaged discussion is provided in sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 in Chapter Two.

majority of African urbanites, the theory marginalized the issues of urban poverty and food insecurity which are central to this thesis.

Urban bias theory shifted the emphasis of development from the economic to the political by arguing that development policies in the developing world systematically favour the politically vocal, articulate, organized, and powerful urbanites at the expense of rural dwellers (Lipton, 1977; Nyerere, 1968). The theory posits that in order to appease the restive urban population, government (through a series of 'price twists') buys agricultural products from rural areas at low prices. The process leaves farmers poor, but affords urbanites access to cheap subsidized food. Consequently, rural areas end up containing most of the poverty as 'urban bias' leads to substantially worse rural than urban outcomes (Lipton, 2005, 1977). In a bid to correct the perceived distortions of urban bias, development initiatives in Southern Africa tilted heavily towards rural areas. Such a situation created and solidified a 'contemporary blindness' towards poverty and food insecurity problems in the city (Maxwell, 2005:8) and therefore worsened the actual urban conditions. This thesis aims to narrow the information gap by investigating how the urban poor survive and meet their food needs in the challenging urban environment.

As the urbanization process in sub-Saharan Africa continues unabated, it has become clear that the highly developed and economically advantaged urban areas envisaged by modernization theorists may be illusory. What is certain, however, is that the towns and cities of the region are increasingly becoming centres of extreme poverty (Owuor, 2006; Potts and Mutambirwa, 1998). Migrants that have evaded rural poverty and moved to urban areas are being engulfed by extreme deprivation in cities (Potts, 2006). The failure of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), macro-economic trade imbalances, global recession and global food price hikes, have all contributed to the worsening of the economic situation in most urban areas of the region. Thus this urban crisis provokes important questions about urban poverty and the consequent challenges for household food security. As Crush and Frayne (2009:1) point out, 'the food security challenges facing the urban poor, and the factors that directly or inadvertently enable or constrain urban food supply, access, distribution and consumption, can no longer be wished away or

marginalized'. Rather the situation demands an in-depth understanding of the vulnerability of the urban poor to food insecurity and urban poverty. The next section therefore deals with the intimate linkages between urban poverty and urban household food insecurity.

1.3 Urban Poverty and Household Food Insecurity

Over 1.4 billion people in the developing world are estimated to be living in extreme poverty (World Bank, 2008). In the global South, between 300 and 500 million urbanites are estimated to be living in absolute poverty, representing about 40 percent of all poorer people and 25 percent of the urban population (Jones and Corbridge, 2010). Acknowledging the enormity of the poverty problem, all the United Nations member states signed the Millennium Declaration and adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 which, among other things, set a target to halve the number of people living in poverty by 2015 (United Nations, 2000). The 2007 Millennium Development Goals Report indicates that this goal will not be met in sub-Saharan Africa (United Nations, 2007a). In this region, are found some of the world's highest levels of urban poverty, reaching over 50 percent of the urban population in countries such as Angola, Chad, Niger, and Sierra Leone (Satterthwaite, 2004; Hinrichsen *et al.,* 2002).

For Southern Africa the situation is also critical as urban poverty vies with rural poverty in its ubiquity. At the end of 2006, over 50 percent of the region's population was estimated to be living below the poverty datum line of US$1 per day and about 314 million people were classified as extremely poor (Crush *et al*., 2007; World Bank, 2006). Southern Africa is the only region in the world where the absolute numbers of those living in poverty has increased in the last decade (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2010). The depth of poverty may even be worse than these figures portray, given that most of the poverty statistics are income-based and do not adequately account for the larger numbers of people who are impoverished in terms of inadequate housing, sanitation and clean water.

In Ethiopia the poor are derogatorily known as 'those who cook water' while in Zimbabwe they are those who have 'poverty that lays eggs' (Commission for Africa, 2005:94-95), indicating the vicious cycle in which the poor are trapped. In the economic development

literature, there has been a tendency to neglect the experience and perception of poverty and to reduce the concept to a uni-dimensional issue of income (Owuor, 2006). The most commonly accepted monetary measures of poverty at a global scale are the US$1/day (extremely poor) and US$2/day (moderately poor) (Frayne and Pendleton, 2009:12). Van Vuuren (2003), however, argues that poverty is multi-dimensional and cannot be adequately gauged by monetary measures alone.

The word "poverty" is usually used to describe a material or non-material situation of an entity, be it a person, a group, an organization or an entire society (Swiatkowski, 2002). It denotes the absence of elements that are considered critical to the sustenance of human life. Narayan *et al* (2000) define poverty as the lack of resources that are necessary for material well-being. These resources can be non-material (such as self-confidence, respect and love) and material including the entitlements required for economic and biological survival and to ward off forms of deprivation like hunger, malnutrition, homelessness, poor health and low consumption (Swiatkowski, 2002). The poor are therefore those who live with hunger, thirst, homelessness, sickness, illiteracy, ill-health, exclusion and general insecurity. The various dimensions of poverty include many aspects of human capabilities: economic (income, livelihoods, work), human (health, education), political (empowerment, rights), socio-cultural (status, dignity) and protective (insecurity, risk, vulnerability) (OECD, 2001). Poverty therefore occurs when the household is unable to command sufficient resources that guarantee the consumption of sufficient goods and services to achieve a minimum level of welfare (Rakodi, 2002a). It also entails being more vulnerable to crises and shocks as well as having little or no capacity to recover. Factors that preclude households from recovering and therefore reduces resilience may be economic, social, political and/or, cultural.

Although much has been written about poverty in the rural areas, the discourse on urban poverty is relatively recent (Nelson, 1999). This has largely been due to the conceptualization of the urban area as a more developed, homogeneous geographic area with no economic differentiation among its citizens. Nelson (1999:3) clearly brings this point across by saying:

> *During the colonial era…those migrating to the cities were often defined as the fortunate, the progressive and the upwardly mobile, no matter how difficult their lives might have been when they arrived there.*

Households in the urban areas were therefore generally deemed to be economically well off, well-fed and more knowledgeable of nutritional issues. Few scholars viewed urban areas as part of an economy, which, besides offering jobs, also created unemployment, prostitution and delinquency (Illife, 1987). Such 'romantic' conceptualizations of the city made urban poverty relatively invisible and absent from most development agendas. Jones and Corbridge (2010) point out that such 'romanticism' still persists in some quarters. For example, the Commission for Africa Report of 2005 only makes its first specific mention of urban poverty on page 220, despite the fact that the Commission spells out at the outset that its task is to 'define the challenges facing Africa, and to provide clear recommendations on how to support the changes needed to reduce poverty' (Commission for Africa, 2005:1).

Illife's (1987) ground-breaking work on poverty in African cities played a major role in the inclusion of urban areas in academic poverty discourse. Illife amply demonstrated that poverty existed in cities and that for the urban poor, poverty entails living with multiple and cumulative deprivations where one dimension of poverty is often the cause or contributor to another. In the urban context, household poverty and vulnerability has been related to four distinctive characteristics of urban life: a) vulnerability stemming from lack of community and inter-household mechanisms for social security; b) urban environmental hazards stemming from the hazardous location of settlements, exposure to multiple pollutants, inadequate garbage collection, overcrowding and contaminated food and water; c) vulnerability stemming from intervention of the state and police, police harassment and corruption as well as an unsympathetic bureaucracy; and d) commoditization, where reliance on the cash economy makes the poor vulnerable to fluctuating prices of basic goods and services (Moser *et al.,* 1996; Wratten, 1995). Apart from food, some of the expenses that households have to meet in the urban environment include costs for housing, water, electricity, transport, health and garbage collection (Satherthwaite and Tacoli, 2002). Thus, because urban dwellers have multiple draws on their income and purchase

most of their food, poverty immediately translates into food insecurity (Falola and Salm, 2004).

By virtue of living in a 'purchasing environment', urban households normally require more income for survival than their rural counterparts (Battersby-Lennard *et al*., 2009; Parnell, 1998). In Tanzania, for example, Kironde (1999) found that the income needed for 2000 calories/day was 98.2 percent higher in Dar es Salaam than in the rural areas. Such observations underlie the fact that living in the city and maintaining household food security depends not only on a functioning urban labour market, but a reliable one as well. The absence of a dependable and secure formal wage employment therefore increases household vulnerability to poverty and reduces resilience when household income suddenly fluctuates due to job loss or declining real wages. In the absence of social protection measures, as in most of Southern Africa, urban households are likely to experience increased food insecurity as they are left to face the vagaries of the urban environment on their own. Rising costs of non-food items such as rent and transport compound the situation as households are forced to cut back on food expenses (Crush *et al.,* 2007) thereby rendering them more food insecure. Worse still, food costs per unit in most poor urban neighborhoods are higher as food is often sold through small-scale outlets which are more expensive than larger supermarkets (Swift and Hamilton, 2003; Atkinson, 1995). In some cases, even physical proximity to food sources and social as well as infrastructural services does not guarantee actual access or affordability for the urban poor.

Despite the fact that the problems facing the urban poor are becoming all too apparent, the current global and national response to food insecurity largely reflects a rural bias. A report from a high level Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) conference on world food security held in Rome during the 2008 world price crisis clearly illustrates this point. The conference report, while acknowledging that 'urban populations are more exposed to rising food prices' (p31) and contending that 'the immediate need is to prevent human suffering due to hunger and malnutrition' (p43) goes on to suggest that 'the focus for the longer term must be on generating and enabling farmers to apply sustainable technologies

for agricultural intensification' (p43) (FAO, 2008). It further proposes 'designing policies to re-launch and revitalize rural economies over the medium term' (FAO, 2008:43). No mention is made of how the food insecurity problems of the vulnerable urban poor will be tackled. As Crush and Frayne (2009:6) point out, the assumption seems to be that developing agriculture, particularly rural agriculture, will solve the food problems of the urban poor by reducing the cost of food. This approach however is problematic, given that urban food security involves not only food supply issues, but also issues of access, prices, environmental hazards and a variety of other factors.

Although the practice of farming in urban areas is well documented (e.g. Murambadoro, 2007; Mbiba, 1994; Mazambani, 1982), the contribution of this activity to overall household food security for the poor cannot be taken for granted. While FAO (2007) estimates indicate that as many as 200 million urban residents worldwide may be producing food that accounts for 15 percent of the total world food output, the overall contribution of this activity to food security in urban areas of sub-Saharan Africa is still not known. There is comparatively little enthusiasm in policy circles for enhancing urban food security through assistance for 'urban farmers' (Jones and Corbridge, 2010). Hence, as Swift and Hamilton (2005) point out, preliminary evidence indicates that urban farming tends not to be undertaken by the poorest families or recent vulnerable immigrants as they usually have no access to land. More often, those that end up cultivating are the poor working class, and those more established in urban areas for they have the initial investment needed to start farming (Gutman, 1987). The challenge is to understand the extent to which the urban poor have recourse to farming in the urban environment and how such a strategy may be contributing to the overall food security of the urban household.

While the preceding discussion has highlighted issues that are critical to food security in the urban areas, care should be taken not to completely detach towns from rural areas or to view food security issues in isolation, for 'urban' and 'rural' are not entirely dichotomous categories. According to Potter and Unwin, (1995:67), the differences that characterize rural and urban areas in social, economic, political, demographic and behavioural terms

simply reflect two sides of the same coin. There is therefore a need to look at the rural-urban nexus and understand how the relationships that exist at the household level play a role in urban food security. These linkages are elaborated on in the next section.

1.4 Transcending the Rural-Urban Divide: Migration and Food Security

Urban and rural areas are often portrayed in literature as separate geographic entities. In spite of the evidence of mutual linkages that exist between them, regional planning in most countries still considers rural and urban development as economically independent, and governments plan for them separately. The reality however, is that these areas are not detached from one another. Rather they are linked in an umbilical exchange of people, money, food, goods, technology, information and ideas (Potter and Unwin, 1995). A variety of studies (e.g. Tacoli, 2006; Owuor, 2005; Oucho, 1996) have shown that most urban dwellers in Africa live in a dual system of multi-spatial households, one in the city and another in the rural area. Across the region, the same practice has been observed in Namibia (Frayne, 2001), in South Africa (Smit, 1998), in Tanzania (Tripp, 1996) and in Zimbabwe (Potts, 2008). Although such a system is not peculiar to Africa, it is probably in this continent that the links between the two remain important in cultural and economic life as most urbanites maintain strong links with their rural areas which they consider to be their 'home' (Tacoli, 2006; Potts, 2000).

In most sub-Saharan African countries, people migrate to town to work in urban areas and go back to the rural areas when they retire. This circular migration has been highlighted by Crush *et al* (2007) who note that many urban residents in the sub-continent see themselves as only being temporarily in the city to avail themselves of economic gain, education or health services. Urban dwellers interviewed in Nairobi, Kenya reported being in the urban area to generate money and planned to go back to their rural areas to 'rest' upon retiring (Andreasen, 1990). Most of these urban dwellers own pieces of land in the rural areas. In Botswana, Lesetedi (2003) found that about 64 percent of the urban households interviewed owned land in the rural areas. In Durban, South Africa, 39 percent of surveyed households reported owning homes in the rural areas (Smit, 1998). During the course of their stay in the urban areas and for the duration of their employment, most of these urban

dwellers invest in their rural homes. Such investments include building modern houses, buying property and livestock. In Lesetedi's (2003) study mentioned above, 63 percent of the interviewed households indicated owning livestock in the rural areas: some inherited, but most as part of the investments made during their labour active years in town. Thus in addition to the social linkages, there are resource flows from the urban to the rural areas. While these resource flows where much stronger in the 1960s and 1970s when urban households typically earned enough to suffice their urban needs and send some money to their rural homesteads (Moseley, 2001), declining conditions and opportunities in today's African urban centres are reducing these flows to the village.

In Zimbabwe, the practice of circular migration dates back to the colonial period when male migrant labourers would work and live in urban areas, but leave their wives and children in the rural areas, whom they would periodically visit (Potts, 1997). Although the coming of independence removed restrictions on living in the city, circular migration continued especially after the introduction of the International Monetary Fund backed Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) when urban life became expensive and the rural home became an important safety net for the urban household (Potts and Mutambirwa, 1991). Urban migrants surveyed by Potts (2006) in Harare between 1994 and 2001 reported feeling increasingly economically insecure in town and less likely to anticipate that their stay in town would be permanent or long-term. A significant proportion of urban dwellers in Zimbabwe thus maintain a strong attachment to a particular rural area which they consider to be their home.

Additionally, because of the patriarchal system that is predominant in the country, most men born in the rural areas, regardless of where they eventually become domiciled, have birthrights to rural arable and grazing lands. They therefore maintain strong links with their rural homes where they own land, livestock and other property. Investing in the rural areas is seen by urban dwellers as insurance for the future. Thus Potts and Mutambirwa's (1991), findings in a survey on post-colonial rural-urban migrants to Harare provides tentative evidence that some migrants were retaining their rural linkages because of the need for security in future when they got old and retired or became unemployed or sick

and were therefore unable to work and maintain an acceptable urban lifestyle. The practice of maintaining two homes seems to continue to the present as those in the rural areas travel occasionally to the urban areas, while urbanites, in turn, periodically visit the rural areas for holidays, funerals, ceremonies and rituals, taking with them industrial based goods and products to families and relatives.

While huge income differences between the urban and the rural areas in the past made sure that net resource flows were directed to the rural areas, there is some tentative evidence that indicates that these resource flows may be changing as the economic decline experienced in sub-Saharan Africa during the past three decades has drastically narrowed the gap between urban and rural incomes (Gelderblom, 2005; Jamal and Weeks, 1988). According to Moseley (2001:81), the favored status of the urban resident in most of the region has been eroded considerably since the 1970s, particularly during the period of structural adjustment. In Zimbabwe's case, in addition to the negative impacts of the economic structural adjustment programme, a decade long economic crisis precipitated by political instability seems to have almost closed this gap (Chimhowu, 2009). Given evidence of the 'urbanization of poverty' in the sub-Saharan African region (Mehta, 2001), the possibility of reduced flows and/or even reverse flows from the rural areas is thus not altogether far-fetched.

While the transfer of remittances from urban to rural households is now well-documented, little is known about the transfer of commodities from the rural to the urban areas (Frayne, 2001). Even where these linkages are now being acknowledged, the social and economic context within which these exchanges occur remains largely unarticulated and poorly understood. Particularly in Southern Africa, where the rural-urban linkages remain part of the urbanization process (Potts and Mutambirwa, 1997), an understanding of the social and economic inter-dependence between urban and rural areas may be key to understanding how poor urban households survive in urban areas during times of a severe crisis such as that being experienced in Zimbabwe. In Namibia, Frayne (2004) established that rural food sources in that country played an important role in household food security in urban areas. Likewise, preliminary studies done by Potts (1997) in Zimbabwe, suggest

that households with access to rural production may be remitting increasing amounts of food to urban areas. These rural links may thus be serving as safety valves and welfare options for urban people who are vulnerable to economic fluctuations in the city. They therefore need to be thoroughly examined to see how far they are impacting on urban household food security.

Within the context of Zimbabwe's economic crisis, the nature and scale of linkages between the urban and the rural area should not be taken for granted. This is because the scale of urban poverty as well as the depressed economy is likely to affect the capacity of urban dwellers to remit to rural areas. Some rural dwellers interviewed by Bryceson and Mbara (2003) reported that while they were sustaining urban households by sending them food regularly, they were increasingly receiving fewer groceries in return, suggesting that the net flow of resources between the areas could be reversing. While this observation may point to the increasing importance of rural food resources to the sustenance of urban dwellers, there is a need to investigate the extent to which urban households are relying on these food sources for survival. This is important considering Gelderblom (2005) and Meagher's (1997) assertion that too much poverty in the city may also disable urban households from getting back to rural areas to collect food.

In addition to facilitating the movement of food from the rural areas, linkages between the rural and urban areas enables the exchange of people. Traditionally, the existence of well developed physical and social infrastructure in the city served to draw rural people into the urban area for jobs, health and education. The worsening economic conditions in many sub-Saharan African cities, however, seem to have initiated new trends where urban household members are returning to the village to live there. In Zimbabwe, for example, it has been suggested that some households are sending some of their members to live in the rural areas in response to the economic crisis (Muzvidziwa, 2001). Some writers (e.g. Owuor, 2005) have argued that such emerging trends may be part of the urban household's way of relieving itself of pressure in the same way that the rural household is bound to send some members to the city during lean years.

Besides rural-urban linkages, a new trend has also begun to be observed in Zimbabwe in the past decade or so. This concerns an increasing number of people who have migrated overseas and to neighbouring countries, currently estimated to be over 3 million (Crush and Tevera, 2010; Tevera, 2008). Most of these migrants are resident in the Republic of South Africa[11], Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and the United States. It has been suggested that large-scale migrations such as these are part of the stressed households' strategy to diversify the income portfolio and alleviate liquidity constraints through remittances (Mendola, 2006; Giesbert, 2007). International migrants are estimated to remit more than US$100 billion per year globally (Ellis, 2003). While Adam and Page (2005) argue that such remittances - whether in cash or in kind - are bound to reduce the level, depth, and severity of poverty in households from which the migrants have emerged, not much is yet known about the contribution of these remittances to food security in urban areas of Southern Africa in general, and in Zimbabwe's towns in particular. This is in spite of the fact that Zimbabwean migrants are estimated to be sending home between US$360 million and US$490 million annually (Tevera, 2008:19-21). Thus there is need to understand the extent to which international remittances are contributing to the survival of poor households in the urban areas.

1.5 Thesis Problem and Research Objectives

Though limited in their focus on the food security situation of the urban poor, a number of studies that have been cited so far in this review have raised a number of important points concerning survival in the urban areas. The first point is that under the current socio-economic crisis in Zimbabwe, the livelihoods of the urban poor are likely to be constructed in the informal sector, which, although traditionally viewed as a source of heightened vulnerability may just as well prove to be the vital source of survival for most poor households in the city. The second point is that transfers of food and money from the rural areas may be playing a more significant role in urban household food security than is currently acknowledged. Third, is that sending household members to the rural areas may be part of the urban household's survival strategy to reduce costs. And, fourthly, that

[11] It is generally agreed that while Zimbabwean migrants are now scattered all over the globe, the majority of them, numbering over a million are resident in South Africa (Crush and Tevera; Robyn, 2008; Tevera, 2008; Makina, 2007).

international migration, previously unknown to households in Zimbabwe could be playing a significant role in urban household food security. But, how prevalent are these practices? How viable are the livelihood activities constructed in the informal sector to the survival of poor urban households? To what extent is the urban household's access to resources in the rural areas helping to ameliorate food insecurity in the city? How significant is the contribution of remittances from international migrants in alleviating the problems of poverty and food shortages in urban households? Teasing out these linkages will substantially contribute to a holistic understanding of how such relationships and linkages between rural and urban areas as well as the international world and their embededness in the migration process contribute to survival of the urban household.

The aim of this thesis, therefore, is to examine the urban poor's vulnerability to food insecurity and to analyze the strategies that these households adopt to enhance their resilience under conditions of adversity in the urban environment.

To address this thesis problem, the following research objectives were formulated:

a) To determine the levels of food insecurity among poor urban households in Harare.
b) To assess the vulnerability of urban households to food insecurity and determine the factors responsible for increasing this vulnerability.
c) To identify and explore the coping strategies employed by poor urban households to increase their resilience to food insecurity.
d) To explore the contribution of rural-urban transfers to urban household food security.
e) To assess the extent to which international migration contributes to urban household food security.

1.6 Organization of Thesis

Chapter One locates the research in its scholarly context by presenting a snapshot in the life of one Harare household and using this as a lens through which issues of urban poverty, deprivation and the consequent food insecurity are depicted and discussed. The chapter

articulates the thesis problem and the research objectives of the thesis, and concludes with an outline of each chapter.

The next chapter, Chapter Two, locates urban food security within the broader framework of migration, urbanization and development discourse. Three theories, namely: modernization theory, urban bias theory and the urbanization of poverty thesis are discussed. In addition, the chapter dwells on livelihoods discourse and discusses its value in helping to understand urban livelihoods and household food security. The chapter concludes by engaging in an evolving debate on the use of the household as a unit for data collection and analysis in food security studies.

Chapter Three gives an overview of the study area and traces the history of the country's urbanization process from the colonial period to independence. This historical approach is adopted in order to provide a context for understanding the current urban food insecurity situation. It then discusses post-independence urbanization and reviews the economic and political situation, particularly in relation to the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) and Operation Murambatsvina. The chapter argues that these issues have collectively acted to negatively impact on the livelihoods of the urban poor who find it increasingly difficult to access services and feed themselves.

Chapter Four discusses the methodological approach used to investigate urban household food security in Harare. It starts by describing the study site and then discusses the research design, which combines qualitative and quantitative methods in a bid to understand urban household food security more holistically. Qualitative data collection consisted of in-depth household case studies and key informant interviews. The quantitative survey involved the administration of a standardized questionnaire to selected households. The chapter also elaborates on issues of validity and reliability of the collected data, ethical considerations as well as the study challenges and limitations.

Chapter Five determines the levels of household food insecurity among poor households in Harare. It then discusses the numerous factors that are responsible for increasing urban household vulnerability to food insecurity. These factors, most of which are beyond the control of the urban household, include persistent food insufficiency on the local market, increasing global food prices, high inflation rates as well as the country's protracted socio-political instability that has progressively served to undermine the recovery and performance of the national economy and pushed prices of food and other essential urban services out of reach of the poor.

Chapter Six explores the various strategies adopted by urban households to cope with food shortages and other related shocks. It demonstrates that these households resort to multiple as well as multi-spatial coping strategies that are meant to safeguard and perpetuate their survival. Most of these strategies, which are constructed in the informal sector, underpin the livelihoods of the urban poor in contradiction to orthodox development perspectives that consider this economy as 'saturated'. The strategies are adopted, not sequentially in any order, but in parallel as part of the household's larger portfolio of multi- coping strategies. It is the household's ability to organize these strategies that is key to its survival in the challenging urban environment.

Chapter Seven focuses on the role of migration in urban household food security. It assesses the extent to which social and economic relations of reciprocity between the rural and the urban area contribute to the survival of households in the urban area. The chapter demonstrates that the means for survival for the urban household transcend the urban boundaries as these relationships make it possible for money, food and people to flow between rural and urban households. In addition, the chapter also argues that international migration has become an important survival strategy as the urban household receives remittances of money, food and goods, which are integral to its survival and reducing vulnerability to food insecurity.

Chapter Eight synthesizes the research findings. It then summarizes the thesis's substantive contributions to the field of *urban food security* which demonstrate that urban

livelihoods are highly evolved systems of coping and are more complex than the livelihood models show, which largely reflect rural realities. The last section of the chapter discusses directions for further research in urban food security.

CHAPTER TWO

MIGRATION, URBANIZATION AND URBAN LIVELIHOODS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the theoretical issues surrounding urbanization, urban livelihoods and food security. By interrogating the processes that have driven and shaped society's transformation from rural to urban communities, the chapter aims to provide a theoretical foundation for understanding food security in urban areas. Three theories, namely, modernization theory, urban bias theory and the urbanization of poverty thesis are discussed. In addition, the chapter also discusses livelihoods discourse and the value of the approach to urban livelihoods and food security.

2.2 Migration, Urbanization and Development

The transition from a rural to a predominantly urban society is a complex process with controversial and contradictory aspects (Tannerfeldt and Ljung, 2006). Various views are therefore found in the literature on the role that cities play in development. Advocates of city growth point out that there is a generally observed positive correlation between percentage urban and GDP per capita (Bravo, 2008). For these advocates, urban centres are 'engines of economic growth and social development' (Potter, 1990:1). Centres that draw in human resources and raw materials, coupled with superior urban infrastructure, spur industrial and commercial development (UN-HABITAT, 2008). They provide economies of scale and agglomeration, as well as the economic and social infrastructure within which many businesses and entrepreneurship are incubated and nurtured (Tannerfeldt and Ljung, 2006). Above all, cities are seen as agents of development from which progress eventually spreads to rural and peripheral areas (United Nations, 2001). In light of the World Bank's finding that urban areas generate 55 percent of gross national product (GNP) in low-income countries, 73 percent in middle-income countries, and 85 percent in high income countries (World Bank, 1998:25), cities are often seen as the nerve centres of the national economy through which the nation's welfare will be determined and hence something to be encouraged (Knight and Gappard, 2001).

In as much as the city is viewed in a positive way, there is also literature in which urban areas are viewed with suspicion. This literature (e.g. Dumont and Mottin, 1983; Stren, 1975; Nyerere, 1968; Lipton, 1968) observes that cities of the developing world, particularly in Africa are not serving as engines of economic growth and social transformation as most countries have urbanized without growth. Africa's pattern of urbanization is therefore argued to be partly a result of distorted trading and food pricing incentives in urban areas that encourage migrants to move to the city rather than in response to opportunities for more productive employment (Njoh, 2003). This has resulted in towns and cities characterized by high levels of poverty and deprivation, as well as inadequate housing and other infrastructure. It is in this vein that African urbanization has variously been referred to as 'excessive urbanization' 'parasitic urbanism' and 'premature urbanization' (Obeng-Odoom, 2009; Ravallion *et al*., 2007) that ought to be controlled.

Further compounding the debate on the merits and demerits of urbanization is the fact that there is no consensus among urban scholars on the nature of the link between urbanization and development. While the link is undeniable, 'the causal relationships remain ill-defined and contested' (Garland *et al,* 2007:11). Debate on the issue conjures puzzles akin to the chicken-and egg conundrum (Njoh, 2003), the question centering on whether urbanization causes development or vice-versa. A good example of this conundrum is shown by Polèse who asserts that on one hand 'urbanization is an inevitable outcome of economic development' and on the other that 'no nation in modern history has managed to attain sustained levels of per capita income growth without a massive transfer of population from land to city' (Polèse, 1997:1). While urbanization may have spurred development in the urbanization process of the developed world, literature suggests that such a relationship is not tenable in the developing world, particularly in Southern Africa, where development seems to have been 'decoupled from urbanization' (Watson, 2007:208). Whereas in the developed world migrants were 'pulled' to the city by the availability of jobs, in Southern Africa the situation has been different, with migrants being 'pushed' from the land because of poverty (Njoh, 2003).

These contradictory views on urbanization are paralleled in development theory which has been equally ambivalent about the role and impact of urbanization in the developing world (Gelderblom and Kok, 1994). Furthermore, they have resulted in the proliferation of development policies that have been 'more diverse than they are made out to be in development textbooks' (Corbridge and Jones, 2006:5). Amongst these varied development perspectives, however, three general theories have had a major impact on the developing world. These are the modernization, dependency and the urban bias theories. This thesis focuses on the theories of modernization and urban bias as these seem to have had the most impact on the role of urbanization in development thinking and practice, particularly in Southern Africa.

2.2.1 Modernization Theory

Modernization theory arose out of the desire to understand how less developed traditional societies could develop over time, and how industrialization could be used as the agent of change in these societies (Gelderblom and Kok, 1994). According to modernizationists, urbanization is part of a natural process of transformation from agrarian to industrialized society (Bradshaw and Noonan, 1997). This transformation is envisaged to follow a development path similar to that experienced by developed countries through the introduction of modern methods of production and industrial efficiency (Gugler, 1997; Sjaastad, 1962). Hence development becomes synonymous with urbanization (Rostow, 1960) as there is no urbanization without development. Consequently, the development paradigm that arose in the 1950s advocated the transformation of the developing world from a rural-based agrarian society to an urban-based industrial one. Development practice arising out of such theorization preoccupied itself with encouraging and facilitating rapid urbanization, with little regard being paid to the eventual economic conditions of the migrants in the city. The assumption that the rural-urban migrant would always be better off in the urban area and the inadequate attention paid to the possibility of the migrant becoming poorer in the city, are the genesis of the lack of attention to urban food insecurity problems. Only a few theorists acknowledged the likelihood of urban poverty, but viewed this only as a necessary initial stage out of which urban wealth would emerge and the poverty immediately disappear.

A strong body of work (e.g. Brinley, 1974; Lewis, 1954) lent weight to this modernization paradigm by arguing that there was significant unemployment in the countryside where rural workers with marginal productivity of close to zero, could be sent to the modern urban-based industrial sector at zero cost to positively contribute to the overall economic growth while improving their own standards of living. By migrating from regions of low marginal productivity to regions with higher marginal productivity, this labour would thus 'increases the total output of the society' (Bradshaw, 1987:225) leading to increased development. Accordingly, migration from rural to urban areas was viewed as a positive feature to be encouraged (Rostow, 1971, 1960). In those decades, the level of urbanization was therefore taken as a proxy for the level of development (Sharma, 2004). In cementing this view, Todaro (1969:139) argued that 'it is a well-known fact of economic history that material progress usually has been associated with the gradual but continuous transfer of economic agents from rural based traditional agriculture to urban oriented modern industry'. The movement from rural to urban areas was thus seen not only as a spatial movement, but also as structural economic development, with benefits accruing to the migrants in urban areas as well. Within these urban areas, questions of food insecurity were thus not expected to arise as incomes from industrial occupations were presumed to be enough to purchase enough food for the urban populace.

While this theorization may hold true for the European and American experience, where urbanization took place within the context of industrialisation, job creation and increases in rural agricultural productivity (Frayne, 2001:32), the urbanization process in most of the developing world has not followed the same trajectory. In Southern Africa, for example, the urbanization process has often taken place independent from industrialization (Bryceson, 2006; Simon, 1997; Wekwete, 1992). Overall, economic growth for the region has generally declined since the mid-1970's (Kanji, 1996; Amis, 1990). Only 9 percent of Africa's labour force was employed in industry in 1999, compared to 18 percent in Asia, which has seen comparable rates of urbanization (World Bank, 2000). To make matters worse, the 22 million new jobs projected to be created by the region's industries between 1985 and 2020 fall far short of the 380 million necessary to keep unemployment below 10 percent (Falola and Salm, 2004). Furthermore, real wages and per capita incomes have consistently

declined since the 1970s (Nsiah, 2005; Drimie and Mini, 2003). Compounding the situation is the finding by the World Bank (2000) that the average African country's GDP per capita had been dropping by an average of 0.7 percent per year while the urban population has been growing at an average of around 4 percent annually. The sheer numerical increase in the region's urban population has greatly exceeded new job opportunities created by the urban formal sector (Gugler, 1988). Hence, most urban dwellers and new immigrants have ended up being unemployed or underemployed in the informal sector (Stevens *et al*., 2006). This situation has seen the emergence and consolidation of a large body of urban poor who have little or no income to meet their daily food requirements.

According to neo-classical economic migration theories, the major cause of migration is the differential between rural and urban incomes (Berliner 1977; Todaro, 1969). Worsening economic conditions in urban areas, combined with the ever-increasing cost of living in the city, are therefore supposed to act as impediments to rural-urban migration (Rogers and Williamson 1982). In spite of these potential impediments, urbanization in the developing regions, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, continues to increase dramatically (Bradshaw, 1987; Rogers 1982). Questions have thus been raised as to why migration to cities has continued in the face of declining urban employment opportunities and mounting food problems among the urban poor. A number of neo-classical scholars (e.g. Todaro, 1969:138; Rogers and Williamson, 1982) have tried to explain this apparent contradiction by arguing that migrants respond not only to the actual wage differences between rural and urban area, but to the expected differential. This means that rural migrants can be expected to continue to move to urban areas as long as their expected urban wages exceed their current rural income (Todaro, 1977). In Southern Africa this therefore translates into the continued movement of people into the urban areas for as long as this expected differential persists, thereby exacerbating an already precarious food insecurity situation. Given the fact that rural food production in the region has largely remained non-mechanized, producing little surplus (Frayne, 2001), a deepening food insecurity situation becomes inevitable in urban areas. Yet modernization theory has always assumed that rural-urban migrants would end up being better off at their destination than they were in their place of origin.

Conceptualizations of African urban areas as more developed homogeneous geographic entities with no economic differentiation among its citizens initially rendered urban poverty relatively invisible. Development literature from the 1950s-1970s mostly deals with poverty only from the perspective of inequalities between poorer rural sectors and their richer urban counterparts. Various scholars (e.g. Potts, 2006; Haddard *et al.,* 1999; Simon, 1997; Amis, 1995; Rakodi, 1995) have shown, however, that huge inequalities do exist within sectors of the urban economy and between groups of people in the urban areas. In fact, inequalities within many cities of the developing world have deepened between the rich and the poor, the 'included' and the 'excluded' and the 'formal' and the 'informal' city (Perlman and Sheehan, 2008). In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, 72 percent of the urban population is estimated to be living in slums owing to poverty (UN-HABITAT, 2006:1). In these urban areas, 'poverty and unemployment are extreme, living conditions are particularly bad, and survival is supported predominantly by the informal sector, which tends in many parts to be survivalist rather than entrepreneurial' (Watson, 2007: 208). Under such conditions of extreme material deprivation, the goal of household food security for the urban poor becomes unattainable.

2.2.2 The Urban Bias Theory

Contrary to the views of modernizationists, urban bias theorists (e.g. Dumont and Mottin, 1983; Bates, 1981; Lipton, 1977; Stren, 1975) do not subscribe to the notion that urbanization is a natural process which all countries go through in their development path. Rather, they argue that urbanization is a product of biased government policies that systematically and disproportionately channel most valuable national resources to metropolitan areas, inevitably 'pulling' rural residents to urban areas. Although Lipton (1977) coined the term urban bias in his essay '*Why Poor People Stay Poor: Urban Bias in World Development*', the theory's underlying argument that urban areas benefit disproportionately at the expense of the rural areas was first enunciated in the Arusha

Declaration[12]. Michael Lipton then sharpened the idea in the 1970s. Robert Bates (1981) and the World Bank (1981) developed it further in the context of sub-Saharan Africa where urban bias was said to be acute. Bates particularly helped to mainstream Lipton's work by providing incisive empirical commentaries on the ways in which governments used marketing boards to impoverish rural farmers while benefiting urban elites and wealthy farmers (Bates, 1988).

The emergence of urban bias theory was a result of dissatisfaction with the industrial-led development advocated by modernizationists. In spite of huge investments targeted at industry-led development, no significant industrialization had occurred and food shortages continued throughout the sub-continent. In addition, the benefits that were supposed to have filtered from the urban areas to the rest of the country had not materialized and rural areas continued to lag behind (World Bank, 1981). Even in the urban areas, meaningful development seemed to be absent. A number of development scholars therefore began to question the lack of economic development, particularly in Africa. Urban bias theory thus arose from a desire to explain why economic development was not occurring in the developing world, but more specifically to account for why poor people, especially those in the rural areas, remained poor.

At the forefront of this new development paradigm was Michael Lipton. His ideas and critique of 'urban bias' resonated with development economists who had begun to explore the prospects for 'agricultural-demand-led industrialization' (Corbridge and Jones, 2006:3). Lipton (1977) argued that the rural areas in the developing world were not developing because of the existence of biased policies that tended to favour urban development, with consequent disadvantages to farmers and rural communities (Tettey, 2005). Being geographically concentrated and strategically located in cities, the urbanites were able to organise quickly and exert their will on elected officials. This was in contrast to the

[12] In 1967, leaders of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) met in a small Tanzanian town of Arusha where their discussions culminated in the signing of the Arusha Declaration. This declaration warned that the real exploitation in a poor largely rural country like Tanzania might become that of the town dwellers exploiting the peasants (Gugler, 1997: Nyerere, 1968). This is therefore seen as the genesis of the urban bias theory.

'dispersed, largely illiterate, ethnically/tribally segmented rural sector which finds it difficult to defend its economic interests' and improve its welfare (Wegren, 2001:1). No longer neutral and being held 'hostage' by urban dwellers, governments therefore adopted policies[13] that protected urban dwellers while disadvantaging those in the rural areas. Even agricultural policy was seen as a by-product of political relations between governments and their urban constituents.

Urban-biased policies prompted migration from rural to urban areas as rural dwellers sought to take advantage of the favorable conditions created in the cities thereby increasing the size of urban areas (Bradshaw, 1987; Lipton, 1984). While making a positive contribution to the urban economy, migration to metropolitan centers robs the rural economy of its more skilled and innovative individuals, leaving the less forward-thinking behind (Lipton, 1980).

The overall impact of urban bias theory in sub-Saharan Africa was to re-orient development emphasis from urban to rural areas. Drawing from the theory, most governments became convinced that proper development in the region could only result from the development of rural areas. With the financial and technical support of agencies such as the World Bank, development capital was channeled to rural areas resulting in urban poverty literally disappearing from the overall development agenda of the region. Urban-bias theory was still very influential up to the late 1990s as it was reinforced in the mid-1980s by the World Bank and IMF funded structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). In a bid to remove the perceived distortions of urban bias and raise prices to market levels that benefit rural producers, SAPs removed subsidies given to urban consumers and permitted market forces to set prices. Hence urban-bias theory became one of the intellectual cornerstones of SAPs in Africa (Kok *et al*, 2001). However, in this bid to correct the abnormalities of urban bias, development efforts and initiatives, particularly in

[13] The ultimate aim for the implementation of such discriminatory policies was argued to be the desire by the ruling class to prevent any political challenge to their authority through urban unrest. Such a goal could only be achieved by reducing the cost of living in urban areas through provisioning urban dwellers with food and services at lower prices thereby silencing them politically-an achievement that could not be accomplished successfully through repression (Lipton, 1977).

Southern Africa, tilted heavily to rural areas to the detriment of urban areas (Maxwell, 2005). Thus, while SAPs negatively affected both urban and rural populations in the region, the cost of this adjustment was disproportionately borne by urban consumers (von Braun *et al*, 1993), who became captive to rising prices because of their reliance on food purchases. This is why SAPs became virtually synonymous with poverty and suffering in most urban areas of the region (Oxfam, 2002; Potts and Mutambirwa, 1998).

Another fundamental impact of urban bias theory was that problems of urban poverty, deprivation and food security virtually disappeared from policy debate in most countries of the region (Amis 1995; Moser 1995). Even in countries where food shortages manifested in food riots, the focus on food security only lasted as long as the riots themselves. Municipal and national governments seemed keener to respond with temporary *ad hoc* measures meant to buy political time than with long term measures seeking lasting solutions to food problems in the cities. While the late 1990s heralded the beginning of a reorientation of development research and practice to urban areas, there still lacks a sound understanding of how urban food insecurity can be solved. As Crush and Frayne (2009:1) argue, 'the complexity of the urban food security situation seems to prompt many governments, international agencies, donors, NGOs and researchers to prefer the conceptual and programming simplicity of "rural development" and "green revolutions" for smallholders'. The result is that urban food security, particularly the strategies that the poor adopt to meet their food needs and cope with food insecurity under conditions of extreme deprivation in the city, remain virtually unexplored. Given evidence that the urban poor are growing faster than the rest of the population (Ravallion *et al*, 2007; Mehta, 2001; Amis and Rakodi 1994), urban food security has therefore become a key developmental challenge in the sub-Saharan African region. In the next section, the discussion centers on the urbanization of poverty thesis and how this is likely to impact on food security problems in the urban areas.

2.2.3 Urbanization of Poverty

The foregoing discussion has indicated that development literature has historically focused on inequalities between poor rural and better-off urban populations. While Southern Africa's rural poverty still exceeds urban poverty, urban poverty rates are closer to rural rates than previously acknowledged (Wratten, 1995). Urban poverty rates in Mozambique, Malawi and Ethiopia, for example, are within 20 percent of rural rates, while approximately a third of the urban population in Madagascar and Zambia is constituted by the poor (Kessides, 2005). Should the projected urbanization trends continue without any fundamental change, it is likely that more than half of the region's people will be found in urban areas of the region within the next decade.

The World Bank (2008) reports that despite significant improvement in human development in the past two decades, extreme poverty in the developing world still persist. For economic and demographic reasons, poverty is increasingly concentrated in urban settlements. The structural adjustment programmes which have been introduced in most developing countries have had a disproportionate impact on the urban poor, due to rising food prices, declining real wages, redundancy in the formal labour market and reduced public expenditure on basic services and infrastructure (Moseley, 2001; Moser *et al,* 1993; World Bank, 1991). In 2002, for example, 746 million people in urban areas were living on less than US$2 a day (Ravallion, 2007:16). In developing countries especially, a large percentage of the urban population lives in overcrowded slums in environmentally degraded environments. They depend on 'precarious employment' in the informal sector where wages are usually low, working conditions poor and are alienated from shelter, jobs, clinics, schools, clean water, transport and other infrastructure (UN-HABITAT, 2006; Perlman and Sheehan, 2008). In addition, most of the urban poor have to contend with high crime rates and other social problems while being forced to pay considerably more for informally accessed services and foodstuffs (Garland *et al,* 2007; Watkins, 1995). In some cities, the cost of living is some 30 percent more than in rural areas, making it difficult for the urban poor to climb out of poverty (Battersby-Lennard *et al*, 2009). As a result of their inability to afford all their food through the formal market, the poor continue to grow some of their food on any available land in the cities. While urban farming is now often tolerated,

it is not officially recognized (Tibaijuka, 2009), and usually does not get any financial and technical support from officials to make it a viable enterprise to reduce urban poverty.

As a developing country phenomenon, urban poverty is now vying with rural poverty in its pervasiveness in Southern Africa. As the United Nations Population Fund (2007) observes, an outstanding feature of the 21st century urbanization is that it will largely be composed of poor people. Some researchers even believe that poverty is now an urban problem because of its depth and complexity. In the words of Piel (1995:58) 'the world's poor once huddled largely in rural areas…in the modern world they have gravitated to the cities'. This shifting of the poverty axis from rural to urban areas has been named the 'urbanization of poverty' thesis (Tibaijuka, 2009; Mehta, 2001; Amis, 1995).

Underlying the 'urbanization of poverty' thesis is the argument that 'far from being an upwardly mobile strategy, migration to cities has become a rural coping strategy of last resort' (Maxwell, 1998:12). Evidence in the literature from sub-Saharan Africa suggests that while earlier migrant movements to cities may have been solely attracted by rural and urban wage differentials, current migrations are also triggered by the need for migrants to diversify income sources by straddling both urban and rural sectors. The aim is to reduce the number of mouths to feed in the rural areas, irrespective of the whether the migrants will do better or worse in the city. For urbanization, this implies a rebuttal of aspects of the modernization doctrine that envisages, *a priori*, a better life for migrants to urban areas. By extension, this also challenges the notion of a household that is food secure simply by virtue of being spatially located in an urban area. In the same vein, given that most urban areas are both socially and spatially heterogeneous, the urbanization of poverty thesis questions the duality embedded in modernization theory which views development in terms of the rural-urban dichotomy.

The urban poor, being marginalized from life and opportunity in the formal city, are usually 'invisible' to their national governments who are reluctant to do anything to improve their welfare (Garland *et al*, 2007). While they live within city boundaries, their condition is sometimes equal to or worse than their rural counterparts. But, because of the lack of

disaggregated poverty data, the urban poor are usually assumed to be relatively better off as statistics that do exist often mask the severity of their socio-economic conditions. In isolated cases where disaggregated data is available, it has been shown that there is great depth and diversity in the extent of poverty within the city (Wratten, 1995). To support this view, Rice (2008:1), presents evidence of an "urban penalty" wherein poor urban dwellers exhibit poorer health outcomes than rural populations. Hence urban food insecurity, though given less attention, is a reality among the urban poor and will not simply 'disappear' from urban space.

The position of poor urbanites is made worse by the fact that they are not shielded in any way from the destructive impacts of globalization. While it was anticipated that globalization would help in reducing poverty in the developing world, such optimism has not been justified. For developing regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, globalization has had a largely negative and marginalizing effect that has resulted in increased income inequalities and has placed the poor at the mercy of the vagaries of unpredictable global market forces (World Bank, 2009). In the absence of social security nets, deepening poverty continues to disable households from accessing food. Dealing with urban food insecurity therefore requires a deeper understanding of the complex environment in which the poor live and deal with a variety of challenges.

2.3 The Concept of Food Security and Livelihoods

From simple beginnings, food security has become 'a cornucopia of ideas' (Maxwell, 1996:155). The concept of a 'secure, adequate and suitable supply of food for everyone' began to take shape after the historic Hot Spring Conference of Food and Agriculture in the United States of America (USA) in 1943 (Weingartner, 2004). Subsequent debates culminated in the right to food being recognized as a core element of an adequate standard of living in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and led to the creation of the World Food Programme (WFP) in 1963 (Rives, 2006: UN, 2004). Thereafter, food security issues began to appear in international development work (von Braun, 1992). It was not however, until the mid-1970s that the concept began to solidify amid concerns of a global food crisis (Clay, 2002).

Initially, food security was mostly concerned with regional, national and global food supplies (Frankenberger and McCaston, 1998). An excess of overall supply over requirements would supposedly guarantee food security for a region, nation or the world. The 1974 World Food Conference lent credence to this notion of food security by emphasizing food supplies as the major cause of food insecurity. At this conference, food security was defined as the 'availability at all times of adequate *world food supplies* of basic foodstuffs…to sustain a steady food expansion…and to offset fluctuations in production and prices' (UN, 1975). Overall, therefore, food security could be tackled by increasing production levels, with little regard being paid to distributional or other associated factors.

However, the continued existence of conditions of food insufficiency despite overall adequacy of national food supply, together with the African food crisis of the 1970's, prompted a re-examination of the supply concept. It was evident that adequate food availability at regional or national level did not necessarily translate into food security at the household and individual levels. Further food crises in Africa in the mid-1980's indicated that food insecurity was also occurring even in geographic areas where food was available (Borton and Shoham, 1991) exposing the myth of increased production as the panacea for food insecurity. In Asia, for example, the successes of the Green Revolution were not translating into reduced hunger at the local level (Clay, 2002). Such observations of hunger and starvation in the midst of plenty brought into question the whole notion of defining food security at the macro level.

One of the first theorists to question the national approach to food security was Amartya Sen. Through his influence, the concept of food security moved beyond 'national food availability' to 'food entitlements' (Drimie and Mini, 2003). In his Book, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlements and Deprivation*, Sen posited that:

> *Most cases of starvation and famines across the world arise not from people being deprived of things to which they are entitled, but from people not being entitled, in the prevailing legal system of institutional rights, to adequate means of survival* (Sen, 1981).

He demonstrated that most people starved not because of food deficiency, but as a result of entitlement failure resulting from inequalities built into mechanisms for distributing the food. Thus famine could occur in the absence of any changes in production (Sen, 1981). Sen argued that these entitlements[14] were crucial for people to be able to access food resources and starve off hunger and famine. Because of the absence or shift of entitlements, certain people, groups of people or households may therefore experience food insecurity. This observation helped to place emphasis on identifying the precise causes of food vulnerability for particular population groups (Rives, 2006). As access issues are entrenched in social, political and economic relations, Sen's work also represented a clear shift in emphasis from natural to societal causes of hunger and famine.

One outcome of this re-examination process was a shift in the thinking of governments and development agencies, who now sought to include the aspect of accessibility in the food security concept. In 1983, for example, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) expanded its definition to include the notion of access when it declared that food security involves 'ensuring that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to the basic food that they need' (FAO, 1983). Embedded within this idea of accessibility was acceptance of the reality that even though food may be available, not all people have access to it. Policy concern thus expanded to focus on securing food access for vulnerable people and ensuring that 'attention was balanced between the demand and the supply side of the food security equation' (Drimie and Mini, 2003). Even more important was that analytical emphasis shifted from the national scale to the level of the household and individual. In addition, the emphasis on accessibility widened the horizons of food security to include factors such as incomes or other resources that people would use to purchase or barter to obtain food.

[14] Sen identified four types of entitlements that were crucial for people to access food resources namely: (i) trade-based entitlement (ownership of goods or resources obtained by trading something a person or household owns, by another party); (ii) production-based entitlement (ownership of output produced using personal or household resources, or using resources willingly hired by others); (iii) own-labour entitlement (ownership of personal labour power, thus enabling the person or household to obtain trade or production-based entitlement in exchange for their own labour power and, (iv) inheritance or transfer entitlement (ownership of goods or resources bequeathed or freely given to the person or household) (Sen, 1981).Without these entitlements, people were vulnerable to hunger, food insecurity and famines.

While the entitlement approach brought out neglected aspects of food security at both individual and household level and helped place emphasis on identifying the precise causes of food vulnerability of population groups (Rives, 2006), its 'food first' approach was found wanting. Studying famines during the 1984-5 period in Darkur, De Waal (1991) observed people intentionally choosing to go hungry to preserve their assets and future livelihoods. Food was thus only one of many issues preoccupying the household during a period of famine (Swift and Hamilton, 2001). Food security therefore began to be viewed in the context of longer time frames, invoking the aspect of *livelihoods*. This paradigm shift was reflected in the adoption of a more complex and encompassing definition of food security by the 1996 World Food Programme in its Plan of Action:

> *Food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels is achieved when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life* (FAO, 1996).

Although the issue of livelihoods had been discussed in 1985 at the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) policy center in London and led to the establishment, in 1986, of the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods programme at the IIED led by Gordon Conway, it was not until the publication of Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway's *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century (1992)* paper, that the livelihoods concept became widely known and accepted (Chambers, 2005; Solebury, 2003)[15].

A livelihood is a way of earning a living. It is not necessarily the same as having a regular occupation or employment although these activities form part of a livelihood. According to Chambers and Conway (1992), a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. Livelihood strategies are therefore the activities that people undertake and the choices that they make to achieve their livelihood goals (Owuor, 2006).

[15] After the publication of Chambers and Conway's book, donor institutions such as Care, Oxfam, the United Nations' Development Programme (UNDP), and the UK Department of International Development (DFID) actively and widely adopted the *Sustainable Livelihoods Approach* (SLA) as a basis for their development programmes and practices (Knutsson, 2006).

A core aspect of the livelihoods concept is sustainability. It means people meeting their current needs without compromising the future. According to Carney (1998:4):

> *'A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance it's capabilities and assets both now and the future while not undermining the natural resource base'.*

The livelihoods approach seeks to improve our understanding of how people use the resources at their disposal to construct a livelihood (Chambers and Conway, 1992). The assumption is that people construct their livelihoods by drawing on a range of assets (human, physical, financial, social, and natural) which are available to them within a broader socio-economic and political context (Rakodi, 2002; Farrington, *et al*, 1999). The context of vulnerability determines the shocks that people are exposed to and the options which are available to them to mediate negative influences (Carney, 1998). In the end, the ability of a household to construct a livelihood depends on the 'stock of assets' that it is able to command, the choices that it makes on the basis of these assets as well as the available opportunities.

The livelihoods concept is a recognition of the multiple activities that households engage in to ensure their survival and well-being (Rakodi, 2002). The poor, especially, deploy a variety of livelihood strategies in multiple locations so that they can gain access to housing, food, money and other services that are necessary for their upkeep and survival. Emerging from research in rural areas, the livelihoods approach was successful as an analytical tool for coming to grips with rural livelihoods and understanding influences of poverty as well as identifying where interventions could best be made.

With respect to urban areas, however, questions have been raised about the value of the livelihoods approach in understanding urban poverty and deprivation. These questions revolve around issues of: (a) the contextual differences between urban and rural areas; and (b) the diversity of the urban context (Beall, 2002; Devas, 2002). The approach has also been criticized more generally for putting insufficient emphasis on the influence of politics and governance regimes on livelihood activities (Scoones, 2009) and for being silent on the impingement on livelihoods at local level by macro-economic trends (Serrat, 2008). Despite

the weaknesses, the livelihoods approach still has merit in improving understanding of how people manage their lives. A number of authors have even demonstrated the value of the livelihoods approach to urban areas (Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002). However, despite this usefulness, Satterthwaite and Tacoli (2002:61) caution against an outright preoccupation with livelihoods in order not to miss other relevant aspects of urban deprivation that may be crucial to urban household food security. For this reason the study employs a grounded theory approach in order to discover how poor urban households cope with food insecurity in the city.

2.4 Defining the Household in Food Security Research

Since the livelihoods approach rests on the additional concept of the 'household' (Rakodi, 2002:7), some discussion on the term is necessary. Within the social sciences, the household is recognized as a central unit for data collection and analysis (Souvatzi, 2006; Guyer and Peters, 1987). Its importance lies in the vital role that it plays in enabling the collection and organization of technical and socio-economic information (e.g. in censuses and surveys) that is necessary for the 'diagnosis, planning and targeting of poverty and other developmental interventions' (Hosegood and Timaeus, 2006:58). Additionally, the fact that 'most people in most societies at most times live in households' (Kunstadter, 1984:300) gives the concept the potential for hosting a variety of inter-related themes and issues.

While the usefulness of the household as a data collection and analytical unit is widely acknowledged, the household has been a difficult concept to tackle (Van De Walle, 2006). This is because rather than being fixed and monolithic, households are shifting and fluid organizing entities whose boundaries are not clear-cut (Souvatzi, 2008). The boundaries are affected by disparities between cultural ideals and practice, rules and conceptions about who can or cannot belong to a household; forms and roles of organization, production, resource allocation, labour participation, decision-making and bargaining strategies; and changing inheritance, kinship, marriage and sexuality patterns (Chant, 2002; Burton *et al*, 2002). Households also vary considerably in size and spatial dimension; in the kinds of options and choices that they exploit; and in the extent to which they plan

their activities (Anderson *et al*., 1994). As such the term is usually used loosely to convey a multiplicity of meanings that depend on the field and purpose of the research.

The household has been variously defined as 'a community of persons' (Booth, 1991:60), 'a unit which organizes the consumption of a collective fund of material goods' (Chen and Dunn, 1996:4), 'a consumption unit that shares food from a common kitchen or hearth' (Goody, 1996:4), 'a small group of people who use their collective resources to pursue the same goals' (Bryant and Zick, 2006:3), 'a domestic unit with decision-making autonomy about production and consumption' (Guyer, 1981:89), and 'all persons who occupy a housing unit and share food from a common kitchen' (Pelto, 1984:3). While the temptation to find a common definition at a theoretical level has been overwhelming (Chen and Dunn, 1996), the task has proven to be a daunting one, given the household's fluidity in terms of its nature, composition and function over space and time.

At the forefront of the household debate have been economists who, from the outset, have largely focused on the household as a unit of analysis. Underlying the economic perspective on the household has been the assumption that households are unitary, coherent and unified entities whose decision-making processes are well coordinated and universally agreed to by all members (Bryant and Zick, 2006). The household is envisaged to make rational economic decisions that aim to derive maximum utility for the benefit of all members (Mattila, 1999). However such a view of the household as the basic unit of decision-making might be convenient in collecting and analyzing survey data, but 'is oversimplified and does not reflect the socio-economic complexities of contemporary societies' (Frayne, 2001:68). Aware of such pitfalls, anthropologists have moved away from aggregate household models of altruism and cooperation to those that include the possibility of negotiation, bargaining and even conflict (Chen and Dunn, 1996; Moore, 1994). As a result households are now increasingly recognized as 'constituted by a series of implicit or explicit contracts, not by total subsumption of the members into a solitary unit whose internal relationships can be taken as given' (Guyer, 1981:100).

Anthropologists and feminist scholars from a wide array of disciplines have also contributed immensely to the household debate by bringing in the additional lens of gender to focus on socially-defined roles within the household. They convincingly argue that households contain several socially-defined categories based on gender, age, seniority or marital status, which carry with them assemblages of rights or responsibilities that ultimately determine access to and use of resources within the household (Chen and Dunn, 1996). Such categories result in 'segments of the households operating semi-autonomously at some levels and coalescing at others' (Harris, 1981:6). The household is now seen as a site of intra-household gender conflict, inequality and power relations that affect the allocation of household resources (Kamkrum, 1994). Such a notion is important in food security studies, particularly in light of suggestions that the existence of differential levels of nutrition within households may well be linked to intra-household resource allocations (McCracken and Brandt, 1998) and that household members often make consumption decisions separately (Bruck and Schindler, 2008). In using the household as a unit of analysis, an effort should therefore be made to interrogate how gender influences the control of resources and ultimately impacts on intra-household food security.

Several authors (e.g. Bruck and Schindler, 2008; Van De Walle, 2006; Frayne, 2001) have questioned the applicability of a household concept conceived in the western world to African societies. Hammel and Laslett (1974), for example, posit that unlike the western nuclear household, the African household is not necessarily linked by blood and marriage. Studying women-headed households in West Africa, Chant (1997), found evidence that some women were not necessarily mothers of the children that they resided with, nor were they in some cases related to them as some took in orphans from the society to become part of their household. This phenomenon has expanded dramatically in sub-Saharan Africa where over 16 million children are estimated to have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS (Fagbemissi et al., 2010; UNICEF, 2006). In such scenarios, households are thus constituted by relatives and non-relatives. According to Evans' (1991), it is a character of African households that, more often than not, they tend to be composed not only of people that are linked by blood and kinship, but by social ties as well.

In addition to issues of composition and intra-household relationships, another subject of concern for the household concept deals with the question of livelihoods. A number of authors (e.g. Bryceson, 2002; Bryceson and Jamal; Ellis, 2000, Francis, 2000), researching in sub-Saharan Africa, have documented an increasing tendency by rural households to diversify from agriculture to non-agrarian economic activities as part of their coping strategies. While some of these non-agrarian activities such as craft work may take place within the rural areas, some of the activities which are urban-based have compelled some members of the household to move to the city, resulting in the splitting of the rural family unit and hence creating multi-spatial households.

Thus the question of residence is a controversial issue in the household debate in Africa, where household members alternate between town and village. While rural household members visit the city for economic purposes, urban household members also periodically visit the village for social, religious, cultural and economic purposes. Smit (1998) observes that most households in Africa seem to be split between the urban and rural area, particularly among low-income people who often view the village as their real 'home' and the urban area as only a temporary residence. This observation is also buttressed by Frayne's (2001) study in Namibia where he found evidence of the existence of these multi-spatial households whose members live in both the rural and the urban area. In addition to the rural-urban split, some households, particularly in the developing countries are now producing international migrants who still maintain social and economic ties with their original home. In studying urban food security one therefore needs to be cognizant of this phenomenon and to design questions that elicit information about the social and economic ties between the urban household with its rural as well as international component. These linkages could prove crucial for urban survival.

While literature on households provides a variety of definitions, it also cautions against trying to come up with a universal definition. Rather it advises one to strive for a context-based conceptualization that is able to achieve the objectives of the research. For this research, the study adopts a definition used by Frayne (2001:74) who defines a household as 'any number of people, kin or non-kin, that self-identify as being part of a household, live

in one residence or in multiple locations,…and who cooperate socially and economically'. Although this definition was used almost a decade ago in Namibia, it nevertheless remains relevant to this study as it encapsulates the conceptual parameters of the urban household, particularly in the Southern African context where this research is based.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the theoretical issues surrounding urbanization and food security in urban areas. It has been argued that the long standing silence about urban food insecurity in the region is a by-product of development theories, particularly modernization and urban bias theories, which influenced development practice in the sub-continent. The chapter has also discussed the value of livelihoods in understanding food security in urban areas. It has argued that although the livelihoods approach arose out of research work in the rural areas, the concepts within the approach have merit for exploring urban food security as well. The chapter has also engaged with the ongoing debate on the use of the household as a unit for data collection and analysis in food security research. Having engaged in these theoretical issues and brought urban food security into a proper perspective, the next chapter focuses on the urbanization process in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe in order to shed light to the current urban food insecurity problems.

CHAPTER THREE

URBANIZATION AND FOOD SECURITY IN COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the geographical setting and socio-demographic characteristics of the study area. It then traces the history of Zimbabwe's urbanization process from the pre-colonial period to independence. This historical approach is adopted in order to provide a context for understanding the current urban food insecurity situation. The chapter then discusses the socio-political processes embedded in post-independence urbanization, which helps in the understanding of household food insecurity in Zimbabwe's urban areas. Underpinning this discussion are issues related to the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) and *Operation Murambatsvina* (Operation Restore Order) as well as the general political and economic situation. All these developments have combined to produce disastrous socio-economic conditions that have negatively affected the livelihoods of the urban poor who find it increasingly difficult to access services and feed themselves.

3.2 Geographical Setting and Demographic Characteristics

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in Southern Africa, bordered by Zambia in the North and North West, Mozambique in the North and East, South Africa in the South and Botswana in the South West (Figure 3.1). It lies just north of the Tropic of Capricorn between the Zambezi River in the north and the Limpopo River in the south. Much of the country is composed of a plateau with an average height of about 1 200 metres above sea level (Rakodi, 1995). Also known as the Highveld, this plateau stretches for 650 kilometres from the southeast toward the northeast of the country and at its widest point it extends for 80 kilometres (Chimhowu, 2009). The country covers a total land area of 390 757 square kilometres, 85 percent of which is agricultural land and the remainder consists of national parks, state forests and urban land (Government of Zimbabwe, 2005).

Figure 3.1: The Location of Zimbabwe and Harare

(Source: Adapted from www.picktrail.com)

The climate of the country is composed of mainly cool dry and sunny winters and hot wet summers. Most of the country's urban areas, including Harare, the capital, lie in the central Highveld, which falls into agro-ecological region 1 and 2, which has the best agricultural soils and high reliable rainfall (Weiner, 1988). Zimbabwe's current population is estimated at around 12.2 million people and is growing at an average rate of 0.9 percent per annum (CSO Zimbabwe, 2009; CSO, 2007). While the country is 37 percent urban, it continues to urbanize at a rate of about 2.2 percent, despite the economic hardships currently being experienced in the cities (CSO Zimbabwe, 2009).

Harare, formerly Salisbury, is Zimbabwe's largest city. It is also the country's administrative, commercial and communication centre with an estimated population of 1.5 million people (CSO Zimbabwe, 2009). The city contains about 46 percent of the total urban population in the country (CSO Zimbabwe, 2002) and is therefore at the centre of the urbanization process. Harare was founded in 1890 as a fort (Fort Salisbury) by the Pioneer Column, which was a force organized by Cecil John Rhodes to aid in the colonization of the country. It was given municipality status in 1897 and achieved city status in 1935 (Muronda, 2008). Between 1953 and 1963, Harare served as the capital of the short-lived federation of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland before the federation collapsed (Kay, 1974).

3.3 Urbanization in Colonial Zimbabwe

The modern urban system in Zimbabwe essentially owes its existence to colonialism (Drakakis-Smith, 1992). There is evidence, however, that urban areas, albeit of a slightly different socio-economic structure, existed in the country in the pre-colonial era (Pikirayi, 2001). The larger and best known of these pre-colonial urban settlements, Great Zimbabwe, served as the capital of the Shona up until the 15th century (Tavuyanago and Mbenene, 2008; Mufuka, 1983). At its peak, the town of Great Zimbabwe is said to have accommodated over 20 000 people (Nelson, 1983) and covered an area of 720 hectares within the boundaries of which various social, economic and political activities sustained its population (Sinclair *et al*., 1993). Food was produced within the boundaries of the city which made it self-reliant. However by the end of the 15th century, the settlement and other

smaller ones that had existed had declined and been abandoned. By the time the country was colonized by Cecil John Rhodes on behalf of the British Empire in 1890, Zimbabwe was inhabited by a multiplicity of local people scattered across the country and the entirety of the territory was rural with no major concentrations of people in confined vicinities that approximated an urban area.

With the advent of colonialism, a number of urban settlements were set up to facilitate the extraction of commodities and the politico-administrative system on which this extraction depended (Raftopoulos and Yoshikuni, 1999). They included Harare - then known as Fort Salisbury - Bulawayo, Mutare and Masvingo. Because of the extractive nature of these urban areas, most of them did not experience substantial growth in their formative years. Harare, for example, remained largely undeveloped for most of the first two decades of its existence, being inhabited by a mere two thousand settlers by 1909 (Yoshikuni, 2006). Few new settlers moved into the town from outside the territory because of the failure to discover the anticipated 'second rand' in the Mashonaland area. Some settlers, having come to terms with the disappointment of failing to find substantial precious minerals, were encouraged by the British South African Company (BSAC) to venture into agriculture to supply food to the urban areas. Hence most settled in the fertile red soils of the Highveld where they engaged in farming activities. By 1892 embryonic urban settlements such as Chinhoyi, Marondera and Chegutu had sprouted in these agricultural areas (Drakakis-Smith, 1992; Smout, 1975).

From the outset, urban areas in Zimbabwe were created to serve the interests of the settlers (Yoshikuni, 2006). The minority of Africans who were allowed into the urban areas only served to advance these interests as they were tolerated in towns only for as long as they had a job there. Their families were not allowed to join them from the rural tribal trust lands (Drakakis-Smith, 1992). As early as 1898, the British South African Company (BSAC) declared its intention to separate the two races geographically and administratively when it proclaimed that;

> *The BSAC having recognized this impassable barrier between the two races, in order to avoid a social collision has adopted a policy of segregation whereby*

> *the natives not directly or indirectly working for Europeans, live apart in large areas reserved especially for them* (British South African Company Official as quoted in Wilmer *et al*., 1973:32)

Residence in the urban areas for the population of African origin was governed by a succession of laws such as the Southern Rhodesian Native Regulations Act (1897) and the Native Registration Act (1936) which required all black residents of the urban areas to posses valid registration only obtainable if they were legitimately employed (West, 2002; Mazur, 1987). By 1910, every male African was required to carry a registration certificate, which they had to produce on demand (Blake, 1977). Such pass laws enabled the settler government to effectively control the movement of Africans and to determine where they could or cold not go. Vagrancy laws (e.g. Vagrancy Law of 1960) were enforced vigorously and perpetrators were liable for a fine, imprisonment or both. This also enabled the government to prevent the accumulation in urban areas of the unemployed whom they considered a threat to peace and stability. The urban areas in colonial Zimbabwe thus grew slowly because of these restrictive legal frameworks.

The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 divided the country between the races, reserving the best agricultural land and all the mining and industrial sites for European settlers while the African population was confined to the less fertile lands which were designated as Tribal Trust Lands (Drakakis-Smith, 1992). The Act allocated over 50 percent of the total land area to the whites who constituted 3 percent of the population and only 30 percent to the blacks who made up 97 percent of the country's total population (Ndlela, 1981:3). Furthermore, the Act removed the right of Africans to purchase or own land outside the specified African areas (Wilmer *et al*., 1973). By so doing the Act legitimized discrimination and segregation through enforcing an overall policy of the separation of races. Economically, the Act stripped Africans of the power to compete in commerce and industry as these activities were predominantly found in urban areas whose location effectively barred African participation except as labourers. This division was further affirmed by the Land Tenure Act of 1969, which gave each of the two races 18.2 million hectares, despite the fact that blacks by that time outnumbered settlers by a ratio of 19:1 (Drakakis-Smith, 1992).

Confined by law to the Tribal Trust Lands, the African population had to seek permission from the Native Commissioner to work and live in town. It should be noted here that most of the Rhodesian legislation was crafted on the erroneous belief that the existing reserves could carry a much larger population than was currently resident there (Gann, 1969). Thus the whole matrix of the land question for the African population was looked at in purely rural terms without any question of African urbanization arising. It is no wonder therefore that the government did not initially plan for the needs of Africans in urban areas. Even where the need for future labour could clearly be envisaged, the government preferred to view the issue in terms of labour migrancy, which they regarded as 'part of the natural order of things' (Gann, 1969:281) where the African labourer was only a temporary sojourner in the city (Raftopoulos and Yoshikuni, 1999). As Blake (1977:163) succinctly points out;

> *African labourers were put into locations-the urban version of a reserve, where they either rented or bought their own huts. The assumption was that they would live there temporarily, apart from wife and family, while they earned enough to pay their hut or poll tax, and return to their permanent homes in the rural areas.*

Although the BSAC had introduced the Hut Tax in 1896 and the Poll Tax in 1908 as a way of forcing the African population into the money economy, they did not intend that the African become part of the permanent urban settlement. Rather they envisaged the African only as a supplier of labour whose entrance into and duration of stay in town was dependent on provisioning of labour. A town clerk in Bulawayo in 1930 starkly put this across when he remarked that 'the African is only in town as a worker of the European business and his home is in the Reserves' (Thornton, 1999:42). Africans were also not allowed to purchase or own property in the urban areas. Thornton (1999) further argues that apart from the racial discrimination inherent in legislation passed during this period, there was also a growing fear of the African as a permanent resident and inhabitant of the town because of all that followed in terms of economic and political participation in urban life. Hence, the colonial pattern of urbanization in the country reflected these racial and regional realities where all the towns were located in the European areas

While the settler administration was determined to continue pursuing its policies of separate development and urban restrictions, they could not escape the ever increasing demand for permanent African labour in the towns, necessitating that the African population be given access to the permanent urban system. This inevitably resulted in the steady increase of black urban population in the towns. At first the majority of the black population in urban areas up to the 1920's consisted mostly of domestic servants, but later grew to encompass others, mostly males, who were employed as unskilled labour force in industries. Over the years, their number gradually increased and Africans began to outnumber whites in the towns. The Whitsun Foundation (1980:3), for example, notes that the ratio of black to white urban residents in Zimbabwe's urban areas increased from 1:1 in 1904 to 3:1 in 1960 and to 5:1 in 1980. Before independence, however, only 17 percent of the black population was resident in urban areas in comparison to 80 percent of the whites (Rakodi, 1995). Most Africans still maintained strong links with their rural homes, coming to the urban areas only employment. An urban survey carried out in 1946 by the Chief Native Commissioner estimated that only 20 percent of the African urban population could be regarded as being continuously resident in towns and in mines (Ibottson, 1946).

The urbanization of the Africans in Zimbabwe is typified by trends that were observed in Harare, the capital of the country and Bulawayo, the second largest city. Although the first 'native location' was established in Harare in March 1892 under the supervision of a White superintendent, the black residents were expected to construct their own huts further from the city centre. Jackson (1986) reports that by 1900 there were only 26 huts in the 'location'. It was only in 1906 that the Native Urban Locations Ordinance was promulgated by the BSAC, creating the legal framework for the establishment and administration of separate residential areas for Africans in the towns (Zinyama, 1993). Thereafter, the first municipal residential area was established in Harari[16] some 2.5 kilometres south-west of the town centre. Here there were harsh restrictions on movement, including night curfews and liquor was prohibited. By 1925 the location housed 2 238 people although close to 10 000 people were employed in the city (Jackson, 1986). In Bulawayo the situation was

[16] This residential area changed its name to Mbare in 1982 when the whole city was renamed Harare

almost the same with the municipality preferring to let the Africans build their own huts in the 'location'. By 1902 there were only 164 privately constructed and owned huts in the township of Bulawayo (Thornton, 1999). Most of these were of sub-standard condition. By 1919 the Bulawayo Native Locations Superintendent had this to say about the conditions in which the Africans were living:

> *The condition of most of these private huts makes them uninhabitable. They are built of pieces of tin and the kitchens are built of sacking and other debris…they present an unsightly appearance and are an undoubted danger to health*[17]

Without concerted efforts by the municipality to increase accommodation for Africans in the city, the majority of the population lived as squatters on farms on the edges of the city from where they would commute to work. It took the government nearly 30 years to establish a second residential area for Africans in Harare (Jogi, 1970). This residential area, Highfield, was located some 15 kilometres from the city centre and is indicative of the reluctance by the settler community to accept the African as part of the urban landscape. Even the degree of segregation offered by the Land Apportionment Act was not adequate for some municipalities. Hence the pattern of having residential areas further away from the urban centre continued with the establishment of other residential areas such as Mabvuku (1952) and Mufakose (1959), all of which are located close to 20 kilometres from Harare city centre. The scenario in Bulawayo was the same with new townships being set up further from the city centre, for example, Mzilikazi (1946), Pumula (1952), Pelandaba (1953), Njube (1954) and Mpopoma (1956). The situation exemplified by Harare and Bulawayo was typical of all the other urban areas in the country where movement into the towns and cities was tightly controlled.

The turning point for African urbanization, at least in law, started in 1941 when the Land Apportionment Act was amended to make provision for the government and local authorities to house their black populations. However, although most town authorities started constructing housing for the African population, they still focused on labour rather than family accommodation. While accommodation for married couples was to be built in the later years, housing for blacks in town remained problematic. Hence most workers

[17] Report by the Native Locations Superintendent for the Month Ending 20th June 1919, B23/1/8R5691

continued to move back and forth between the urban areas and their rural homes where their families still resided. This created a bias towards a male labour force as well as in the general composition of the urban population. In 1969, for example, the male population in the urban areas of the country was double that of females (Drakakis-Smith, 1992). Such a scenario persisted to independence when only 15 percent of the non-agricultural labour force in Harare was female. The effect of this male bias also meant that circulatory migration between urban and rural areas continued to exist in the country well into the 1970s until a 'quasi-stabilization' situation developed, where workers would stay in town during their working years and go back to the rural areas upon retirement (Patel, 1988).

Even during the years of significant economic growth and high industrial labour demands in Rhodesia between 1969 and 1974, the controlled nature of the urbanization process was such that no shanty or squatter settlements emerged in the urban areas of the country as was the case in other developing countries. The total urban population-which stood at 764 740 people in 1962-increased to only 945 480 people in 1969 (Mutizwa-Mangiza, 1986:148). The urban growth rate during this period was 3.1 percent per annum compared to 4.1 percent per annum for the entire population. The situation was to change in the mid-1970s because of the intensification of the war of liberation which increased insecurity in rural areas and drove large numbers of people to the urban areas as refugees. Employment opportunities on commercial farms had also stagnated because of the war and forced other people to move to urban areas in search of employment.

The increased movement of people from the rural to the urban areas due to security concerns in the rural areas during the war years led to the establishment of informal settlements on the edges of the country's various cities. Such settlements included Epworth and Chitungwiza in Harare. Epworth, which emerged on the fringes of Harare, 15 kilometres to the southeast of the city, housed the urban population that was not allowed by law to live in the city and those who could not afford the high rents of the urban area. About 30 kilometres to the south of Harare, another settlement, Chitungwiza, began to boom during these war years from an embryonic settlement that had been in existence at Chirambahuyo since the late 1950s. From a population of only 15 000 people in 1969, the

settlement expanded to 172 000 people by 1982, 274 035 by 1992 and 323 260 inhabitants by 2002 (CSO, 1982; 1992; 2002). One of the fastest growing urban centres in the country, Chitungwiza now houses close to half a million inhabitants, making it the third largest urban centre in the country after Harare and Bulawayo. Industrial growth in the town has been slow and most of the residents still commute to find work in Harare's industrial areas of Msasa, Workington and Willowvale.

While the ending of the war in 1979 normalized the rural security situation, immigration into urban areas did not slow down as the attainment of independence in 1980 provided a new impetus for Africans to continue their movement into towns and cities. This was because the new independent government removed restrictive legislation on urban migration and extended home ownership to occupants of formerly publicly owned rental housing stock (Patel, 1984). Because of increased housing security, workers who had previously lived in urban areas as 'singles' were joined by their families from the rural areas. Furthermore, in the absence of restrictions, the uneven pattern of development inherited at independence also acted to pull in more rural migrants to towns, creating a ballooning urban population in the first years of independence.

The fast pace of urbanization of the early 1980s brought to the fore a number of problems that besieged the government and urban municipalities. These included housing shortages, lack of employment opportunities, health problems associated with overcrowding, inadequate refuse collection, insufficient water supplies, and the deterioration of the general urban environment due to noise air and solid waste pollution. This situation was acknowledged in the Transitional National Development Plan 1982/83 which noted that there was bound to be chaos and confusion in the urban areas if population distribution was not adequately planned for (Government of Zimbabwe, 1982:56). The First Five-Year National Development Plan 1986-1990 acknowledged the need for a national urbanization plan involving the encouragement of industrial growth in small urban centres and rural district centres, as well as the implementation of an integrated rural development programme in order to stem the tide of rural-urban migrations (Government of Zimbabwe, 1986). However as Stevens and Mugova (2006) point out, the pace of development in the

rural areas was slow and rural-urban migration continued. Even the emphasis and publicity given to land redistribution in the rural areas just after independence did very little to stem the flow of the peasantry to the urban areas.

3.4 Post-Independence Urbanization

Zimbabwe's post-independence socio-economic and political context is important for understanding contemporary urban household food security in the country. Food security at the household level has been successively impacted on by a multiplicity of factors that include: a) the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP); b) Operation Murambatsvina (OM); c) the war veterans payouts and DRC war; d) the fast-track land redistribution programme; e) the general macro-economic meltdown; and f) the cholera outbreak as well as adverse politics and poor governance issues. These factors have combined to increase poverty and reduce well being and have impacted negatively on livelihoods. While the impact has been disastrous across the rural-urban spectrum, the urban areas have been hard hit because of their exposure to the market economy and the absence of substantial relief services in urban areas compared to the rural areas (ZimVac, 2003). The following sections provide a discussion on these factors and how they have impacted on the households' ability to feed themselves in Zimbabwe's challenging urban environment.

3.4.1 Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP): The Beginning of the End

Zimbabwe inherited a debt of slightly over US$697 million from the Rhodesian Government at Independence in 1980 (Grant, 2007). Despite this debt however, the country had a relatively stable and sophisticated economy, which was one of the most diversified in the region (Chitiga, 2004). On the back of this stability however, the new government also inherited an uneven pattern of development not only along the urban-rural axis, but between races as well with 4 percent of the population, primarily whites, earning 60 percent of the national income (Tevera, 1995). Hence, one of the immediate challenges of the post-independence period was to put more focus on redistributive policies with emphasis on social services for previously disadvantaged people. A lot of improvements were made in this direction such that by 1995 the country had registered a

net primary education enrollment rate of 82 percent and an adult literacy rate of 86 percent (Malaba, 2006). On the health front, the government introduced free medical care in 1981 to cover those earning incomes less than Z$150 (Tevera, 1995). On the economic front, impressive gains were recorded during the first decade of independence. In 1990, for example, real GDP growth rate was 7 percent per annum, average annual inflation was only 12.4 percent, budget deficit as a percentage of GDP was 5.3 percent per annum, Gross National Investment (GNI) as a percentage of GDP was 18.2 percent per annum and export growth stood at 15.2 percent per year (Malaba, 2006). The first decade of independence was therefore one of relative success.

In contrast, the 1990s heralded a new chapter in the country's economic fortunes. Government expenditure rose to over 50 per cent of GDP by 1990, mostly as a result of increased spending on health, social services, and infrastructure (Brown, 2000). By 1989, the national workforce was increasing by about 200 000 school leavers per annum, against an economy capable of generating only 20–30 000 new jobs annually. Unemployment shot to 26 percent by 1990 from about 8 per at independence (Robinson, 1991). Inflation continued to increase being fuelled by successive devaluation of the dollar (Brown, 2000). Central government debt reached 71 per cent of GDP in 1989, 36 per cent of which was external (Munjoma, 1999). By 1997, per capita incomes were lower than in 1990 (Mupedziswa and Gumbo, 2001). Most of these problems were compounded by a series of recurrent droughts, coupled with global recession and the consequent fall in demand for the country's exports (Stevens and Mugova, 2006).

These problems convinced the government that there was need for a structural change in the economy and led to the adoption and implementation of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) sponsored Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in 1991. Essentially, ESAP was required to overcome the country's domestic and international debt and to promote investment and growth (Mupedziswa, 1997; Chisvo and Munro, 1994). This was to be done through a three-pronged strategy which involved: a) trade liberalization, b) domestic deregulation and investment promotion, and; c) fiscal and monetary policies to curtail government expenditure (Chisvo,

2000). These measures, it was argued, would kick-start the process of economic growth which was then stalling, and reshape the role of the government in the process and at the same time reduce the fiscal deficit as well as encourage foreign investment.

Although ESAP cannot be wholly blamed for the economic woes that bedevilled Zimbabwe in the 1990s, it certainly 'laid the groundwork for extreme economic hardships' (Grant, 2007:79). Many analysts (e.g. Potts, 2006, 1997, 1995; Tibaijuka, 2005; Potts and Mutambirwa, 1998, 1990; Robinson, 1991) argue that the adoption and implementation of the programme was the beginning of a serious downward trajectory. This is because the austerity measures that ESAP imposed on the economy led to a host of negative impacts that included the closure of many factories, massive retrenchments, stagnant and even declining real wages, skyrocketing consumer prices as well as the decline of the formal economy and the subsequent rise of the informal sector (Tibaijuka, 2005; Chattopadhyay, 2000). Such measures included the removal of subsidies on food and agricultural inputs, the removal of controls on prices, labour and wages and the operation of social services at cost recovery levels. The result of these measures was massive retrenchment of both skilled and unskilled manpower due to the downsizing of the civil service as well as the closure of a number of industrial and commercial enterprises (Chibisa and Sigauke, 2005) thereby creating severe hardships for workers whose standards of living deteriorated drastically.

On the social front, significant inroads that had been made in the education and health sectors since independence were virtually reversed. Chisvo and Munro (1994) note that the introduction of user fees in these two sectors in 1991 had deleterious effects. In the health sector, this included a decline in outpatient attendance of 18 percent and a further decline of 29 percent in the length of stay of inpatients by the end of 1992. Perinatal mortality is also said to have increased during the same period as a growing proportion of mothers were unable to utilize antenatal care. By mid 1992 about 800 health workers had been retrenched and 400 health posts were abolished due to cuts in health expenditure (Tevera, 1995). This seriously compromised health delivery services as health worker-to-patient ration fell from 9 per 10 000 to 8 per 10 000 in just one year (Tevera, 1995).

In education the situation was equally bad: real per capita expenditure on primary education declined by 32 percent between 1990 and 1994 (Chisvo and Munro, 1994). Furthermore, enrollment in primary school dropped by 0.7 percent in 1992 alone due to the introduction of user fees. In some schools, enrollments declined by over 20 percent between 1991 and 1993 (Tevera, 1995). Increased educational costs also resulted in increases in drop-out rates, especially amongst girls (Sanders, 1992) as parents sacrificed girl child education to concentrate their meager resources on the education of boys. At secondary school level, the impact could be detected more on the number of subjects that candidates registered at Ordinary level. While the number of subjects that a student sat for averaged 6.34 in 1985, this declined to 4.81 at the end of 1991 and to 4.59 by 1993 as most parents failed to pay examination fees for their children (Chisvo, 1993). Equally significant was the decline in real salaries of teachers by 20 percent between 1991 and 1993 (Chisvo and Munro, 1994). The situation in education and health was similar across other sectors as reduction in government and subsidies spending meant that the ordinary person was now required to fork out more money in an environment characterized by declining real wages.

In the early years of the implementation of ESAP some progress was recorded in trade liberalization, price decontrols, foreign currency exchange regime liberalization, market deregulation, parastatal reform and investment promotion (Chidzero, 1993). In the later years however, such progress was wiped out by the negative impacts of the programme. Overall therefore, ESAP's objectives were never achieved. The predicted increase in revenue base actually manifested in a 27 percent decline between 1993 and 1997 (IMF, 1997). This decline has been blamed on a shrinking tax revenue base resulting from the growth of a large informal sector (Chattopadhyay, 2000). By December 1995, it is estimated that over 32 000 workers had lost their jobs because of retrenchments precipitated by ESAP (Chipfika, 1998). Formal sector employment, which had accounted for approximately 500 000 urban households in 1992 accounted for only 120 000 households in 2002 due to the gradual, but systematic decline of the formal sector through liberalization (Chibisa and Sigauke, 2008; CSO, 2002). The textile industry, for example,

saw a contraction of 61 percent between 1990 and 1995 (Carmody, 1998), manufacturing output fell by 20 percent between 1991 and 2000, while civil sector reform made 25 percent of the public workers redundant and helped to push unemployment to 50 percent by 1997 (Chimhowu, 2009). For those people who were still employed, the situation was not good either. Average real wages fell by 33 percent between 1990 and 1997 in an environment of general price increases which led to a deterioration of the standard of living and scarcity of social services. This situation affected the urban population more than their rural counterparts because of the former's heavy dependence on the cash economy (Ranga, 2004). Without jobs or with low-paying employment, the living conditions in the urban areas became challenging and a class of the 'new poor' emerged even as the former middle and working class slid into poverty. Although there was no net reverse migration to the rural areas, it is largely accepted that a number of urbanites did indeed migrate to the rural areas during the ESAP years where the problems were not as pronounced as in the urban areas.

After 2000, Zimbabwe's urban residents continued to experience rising unemployment and increasing shortages of housing and other associated social services. This provided further impetus for the expansion of the informal sector as job creation in industry could not keep up with the demand. The government aided the growth of the informal sector by deregulating activities such as hairdressing, tailoring, book-binding, welding, carpentry and wood/stone carving. As a result, these activities proliferated in residential areas. By 2005 the informal sector had become the mainstay for the majority of the urban population with an estimated 3 million people earning their living through this sector (Chibisa and Sigauke, 2008). The contribution of the informal sector was important given the substantial shrinkage of formal sector employment from about 3.6 million in 2003 to only 480,000 by 2008 (Chimhowu, 2009). Furthermore, with 80 percent of the population living below the poverty datum line and unemployment hovering close to 80 percent, one is persuaded by Ncube and Phillip's (2006) argument that the informal sector in the country could have accounted for close to 60 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by the end of 2005.

3.4.2 The War Veterans Payouts and the DRC War: Unbudgeted Expenditure

While ESAP started the downward trajectory of the economy, the situation was compounded by a succession of government measures such as the granting of gratuities to war veterans in August 1997. Approximately 60 000 veterans of Zimbabwe's liberation war were each granted a Z$50 000[18] lump sum plus a monthly pension of USD125 (Chitiyo, 2000). These payouts amounted to almost 3 percent of GDP at the time and this had the immediate effect of inflating the budget deficit at the end of 1997 by 55 percent from the 1996 levels (Kairiza, 2009:4). According to Tibaijuka (2005), the gratuity payouts to the war veterans are one of the three major political factors[19] that deepened the economic crisis of the 1990s. This is because the money had not been budgeted for and triggered inflation when the government printed money to cater for this expenditure (Bond, 1998). Because of such inflationary pressures, the Zimbabwean dollar tumbled and crashed to unprecedented levels. On 14 November 1997, for example, the Zimbabwean dollar lost 75 percent of its value against the USD on a single day (Kairiza, 2009:5).

The cash payout to the war veterans, which triggered the economic collapse of the country, is often seen as a political maneuver by the ruling party to gain support of the powerful war veterans in the 2000 parliamentary elections. The ruling party, ZANU-PF, having enjoyed a political monopoly for 17 years, was now being challenged by an opposition party formed out of a merging of civic and labour groups. This grouping formed a formidable enough force to make a bid for power, and could therefore have galvanized the ruling party into currying favour from the ex-combatants (Gandure and Marongwe, 2006). Whatever arguments may be advanced for the payouts, the fact remains that the unbudgeted payouts started an inflationary spiral, which caused a lot of suffering in the country.

Adding to the inflationary pressures was the heavy expenditure incurred during the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) civil war when the Zimbabwean government sent over 13 000 troops to help the DRC government stave off an invasion by rebel forces in

[18] Approximately US$3 000 at the time.
[19] The other political factors being the military intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the 'fast-track' land reform programme (Tibaijuka, 2005).

September 1998. It has been estimated that the government initially required about US$1.3 million per month to finance the war, but that the figure had risen to US$3 million per month by 1999 (IMF, 1999). This was in foreign currency that the country was not in a position to spare and thus put an added strain on the national budget and thus increased the country's economic downward trajectory.

3.4.3 *Operation Murambatsvina* (OM): Destroying Urban Livelihoods

Operation *Murambatsvina* (OM)[20] was officially launched in Harare on 18 May 2005. The government, in conjunction with local authorities, destroyed backyard houses, vending stalls, flea markets and informal businesses in the urban areas of the country. The government argued that it was enforcing urban by-laws to stop these 'illegal' activities, including urban cultivation (Government of Zimbabwe, 2005). It further stated that it wanted to ensure order and prevent the 'chaotic' manifestations of rapid urbanization that are usually characteristic of African cities (Government of Zimbabwe, 2005). This goal was reflected in the statement issued at the official launch of the operation by the then Chairperson of the Commission running the affairs of the City of Harare, who argued that the city had lost its 'sunshine city' status because of uncontrolled developments within the city. According to the Chairperson:

> *These violations of the by-laws are in areas of vending, traffic control, illegal structures, touting/abuse of commuters by rank marshals, street-life/prostitution, vandalism of property, infrastructure, stock theft, illegal cultivation, among others have led to the deterioration of standards thus negatively affecting the image of the City. The attitude of members of the public as well as some City officials has led to a point whereby Harare has lost its glow. We are determined to bring it back. Harare was renowned for its cleanliness, decency, peace, tranquil environment for business and leisure; therefore we would like to assure all residents that all these illegal activities will be a thing of the past*[21]

Critics of Operation *Murambatsvina*, on the other hand, give an alternative explanation for the operation. They argue that as social hardships and poverty escalated in the country, particularly in urban areas, the government became increasingly afraid of discontent

[20] Literary translated to 'Clean up the Rubbish' this operation was also known as Operation Restore Order.
[21] Speech by the Chairperson of the Harare Commission on the official launch of 'Operation Murambatsvina' at the Town House on 18th May, 2005, The Saturday Herald, 28 May 2005.

building up amongst the urban populace which could culminate in an uprising (Masakure, 2006). According to this view, the essence of the operation was therefore to disperse a restive urban population that could have provided a breeding ground for a revolution against the government (International Crisis Group, 2005). By removing all vendors and informal structures, it is argued that Operation *Murambatsvina* depopulated the urban centers and physically cleared the streets of places to hide thereby making it easier for the government to monitor the movement of people in and out of towns (Masakure, 2006). Hence, the action undermined the possibility of any kind of organized anti-government mass action.

Whatever the government's intentions were, there is no arguing the fact that operation caused massive destruction of livelihoods in the urban areas of the country. By the end of the operation, more than 700 000 urbanites had either lost their homes and livelihoods or both (Mugara, 2007). A further 2.4 million people were indirectly affected in varying degrees, as thousands were made homeless without access to food, water, sanitation or health care (Tibaijuka, 2005). Ordinary people coined the term 'tsunami' for the operation in reference to its speed and ferocity, which resulted in the destruction of homes, business premises and vending sites.

The operation exacerbated an already precarious housing situation since the housing backlog for the country's urban areas stood at over 1 000 000 units by 2004 (Government of Zimbabwe, 2005). The people whose houses were destroyed were urged to return to their rural homes, in spite of the fact that some of them had no rural homes to go to, having been born and raised in the urban areas. Data from the 2002 national census, for example, indicates that over 50 percent of the people in Zimbabwe's largest urban areas of Harare, Bulawayo and Chitungwiza had been born in the towns (CSO Zimbabwe, 2004) and could not therefore have had automatic recourse to a rural home. Although the government had indicated that they would assist in the translocation of the displaced and their belongings to their rural homes, very little support was eventually rendered. It is estimated that about 144 000 people eventually moved from urban to rural under very difficult conditions

(Potts, 2008; Human Rights Watch, 2005). Operation *Garikayi*, launched in the aftermath of Operation *Murambatsvina,* to construct houses for some of the affected families was too little too late to mitigate the impacts of OM as the government had neither the capacity nor the resources to ensure meaningful mitigation.

Although there is no consensus on the actual number of people affected by the operation, there is no disputing the fact that Operation Murambatsvina drastically altered Zimbabwe's urban landscape and may even have slowed down the pace of urbanization. For most households that remained in the urban areas, their livelihoods were negatively and drastically affected. Some, without a rural home to go to, ended up living in dilapidated and squalid conditions in transit camps. One of these settlements, Caledonia, on the outskirts of Mabvuku, continued to be occupied by vulnerable households long after it was declared officially closed. Thus, contrary to its stated purpose, Operation *Murambatsvina* ended up being a major cause of increased vulnerability and hunger in Zimbabwe's urban areas (Gandure and Marongwe, 2006). The Catholic Relief Services (CRS) revealed that urban-based mushroom production projects that they were carrying out with vulnerable households in Hatcliffe, Mabvuku and Epworth suburbs were stopped when production structures were cleared by the campaign (Catholic Relief Services, 2005). In the same vein, the Solidarity Peace Trust (2005) reported on some of the destruction to livelihoods as follows:

> *Harare has been among the worst affected cities in terms of destruction of vendor's sites and wares….police action was brutal and unannounced. Sculpture parks along the main roads, which have been there for decades and feature as a tourist attraction in guide books, were smashed. Beautiful works of art on roadside display, created out of stone, wood and metal, some standing up to two metres high, were smashed.*

Such destruction meant that most people were pushed deeper into poverty, deprivation and destitution and rendered more vulnerable to hunger and food insecurity (Tibaijuka, 2005). Tekere (2001) had found that flea markets were a major staple of household food security through increased incomes and importation of food. The destruction of these markets wrought by Operation *Murambatsvina* therefore served to exacerbate food insecurity within urban households. Besides being rendered homeless by the operation,

people also lost their jobs as informal businesses were demolished; homeowners lost income as properties they used to rent were destroyed; small-scale operators lost business because of the disruption of the supply chain; people who were formally employed lost income as they were forced to leave their jobs as a result of the loss of shelter; and many others lost access to education and health services as a result of forced relocation (Tibaijuka, 2005). Still others were forced into bankruptcy after taking out loans for small businesses and then suddenly finding themselves without the means to repay such loans because of the destruction of their businesses. What made the impact of Murambatsvina even more devastating is the fact that the operation disproportionately affected urbanites of the lower income social strata. This is because such poor people were 'the ones practicing vending along city roads and other premises and living in unregistered backyard cottages and other forms of unofficial extensions to main houses' (Gandure and Marongwe, 2006:18). Operation *Murambatsvina* stands out as the single most visible post-2000 activity that rearranged the urban landscape in Zimbabwe and worsened the plight of the poor whose livelihoods were already precarious in a declining economic environment.

3.4.4 The Fast-Track Land Redistribution Programme (FTLRP): From a Bread Basket to a 'Basket Case'

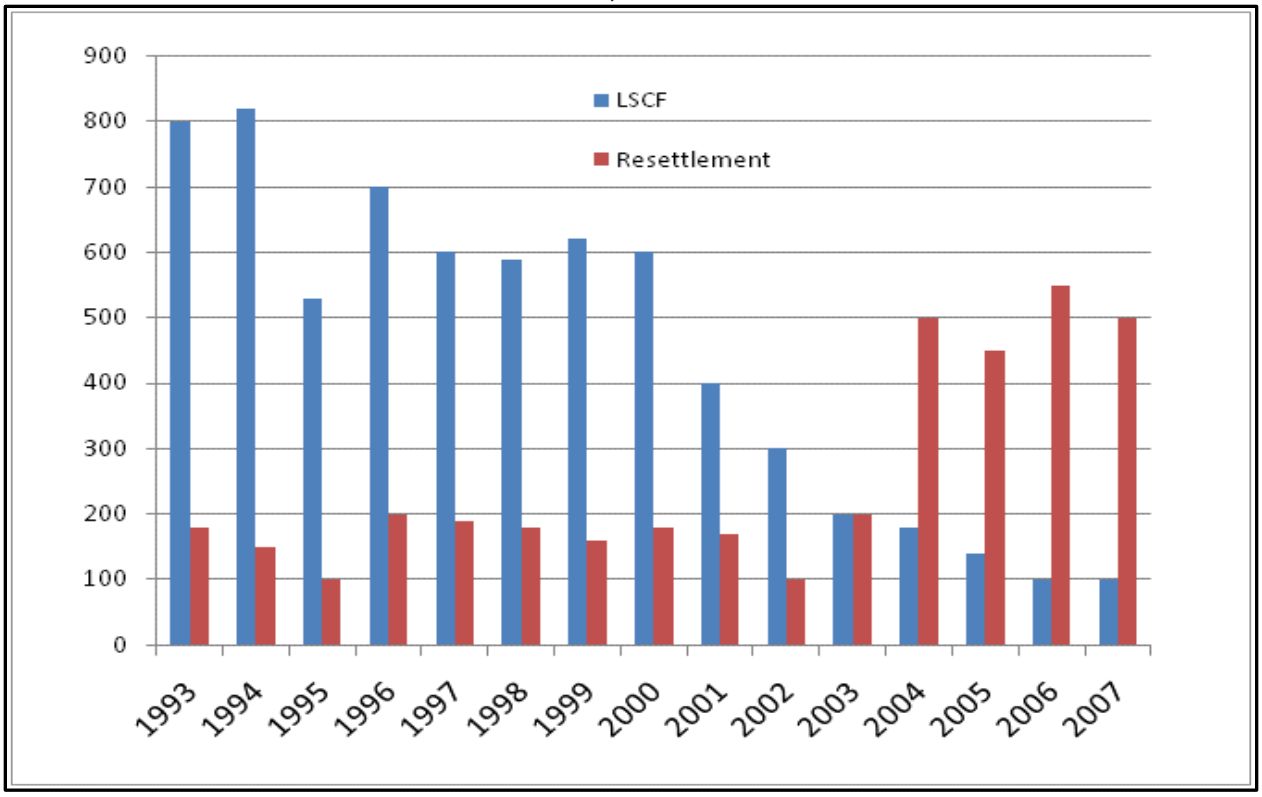
The fast track land redistribution programme was launched in the year 2000. This was a government programme which compulsorily acquired farms from white farmers for redistribution to indigenous blacks. Before the start of the programme there were approximately 4 500 white farmers in the country mostly in the large-scale commercial farming sector. By the end of 2002 when the fast-track programme was pronounced officially over, only about 600 white farmers remained (Sachikonye, 2003). Their numbers have continued to dwindle since then. Although the government maintains that over 1.2 million black farmers benefited from the land reform programme (Government of Zimbabwe, 2004), the fast-track land reform programme did not get the approval of the international community because of the political and largely *ad hoc* nature in which it was carried out. While many stakeholders agreed to the necessity of land redistribution, some argued that the process was done in the context of a government aiming to win political

votes rather than to increase production or ensure equitable distribution of resources (Muronda, 2007).

The fast track land reform programme undoubtedly contributed to Zimbabwe's rapid social and economic deterioration. This is because some of the beneficiaries of the land reform process have not been productive, with some holding on to the land speculatively for its future value. Others have neither the financial resources and equipment nor the expertise to productively run the farms (Gandure and Marongwe, 2006). Additionally, because of the largely *ad hoc* nature of the programme, government was not able to extend meaningful financial support to the new farmers or provide adequate agricultural extension services necessary for the success of the programme. As a result, Zimbabwe shifted from being the 'bread basket' of Southern Africa, to what has generally been termed a 'basket case': where the country has not only become a net importer of food, but survives largely on humanitarian food donations.

The production of maize, for example, has suffered significantly since the launch of the fast-track land reform programme. While there have been periodic declines of this staple crop before the year 2000, these declines were mostly associated with changes in rainfall patterns. The persistent post-2000 declines (Figure 3.2) were however largely attributed to the disruptive impacts of the fast-track land reform programme. While production levels somewhat improved in the newly resettled areas since 2004, these increases have not been sufficient to offset the losses incurred in the large-scale commercial farming areas, hence the country has been perennially surviving on food donations from various organizations such as the United Nations (UN), Care International, Oxfam GB, World Vision International and Christian Care. Maize production deficits have averaged over 500 000 tonnes per annum since 2000 (Commercial Farmers Union, 2005). For the 2005-2006 season, the situation was worse with an estimated deficit of 1.2 million tonnes of maize (Tibaijuka, 2005). Despite more reliable rainfall in 2006/7 season, only a marginal increase in output was recorded from resettled farmers and total national maize output was only just a third of the country's total requirements (Richardson, 2007).

Figure 3.2: Total Maize Production (000 tonnes) from Large Scale Commercial Farming and Resettlement Areas in Zimbabwe, 1993 – 2007



(Source: ZimVac, 2003: 2005:2009; Chimhowu, 2010)

Furthermore, the controversy surrounding the land reform programme soured relations with international financiers and donors, resulting in very little inflow of the foreign currency needed to finance production and other activities. While rural populations could, to some extent, still produce for their own consumption, there was very little or no surplus that could end up on the urban market for the urban populace. The urban population thus began to rely on imports, whose inflow could not be guaranteed as the country had little foreign currency.

The implications of these production trends for food security at national level have been dire. This is because the country has had to continuously rely on food imports to meet the deficit. In 2009, for example, the government, together with humanitarian organizations, imported about 840 000 metric tonnes of cereals to meet the shortfall for the 2008/09 agricultural season (FEWSNET, 2009). Although food availability in the country had slightly

improved at the beginning of 2009 owing to increased private sector activity due to the relaxation of restrictions on private sector trade and the peaking of harvests of green maize, pumpkins and groundnuts, indications were that most of the country was still relatively food insecure. Estimates for the 2009/10 agricultural season indicate that over 680 000 metric tonnes will be needed to meet the maize deficit (USAID, 2009). This has therefore increased vulnerability of the population to hunger and food shortages at a time when the government does not have the capacity to import food to meet the shortfall.

The ability of the government to import food is constrained both by soaring food prices and the unavailability of foreign currency in an economy that has been declining for close to a decade. Of the 2.8 million people said to be in need of food aid in 2009-10, over 600 000 were estimated to be in urban areas (ZimVac, 2009)-indicating the heightened vulnerability of urban populations to food insecurity. In these urban areas, the prohibitive price of food commodities and other basic products and services make the general populace more vulnerable, thus increasing the need for humanitarian assistance. According to IFRC (2009), Zimbabwe, with about 7 million people in need of food aid at the beginning of 2009, had become the world's third largest food aid operation, after Afghanistan (8.82 million) and Ethiopia (8.67million).

While there is no arguing with the fact that the post-2000 fast-track land reform (locally known as the *third chimurenga*) caused huge disturbances on commercial agriculture resulting in significant declines in food production in the country, it would be remiss to label the whole land reform process as a total failure. A forthcoming book by Scoones *et al*., (2010) provides comprehensive empirical evidence of a number of success stories in Zimbabwe's land reform, which stories have largely been ignored by the press, political commentators and even academics in the prevailing political situation in the country. The book challenges the myths that the land reform has been a total failure; that the beneficiaries of the land reform have largely been political 'cronies; that there has been no investment in agriculture; and that the rural economy has totally collapsed. Using evidence from 400 households in 16 different sites in Masvingo Province, Scoones *et al.,* (2010) conclude that Zimbabwe's land reform programme is far more complex than

generalizations of media headlines and that there are both stories of success as well as of failure. While such success stories give hope that the country may be on the road to recovery, it nevertheless does not erase the fact that at inception and in the subsequent years, the fast-track land reform programme contributed immensely to increasing food insecurity levels at national levels generally and at the urban scale more specifically as little food filtered into towns and cities to feed the struggling urbanites.

3.4.5 The General Macro-Economic Meltdown

Since the year 2000, Zimbabwe has experienced unprecedented economic decline culminating in enormous socio-economic challenges. Statistics and trends hardly convey the magnitude of the crisis (Bird and Prowse, 2008). Various home-grown economic policies[22] have been instituted in a bid to stabilize the economic situation without success. It has been argued that one of the reasons why these policies failed was that they lacked the support of the international financial institutions, which could have provided the much-needed resources (Malaba, 2006). Zimbabwe's economy has been shrinking drastically with GDP contracting by over 40 percent since 2000 (Government of Zimbabwe/Unicef, 2006). As Table 3.1 indicates, annual inflation also increased dramatically from two-digit figures in 2000 to 7982 percent in 2007. The situation continued to deteriorate and the last official figures before the country adopted a multiple-currency system indicates that inflation could have peaked at around 231 million percent in July 2008 (Hanke and Kwok, 2009; RBZ, 2008), presumably the highest figure of hyper-inflation to have been achieved by any country in the world.

Unemployment was estimated to be around 80 percent in 2009 (Chimhowu, 2009). Because of the decline in export production the country's external debt had ballooned to around US$4.8 billion in 2007, while domestic debt accounted for 80 percent of GDP in 2006 (Gilpin, 2007). Life expectancy which had peaked at 61 years in 1990 (World Bank,

[22] Some of the economic policies include the "Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST)" "Millennium Economic Recovery Programme (MERP)", August 2001; the "National Economic Revival Programme (NERP): Measures to address the current challenges", February 2003; the "Macroeconomic Policy Framework 2005-2006"; the "Monetary Policy Statement, 2003-2008" as well as the "National Economic Development Priority Programme (NEDPP)" of March 2006 (Government of Zimbabwe/UNICEF, 2006).

2000) fell to around 36 years in 2008 (United Nations, 2008). The result has been a decline in the welfare of the Zimbabwean people as indicated by the Human Development Index (HDI) which declined from its peak of 0.621 in 1985 to 0.468 in 2003 (Malaba, 2006; UNICEF, 2004;69). All these developments also occurred on the back of highly contested national elections in 2002, 2005 and 2008 whose outcome was disputed by the international community and reduced the inflow of much needed foreign currency.

Table 3.1: Zimbabwe's Macro-economic Trends

Year	GDP Growth Rate (%)	Annual Inflation
1998	-0.8	47
1999	-2.1	57
2000	-7	55
2001	-3	112
2002	-4	199
2003	-10	599
2004	-2	133
2005	-4	586
2006	-3	1281
2007 (Sept)	-	7982
2007 (December)	-6	66 212
2008 (January)	-	100 580
2008 (April)	-	650 899
2008 (July)	-14.5	231 150 888

(Source: RBZ, 2009; Hanke and Kwok, 2009)

The cumulative impact of all of the above has been a severe case of macroeconomic instability where production has been curtailed, prices of goods continuously increase and food shortages have become the norm. This negatively impacted on the livelihoods of the people as a whole, but the impact on the urban poor has been particularly devastating. The purchasing power of the average Zimbabwean in 2005, for example, had fallen back to the same level as in 1953 (Clemens and Moss, 2005). Persistent shortages of the local currency between 2002 and 2008 also made it impossible for households to access food on the market. Thus, the economic conditions during the time of the research for this thesis were very challenging for all Zimbabweans and urban households in particular.

The progressive decline in the economy has had a significant impact on the poverty levels in the country. Although reliable data on poverty is hard to come by in Zimbabwe, three major surveys have been carried out in the country since the introduction of the ESAP. These are the Income, Consumption and Expenditure Survey of 1991 and the Poverty Assessment Study Surveys of 1995 and 2003. These surveys indicate that the proportion of households living below the Food Poverty Line (very poor) increased from 20 percent in 1995 to 48 percent in 2003, representing an increase of 148 percent over the eight-year period (Government of Zimbabwe, 2006:20). A similar trend was also observed in the number of households living below the Total Consumption Poverty Line (very poor and poor) where the percentage increased from 42 percent in 1995 to 63 percent in 2003, representing a 51 percent increase (Government of Zimbabwe, 2006:20). While there has not been any official poverty survey till then, it has been suggested that by the time the socio-economic crisis reached its high point in November 2008, up to 80 percent of the population were surviving on less than US$2 a day. The country's UNDP's Human Poverty Index (HPI)[23] was 17 percent in 1990 and was estimated to have more than doubled to 40 percent by 2006 (Chimhowu, 2009).

In terms of general development levels, the country slid from a respectable ranking of 52 in 1990 to 155 out of 177 countries by 2005 (Chimhowu, 2009). Although, the 2003 PASS indicated that there was a higher percentage of households living below the Total Consumption Poverty Line in rural areas than in urban areas, the highest increase in poverty between 1995 and 2003 was recorded in urban areas (65 percent) while rural areas recorded a lower increase of 42 percent (Government of Zimbabwe, 2006:20). This indicates that, on average, urban households were becoming poorer faster than their rural counterparts. The considerable decline in the welfare of the urban household can be attributed in part to the deteriorating macro-economic environment that shrunk the job market through industrial closures. Increasingly therefore, the urban labour market has come to be dominated by informal rather than formal jobs. This heightened the

[23]This is a composite index measuring deprivation computed from three dimensions namely; probability of not surviving till 40, adult literacy and unweighted mean of number of people without sustainable access to an improved water source and children under weight for age.

vulnerability of households that make a living from a generally insecure and income-variable informal sector. Household food security in urban Zimbabwe is therefore best understood in the context of an urban populace whose livelihoods have progressively been decimated by a combination of factors such as ESAP and the general economic meltdown precipitated by the post-2000 social political upheaval in which land reform, Operation Murambatsvina and governance issues take centre stage.

3.4.6 The Cholera Outbreak: Another Nail on the Coffin

Although Zimbabwe has experienced periodic outbreaks of cholera since 1992, the frequency of occurrence and the severity of the disease have always been minimal. The outbreak which began in August 2008 and continued well into 2009 was, however, very severe and led to many fatalities. By May 2009 the disease outbreak had claimed over 4 274 lives and infected over 98 114 people (IFRCCS, 2009). The disease was concentrated in urban areas, particularly Harare, where water supply, sanitary and health services had virtually collapsed. Most homes in the capital were without a source of clean water for over a year due to a wide range of issues ranging from burst water pipes (www.bamun.org) or the inability of the city council to supply the water. In some places where water could be accessed, most of it was not safe to drink because it was not properly purified. In other residential areas such as Budiriro, where the epidemic was severe, residents were resorting to using water from unprotected wells most of which was contaminated by sewage from burst sewer pipes. In Epworth, most of the residents were accessing water from open wells, which made them susceptible to the disease. Without access to clean, adequate and safe water household food security thus hung in the balance as water is essential for proper preparation, consumption and utilization of food.

3.5 Conclusion

The chapter has reviewed the colonial and post-colonial urbanization process in Zimbabwe. It has shown that colonial urbanization was characterized by a dual system where the urban area was disproportionately developed and the rural area remained largely undeveloped. Because these urban areas were conceived as domains of a small white population with the African as a temporary sojourner, the cities were ill-prepared for

the massive influx of migrants at independence. Lacking in proper infrastructure such as adequate housing, health services and jobs, the post-independence urban area has managed to accumulate more than its fair share of poor people who are unable to feed and provision themselves. Their condition has progressively been worsened by the implementation of programmes such as ESAP and Operation *Murambatsvina* which destroyed urban livelihoods and pushed the poor into deeper poverty.

Within this context of a collapsed economy where formal food systems are basically non-existent, how were the urban poor meeting their food needs? What strategies were they adopting to cope with food insecurity and to enhance their resilience under such conditions of material deprivation? In order to answer these questions, the study combines qualitative and quantitative research methods to examine the urban poor's vulnerability and resilience to food insecurity. This methodological approach is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

COMBINING QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE METHODS IN AN URBAN HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY SURVEY

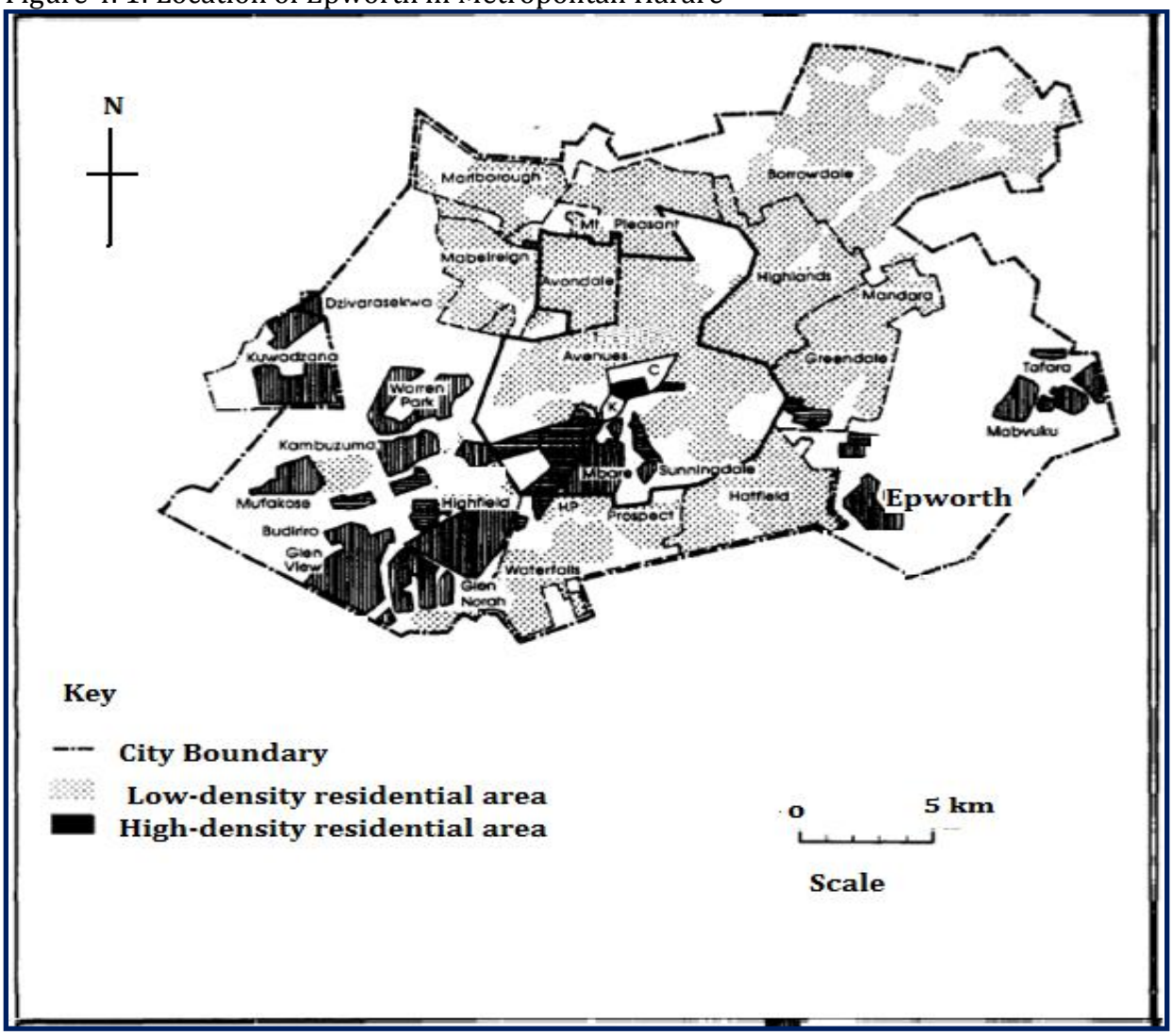
4.1 Introduction

This chapter details and justifies the methodological approach used to investigate urban household food insecurity in Epworth, Harare. It starts by describing the study site and then discusses the research design, which combines qualitative and quantitative methods in a bid to provide a richer contextual basis for understanding household food security in the urban environment. Qualitative data collection centered on the grounded theory approach and consisted of in-depth semi-structured household case studies and key-informant interviews. The quantitative survey involved the administration of a standardized questionnaire to selected households. In addition, the chapter deals with issues of validity and reliability of the collected data, ethical considerations as well as the various challenges encountered during the research. It concludes by highlighting the study limitations.

4.2 The Study Site

Epworth is a high-density peri-urban residential area in Metropolitan Harare, located about 15 kilometres to the southeast of the city centre, just beyond the low-density area of Hatfield (Figure 4.1). The land on which the suburb is situated was donated by Cecil John Rhodes to the Wesleyan Methodist Mission Trust in 1900 (Butcher, 1988; Rakodi, 1995). Historically, the inhabitants of the area were subsistence farmers until the early 1970s when the church opened up the area to a heavy influx of refugees who were fleeing war in rural areas. Although early refugees came from the surrounding rural areas of Seke and Goromonzi, the intensification of the war across the width and breath of the country resulted in refugees from far away places to Harare which was considered relatively safer than the smaller towns which they passed through. Thus today the residential area of Epworth accommodates people from different parts of the country. The majority, though, are from the nearby Mashonaland Provinces which surround the capital.

Figure 4. 1: Location of Epworth in Metropolitan Harare



(Source: Adapted from Rakodi and Withers, 1995:393)

While in 1980 Epworth accommodated around 20 000 people (Butcher, 1983; CSO, 1982), by mid-2009, the residential area was home to over 120 000 people (CSO, 2009). The increasing number of people and the subsequent fragmentation of plots to accommodate the newcomers slowly turned the mission into a residential area. Because there were no industries in the area, most of the inhabitants sought employment in Harare's main industrial areas of Masasa, Graniteside and Willowvale.

Besides rural-urban migration, the rapid expansion of Epworth after independence was fuelled by the influx of people from other residential areas in Harare seeking lower rents and rates. That trend still persists today as high rents elsewhere in the city force the poor to relocate to Epworth. In 1986, the Methodist Church passed on the ownership of the area to the government who in turn appointed a Local Board to oversee the area's development in terms of water, electricity and other services, and then spearhead its integration with the rest of Harare.

Epworth is composed of seven wards namely wards one to seven[24]. A section of ward seven[25] still remains part of an informal settlement, which is being regularized (Epworth Local Board, 2009).The choice of the study area was motivated by the fact that Epworth is one of poorest residential areas in Harare and would therefore likely yield more information on how the urban poor strategize to meet their food needs in the country's crisis situation. It is also one of the few residential areas in the country that was allowed by government to grow up as an informal settlement and later regularized into a proper urban settlement. Thus, the proliferation of low-income people in the area was thought to be more likely to yield useful information on how the urban poor construct their livelihoods and grapple with food insecurity challenges in the urban environment.

4.3 Research Design: A Mixed Methods Approach

This study employed a mixed methods approach, which refers to the 'collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially… and involve integrations of the data at one or more stages in the processes of research' (Creswell *et al*. 2003). Methodologically, there are two major perspectives on combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. One view, the 'paradigm purity' argument discourages the mixing of the two methods on the basis

[24] Although these numerical wards are the official administrative demarcations, residents refer to different areas with their local names such as: Makomo Origin/Extension, Zinyengere Origin/Extension, Chinamano Origin/Extension, Delport, Overspill, Maguta and Gada.

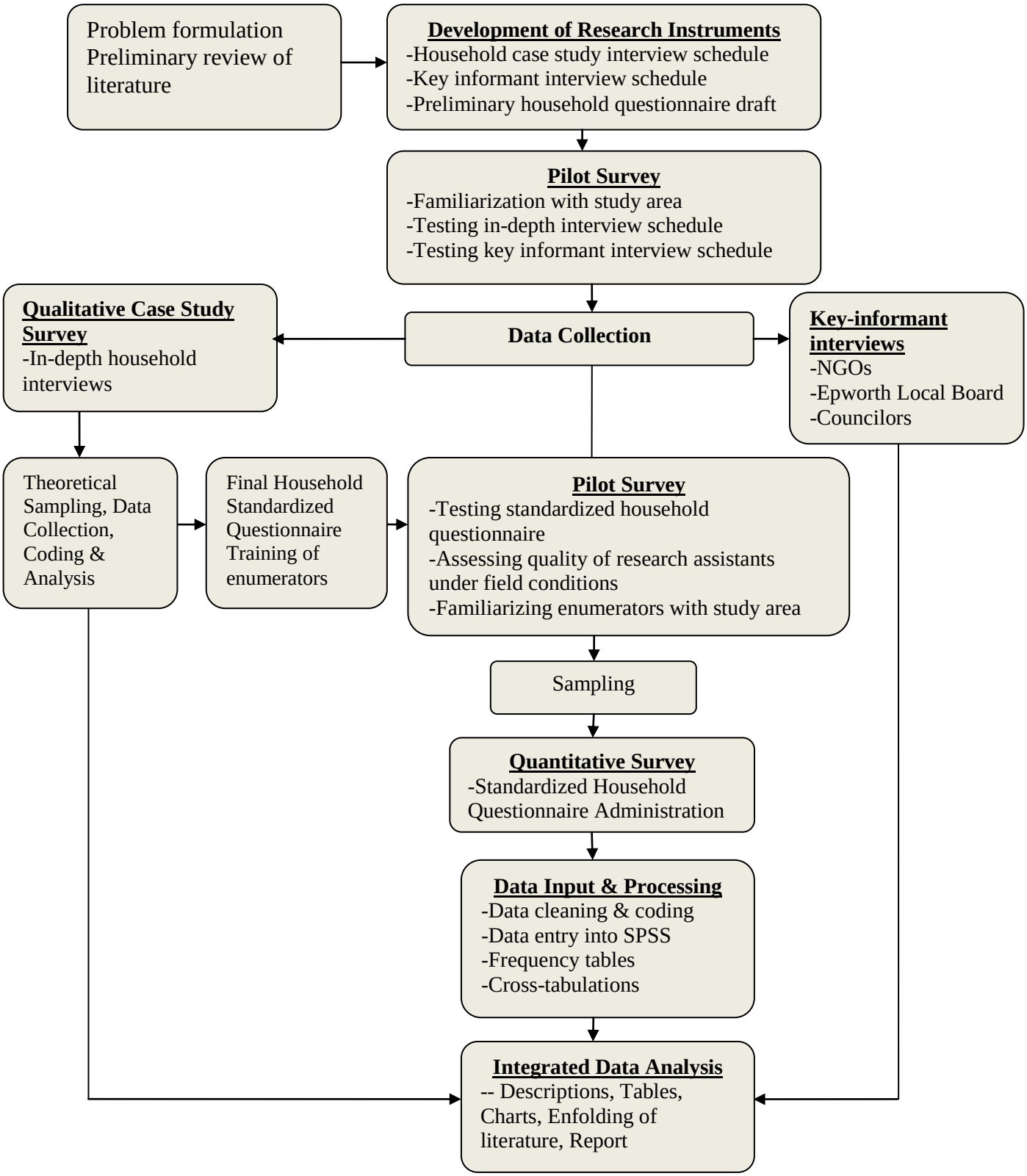
[25] This area is popularly known as Gada (literally translated to mean good life) – signifying the fact that residents of the area did not pay for the plots where they stay, but simply occupied them and stayed without paying any rent or rates to the local board. In 2006, however, residents of this area began to pay rates after the local authority undertook to regularize the area.

that qualitative and quantitative methods are linked to distinct philosophies of 'positivism' and 'constructivism' respectively. Accordingly, advocates of paradigm purism believe in the exclusive alignment between philosophical stances and methods and therefore do not see how two methods, emerging from different philosophical backgrounds, can be combined (Knox, 2004). The contesting 'compatibility thesis', argues that it is possible to address a research problem that philosophically falls under both positivism and constructivism by choosing the most appropriate method or combining the two (Tolossa, 2005). Although in Geography the two methods were traditionally viewed as two different ways of assessing reality, such dualism is now regarded as artificial and the mixed methods approach has become more acceptable[26]. It has helped to widen focus from the manipulation of pre-existing quantitative survey data towards issues that require subjective interpretation, including the socio-cultural context in which lived experiences are situated.

The combining of qualitative and quantitative procedures in this study provided the research with rigour, breath and an in-depth understanding of urban household food security, which is a multi-dimensional phenomenon with complex linkages and variables. This methodological pluralism offered a chance to transcend many of the problems that are inherent in single or narrower methods, for the strengths of one method were used to compensate the limitations of the other. While the qualitative method provided an exploratory edge to discovering the means and ways in which households function in the urban environment to ensure food security, the quantitative approach played a confirmatory role, measuring and quantifying those aspects of food security identified in the qualitative process and 'operationalizing' these theoretical relations so as to allow for generalization of findings. The use of the two methods also increased the robustness of the results through triangulation and cross-validation and provided a clearer and fuller picture of urban household food security than would otherwise have been achieved by using either of these methods on their own. Figure 4.2 below provides a detailed outline of the entire research process.

[26]A number of geographers particularly in economic and population geography (e.g. Kwan, 2004; Pacione, 2003; Graham, 1999) have used mixed methods extensively. In food security and livelihood studies specifically, the mixed method approach has been adopted and used by a number of researchers with successful results (e.g. Barrett, 2004; McKay, 2004; Ellis, 2000).

Figure 4.2: A Detailed Research Process



4.3.1 Qualitative Data Collection: A Grounded Theory Approach

> *I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts*
>
> (Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1891:2)

The broader failure of the current literature to give sufficient attention to urban household food insecurity necessitated the use of a grounded theory approach to fill the information gap. Stern (1980:20) points out that 'the strongest case for the use of grounded theory is in investigations of relatively unchartered waters'. This is particularly true of food security as existing theories do not offer detailed guidance on the urban context. In choosing a methodology for this study, the grounded theory approach was therefore seen as the most appropriate method for exploring urban food security dynamics at the household level. While food security research in rural areas has generated some theoretical concepts that are useful in understanding how households organize themselves to survive in their environment, this study was not structured within the confines of those frameworks, recognizing as Seidman and Rapparport (1986) point out, that theory is *time*, *place* and *context* bound. Researching urban food security through pre-existing frameworks may thus have limited the width and depth of this enquiry and run the risk of missing fundamental food security trends and processes that are peculiar to the urban environment. In this vein, the grounded theory approach allowed the investigation of urban household food security with an open view about the processes and inter-linkages operating in the urban environment rather than being confined to the rigid lens of an existing framework.

Grounded theory is a 'bottom up' approach for building theory where concepts and generalizations are built from the ground up (Punch, 2000). Pioneered by Glaser and Strauss in 1967, the method contrasts with traditional logical-deductive approaches, which derive their hypotheses from existing theories and bias data collection and analysis in favour of verification (Charmaz, 1990). The aim of grounded theory is to explore basic social processes and interactions by using a systematic set of procedures to inductively understand a phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It emphasizes the involvement of the researched in the research process and 'grounds' the resultant findings in their

experiences, seeking to understand rather than to control phenomena. The only reality in grounded theory is therefore that which is constructed by the individuals involved in the research as the researcher relies on their voices and interpretations to report this reality faithfully. Because grounded theory puts people at the centre of determining the research outcome, the approach allows urban household food security trends and processes to emerge from Epworth residents' own experiences and struggles rather than being identified *a priori* by the researcher. The analysis of these experiences yields important information that is well grounded in empirical data on how households' experience food insecurity, the challenges they face and the strategies that they adopt to enhance their resilience in the challenging urban environment.

A total of 30 in-depth case study interviews were carried out in Epworth. The sample size was not specified at the start of the research as theoretical sampling[27] does not allow the setting of a rigid sample size. Rather the researcher decided how many additional interviews were relevant to fully understand the processes and develop the evolving conceptual categories that were emerging from the analysis. Sampling was therefore undertaken parallel to the analysis. After interviewing 30 households, it became clear that further collection and analysis of data would not yield any additional insight into how households in Epworth were surviving and coping with household food insecurity. The researcher therefore decided that a 'theoretical saturation point'[28] had been reached and terminated the interview process. These 30 case studies allowed an in-depth understanding of urban household food insecurity and fulfilled the demands of 'analytic generalizability' as well as providing explanations for cause-effect relationships identified in the research. To capture the diversity of household food insecurity experiences, the researcher purposefully included into the sample male-headed, female-headed and child-headed households as well as households with different socio-economic status and varying

[27] Purposeful selection of samples to inform the emerging theory in a study. Data collection is therefore controlled by the emerging theory (Glazer, 1978; Coyne, 1997).

[28] This is a point at which the continued collection of data yields no new insights or identifies new themes regarding the subject under study (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In other words, further data collection and/or observations are likely to yield only minimal or no new information to further elaborate on the issues being studied.

length of residence in the city. These in-depth case studies sought depth rather than breadth, explored the poverty and food insecurity challenges of the household in real-life settings while probing the feelings, multiple viewpoints as well as the lived experiences of urban households in Epworth.

Within selected households, a household member above the age of 18 years was randomly chosen as an informant. To achieve this randomness, cards were numbered from one to the highest number corresponding to all the qualifying household members, each of whom was assigned a number. These cards were put in a box and an under-age household member was then asked to randomly pick one. An individual whose assigned number corresponded to the one picked from the box then became the household respondent. Such a random sampling process was designed to capture data from a wide cross section of household members ranging from household heads, spouses, children and other household members.

Each in-depth interview took approximately one and half to two hours. The semi-structured nature of the interview schedule enabled the researcher to probe for additional information by pursuing any interesting issues through follow-up questions. In this way, the researcher was able to tease out some of the more intricate ways of coping with food insecurity that would not have been captured through a structured questionnaire. By taking the first five minutes of arrival for introductions, enquiring on the health of household members and chatting about general issues, the researcher was able to create good rapport with the respondents thereby putting them at ease. This guaranteed cooperation and most respondents were eager to participate in the survey.

Key informant interviews were conducted with the Chairman, Executive Secretary and four councilors of Epworth Local Board as well as with five informants from NGOs. These interviews served to complement data obtained from the in-depth household case study interviews. The key informants were purposively selected for interview based on their being able to provide valuable information concerning household food security in the urban areas. As Denscombe (1998:118-119) points out, such selections are usually deliberate because the informants have ‘some special contribution to make’ and ‘have a

unique insight' owing to the position they hold. The local authorities specifically provided information on the extent of poverty and food shortages in the area, general socio-economic conditions, the local authority's by-laws on urban agriculture and vending as well as other general welfare issues. Key informants from NGOs provided a general assessment of the country's food security situation, particularly in urban areas, the scale of their urban aid activities, the kind of aid they offer and how they selected the beneficiaries of their programmes.

4.3.2 Quantitative Data Collection

Quantitative research is 'the numerical representation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect' (Casebeer and Verhoef, 1997:2). It measures the cause and effect relationships between variables, but rarely considers what the variables' constructed meanings are. Quantitative data gathering in this study involved the collection of information on household food security through a standardized household questionnaire administered to 200 sampled households in Epworth. According to Cohen and Manion (1994) there is no single way of determining a sufficient sample size for a quantitative survey as the size normally depends on the objectives of the research, the type of analysis that is to be carried out as well as the margin of error that one is willing to allow for the results. However, the sample should contain enough sub-groups to provide a basis for making comparisons and generalizations. To meet some of these sample demands, statistical procedures have been developed to select statistically acceptable sample sizes. Using these statistical procedures, 200 households were selected from all the seven wards of Epworth. Table 4.1 below shows the distribution of the sample by wards. A detailed description of the sample characteristics is presented in Appendix F. These characteristics allowed household data to be disaggregated into categories that enabled rigorous data analysis and permitted a deeper understanding of urban household food security.

Table 4. 1: Sample size for the standardized household questionnaire survey by wards

Ward	Number of households	Weighting (%)	Sample Size
1	6 981	15.7	31
2	4 014	9.0	18
3	3 183	7.2	14
4	5 531	12.4	25
5	5 025	11.3	23
6	8 069	18.1	36
7	11 691	26.3	53
Total	**44 494**	**100**	**200**

The researcher used the 2005 Master List for Epworth as a sampling frame. This list had been created by the Zimbabwe Central Statistical Office after the 2002 Zimbabwe national census, and then updated and used for the 2005-6 Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS). While some households had moved into the area and others had left since then, it was not possible to update the sampling frame because of the enormous costs involved in carrying out such an exercise. The list also excluded households in institutions like hospitals, schools, orphanages and police camps.

Sampling in the quantitative component of the research was a two-stage process. The first stage involved choosing participating households within the wards. Random sampling was used to select households from the ward lists, which were arranged in alphabetical order. In each ward, a sampling starting point was determined by throwing a dice and thereafter selecting households at a predetermined interval until the desired sample size in the ward was achieved. The second stage involved choosing respondents to whom the questionnaire would be administered within the selected households. This process entailed randomly selecting a household member above 18 years as the respondent. To achieve this randomness, a process similar to the one adopted during the in-depth case study survey (see section 4.3.1) was adopted and followed. Household members showed a lot of enthusiasm to participate in the process of selecting the respondent.

4.3.3 The Standardized Household Questionnaire

A structured, pre-coded household questionnaire[29] was designed for administration to selected households in Epworth. The questionnaire was developed in two phases. The first phase involved designing questions after an initial review of literature. This preliminary review was done to familiarize the researcher with general issues of issues of interest in urban food security. Although the grounded theory approach does not encourage a full-scale review of literature before going to the field, for fear of building preconceptions[30] about the phenomena to be studied, Heath and Cowley (2004) argue that no one can claim to enter the field completely free from the influence of past experience and reading and that even if this were possible, ignorance would not be synonymous with generating insider understanding. Both Glaser and Strauss accept that, to some extent, reviewing literature may be permissible where reading is just general and alerts or sensitizes one to a wide range of possibilities or is used to stimulate theoretical sensitivity and generate hypothesis (Strauss, 1987 Glazer, 1978). Hence an initial reading of literature was done and the broad issues encountered were utilized to frame broad questions for the research.

The second phase of questionnaire development occurred after the in-depth interview survey, where data collected and analyzed yielded information on how urban households constructed their livelihoods to result in various food security outcomes. This information was then used to frame questions that enable the researcher to find out how prevalent the strategies identified in the qualitative survey were in Epworth. The standardized household questionnaire[31] subsequently designed was then administered to collect quantitative data from sampled households in all the seven wards of the study area. Information from key informant interviews was also used to aid in the construction of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to capture information that would make it possible to gauge the strength and validity of the trends and processes observed during the

[29] See Appendix B for sample of standardized household questionnaire

[30] Grounded theory encourages that no review of the literature in the area of study be done before data collection. The rationale for this argument is to avoid biasing the investigator's attempts to develop concepts and ideas from the data that actually fits the concept (Tavakol *et al*., 2006)

[31] In addition to questions formulated during the qualitative data survey, the researcher acknowledges the use of questions designed by the Program in Urban Food Security (PUFS) for their 2008 Urban Food Security Baseline Survey in 11 cities of Southern Africa.

qualitative research process. Information collected through the questionnaire included household demographic characteristics, poverty data, income and expenditure patterns, household food insecurity experiences, dietary diversity information and household coping mechanisms. The questionnaire was pre-coded to allow easier administration and smooth data capture after the survey. The administration of each questionnaire took approximately forty-five to sixty minutes.

Four enumerators (three males and one female) who were Masters Students in the Department of Geographical and Environmental Sciences at the University of Zimbabwe were trained as fieldworkers over a period of two days. This intensive training involved educating the enumerators on the objectives of the research, the content of the questionnaire, how to record respondents' answers accurately and some simple guidance to etiquette[32]. Role-plays were carried out so that each enumerator had a chance to conduct an interview and suggestions were made to improve the process. The training of these enumerators went smoothly as all of them had field experience, having participated in the AFSUN Urban Food Security Baseline Survey in Harare in October 2008. During fieldwork, the enumerators demonstrated a clear understanding of their roles and displayed a professional attitude towards the research. At the end of each day, the research team met to review progress and discuss problems that were encountered as well as mapping strategies for the next day's work. The researcher kept an inventory of the number of completed questionnaires received from enumerators each day. This process made it easier to keep track of progress, to prevent loss of questionnaires as well as to check the productivity of each enumerator who had been tasked to administer a minimum of five questionnaires every day.

4.3.4 The Pilot Surveys

Two pilot surveys were carried out. The first survey was conducted in Epworth at the beginning of March 2009. The purpose of this pilot survey was to test the in-depth interview guide as well as the key informant interview schedule to gauge the suitability of

[32] It was mandatory for enumerators to announce themselves before entering household premises, to greet household members, inquire on their health and introduce themselves before beginning the interview.

these instruments in terms of clarity of questions, content and the time taken to complete the interview. It also helped the researcher to familiarize himself with the study area, identify key informants and select households for the in-depth case studies. The pilot survey also gave the researcher an opportunity to assess prevailing conditions and gauge whether the political climate[33] at the time was conducive for carrying out research. This visit was timed to coincide with a day that local councilors were holding one of their weekly meetings. This was done in order to take advantage of their presence at the council offices to brief them of the impending survey[34]. After the briefing, the councilors went and informed people in their wards about the survey. This proved to be worthwhile as the research was well publicized in the wards and made the researcher's eventual entry into the field much easier.

A second pilot survey was carried out at the end of March 2009 when qualitative in-depth case study research had been completed and preparations were being made to begin the quantitative survey using a standardized household questionnaire. This pilot survey served three purposes. First, it enabled the testing of the standardized household questionnaire in terms of its clarity and content as well as to gauge the time that it would take to administer it. It was discovered during the pilot survey that although the government had introduced a multiple currency regime for trading purposes, there was a self-selecting system, which was partial to the United States Dollar, the South African Rand, the British Pound and the Batswana Pula. However, most people were using the United States dollar and the South Africa Rand. As most products traded in the country were of South African origin, the researcher decided to use the South Africa Rand as the monetary measure since household members were able to provide accurate prices and costs using this currency.

[33] Widespread political violence before and in the aftermath of the June 27 2008 presidential run-off elections had created a highly polarized society which was suspicious of strangers and an academic research could easily be misconstrued as having political undertones. Although a Government of National Unity (GNU) had been inaugurated in February 2009, there was still a lot of distrust between the political opponents (ZANU PF and MDC) which also filtered to community levels and made research a delicate process. The researcher's entry into the area through the councilors however smoothed the process and the survey was conducted successfully without any hindrance.

[34] Ward councilors are part-time employees who meet occasionally at the Epworth Local Board offices only when they have scheduled weekly meetings or urgent business to discuss.

Secondly, the pilot survey provided a platform to gauge the quality of the enumerators in terms of how they approached households, sought permission from participants, administered the questionnaires and handled the general interaction that ensued during the interview process. It was observed that the enumerators were able to effectively carry out their duty of administering the questionnaires correctly, timeously and with confidence. Thirdly, the pilot survey served to familiarize the enumerators with the area in terms of its general layout, the streets and the ward demarcations.

4.3.5 Consent, Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations

Gaining consent from the informants is an integral part of the research process. Informed consent refers to the ongoing agreement by a person to participate in research after purpose, risks and benefits of the research have been fully explained (Christians, 2005). Thus, the first thing that the researcher did on approaching selected respondents was to inform them about the purpose of the study and ask for their consent to conduct the interviews. Explaining the purpose of the research was meant to ensure that respondents made informed and voluntary decisions on whether or not to participate without feeling as is they were being coerced to do so, physically or psychologically. Those who agreed to take part in the survey were asked to indicate their consent by signing consent forms.

Although the majority of the respondents readily agreed to sign consent forms, a few felt that signing the forms contradicted the pledge of anonymity that the researcher had assured them. The researcher thus had to re-emphasize that their signature on the consent forms would in no way be linked to the information that they would provide and that their signing should not make them feel compelled to continue participating if, at any point during the interview they did not feel so. The respondents could terminate the interview any time they wanted to. During both the in-depth case study interviews and the standardized household questionnaire administration, all communication was in the local *shona* language so that the respondents fully understood the purpose of the interviews as well as the information being sought.

While it has been argued by other researchers such as Smith (2005) that by signing consent forms, respondents may perceive the researcher as someone who occupies a more 'powerful' position and therefore give out information that they deem to be acceptable to the researcher, the researcher minimized this effect by informing respondents that there were no wrong or right answers. Instead, it was made clear that it was their various food insecurity experiences that were crucial to the research. Moreover, the grounded theory approach attempts to equalize this relationship by empowering the respondents through making them part of the process rather than bystanders in the research.

During the in-depth case study interviews, permission was also sought from respondents to record the interviews. These respondents were assured that no personal or household information that could identify them was to be recorded on the audio tape. Twenty-four of the thirty respondents refused to have their interviews recorded. They cited a number of cases in the area where journalists, disguising their profession and intent, had interviewed them and had gone on to air these interviews on foreign radio stations without their permission. Because of the politically unstable environment in the country, such breach of confidentiality could have serious security repercussions for the respondents who could then be targeted by one political group or the other for their views. Thus, the researcher conducted most of the in-depth interviews while taking down notes. The researcher also made sure not to do anything that conflicted with local taboos and ethics, including having to dress casually in a way that was acceptable to the community.

4.3.6 Reliability and Validity of the Research and its Findings

According to Kitchin and Tate (2000), good research not only tells a convincing story, but is also rigorous in nature so that its conclusions can be accepted more definitively. In striving for this acceptance, the researcher should show the audience the procedures used in ensuring that the methods are reliable and conclusions valid. This brings to the fore important tenets of reliability and validity, which every researcher should be concerned about while designing a study and analyzing results. Reliability is 'the extent to which results are consistent over time' (Joppe, 2000:1). It is the 'repeatability' of scores or measured values of variables in particular research. The test for reliability is to answer the

question: If the procedures used in conducting the research are followed by an altogether different researcher, will they give the same results? Yin (1994) suggests the use of the case study protocol and putting in place a case study database so that the study can be replicated. Hence, in trying to achieve high levels of reliability in this study, all the steps and procedures followed during fieldwork were clearly documented so that they could easily be followed. Additionally, a documentation system was put in place, which gives the details of households that were interviewed, when they were interviewed and the wards in which these households are located.

The researcher also ensured that interviews were carried out on a one-to-one basis so that the respondents were not compelled by the presence of other household members to either withhold or distort information pertinent to the research. The acute food shortages existing in the study area at the time of the research alerted the researcher to the possibility that some respondents could intentionally or unintentionally exaggerate their food insecurity situation in the hope that doing so would get them help. To guard against such a possibility that could distort the reliability of the supplied data, the researcher emphasized that the survey was simply of an academic nature and urged them to respond truthfully. The researcher created a good rapport with respondents and put them at ease so that they became comfortable about discussing various issues surrounding household food security.

Validity, on the other hand refers to 'the accuracy of scientific findings' (Le Compte and Goetz, 1982:32). It requires assessing whether constructs devised by the researcher measures effectively the categories of human experience that occur and establishing the extent to which conclusions reached effectively represent empirical reality that contributes to scientific knowledge. For the case study, the challenge of meeting these parameters is even more difficult considering the major case study criticism is that it is not possible to generalize results obtained from a single case. Yin (1994:21) however makes it clear that the purpose of the case study, like the experiment, is analytic rather than statistical generalization. Accordingly, the results of this study are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to the wider generality of the urban population in Zimbabwe or in

other cities of the region. It is through such theoretical generalizations that the case study becomes central to scientific development.

The use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods in this research served to enhance the validity and reliability of study results. This is primarily because Epworth residents' own formulations and constructions of reality regarding household food security, as obtained from the qualitative research process, were checked against information derived from the quantitative survey and observations made in the same study area. As has been noted by Denzin (1978), such triangulation is in itself a recursive check on the validity of the data and the researcher's interpretations. Validity was further enhanced by interviewing multiple informants in the survey as well as constantly comparing data from different households through the 'constant comparative' method of data collection and analysis which is embedded in the grounded theory approach. The multiple informants included household members, authorities from Epworth Local Board and representatives from Non-Governmental Organizations. In order to make sure that views from diverse groups were included in the research, as noted above, the researcher interviewed male headed, female and child-headed households, which also served to increase internal validity.

Although grounded theory emphasizes reporting the interviewees' conceptualizations and interpretations as faithfully as is possible, there is still room for researcher error in qualitative analysis. Such an error can reduce the reliability of the conclusions made in the research. To guard against this error the researcher carried out a validation process that entailed reporting back the findings of the in-depth case study interviews to five of the thirty interviewed households to see whether the findings reflected the information that the households had supplied. This is encouraged by Riley (1996:36-7), who says:

> *When establishing the credibility of analysis, the tradition of investigator-as-expert is reversed. This process is called 'member checking' and is an invited assessment of the investigator's meaning. Informants can be invited to assess whether the early analyses are an accurate reflection of their conversations.*

The report back was done in the local *shona* language and in non-technical terms. It was important to report back in a simple way so that the researched could easily understand

the findings and have the chance to query, concur with or correct the researcher's interpretation of the information that they had supplied. Without this basic understanding during the feedback process, Bryman (2004) points out that the researcher's account may be accorded privileged status when the subjects do not understand the meaning of the research findings. The five households verified the information as correct and hence ensured a high degree of validity and reliability for the survey results.

4.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Analysis of qualitative information took precedence over that of quantitative data. The aim of this methodological route to data analysis was to utilize the qualitative data from the in-depth household survey to identify important themes and sub-themes regarding the ways in which households provisioned themselves, survived and coped with a variety of food security challenges in the urban environment. After identifying these themes, the quantitative data from the standardized household questionnaire survey was then used to verify the strength and validity of these inter-linkages. In pursuing this approach, a cue was taken from de Haan, *et al*., (2003) who argue that food security cannot be entirely understood by qualitative methods alone, but rather by a complementary quantitative analysis that tries to reveal the extent to which characteristics identified in the relatively small scale in-depth survey are 'typical'. The quantitative analysis in this thesis is therefore informed by a qualitatively generated understanding of how households in Epworth function in their environment. This was considered a better analytical approach as it allowed themes and issues to emerge from a dialogue with data rather than trying to fit the collected data into pre-conceived categories.

4.4.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

Although Glaser and Strauss (1967) founded the grounded theory approach together, the analytical methods prescribed for the research process have somewhat developed into two distinct guidelines, each aligned to either of the pioneers of the approach. While Glazer seemed to have remained faithful to classic grounded theory, Strauss has produced a reformulation of the classic mode and together with Corbin has further developed analytic techniques that provide guidance to novice researchers. This study followed the analytical

procedures advocated by Strauss and Cobin (1992) as these seemed to best serve the purpose of the research. These procedures consisted of three activities that occurred during the survey, namely: a) familiarization with data; b) coding and; c) enfolding literature into the analysis. Although the process is presented here in a linear fashion to make it more comprehensible, data collection and analysis took place concurrently in a practice known as the constant comparative method of analysis. Constant comparison simply indicates that the researcher is 'constantly gathering more data, analyzing them, comparing the analyses to past analyses, then gathering and analyzing more data in order to clarify an emerging theoretical relationship among variables' (Parry, 1998:89). Because grounded theory does not make a clean break between gathering and analyzing data, nor does it wait until data collection has been completed to begin analysis, the search for meaning in urban food security through the interrogation of qualitative data began in the early stages of data collection and ended at the last stages of report writing.

4.4.1.1 Familiarization with Data

Familiarization with data entailed reading in-depth survey interviews and notes to get a grip on the content as well as listening to tapes of recorded interviews. This familiarized the researcher with the substance of the collected material and initiated a process of identifying peculiar or outstanding themes on household food security. Familiarization also involved taking notes of both the content of the interview as well as the researcher's impressions on respondents in terms of their speech (e.g. stress, reluctance, tone of voice, and mood). By transcribing all interviews personally, the researcher also kept in contact with data and became conversant with issues that were central to household food security.

4.4.1.2 Data Coding and Conceptualization

Following the transcription and familiarization with interview data, the researcher extricated key themes, which emerged from the interviews through an initial coding of the transcripts. This 'open coding' resulted in the identification of three broad categories of urban household food security: (a) the context of household vulnerability to food insecurity, (b) household food insecurity experiences and perceptions and (c) the strategies adopted by these households to cope with hunger and food shortages. Under

these broad categories, sub-categories were formulated. The arrangement of the sub-categories used a 'selective coding' approach in which the categories were linked to the core categories. Coding at each stage terminated when theoretical saturation was achieved and no further relationships were emerging from the data. Throughout the research process, memos were kept identifying key issues and trends and this kept the researcher in contact with the data while moving in the analysis from descriptive concepts to core categories and their inter-linkages. The codes were inserted in the margins of interview texts for easier reference and spotting and by the use of memo cards stuck on the text.

While this process of identifying key elements and forming categories was interpretive in nature, it also included the perspectives and voices of the people who were being studied in Epworth. The researcher noted the meanings that households attached to food security, what it meant for them to be food secure and the various factors that were integral to urban household food security. During the analysis of each respondent's specific information, emphasis[35], special concerns and general attitudes were recorded on a separate page. The themes that were identified by different people were then validated and fitted into the conceptual levels identified earlier. Selective coding also involved the identification of the central phenomenon and linking it with different categories. This integration entailed linking the central concept of household food security with other categories such as those on urban agriculture, social capital, international as well as rural-urban migration and its influence on household food security.

4.4.1.3 Enfolding the Literature

In addition to the review of literature prior to fieldwork to familiarize the researcher with key issues in urban food security, more literature was consulted during and after the survey. During the research, literature was consulted as themes, concepts and relationships began to emerge and comparisons with related literature became imperative. The researcher reviewed literature on urban poverty and urban livelihoods in order to find out

[35] The tone of the voice of the respondent, recurring verbal expressions and the frequency of mentioning certain aspect were taken as indicators of emphasis.

whether the trends that were being observed in Harare had been observed elsewhere and how this could help explain the way surveyed households were surviving. Thus enfolding this literature involved asking what was similar, contradictory and why. Review of literature also helped to explain a variety of linkages that emerged from the field.

4.4.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

After the standardized household questionnaire survey, the researcher carried out a data cleaning process, which involved checking the 200 questionnaires from the survey for omissions and inconsistencies. Data was then entered into SPSS.v17 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for computer-aided analysis, which entailed generating frequency tables and performing cross-tabulations between given variables. This quantitative data was used in the analysis to probe the validity and strength of relationships established through the qualitative analysis. The survey used three measures of household food insecurity namely: a) the Household Food Insecurity Access Prevalence Indicator (HFIAP); b) the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS); and, c) the Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning (MAHFP) measurement of household food access[36].

4.4.2.1 The Household Food Insecurity Access Prevalence Indicator (HFIAP)

The Household Food Insecurity Access Prevalence Indicator (HFIAP) is based on the idea that the experience of food insecurity (access) causes predictable reactions and responses that can be captured and quantified through a survey and summarized in a scale. The questions asked how frequently over the past month the respondent or household members either felt or behaved in a particular way in the face of food vulnerability or insecurity and the responses to the nine questions were coded and used to calculate an index, which was used to classify households into four levels of household food security: food secure, mildly food insecure, moderately food insecure and severely food insecure. For ease of analysis, the first two categories were collated into one to make up the food secure category while the last two were combined to form the food insecure category.

[36] These measures were designed by the USAID's Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) project and have been used extensively in food security surveys internationally. A more detailed discussion of the development, significance and operationalization of these measures is found in Coates *et al.*, (2007).

4.4.2.2 The Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS)

The Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) is a simple count that use uses a variety of different food groups that are consumed by the household over a given reference period to calculate a proxy measure for household food insecurity. The rationale for calculating dietary diversity in this survey was that the measure could give an insight into household food insecurity levels, as food insecure households tend to be over-reliant on starchy staples while excluding proteins and other nutrients from their diet[37]. Low dietary diversity was thus used as a good predictor of food insecurity among households.

4.4.2.3 The Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning (MAHFP)

Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning (MAHFP) enumerates the months in which households have access to adequate food. It was used in this research to capture the household's ability to address vulnerability by ensuring food availability above a minimum level all year round. The higher the number of months that a household did not have adequate food provisioning, the more likely the household was food insecure and therefore the less resilient it would be to food shocks. The measure was therefore used to indicate how food insecurity at the household level fluctuated throughout the year within the researched households.

4.5 Challenges and Limitations of the Research

A number of challenges were encountered in the research. The first challenge regarded sampling of households for the standardized household questionnaire survey. This is because although the sampling frame that was used contained addresses for the sampled households, locating them on the ground proved to be very difficult, as most of the streets in the area had no signposts. The street map for the area was not particularly helpful as it was outdated with new developments not being reflected. Furthermore, some of the numbers on the houses were not legible and in some streets the numbering was quite

[37] A large body of research (e.g. Azadbakht *et al*., 2005; Savvy *et al*., 2005; Kant *et al*., 1993) supports the use of dietary diversity measures as they have been tested and found to perform well as proxy measures for food security.

confusing as the next number in the progression could be found four or five houses away. It was therefore quite a challenge for the research assistants to locate the sampled households. Houses in Gada, which is part of the informal settlement in ward seven, had no street addresses and the challenge of locating the selected households was even more daunting there. This exercise therefore took up much time that could have been used in interviewing. In the end however, the exercise proved to be worthwhile as a learning experience in translating the sampling processes from paper to the ground.

The second challenge related to the fact that the study was done during a period when the entire country was experiencing acute food shortages. A food security study was therefore bound to heighten the expectations of the households who saw the researcher as being in a position to channel their plight to government and NGOs so that they could be assisted. Although the researcher fully explained the academic nature of the research and emphasized that there was no way of knowing if, when or how some policy makers or food aid groups would make use of the research findings, most respondents kept urging the researcher to take their plight to higher authorities. In emphasizing the academic nature of the research, the researcher wanted to avoid raising expectations that could not be fulfilled and therefore pose a challenge for future researchers in the area.

The third challenge concerned some households who were not selected into the sample. These households felt left out of the process and some members even begged the researcher to include them in the survey. Although the researcher and the enumerators continuously explained to them how the sample had been selected, some still voiced the view that they did not like being left out of a process that could somehow ameliorate their problems in future, no matter how remote that possibility seemed to be. This proved to be quite a challenge: to research on a people's plight, to witness their struggles and suffering and observe first hand households living on the margins of starvation, but at the same time to be unable to do anything about their situation.

The fourth challenge centered on the political environment in the country at the time of the survey. A decade of recurrent food shortages and political disagreements between the two

major political parties, ZANU PF and MDC had deeply polarized society and made food issues highly political and sensitive. This sensitivity was illustrated during the in-depth case study survey when the researcher was confronted by a group of youths demanding to know the purpose of the survey and who was funding it. Having lived in Zimbabwe through some of these turbulent years, and being aware how the situation could easily turn political, the researcher fully explained the purpose of the survey, emphasizing its academic nature and producing a letter from Epworth Local Board authorizing the research. In addition, the researcher refused to be drawn into any political discussion. One member among the group remembered hearing about the research from his councilor and what could possibly have been a confrontational situation easily became cordial. The youths even ended up offering to help find people to interview, which request the researcher politely declined, but nevertheless thanked them for their offer. This incident highlights the importance of proper entry into a research area as this can serve to smooth the way for the researcher even in a politically sensitive terrain such as that which existed in Zimbabwe.

One of the limitations in the study concerns the accuracy of the data that was supplied by respondents. Because some of them kept on insisting the researcher pass on their plight to anyone who could help them, one therefore cannot discount the possibility that some of them could have exaggerated their situation in the hope that they would be able to benefit should assistance be forthcoming. During the standardized household questionnaire survey, for example, some respondents even wanted their identifying particulars to be recorded and seemed particularly disappointed when this could not be done. Additionally, some of the longitudinal data could have been less accurate owing to the long recall period where households were required to recall information relating to the past year. This was especially the case with medical, education, insurance as well as funeral costs.

To minimize distortion due to memory loss, the researcher cross-checked some of the expenses with the gazetted[38] prices at the time. These gazetted prices were available in various government gazettes, bulletins and newspapers. Where households had receipts for particular expenses, they were encouraged to produce them to increase accuracy. Another limitation of the research is that the sampling list excluded households that were located in institutions such as police stations, schools and orphanages as well as the homeless. The perceptions and experiences of food insecurity by these groups of people were therefore not captured. Further research on urban household food insecurity would thus need to consider how such groups of people are also constructing their livelihoods in the urban environment.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology used in the study. It demonstrates the suitability of the grounded theory approach in examining largely unexplored subject areas such as household food insecurity in the urban environment. By using this approach, which puts people at the centre of the research process, the research was able to determine the levels of household food insecurity and explore the ways in which poor urban households feed themselves and cope with various food security challenges under adverse conditions in the urban environment. The chapter also shows the benefits of combining qualitative and quantitative research methods in food security studies in order to understand the phenomena more holistically. While the qualitative process, consisting of in-depth case studies and key informant interviews, provided an exploratory edge to discovering the ways in which households cope with food insecurity in the urban environment, the quantitative survey played a confirmatory role, measuring and quantifying those aspects identified in the qualitative process. This methodology proved useful in capturing the complexity of urban household food security, particularly in a crisis such as that in Zimbabwe. The findings revealed by this methodology are presented in the next chapter.

[38] Although this was particularly useful where services were provided by the government (e.g. public hospitals, schools as well as for food accessed through the Grain Marketing Board) it was not entirely helpful when it came to services and goods provided by private entrepreneurs whose charges differed significantly with the gazzetted prizes.

CHAPTER FIVE

URBAN HOUSEHOLD VULNERABILITY TO FOOD INSECURITY IN HARARE

5.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to determine the levels of household food security in Harare and to examine the factors that are responsible for increasing the vulnerability of these households to food insecurity. Such an examination is important for one to get an insight into how poor urban households negotiate their way through a web of intertwined relationships to produce varied food security outcomes at the household level. It is through interrogating such interrelationships that the processes inherent within the household urban food security matrix can be unpacked. In presenting the research findings, qualitative data generated from in-depth case study interviews is used to identify important themes and inter-linkages while quantitative data collected through the standardized household questionnaire survey is used to verify the strength and direction of these relationships.

5.1.1 Urban Household Food Security Status in Harare

Food security is a complex, cross-cutting and multi-faceted phenomenon. It is therefore only possible to get a clearer picture of a household's food security status and well being by analyzing it both its qualitative and quantitative aspects. Qualitative data from in-depth household case study interviews revealed a number of household food insecurity experiences. These experiences, which are depicted in Table 5.1, revolve around issues of food shortages, food accessibility, inadequacy and unsuitability of diets as well as the household members' feelings of lack of control over their food security situation.

The majority of surveyed households indicated that they were food insecure as they could hardly maintain a steady supply of adequate food for all household members. For most households, finding enough food for a single meal was a real challenge. When asked to explain their food security status, the greater proportion of these interviewed urban households would offer statements such as: 'we are dying here', 'we are lucky to be alive' or 'we are starving…it's by the grace of God that were still survive'.

Table 5.1: Urban households' food insecurity experiences in Harare

Description of household experiences	Key thematic issues
Low food supply	Food shortages
No food supply	
Insufficient food for adults	
Insufficient food for children	
Anxiety about food supply	Preoccupation with access
Uncertainty about future food supply	
Worry about state of national supply	
Lack of choice of what to eat	Inadequacy and unsuitability of diet
Same type of food for long periods	
Low nutrition	
Unknown/unfamiliar foods-unknown safety	
Feelings of being inadequate and guilt	Lack of control of situation
Feelings of hopelessness and frustration	
Feelings of anger towards government and national leadership	
Feelings of shame at being unable to provide	
Feelings of being abandoned by God	

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The severity of their insecurity was captured by one respondent who described her household's situation as follows:

> Things are tough and we barely survive. We sometimes spend the whole day without eating anything. Stray dogs that used to rummage through our bins have disappeared, for no-one leaves food for them anymore. This is how we live and this is how terrible our situation has become[39].

This description was common among interviewees and served to indicate the depth of food insecurity within households where food shortages had become a permanent feature of daily life. Although some households indicated that they were more food insecure than others, the problems that they were experiencing were the same: poverty and food shortages ultimately leading to household food insecurity. This was primarily because for a number of years during the country's economic crisis, shortages were an everyday occurrence both at national as well as at city scale. The food that was being produced in the country could not meet national demand and the government did not have enough foreign

[39] Case Study No. 1, 23 March 2009, Ward 1, Epworth, Harare.

currency to secure food imports. While NGOs and International development agencies were helping in bringing in much needed food imports to alleviate food shortages, they were unable to meet the deficits. Thus even households earning enough money consistently found themselves facing severe shortages as there was little food on the market. On the other hand skyrocketing inflation reduced the value of wages such that even on those rare occasions when food was available on the market, an average worker's wage was inadequate to buy sufficient food for most households. Hence most households were generally food insecure. One respondent indicated the severity of such household's food security situation by saying:

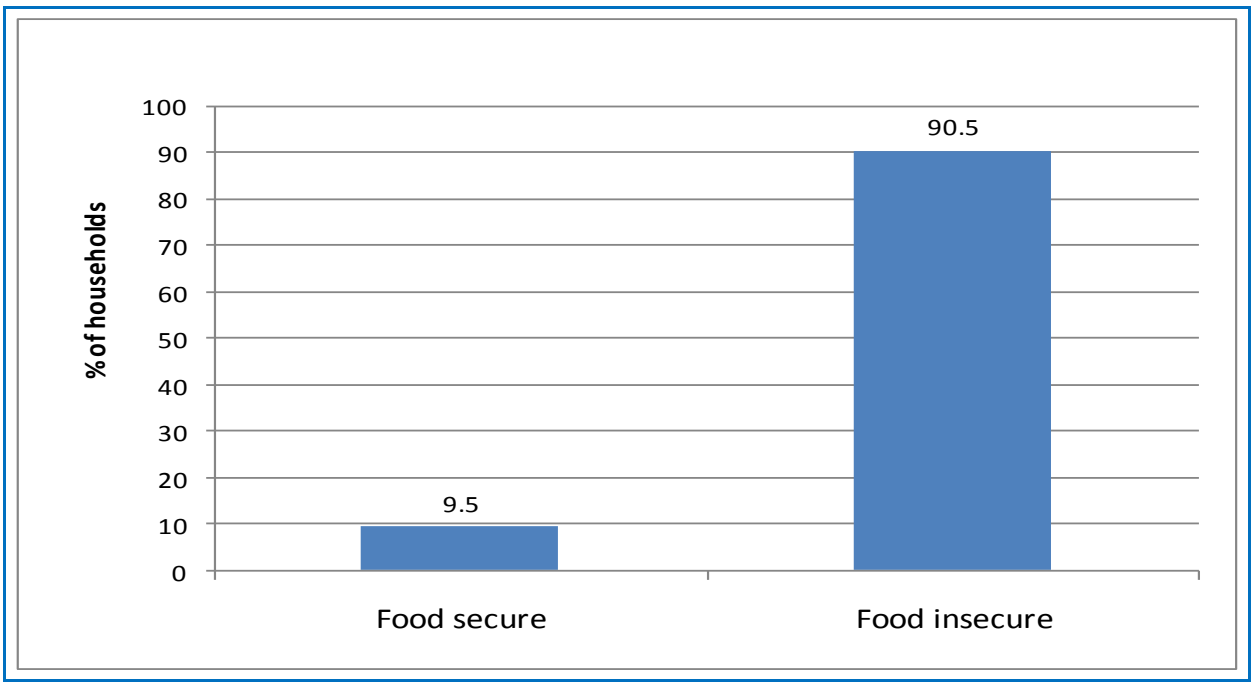
> I can count on one hand the number of days that we have a descent meal in a month in this household. Everyday we worry about where to get money, where to get food and how to feed the children. It's the same everyday for the rest of the year. I used to hope that one day things would get better, but it is just a dream[40].

For this household and many others in Harare, the struggle to find enough food to survive is a daily occurrence with no end in sight or any prospects that the situation may get better. Results from the quantitative survey confirm this food security situation as only 9.5 percent of the surveyed households were found to be food secure (Figure 5.1). This food insecurity prevalence rate of 90.5 percent was slightly lower than the 95 percent prevalence rate recorded for the Urban Household Baseline Survey held in Harare in October 2008 (Zanamwe *et al.,* 2009). This difference may be accounted for by the fact that there had been an improvement in the country's economic environment between the 2008 Baseline Survey and this research in March-April 2009.

Much of the improvement is attributed to the formation of the Government of National Unity[41] which increased in the inflow of food imports, reduced inflation and stabilized food prices. Despite this slight improvement, the longer term trends however show little sign of improvement considering that in 2003 about 63 percent of Harare's urban population had been classified as food insecure (SADC/FANR, 2003).

[40] Case Study No. 23, 27 March 2009, Ward VII, Epworth, Harare.
[41] The Government of National Unity brought together into government the three rival political parties of ZANU PF, MDC-T and MDC-M. Although the Global Political Agreement (GPA) giving rise to this Government was signed in September 2008, it was only in February 2009 that the actual government was formed and became operational.

Figure 5. 1: Urban household food security status in Harare

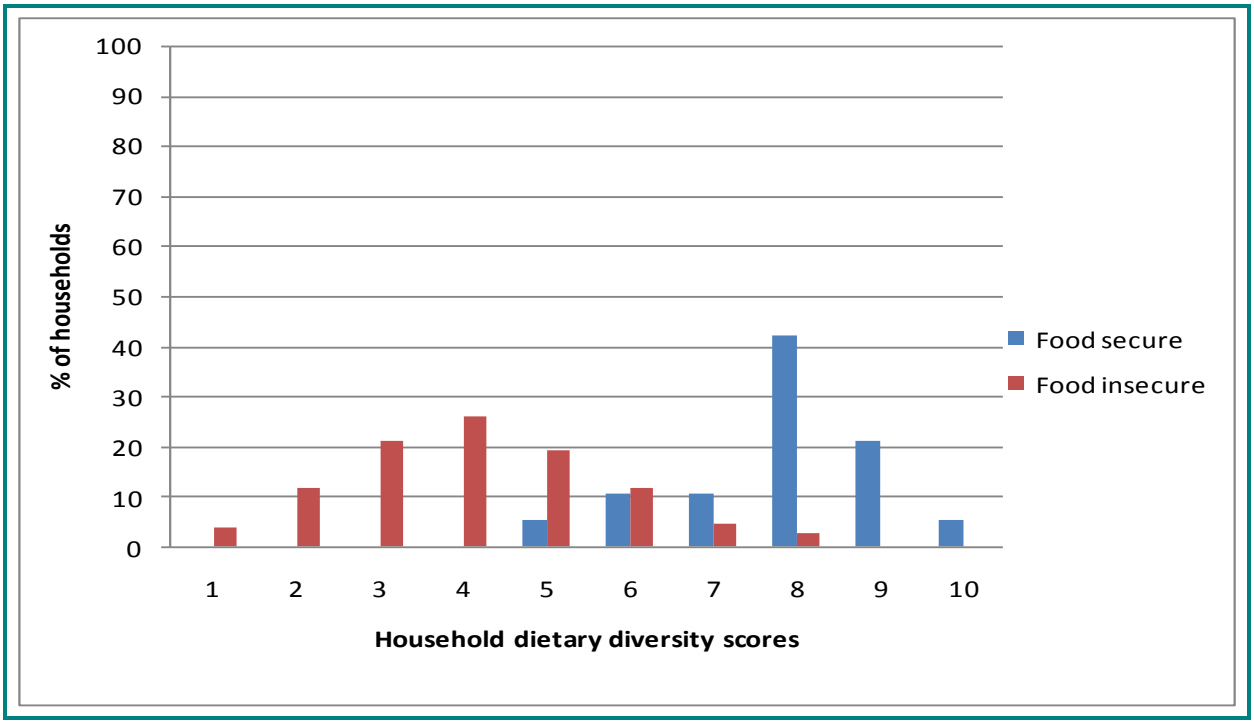


(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The severity of household food insecurity in Harare was not just reflected in the prevalence of households that were food insecure, but also in the narrower range of foods consumed by these households. Most respondents to the in-depth case study interviews indicated that they always had 'the same meal' or 'the usual meal' which consisted mostly of *sadza* and boiled vegetables. Quantitative survey results validate these assertions of narrower diets as no household reported consuming all 12 food types that were investigated. Rather the mean household dietary diversity score was only 4.45 out of a possible score of 12.00, indicating that households were consuming foods from an average of four different food groups only. While the median score was 4.00, some households had scores as low as 1.00 reflecting a lack of variety in the foods consumed. Households consuming a narrower range of foodstuffs were found to be less food secure than those consuming a varied diet (Figure 5.2). The mean score for food insecure households was 4.09 compared to 7.8 for food secure households. Among those households reporting a varied diet, most indicated having more access to foods with high carbohydrates content than proteins such as vegetables (88%), cereals (84%), and food foods from tubers (68%) in the twenty-four

hours preceding the survey. On the other hand, few reported consuming fruits (32%), eggs (28%) or meat and meat products (24%). Given that only 14 percent of the surveyed households reported having eaten from more than five food groups, it can be concluded that most diets for the urban poor were nutritionally inadequate and would therefore impact negatively on the health and growth of household members, particularly children.

Figure 5. 2: Urban household food security status by dietary diversity scores



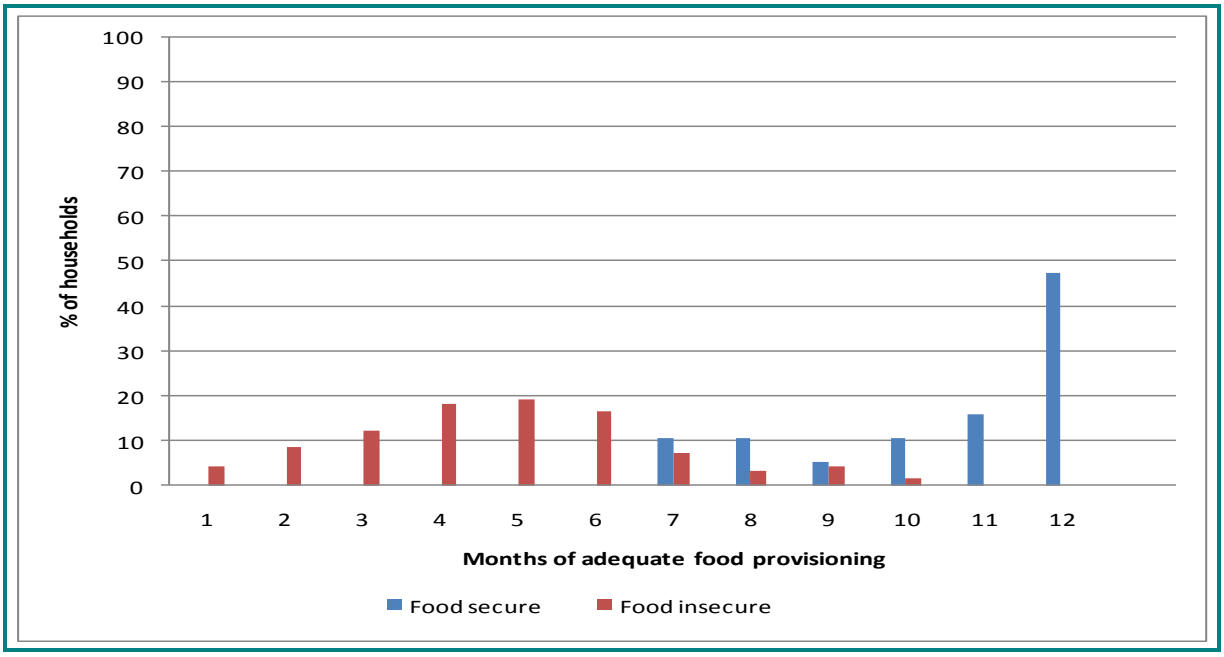
(Source: Research Survey 2009)

This is a cause for concern given that the importance of nutrients in a diet extends well beyond the energy value of the food. Deficiency of iodine, for example, has often been associated with increased risk of miscarriages (World Bank, 2005). In children and adolescents, poor nutrition has been shown to result in poor physical and mental development as well as affecting educational efficacy and productivity in adulthood (Aboussaleh and Ahami, 2009). These narrower household diets therefore reflect a deeper food insecurity problem that goes beyond the issue of food availability. There were no differences observed between female-headed and male-headed households in terms of their dietary diversity. This was contrary to what was expected, given the assertions in the

literature (e.g. Toroitich-Ruto, 1999) that women-headed households tend to have better dietary diversity because of their better knowledge of food variety and the fact that they are likely to spend more of their income for immediate food and health needs than their male counterparts. It is possible, however, that the lower levels of income recorded by female-headed households in the survey precluded them from accessing the various foods that they required even if they might have possessed the necessary knowledge about which foods were nutritious.

While low dietary diversity showed the nutritional inadequacy of the food being consumed by the poor, of greater concern was the variability of food supplies within surveyed households. A mean score of 5.07, representing 5 months of adequate food provisioning was recorded, with a median of 4.00, a minimum of 0.00 and a maximum of 12.00 months. The survey results showed a significant relationship ($p<0.001$) between the months of household food provisioning and the household food security status (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5. 3: Urban household food security status by MAHP

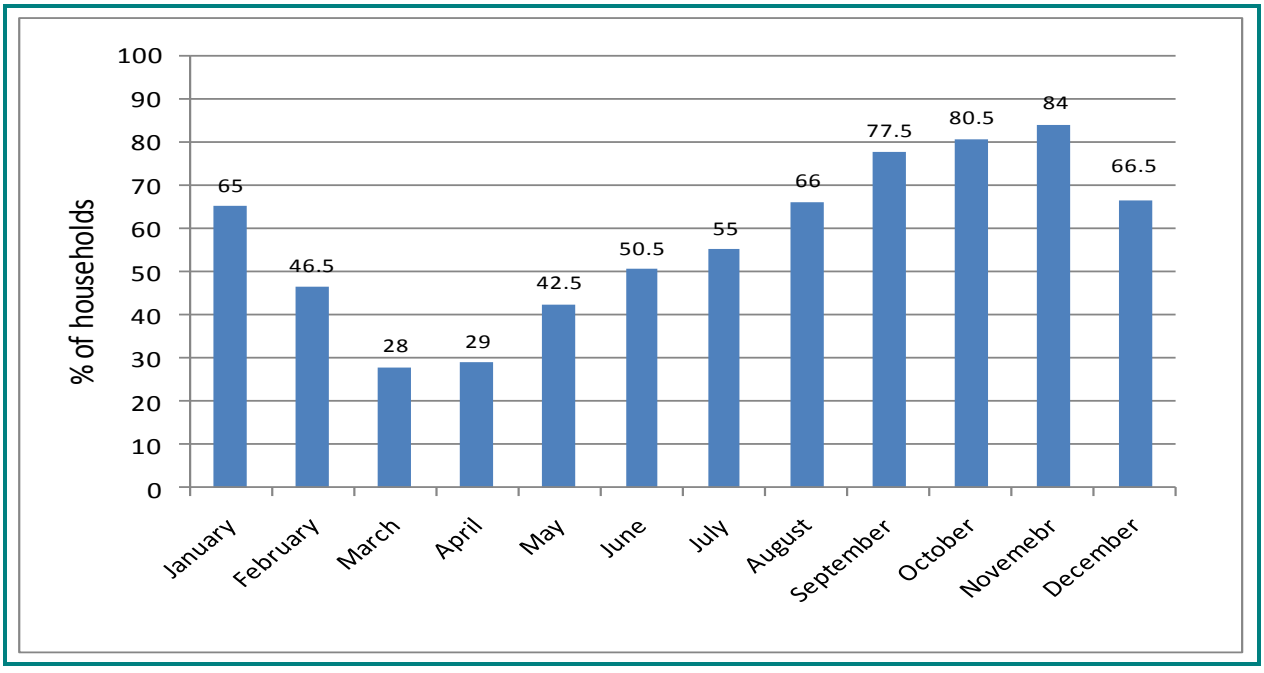


(Source: Research Survey 2009)

All the households that reported less than seven months of adequate household food provisioning were found to be food insecure, while those reporting more than 10 months were food secure, indicating the importance of food access for household food security.

Although seasonality is often treated as an issue only affecting the food security status of rural households, the survey results (Figure 5.4) show that it is also a concern of the urban areas in Zimbabwe, particularly in Harare. This is because most households reported being well provisioned during the months corresponding to the country's agricultural season (February-June) while severe shortages were recorded during the dry months (August-December). Within the former period, most foods, especially cereals which are dependent on the agricultural production season, increase in supply as crops are harvested. Food prices are also relatively low during this period and therefore most households tend to be well provisioned. Additionally, in a country like Zimbabwe where rural-urban linkages are strong, food flows from rural to urban areas considerably increase food availability in the cities thereby increasing the proportion of household that are well provisioned during this period.

Figure 5. 4: Months in which urban households did not have enough food



(Source: Research Survey 2009)

Households that do not have access to rural food production benefit from such seasonality trends as food prices are known to vary by as much as 50 percent in most African urban areas depending on the season (Alderman and Shively, 1996). In Epworth, some urban households that were partaking in urban agriculture also provisioned themselves from such production, and hence the increase in households that were well provisioned during and in the immediate aftermaths of the agricultural season (February-June).

Food insecurity in Epworth also manifested itself in anxiety and stress. In-depth case study interviews revealed that household members worried much about where their next meal would come from and what they would do should they fail to access food. Other respondents felt powerless and frustrated at being unable to do anything substantial to change their situation. In the same way, some felt guilty for being less of the provider that society expected them to be. In extreme cases of food insecurity, some male household heads indicated that they had even considered abandoning their families because of such failures. One such respondent had the following to say about how he felt at being unable to provide enough food for his family:

> Many times I have thought of running away from home…just disappearing to roam about the country so that I do not witness how my family is suffering. It pains to watch them suffer like this. They look up to me to provide and when I fail I ask myself what kind of a father I am. How do I explain to my 3-year old daughter that there is no food because I have not been able to provide? Just how do I do that? It's painful and humiliating. Sometimes when the situation is really bad and we spend a week without eating anything solid I reach a point where I wish God could just end it all[42].

Such feelings of hopelessness indicate the extreme degree of food insecurity in Harare, which goes beyond the physical impact on household members to their mental and spiritual well-being. But what really lies at the heart of this intense food insecurity and nutritional bankruptcy among poor urban households? What factors are responsible for increasing the vulnerability of these households vulnerable to food insecurity? The next section attempts to answer these questions by presenting and discussing the research findings on the major determinants of vulnerability in Harare.

[42] Case Study No. 13, 25 March 2009, Ward IV, Epworth, Harare.

5.2.3 Urban Household Vulnerability to Food Insecurity

Vulnerability refers to the full range of unfavourable conditions and factors that place people at risk of becoming food insecure as well as those factors that affect their ability to cope when they are threatened by environmental change[43]. In the rural areas, vulnerability has often been used to refer to the exposure of households and communities to natural events such as droughts, forest fires, winds, pest outbreaks and other factors that place people at risk of being food insecure. However, in the urban areas, the risks are different and more diverse, particularly for the poor who are usually unable to participate fully in the urban economy and have limited access to information and resources that could mitigate their situation in times of need. The environmental changes that increase vulnerability and threaten the urban household may be economic, social or political and can take the form of sudden shocks, long-term trends, or seasonal cycles. Most of these changes do not occur in isolation, but rather appear as multiple stressors that increase the vulnerability of the poor and negatively affect their ability to cope with such challenges.

Research findings from Harare reflect a wide array of vulnerabilities, risks and shocks that the urban households are exposed to. For close to a decade, Harare, like the rest of the country, has been facing an on-going complex emergency due to a host of factors ranging from a collapsing economy, limited access to basic goods and services, political instability, hyperinflation and unemployment (USAID/OCHA, 2009). As has been shown in Chapter Three, these conditions were exacerbated by the large-scale displacement of urban and peri-urban dwellers during *Operation Murambatsvina* in 2005. These factors combined to negatively affect the livelihoods of poor urbanites whose means and options of coping were already limited by the onslaught of ESAP. Several major factors increasing household vulnerability to food insecurity were identified during the in-depth case study interviews. These factors, presented in Table 5.2 are discussed in detail in the next sections.

[43] Chambers (1989:20) distinguishes between an external and an internal side of vulnerability. The external side relates to risks and shocks which are beyond individual/household control, but to which individuals or households are exposed to (e.g. globalization, political and economic marginalization, declining terms of trade, weakening social networks). The internal side on the other hand is concerned with specific characteristics of a person/household that exacerbate their susceptibility to shocks and stress and affects their ability to cope (e.g. education levels of household members, unemployment and poverty).

Table 5.2: Key urban household vulnerability factors in Epworth, Harare

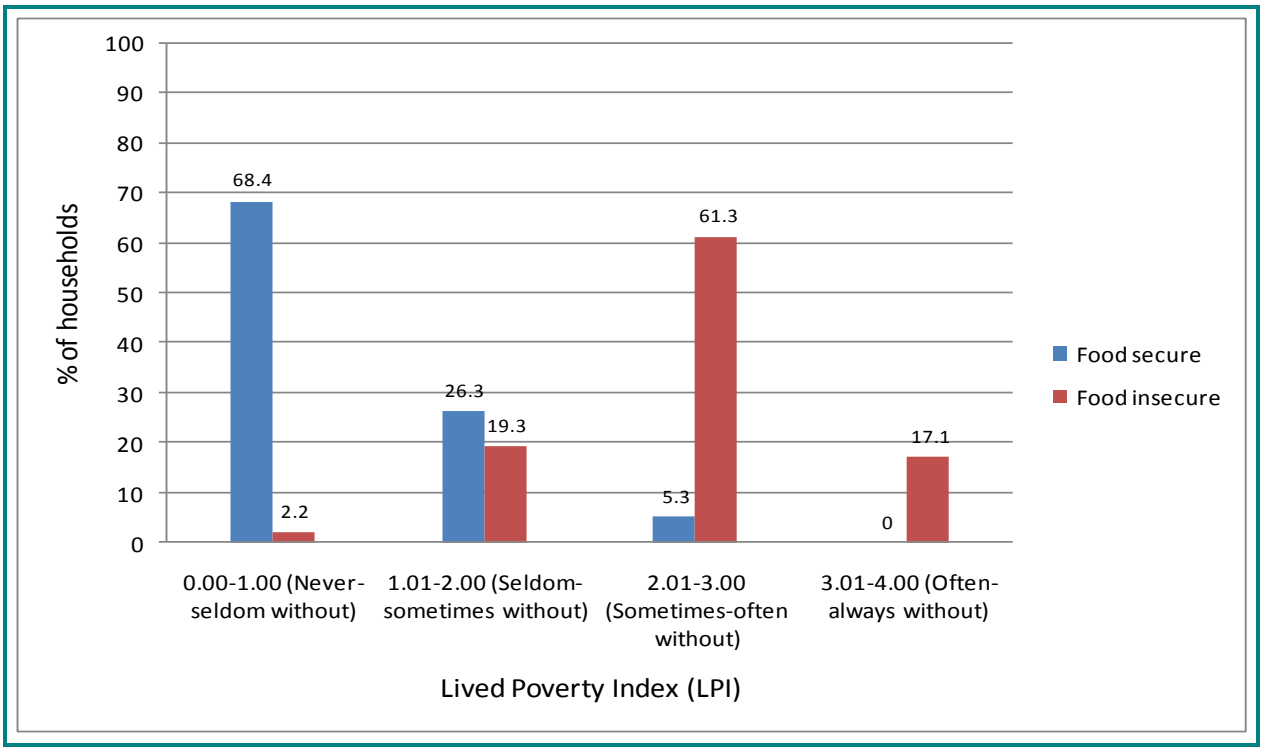
Key factors identified as influencing urban household vulnerability	**Key category**
Lack of money, lack of an income, inadequate pension, low wages	Poverty and unemployment
General deprivation	
No jobs, Temporary jobs, seasonal jobs	
Expensive food	Food price increases
Expensive imported food	
Changing food prices-No price control	
High cost of education, health, municipality bills, transport costs	High utility bills
Unstable and unpredictable availability of food on market	Low market access
Difficulty in getting accommodation, high cost of accommodation	
Continuous movement in search of housing	Lack of housing and insecure tenure
Evictions at short notice or without notice	
High costs of land for building	Lack of access to urban land
No proper channels for getting public land for housing or business	
Currency has no value, cash shortages,	Inflation
Exchange rate continuously changing	
Expensive tuck-shops and local shops in residential areas	
Expensive food from vendors-quantities not accurate	Poor food distribution networks and infrastructure
No food in shops, long periods of no supply, few large retail shops/supermarkets	
No proper government, Harassment by political opponents	Political and governance factors
Harassment of traders by police (confiscation of goods, fines, bribes) confiscation of food from rural areas by police and GMB officials	
Death in household	Poor health status
Illness in household, especially breadwinner	
Many dependents, orphans	Household demographic factors
Lack of education, large household size, number of unemployed, gender of household head	

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

5.2.3.1 Poverty and Household Food Security

Most households in the survey were living in extreme poverty as reflected by an average sample LPI[44] of 2.80, a median of 2.68 and a maximum LPI score of 3.88. Given these higher levels of poverty, it was therefore no surprise that most were food insecure. The survey found that households with a higher Lived Poverty Index (LPI) were food insecure. This relationship was statistically significant ($p<0.001$). As Figure 5.5 shows, 78.4 percent of the households that were food insecure had higher LPI indices of above 2.00. Alternatively, only 5.3 percent of the households with an LPI index above 2.00 were food secure, underlying the fact that poverty is a major factor increasing vulnerability in Harare.

Figure 5. 5: Urban household food security status by Lived Poverty Index



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

[44] The Lived Poverty Index (LPI) scores range from 0.00 (complete satisfaction of basic needs) to 4.00 (frequent shortages of basic needs). The LPI is a good indicator of household poverty as it measures how frequently people go without necessities such as food, clean water, medicine, enough fuel to cook food and an income (Mattes, 2008; Afrobarometer, 2003).

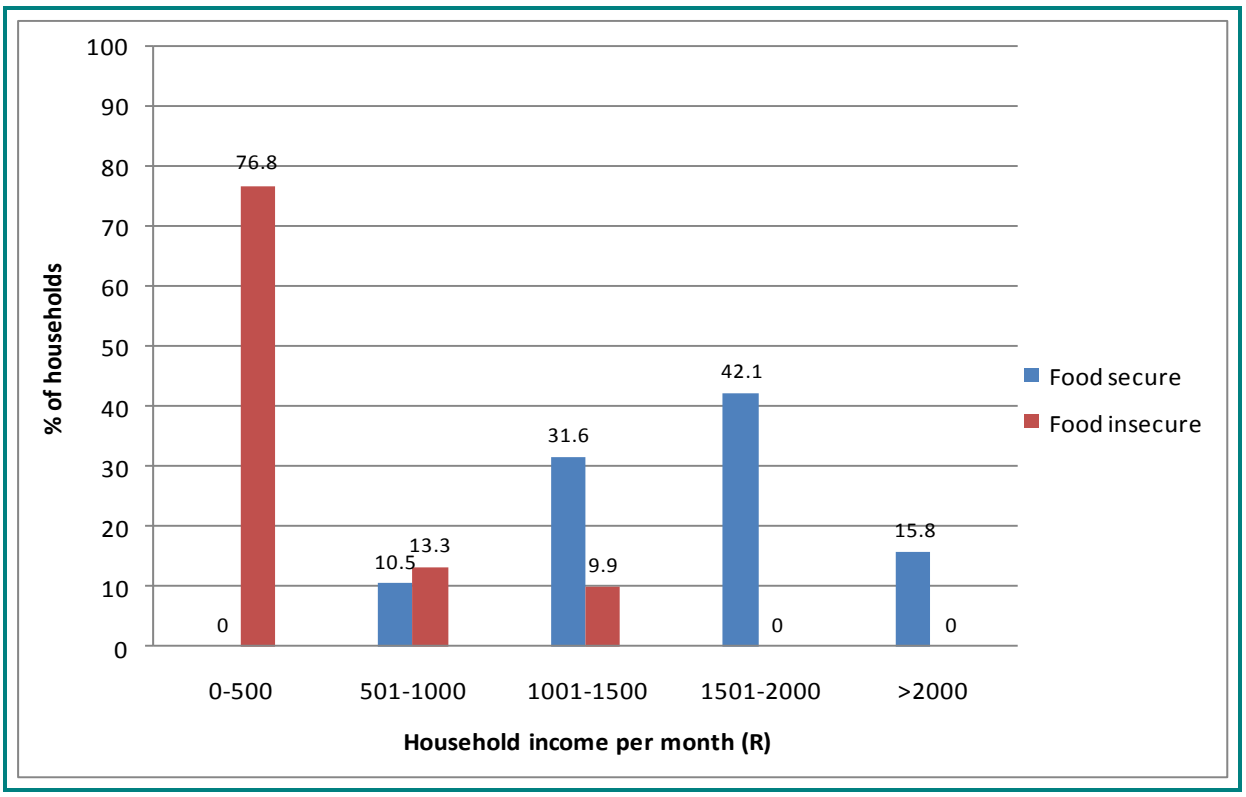
Thus, those households that had never-seldom gone without (LPI 0.00-1.00) or seldom-sometimes gone without (LPI 1.01-2.00) particular provisions and services had a higher probability of being food secure, indicating a decrease in household food security status with increasing Lived Poverty Index. As these results show, the link between poverty and food insecurity in urban areas is very strong. This is because poverty reduces household access to such goods and services as housing, water and energy that are all necessary for maintaining household food security. While poverty encompasses many dimensions, the one that dominates in reducing household access to most urban goods and services is income. For the urban household therefore, access to an adequate and stable income is vital for household food security.

5.2.3.2 Income and Household Food Security

Without an income, access to food in the urban area is problematic as most the foodstuffs have to be purchased. One respondent to made a particularly apt comment about income and survival in the urban environment when he said the urban area 'only recognizes one totem: money' and then cynically added that 'you even pay to bask in the sun[45]'. Putting his cynicism aside, the underlying truism that you pay for most of your needs in the city makes income indispensable for household food insecurity, particularly given that most poor urban households are net food purchasers (FAO, 2008a). As the survey findings show, over three-quarters (76.8%) of the food insecure households had total monthly incomes below R500 (Figure 5.6). On the other hand, 59.7 percent of the food secure households were reportedly earning monthly incomes above R1500. This association between household income and food security status was statistically significant ($p<0.001$). There were however some households that had considerably higher incomes above R1000 that were food insecure. This anomaly reflects Harare's crisis where persistent food shortages on the urban market could still render even moneyed households food insecure.

[45] Case Study No. 6, 24 March 2009, Ward II, Epworth, Harare.

Figure 5. 6: Urban household food security status by household monthly income



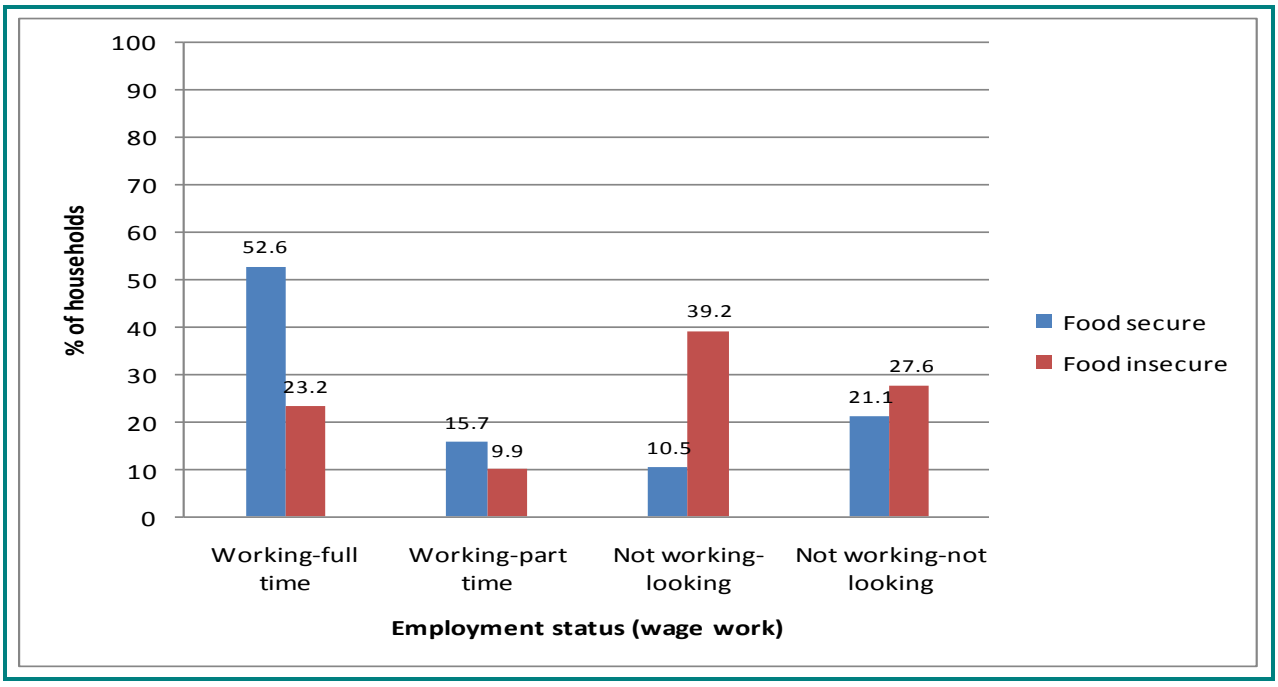
(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

Although the relationship between income and food security was complicated by the extent of Harare's crisis conditions, household income remains a fundamental requirement for household food security in urban areas. A higher income unquestionably empowers households to make choices about where to get food, choices which may not be available to those with lower incomes. That is why some households with enough money managed to form food clubs through which they imported food from Mozambique, Botswana and South Africa. Since one of the major sources of income in urban areas is employment, the next section discusses the relationship between household employment and urban household food security status in Harare.

5.2.3.3 Employment Status and Household Food Security

The employment status of household members was posited to have a direct positive effect on the food security status of the household. Survey results confirm this assertion as households with members employed full-time were more food secure, constituting 52.6 percent of the food secure households. On the other hand, households with unemployed members (not working-looking) constituted the least proportion of food secure households (10.5%). This relationship between employment and food security status was statistically significant ($p<0.01$), indicating the importance of employment to household food security (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5. 7: Urban household food security by employment status of household head



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

While wages in the country declined in real terms after 2000, those who were still employed full-time and drawing a wage fared considerably better than those who were unemployed. Households with a member in full-time employment reported a significantly higher amount of income than other groups (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: Average monthly household income by employment status

Work status (wage employment)	N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Working-full time	52	873	600	100	5400
Working-part time	20	484	380	80	1550
Not working-looking	74	393	280	40	850
Not working-not looking	54	530	400	90	1900

(Source: Research survey, 2009) *Units are in rand

With this relatively higher income, households with members working full-time were thus able to use this income to purchase food and pay for other obligatory urban expenses. While the general perception in the country during the crisis period was that it was no longer advantageous to be in wage employment due to the high inflation that continuously eroded the wages, survey results contradict this perception. Rather they show that the availability of a stable income such as that from full-time employment, however low that income may be, enhances household food security.

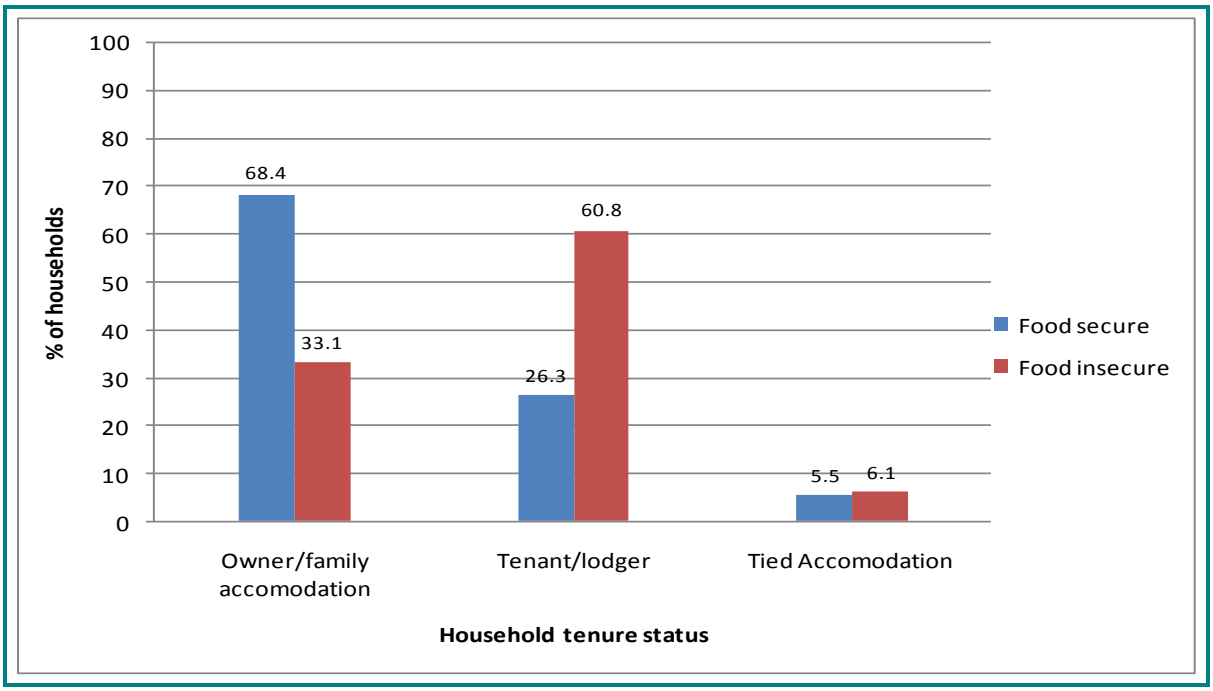
Households classified as not working, but not looking contributed a relatively higher proportion to the food secure households (21.1%) than those working part-time (15.7%) and those not working-looking (10.5%). Such a finding raises serious questions about orthodox development perspectives that see formal sector employment as the only lucrative and secure source of urban livelihood. Given that the majority of those who reported being unemployed (not working-not looking) were engaged in the informal sector, the importance of this sector in meeting the food needs of the urban poor should be given more recognition. This is where most households generated their resources that they used to feed themselves. Besides unemployment and erratic incomes, the survey also revealed that lack of home ownership and insecure tenure are major sources of vulnerability for poor households in the urban area. The discussion in the next section thus shifts to these vulnerability factors in a bid to understand how they influence urban household food security.

5.2.3.4 Household Tenure Status and Food Security

Home ownership has frequently been postulated to greatly reduce vulnerability in both the rural and urban areas (Waite, 2000). However, unlike in the rural areas where the poor can

build houses using locally available material, the urban situation is different. This is because urban land is costly and building materials are usually beyond the financial means of the poor. In addition, building standards[46] enforced by city bye-laws make it impossible for the poor to build their own houses. In this context, the impacts of *Operation Murambatsvina* were bound to be massive. The relationship between home ownership and food security was found to be strong and statistically significant ($p<0.001$) with the greater proportion of food secure households living in their own or family accommodation (68.4%) while only 26.3 percent lived in rented accommodation and 5.5 percent in tied accommodation (Figure 5.8).

Figure 5. 8: Urban household food security status by household tenure



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

Household food insecurity was higher among households who were renting (60.8%) than in other categories. The dominance of food insecure households in the tenant/lodger

[46] The high building standards which were set up during the colonial period in the country remain largely unchanged as enunciated in the Housing Standards Act of 1977 and the Regional Town and Country Planning Act of 1996. These Acts make it illegal to operate outbuildings and backyard properties in which most of the urban poor live. It is such buildings and facilities that were targeted for destruction by Operation Murambatsvina.

category is because these households were utilizing an ever-increasing proportion of their income for rent in the country's hyperinflationary environment. Many respondents indicated that it was common for them to go hungry after having used all their earnings to pay rent. As one respondent explained:

> Most landlords do not care whether you starve or not, all they want is for you to pay the rent. What happens to you later is your business. Last year I was evicted because the landlord saw me buying bread before paying rent. But what could I do? Let my kids starve?[47]

The problems faced by such tenants became the norm in Zimbabwe's economically troubled years. To safeguard their earnings, some property owners even resorted to pegging their rents in foreign currency. Prior to January 2009, tenants had to purchase this foreign currency on the black market at highly inflated rates thereby rendering them more vulnerable. This vulnerability was similar to the situation observed by Grant (2007) in Gweru where landlords could unilaterally hike their rents without notice to the tenants. While tenants were living under the constant threat of eviction, home owners had the advantage of not only being excluded from paying rent[48] but also being in a position to generate income from offering accommodation. This added substantially to their income and reduced their vulnerability to food insecurity as they had more disposable income. Some households in the informal sector were also using their homes as business premises to generate more income.

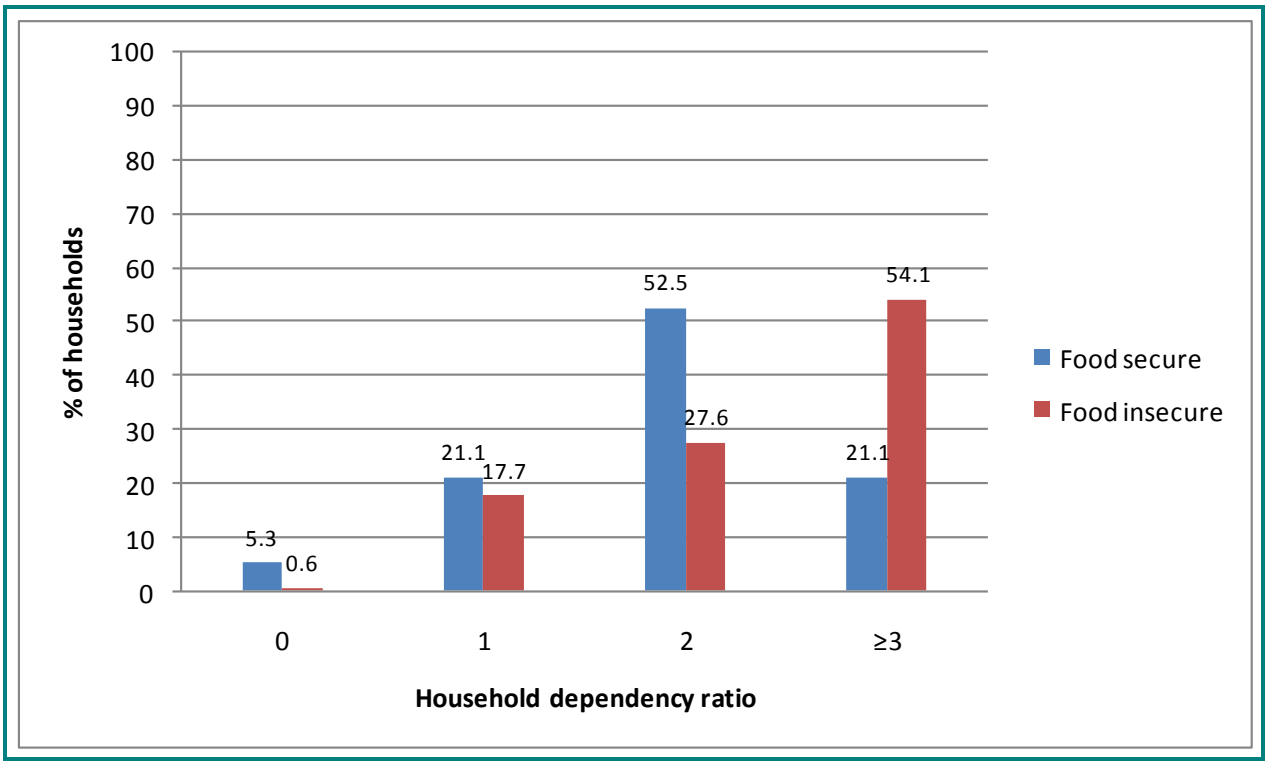
5.3.2.5 Household Size, Dependency Ratios and Food Security

Although the proportion of food secure households in the category of 1-5 household members was higher (84.2%) than those that were food insecure (72.4%), the relationship was not statistically significant ($p>0.001$). What is important, however, is that the relationship between household dependency ratios and food security was statistically significant ($p<0.001$) with low dependency ratios being associated with the household being food secure (Figure 5.9). As a result, 73.6 percent of the food secure households had dependency ratios of two or less. On the other hand, more than half of the food insecure households (54.1%) had dependency ratios equal to or greater than three. In the absence of

[47] Case Study No. 25, 27 March 2009, Ward VII, Epworth, Harare.
[48] Rent averaged R115 per household (Research Survey, 2009).

significant differences in income between households, higher dependency ratios tend to aggravate food insecurity as more mouths rely on the meager income to survive. Thus, a lower household per capita income, resulting from an increased household size tends to aggravate household food security. While the addition of household members in urban households during normal economic times may increase household income as soon as the additional household members get employment, the situation in Harare was dire. With unemployment rates close to 80 percent, the chances of getting employment were drastically reduced, if not non-existent. Increased dependency ratios were therefore likely to increase vulnerability and result in a decrease in household food security status.

Figure 5.9: Urban household food security status by dependency ratio

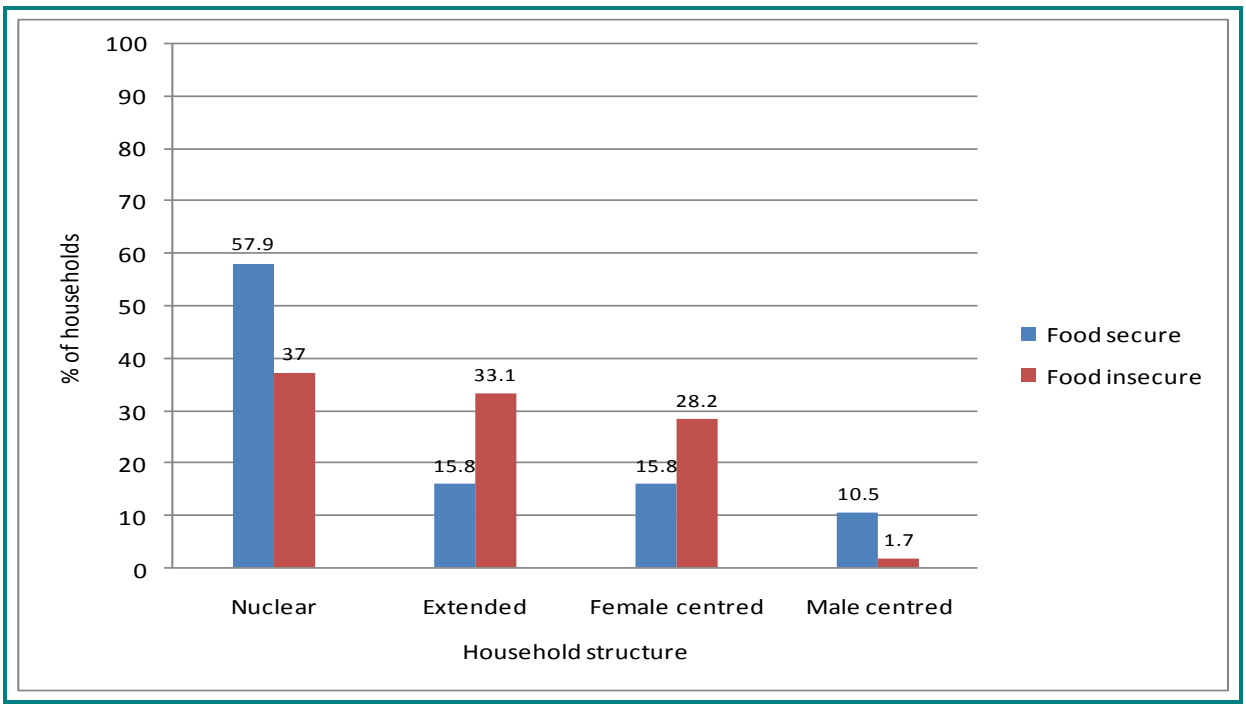


(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

5.3.2.6 Household Structure and Food Security

The impact of household structure on food security in urban areas cannot be over-emphasized. Survey results show that male-centered households were the most food secure (Figure 5.10).

Figure 5. 10: Urban household food security status by household structure



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

Female-centred households and extended households were less food secure indicating the vulnerability of these household structures to food insecurity. For female-centered households, vulnerability was linked to low income as households reported earning a comparatively low average monthly income of R475 in comparison to R772 for male-centered, R576 for extended and R600 for nuclear households (Table 5.4).

The high food insecurity levels and heightened vulnerability of extended households can be explained by two major factors: The first factor concerned the high dependency levels that were found among these households while the second factor related to the low per capita income levels that were recorded in this category. With regard to dependency ratios, the survey found that dependency was high among extended households. While extended households are not ordinarily synonymous with high dependency, the economic crisis in Zimbabwe meant that most household members were unable to find employment. In an environment where unemployment rates were hovering above 90 percent for most of the crisis period, the greater proportion of household members were failing to get

employment. It was thus common to find only a single member being employed from a household of six or more people. Without enough income to initiate other income-generating activities, the superiority of sheer numbers alone did not therefore ascribe any advantages to the extended household. In addition, the majority of the poor were also lodgers, which meant that extended families had to pay more money for their extra space (rooms) requirements, leaving very little income for food requirements. Hence, the chances for extended households to be food insecure were heightened.

Table 5.4: Urban household monthly income by household structure

Household structure	N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Nuclear	78	600	465	100	5400
Extended	63	576	440	80	2400
Female centered	54	475	380	40	2000
Male-centered	5	772	500	400	3000

(Source: Research survey, 2009) *Units are in rand

In the urban environment, where nearly every good and service is paid for, such differences in household income were bound to play a significant role in determining household food security status. In addition, female-headed households were more likely to be food insecure than male-headed ones as shown by the fact that 10.7 percent of the total male-headed households were food secure in comparison to 6.7 percent of their female counterparts. Although the relationship was weak, it was nevertheless statistically significant ($p<0.01$). These differences in food security status between male and female-headed households are likely to be linked to differences in household income as male-headed households reported a higher income than those with female-heads (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Urban household monthly income by household type

Household type	N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Male-headed	140	595	500	100	5400
Female-headed	60	492	420	40	2000

(Source: Research Survey 2009) *Units are in rand

In addition, female household heads indicated that they are unable to compete with men in sourcing food, given the physical power required to stand in queues where pushing and

shoving is the order of the day. One female household head had the following to say about her struggles to secure enough food:

> When we queue for food at the shops, it's like a war. No one cares about anyone anymore. Sometimes we spend the whole day in a queue and fail to buy anything. Men push, shove and jump the queues, buy and rejoin the queues to buy again. They do not respect women or the elderly; they can shove you out of the queue even when you are carrying a child on your back. So we end up buying food from them[49].

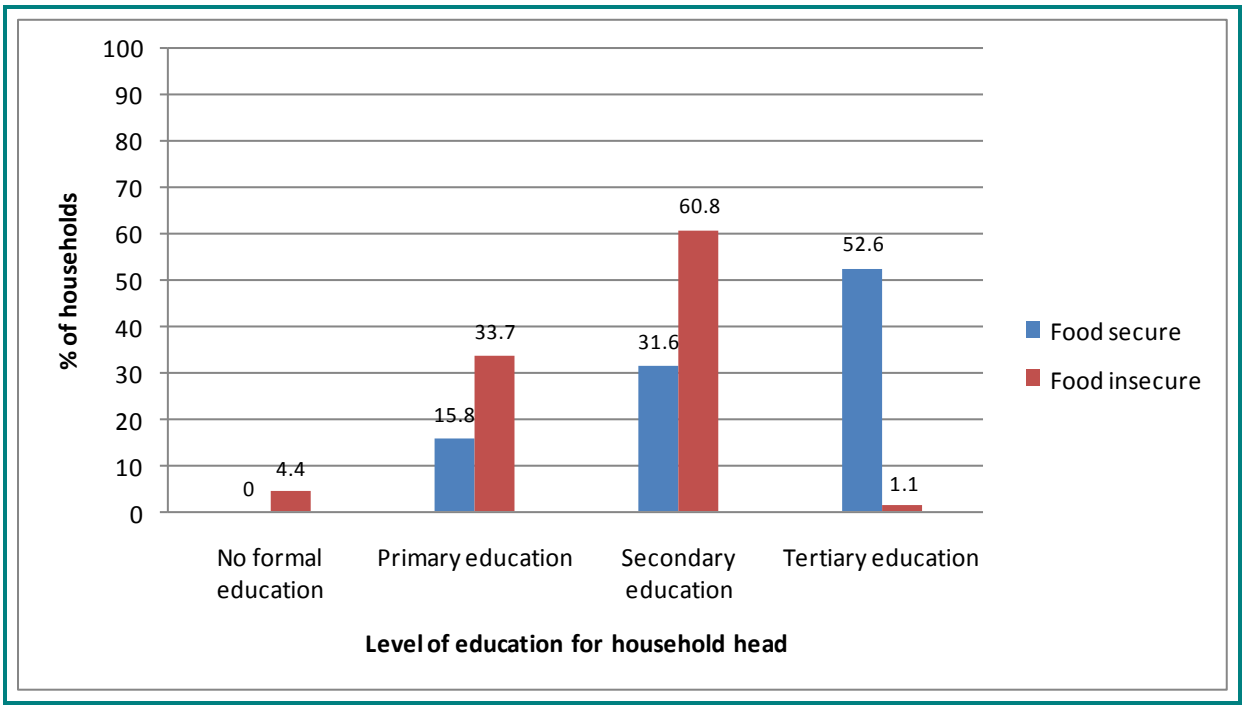
Where securing food is no longer just an issue of money, but one of physical ability too, female-headed households become even more vulnerable to food insecurity. Thus, the gender aspect of food access becomes even more pronounced in the urban area in situations such as those in Harare where food supplies are erratic.

5.3.2.7 Education and Urban Household Food Security

In urban areas, education and its attendant skills is associated with increasing employment prospects (Pendleton, 1996) and bettering one's earning capacity. This, in turn, increases the ability to pay for food and other urban services. Findings from Epworth show a positive and statistically significant relationship ($p<0.001$) between education and food security as better education increases household food security (Figure 5.11). Thus the greater proportion of the food secure households were in the tertiary education category (52.6%), followed by those in the secondary education category (31.6%) and primary education (15.8%). There were no food secure households at all in the 'no formal' education category. The increased food security among households with tertiary education is attributed to the higher average monthly income that these households recorded in comparison to other categories (see Table 5.6).

[49] Case Study No. 19, 26 March 2009, Ward VI, Epworth, Harare.

Figure 5. 11: Urban household food security status by level of education of household head



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The finding that higher educational levels generally increase the chances of a household being food secure resonate with that of Benson (2007) who found, while researching in the slum areas of urban Bangladesh, that most food secure households were headed by a literate head who had attained a higher level of education. Under conditions of adversity akin to those of Harare, higher education is therefore likely to increase the urban household's ability to recover and move from vulnerability to self-sufficiency (de la Rocha and Grinspun, 2001).

Table 5.6: Urban household monthly income by educational status of household head

Educational status	N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
No formal schooling	8	480	300	80	1550
Primary education	64	543	480	100	3000
Secondary education	116	550	490	40	5400
Tertiary education	12	850	600	100	2400

(Source: Research Survey 2009) *Units are in rand

Education is thus an important survival tool in urban areas as it affects not only employment and income, but also the ability of the household to make logical choices that are capable of pulling them through periods of crisis.

5.3.2.8 Urban Household Food Security and Food Prices

Between 2007 and 2008, international food prices increased to unprecedented levels. The prices of wheat, soybean, corn, and rice prices rose by 146 percent, 71 percent, 41 percent, and 29 percent respectively (USAID, 2009). These rising food prices were especially problematic for the urban poor who spend a disproportionate amount of their income on foodstuffs (Moseley *et al.,* 2010). In developing countries, the impact of these price escalations was devastating as exemplified by the multiplicity of food riots that occurred in most countries during this period. The impact of these global food price increases was more pronounced in countries with a heavy reliance on imported food. In West Africa, for example, Moseley *et al*., (2010) show that the region became vulnerable to increases of food prices on the world market as it was importing more than 40 percent of its cereal needs. In countries such as the Gambia and Cote d'Ivoire, vulnerability increased as the price of imported rice more than doubled during the crisis. Such vulnerability was also experienced in Southern Africa generally, and in Zimbabwe in particular. Zimbabwe's urban population was more vulnerable as the country was meeting most of its food requirements through imports rather than domestic production. These imports made the domestic market captive to the global increases: fuelling domestic prices that had already skyrocketed. Predictably, the survey results show that only 2 percent of surveyed households had never gone without food because of price increases (Table 5.7).

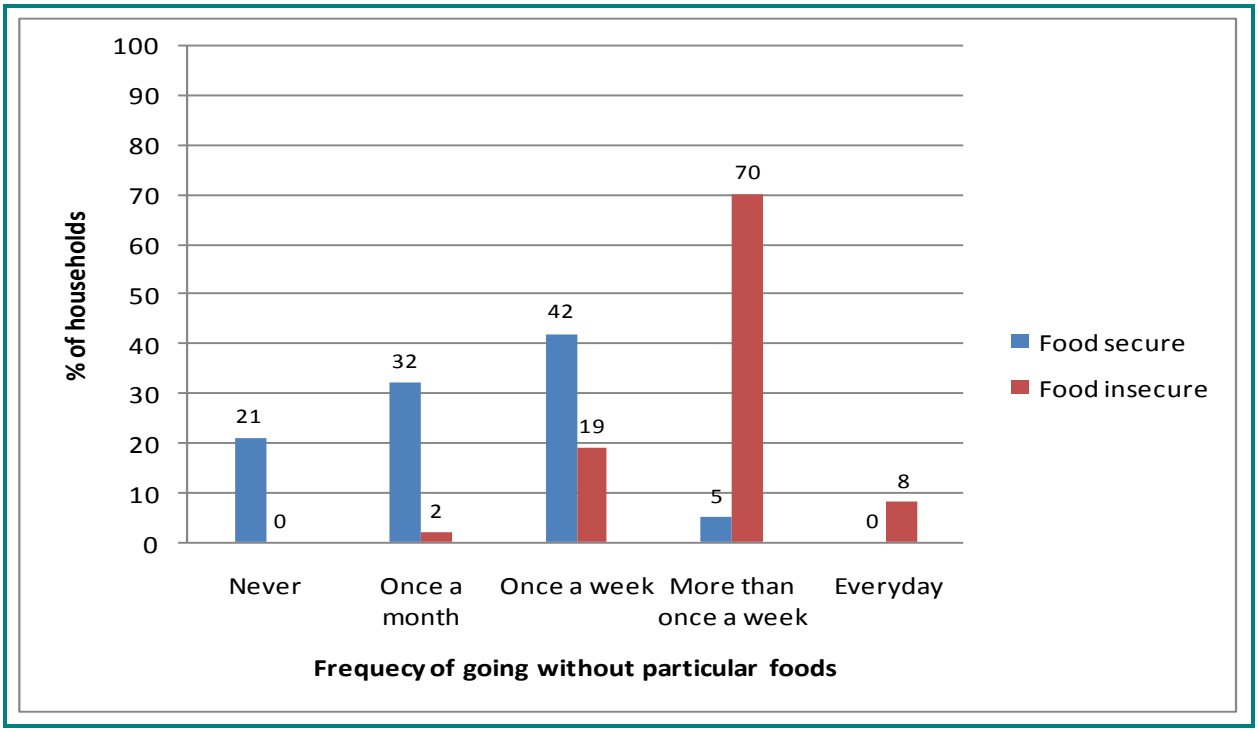
Table 5.7: Frequency of going without particular food because of price increases

Frequency	**No.**	**%**
Never	4	2
Everyday	16	8
Once a week	42	21
More than once a week, but less than everyday	128	64
Once a month	10	5
Total	**200**	**100**

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The majority (64%) reported going without certain types of foods more than once a week. The foods that most households were going without in the six months preceding the survey include beef, pork and other meat products (94%), bread, rice and noodles (91%), and potatoes, yams and cassava (90%). The only food group that few households had gone without was that of vegetables (32%). An analysis of the food security status of households by frequency of going without particular foods indicates that household food insecurity increased with the frequency of going without particular foods (Figure 5.12).

Figure 5. 12: Urban household food security status by frequency of going without particular foods



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

This relationship was statistically significant ($p<0.001$) and 78 percent of the food insecure households were among those that had reported going without particular foods every day and more than once a week. On the other hand, food secure households reported never going without particular foods (21%) or had gone without particular foods only once a month (32%) or once a week (42%). The precipitous decline of the Zimbabwean dollar exacerbated the situation by causing retailers to constantly increase their prices so as to

safeguard their investment. While these retailers were using foreign currency to source goods regionally, they were required to resell in Zimbabwean dollars[50] such that they had to keep increasing their prices in line with the changing value of the dollar.

Persistent cash shortages worsened the situation as people struggled to withdraw cash from banks. Where people were able to withdraw money, it was in most cases insufficient to purchase enough food. The government was overwhelmed with the situation as they failed to articulate a clear socio-economic policy to stabilize the situation. For much of the period after 2005, the economic landscape was characterized by policy inconsistencies and *ad-hoc* implementation as exemplified by a host of policy frameworks[51] that were partially implemented and then discarded. Besides the debilitating effect of price increases, poor (and sometimes non-existent) food distribution systems further increased household vulnerability to food insecurity.

5.3.2.9 Urban Household Food Security and Food Sources

Food distribution systems are a significant source of vulnerability for poor urban consumers as intra-urban food distribution networks are generally tilted in favour of high-income residential areas. In these high-income areas, infrastructure such as roads, retail and marketing systems are well established and functional (Swift and Hamilton, 2001). In contrast, network systems in low-income areas are poor. This creates disparities in the pricing system as food reaches low-income areas through informal rather than formal systems. A study carried out in Harare by Leybourn and Grant (1999) suggested that low-income residential populations were accessing most of their vegetables through the informal supply chain of women small traders who made purchases from the main markets for resale to consumers at a profit. Ten years after that study, this survey found that the situation had worsened significantly more foodstuffs being sold through these informal

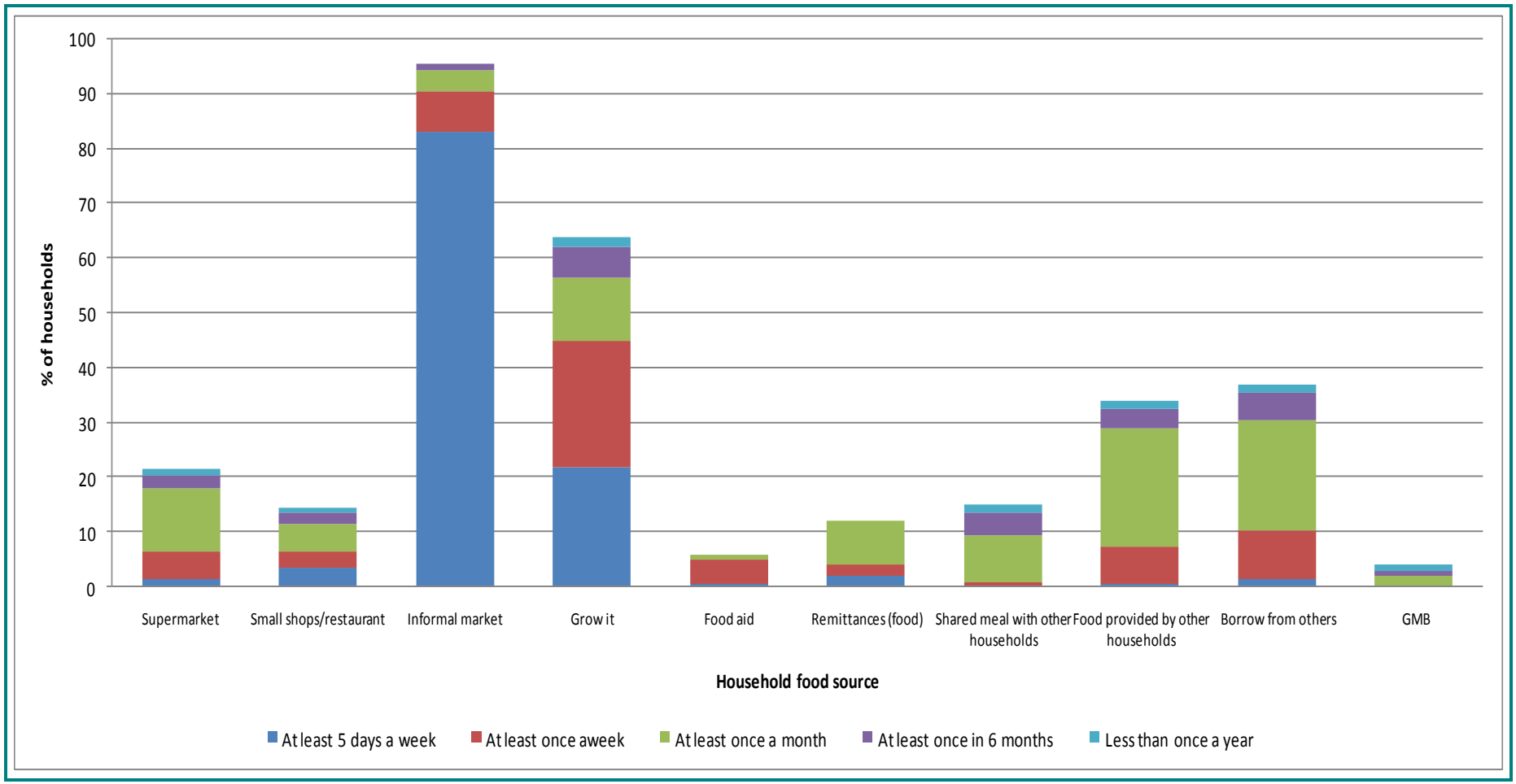
[50] It was only on 10 September 2008 that the Government of Zimbabwe, through the Reserve Bank introduced Foreign Exchange Licensed Warehouses and Retail Shops (FOLIWARS), which were allowed to sell their products in foreign currency.

[51] Policies such as the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST), the National Economic Revival Programme (NERP), and the National Economic Development Priority Programme (NEDPP) were never fully implemented: usually one policy lasted for only a few months before the launch of another one that would subsequently be abandoned (ZIMCODD, 2007).

rather than formal channels. At the time of the research, the normal interplay of formal food systems in Harare had virtually disappeared, save in a few high-income residential areas where supermarkets and retail shops were kept provisioned through imported foodstuffs whose prices were out of reach of the poor.

As Figure 5.13 below shows, the two most important sources of food for poor urban households were the informal market (95.5%) and own production (63%). Supermarkets (21%) and small shops (14.5%) which, under normal circumstances are expected to be major food sources in urban areas, were playing a less significant role. Households were also obtaining food more frequently from informal sources rather than formal ones. In this regard, about 83 percent of the households reported obtaining food from the informal market at least five days a week; an indication that they were buying in small quantities that necessitated going back to the market more frequently. Here they could negotiate whatever smaller amounts of food their money would buy. Street foods were thus the lifeline of the poor in Harare during the country's prolonged periods of food shortages. Individuals and small-scale traders imported food for resell on street corners and pavements. But what is the relationship between food sources and household food security?

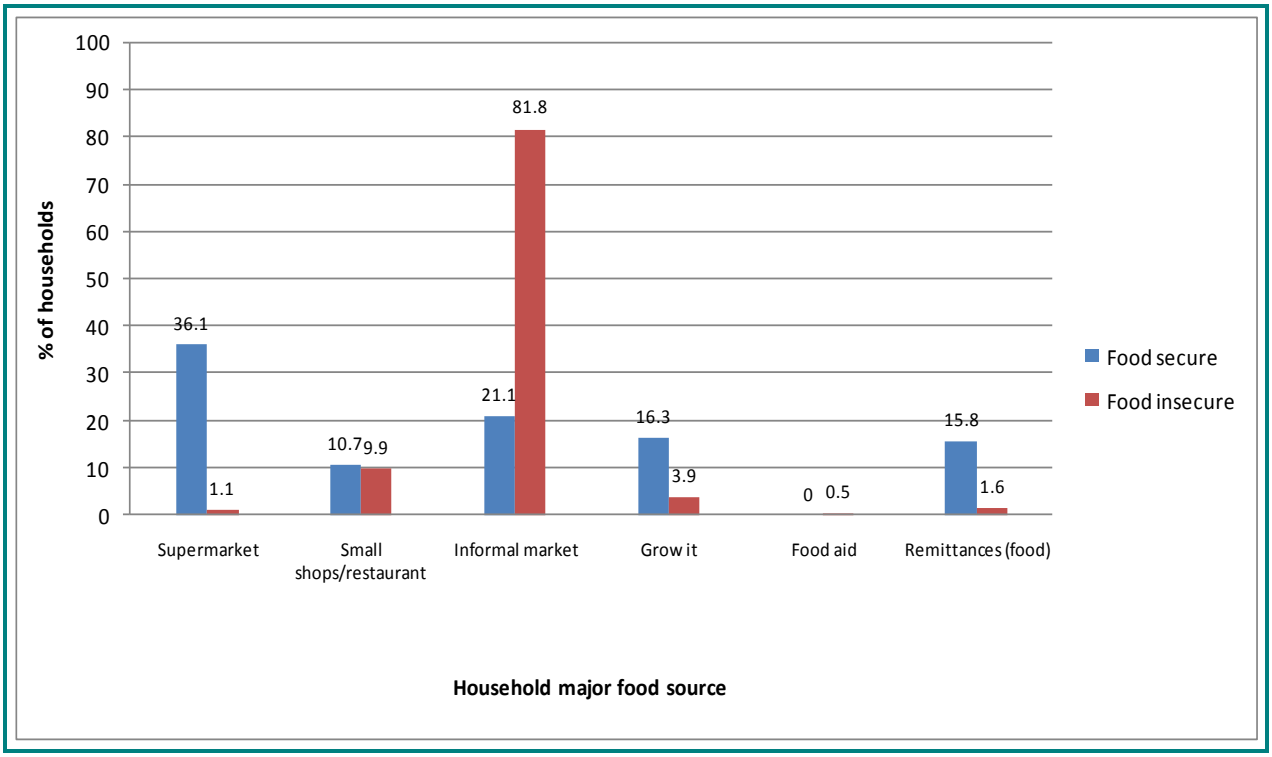
Figure 5. 139: Urban household food sources and frequency of obtaining food from a particular source



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The study findings indicate that although the informal food market was the major source of food for poor households, it was also a major source of vulnerability as 81.8 percent of the food insecure households were using this food source (Figure 5.14). In contrast, the highest proportion of food secure households (36.1%) were sourcing food from supermarkets. Among households receiving food remittances were more food secure households (15.7%) than insecure ones (1.6%).

Figure 5. 14: Urban household food security status by major food source



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The conclusion that one draws from these findings about food sources is that the poorer the household, the more it tended to use informal food sources, which made it even more vulnerable to food insecurity. Conversely, the more formal the food sources that a household uses, the higher the chances that the household will be food secure. A surprising finding of the study was that although 63 percent of the surveyed households reported urban farming as a source of household food, less than 20 percent indicated this was their major source of food. This may be because while most households reported growing both

field and garden crops, the small plots of land that they utilize may not yield enough to sustain them throughout the year. For cereal crops such as maize, urban agriculture therefore plays a complimentary role to food provisioning rather than being the main source of food for most households. It is only those who have access to large urban plots that can farm enough to provision themselves throughout the year. Despite playing a supplementary role, urban agriculture has become an integral part of the urban household's source of food and livelihood.

5.3.3 Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to examine household food security levels in Harare and to identify the factors responsible for increasing vulnerability to food insecurity. The survey findings demonstrate the existence of acute levels of food insecurity among urban households in Harare, which manifest themselves through severe shortages, consumption of a narrower range of foods, and many months of inadequate food provisioning. Increased household vulnerability stemmed from a range of factors, chief among them being: a) increased household poverty levels; b) high unemployment; c) low household incomes; d) inadequate housing for the poor; e) unreliable informal food sources; and, f) skyrocketing food prices. These vulnerability factors were exacerbated by the existing adverse socio-economic and political climate, which continued to undermine national economic performance and deepened household poverty. With these apparently high levels of food insecurity, how were poor households in Harare coping? How resilient were they in the face of these daunting challenges? In order to address these questions, the next chapter identifies and explores the coping strategies that poor urban households were employing to cope with shortages and increase their resilience to food insecurity.

CHAPTER SIX

HOUSEHOLD SURVIVAL AND RESILIENCE TO FOOD INSECURITY

6.1 Introduction

A decade of socio-economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe has impacted negatively on people's livelihoods both in the rural and urban areas. However, it is in the urban areas where the situation has been most disastrous, particularly among the poor whose purchasing power has consistently been eroded by falling real wages, hyper-inflation and the rising cost of living. The residual deleterious effect of the structural adjustment programme of the 1990s, which resulted in massive retrenchments and the disintegration of the public welfare system, was compounded by the current economic crisis which left the majority of the urban poor unable to provision and feed themselves. How then were these households surviving under such conditions of extreme material deprivation? What survival strategies were they employing to cope with conditions of adversity in the urban environment and how resilient were they in the face of the country's protracted socio-economic crisis? While the coping strategies employed by rural households under conditions of distress and adversity are well-documented in the literature on rural livelihoods, very little has been written about the coping strategies of poor households in the ever-changing urban environment. This chapter attempts to shed light on these questions by identifying and exploring the coping strategies employed by poor urban households to decrease vulnerability and increase their resilience to food insecurity. It demonstrates that the majority of these coping strategies are constructed within the rapidly expanding informal sector which has become a vital component of survival in the urban area.

6.2 Household Coping Strategies and Resilience

Coping strategies in food security are the activities that households use to offset threats to their food and economic resources in times of hardship and to stave off destitution with the hopes of reversing the situation and the possibility of again attaining food and livelihood security in future (Adams *et al*., 1998). Coping is therefore a process in which households

switch from their normal performance to survival strategies. The ultimate aim of these strategies is to make sure that the household continues to maintain its various objectives, which include livelihood security, consumption, health status and overall well-being. During this struggle to survive, some households are more successful than others as they persist even in the face of difficult challenges. Others cease to function and disintegrate. Those households that continue subsisting are the ones that are termed resilient. Thus, embedded in the idea of coping is the concept of resilience. In general, resilience relates to 'the ability of an entity or system to maintain function when shocked' (Rose, 2007:384). This continued functioning may not necessarily be at the same level at which the household was able to function before encountering the shock, but nevertheless enables it to continue existing even at a lower level of consumption and food provisioning. It is in line with this reasoning that this study adopts a definition by Klein *et al*., (2003:40) who see resilience as relating 'to the functioning and interaction of the systems rather than to the stability of their components or the ability to return to some equilibrium state'.

General literature on household vulnerability points to two broad means of dealing with risk and increasing resilience at the household level: (a) ex ante strategies of income generation linked to diversification, and (b) ex post strategies of consumption smoothing (Bird and Prowse, 2008). In rural areas, within which most vulnerability studies have been carried out, diversification usually entails households engaging in various income generating activities other than their main occupation, which is agriculture. Some of the activities may even involve migrating to urban areas to search for wage work. But, what does diversification in Zimbabwe's urban areas, particularly in Harare, entail? What activities do poor urban households, facing hunger and a multiplicity of other deprivations, engage in to enhance their resilience? The story of *Lazarus* and *Maidei* provided in section 6.2.1 below provides a good starting point for understanding household resilience through diversification in the urban environment, especially as it gives insights into household survival under Zimbabwe's economic distress conditions.

6.2.1 Diversifying to Survive in the City

Lazarus[52], *Maidei* and their four children live in a two-roomed cottage in Epworth. *Lazarus* is employed as a general hand in the city. He earns a salary of R300 a month. The salary is hardly able to cover their monthly expenses of food, rent, school fees and bus-fare. He estimates that their total monthly costs are around R950. With such a huge disparity between his monthly salary and expenses, how then do they afford to survive to the end of the month? *Lazarus* explained their survival as follows:

> We live like vultures, we scrounge from every source and we do anything that brings in money and food. We do not choose, we take what we get and that way we survive. During weekends, I do piece jobs for other households who pay me in cash or in kind. This can be cleaning their yard, mending their door or weeding the garden. At work, I sell *maputi*[53] to colleagues during break and lunch time. Now people at work refer to me as *Mukoma vemaputi* (the brother who sells *maputi*). We also cultivate a small piece of land where we get some maize and sweet potatoes. It is not much, but it helps a lot especially as we use the sweet potatoes to substitute for bread. My wife, Maidei, moves door-to-door selling tomatoes, vegetables and other greens in our neighbourhood. During the rain season, she also goes to the village to grow crops and comes back after harvesting. She brings back *hupfu*[54] and *mufushwa*[55], which reduces our food expenses considerably. Sometimes she brings some to sell to our neighbours and in the street. We also combine resources to buy food in bulk and then we share. When things get really tough, as has become the norm in the past few years, we borrow from friends and relatives. It is a struggle, but we are surviving.

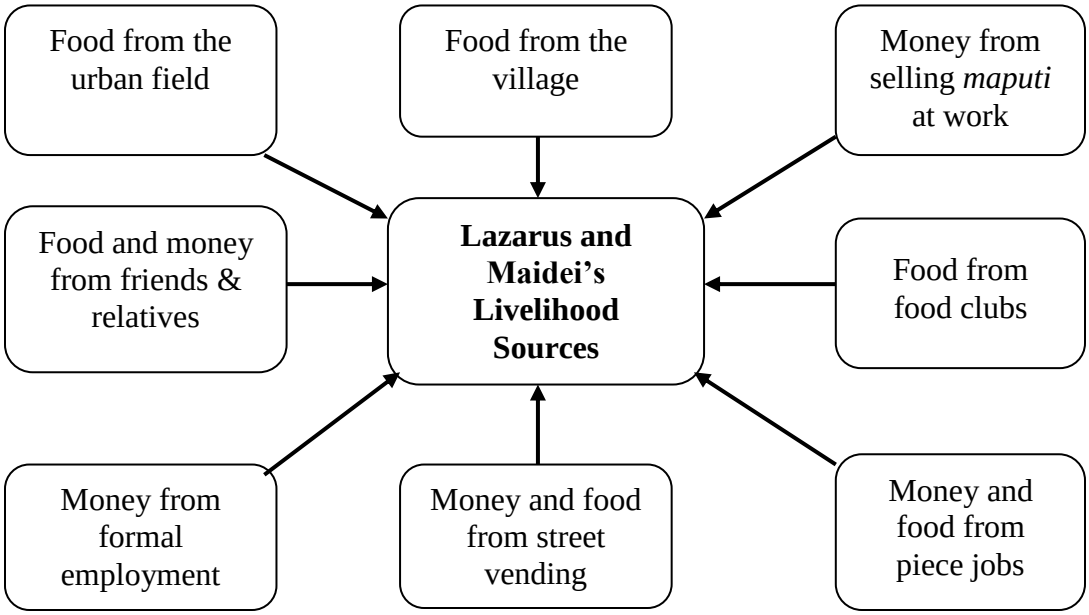
The sources of food and money listed above form part of the larger portfolio of *Lazarus* and *Maidei's* livelihood strategies in order to sustain their families under Zimbabwe's protracted socio-economic and political crisis. This crisis, spanning over a decade, has resulted in the progressive decline in employment opportunities and a gradual erosion of real wages. Combined with spiraling inflation, a single income, such as Lazarus' salary from his formal employment has thus become very inadequate. The only sure way of enhancing a household's survival chances has therefore been to diversify into many resource generating activities (Figure 6.1). This is because a decline in income in the 'purchasing urban environment' more often than not translates directly into food shortages and worsening overall conditions of household well-being. Just as *George Mushipe's* household

[52] Case Study No. 4, 23 March 2009, Ward I, Epworth, Harare.

[53] Popcorn
[54] Maize-meal
[55] Dried vegetables of any kind

(described in the introduction in Chapter One) was engaged in many activities, *Lazarus* and *Maidei's* aim is to use these extra activities to raise additional resources that minimize the threatened fall in food consumption and other livelihood needs. As Kantor (2008:250) argues, such diversification reduces exposure and the extent of decline resulting from a shock because other activities are available to make up for the loss.

Figure 6.1: Lazarus and Maidei's livelihood sources



Although Lazarus and Maidei have eight sources from which to support their livelihood, not all of these activities are always beneficial. Wage employment, for example, while providing a steady income, was not generating enough resources for sustenance. Lazarus said that he only continued to hold on to his job because it enabled him to raise money for investing in the vending business and also because the workplace was a good 'business' site for selling *maputi*. Like *Tapera's* household described in the next section, the informal sector is the backbone of *Lazarus* and *Maidei's* household and many others like them.

6.2.1.1 Earnings From the Street: *Tapera's* Life as a Vendor[56]

Tapera's survival in the urban area is akin to that of many households in Harare. He has not been employed since he was retrenched almost nine years ago. He spent the first year of unemployment trying hard to find another job. He soon realized that he could be wasting his time, as nothing seemed promising at all. Most of his friends and relatives that he initially thought would help him secure employment at their workplace were also losing their jobs. Feeding his family of four (a wife and two children) was becoming a nightmare as the small retrenchment package that he received had long been exhausted in the first four months of unemployment. He thus resolved to buy and sell sweets, freezits, *maputi* and boiled eggs in the area:

> It was the only thing that I could do. I sold my bed and wardrobe to raise the startup capital and joined others who had long been on the streets. As a man, I was at first ashamed to be seen selling things like sweets, but I had no choice. Now I have diversified and also sell tomatoes, *bakayawo*[57] and maize meal.

The major challenge for *Tapera* was that street vending is illegal, and he had to contend with almost daily clashes with the municipal as well as the national police who usually confiscated and destroyed his trading wares. Like most vendors in his neighbourhood, he said he did not have a permit. If he is lucky and is caught by police officers that he knows, he gives them a bribe and is released. His business is therefore conducted on street corners, along major roads and sanitary lanes, in front of shops and at major bus stops in the area. *Tapera* said he has no single permanent trading place, but rather moves from one point to the other depending on which place is yielding the maximum number of customers on a particular day. Why then, does he not pay for a vending permit to enable him to operate legally? He responded that the permits were expensive, and the process of acquiring them cumbersome and riddled with corruption:

> It is difficult to get a permit. You have to be well connected to get the permit. You also have to pay R100, which is expensive for some of us. It is difficult to raise that kind of money at one time. On top of that, you have to have a health certificate, which is very costly to obtain. Even if you have a permit you still trade on the streets as there are few vending stalls, so I think it is better to continue like this, as I have been doing for years.

[56] Case Study No. 16, 24 March 2009, Ward V, Epworth, Harare.
[57] Dried and salted fish

Epworth Local Board confirmed that there were few vending stalls in the area as they did not have the financial capability to construct adequate facilities needed to accommodate the high number of prospective vendors, estimated to number over 20 000[58]. Hence, they have licensed only slightly over 300 people. Because the six vending sites that were operational in Epworth at the time of the survey had only 120 vendor-stalls, some of the licensed vendors were also operating from the streets. Despite the numerous challenges and struggles associated with street vending, *Tapera* vowed to continue the trade as this is the livelihood activity that sustains his household. Besides the monetary income that Tapera and others like him get from trading on the street, there is also the food that they usually take from their business, particularly food which is no longer in a state to be traded.

Like *Tapera's* household, about 64 percent of the surveyed households indicated that they were engaged in some form of street vending as a livelihood activity. Goods traded on the streets ranged from everyday low order products such as bread, cooking oil, sugar salt, tomatoes, to higher order goods like clothes and kitchen utensils. For most households, the street corner has thus become the 'workplace', and the 'industry'- a source of livelihood for urban household survival. Proceeds from street vending are occasionally used to invest in other businesses as a way of further diversifying the urban livelihood. *Tapera*, for example, used part of his proceeds from vending to buy a sewing machine for his wife. Although his wife was still learning the sewing trade, she had managed to accumulate a reliable client base which was giving them some income to supplement that from vending. Occasionally, the wife makes children's clothes to take to the rural areas for bartering with maize, groundnuts and sweet potatoes that are then brought back to the city to feed the urban household. Street vending has also given people like *Tapera* a solid circle of friends that they can rely on when times are hard. 'The street', he said 'has become our survival.'

[58] Interview with Executive Secretary of Epworth Local Board, 23 March 2009, Epworth, Harare.

6.2.1.2 Beyond Borders - Cross Border Trading and Household Survival: The Case of *Miriam*[59]

Miriam, 42, is a single mother with two children. She had never been formally employed all her life. Until six years ago, she was a happy and secure woman married to a long-distance truck driver who tragically passed away in a road accident. The death of her husband left the family with no income and *Miriam* was forced by circumstances to fend for her daughters. 'I tried almost everything, but nothing seemed to work', she said. This included working as a cleaner in a clothes factory, a job she quit after only one month because the pay was almost equivalent to her monthly transport costs and she could hardly make ends meet. She then met *Tariro*, a long-time friend whom she had lost touch with for some years. She was now involved in cross-border trading and passed through her home selling imported blankets from South Africa. They talked and agreed to go together on the next trip the following week. She narrated her story as follows:

> I had some money that I had received from my husband's terminal benefits. I had never thought of cross-border trading before, but when Tariro passed through my place, I just said to myself, why not go and buy some things for resell and maybe I can get some money to look after my children. I already had a passport, which my husband had helped me to acquire before his death. We had hoped that one day I would accompany him on some of his trips to countries like Zambia, DRC, Mozambique and South Africa that he frequented, but he died before I could go even on a single trip. So I made a decision and went with Tariro on my first trip and brought back some few goods. Within a week of coming back, all my goods were sold out. I went back and from then on, I have never stopped. Now I can afford to bring back food and clothes for my children. I am even renting two rooms instead of the one I used to have. I usually go to Zambia when I have customers who want clothes, especially jeans that are cheaper there. From South Africa, I mostly bring back food and electrical gadgets as well as blankets, and from Mozambique, I bring rice and *bakayawo* [dried fish]. This is how I am managing to live, otherwise things could have been worse for us. Although it's still tough, at least I can pay some of my bills and send my children to school.

Besides the monetary income that *Miriam* derives from cross-border trading, she is also able to get food cheaply at its source, as most of the food sold in Zimbabwe's shops is imported. Things are not always smooth as transport costs usually drastically reduce her profits. To cover these increased transport costs, *Miriam* and some of her friends buy cigarettes which they resell in South Africa and Botswana. Although it is illegal, they are usually able to smuggle their booty with the help of long distance lorry drivers for a small

[59] Case Study No. 3, 23 March 2009, Ward I, Epworth, Harare.

fee. In addition, when they come back home she sells her goods directly to the public on the street rather than selling in bulk to other traders who would then sell on the streets. The profit margin on the street is very high and so Miriam has become a cross-border trader and a street trader at the same time. Through cross-border trading and street trading, her family has managed to survive the onslaught of the Zimbabwean economic crisis and the challenges that are rampant in the urban area. Many other women like *Miriam* continue to shuttle between countries in order to eke out a livelihood and survive in the city. Quantitative survey results indicate that 19.5 percent of the interviewed households were partaking in cross-border trading as a livelihood source. A majority of these traders were women who, like Miriam, sourced their goods from regional countries such as Botswana, South Africa, Zambia and Mozambique. Others indicated that, on a few occasions, they had ventured out as far as Dubai and China to buy their trading wares. They were in the minority owing to the prohibitive costs of travel to these destinations. Whatever destination these traders go to, they are constantly on the move in order to earn a living and support their families. 'We rarely sleep at home' said *Miriam*, 'If we do that, then our families will definitely starve'.

6.2.1.3 Surviving on the Urban Field: *Sekuru* Matanda's Secret[60]

Sekuru[61] Matanda is a 69-year-old pensioner who lives with his wife and four grandchildren in Ward 7 of Epworth. Two of his grandchildren are orphaned and the other two were left in his care by her daughter, who remarried and now lives in another town. His pension is only R60 a month and can hardly feed his family. For the past seven years now, he has been taking care of his family without any assistance from his daughter. Providing food for such a large family is quite a challenge, but *Sekuru* Matanda says he has mastered the trick of how to survive in the urban environment during these tough and demanding times. He explained:

> When I came to Harare in 1965, I did not forget the way I was brought up: that a man should not buy or pay for everything, but learn to grow for oneself. I raised my children by supplementing my income through growing maize, potatoes and vegetables. That helped me a lot as we rarely bought these foods. Now I am raising my grandchildren by

[60] Case Study No. 29, 28 March 2009, Ward VII, Epworth, Harare.
[61] *Sekuru* is a Shona word meaning grandfather

> the same means. Every year, regardless of the weather, I grow food on a small patch of land near the stream: maize, beans, potatoes, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. Here at home, I have a garden in the backyard where we grow vegetables. This year I harvested five 50kg bags of maize, three buckets of sweet potatoes and many pumpkins. We have food problems like everybody else, but we do not starve because of the small patch of land that we cultivate. I also make some money when I sell food to my neighbours, some of whom are much stronger and fit than I am. That field is our saviour.

Because of this small plot of land, *Sekuru* Matanda manages to look after his grandchildren, even at his advanced age. He rarely buys mealie-meal or vegetables. He declared that he has rarely been in a queue to buy food, except when it is to purchase sugar. During the rainy season, he dries vegetables into *mufushwa*, which they use as relish in the dry season in addition to fresh vegetables from his garden at home. Some of this *mufushwa* he sells to his neighbours for R1 a packet or 50 cents a cup. He estimated that he makes up to R200 a month from this venture. The money that he generates from these sales goes a long way in helping him pay school fees for his grandchildren, four of whom are still at school. Without this money, his life would also have been difficult as his pension of R60 per month is hardly adequate to meet their needs. Learning to grow your own food, particularly maize and vegetables, is the secret to survival in the urban environment, he said as a parting shot.

Sekuru Matanda is not alone in this endevour, for the quantitative survey in Harare indicated that 66 percent of the households were growing field crops while 43.5 percent were growing garden crops. This practice of farming among urban dwellers confirms Foeken and Uwuor's (2008) argument that urban agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa is increasingly becoming an integral part of the urban household's diversification processes. In the context of Zimbabwe's current economic crisis, urban agriculture has not only provided urban households with food that they would otherwise have had to buy on the market, but has also given these households a monetary income through selling some of the produce, as *Sekuru Matanda* does. The findings of this study were consistent with those of AFSUN (2008) which found that 60 percent of surveyed households in Harare were undertaking urban agriculture as a way of supplementing their food needs in the city. The recourse of these urban households to urban farming was also confirmed by local authorities who indicated that cultivation of crops in the city had drastically increased in

the past few years with almost all the available open spaces being utilized for agriculture. According to Epworth Ward 7 councilor:

> Most families are managing to survive by growing some of their own food. The practice is more pronounced in this ward [Ward 7] because it is located on the edge of the city where there are a lot of open spaces. These days it is rare to see any open space that is not utilized…people may not harvest a lot because the pieces of land are very small, but they get some food. As the local authority we recognize the contribution of agriculture in helping the poor to get food, which is why we are allowing them to grow crops even though our by-laws prohibit such land-use within city boundaries[62].

Most households that were involved in urban farming indicated that they were getting a lot of food from the activity with some managing to produce 3-4 month's supply of household cereal requirements. Despite large-scale involvement in urban agriculture, some households, particularly tenant households, indicated that they had no access to land for urban farming activities as most of the open spaces were utilized by homeowners who had been settled in the residential area for a long time. The same case applied to garden farming as landlords were reluctant to let their tenants utilize space within their premises to produce vegetables. This was because the landlords could benefit more by selling produce to these tenants rather than letting them grow their own vegetables on the premises.

6.2.1.4 Doing More to Get the Same: Piece Work and Odd Jobs- *Sheila* and *Temba*[63]

Sheila and *Temba* epitomize the situation of the great proportion of professionals who have failed to live on their salaries alone. Sheila is a secretary for a law firm in the city, while her husband, *Temba*, is a fuel station attendant. Their combined salary is R650 and this hardly meets their expenses that total R1200, and include rent, food, school fees, bus-fare and medical bills for their second child, who is asthmatic. The medical bills alone can take up half their income, while the remainder goes to rent. After paying these two expenses, there is nothing left for food, transport and school fees. As a result, they have resorted to engaging in other extra work during their spare time: at night and on weekends. Sheila

[62] Interview with Councilor, 31st March 2009, Ward VII, Epworth, Harare.
[63] Case Study No. 9, 24 March 2009, Ward III, Epworth, Harare.

finishes her work at 4:30pm and, instead of going straight home, she goes to work as a part-time receptionist for a doctor's surgery until 7:30pm. She says:

> I work hard so that we make ends meet, otherwise we would not survive. I leave home at 6 am so that I am in time for work at 8 am. By the time that I arrive back home around 9pm, I am very tired and go straight to sleep. We did not work this hard when I started working, but things were okay then and we could get by with our salaries. Now we work a lot harder, but we do not live any better. In fact we are worse off that we were and this makes me angry. We do not even have time to relax as a family: its work, work and work. And there is no choice. You either work or you starve.

As Sheila aptly points out, you work more or you starve. For those people who are formally employed, engaging in additional work has thus become the norm rather than the exception as income from the main occupation proves highly inadequate. *Temba* also works additional jobs to raise enough money for food and other expenses. He does any odd jobs that he can find and has ceased to be selective about what he can or cannot do. He is rarely at home, as he chases after piecework. He says:

> I really have no time to be at home to relax or spend with my family. My job pays me R300 per month and the money is not enough. In the evenings after work I do any piecework that I can find. Sometimes I ask clients who come to buy fuel whether they have some work that I can do. If they have, then I arrange to go and do the work after I dismiss. During weekends, I do a lot of these piece works because I will be free. So every month I make about R200 from these odd jobs and this helps a lot.

In agreement with his wife, Temba says that the fact that they now work harder does not mean that they live a better life. Rather they seem to be progressively failing to afford some of the basics. But he is appreciative that at least they can still afford to pay rent, feed themselves and send their children to school. They, and many others like them, will have to continue working extra jobs until their full-time employment is better remunerated. Quantitative survey results indicated that about 22 percent of the surveyed households were engaging in extra or part-time work to supplement their main income. These jobs are carried out at night after the day job and during weekends as households try to raise enough money to buy food and pay for other urban expenses. Like *Sheila* and *Temba*, engaging in an additional job has thus become the survival strategy through which most professional households have managed to weather the onslaught of the crisis in the country.

6.2.1.5 Dangerous and Illegal, but Highly Lucrative: *Joseph's* Dealings in Foreign Currency and Fuel on the Black Market[64]

Joseph is a 26-year-old single man who, until 2007 was a till operator in a large supermarket in town. He resigned from his work because it was not paying well. Since then, his life revolves around Road Port[65], where he has joined a group of young men and women who are engaged in illegal foreign currency trading. Here they change Zimbabwean dollars into any currency of foreign denomination and vice-versa: a service that they supply because local banks fail to satisfy the foreign currency demands by travelers. *Joseph* narrates how the trade changed his lifestyle and made him survive the most brutal of the economic challenges in the city. He says:

> Without the black market I do not think I would be here today. Maybe I could have gone back to the rural areas a long time ago or died of hunger. My job was a joke: it was paying me less money than I used for transport alone to come to work, so I quit. I then got employed by a *Big Dhara*[66] who pays me on commission. During the past two years, he has been supplying me with the foreign currency and Zimbabwean dollars that I use for transactions on the black market. I make some money and have a fairly good life where I can buy most things I want: clothes, food and electrical gadgets as well as paying rent. I even afford to periodically buy groceries for my mother and brothers in *Tafara*[67].

Joseph, like most urbanites involved in the black market foreign currency trade, manages to generate enough money to survive the harsh economic times. The foreign currency enabled them to access even scarce commodities. The trade is, however, fraught with danger. The fact that it is an illegal activity means that the police periodically round up the dealers, imprison and fine them. In some cases, dealers fall prey to criminals who lure them to secluded places in the guise of wanting to transact, and then rob them of their cash. Some even pretend to be police officers, effect pseudo-arrests and then continue to beat and rob the dealers before dumping them in isolated spots. Joseph narrated an incident where he and his friend lost not only thousands of dollars in foreign currency to bogus police officers, but nearly lost their lives as well:

> There is a lot of money to be made in this trade, but is very dangerous. Last year I nearly died. I got a phone call from a person who said he wanted to buy some US$3 000. I phoned my *Big Dhara* and got the money, then asked my friend to accompany me to

[64] Case Study No. 15, 25 March 2009, Ward V, Epworth, Harare.
[65] Road Port is an international bus-terminus in central Harare where travellers board and disembark from long distance buses coming from countries such as South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique, and Malawi.
[66] A wealthy man, who is usually well connected politically
[67] Another residential area in metropolitan Harare

> the Avenues area where the deal was supposed to take place. The area was relatively safe; I had conducted business there before. As soon as we arrived, we were accosted by three police officers who searched and handcuffed us before bundling us into an unmarked car. We were driven to Domboshava, 17 kilometres out of town blindfolded where we were beaten, robbed and left for dead. That is when we realized that they were not police officers, but robbers. We did not even report the case to the real police: what could we say when we risked being arrested ourselves?

Despite this ordeal, Joseph has not stopped trading, as this has become his lifeline. Moreover, he really has no choice, as his *Big Dhara* wants him to work and repay the money that he lost through the robbery. The trade has become less profitable since the introduction of the multiple-currency system where all currencies have become legal tender in the country. Regardless of this new challenge, Joseph and many other like him still continue to patronize Road Port, but this time without the Zimbabwean dollar[68] involvement, changing US$ into rand or pounds and vice-versa, in what Joseph prefers to call the 'cross-rate' business. To augment income from foreign currency trading, Joseph also engages in fuel trading on the black market. Because of his easy access to foreign currency, he is able to buy fuel direct from importers in large quantities and then resell it to motorists in smaller quantities at a profit.

Like foreign currency trading, fuel trading on the black market is illegal and attracts fines or imprisonment. Joseph confided that he has been raided by the police several times and his fuel confiscated. On one occasion he was imprisoned for a week at a police station, but was lucky to be released after his friends managed to bribe the arresting policemen. Although these activities are dangerous, *Joseph* said that the money is easy and returns quick and that he has no choice but to continue in order to survive. 'There are no other jobs out there and this is how I have managed to live. I am here to stay in this trade', he declared. Joseph is not alone as 7.5 percent of the households interviewed during the quantitative survey indicated that they managed to survive and feed their families by engaging in these illegal activities. A visit to Road Port in central Harare, where multitudes of men, women, the young and the middle-aged mill around for the day bears testimony to

[68] The introduction of the multi-currency system rendered the Zimbabwean dollar worthless and this currency is no longer in circulation.

the illegal, but thriving, activities which have become a central facet of urban livelihood in Harare.

6.2.1.6 Renting out Rooms to Tenants: *Gogo* Mutsago's Salvation[69]

Gogo[70] Mutsago is a 70-year-old grandmother who lives with three grandchildren in her seven-roomed house in Epworth. Her husband passed away 15 years ago after battling with cancer for close to a decade. *Gogo* Mutsago says that the greatest contributor to her life and that of her grandchildren is her seven-roomed house which they built when her husband was still alive. She explained how the house has made them survive and fight off the economic problems that have besieged the country in the past few years:

> This house is my husband; it provides me with almost everything: food, school fees for my grandkids, money for their clothes and for rates such as water and electricity. Without the rents that I collect every month, I would not be able to survive. What would I give to the children? How would I pay for their education? Every day I thank my late husband for having the vision to build this house. Now I have something to rely on.

Until 2005, *Gogo* Mutsago and her family occupied all eight rooms in the house. The only income they had was from her daughter who is in the United Kingdom and who would regularly send some money. When the economic situation began to get worse however, the money from her daughter became inadequate and she had to look for alternative means to supplement it. At first she let out a single room for R50 and the money helped her patch up things here and there. She confessed however that within six months the extra R50 was not enough and she resolved to rent out another room, again at R50 per month, to another tenant. At the beginning of 2007, even that R100 extra income became highly inadequate and she made two bold decisions. First, she constructed a three-roomed cottage in her backyard and put another tenant there. It was a bold decision given that it was such backyard buildings that had been targeted, destroyed and made illegal during *Operation Murambatsvina.* Second, she let out a further two rooms inside her main house to another tenant. That left her with only three rooms to use with her family. She said that she had no choice, but to let out most of the rooms so as to increase the income even if it meant that

[69] Case Study No. 7, 24 March 2009, Ward II, Epworth, Harare.
[70] *Gogo* is a Shona word for grandmother

she had to live in cramped conditions with her grandchildren and all her property in just three rooms. Some of the property could not even fit in the three rooms and had to be stockpiled in the garage, where it continues to deteriorate due to exposure to the wind, sun and rain. By increasing the rent for one room to R100, *Gogo* Mutsago was now earning R700 a month from tenants and this was helping her get food, pay her rates and the educational costs for her grandchildren. Now she does not pressure her daughter to send her money more frequently as she has a reliable monthly income to bank on. Besides renting out rooms to tenants, *Gogo* Mutsago also runs a small tuck-shop at her house. Here she sells small items such as eggs, tomatoes, beans, *kapenta,* bread and fruits. Between these two income generating activities, she has managed to persevere in the city and always thanks her late husband for having had the foresight to build a house which has now become the backbone of their livelihood.

Like *Gogo* Mutsago, some 32 percent of the households interviewed during the quantitative survey reported renting out part of their homes to other households as a way of raising income to pay for food and other associated urban expenses. The average earning per household for those that were letting part of their houses was R225 per month. Thus besides being a shelter for the household to live in, housing was also a productive asset to generate income on which these households could survive. Although this strategy was limited to property owners and was therefore not an option for the greater proportion of surveyed households, it was nevertheless proving to be a worthwhile livelihood strategy for property owners. Grant (2007) also observed the same strategy being used by struggling households to raise income in Gweru, the country's fourth largest town. For the few that owned houses, leasing thus proved to be one of the numerous strategies that enabled households to persist in the challenging economic crisis.

6.3 Some General Observations on Household Diversification and Urban Survival

From the case studies presented thus far, a number of observations can be made about diversification and survival of poor urban households in Harare under conditions of economic distress. The case studies show that the urban poor, though seriously challenged by the prevailing economic conditions, have not taken the situation lying down. Rather they

have displayed a remarkable degree of imagination and innovativeness in eking out an existence in the challenging urban environment. They have turned challenges into 'opportunities' to diversify their income sources, engaged in multiple livelihood activities, and have constructed their livelihood largely in the informal sector. A significant number also straddle the formal-informal sector divide.

6.3.1 Multiple Livelihoods Among the Poor

Lazarus and *Maidei's* livelihood sources are many. Their main source of livelihood, Lazarus's job as a general hand, is inadequate to meet their basic needs that include rent, food, clothes, water, electricity, transport and medical bills. Without supplementary income from piece jobs and street vending, their survival would have been much more difficult. *Sheila* and *Temba* are also in the same category: they have formal jobs that are no longer able to support them and have therefore diversified into other income-generating activities. Even though they now work extra jobs, their lives have not significantly improved. Rather they seem to be gradually becoming worse off. This underlines the fact that for the poor, multiple livelihood sources have become the norm rather than the exception for survival in the urban environment. As Table 6.1 shows, more than half (55%) of the households interviewed in the quantitative survey were engaged in more than one livelihood activity.

Table 6.1: Number of coping strategies being utilized by urban households

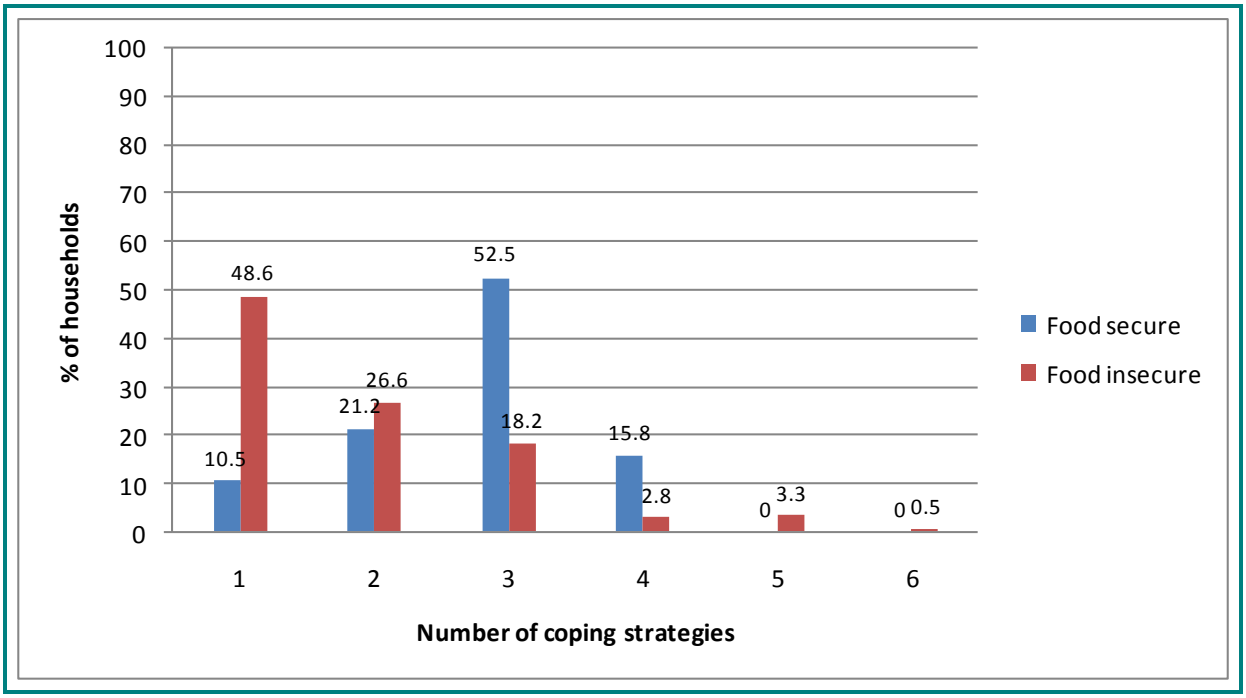
Number of coping strategy	**N**	**%**
One	90	45.0
Two	52	26.0
Three	43	21.5
Four	8	4.0
Five	6	3.0
Six	1	0.5
Total	**200**	**100**

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

That some were engaged in as many as four or five activities emphasizes the importance of diversification in the survival of poor urban households. This was further evidenced by the

fact that household food security status was positively related to the number of coping strategies that were employed by the household (Figure 6.2). As the figure indicates, the greater proportion of food insecure households (48.6%) was surviving on a single source of income while the majority of the food secure households (68.3%) were employing at least three income generating activities.

Figure 6.2: Urban household food security status by number of coping strategies



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

Multiple economic activities have thus become the norm as households spread their risks. There were a variety of factors determining the number of coping strategies that a household could engage in. These factors included the size of income at the disposal of the household, knowledge about alternative coping strategies, access to land for urban farming and access to informal networks through which food for resale was accessed from the market. With respect to income, households with higher incomes had more chances of finding more activities that they could take part in. This is because they could invest some of their income in income generating projects and still have some money to survive on. On another level, households that were socially and politically well-connected also had

advantages in accessing food and other goods that they could then trade on the 'black market' to make profit and therefore improve their income earning capacity. With respect to urban farming as a coping strategy, the survey revealed that property owners were advantaged as they could use part of their properties for growing crops (e.g. backyard farming): something which tenants were unable to do. Thus the coping strategies for property owners seemed to be more varied than those that were renting. It is no wonder that urbanites who owned their own accommodation were seen to be more food secure than non-property owners. In addition, households that had settled for a long time in the city had better access to small pieces of land than those newly arriving and therefore tended to have another coping strategy that was not necessarily available to the recent migrants. So even though recent migrants are believed to have more farming experience owing to their recent farming activities in the rural areas, such experience is not usually utilized as there were no spaces left to partake in urban farming.

A word of caution is necessary, however. Household resilience should not be viewed only in terms of the number of income-generating activities, for Figure 6.2 also illustrates that too many activities may actually be detrimental to the household. This was particularly evident in cases where household livelihood portfolios were filled with transient activities which were neither dependable nor resilient enough to sustain households through prolonged periods of income and food shocks. Such households were more often than not found shifting from one activity to the other and back again. The activities offered basic survival, rather than any realistic means to escape poverty. Household resilience thus depended not only on the poor's ability to find alternative strategies, but also in the viability of the chosen strategies to sustain their livelihoods.

6.3.2 The Poor's Livelihoods are Multi-Spatial

Miriam's story, together with that of *Lazarus* and *Maidei*, confirms that the livelihoods of the urban poor are not confined to the urban area only. Rather they indicate that survival in the city has necessitated the spreading of income generating activities beyond the urban borders into rural areas and into other countries as well. *Maidei's* farming activities in the rural area have become a central facet of their household survival in the city. The food

grown in the village has meant that *Lazarus* and *Maidei's* household do not have to buy some basic foodstuffs. Just as Owuor (2006) and Frayne (2001) found in Ghana and Namibia respectively, urban households in Harare are increasingly relying on rural areas for food to enable them to survive in the challenging urban environment.

Survival activities for the urban household are thus located in both the urban and the rural areas, hence the designation multi-spatial. *Miriam*, on the other hand, has built her livelihood around cross-border trading as she brings products from South Africa, Zambia and Botswana to trade in the streets of Harare and also takes cigarettes to sell to these foreign countries. Her livelihood, like that of others in Harare has thus become multi-spatial as well. The quantitative survey revealed that about 19.5 percent of surveyed households were involved in cross-border trading as one of their multiple household strategies. For cities in crisis, the means of survival for the urban household therefore does not lie within the urban boundary only, but rather extends to the international arena where household members transcend borders in order to generate income and search for food to sustain the household.

6.3.3 The Poor's Livelihoods Sometimes Encompass Illegal and Dangerous Activities

Tough economic times and deteriorating urban conditions sometimes breed desperate measures. *Joseph's* livelihood as a black-market dealer in both fuel and foreign currency, though providing a means for survival to him and to a significant proportion of the urbanites, is illegal and dangerous. The collapse of the formal economy in Zimbabwe meant that even people without criminal intent were often found on the wrong side of the law trying to survive and eke out a basic living. Unlike street vending, foreign currency trading is a dangerous activity with a high risk of imprisonment, robbery and even being killed and maimed. The abduction and assault of *Joseph* is testimony to how surviving in the urban environment in this way is fraught with risks. Considering that 7.5 percent of the households interviewed in the quantitative survey indicated being engaged in the activity, the proportion of people living dangerously in order to feed and sustain themselves cannot be ignored. These illegal activities have thus formed part of the livelihood portfolios of a significant proportion of households in the urban environment.

6.3.4 Urban Farming Has Become an Integral Component of the Poor's Survival in the City

Although the challenges that face poor households in the city are many and various, food is indispensable and, unlike most other expenditures, cannot be ignored, sidelined or postponed. Thus, while the activities that the poor engage in are targeted at reducing vulnerability to many deprivations in the city, food ranks as the most important. One way that these households have found of keeping themselves provisioned is by growing their own food in the city. *Sekuru Matanda's* survival, and that of many others like him, is ample evidence that urban farming is becoming the rule for most poor households in the city. Some households are able to supply themselves with maize meal from the urban field and a reliable source of fresh vegetables from the backyard garden for most of the year. The poor's survival is thus no longer entirely dependent on purchasing food on the urban market but also on their ability to grow food for themselves where land is available and they have resources for inputs.

6.4 Saving Income as a Means to Survival in the City

While poor urban households diversify to increase their income-generating capacity so that they are able to meet their food and other requirements, survey results from Harare indicate that these households also make concerted efforts to save income by rationalizing their needs and tailoring them according to their income generating capabilities. The following three case studies demonstrate how some poor households in Harare are able to survive the harsh urban economic environment through various income saving measures.

6.4.1 Falling Back on their Roots: *Tapiwa* and *Violet*[71]

Tapiwa and *Violet* have been married for sixteen years and have six children. They are both unemployed and survive by trading on the informal market. Until five years ago, they all lived in the city in a three-roomed cottage in Ward I of Epworth. At that time life for them was hard, but not as bad as has become. Then rents started going up almost every month; prices of goods skyrocketed; most goods became scarce on the market; school fees became

[71] Case Study No. 5, 23 March 2009, Ward I, Epworth, Harare.

unaffordable and landlords started demanding rents in foreign currency. They began to borrow from friends and relatives, but could not generate sufficient to pay back what they owed, so they could borrow no more. As Tapiwa explained, they had to think of something in order to survive:

> We could no longer afford to rent three rooms as all our income was now going towards rent. So we talked to the landlord and relinquished the use of another room and were now left with two rooms. A few months later we could not even afford to pay for those two rooms and so we invited my wife's sister to come and stay with us so she could use the other room and pay her rent. We had to find our relative because these two rooms have the same entrance so you cannot live with a stranger. But with her own two children we became overcrowded and the landlord complained, so we eventually had to send four of my kids to the rural areas to stay with my mother. That's where they are now: it's better there as there is enough space, more food and the schools are cheaper. Here we live with the youngest two, aged 5 and 2 years.

Tapiwa has no intention of bringing his children back to the city any time soon. He and his wife take turns to go and visit the other children in the village and also take advantage of these visits to bring back some food. Although they also go with some goods from the city, *Tapiwa* confesses that it is not much since life is very tough in Harare and they rarely have anything to spare. The village has become their fall back in times of crisis. By sending their children to the village, they have managed to whether the storm. Their situation is similar to that of other households in the urban area. In the quantitative survey, about 46 percent of the surveyed households indicated that they had household members who were normally resident in the city now residing in the rural areas. The objective has been the same: to reduce expenses for accommodation and to reduce the number of people to feed during the period of economic crisis.

6.4.2 From the Street to the Pot-Living on *Tsaona*: *Ishmael's* Household[72]

The everyday survival of *Ishmael's* household epitomizes that of most poor households in Harare: they buy from the street, they buy in small quantities and they buy every day. With a family of five (a wife and three children), the income that he gets from his carpentry business is a far cry from what they need to spend each month. Even though his wife supplements this income by engaging in a hair plaiting business, it is still not sufficient.

[72] Case Study No. 14, 25 March 2009, Ward IV, Epworth, Harare.

They are therefore unable to raise enough money to buy food in large quantities. Every day they frequent the street to buy maize meal for *sadza* and some relish in small quantities that are popularly referred to as *tsaona,* because the quantities are usually enough to cook only a single meal on an emergency basis. As he explains, without the street foods things could have been a lot worse than they are now:

> I do not remember when I last bought food from the shops or supermarket. Five or six years ago, I am not sure. We survive on buying from street vendors. There you can get any quantity that you want depending on your money-if you have any amount of money, you will get something. You can even buy 5ml of cooking oil, a cup of maize meal, 1 piece of meat and then go home and cook your meal. And the vendors are found all day long: you can go to their homes in the evening, even at midnight and buy what you want. When there is no food in the shops, the vendors always have something.

During Zimbabwe's economic crisis, the street became the lifeline of most households in the city. As shown in Figure 5.13 in Chapter Five, the majority of poor households reported sourcing food on the informal market. While the informal system has always been part of the food system in urban Zimbabwe, the deepening economic crisis and the collapse of the formal food system entrenched it and made it an indispensable component of household survival in the city. It was not by choice that most poor households found themselves depending on informal food markets. Rather it was because that is where the food could be found and in quantities that the poor could afford to purchase.

6.4.3 Food Clubs: Households Surviving on Women's Initiatives

One female respondent in the in-depth case study survey declared that without the innovations and initiatives of women, most households in Harare would not manage to survive and persist in Zimbabwe's economic crisis fraught, as it is, with persistent food shortages. To argue her point, she introduced the researcher to a food club of six households in the area, of which she was a member. The respondent, *Mai Moyo*[73] narrated how, through this food club, the households have managed to maintain a steady supply of food even through some of the most difficult months:

> Our households survive because of our efforts, our perseverance and our inventiveness. When things got really bad and we could not afford to buy in our shops, we came together as three households and started buying our groceries

[73] Case Study No. 10, 24 March 2009, Ward III, Epworth, Harare.

> together. We would go into town, find the cheapest shops and buy in large quantities. As inflation continued to rise, we found ourselves unable even to buy in our shops even with our combined resources. So we shifted and started buying from other countries. But this needed a lot of money so we recruited other three households. So every two months we would pull our resources together and send one person across the border [South Africa, Mozambique and Botswana] to buy groceries. Initially most of our husbands did not seem to like the idea, but they soon caught up to the idea and they now support us. Now we bring in flour and even make our own bread and share recipes for our food to last longer and make it more nutritious. Men know nothing about some of these things…they just want food on the table.

Through the food club, *Mai Moyo* and other households that were part of the scheme were managing to find cheaper food to feed their households. Besides pooling their resources to purchase food, these food clubs also served as a platform on which the women shared a variety of recipes for different kinds of foods for their own consumption. *Mai Moyo*, for example, indicated that their group had even devised a new recipe for making bread out of pumpkins as well as other nutritious dishes out of raw paw-paws and bananas. Additionally, some food preservation mechanisms were devised and shared so that food losses would be minimized during these lean periods. One of these mechanisms included using fresh lemon tree leaves as a preservative that could keep left-over food fresh for longer periods, particularly for most of the households that had no refrigerators. During the quantitative survey, about 38 percent of the surveyed households indicated being part of a food club that shared costs and bought goods together so as to make the food more affordable. At least 35.5 percent of these households also reported that their membership to the food clubs was critical to their survival, while 52.6 percent thought it was very important and 11.9 percent viewed it as important (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: Importance of food clubs to urban households

Importance	**N**	**%**
Critical	27	35.5
Very important	40	52.6
Important	9	11.9
Not important at all	0	0.0
Total	76	100.0

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

None of the households reported that membership as not important, emphasizing the crucial role that these voluntary and informal groupings were playing in the survival and sustenance of the urban household. A notable feature of these food groups was that most were organized by women, indicating that in the struggle for survival under harsh economic conditions, women no longer occupy peripheral roles in household food security issues. Rather they have become central players in the battle to ensure that their households are fed.

6.5 Some Observation on Savings as a Means to Survival

While households were diversifying in order to raise income for food and other urban expenses, they have found ways and means to reduce their expenses so that the food security of their members is enhanced. Their resilience is therefore born of a combination of income generating as well as income saving activities. While living in the urban area has always been regarded as a sign of upward mobility in social and economic standing, the economic crisis in Zimbabwe, just like in some other countries of the region, has necessitated a reevaluation of this seemingly logical observation. This is because the deteriorating conditions in most of these cities have reduced most of the advantages that initially drew people to the cities. Jobs are no longer abundant, accommodation is scarce, food is expensive and education is also getting out of reach of the poor members of the urban community. For the poor, one of the means to survival has thus been to send some of their household members to the rural areas where expenses are lower by comparison.

Although the rural areas are plagued by their own lack of physical and economic infrastructure, in the short term, they seem to offer the best alternative for households that are unable to persevere as a unit in the tough urban environment. This movement is also resulting in the break-up of the household unit into two or more separate, but mutually supportive, units. Thus, in one of the above case studies, while *Tapiwa, Violet* and their two children live in the city, their other children are translocated to another locality.

Women have ceased to be marginal players in the household survival process. Through their initiatives, households have managed to endure the harsh economic times. They now

partake in activities that were previously viewed as men's domain: sourcing food through food clubs and deciding what, when and how to provision their families. Besides these two major cost saving strategies, the survey also found out that households were moderating their consumption patterns in order to adapt to the shifts in household income. Hence 69 percent and 56.5 percent of the surveyed households indicated having reduced the size of their meal portions and the number of meals per day respectively, as a cost cutting measure.

6.6 Urban Household Survival on Social Capital

Most of the case studies presented in this chapter have revealed that, besides having a multiplicity of income-generating activities, households may reach a point of distress where very few or none of the activities are capable of generating enough for household survival. *George Mushipe's* case study in Chapter One and *Lazarus* and *Maidei's* livelihood strategies shown in Section 6.2.1 indicate that in extreme circumstances, households end up relying on friends and relatives to see them through the difficult times. This ability of households to call on the resources of others for their survival during difficult times is what is known as social capital[74]. Putnam (1995:655) defines social capital as the 'features of social life-networks, norms and trust-that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives'. Evidence of social capital has been found in most societies. Davies (1996), for example, discovered strong evidence of the redistribution of assets within kinship groups in rural Mali to counter the effects of shocks on the households. Similarly, Devereux and Naeraa (1996) also reported an increase in informal transfers between neighbours and relatives in rural Namibia during the food crisis caused by drought in 1992.

[74] The idea of social capital was popularized by Scott (1976) in his book, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*. He studied peasant communities of Southeast Asia and advanced the notion that most peasant communities live in a *modus operandi* of risk aversion rather than profit maximization, and that when faced with risks, they distribute such risks across households in the community so as to ensure that everyone could meet their survival needs. Such spreading of risks was codified in the mutual expectations of the community members who viewed the reciprocal exchange of resources between households in times of crisis as being ingrained within the normative demands that society places upon behaviour.

Although much has been written about the use of social capital as a survival strategy in rural areas, the potential of social networking for livelihood security in urban areas has so far been referred to only sporadically in literature (Misselhorn, 2005). While it has been suggested that in conditions of deteriorating urban economic conditions, social networks may play a critical role in household survival by providing a buffer for the poor against deepening vulnerabilities and shocks (Schutte, 2006), other authors have also pointed out that these networks may be less helpful in the urban settings due to the erosion of traditional systems that govern social interactions and the transient nature of urban settings which inhibits the establishment of such networks before households are on the move again (Jabeen *et al*., 2009). Given these conflicting suppositions, what is the reality in urban areas of Southern Africa and to what degree can urban households enhance their resilience by relying on these social networks in times of need?

Quantitative survey results indicate that around 36 percent of the households reported relying on borrowing food and 29 percent on borrowing money from neigbhours, friends or relatives as a coping strategy (Table 6.3).

Table 6. 3: Type of social capital used by urban household for survival

Type of Social Capital	**N**	**%**
Borrowing food from friends/neighbor/relatives	72	36.0
Borrowing money from friends/neighbours/relatives	58	29.0
Cooking food together with friends/neighbours	30	15.0
Eating at neighbours/friend's house	21	10.5
Getting left-over food from workplace(e.g. hotels, lodges, restaurants)	15	7.5

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

Although the social networks were concentrated among friends and relatives, there were also a few households that had extended these networks to the workplace, particularly for those households whose members were employed in restaurants, fast-food outlets, and hotels.

The small proportion of households relying on social networks as part of their portfolio of coping strategies indicates weaker social relations within the urban context, and seems to be consistent with Frayne (2001)'s findings in Windhoek that intra-urban linkages at the household level are limited and overshadowed by strong social connections between urban and rural areas. Respondents during the in-depth qualitative survey revealed that the weaker intra-urban connections are also a result of the congregation of poor households that have very little to give, within the same vicinity. Asked why they did not give or borrow much from neighbours, relatives and friends, one respondent explained:

> Everyone is suffering here. No-one has enough to feed their own families, so how can they give? When neighbours come to borrow money or food and you tell them that you have nothing to offer, some do not understand as they always think that you are better than them. But the truth is that we are all the same. I am afraid of lending the little I have in case it's not returned and tomorrow my children starve. I lent money to some people over seven months ago and they have not yet returned it…I am not even sure that I will get it back.

Households felt more inclined to lend food than money as they believed that food was easier for the borrower to return than money. Moreover reciprocal exchanges were reported to be much stronger between relatives and friends or people who originated from the same rural area than between neighbours[75]. Thus while some household members reported eating food at a neigbhour's house, this was more common where the neighbours were also friends, suggesting that residential propinquity per se may not play a large role in urban social networks.

What conclusions can one draw about the value of social relations of reciprocity for household food security within urban areas? The fact that few households reported falling back on social coping mechanisms does not necessarily mean that these mechanisms do not exist in the city. Rather it may signal the fact that the operation of such networks may have been eroded by the deepening and protracted crisis that has been affecting Zimbabwe's urban poor, thus confirming Moser's (1998) claims that social capital is usually eroded under conditions of severe stress and shock. The survey results may therefore be indicative of the waning of social capital due to increasing hardships. If tensions resulting from poverty and other conditions of deprivation in the city tend to break down or reduce

[75] Case Study No. 21, 26 March 2009, Ward VI, Epworth, Harare.

community ties of social reciprocity, then urban social networks would have to be recognized for exactly what they are: more brittle and having a lower tolerance level than those in rural areas.

6.7 Food Aid Activities and Urban Survival

Zimbabwe has been a major recipient of food aid for the past decade owing to its inability to produce enough food for national consumption. With more than half of its population requiring food aid at the beginning of 2009, the country was the third largest food aid activity zone in the world after Afghanistan and Ethiopia (IFRC, 2009). However, very little of the food aid that was coming into the country was being distributed in the cities as most activities were concentrated in rural areas.

Quantitative survey results indicated that only 6 percent of the respondents were receiving food aid, either from the government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or Church-based organizations (CBOs). NGO representatives interviewed in Harare confirmed that the greater proportion of their aid activities was targeting rural areas where poverty and food insecurity were perceived to be more severe. For the few who had begun to focus some of their activities in the urban areas, the activities were still insignificant as they accounted for less than a fifth of their overall aid activities in the country[76]. The most pronounced aid activities in urban areas were being carried out under the Zimbabwe Joint Initiative Group (JIG) that was formed in 2005 in the aftermath of *Operation Murambatsvina* by seven international NGOs[77] to try and help victims of the operation and other poor urbanites.

The first phase of the initiative, which was implemented from May 2006 to March 2008, was the first concerted effort by NGOs to target aid in urban areas and covered selected areas in Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare, Gweru and Masvingo[78]. Phase II of the programme, which became operational at the end of 2008, includes aid activities such as food

[76] Interview with an NGO representative 16th April 2009, Harare.
[77] The Joint Initiative group consists of seven NGOs namely Mercy Corps, Africare, Care International, Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam GB, Practical Action, and Save the Children UK
[78] Interview with an NGO representative, 20th April 2009, Harare.

distribution, provision of low-cost technology for housing construction, financing low-input gardens, and food and cash transfers to the elderly, orphans and those affected with HIV/AIDS. The scale of operation is, however, still very low and has therefore not been instrumental in fostering household resilience to food insecurity in urban areas.

6.8 Conclusion

The evidence presented in this chapter points to a number of findings that are central to the theme of survival and resilience of the poor to food insecurity in the urban environment. First, the chapter has clearly shown that though seriously challenged by prevailing economic conditions, the urban poor do not simply resign themselves to fate. Rather they transform themselves into actors who engage in innovative and imaginative strategies that help them to eke out an existence in challenging urban environments. This they have managed to do by increasing their income sources through diversifying into multiple livelihood activities, which have become standard practice as households spread their risks. Their survival is thus dependent on how well they are able to take advantage of the 'opportunities' that exist.

Secondly, the greater proportion of the livelihood activities that the urban poor engage in are constructed in the informal sector, which has become the backbone of survival for most poor households in the city. This finding contrasts with the conventional view that sees the informal sector as being completely saturated and therefore one that is not able to support livelihoods. As the chapter has shown, a significant proportion of poor urban households have managed to ride the storm of Zimbabwe's crisis by eking a living within the informal sector, which became a significant part of urban livelihoods after the collapse of the country's formal sector. Although the urban informal sector was strengthened significantly and became more dominant during crisis years, it is an activity that had entrenched itself in the inner womb of the urban economy and is likely to persist, albeit at a lower scale, should the economic situation in the country stabilize or return to normal. In addition, the informal food supply system also became, not just a source of food, but a livelihood as well for people involved in the trade of food and other basic goods. To this end, the informal

food supply system has moved beyond the survivalist mode to an almost permanent feature of the urban food supply system, particularly for vegetables, fruits and cereals.

Thirdly, the chapter has demonstrated that a significant proportion of the poor survive by straddling the formal-informal sector divide. This has resulted from the perpetual decline of industrial wages that have seen the income from formal employment become inadequate to meet the daily needs of the average urban household. Household members that are employed in the formal sector have thus moved to supplement their income sources by engaging in informal sector activities.

Fourthly, the evidence presented here shows that the livelihood sources of the urban poor are no longer confined to the urban area alone. Rather the deepening economic crisis has necessitated the spreading of income-generating activities beyond the urban borders into rural areas and into other countries as well. Many urban households rely on their linkages with the rural areas to get access to food for urban survival. Cross-border trading, a hitherto unknown economic activity until the 1990s, is now playing an increasingly important role in generating income and supplying urban households with resources for their continued sustenance.

Fifthly, tough economic times and deteriorating urban conditions have resulted in urban households sometimes taking desperate measures in order to survive. It has been shown in this chapter that a number of households were engaging in black market dealing in order to generate income for their survival. The main activities include trading in fuel and in foreign currency, which activities are illegal and usually dangerous as, besides the risk of being arrested and fined, there is also the danger of being robbed, maimed or killed. Nevertheless, the collapse of Zimbabwe's formal economy and the narrowing of livelihood alternatives in the city has meant that most livelihood activities have become illegal and people without criminal intent are often found on the wrong side of the law simply trying to survive. These illegal activities have thus become part of everyday life and are responsible for the continued survival of a significant proportion of households in the city.

Sixthly, the practice of urban farming has become widespread and an integral component of survival for an increasing proportion of households that are challenged by declining conditions in the city. The urban field and the backyard garden have become indispensable to urban households that are able to provision themselves with maize meal and fresh vegetable produce for most part of the year. The poor's survival is thus no longer entirely dependent on purchasing food on the urban market but also on their ability to grow some food for themselves.

Seventhly, intra-urban social networks, though overshadowed by rural-urban networks, are increasingly important in urban areas as part of the household's insurance system in times of crisis and food shortages. Although these networks show signs of withering during periods of prolonged economic crisis, dependence of households on the resources of others has increased the resilience of the urban poor to food insecurity. The formation of food clubs by women is ample evidence of the role played by social networks in the survival of poor urban households.

Lastly, a significant proportion of surveyed households indicated that they had sent some of their household members to the rural areas as a means of reducing their expenses in the city until the economic situation returns to normal. This return migration challenges orthodox migration perspectives that consider circular migration as a dying trend in the developing world. In addition to the exchanges of people, some households were also receiving food and money from the rural areas which contributed to their survival in the urban areas. The livelihoods of the urban poor are not only multiple, but also multi-spatial.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MIGRATION AND URBAN HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings on the role of migration in urban household food security. It assesses the extent to which the movement of people between the village and the city, as well as the social and economic relations of reciprocity that exist between them, contribute to the resilience and survival of poor urban households. The chapter demonstrates that for most poor urban households, their means of survival often transcend the city boundaries as strong relationships with the rural area makes it possible for them to access the food and money that has become central to urban survival during tough economic times. In addition, the chapter shows how international migration is increasingly becoming an important new survival strategy for some poor urban households that traditionally have not been known to have strong linkages with the outside world. Within this context of international migration, remittances of money, food and goods, have become an integral component through which households reduce their vulnerability and increase their resilience to food insecurity.

7.2 Migration History of the Sample Population

Although survey results indicate that 57 percent of the surveyed population was born in the urban area, a significant proportion of the sample population had been born in the rural areas (42%) (Table 7.1). These results are almost the same as those of the 2002 Census which showed that almost 50 percent of the population in Harare had been born in the rural areas (CSO, 2004). The fact that almost half of the population in the sample had been born in the rural areas is significant in that these rural-born migrants are more likely to remain attached to their rural homes than would be expected amongst the urban born. The existence of such an attachment is necessary for the continued exchange of people, goods, money, information and services between the rural and the urban areas.

Table 7.1: Urban households' members by place of birth

Place of birth	N	%
Rural area	386	42.0
Urban area	525	57.0
Foreign country rural area	8	0.9
Foreign country urban area	1	0.1
Total	**920**	**100.0**

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

While the majority of the people in the surveyed households were living in the study area (44.6%), elsewhere in Harare (38.8%), or in a different urban area (10.7%), there were household members living in an a foreign country in an urban area (2.0%) or rural area (0.2%) (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2: Urban household member's current place of residence

Current place of residence	N	%
Same rural area	10	1.1
Different rural area	10	1.1
Same urban area	410	44.6
Different urban area	98	10.7
Foreign country urban area	18	2.0
Foreign country rural area	2	0.2
Urban area	356	38.8
Rural area	14	1.5
Total	**920**	**100.0**

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The majority of international migrants were domiciled within the region in South Africa and Botswana, with small numbers scattered in overseas countries, notably the United Kingdom and the United States. These migrants are likely to play a role in determining the food security status of the household through providing remittances in the form of money, goods and food. Before discussing the impact of these international migrations to urban household food security, the discussion focuses on social relations of reciprocity between rural and urban areas and how the trust and obligations embedded in these relationships enables urban household to fall back on its rural component in times of crisis.

7.3 Social Reciprocity Between the Rural and Urban Areas

The degree to which urban households have recourse to resources in the rural areas for their survival in the city depends on the extent to which they interact with rural households both physically and socially. The existence of such interactions is therefore, to some extent, a good measure of the strength of these urban-rural linkages and their viability in militating against food insecurity among urban households (Frayne, 2001). Survey results indicate that 95.5 percent of the interviewed households had a 'home' in the rural areas. The fact that most households still continue to have a place in the rural areas that they call home, despite close to half of the sample population being born in the city underlines the fact that the majority of Africans in urban areas still maintain a strong affiliation with their 'roots' regardless of whether they become permanently domiciled in cities or not. Because of these affiliations, there are strong active social, cultural and economic links that are continuously maintained and proving to be vital in the survival of the urban household.

The strength of the social linkages are exhibited by the fact that 64.5 percent of the surveyed households reported that household members normally visit their rural homes once every year, while 28 percent indicated that they normally visit every six months and 6 percent every month (Table 7.3). Only a few households (1.5%) reported never visiting the village. Although increasing costs of commuting to and from the village, as well as declining urban industrial wages, were curtailing the frequency of these visits, most respondents indicated that they nevertheless continued to make efforts to visit periodically.

Table 7.3: Frequency of visits by urban household members to rural areas

Frequency of visits	**N**	**%**
Every week	0	0.0
Every month	12	6.0
Every six months	56	28.0
Every year	129	64.5
Never	3	1.5
Total	**200**	**100.0**

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

Visiting relatives and friends periodically in the rural area is seen as a way of life: a tradition through which the urbanites in the country keep in contact with their kith and kin as well as remaining 'anchored' to their rural homes. As one respondent succinctly put it:

> In our tradition one does not detach himself from the village, regardless of how well that person may be doing in the city. The village is our home. My mother, uncles and other relatives still live there and we have to constantly know how they are doing. When there is not enough money for all of us to travel the village, as is the case these days, then either I or my wife has to go and see how they are living even if we do not bring them anything.[79]

As a strategy to counter the negative effects of deteriorating urban conditions on the maintenance of urban-rural linkages, most households have resorted to visiting the village only on special or major national holidays such as Christmas and Easter or for the often obligatory funerals and serious illnesses. The findings of this quantitative survey bear testimony to the need by urban household members to stay in touch with relatives and friends in the countryside, as 80 percent of the surveyed households reported members visiting the village to see how friends and relatives were faring, while 66 percent indicated visiting for social events such as weddings, marriages and tombstone unveilings (Table 7.4).

Table 7.4: Reason why household members normally visit their rural home

Reason for visiting	**N**	**%**
To see relatives and friends	160	80.0
Social events (e.g. Marriages, funerals, tombstone unveiling)	132	66.0
To get food and/or money	128	64.0
For farming & other economic purposes (e.g. to sell livestock)	70	35.0
To send money and/or food	68	34.0
To send children to school	65	32.5
Others	11	6.5

*This was a multiple response question, so totals do not add up to a hundred

However, besides the social ties that exist between the city and the village, the survey results show that these visits are increasingly becoming economic rather than simply social. As many as 64 percent of the household respondents reported that they normally visit their rural homes to collect food and/or money from the rural area while 35 percent

[79] Case Study No. 28, 28 March 2009, Ward VII, Epworth, Harare.

normally visit in order to take part in farming and other related economic activities. Another 34 percent take money and food to the rural areas. Thus the social and cultural linkages that exist between the urban and the rural household act as conduits for the movement of food and money between the rural and urban areas. In addition, a significant percentage of the surveyed households (32.5%) also indicated that they normally visit the rural areas in order to leave their children who go to school there. These economic linkages are elaborated in detail in the next two sections as they form part of the urban household's portfolio of strategies that enable it to feed itself and survive in the challenging environment of the city.

7.4 Transfers of Food From Rural to Urban Areas

Interviews with respondents during the in-depth survey indicate that one of the reasons why urban household members visit the rural areas is to enable them to take part in agricultural activities, particularly during the rainy season. This is because most urban households still maintain small plots of land in the village where they grow crops while some even keep animals. For some households, visiting the village for farming is a yearly ritual as reported by one respondent who said:

> Every year my husband buys seeds and fertilizer and I go home to the village during the rainy season to farm on our small plot…we have about 2 acres of land. Normally I spend around 2 months in the village, come back and then go back again for a shorter period to harvest. During the school holidays I also take my children to the rural areas so that they can help me to work in the fields.[80]

The practice of urban households participating in rural farming is common in Zimbabwe. Quantitative survey results validate the existence of this practice as 35 percent of the surveyed respondents reported visiting the rural areas for farming and other economic purposes related to livestock (see Table 7.4 above). By engaging in rural farming, urban household members contribute to generating the food that they eat when they visit the countryside or sell to get a supplementary income that they can use in both the rural and in urban area. They also bring some of the food back to the urban area. Thus a significant percentage of households in the survey indicated that they normally visit the rural area to get food and money that they use in the urban area for the sustenance of household

[80] Case Study No. 27, 28 March 2009, Ward VII, Epworth, Harare.

members. While the transfer of these resources was not one way, with urban households also taking or food and money to the rural areas, the proportion of households that indicated normally sending food and/or money to the rural areas was lower (34%).

In the past, the established practice was for urban households to send money and food to the rural areas. Most respondents however pointed out that economic hardships in the city are now making it difficult for these flows to continue. Rather, urban households are increasingly getting more from the village than they send, suggesting that the flow of resources between the rural and the urban area may have reversed. It is this net urban-ward flow of resources, especially food, that this study argues is partly responsible for the resilience of poor households in the city. Lending credence to this argument, the quantitative survey findings revealed that more than half of the surveyed households (61.5%) normally receive food from the rural areas, while 34 percent reported normally receiving money (Table 7.5). Most of those who were not receiving food were those whose rural homes were located far from Harare, especially those from the Midlands and Matabeleland provinces which are over 300 kilometres away.

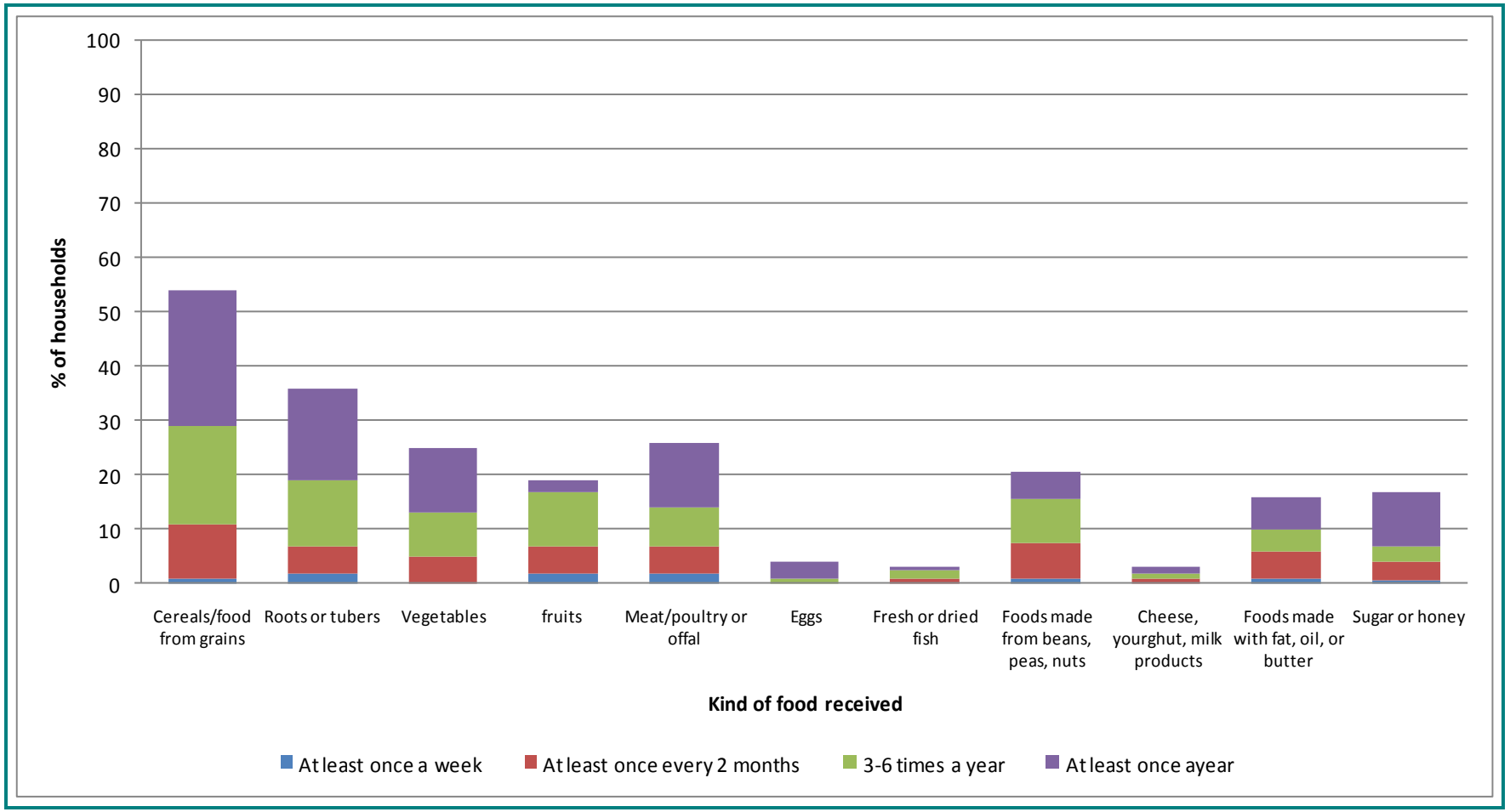
Table 7.5: Households that normally receive food and money from rural areas

	Normally receive food		**Normally receive money**	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**
Yes	123	61.5	68	34.0
No	77	39.5	132	66.0
Total	**200**	**100.0**	**200**	**100.0**

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The money that the households receive is usually from the sale of agricultural crops grown by some urban households in the rural areas. In addition, other urban households keep livestock such as cattle, goats, sheep and chickens that they occasionally dispose of for cash to help them during periods of crisis. The most prominent foods being transferred from the rural areas were cereals at 54 percent, root and tubers (36%), meat and poultry (26%) and food made from beans and nuts (16%), as shown in Figure 7.1 below.

Figure 7. 1: The kind of food normally received from rural areas and the frequency of receiving such food



(Source: Research Survey 2009)

The predominance of cereals from the rural areas can be explained by the fact that maize is the staple crop for Zimbabwe and therefore the majority of transfers involve this staple that the majority of households use as their everyday food. The importance of maize transfers for the survival of the urban household is illustrated by the following quote from a respondent in the in-depth case study interviews:

> Whenever I go to the village I make sure that I bring some maize or maize meal. If I know beforehand that someone from the village is visiting, I also instruct them to bring maize-meal because that is our basic food. If I am able to cook *sadza* for my family, then all other things do not really matter. So, *hupfu* first and all other foods come second. When I get a chance to go home, I bring as much as I can, even to last me for six months.[81]

For this household, like many other households in Harare, the transfer of cereals from the rural to the urban area is central to the economic linkages that exist between the city and the countryside. And because of the prohibitive cost of transport between the rural and the urban area, a greater proportion of such food transfers were reportedly taking place 3-6 times a year or even once a year. Those members of the household who manage to travel to the rural area always make sure that they bring back as much as they can afford to carry so that the food will last as long as possible.

Food from the rural areas plays an important role in the continued survival of the urban household. Its importance is validated by household responses from the quantitative survey which indicate that 58 percent of the households regarded the food that they were getting from the rural area as being very important while 18 percent regarded it as being critical to their survival in the city (Table 7.6).

Table 7.6: Importance of rural food transfers to urban household

Importance of food from rural areas	**N**	**%**
Not important at all	0	0
Somewhat important	12	9
Important	18	15
Very important	71	58
Critical to survival	22	18
Total	**123**	**100**

(Source: Research survey, 2009)

[81] Case Study No. 12, 25 March 2009, Ward IV, Epworth, Harare.

None of the households perceived the food transfers as unimportant, indicating the significant contribution of rural-urban food transfers towards the sustenance of poor urban households in Harare.

These findings validate the prediction of O'Connor (1991) that rural-urban linkages in Southern Africa were likely to assume new importance with rising urban poverty in the region. Thus these rural-urban food transfers now represent vital safety valves and welfare options for people and households that are vulnerable to economic fluctuations in the city. It is through these flows of food and money that food price increases lost some of their bite and households were able to survive in spite of decreased incomes and a sky-rocketing cost of living. One respondent aptly summed up the importance of these food transfers to the resilience of her household by saying:

> Without the food that we get from the village we would not be surviving here in the city. It is because of that small plot that we have that we do not need to buy maize meal, beans and sweet potatoes. Occasionally we also get meat when a goat or a cow has been slaughtered. So even though life is tough, we can somehow survive [82]

The importance of the transfers is also seen in the fact that all the households that reported normally receiving food from the rural areas where eating the food. Only a few of these households were selling the food (26%), giving it away to friends (18%) or using it to feed livestock such as chickens and rabbits (9%) as indicated in Table 7.7 below.

Table 7.7: Use of food received from the rural areas

Use	**N**	**%**
Eat it	123	100
Sell it	32	26
Give it away to friends/relatives	22	18
Feed it to livestock (including chickens)	11	9

(Source: Research Survey, 2009) *This was a multiple response question, so totals do not add up to a hundred

It is clear that rural-urban food transfers are increasingly becoming an important component for the survival of poor households in Harare. These households not only make

[82] Case Study No. 26, 28 March 2009, Ward VII, Epworth, Harare.

use of the resources that they have in the urban area, but also rely on those resources that they can find in the rural areas so that their urban livelihoods are enhanced and protected. The phenomenon that Potts (2008) defines as 'straddling the rural-urban divide', has therefore become a way of life for most poor urban households. The reality of household food security in urban areas is that the livelihoods of the urban poor do not exist in isolation from their rural 'homes'. Rather their needs, livelihood activities and coping strategies span the rural-urban divide as they strive to harness sufficient resources for their survival in the deteriorating urban environment.

7.5 Sending Household Members to Rural Areas

The discussion in section 7.3 above briefly highlighted another significant strategy emerging among urban households; that is, moderating household size in response to increasing hardship in the city. This is the growing practice by urban households of sending some of their household members to live in the rural areas either permanently or temporarily. About 46 percent of the surveyed households indicated that they had household members who were normally domiciled in the city, but were now living in the rural areas (Table 7.8).

Table 7.8: Proportion of urban households with members normally resident in the city now living in rural areas

Response	**N**	**%**
Yes	92	46
No	108	54
Total	**200**	**100**

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The major reasons advanced by households for sending some of their members to reside in the countryside included saving on the costs of food by reducing the number of people to feed (44%) (Table 7.9). For some households, particularly those with a keen interest in farming, this strategy had a double benefit in that it reduced the number of people that needed to be fed in the city, and at the same time provided a person who could organize and take part in agricultural production while living in the rural area.

A significant proportion of households also reported sending some household members to the village as a way of saving on school fees (31%). This was particularly true for households with school going children who wanted to escape the high costs of education in the city. The education costs are not only centred on tuition fees, but also on daily transport costs to and from school. Some respondents indicated that they could not afford the cost of daily commuting as some of their children had been enrolled in the schools in the city centre, some 15 kilometres away, or in Mbare, on the other side of the town.

Table 7.9: Reason for sending household member to the rural area

Reason for sending	**N**	**%**
To save on food	88	44.0
To save on school fees	62	31.0
To save on rent	47	23.5
For children to be cared for by grandparents	29	14.5
For member to look after the rural home	8	4.0

(Source: Research Survey, 2009) *Multiple response question, so totals do not add up to a hundred

In addition, sending children to be educated in the rural areas was advantageous in that there would be no transport costs involved and the tuition fees for rural schools were lower. The money thus saved could then be channeled towards purchasing food for the remaining household members. When questioned on whether the low costs of education in the rural areas could compensate for the loss of quality education in the city, the majority of the respondents argued that it was far better for their children to get lower quality education in the countryside, than for them to continue living in the city where they no longer afforded the fees.

Sky-rocketing rents in the city mean that most households could not afford to pay rent for many rooms. The poor were thus reduced to living in overcrowded conditions where parents shared the same room with their children. One respondent commented that they had managed to survive by reducing their space requirements and redirecting the savings towards food purchases:

> I used to rent three rooms for my family of six, but things got tough and I had to release two rooms back to the landlord. Six months later I was forced to use one room as it was all I could afford, but I could not share it with my wife and children.

> So we sent the elder children to live with their grandmother in the village in Mutoko. Now we only live with the smaller child who is 2 years old. If things improve, then maybe we will get a bigger place and take them back, but not as the situation is now. Its better they stay there-they have a place to live, the school is just 2 kilometres away and the food is abundant. Meanwhile I struggle with this little one here and we are coping[83].

As the quote clearly illustrates, sending some household members to the village and to relatives elsewhere has become a viable coping strategy for poor households faced with difficulties in the city. It has brought much relief to those who cannot afford the high costs of rent as well as the high costs of education in the urban area. Whatever minimal savings are made by reducing the burden in the city, the remaining city dwellers indicated that they find it easier to cope when the demands have been reduced. At least in the short term, the rural areas have thus become a refuge for distressed urban households, giving them enough space and time to reorganize and re-strategize.

7.6 International Migration, Remittances and Urban Household Food Security

About 12 percent of surveyed households indicated having at least a member of the household who was working away from home (Table 7.10). This was slightly lower than the 13.6 percent recorded by the AFSUN (2008) survey in Harare or the 19 percent national average recorded by the ZIMVAC (2009) during its January 2009 survey.

Table 7.10: Proportion of urban households with a migrant

Response	**N**	**%**
Yes	24	12
No	176	88
Total	**200**	**100**

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The explanation for this slightly lower figure lies in the fact that Epworth is one of the poorest residential areas in Harare and few households have sufficient resources to send one of their members across the national borders. Respondents pointed to the prohibitive cost of getting travel documents (passports[84], visas) and the absence of relatives and

[83] Case Study No. 20, 26 March 2009, Ward V, Epworth, Harare.
[84] An ordinary passport for an adult was costing US$670 at the time of the survey

friends in the neighbouring countries as causes for the low migrancy rate among these poor households. However, there were more international migrants (83.3%) than internal ones (16.7%). The majority of the international migrants probably cross illegally[85] into neighbouring countries were they seek employment in the hope of improving their lives and the welfare of those household members that remain in the country. As one respondent indicated, her children had no travelling documents, but had migrated to South Africa 'just like most of the people are doing-wading across the Limpopo River and taking their chances with the border police'[86].

However, the qualitative analysis revealed the importance of international migration to Epworth's migrant-sending households. This was because most migrants were sending back money and food to their families. Questioned about the importance of remittances from the migrant in household food security one respondent whose children had migrated to South Africa had this to say:

> If it were not for my children who are working in South Africa, this family could have starved a long time ago. Those children have made us survive…rarely does two months pass by without one of them sending money or groceries...that is how we are surviving and managing.[87]

Such findings are consistent with those of a number of studies (e.g. Mendola, 2006; Wiggins, 2003) in developing countries which reveal that remittances are a significant component of household income and enable recipient families to smooth their consumption and improve their well-being. In a Zimbabwe national migration survey carried out in 2004 by Tevera and Chikanda (2009), three-quarters of the migrant-sending households reported receiving remittances in the year prior to the study, indicating the increasing importance of migration to the survival of households in the country. The contribution of remittances to the well-being of some households in Epworth is illustrated by the fact that migrant-sending households reported significantly higher monthly average incomes than non-migrant ones, as depicted in Table 7.11 below.

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[85] A survey by Maphosa (2009) on migration indicates that the majority of Zimbabweans enter South Africa illegally by border jumping. Increasingly, there were also others who were entering legally through official entry points and then overstaying.

[86]Case Study No. 26, 28 March 2009, Ward VII, Epworth, Harare.

[87] Case Study No. 26, 28 March 2009, Ward VII, Epworth, Harare.

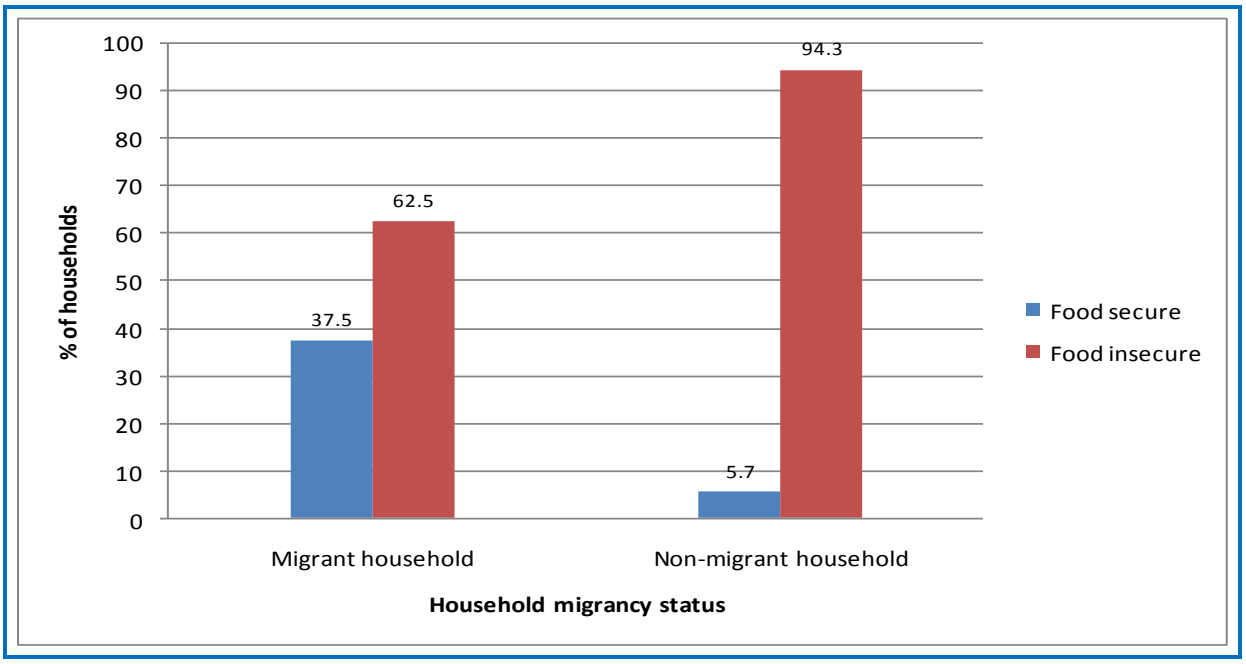
Table 7.11: Average monthly income by urban household migration status

Urban household migration status	N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Migrant household	24	1450	1200	400	5400
Non-migrant household	176	442	300	40	1550
Total	200	563	400	40	5400

(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

Whereas migrant households had an average income of R1450, the reported average household monthly income for non-migrant households was much lower at R442. Such differences in household income are likely to impact on the household food security situation as this money could be used to purchase food. Hence migrant-sending households recorded a higher proportion of households that were food secure (37.5%) than non-migrant households (5.7%) (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7. 2: Urban household food security status by household migrancy status



(Source: Research Survey, 2009)

The improved food security situation of migrant-sending households is be explained by the fact that although remittances were put to a variety of uses, all the households indicated that they used a portion of their remittances for their food needs (Table 7.12). In addition,

migrant households revealed that the largest proportion of non-cash remittances were in the form of food. A significant proportion of the migrant-sending households also used remittances for school fees (79.2%), paying rents and rates (70.1%) purchasing consumer goods (62.5%) and paying for medical expenses (50%). Few households reported saving remittances for future use (12.5%). Even fewer households indicated using the remittances to invest; only 8.3 percent and 4.2 percent respectively reported investing the money in a business and in the construction of a house. The proportion investing remittances in a business was much lower than the 16 percent reported for 2004 by Tevera and Chikanda (2009:4), perhaps indicating that households were being barred from saving by the worsening economic conditions which demanded that they spend more on consumption.

Table 7.12: Use of remittances by urban migrant households (n=24)

Use of remittances	**N**	**%**
Food	24	100.0
School fees	19	79.2
Paying rents and rates	17	70.1
Consumer goods	15	62.5
Medical expenses	12	50.0
Saving	3	12.5
Investing in business/goods for resale	2	8.3
Construction of a house	1	4.2

(Source: Research survey, 2009) *This was a multiple response question so totals do not add up to 100

Thus, although migrant-sending households are relatively more food secure than non-migrant households, the fact that the greater proportion of remittances are channeled towards food indicates that even these households are struggling. When asked about the importance of remittances to the survival of the urban household, 87.5 percent of the migrant-sending households indicated that remittances were very important, 8.3 percent felt that they were important while only 4.2 percent indicated that remittances were not important (Table 7.13).

Table 7.13: Respondent's perception of importance of remittances to survival of urban household

Importance of remittances	**N**	**%**
Very important	21	87.5
Important	2	8.3
Neutral	0	0.0
Not important	1	4.2
Not important at all	0	0.0
Total	**24**	**100**

(Source: Research Survey 2009)

Likewise, the greater proportion of the migrant households indicated that remittances had had a very positive effect on their household (91.6%), while 4.2 percent reported that the effect had been positive. Only 4.2 percent found the effect of having a household member living and working somewhere was negative (Table 7.14).

Table 7.14: Effect of having a migrant on the welfare of the urban household

Effect of remittances on urban household	**N**	**%**
Very positive	22	91.6
Positive	1	4.2
Neither positive nor negative	0	0.0
Negative	1	4.2
Very negative	0	0.0
Total	**24**	**100**

(Source: Research Survey 2009)

This could be because some migrants take time to find employment at their destination and hence may not, in the interim, contribute to the welfare of the household. If the migrant had been the sole breadwinner, the effects may very well be negative as the remaining household members are left to fend for themselves while the breadwinner has still to find employment. Overall, however the effects of remittances on the urban household in Harare were reported to be very positive. Most migrant households considered that their future would be better if other members of the household were to migrate to another location to work (Table 7.15).

Table 7.15: Perceived effect of future migration on the urban migrant household

Perceived effect of future migration	**N**	**%**
Better off	23	95.8
About the same	0	0.0
Worse off	1	4.2
Total	**24**	**100**

(Source: Research Survey 2009)

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the role of internal and international mobility in the survival of poor urban households in Harare. It assessed the extent to which the socio-cultural linkages that exist between the city and the village, as well as how the economic relations of reciprocity embedded within these relationships, contribute to the resilience of the poor in the city. The central argument in the chapter is that the interactions and linkages that persist between urban and rural households are central to the survival of poor urban households that are exposed to deleterious and deteriorating conditions in towns and cities. Through these linkages, resources continue to flow between the rural and urban areas as circular migration, initiated during the colonial period, persists and even show signs of resurgence. Although economic hardships brought about by the prolonged socio-political crisis in the country are negatively affecting the flow of resources from the urban to the rural area, the reverse flow (i.e. from rural to urban) seem to be growing as urban households increasingly rely on their rural components for food.

The chapter therefore demonstrates that for most poor urbanites, survival often transcends urban boundaries since strong ties with the rural area are maintained, making it possible to access food and money generated in the village for use in town. During times of shock and distress, the importance of the rural area as a safety net intensifies as urban households are able to fall back and rely on the rural household to enhance their resilience to food insecurity. The rural area, in turn, receives other goods and services thereby completing the pattern of reciprocity between the two.

Besides the reliance by urban households on resources from the rural areas, the survey also indicated an emerging trend where urban households send some of their members to the rural area as a way of reducing food expenses in the city. Most of these members are sent temporarily in the hope that improved economic circumstances will enable their return to the urban area in the future. This demographic coping mechanism represents a viable strategy for poor households who are then able to concentrate on feeding the remaining members thereby increasing the overall resilience of the household.

In addition to internal migration, international migration represents a new survival strategy for urban households that have not been traditionally known to have strong ties with the outside world. Remittances - in the form of goods, money and food - are becoming increasingly important for migrant-sending households. While the global financial crisis poses a threat to the continued flow of remittances[88], in turn reducing the resilience of the migrant-sending households, the effect on the surveyed households has so far been minimal owing to the concentration of migrants in Southern African countries which are further away from the Euro-American epicenter of the crisis. However, should these countries become more exposed, the expected reduction in remittance inflows may reduce household resilience to food insecurity. These concerns aside, international migration has become a viable option for some urban households to decrease their vulnerability to food insecurity.

[88]Although remittance inflows to developing countries grew between 2007 and 2008, there was a noticeable downward trend in the last quarter of 2008 and 2009. In addition, global remittances inflows declined to $420.1billion in 2009, a 5.3 per cent decline over 2008 (Economic Commission for Africa, 2010; World Bank, 2009).

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Introduction

Food security discourse is not new to sub-Saharan Africa. There is much literature detailing the experiences of poverty, hunger and food insecurity in the region. However, the literature is disproportionately weighted towards the experiences and coping strategies of rural households. Much less is therefore known about how poor and vulnerable urban households cope with food insecurity, particularly in crisis conditions such as those that have characterized Zimbabwe over the last decade. This study has therefore attempted to begin to fill this gap through a detailed case study of a city (and country) in crisis. Consequently, the thesis focuses on the survival of poor households in a crisis-ridden urban environment. It has examined the urban poor's vulnerability to food insecurity and analyzed the strategies that these households adopt to enhance their resilience under circumstances of extreme adversity. At the same time, the thesis attempts to provide a substantive contribution to the emerging field of urban food security in Africa. This concluding chapter discusses the nature of this contribution.

The major findings with potential relevance to other crisis situations include the following: first, the research shows that the greater proportion of the livelihoods of the poor are constructed in the informal sector, regardless of whether this sector seems 'saturated'. The informal sector has become a key component of the livelihood strategies employed by stressed urban households to cope with their food requirements, as well as other livelihood needs. Secondly, the transfer of resources from rural to urban households, particularly of food and money, has become an important coping strategy for poor urban households. This is the opposite of the conventional picture depicted in the literature on urban-rural links where the net flow of resources is from urban to rural areas. Thirdly, urban households are employing demographic coping strategies to reduce their food requirements by sending some members to the rural areas, despite the more limited social and physical infrastructure outside the city. Fourthly, international migration is a key dimension of

urban livelihoods for a significant minority of households which depend on remittances for their survival in the city. Fifthly, the survey findings demonstrate that the livelihoods of the urban poor are highly evolved systems of coping, diversification and innovation which are certainly more complex than rural livelihood models would allow. Lastly, the study demonstrates that the struggle for survival and livelihood in the city has split the urban household into separate, but mutually supportive, units whose activities, composition and location remain highly fluid. It is this fluidity which enables the household to construct multi-spatial livelihoods that are crucial to its survival. Each of these substantive contributions is elaborated in the following sections.

8.2 Survival in the Informal Sector

Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, has become the world's poorest continents. In the past two decades or so, the absolute numbers of the poor and undernourished has been consistently increasing and is expected to continue to do so in the foreseeable future. In urban areas, rising unemployment and the fall in real wages and per capita incomes precipitated by the failure of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in the 1980s and 1990s have been further exacerbated by the recent global recession which has seen thousands of workers being made redundant without prospects for a quick economic recovery. These general deteriorating urban conditions have, in Zimbabwe's case, been amplified by the economic and political crisis that has gripped the country since 2000. This has thus further heightened the challenges facing the country's urban population.

In Harare, only 36 percent of the interviewed population was employed at the time of the survey. The majority of urbanites have thus sought and found refuge in the informal sector which has become the cornerstone of urban livelihoods in Harare. Informality has pervaded the livelihood strategies of the poor in the city as most households now derive the majority of their income from within the sector. Collapsing formal food systems have also meant that the greater proportion of poor households source their food on the informal market. Thus while the informal sector has traditionally been associated with irregularity, low wages and unreliability, it is proving to be the mainstay of most urban households and is responsible for reducing vulnerability to food insecurity in Harare.

In Zimbabwe, and in Africa generally, the formal sector, long regarded as the 'engine of employment growth' (ILO, 1992), has been unable to generate adequate employment and sustain the ever-increasing urban population. Instead, under the current crisis conditions, the formal public sector has undergone massive retrenchments and job lay-offs which have served to reduce income and increase urban household vulnerability to food insecurity. In the decade of crisis in the country, a clear process of informalization has been taking place and it is this shift from formal to informal systems that has contributed to the survival of most poor urbanites. The informal sector has absorbed most of the urban unemployed despite predictions by writers such as Kanji (1995:46) that 'many areas of informal services and production…are now saturated and cannot absorb any more labour.' It has therefore become an integral part of the urban economy. With its high performance during the country's crisis period, there has now been a blurring of the traditional dualistic distinction between the formal and the informal sector which has always been sharp and evident in the past. In some sectors of the urban economy, the informal sector almost rivals the formal one. The multiplicity of informal sector activities that have kept poor urban households afloat include street vending, cross-border trading, casual work and piece-jobs as well as trading of foreign currency and fuel on the black market. Whether this situation persists is a matter that remains to be seen as the economy stabilizes and recovers under an improving political climate.

Most informal sector activities are survivalist rather than entrepreneurial in nature. The poor, devoid of any substantial assets and resources, have shown a remarkable degree of astuteness in eking out a living in the tough urban environment that has been characteristic of Harare (and Zimbabwe in general). This study confirms the findings of Beall and Schutte (2006) in Kabul and Grant (2004) in Bangalore that for cities (and countries) in crisis, most income opportunities for the poor are found in the informal sector. The importance of the informal sector to the survival of the urban poor cannot be underestimated. The official view in Zimbabwe has been that the informal sector is disorderly, chaotic and a hive of criminality. What is required, rather, are urban policies

that seek to integrate these activities so that they do not interfere with, or become stumbling blocks for other formal sector activities still taking place in the city.

8.3 Rural-Urban Food Transfers: New Flows on Old Networks

The transfer of goods and money from urban to rural areas in Africa is well- documented and has always been a vital part of the African migration process (O'Connor, 1983). Such migration processes were initiated by the colonial practice of regarding towns as European areas and Africans as temporary sojourners whose presence in the city was only required in order to utilize their labour. Laws enacted by colonial governments therefore did not encourage indigenous families to settle in the city, but rather compelled them to come to town as 'singles' leaving their families in the rural areas. Thus, migrant workers periodically returned to the village, taking with them money and industrial goods for their families. Although some migrants would, on return, bring back farm produce, this was minimal and paled in comparison to the dominant flow of cash earned in industrial work which was channeled to develop the rural home, as well as buying industrial goods and food for the people resident in the countryside.

Such circular migration patterns, which were firmly established during the colonial period, seemed to be waning after independence as migrant workers brought their families to the city where they could stay longer without returning to the countryside. However, this process, combined with higher natural population growth, drastically increased urban populations amid stagnant and sometimes deteriorating urban economic conditions. The worsening living conditions in the city in the 1990s narrowed the gap between the rural and urban areas and triggered a resurgence in circular movements. The survey findings show indicated that in the current crisis most urbanites, particularly the poor, have maintained and strengthened these links. Urban households are using their frequent visits to the rural areas to bring food and money back with them to sustain the urban household. As the story of *George Mushipe* in the introduction in Chapter 1 as well as that of *Lazarus* and *Maidei* in Chapter 6 clearly illustrate, the transfer of food from the rural to the urban area has become critical to the survival of the poor household in the city.

Thus, while urban-to-rural flows of goods and money do still occur, new and stronger reverse resource flows are becoming more significant and crucial to urban survival. While most urban households get food from their kith and kin in the rural areas as gifts, others are involved in rural farming and periodically send household members to the village during the rainy season for farming purposes. Some of this agricultural produce is sold and remitted to the city as cash while the rest is remitted as food. The growing reliance of the urban household on the rural areas during a time of crisis underlines the fact that the livelihood of the urban household is not limited by urban spatial boundaries. Rather, it its survival is based on it being part of a multi-spatial household that benefits from the exchange of goods and money. Without receiving these resources from the rural area, the resilience of the urban households to challenging urban conditions would be severely weakened.

8.4 Demographic Coping as an Urban Survival Strategy

Demographic coping, where households send some of their members to the village as a way of reducing expenses in the city, is another new form of linkage that has emerged between rural and urban areas. While the movement of people between the two is not new, return migrants in the past have tended to be old people retiring to their rural 'homes'. The return migration observed in this study is different. This is because it is undertaken by middle aged people who are in their most productive years, but are unable to find employment or earn sufficient income to support the urban household. The purpose of returning these household members to the village is threefold: first it reduces food expenses by decreasing the number of people to be fed in the urban household, hence increasing food security by raising the per capita food allocation for the remaining household members. Secondly, the household members that are sent to the countryside are able to participate in rural farming and produce food that is sent to the urban household for its sustenance. Thirdly, for the majority of the urban poor who are lodgers, a reduction in the number of urban household members means a decrease in the space required for living and hence a saving in rent. *Tapiwa* and *Violet's* livelihood strategies described in Section 6.4.1 clearly illustrates how urban households send members to the village in order to save on rent. The fact that about 46 percent of the surveyed households had sent some

of their members to live in the village suggests that this has become a viable coping strategy for poor urban households threatened by declining economic conditions in the city.

In addition to sending adult household members to the countryside, the research indicated that distressed urban households are also sending children to relatives in the village. While urban households with strong rural attachments have traditionally visited the countryside with their children during school holidays, these visits are usually temporary in nature, with the young people returning to the city in time for the commencement of the school term. In contemporary Harare, the movement is becoming more permanent, with the children staying in the rural areas with their grandparents or other relatives and going to school there. About 31 percent of the households indicated sending their children to the rural areas in order to save on school fees. As the respondents argued, the cost of education in the city had become unaffordable to most poor urban households not only in terms of tuition, but also in terms of the costs of daily commuting to and from school.

Despite the obvious reduction in the quality of education entailed in transferring children to rural schools, poor urban households regard the compromise as a necessary trade-off as the alternative would be complete withdrawal of the children from schools in the city. In addition to paying no transport costs in the village, huge savings are made as tuition fees in the countryside are comparatively lower. Such savings are then redirected to purchasing food and other important expenses thereby increasing food security for the urban household. Furthermore, the children are well taken care of in the village as food is available. Thus, sending some household members to the village has become a viable coping strategy for poor households faced with difficulties in the city. They are able to minimize food rationing for the remaining members, lessen the need to borrow from other households and avert the need to sell off household assets.

8.5 International Migration and Remittances

In the same way that the urban household depends on resources from the rural area for survival in the city, some urban units are also able to call upon other resources and

remittances from international migrants, who form part of the household's diversification process. *George Mushipe's* intention to send his son across the border to South Africa, as shown in Chapter 1, is illustrative of the increasing importance of this emerging survival strategy for households that traditionally have not been known to have strong linkages with the outside world. For much of the crisis period, migrant households in Harare have benefited from international migrations as resources from outside the country have been used to prop up the urban household's resources.

International migrations have increased the resilience of migrants in three important ways. First, remittances of food shipped from foreign countries have enabled migrant households to have access to adequate stocks during periods of generalized food shortages in the country. Secondly, foreign currency sent to migrant households by international migrants has served to increase the urban unit's access to stable currencies that hedge against the country's hyperinflationary environment in which entire savings can be wiped out within a single day. Thirdly, access to foreign currency has increased accessibility of the urban household to local food products, most of which are now denominated in foreign currency. Thus monetary and food remittances have increasingly become important for migrant households whose food security situation may have been worse without these transfers from international migrants. As the survey results show, a higher proportion of migrant-sending households (37.5%) were food secure in comparison to 5.7 percent for non-migrant household. These results demonstrate the viability of international migration as a coping strategy for urban households facing conditions of economic distress in the city. It is thus no longer possible to view urban food security as a product only of the internal dynamics of the city.

8.6 Multi-Spatial Households: Revisiting the Household Concept

There is no argument that the household is a useful unit for data collection and analysis. Its value lies in the vital role that it plays in enabling the collection and organization of technical and socio-economic information that is necessary for the 'diagnosis, planning and targeting of poverty and other developmental interventions' (Hosegood and Timaeus, 2006:58). However, despite this usefulness, the household has been a difficult concept to

define, particularly in the urban area. In contrast to the fixed, cohesive and monolithic unit envisaged by some earlier writers, the data from Harare convincingly demonstrates that households are shifting and highly fluid organizing entities whose boundaries are not clear-cut in terms of their nature, size, composition and location of their members. The fact that most urban households have some of their members alternating between living in the city and in the village for particular periods of time (e.g. during the rainy season) is indicative of the reality that it is no longer possible, at least in Zimbabwe, to talk of a purely 'urban' or 'rural' household. Rather, it is more plausible to view the household as a multi-spatial entity that is part of the same unit whose survival in the city depends on its ability to alternate members between the two locations. This is particularly true given the evidence that the urban component of the household is increasingly sending some of its members to live in the village as part of its cost-cutting strategy meant to enhance survival and resilience in the city.

In addition, the fact that 'urban' households rely on resources from the rural area as well as from the diaspora indicates that urban survival necessitates the multi-spatial livelihoods that households employ to persevere within the challenging urban environment. However, as Kaang (2004) points out, this reconceptualization does not necessarily mean that the old assumptions about the household were erroneous or limited. Rather it signifies the fact that new patterns of survival and livelihoods have emerged that requires recognition of the household as a multi-spatial, multi-dimensional and multi-local entity whose fluidity enables it to survive challenging times. This multi-spatiality, which has not often been captured in livelihood models, is an integral component of survival in the urban environment.

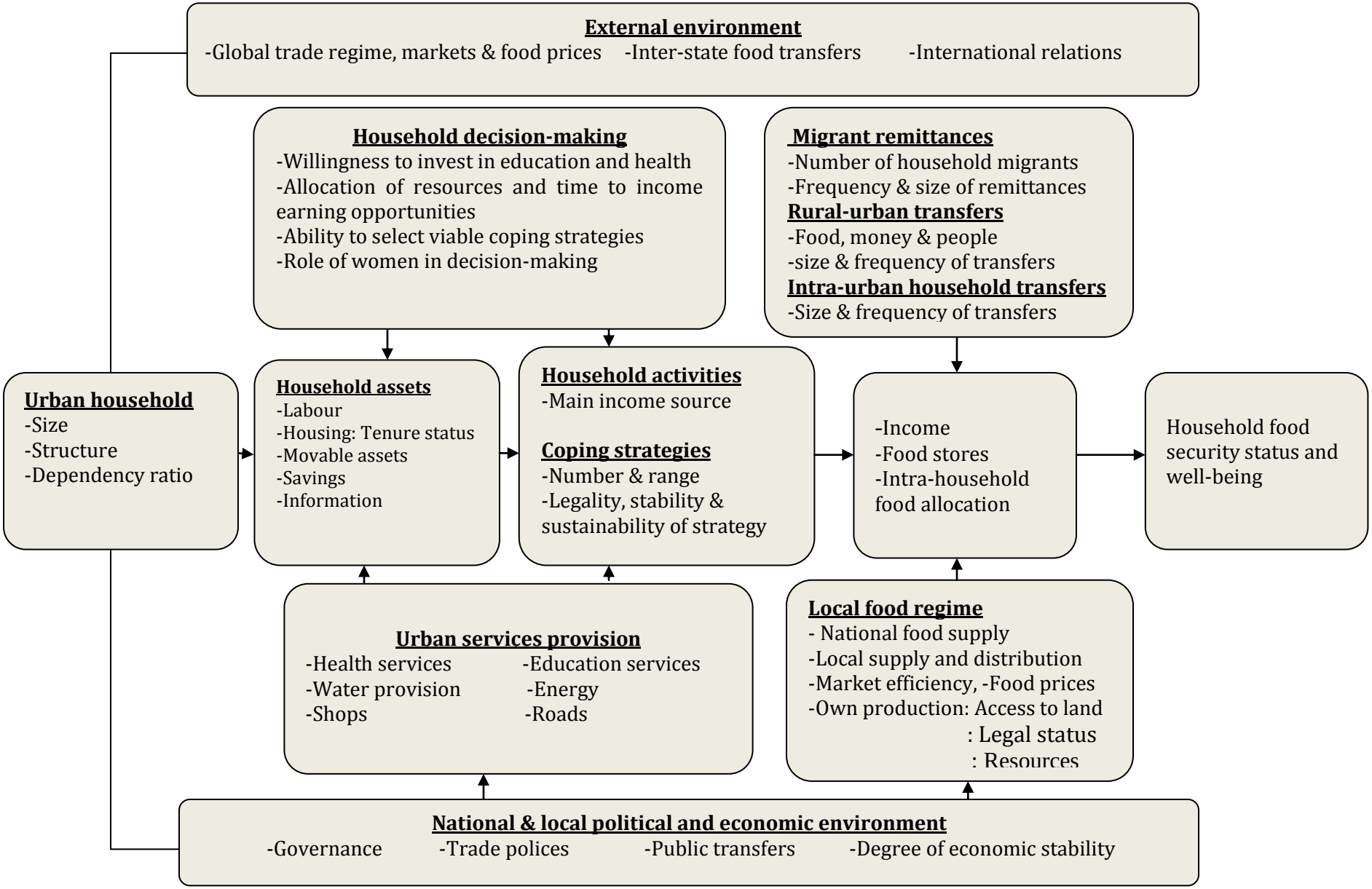
8.7 Conceptualizing Complex Urban Livelihoods

The starting point for this thesis was that urban food security in Southern Africa is a neglected field and, as a result, our understanding of what goes on within the changing urban environment is therefore very limited. The livelihoods approach, which has been used extensively to help in the understanding of rural livelihoods, has been advocated as equally relevant for urban areas (Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002). This study resolved not

to confine the exploration of urban food security to the rigid lens of a pre-existing framework recognizing, as Satterthwaite and Tacoli (2002:61) point out, that such a preoccupation could miss other aspects of urban deprivation that are central to the food security situation of households in urban areas. Through the grounded theory approach, this study thus attempted to gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the actions, processes and relationships that interplay in the urban household food milieu and result in various food security outcomes.

It is evident from the data presented in this thesis that the livelihoods of the urban poor are complex systems of coping that are more evolved than those often portrayed in livelihood frameworks, which largely reflect rural experiences. The synthesis made in the preceding sections establishes various linkages and inter-relationships that are central to household food security in urban areas. These are summarized in Figure 8.1. The study reinforces Chambers and Conway's (1992) argument that a household's ability to survive depends on the assets that it commands. In the urban area, the most important of these assets is labour. It is labour that the majority of the poor urbanites surveyed in this study were relying on to earn an income in the country's burgeoning informal sector. Besides labour, households with access to housing and other movable assets were able to use these assets to generate income which could then be channeled towards food and other urban expenses. Because of deteriorating urban conditions, most households engage in multiple livelihood activities in order to raise enough capital for their survival. The viability of such livelihoods and the degree to which households are able to use these to provision themselves with food and other resources depend not only on the household's access to assets, but also on the ability of that particular household to make viable choices and invest time and resources in pursuit of a favourable food security outcome.

Figure 8.1: Major factors and linkages in household food security in Harare



The study further reveals that urban household food security is not just a local phenomenon. The urban household operates within the national political and economic environment which impacts on it through the implementation of policies that affect economic stability and public transfers. These national influences also impact at the local level by exposing the household to issues of local food supply, distribution and market efficiency.

Beyond these national influences, issues of globalization are central to urban household food security. This is because the state no longer operates in isolation, but is increasingly governed by its participation in global trade- a factor which exposes it to global food price fluctuations. Although most of food price increases responsible for increasing vulnerability of urban households in Harare were a result of internal dynamics, there is no denying the fact that some of the increases were precipitated by increases in global food prices. This was particularly important as Zimbabwe was importing most of its food requirements.

The urban poor are thus not protected from the sometimes economically hostile environment of the global economy, but rather exist side by side with the well off, subjected to the same forces of globalization that operate without the slightest distinction between the haves and the have nots. As Moseley and Gray (2008:3) point out, 'for better or for worse, Africa is connected to the global market-place'. This makes globalization and urban food security inseparable. While most livelihood frameworks, with the exception of Bebbington and Batterbury (2001) and Warren *et al* (2001) have made little attempt to link local livelihoods to the macro-scale of trade regimes, the Harare cases shows that the urban poor are vulnerable to the ravages of global price increases as they have an immediate impact because of their purchasing environment. Hence, urban livelihoods are complex systems of coping which entail households grappling with a multiplicity of local, national and international challenges in a bid to ensure food security.

8.8 Policy and Programming Implications

The study on vulnerability and resilience of poor urban households to food insecurity in Harare has highlighted several important findings that have policy and programming

implications in Zimbabwe. Firstly, the study has shown that a significant proportion of households in Harare are living in conditions of extreme poverty where they are unable to meet their basic food requirements and other essential needs. While the situation has been exacerbated by the prevailing economic crisis conditions in the country, the findings nevertheless help to bring home the point that a greater segment of the urban population is just equally, if not more vulnerable to poverty and the resulting food insecurity, as their rural counterparts. The first step in resolving the urban food security crisis is therefore for the government to accept this fundamental fact and allocate equally more time, effort and resources in addressing the food needs of the urban poor.

Secondly, the study has given some insights into factors that increase the vulnerability of the urban poor to food insecurity. These revolve mainly around issues of income and unemployment as well as the lack of housing which depletes significant household resources that could be used to secure food. It is therefore imperative that in trying to resolve the urban food security crisis, attention should be focused not only on creating more urban employment opportunities, but also in making sure that such employment is sufficiently remunerated to enable workers to sustain their household food needs as well as other urban household expenses. With regards to housing, both the national government and city authorities should work together to increase the poor's access to urban housing as ownership of housing will free enormous resources that the poor are currently channeling towards accommodation.

Thirdly, it has been shown in the study that in the absence of viable formal employment opportunities, the informal has become the backbone of survival of a greater segment of the urban poor. The days of a dualistic situation of a stronger and organized formal sector on one hand and a poor, disorganized and unprofitable informal sector on the other are over. The informal sector is here to stay and is now part of the mainstream urban economy. But the policy and regulatory environment in which these poor urbanites are operating is not tolerant to their efforts and innovativeness. More often, regulatory frameworks in place have been inhibitive and the poor have found themselves engaged in running battles with the municipal police as they try to earn a living in this hostile economic environment. There is therefore need for the government and municipal authorities to accept that this sector is here to stay; that the city stands to

benefit if the efforts of the poor are supported and complimented with an enabling policy and regulatory environment rather than being repressed. One of the few ways in which this can be done is to create more vending sites where traders can pay to come and trade their wares as the current sites are simply not enough. The location of these sites needs to be strategic for business purposes (e.g. close to bus-termini, business centres, schools, e.t.c) and this has to be done in consultation with traders. Any locations that are arbitrarily allocated by the city without traders' input risk being ignored as vendors pursue their trade in profitable, even if illegal, sites. In addition, there is need to remove the bureaucratic impediments surrounding the issuance of vending licenses so that as many traders as possible can be licensed. Without such reforms, both the city and the traders will continue to loose: the city as vendors continue to trade unlicensed, and the traders as they waste valuable time engaged in running battles with the municipal police.

Fourthly, a significant number of households in the survey were engaged in urban agriculture, producing vegetables and cereals for their household consumption as well as for sale. While city authorities recognize the valuable role that urban agriculture plays in security household food security for poor urban households, the policy framework for such activities has not been changed to reflect that recognition. Paying a blind eye to farming activities within city boundaries is simply not enough. What is needed is a policy and regulatory framework that lays down the criteria and parameters within which such an activity can be carried out so that urban farmers do not play hide and seek with city authorities. Just like rural farmers, urban farmers also need access to agricultural extension services as well as credit facilities to enable them to farm more productively. By engaging urban farmers, the city also stands to benefit by influencing the protection of the environment through good farming practices.

Fifthly, the study has also brought to the fore the facts that in times of crisis, most poor urban households straddle the rural – urban divide in order to ensure their survival. It is imperative therefore that the government removes regulatory instruments that impede the smooth movement of food produced in the rural areas to the city. The current scenario in which government periodically tries to control the movement of

food from the rural areas to the city is detrimental to the welfare of the urban poor and should therefore be abandoned.

Sixthly, the absence of formal safety nets for the urban poor is worrying as it is indicative of the inadequate attention that both the government and city authorities pay to issues of poverty and food insecurity in the urban areas of the country. The way forward should therefore be a deliberate effort that tries to understand the needs of the urban poor, and the creation of formal safety nets that target vulnerable households in various geographic areas within the city. While household targeting is likely to reach deriving people, geographic targeting may also be useful in pinpointing low income areas with a high concentration of vulnerable households. In this regard, government, international development agencies as well as Non-Governmental Organizations need to recognize the vulnerability of the urban poor to food insecurity and thus direct some of their food aid operations to vulnerable urban communities.

Lastly, the issue of urban food security is scarcely understood, even at international level. It is therefore crucial that any intervention strategies on food security in urban Zimbabwe should be preceded by thorough research that precedes any policy and programming work in the country. As the economic crisis in the country continues and more urbanites find themselves in difficult economic circumstances, the situation compels the government, local authorities, civic society, international development organizations and donor agencies to act now not only to deal with problems of urban livelihoods in general, but with issues of urban poverty and food insecurity in particular.

8.9 Areas for Further Research

This research raises a number of issues concerning the survival of the urban poor in crisis situations that need further attention and analysis. Firstly, an in-depth analysis is still needed in other towns and cities of Zimbabwe in order to find out whether the trends and practices observed in Harare are common to other urban centres, as well as the extent to which they can be generalized to the rest of Southern Africa. Secondly, a more detailed account is required of the depth of the urban poor's commitment to the practice of urban agriculture and whether this is just a transient activity that is easily abandoned as soon as the economic crisis has abated. This is especially important as policy shifts by city authorities in connection with urban agriculture are unlikely to have

long lasting impacts if the practice is seen only as a coping strategy rather than a more permanent livelihood activity. Thirdly, although the dominance of resource flows from the village to the city has been established in this study, a more detailed economic study still needs to be done to establish the extent of these flows not only from the urban perspective, but also from the rural perspective. Finally, while the role of women in the survival of urban households has been highlighted, a more comprehensive study which fully addresses issues of gender in urban food security still needs to be undertaken. The focus of such research should address the level and content of women's involvement in the broader urban food security system and the implication of gender inequalities.

This thesis has focused on survival and food security in an unprecedented crisis situation. The results may not be immediately generalizable to other African countries, but the poorest households in cities throughout Africa face many of the same challenges as those in Harare. As a result, the thesis serves to highlight the important strategies that such households might be expected to adopt. To that extent, the thesis will hopefully also be a modest contribution to the new discourse on *urban food security* in Africa.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Urban Household In-depth Case Study Interview Schedule

My name is Godfrey Tawodzera. I am a PhD student in the Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. I am carrying out an academic research on vulnerability and resilience of urban households to food insecurity in Harare, Zimbabwe. My intention is to use this information for my doctoral thesis. I also intend to publish all or part of my findings from this study, which may include information that you would have kindly provided. The information will also be made available to organizations that are involved in, or have interest in urban food security work.

Your household has been randomly selected to participate in this survey. The general purpose of this interview is to collect information on urban household food security, particularly on issues surrounding how you acquire your food, where and how you acquire it, its adequacy, the problems you face in accessing it, and how you deal with food shortages. There are no right or wrong answers. Your opinions and experiences-whatever they are- are important in helping me to understand how people in Harare cope with a variety of household food security issues. I will not record your name and street address or show your information to other people so the answers that you will provide are confidential and will be mixed with those from other households taking part in this same survey. I hope that you will participate in this survey as your views are important to my research. The interview will take 40-60minutes.

Are you willing to participate?

Yes	1
No	2

If No, Thank you for your time. Goodbye.
If yes; Do you want me to tape record the interview or write notes as we progress?

Use Tape Recorder	1
Write Notes	2

Do you understand that you have the right to stop this interview any time you want and you can choose not to answer any or all the questions or particular issues that you may not wish to discuss?

Yes	1
No	2

At this time, do you wish to ask me anything or are there issues that you need to be clarified about the survey before we proceed?

Yes	1
No	2

If yes; Question/clarification.....
May I begin the interview now?

Yes	1
No	2

Participant Declaration

1. I fully understand the purpose of the research.
2. I am participating in this research on my own free volition without force or coercion.
3. I am aware that I have the right to terminate this interview whenever I may feel so without any prejudice on my part.

Participant signature.....Date.....

Name of Interviewer	
Signature	
Date of Interview	

Section A: Socio-demographic data

- How are you related to the head of the household?
- What is your age (Age as of last birthday)? What is your level of education?
- What is your marital status?
- How many people are in this household? What are their ages?
- Where were you born? When did you come to live here if you were not born here?
- Why did you come to live here if you were not born here?

Section B: Economic data

- How do you earn a living? (Please explain in detail)
- What is the household's monthly income? What are the sources of this income?
- How many household members contribute towards this income? Who contributes the most income?
- Do you pool your resources as a household? Who decides how much to contribute?
- Is the household income stable or it varies over the year? If it varies, which months have more income and which months have less? Why is this so?
- How is this income used (e.g. Rent, food)? How much goes towards each of these expenditures?
- Which of these expenditures get preferential treatment? Why is this so?
- Who in this household decides how this income is used? Why is this the case?

Section C: Household assets

- Do you own a house in Harare or any other town? Please give details.
- If you do not own this house, do you rent? How much do you pay per month? Is this rent affordable?
- What other assets do you own? (List all). Where are these assets?
- Do these assets help you in securing food for the household? How? Please explain.
- Have you ever sold household assets to raise money for food? If yes, what assets and under what circumstances?

Section D: Food security

- Is there a food problem in this household? Tell me about your household food situation.
- What are the most important foods for this household? Why?
- How many meals do you normally eat per day? When are these meals taken? Why at those times?
- Where are these meals normally eaten? What do the main meals normally consist of? (List all foods).
- Who decides what food to buy or prepare in this household? Why?
- Is the food normally enough for everybody?
- Have you or any member of the household ever gone without food because of shortages? How often do you or anyone in this household go hungry?
- Are men, women and children affected the same way or differently by food shortages? Please explain.
- Is food quality a concern to this household? Please explain.

- Without the constraints of resources to acquire food, what foods would you prefer to have? Why these foods?
- Tell me how you feel about not being able to get enough food for the household.
- Have you ever eaten foods that you would normally not eat in this household? What foods? Why did you have to eat them?
- How do you feel about eating those foods?
- Can you tell me the major obstacles that you face in obtaining food for this household?
- What do you do when there is not enough food in the household? (Please explain in detail).

Section E: Sources of food

- Where does this household normally obtain its food? (List all sources).
- Which are the major sources? Why do you prefer these sources?
- Have you ever failed to access food from these sources when you have money? Please explain the circumstances?
- What other obstacles do you face in accessing food from these sources?
- Does the household ever grow its own food? If it does, where, when and how much?
- How much does this food contribute towards your household requirements?
- Are there any obstacles that prevent the household from growing its own food? If yes, what are these?
- Are there any changes in the availability of food in a normal year?
- In which months is the food adequate or inadequate? Please explain these trends.

Section F: Urban Food Transfers

- Does this household ever get food from other households in the city?
- Is this food from friends, relatives or neighbours? Please explain.
- How much food do you receive? How frequently?
- Do you ever borrow food from other households? From whom? What kind of food? Who in the household makes the decision to borrow?
- Are you expected to pay this food back? Do you manage to pay back?
- Besides food, what other help do you receive from other urban households?
- Have you ever helped other households by lending them money or food?
- Who makes the decision to lend? What food do you lend? How much? Do you expect it back? In what form? Do they ever pay back?
- Do you ever beg for food? From whom? Tell me how you feel about begging.

Section G: Rural-Urban Transfers

- Does this household ever receive food from the rural area?
- What kind of food do you receive? How frequently?
- What kind of food do you receive? Why that kind of food?
- Who sends this food? Why do they send it?
- During which time of the year does this household receive more food? Why during that time?
- Who grows the food that this household receives from the rural area?
- What do you do with the food that you receive from the rural area?

- How important is this food for the food security of this household? Please explain.
- Do you ever receive money from the rural areas? How much and how often?
- What is the source of this money?

Section H: International Transfers

- Do you have members of this household who are living in other countries?
- How many and where are they?
- Do these members send money, food or other goods to this household?
- What kind of food do they send? How frequently?
- How much money do they send? How frequently?
- How important are these remittances to the survival of this household? Please explain.
-

Section I: Aid

- Does your household ever receive any aid?
- What kind of aid do you receive?
- From whom do you receive this aid?
- How frequently do you receive this aid?
- How important is this aid to household?

Thank you for your participation. Do you have anything that you may wish to ask, add, retract or explain?

Appendix B: Standardized Urban Household Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER

URBAN FOOD SECURITY HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

IDENTIFICATION OF HOUSEHOLD

COUNTRY Zimbabwe

NAME CITY Harare

INTERVIEW LOCATION Epworth

WARD .....

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER ……..

INTERVIEW STATUS [1 = Completed; 2 = Refused; 3 = Not at home; 4 = Premises empty]

NUMBER OF CALLS [to household where interview actually took place]

TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERVIEWER

TIME INTERVIEW: STARTED _____ COMPLETED _____

NAME OF INTERVIEWER _____

SIGNATURE _____

COMMENTS:

DATE OF INTERVIEW

DAY

MONTH

YEAR

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISOR

NAME OF SUPERVISOR _____

SIGNATURE _____

COMMENTS:

HOUSEHOLD BACK-CHECKED? [Yes=1; No=2]

QUESTIONNAIRE CHECKED? [Yes=1; No=2]

For office use only

SUPERVISOR	INTERVIEWER	FIELD EDITOR	OFFICE EDITOR	CODED BY	KEYED BY

STANDARDIZED URBAN HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction and consent

READ OUT ALOUD

My name is (INSERT NAME). I am a Researcher from the University of Zimbabwe. We are conducting an academic research on urban food security and are therefore talking to people in Harare about how they get food, where they get it, its adequacy, the problems they face in accessing it, and how they deal with food shortages as well as other related important social and economic issues. Your household has been randomly selected and we would like to discuss these issues with yourself, or an adult member of your household.

[APPLY RANDOM CARD SELECTION PROCEDURE AND THEN RE-READ INTRODUCTION TO THE PERSON SELECTED]
Your opinions will help us to get a better idea about how people in Harare feel about these issues. There are no right or wrong answers. The interview will take about 45 minutes. Your answers will be confidential. They will be put together with those of over 200 other people we are talking to here in Harare to get an overall picture. We will not be recording your name or your address and it will be impossible to pick you out from what you say, so please feel free to tell us what you think.

Are you willing to participate? (CIRCLE THE ANSWER GIVEN)

Yes…1 No…2

IF NO: READ OUT: Thank you for your time. Goodbye.

IF YES: IF WILLING TO PARTICIPATE, READ OUT THE FOLLOWING:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Just to emphasize, any answers you provide will be kept absolutely confidential, and there is no way anyone will be able to identify you by what you have said in this interview. We are not recording either your address or your name, so you will remain anonymous. The data we collect from these interviews will always be kept in a secure location. You have the right to terminate this interview at any time, and you have the right to refuse to answer any questions you might not want to respond to.

Are there any questions you wish to ask before we begin?

Specify:
…….....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

SECTION A: HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

List on the grid below the details for **all people** living in the household including people who are usual members of the household who are away working (migrants) or for other reasons. See page 4 for codes to be entered.

PNO	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1a Relation to HHD head										
1b Sex										
1c Age										
1d Marital status										
1e Highest level of education										
1f Occupation (most important first accept up to two)										
1g Income last month for main occupation										
1h Lives away from this household?										
1i Work status										
1j Current country of work										
1k Where born?										
1l Where living now?										
1m Why moved to present location? (Enter up to three reasons for moving)										
1n Health Status (Enter up to three health issues)										
1o Where was main meal eaten yesterday?										
1p Who in the household normally does any of the following: (See code list on page 5 for activities. Enter up to four activities)										

Codes for Q1 (One code for each)

1a Relation to head
1 Head
2 Spouse/partner
3 Son/ daughter
4 Adopted/ foster child/ orphan
5 Father/ mother
6 Brother/sister
7 Grandchild
8 Grandparent
9 Son/ daughter-in-law
10 Other relative
11 Non-relative
97 Refused
98 Don't know
99 Missing

1b Sex
1 Male
2 Female
9 Missing

1c Age at last birthday
0 under 1 year
Whole numbers only
97 Refused
98 Don't know
99 Missing
(If respondent is older than 96, record 96)

1d Marital status
1 Unmarried
2 Married
3 Living together/ cohabiting
4 Divorced
5 Separated
6 Abandoned
7 Widowed
97 Refused
98 Don't know
99 Missing

1e Highest education
1 No formal schooling
2 Some Primary Education
3. Some Secondary Education (Junior or Senior)
4 Secondary Education Completed
5 Post secondary qualifications not university
6 Some university
7 University completed
8 Post-graduate
97 Refused
98 Don't know
99 Missing

1f Occupation
01 Farmer
02 Agricultural worker (paid)
03 Agricultural worker (unpaid)
04 Service worker
05 Domestic worker
06 Managerial office worker
07 Office worker
08 Foreman
09 Mine worker
10 Skilled manual worker
11 Unskilled manual worker
12 Informal sector producer
13 Trader/ hawker/ vendor
14 Security personnel
15 Police/ Military
16 Businessman/ woman (self-employed)
17 Employer/ Manager
18 Professional worker
19 Teacher
20 Health worker
21 Civil servant
22 Fisherman
23 Truck driver
24 Pensioner
25 Scholar/ Student
26 House work (unpaid)
27 Unemployed/ Job seeker
28 Other (specify)
97 Refused
98 Don't know
99 Missing

1h Lives/works away from this household but still a member of the household
1 No
2 Yes, migrant-working
3 Yes, migrant-looking for work
4 Yes, attending school
5 Other (specify)
9 Missing

1i Work status (wage employment)
1 Working full-time
2 Working part-time/ casual
3 Not working – looking
4 Not working – not looking
7 Refused
8 Don't know
9 Missing

1j Current country of (work
1 Works in home country
2 Mozambique
3 Namibia
4 Angola
5 Zimbabwe
6 Lesotho
7 Botswana
8 Malawi
9 Zambia
10 Swaziland
11 Tanzania
12 South Africa
13 Rest of Africa
14 Europe/UK
15 North America
16 Australia/NZ
17 Asia/China
18 Other
19 Not applicable (students, pensioners, etc)
97 Refused
98 Don't know
99 Missing

1k Where born
1 Rural area
2 Urban area
3 Foreign country rural area
4 Foreign country urban area
7 Refused
8 Don't know
9 Missing

1l Where living now?
1 Same rural area
2 Different rural area
3 Same urban area
4 Different urban area
5 Foreign country rural area
6 Foreign country urban area
7 Urban area
8 Rural area
97 Refused
98 Don't know
99 Missing

1m Why to present location
1 Housing
2 Land for livestock/grazing
3 Land for crop production
4 Formal sector job
5 Informal sector job
6 Food/hunger
7 Military Service
8 Drought
9 Overall living conditions
10 Safety of myself/family
11 Availability of water
12 Political exile
13 Asylum
14 Education/schools
15 Crime
16 Attractions of the city: urban life/modern life
17 Illness related (HIV/AIDS)
18 Illness related (not HIV/AIDS)
19 Moved with family
20 Sent to live with family
21 Marriage
22 Divorce
23 Abandoned
24 Widowed
25 Freedom/democracy/peace
26 Retirement
27 Retrenchment
28 Eviction
29 Deaths
30 Floods
31 Religious reasons
32 Returned to former home
33 Other (specify)
96 Not moved
97 Refused
98 Don't know
99 Missing

1n Health Status
1 Accident
2 Diabetes
3 Asthma
4 Hypertension and stroke
5 Heart problems
6 Arthritis
7 Physical disability
8 HIV/ AIDS
9 Tuberculosis (TB)
10 Malaria
11 Chronic diarrhoea
12 Weight loss (severe)
13 Pneumonia
14 Cancer
15 Mental illness
16 Other (specify)
17 None of the above (good health)
99 Missing

1o Where was main meal eaten yesterday?
1 Home (this household)
2 Small shop/restaurant/take out
3 Informal market/street food
4 Shared meal with neighbours/or other households
5 Work place
6 School
7 Community food kitchen
8 Food provided by neighbours/ or other households
9 Did not eat a meal
10 Other (specify)
99 Missing

1p Who in the household normally:
1 Buys food
2 Prepares food
3 Decides who will get food (allocates)
4 Grows food (produces)
5 Does none of the above

SECTION B: HOUSEHOLD DATA

2a	**Which one of the following housing types best describes the type of dwelling this household occupies?** (*DO NOT read aloud - circle only ONE answer for the column labeled 'Code'*)	Housing Type		Code
		a. House		1
		b. Flat		2
		c. Traditional dwelling/ homestead		3
		d. Hostel/ Compound		4
		e. Hotel/ Boarding house		5
		f. Room in backyard		6
		g. Room in house		7
		h. Room in flat		8
		i. Squatter hut/ shack		9
		j. Other (specify):		10
2b.	**What is the tenure status of your household?**	a. Owner/Purchaser/Family Accommodation		1
		b.Tenant/Lodger		2
		c.Tied Accomodation		3
3a	**Which of the following best describes the household structure?** (*DO NOT read aloud - ask about household type and circle only ONE answer*)	Household Structure		Code
		a. Female Centered (No husband/ male partner in household, may include relatives, children, friends)		1
		b. Male Centered (No wife/ female partner in household, may include relatives, children, friends)		2
		c. Nuclear (Husband/ male partner and wife/ female partner with or without children)		3
		d. Extended (Husband/ male partner and wife/ female partner and children and relatives)		4
		e. Under 18-headed households female centered (head is 17 years old or less)		5
		f. Under 18-headed households male centered (head is 17 years old or less)		6
		g. Other (specify):		7
3b	**Does your household have access to, or is connected to;**		Yes	No
		Piped Water	1	2
		Electricity	1	2
		Flush Toilet	1	2
		Pit latrine toilet	1	2

4 **Household income from all sources (in the last one (1) month):**

(a) & (b) Read list aloud, circle the code that applies (column (b)) and complete the information for that row; leave rows blank for categories that do not apply.
(c) Enter amount over the past one (1) month to nearest currency unit in column (c).For income in kind i.e. 'Remittances – goods/ food', 'Income from farm products' and in some cases perhaps also 'Gifts', estimate the monetary value over the past month and record this figure in (c).

(a) Income categories	(b) Code	(c) Amount (to nearest currency unit)
a. Wage work	1	
b. Casual work	2	
c. Remittances – Money	3	
d. Remittances - Goods	4	
e. Remittances - Food	5	
f. Income from rural farm products	6	
g. Income from urban farm products	7	
h. Income from formal business	8	
i. Income from informal business	9	
j. Income from renting dwelling	10	
k. Income from Aid 1) food	11	
2) cash	12	
3) vouchers	13	
l. Pension/disability/other social grants	14	
m. Gifts	15	
n. Other (specify)	16	
o. Refused to answer	17	
p. Don't know	18	

5 **Household monthly expenses for the last month for items (a) through (f) & year for items (g) through (o).**
(*Read list aloud, circle the code that applies and complete the information for that row; leave rows blank for categories that do not apply; if an annual expense give a monthly estimate.*
If the household has no expenses, circle ONLY code = '17' for 'NONE'.
If respondent refuses to answer, circle ONLY code = '18' for 'Refused to answer'.)

(a) Expense categories	(b) Code	(c) Amount (Rand) (to nearest currency unit)	
a. Food and Groceries	1		Last month
b. Housing (rent, mortgage)	2		Last month
c. Utilities (write total for all: water, sewer, electricity, telephone, etc)	3		Last month
d. Transportation	4		Last month
e. Savings	5		Last month
f. Fuel (firewood, paraffin, gas, candles, etc)	6		Last month
g. Medical (medical aid, medical costs)	7		Last year
h. Education (school fees, books, uniforms)	8		Last year
j. Insurance (life, burial, etc.)	10		Last year
k. Funeral costs	11		Last year

	l. Home-based care	12		Last year
	m. Remittances	13		Last year
	n. Debt service/repayment	14		Last year
	o. Goods purchased to sell	15		Last year
	p. Other (specify type of expenditure & time)	16		
	q. None	17		
	r. Refused to answer	18		

6	**To what extent do people in your household use strategies other than jobs (regular formal employment) to make a living?** Use the code list below to record the extent to which people in the household use other strategies: 1 = Not at all 2 = Slightly 3 = Partly dependent 4 = Totally dependent *Record the appropriate code in the last column.*	Way to make a living	Code
		a. Field crops	
		b. Garden crops	
		c. Tree crops	
		d. Livestock	
		e. Marketing	
		f. Crafts	
		g. Begging	
		h. Gifts	
		i. Casual labour	
		j. Rent out space to lodgers	
		k. Formal credit	
		l. Informal credit	
		m. Self employed at home	
		n. Other (specify)	

7	**How would you say the economic conditions of your household are today compared to your household a year ago?** (*Circle one answer only*)	Economic conditions	Code
		Much worse	1
		Worse	2
		The same	3
		Better	4
		Much better	5

Living Poverty Index (LPI)

8 Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or your family (household) gone without?

	Conditions	**Never**	**Just once or twice**	**Several times**	**Many times**	**Always**	**Don't know**
	a. Enough food to eat						
	b. Enough clean water						
	c. Medicine or medical treatment						
	d. electricity in your home						
	e. enough fuel to cook your food						
	f. a cash income						

SECTION C: CONTRIBUTION OF TRANSFERS TO SURVIVAL/ LIVELIHOODS

IF THIS HOUSEHOLD HAS A MEMBER LIVING AND WORKING ELSEWHERE - A MIGRANT WORKER - (SEE QUESTION 1H - M), PROCEED TO SECTION C BELOW.

IF NOT, SKIP SECTION C AND PROCEED TO SECTION D

9	**Do you think that this household has been affected positively or negatively by having a person(s) living and working elsewhere?** *(Probe for strength of opinion; circle only ONE answer)*	Affect on household	Code
		Very positive	1
		Positive	2
		Neither positive nor negative	3
		Negative	4
		Very negative	5
		Don't know (do not read)	6
10	**How important are remittances (cash, food and goods) for the survival of this household?** *(Probe for strength of opinion; circle only ONE answer)*	Importance of remittances	Code
		Very important	1
		Important	2
		Neutral	3
		Not important	4
		Not important at all	5
		Don't know	6
11	**What are these remittances used for?**	Food	Code
		School Fees	1
		Investment/Goods for resale	2
		House construction	3
		Rents and rates	4
		Consumer goods	
		Medical expenses	
		Savings	
11b	**If other members of this household were to migrate to another location to work, do you think this household would be:** *(Probe for strength of opinion; circle only ONE answer)*	Condition of household	Code
		Better off	1
		About the same	2
		Worse off	3
		Don't know	4

SECTION D: FOOD INSECURITY

12 **HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY ACCESS SCALE (HFIAS)**
(READ the list and categories and circle only ONE answer for each question)

Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) <u>for last four weeks</u>	No (Answer to question is 'No')	Rarely (once or twice)	Sometimes (3 to 10 times)	Often (more than 10 times)
a. In the past four weeks, did you worry that your household would not have enough food?	1	2	3	4
b. In the past four weeks were you or any household member not able to eat the kinds of foods you preferred because of a lack of resources?	1	2	3	4
c. In the past four weeks did you or any household member have to eat a limited variety of foods due to a lack of resources?	1	2	3	4
d. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat some foods that you really did not want to eat because of a lack of resources to obtain other types of food?	1	2	3	4
e. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat a smaller meal than you felt you needed because there was not enough food?	1	2	3	4
f. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat fewer meals in a day because there was not enough food?	1	2	3	4
g. In the past four weeks, was there ever no food to eat of any kind in your household because of lack of resources to get food?	1	2	3	4
h. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member go to sleep at night hungry because there was not enough food?	1	2	3	4
i. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member go a whole day and night without eating anything because there was not enough food?	1	2	3	4
j. In the past week, did you or any household member eat a cooked meal less than once a day?	1	2	3	4

13	**HOUSEHOLD DIETARY DIVERSITY SCORE (HDDS)** **Now I would like to ask you about the types of foods that you or anyone else in your household ate yesterday during the day and at night**.(*Read the list of foods. Circle yes in the box if anyone in the household ate the food in question, circle no if no one in the household ate the food*)		
	Types of food	**Yes**	**No**
	a. Any [INSERT ANY LOCAL FOODS], bread, rice noodles, biscuits or any other foods made from millet, sorghum, maize, rice, wheat, or [INSERT ANY OTHER LOCALLY AVAILABLE GRAIN]?	1	2
	b. Any potatoes, yams, manioc, cassava or any other foods made from roots or tubers?	1	2
	c. Any vegetables?	1	2
	d. Any fruits?	1	2
	e. Any beef, pork, lamb, goat, rabbit, wild game, chicken, duck, other birds, liver, kidney, heart, or other organ meats?	1	2
	f. Any eggs?	1	2
	g. Any fresh or dried fish or shellfish?	1	2
	h. Any foods made from beans, peas, lentils, or nuts?	1	2
	i. Any cheese, yoghurt, milk or other milk products?	1	2
	j. Any foods made with oil, fat, or butter?	1	2
	k. Any sugar or honey?	1	2
	l. Any other foods, such as condiments, coffee, tea?	1	2
14	**MONTHS OF ADEQUATE HOUSEHOLD PROVISIONING (MAHP)** **Now I would like to ask you about your household's food supply during different months of the year. When responding to these questions please think back over the last 12 months.**		
	(a) **In the past 12 months, were there months in which you did not have enough food to meet your family's needs?** (*READ the question and circle the appropriate answer*)	Yes	1
		No	2
		(If NO, skip to Question 15 If YES, continue with Q 14b)	
	(b) **If yes, which were the months (in the past 12 months) in which you did not have enough food to meet your family's needs?** (*Do not read the list of months. Working backward from the current month:* *Circle the one ('Yes' column) if the respondent identifies that month as one in which the household did not have enough food to meet their needs.* *Circle the two ('No' column) if the respondent identifies that month as one in which the household did have enough food to meet their needs)*	**Months in which household did not have enough food to meet needs**	**Yes**	**No**
		a. January	1	2
		b. February	1	2
		c. March	1	2
		d. April	1	2
		e. May	1	2
		f. June	1	2
		g. July	1	2
		h. August	1	2
		i. September	1	2
		j. October	1	2
		k. November	1	2
		l. December	1	2

15	**EXPERIENCE OF FOOD PRICE CHANGES** **Now I would like to ask you about your household's experience of food prices over the past six months.** **Over the past six months, have you or your household gone without certain types of food because of the price of food (it is unaffordable)?** (*Circle the appropriate answer*) (If NEVER OR DON'T KNOW, skip to Q18 OTHERWISE, continue with Q16)	**Frequency of going without food**	**Code**
		Never	1
		About once a month	2
		About once a week	3
		More than once a week but less than everyday of the week	4
		Every day	5
		Don't know	9

16 **You have said that over the past six months, you or your household have gone without food because of the increase in the price of food items. Which types of foods have you or your household gone without?**
(*Read the list of foods. Circle 'Yes' in the box if anyone in the household has gone without this food and 'NO' if they have had this food*)

Types of food	Yes	No
a. Any [INSERT ANY LOCAL FOODS], bread, rice noodles, biscuits or any other foods made from millet, sorghum, maize, rice, wheat, or [INSERT ANY OTHER LOCALLY AVAILABLE GRAIN]?	1	2
b. Any potatoes, yams, manioc, cassava or any other foods made from roots or tubers?	1	2
c. Any vegetables?	1	2
d. Any fruits?	1	2
e. Any beef, pork, lamb, goat, rabbit, wild game, chicken, duck, other birds, liver, kidney, heart, or other organ meats?	1	2
f. Any eggs?	1	2
g. Any fresh or dried fish or shellfish?	1	2
h. Any foods made from beans, peas, lentils, or nuts?	1	2
i. Any cheese, yoghurt, milk or other milk products?	1	2
j. Any foods made with oil, fat, or butter?	1	2
k. Any sugar or honey?	1	2
l. Any other foods, such as condiments, coffee, tea?	1	2

17	**Besides the increase in food price, what other problems (by order of importance) prevented you in the past six months from having enough food to meet your family's needs?** (*Do not read options, write number in front of the identified cause by order of importance (1=highest).* *Probe: Did you experience any other problem?*)	**Problem**	**Rank**
		a. Insecurity/violence	
		b. Death of a working household member	
		c. Death of the head of the household	
		d. Death of other household member	
		e. Serious illness of household member	
		f. Accident of household member	
		g. Loss/ reduced employment for a household member	
		h. Reduced income of a household member	
		i. Relocation of the family	
		j. Reduced or cut-off of remittances from relatives	
		k. Taking in orphans of deceased parent(s)	
		l. Health risks/ epidemics (e.g. cholera)	
		m. Floods, fire and/or other environmental hazards	
		n. Increased cost of water	
		o. End of a social grant	
		p. End of food aid	
		q. Theft	
		r. Political problems/issues	
		s. Other (please specify)	
		t. None	
		u. Don't know	99

18 **a) Where does this household normally obtain its food?**
(*Read the list of food sources. Circle 'Food Code' in the box if anyone in the household answers yes to the food source on the list.*)
b) **How often does the household normally obtain its food from these sources?**
(*Probe for frequency that food is obtained from the source as given by respondent (a - k) and circle the appropriate number on the scale*)

Source of food	(a) Food Code	(b) Frequency Food Obtained from this Source					
		At least five days a week	At least once a week	At least once a month	At least once in six months	Less than once a year	Never
a. Supermarket	1	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Small shop / restaurant/take away	2	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. Informal market / street food	3	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. Grow it	4	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Food aid	5	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Remittances (food)	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Shared meal with neighbours and/or other households	7	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. Food provided by neighbours and/or other households	8	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. Community food kitchen	9	1	2	3	4	5	6
j. Borrow food from others	10	1	2	3	4	5	6
k. Other (specify):	11	1	2	3	4	5	6
l. Don't know	99						

19 **In the last week, where did members of this household obtain their food?**
(*Read the list of food sources. Circle 'Yes' in the box if anyone in the household answers yes to the food source on the list.*)
(*Circle 'No' if no one in the household obtains food from the source being read out on the list.*)

Source of food	**Yes**	**No**
a. Supermarket	1	2
b. Small shop / restaurant / take away	1	2
c. Informal market / street food	1	2
d. Grow it	1	2
e. Food aid	1	2
f. Remittances (food)	1	2
g. Shared meal with neighbours and/or other households	1	2
h. Food provided by neighbours and/or other households	1	2
i. Community food kitchen	1	2
j. Borrow food from others	1	2
k. Other (specify):	1	2
l. Don't know	9	9

SECTION E: RURAL – URBAN LINKS AND FOOD TRANSFERS

20 **Do you have a home in the rural areas?**

Yes	No	Don't know
1	2	9

21 **Are there members of this household who were normally resident in the city, but are now living in the rural areas?**

Yes	No	Don't know
1	2	9

22 **What are the reasons for these household members going to live in the rural areas?**
(*Accept multiple responses*)

Reason	Code
To save on food	1
For children to be cared for by grandparents	2
To save on rent	3
To save on school fees	4
For member to look after the rural home	5

23 **Do members of this household normally visit the rural areas?**

(*If no-one visits the rural areas, skip question 24*)

Yes	No	Don't know
1	2	9

24 **How frequently do these household members visit the rural areas?**

Frequency of visits	Code
Every week	1
Every month	2
Every six months	3
Every year	4
Never	5
Other	9

25 **For what reason(s) do these household members visit the rural areas?**

(A*ccept multiple responses: do not read answers*)

To get food and/or money	1
To send money and/or food	2
To see relatives/friends	3
To send children to school	4
For social events (e.g. marriage, funerals e.t.c	5
Farming and other economic purposes	6
Other (please specify)	9

26	**Does this household normally receive money from the rural areas?**	Yes	No	Don't know
		1	2	9

27	**How important do you feel the money is to this household which is received from the rural areas?**		
		Not important at all	1
		Important	2
		Very important	3
		Critical to our survival	4
		Don't know	5

28 Does this household normally receive food from relatives /friends in the rural areas and or other urban areas?

	Location	Relationship	Yes	No	Don't know
	Rural areas	Relative	1	2	9
		Friends	1	2	9
	Urban areas	Relatives	1	2	9
		Friends	1	2	9

29 (a) What kind of food do people in the household normally receive from the rural and/or urban areas? (Circle 'Food Code' in the box if anyone in the household answers yes to the food source on the list. Probe for traditional foods).
(b) How often is the food received?
(*Probe for frequency that food is received from the source as given by respondent (a-k) and circle the appropriate number on the scale*)

Types of food	**(a) Source of Food**		**(b) Frequency of Food Received**				
	Location	**Food Code**	**At least once a week**	**At least once every 2 months**	**3-6 times a year**	**At least once a year**	**Don't know**
a. Any [INSERT ANY LOCAL FOODS], bread, rice noodles, biscuits or any other foods made from millet, sorghum, maize, rice, wheat, or [INSERT ANY OTHER LOCALLY AVAILABLE GRAIN]?	Rural	1	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	2	1	2	3	4	9
b. Any potatoes, yams, manioc, cassava or any other foods made from roots or tubers?	Rural	3	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	4	1	2	3	4	9
c. Any vegetables?	Rural	5	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	6	1	2	3	4	9
d. Any fruits?	Rural	7	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	8	1	2	3	4	9
e. Any beef, pork, lamb, goat, rabbit, wild game, chicken, duck, other birds, liver, kidney, heart, or other organ meats?	Rural	9	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	10	1	2	3	4	9
f. Any eggs?	Rural	11	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	12	1	2	3	4	9
g. Any fresh or dried fish or shellfish?	Rural	13	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	14	1	2	3	4	9
h. Any foods made from beans, peas, lentils, or nuts?	Rural	15	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	16	1	2	3	4	9
i. Any cheese, yoghurt, milk or other milk products?	Rural	17	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	18	1	2	3	4	9
j. Any foods made with oil, fat, or butter?	Rural	19	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	20	1	2	3	4	9
k. Any sugar or honey?	Rural	21	1	2	3	4	9
	Urban	22	1	2	3	4	9
l. Don't know DO NOT READ		99					

30	**How important do you feel the food is to this household which is received from the rural and/or urban areas?** (*Circle the appropriate response*)	**Importance of food**	**Code**
		Not important at all	1
		Somewhat important	2
		Important	3
		Very important	4
		Critical to our survival	5
		Don't know DO NOT READ	9
31	**Why do you think people in the rural and/or urban areas normally send food to people in this household?** (*Circle all that apply*)	**Reasons for sending food**	**Code**
		To help this household feed itself	1
		For traditional uses	2
		As gifts	3
		To make business	4
		Other (SPECIFY):	5
		Don't know DO NOT READ	9
32	**How do people in this household use the food which is received from the rural and/or urban areas?** (*Accept multiple responses*)	**Use of food**	**Code**
		Eat it	1
		Sell it	2
		Give it away to friends/relatives	3
		Feed it to livestock (including chickens)	4
		Don't know DO NOT READ	9
33	**If people sell the food, do they:** (*Accept multiple responses*)	**Selling of food**	**Code**
		Sell on the street (hawker/vendor)	1
		Sell it from home	2
		Sell it to/from a restaurant	3
		Make alcoholic beverages for sale	4
		Other SPECIFY:	5
		Not applicable (do not sell the food in any way)	6
		Don't know DO NOT READ	9

SECTION F: URBAN FOOD AID

34	**Does anyone in this household receive food aid?**			**Yes**	1
				No	2
				If NO, skip to the 'End'. If YES, continue with Q35 below.	
35	**What kind of food aid is received, and from which source(s)?** (*Accept multiple responses for type of aid and source of aid*).	**Type of Aid**	**Code**	**Source of Food Aid**	**Code**
		Food	1	UN Agency	1
		Cash	2	CBO	2
		Vouchers	3	FBO	3
		Other (specify):	4	NGO	4
				Government	5
				Other (specify):	6
		Don't know (do not read)	9	Don't know (do not read)	9
36	**How important is food aid to this household?** (*Probe for strength of opinion; circle only ONE answer*)			**Importance of food aid**	**Code**
				Very important	1
				Important	2
				Neutral	3
				Not important	4
				Not important at all	5
				Don't know	6

I have finished my questions. Before we end, is there anything in particular that you would like to add to what you have said or to change?

Do you have any questions that you would like to ask?

Questions	Office use only
1.	
2.	
3.	

Thank you very much for spending this time talking with us. The information you have provided is very valuable and we appreciate you sharing it with us. Just to reiterate, as we have not recorded your family name or address no one can link what you have said to you or this household, so your confidentiality is totally guaranteed. Goodbye.

Appendix C: Key Informant Interview Schedule for NGOs

Dear Participant:
My name is Godfrey Tawodzera. I am a PhD student in the Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. I am carrying out an academic research on vulnerability and resilience of urban household to food insecurity in Harare, Zimbabwe. My intention is to use this information for my doctoral thesis. I also intend to publish all or part of my findings from this study, which may include information that you would have kindly provided. The information may also be made available to organizations that are involved in, or have an interest in urban food security work.

Your organization has been selected to participate in this survey on the basis of it being a key NGO working in food security in the country. The general purpose of this interview is to collect information on urban food security, particularly issues surrounding how you work in and with communities in helping to reduce hunger and food insecurity, the problems these households and communities face and how they deal with food shortages. Your opinions and experiences gained in working with these communities are important in helping me to understand how people in the urban areas of Zimbabwe generally, and in Harare in particular, live with and cope with a variety of food security issues. I hope that you will participate in this survey as your views are important to my research. The interview will take about 40-60 minutes.

Are you willing to participate?

Yes	1
No	2

If No, Thank you for your time. Goodbye.
If yes; Do you want me to tape record the interview or write notes as we progress?

Use Tape Recorder	1
Write Notes	2

Do you understand that you have the right to stop this interview any time you want and you can choose not to answer any or all the questions or particular issues that you may not wish to discuss?

Yes	1
No	2

At this time, do you wish to ask me anything or are there issues that you need to be clarified about the survey before we proceed?

Yes	1
No	2

If yes; Question/clarification.....
May I begin the interview now?

Yes	1
No	2

Participant Declaration

1. I fully understand the purpose of the research.
2. I am participating in this research on my own free volition without force or coercion.
3. I am aware that I have the right to terminate this interview whenever I may feel so without any prejudice on my part.

Participant signature.....Date.....

Name of Interviewer	
Signature	
Date of Interview	

Section A: Background Information

- Briefly tell me about the history of your organization (e.g. origin, aims, and areas of operation).
- Which urban areas of Zimbabwe do you operate in? Why in those areas?
- What has been your motivation for implementing aid programmes in the urban area?
- Which cities do you operate in? Which areas do you operate in Harare? Why those particular areas?

Section B: General Poverty Issues

- What is your perception of the levels of poverty in the urban areas of the country and in Harare in particular?
- In your own assessment, has poverty levels been increasing or decreasing in the city during the past five years? Why do you say that?
- In which parts of the city is this poverty most concentrated? Why do you say that?

Section C: Food Security and Aid

- What is your general assessment on hunger and food insecurity levels in Harare?
- What about in Zimbabwe's other urban areas?
- What kind of aid does your organization provide? Why that kind of aid?
- If it provides food, what kinds of food do you give? How much? How frequently?
- Why those kinds of foods?
- How do you select your beneficiaries? Do they have a choice in what food they receive?
- From your experiences with working in urban communities, what are the major challenges faced by poor households in acquiring food?
- How can these challenges be overcome? As an organization, how have you ever tried to deal with these issues? With what results?
- How do food insecure households in these communities cope with food shortages?

Section D: Successes and Challenges

- How has your aid programme been received by communities that you operate in?
- What successes have you had in reducing vulnerability to food insecurity at household levels?
- What have been your major challenges? How have you tried to deal with these challenges? With what success?
- From your organization's point of view, how best can urban poverty and food insecurity be tackled?
- How effective would this be in increasing food security at both household and community scale?

Thank you for your participation. Do you have anything that you may wish to ask, add, explain or retract?

Appendix D: Key Informant Interview Schedule for Local Authorities

Dear Participant:
My name is Godfrey Tawodzera. I am a PhD student in the Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. I am carrying out an academic research on vulnerability and resilience of urban households to food insecurity in Harare, Zimbabwe. My intention is to use this information for my doctoral thesis. I also intend to publish all or part of my findings from this study, which may include information that you would have kindly provided. The information may also be made available to organizations that are involved in, or have an interest in urban food security work.

You have been selected to participate in this survey on the basis of it being the local administrator for Epworth, the selected study site. The general purpose of this interview is to collect information on urban food security, particularly issues surrounding how households in your area access food, the problems they face as well as how they cope with food insecurity at both the household and community level. I am also interested in information regarding how you, as the local board, are involved in food security issues that help to reduce hunger and food insecurity in the area. Your opinions and experiences gained in working with your communities are important in helping me to understand how people in Harare generally, and in Epworth in particular, live with and cope with a variety of food security issues. I hope that you will participate in this survey as your views are important to my research. The interview will take about 40-60 minutes.

Are you willing to participate?

Yes	1
No	2

If No, Thank you for your time. Goodbye.
If yes; Do you want me to tape record the interview or write notes as we progress?

Use Tape Recorder	1
Write Notes	2

Do you understand that you have the right to stop this interview any time you want and you can choose not to answer any or all the questions or particular issues that you may not wish to discuss?

Yes	1
No	2

At this time, do you wish to ask me anything or are there issues that you need to be clarified about the survey before we proceed?

Yes	1
No	2

If yes; Question/clarification.....
May I begin the interview now?

Yes	1
No	2

Participant Declaration
1. I fully understand the purpose of the research.
2. I am participating in this research on my own free volition without force or coercion.
3. I am aware that I have the right to terminate this interview whenever I may feel so without any prejudice on my part.

Participant signature.....Date.....

Name of Interviewer	
Signature	
Date of Interview	

Section A: General Background

- Briefly tell me about the history of Epworth.
- What is the socio-economic profile of the residents of the area?
- What economic activities are available in the area?

Section B: Poverty Issues

- What is your perception of the poverty levels in Harare in general, but in Epworth in particular?
- What are the causes of this poverty?
- In your own assessment, have poverty levels been increasing or decreasing in the area during the past five years? Please elaborate.
- How do residents deal with this poverty? Please explain.

Section C: Food Security

- What is your assessment of the general hunger and food insecurity levels in the area?
- In which parts of the community is this insecurity serious? Why those areas?
- What are the major sources of food for households in this area?
- How reliable are these sources?
- From your experiences working in this community, what are the major challenges faced by households in acquiring food?
- How can these challenges be overcome? How have you tried to help households to deal with these challenges? With what successes?
- How do the food insecure households cope with these persistent food shortages?
- Do these household ever grow their own food? If yes, to what extent do households rely on their own food production for survival?
- As a local authority, what are your views on urban agriculture?
- What laws are in place to deal with urban agriculture? Do they encourage or discourage the practice of urban agriculture?
- In light of the current hunger and food insecurity problems, have your views and laws on food production in the city changed?
- How do you view vending and other informal sector activities as a livelihood source for the poor in your area?
- What laws are in place in relation to these activities?
- From the local authority's point of view, what is the best possible way of tackling and dealing with urban poverty and food insecurity in your area?
- How effective would this be in reducing vulnerability and increasing food security at household and community level?

Thank you for your participation. Do you have anything that you may wish to ask, add, explain or retract?

Appendix E: Urban Household Case Studies

Case Study No. 1: 23 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward I
Case Study No. 2: 23 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward I
Case Study No. 3: 23 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward I
Case Study No. 4: 23 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward I
Case Study No. 5: 23 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward I
Case Study No. 6: 24 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward II
Case Study No. 7: 24 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward II
Case Study No. 8: 24 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward II
Case Study No. 9: 24 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward III
Case Study No. 10: 24 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward III
Case Study No. 11: 25 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward IV
Case Study No. 12: 25 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward IV
Case Study No. 13: 25 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward IV
Case Study No. 14: 25 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward IV
Case Study No. 15: 25 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward V
Case Study No. 16: 24 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward V
Case Study No. 17: 26 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward V
Case Study No. 18: 26 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VI
Case Study No. 19: 26 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VI
Case Study No. 20: 26 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VI
Case Study No. 21: 26 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VI
Case Study No. 22: 27 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VI
Case Study No. 23: 27 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VII
Case Study No. 24: 27 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VII
Case Study No. 25: 27 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VII
Case Study No. 26: 28 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VII
Case Study No. 27: 28 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VII
Case Study No. 28: 28 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VII
Case Study No. 29: 28 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VII
Case Study No. 30: 28 March 2009, Harare, Epworth, Ward VII

Appendix F: Summary of Household Characteristics in Epworth, Harare

	Household characteristics	Categories	N	%
(a)	Age of household head (Years)	:<30	23	11.5
		:30-44	110	55.0
		:45-59	55	26.0
		:60+	12	6.0
(b)	Household size	1-5	147	73.5
		6-10	48	24.0
		>10	5	2.5
(c)	Household type	Male-headed	140	70.0
		Female-headed	60	30.0
(d)	Household structure	Nuclear	78	39.0
		Extended	63	31.5
		Female-centered	54	27.0
		Male-centered	5	2.5
(e)	Household tenure status	Owner/family accommodation	73	36.5
		Tenant/lodger	115	57.5
		Tied accommodation	12	6.0
(f)	Housing type	House	108	54.0
		Room(s) in a house	64	32.0
		Room(s) in backyard	23	11.5
		Traditional dwelling	5	2.5
(g)	Educational status of household head	No formal schooling	8	4.0
		Primary education	64	32.0
		Secondary education	116	58.0
		Tertiary education	12	6.0
(h)	Household employment status	Working-full time	52	26.0
		Working-part time	20	10.0
		Not working-looking	74	37.0
		Not working-not looking	54	27.0
(i)	Household income (R/month)	0-500	139	69.5
		501-1000	28	14.0
		1001-1500	24	12.0
		1501-2000	6	3.0
		>2000	3	1.0
(j)	Household expenditure (R/month)	0-500	98	49.0
		501-1000	70	35.0
		1001-1500	22	11.0
		1501-2000	8	4.0
		>2000	2	1.0
(k)	Household poverty status (Lived Poverty Index)	0.00-1.00 (Never-seldom without)	17	8.5
		1.01-2.00(Seldom-sometimes without)	40	20.0
		2.01-3.00 (Sometimes-often without)	112	56.0
		3.01-4.00 (Often-always without)	31	15.5