

# **Assisting vulnerable food insecure household recovery from mid-season drought and erratic rainfall project for CARE international Zimbabwe**

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Final Evaluation Report

8/28/2019

*Submitted to:*

**CARE International Zimbabwe**

*Prepared by:*



## I. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Empowerment for Career Development (EMCAD) expresses its deepest appreciation to CARE International Zimbabwe for the opportunity to undertake the final evaluation of the project on *'Assisting vulnerable food insecure household recovery from mid-season drought and erratic rainfall'* in Gwanda & Beitbridge. Special thanks go to CARE International programme staff and management for their unwavering support and coordination throughout the evaluation process.

We also appreciate the contribution received from community leaders, government stakeholders, and project beneficiaries who actively participated in the evaluation process. Lastly, special acknowledgement and thanks go out to the team of enumerators engaged for data collection as well as the EMCAD teams for all their input.

## II. LIST OF ACRONYMS

AGRITEX	Department of Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services
CA	Conservation Agriculture
CIZ	Care International Zimbabwe
DLVS	Department of Livestock and Veterinary Services
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EMCAD	Empowerment for Career Development
FAW	Fall Army Worm
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
Ha	Hectare
ISAL	Internal Saving and Lending (Also referred to as VSL; Village Savings and Lending)
MLAWCR	Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate and Rural Resettlement
MT	Metric Tonnes
NR	Natural Region
OFDA	Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance
PSP	Participatory Scenario Planning
RSA	Republic of South Africa
ToR	Terms of Reference
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Veterinary
ZIMASSET	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
ZIMVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CARE International in Zimbabwe (CIZ) implemented a twelve months emergency intervention programme titled 'Assisting vulnerable food insecure household recovery from mid-season drought and erratic rainfall' in Gwanda and Beitbridge districts of Matabeleland South province. The programme that targeted 30 000 individuals (23% of the total population) went on to implement interventions under cropping, livestock and economic recovery activities and assisted the most vulnerable households (15% of total beneficiaries) with small livestock and small grains. These vulnerable households were targeted to recover from the impact of previous drought years, erratic rainfalls and mid-season dry spells aiming to prevent a potential decline into severe food insecurity.

At the end of the project In July 2019, CARE commissioned Empowerment for Career Development (EMCAD) to carry out a terminal evaluation of the programme. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess and provide reliable end-line information on project performance against set parameters (i.e. indicators, goals, short and long term impact) in the two (2) programming sectors which are agriculture and food security and economic recovery and market systems. The evaluation included an analysis of the intervention's appropriateness, timeliness, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. It also provided a qualitative and quantitative assessment of project progress towards building resilience on drought affected population in Gwanda and Beitbridge.

EMCAD adopted A Utilisation- Focused Approach as the guiding framework for the evaluation. The approach was grounded on the triangulation design mixing qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods. Qualitative information was collected using interview guides. Quantitative data was gathered using structured questionnaire which was administered electronically using KOBO toolbox (a real-time data collection application) to sampled project beneficiaries. The evaluation documented some lessons learnt, project successes and failures and recommendations for future projects.

Under the programming sector of agriculture and food security, and the subsector of livestock, the evaluation established that despite the drought season, that heavily affected the cropping side; the targets on the livestock sector were met. CARE presented that 100 % of the targeted beneficiaries received goats, 500 farmers per district received 2 goats each making it a gross 2000 goats from CARE to the farmers. The evaluation established that 84.5 % of the respondents benefitted from all types of livestock. Also an overall 80.4 % benefitted from livestock activities which included training in animal health management, fodder production, training of Paravets and farmers, training on how to construct goat and poultry housing and CARE facilitated renovation of dip tanks and kreb water points.

Under the Pests and Pesticides subsector, the evaluation established that 83.4% were trained in integrated crop protection, thereby achieving the target. The area protected against pests was not achieved in Beitbridge 35% because most of the areas planted dried off. So there was no longer anything to spray and protect against pests. In Gwanda 77.7% percentage hectares were protected against disease and pest attack. Conservation farming with the introduction of the ripper tine increased popularity because it could easily be pulled by 1 donkey

Under Seed System Security, the evaluation established that all the 5000 (100%) farmers targeted by CARE received seed and fertilizer. Farmers received Sorghum (Shirikure variety) (25MT), Cowpea CBC2 (25MT) and Ammonium Nitrate (125MT) groundnuts (12.5M) and velvet beans. Regarding Improved Agricultural Production/Food Security, the evaluation established that (90.91% in Gwanda and 100% in Beitbridge) of the respondents had less than two months supply of food stock.

Sector 2 on Economic Recovery and Market Systems sought to reduce dependency on casual labour and negative coping mechanisms amongst vulnerable food insecure households in the targeted areas through building of household and community economic activities and establishing and strengthening Village Savings and Lending Groups.

During the survey, 87.8 % of respondents in both districts highlighted that there was a ISAL group in their ward FGDs established that in both Gwanda and Beitbridge, there were success stories and failures. 52% of the respondents indicated that the majority of the cluster facilitators were becoming invisible. Some Key Informant interview respondents indicated that most of the ISAL groups had become inactive because group members are investing in non-income generating return assets like household furniture and groceries such that in most wards of the participants had dropped out.

Regarding the issue on appropriateness, relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact, the evaluation concluded that the project implemented by CARE OFDA was relevant. The study also learned that the alignment of CARE with National agendas enhanced relevancy of CARE projects. Selecting the appropriate means of development in the form of small livestock i.e. goats, plus supplementary home grown feeds increased success rate. It was also learned that the long season sorghum variety planted cannot be sustained by the Matebeleland South rains especially in the wake of climate change.

The evaluation concluded that the project suited the needs, expectations and priorities of the target communities, government and partners. The CARE OFDA programme was fully aligned to the community needs, district requirements and national strategic agenda and plans. The project met part of the stated objectives. It met the livestock based objectives. It failed to meet objectives pertaining to crops production and productivity targets as a result

of drought. About 92% had no harvest Food reserves reported in the study are largely imported. High transport costs presented challenges and hindering effective meetings and other need to travel especially to farmers and Government support systems that impact on sustainability it was noted that youths and young adults below the age of 30 were generally excluded from development projects

The evaluation recommended that there is need to Station extension officers nearer to beneficiaries to cut on transport charges. Also there is need for AGRITEX in different wards to urgently mount trials and establish the most suitable varieties of crops and legumes which can be adopted by the development agents. It was CARE may need to target the youths as well so as to distract them from negative coping mechanisms. Key informants should be involved in identifying reputable sources of raw materials e.g. for construction and seed. The evaluation also recommended that future projects may have to consider a water element to accompany drought recovery mitigation efforts.

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The implementation of the project, 'Assisting vulnerable food insecure household recovery from mid-season drought and erratic rainfall' commenced in October 2018 and was completed in July 2019. The project received funding support from USAID/OFDA. It was being implemented by CARE International, working closely with the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate and Rural Resettlement (MLAWCR), Local Government authorities and community stakeholders in Gwanda and Beitbridge Districts, Zimbabwe. Having completed its project, CARE International commissioned Empowerment for Career Development (EMCAD) to undertake a final evaluation of the project to establish if the project objectives had been achieved.

### **1.2 Project Context**

In Zimbabwe, the Matabeleland South Province is ranked as the region with the highest cattle mortality rates (14%) and is also rated as a region with the highest food insecure households (16%) according to the ZIMVAC 2017 report. This is due to the fact that, the region is characterized by erratic rainfalls and mid-season dry spells, resulting in severe food insecurity. Food insecurity is also perpetuated by the macroeconomic conditions and lack of development at national level and this has compounded the impact of the droughts hindering recovery. The region is also dependent upon livestock, however these livestock have suffered losses due to insufficient water during the dry spell and further losses were due to heavy rains causing foot rot in small ruminants. Despite of the ongoing assistance from external factors, the targeted districts (Gwanda and Beitbridge) have been struggling to recover following consecutive seasons of severe weather stress, starting with the 2015/16 El Nino drought, followed by the 2016/17 La Nina floods, and erratic rainfall in 2017/18 year. Farmers were affected both by mid-season drought and subsequent water-logging in some areas due to long dry spells in January followed by heavy rainfall in February.<sup>1</sup> As a result of persistent drought conditions, some of the communities started selling productive assets (mainly livestock), consequently making them unprepared for the coming/next season.

The most vulnerable households (15% of total beneficiaries) that are unable to produce for the coming season were assisted with small livestock and /or inputs (small grains, legumes and fertilizer) to prepare for the season. 30,000 farmers (23% of the population) were targeted through lead farmer training and demonstration sites with capacity building for improved crop and livestock management, including refresher training and equipping of community-based Paravets to provide basic animal health services and guidance. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), including Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) to establish

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1 Care International Full Proposal

community level information systems and farmer response mechanisms, was mainstreamed to strengthen resilience to future shocks.

### 1.3 Project Background

CARE International Zimbabwe (CIZ) implemented the USAID/OFDA-funded project in Matabeleland South, Beitbridge and Gwanda districts from October 2018 and was completed in July 2019. The USAID/OFDA funded project, ‘**Assisting vulnerable food insecure household recovery from mid-season drought and erratic rainfall**’, came as a response to the region’s dire situation, seeking to assist the most vulnerable households to recover from the impact of successive drought years, erratic rainfalls and mid-season dry spells and prevent a potential decline into severe food insecurity. The overall goal of the Project was to ‘Assist vulnerable food insecure household recovery from mid-season drought and erratic rainfall’. Figure 1 (below) depicts, the project two major Sectors and subsectors; (i) Agriculture & Food Security (**subsectors**: Livestock, Pests and Pesticides, Seed Systems Security & Improving Agriculture Production/Food Security) and (ii) Economic Recovery and Market Systems (**subsectors**; Livelihoods Restoration and Financial Services)

#### Project Sectors

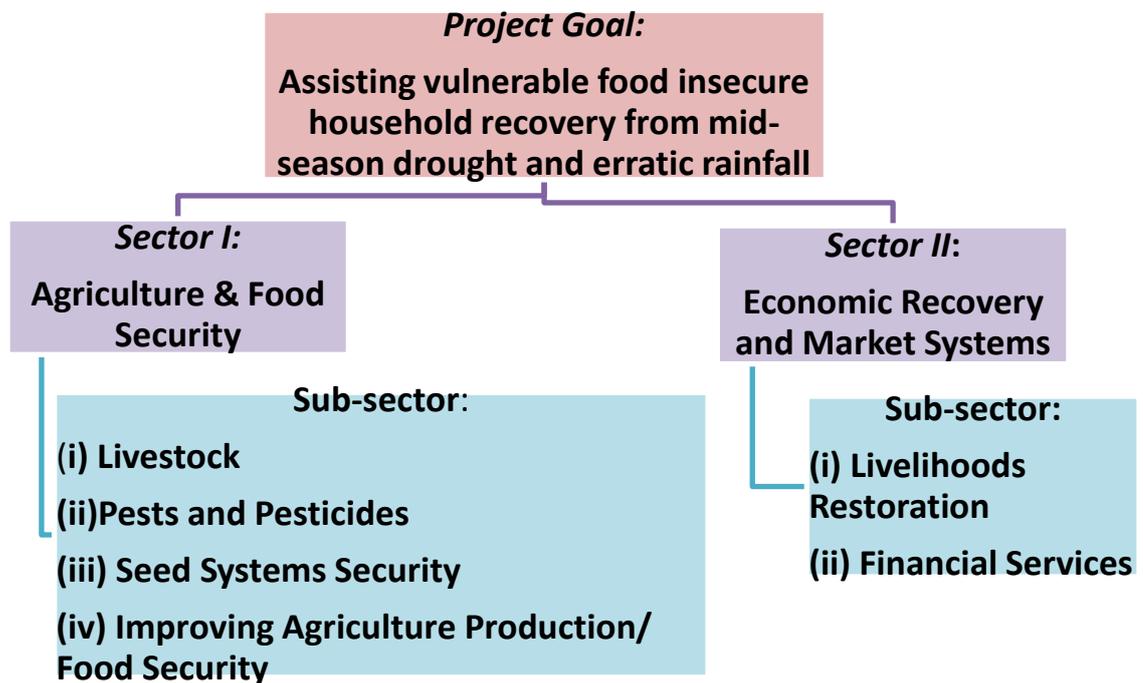


Figure 1: Project Sectors

#### Sector I: Agriculture & Food Security

The project implemented emergency related interventions under agriculture and food security. The recovery activities that were implemented by CIZ were focused on goats and poultry to ensure that the project benefits reach women farmers who traditionally own and control small livestock. The project targeted 30000 individuals (23% of the total population)

affected by mid-season drought of 2017/18 agriculture season in both Gwanda and Beitbridge districts. The project targeted 20 wards 10 from each of the two targeted districts. The most vulnerable households (15% of total beneficiaries) were assisted with small livestock and /or inputs (small grains, legumes and fertilizer) to prepare for the season and were also trained on various conservation techniques in-order to improve agricultural productivity and to promote food security. Rehabilitation of livestock dip tanks in the project provided an opportunity for the targeted communities to sustainably manage their livestock through frequent dipping to reduce diseases, whilst the construction of livestock watering krebs aimed at providing livestock water in the drier season of the year as a fall back plan.

## **Sector II: Economic Recovery and Market Systems**

The Economic Recovery and Market system focused on livelihood support within the community through establishing and strengthening existing Village Savings and Lending groups. It also focused on promoting food security related income generating activities to further strengthen agriculture activities in the project as well as to increase the participation and benefit women, who typically make up at least 80% of ISAL group members, in the project. Disaster Risk Reduction, including Participatory Scenario Planning to establish community level information systems and farmer response mechanisms, was in-cooperated in order to mainstream and strengthen resilience to future shocks.

### **1.4 Purpose of the Final Evaluation**

The objective of the final evaluation was to assess performance against set parameters in the project proposal, and assess the project progress towards resilient building of drought affected communities in Gwanda and Beitbridge, establishing changes that had occurred since the baseline, using the project indicators as key areas of inquiry. The evaluation was expected to assess the intervention's appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, and document project successes and failures. It was also expected to make a measurement of the project indicators by providing an analysis that explains any variances in achieving the expected targets.

### **The following are the specific objectives of the Final Evaluation, as provided for in the Terms of Reference;**

- To capture and documents lessons learnt from the project implementation for knowledge management and learning and future programming
- To come up with practical recommendations for replication of the programme in different context of the country (recommendations need to be specific, practical/feasible and achievable)
- To assess the appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness, outcome impact level, and sustainability of the programme in two targeted districts in relation to specific questions under each evaluation criteria.

### 1.5 Scope of the Final Evaluation Study

The final evaluation study was conducted in 8 wards, 4 wards in Gwanda, (wards 2, 5, 8, 14) and 4 wards in Beitbridge (3, 6, 8, 15) districts. The evaluation focused on project participants and key stakeholders in the selected wards which were visited.

### CARE OFDA funded programme Geographical coverage

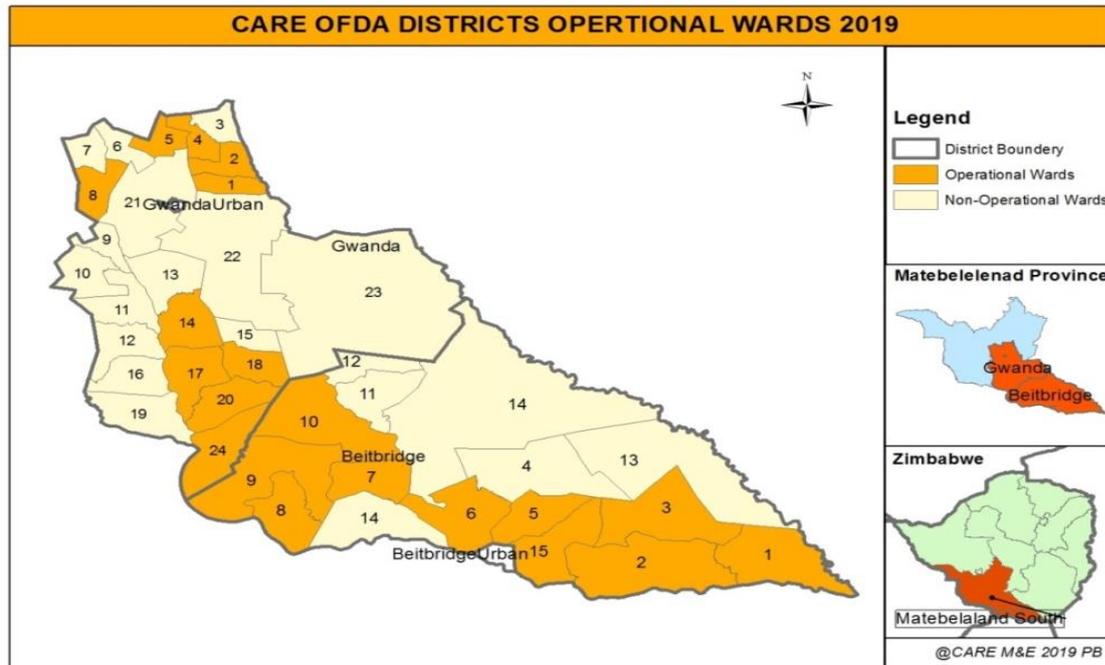


Figure 2: CARE OFDA Geographical coverage

## CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Evaluation Approach

A Utilisation-Focused Approach was adopted as the guiding framework for the USAID/OFDA project final evaluation. That means that EMCAD constantly reflected on the intended users and uses of the evaluation findings. This kept the entire evaluation processes aligned to the objectives of the final evaluation and CARE International's requirements. Guided by the Utilisation-Focused Approach, EMCAD employed qualitative and quantitative methods that ensured generation of salient data to adequately respond to the evaluation questions.

### 2.2 Evaluation Design

The USAID/OFDA project final evaluation was grounded on the triangulation mixed methods design which enabled evaluators to investigate, phenomena that change over time through the use of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods<sup>2</sup>. EMCAD conducted an analysis to assess changes that took place towards the achievement of assisting food insecure households to recover from mid-season drought and erratic rainfall, since the baseline stage. The analysis generated findings that are essential to CARE International in reflecting project appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability and to inform any changes to project design. The findings are also useful to CARE International in assessing changes brought about by the project.

The convergent mixed-methods approach used was largely participatory, and ensured concurrent collection of qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data was collected through a survey where a structured questionnaire was administered among project beneficiaries whereas qualitative data was collected through focus group discussions, observations and key informant interviews. The evaluation team conducted a comprehensive review of documents to generate evidence on the extent to which the project had progressed in achieving its intended outcomes since project inception. The whole evaluation exercise was highly consultative, that is, a strong communication between EMCAD and CARE International was maintained.

### 2.3 Evaluation Methods

#### 2.3.1 Quantitative Approach

EMCAD rolled out a household survey among project beneficiaries to gather essential project information that was used in measuring the project's quantitative indicators. To generate this information, a structured questionnaire was administered electronically using KOBO toolbox (a real-time data collection application) to sampled project beneficiaries. The survey questionnaire covered the two project Sector's (Agriculture and Food Security & Economic Recovery and Market Systems), and the questions were primarily close ended to

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<sup>2</sup> Clark, V.L.P., Anderson, N., Wertz, J.A., Zhou, Y., Schumacher, K., and Miaskowski, C. (2014). Conceptualising Longitudinal Mixed Methods Designs: A Methodological Review of Health Sciences Research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* (2014), 23 pp; doi.

allow for a quantitative analysis. In calculating the sample size the evaluation team used Raosoft sample size calculator at 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error.<sup>3</sup> This implies that for all the values calculated, one can be certain that of all values to be reported, percentage findings can either be a plus/ minus 5% and there is 95% certainty that these figures will be correct. Therefore, from the N=30000 households targeted by the project, a sample size of n=380 was calculated for the survey. The chosen sample size was apportioned between the two districts (Gwanda and Beitbridge). In sampling the participants to be reached with the survey questionnaires, a simple random sampling technique was employed, giving all project beneficiaries an equal opportunity of being selected for the study. However, a total of 368 project beneficiaries in both Gwanda and Beitbridge were reached by the final evaluation study and there was a deficit of 12 people from the targeted sample. The shortfall in reaching the target was due to the unavailability of some intended respondents that had planned to attend but had to go for a funeral in the same village. In ward 15, the chief called for a meeting whereby the villagers had to attend.

### **2.3.2 Qualitative Approach**

The qualitative approach was highly interactive, giving stakeholders at different levels opportunities to give their perceptions on project progress as they observed changes. In order to engage these diverse stakeholder groups, the evaluation team employed key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs) and observations as data collection techniques. These techniques are elaborated below.

#### **2.3.2.1 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**

In-depth face to face discussions on specific topic(s) with purposively selected key informants were undertaken in-order to assess the extent to which the project had progressed in achieving its intended outcomes. A total of 18 key informants, selected in consultation with CARE Zimbabwe Country Office staff, were reached. The Key Informants included Government officials at national and district level, Community leaders (Councillors and Headmen), project Paravets, lead famers as well as CARE International project management and staff. A semi-structured interview guide was used for the purpose. List of key informants are annexed.

#### **2.3.2.2 Focus Group Discussions**

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with selected project beneficiaries in order to produce collective insights and in-depth knowledge on their perceptions and understanding of the programme and how it addressed their needs. A total of 7 FGDs were conducted (3 in Gwanda and 4 in Beitbridge). A focus group discussion guide was used in facilitating discussions. Respondents were allowed to express their views in their vernacular language (Venda/Shona/Ndebele) and interpreters provided assistance where need arose. A list of FGDs conducted in the two districts is tabled below.

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<sup>3</sup> (<http://www.raosoft.com> )

List of focus group discussions conducted			
District	Females	Males	Mixed
Gwanda	✓	✓	
	✓		
Beitbridge	✓		
			✓
	✓		✓
<b>Total (7 FGDs)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

**Table 1: List of Focus Group Discussion Conducted**

### 2.3.2.3 Observations

As the evaluation team moved in and around project implementation communities, it managed to observe some of the changes brought about as a result of the project. Observations were made on livestock housing, renovated dip-tanks and constructed livestock watering Krebs. Pivotal to the observations was the verification and validation of project activities, outputs delivered and their quality.

### 2.3.2.4 Literature or Desk Review

The evaluation team systematically carried out a comprehensive review of relevant project documents availed by CARE International and also used other relevant sources of secondary information. The review process informed the development of the data collection tools, and complemented primary data in compiling the final evaluation report. The review responded to the guiding questions provided under the respective evaluation criterion in the Terms of Reference.

## 2.4 Data Quality Assurance (DQA)

EMCAD’s success in managing and implementing consultancy assignments is based on its proven Quality Assurance Plan, which is focused on meeting the highest professional standards through establishing strong lines of communications between the consultancy team and the client. EMCAD ensured that it attended to all potential risks and concerns regarding the final evaluation schedule and deliverables at each stage of the study.

### 2.4.1 Daily debriefs and data spot-checks

EMCAD held debrief meetings daily to assess data quality, review work progress and discuss all issues that arose which could impact data quality. The team worked together to proactively develop solutions to the emerging problems, and engaged in simultaneous communication with CARE International and relevant key stakeholders e.g. AGRITEX. At the

end of each data collection day, the Enumerators downloaded their data and the Monitoring and Evaluation Expert uploaded the same into the KOBO Toolbox dashboard.

In ensuring data completeness, accuracy and reliability for the survey with project beneficiaries, EMCAD put in place the following measures;

- i. **Conducting quality spot-checks** – the M&E expert and team, consistently monitored data quality through verification of each and every enumerator’s uploaded data. This was done through downloading daily data uploads in Microsoft Excel format and filtering enumerator specific data submissions to check incomplete records. Corrective measures were made during debrief sessions in instances where data inconsistencies and incompleteness were noted.
- ii. **Setting Mandatory Responses** - to avoid unanswered questions in the dataset and to ensure that enumerators did not skip important questions, the design of the electronic questionnaire comprised of Mandatory Responses, especially on the key questions, and hence enumerators were not able to proceed to the next interview without completing such questions.
- iii. **Using skip rules** for questions that were not applicable to a particular beneficiary, skip rules were used in designing the electronic questionnaire where the Skip Logic commands were set to lock the inapplicable questions.
- iv. **Back stopping approach.** In ensuring quality of product, the data collection tools i.e. the FGDs and KIs were designed following the project outcomes. This enabled incorporating all indicators being measured. During the process of data collection from Key informants and FGDs facilitated by the Evaluation Team Leader, the Research Assistant often assisted with notes taking. This allowed the facilitator to focus on the discussions and interview sessions. The team later captured pre-determined and emergent themes during interviews and group discussions. At the end of each day, feedback was given on a daily basis, to make improvements for the next day’s data collection exercise.

#### 2.4.2 Training of Enumerators

Considering the importance of the evaluation, 14 (7 in Gwanda and 7 in Beitbridge), experienced and competent enumerators were recruited by CARE International for data collection. These enumerators had at least one year of work experience in data collection for agriculture and food security projects that target vulnerable households. The enumerators still received a two-day comprehensive training on 19<sup>th</sup> (theory) and 20<sup>th</sup> (field practices) of July 2019 covering the following areas;

- Data collection using KoBo collect
- Ensuring data quality during data collection
- Question interpretation
- Skills required in engagement with communities
- Basic evaluation ethics
- General conduct ethics relevant to diverse cultural norms in the districts

The Core Evaluation Team conducted the training of enumerators and an interpretation session of all the data collection tools so that enumerators had a similar understanding of the questions to ensure consistency of data collected.

### 2.4.3 Pilot testing

EMCAD conducted a pilot test of tools, specifically the survey questionnaire; in ward 1, in Gwanda district on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2019 and adjustments to the tools were made upon feedback from the field before the final tool was adopted for use. Data collected from ward 1 was not included in the final evaluation findings.

## 2.5 Field visits & Data collection

After finalisation and approval of the data collection tools, the evaluation team physically visited a total of 8 wards in both Gwanda and Beitbridge ( visited 4 wards in each of the districts) to conduct community level FGDs, survey among project beneficiaries households and interviews with district level officials and community leaders. Pre-arrangements for field visits (including notifying communities) were made with support from CARE International project team staff.

## 2.6 Ethical Considerations

The evaluation team ensured that procedural and technical standards were taken into account at all times to guarantee protection of participants from harm and their right to privacy. These ethical considerations include human rights, gender considerations and informed consent by participants. The evaluation team also took into account the cultural practises, beliefs and norms of the researched community. Data gathered and participants' identities were secured. Participants' were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time from the discussion. Throughout the data collection phase participants were:

- briefed on aims, objectives, expected outcomes and use of findings from the study
- given freedom of choice to participate in the study
- assured that the study is confidential before commencement of discussions
- assured that identification information will be excluded during group discussions
- not put under any pressure to participate
- to use their preferred vernacular language

## 2.7 Data analysis

**Quantitative data** collected using Kobo collect Tool was downloaded from the main dashboard into Microsoft Excel format and cleaned. The cleaned data was then exported to statistical analysis software, SPSS, for an in-depth analysis. The analysis moved beyond descriptive analysis to establish the relationships and patterns in variables. The analysis ensured that results from the final evaluation are compared against results from the baseline study in measuring changes brought about as a result of the project. Findings are presented in form of frequent tables, graphs and charts.

**Qualitative data:** Data was collected from KIIs and FGDs in preparation for analysis. Data collected in vernacular was translated into English, verified and discussed with the evaluation team in line with quality assurance procedures. Thematic analysis techniques were used in coding discrete units of meaning, chart the relationships among these units and describe the patterns of experience seen in data generated from focus group discussions. In analysing data from key informant interviews, the evaluation team used thematic analysis where data was organised and coded in themes derived from key evaluation questions. Patterns of data were established and summarised for the purposes of analysis and report writing.

## CHAPTER 3: EVALUATION FINDINGS

This section provides an analysis of findings on the evaluation that was carried out. It presents end-line information on the OFDA project performance against set parameters in the programming sectors of Agriculture and Food security, Economic recovery and Markets. The write up also includes an analysis of projects' intervention appropriateness, timeliness, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability; project successes and failures, together with a quantitative and qualitative assessment of project progress towards recovery from mid- season drought and erratic rainfall.

The findings are prefixed by demographic profiles and other variables in order to provide context. This section also captures and documents lessons learnt from the project implementation, for knowledge management and learning, as well as for future programming. It also provides practical recommendations that are specific, feasible and achievable for replication of the programme in different context of the country. The evaluation findings are presented by sector where both districts are jointly analyzed.

### 3.1 Household Demographics and Vulnerability Status

This section seeks to characterize the sample studied in order to gain understanding of project outcomes.

#### 3.1.1 Sex of household head

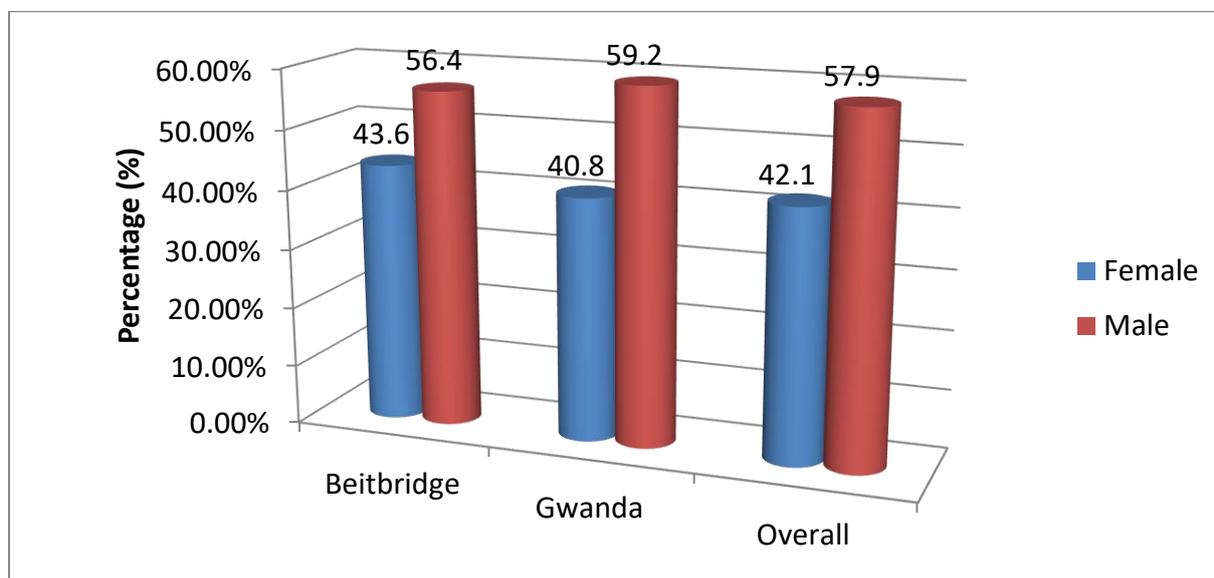
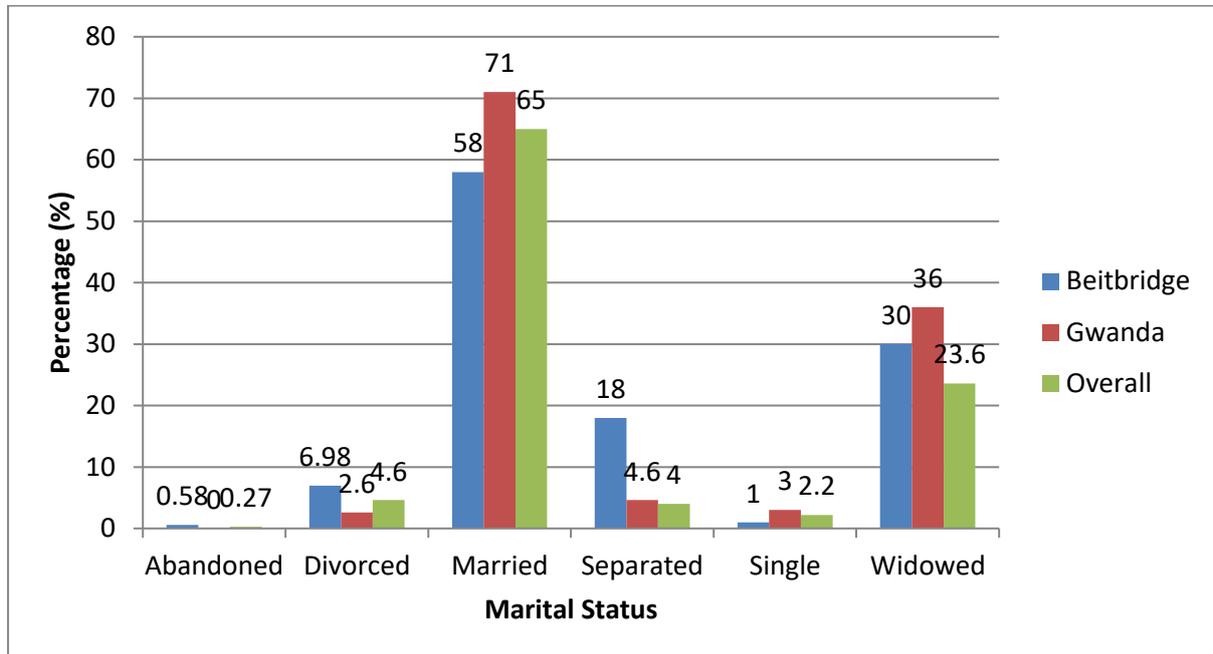


Figure 3: Sex of household head

The survey reached a total of n=368 households (100%). In Beitbridge 43.6% (n=75) were females and 56.4% (n=97) were males. In Gwanda 40.8% (n=80) were females and 59.2% (n=116) were males. The majority of household heads were males. The fact that the majority of household heads are male shows that the decisions are skewed on men.

Therefore, the project was relevant in promoting the empowerment of women so that they also have an opportunity to make decisions based on their wealth.

### 3.1.2 Marital Status of household head



**Figure 4: Marital Status of household head**

In both districts, the highest proportion of survey respondents were married, 65% overall followed by an overall 23.6% widowed. It may appear that, to a lesser extent the under privileged were targeted, given that the majority of beneficiaries are couples. However the majority of the FGDs presented that the selection process was an open equal opportunity moment, whereby it is reported that some vulnerable farmers actually refused to be part of the programme. They feared that if they failed, they would be held accountable for the assets received.

### 3.1.3 Age of household head

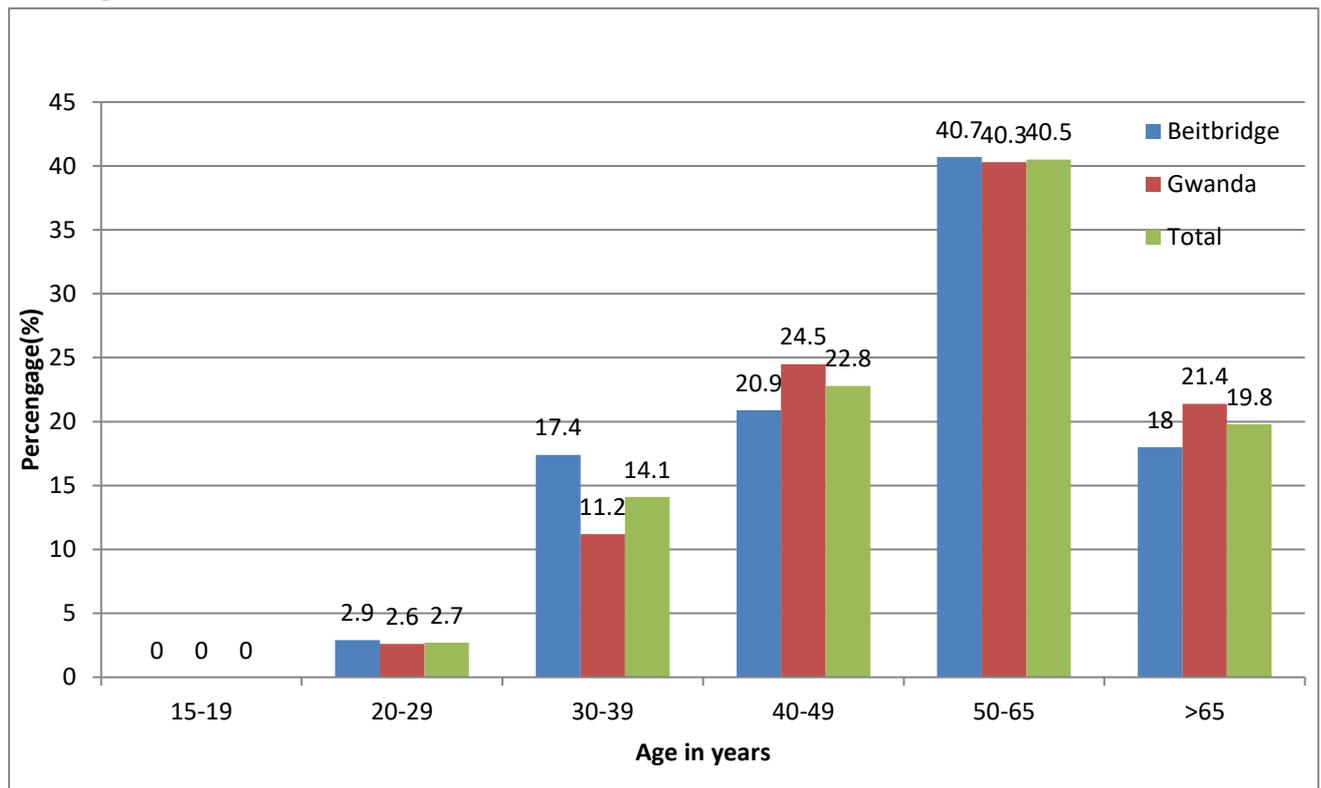


Figure 5: Age of household head

The highest proportion of survey respondents, 40.5 % were aged between 50-65 years of age, followed by 22.8 % who were aged between 40-49 years and 19.8 % who were over 65 years. Only 14.1 % were aged 30-39 and 2.7 % were aged between 20-29. None of the project beneficiaries were aged between 15-19. The majority of households heads are aged above 50 years. They are settled and their livelihoods are based on agriculture. On the other hand the youths are still hustling and trying other options but they are battered by the negative growth of the economic situation.

### 3.2 Sector 1: Agriculture & Food Security

Sector I: The specific objective was to *improve agricultural productivity among vulnerable food insecure farmers in areas affected by drought and erratic rainfall.*

The sector looked into subsectors of Livestock, Pests and Pesticides, Seed Systems Security and Improving Agricultural Production/Food Security

#### Subsector 1.1: Livestock

Under the livestock subsector, 800 farmers were targeted to enhance the household food security through improved animal health and restoring small livestock holdings. Findings from the study established that 500 farmers per district received 2 goats each. This resulted in a total of 1000 goats per district or 2000 goats being distributed by CARE. The Biannual report presents that a total of **341** (203F; 138M) received training on small livestock housing and were equipped with knowledge and skills to construct proper chicken and goat housing.

The evaluators observed some of the goat housing constructed. As per the picture below, a *Beitbridge farmer (Ndovhoniswani Mbedzi) show-casing the new goat housing and her goat which has one kid already.*

### **Goat Housing Construction**



**Photo 1: Goat housing in Beitbridge ward6, Dhosa Village**

Key informants, Paravets, indicated that they were trained on practical sessions on vaccination and livestock management. They also highlighted that they were issued with Vet kits. Most of the Paravets interviewed indicated that they were working well with communities. Where technical challenges were beyond their scope, they referred back to the Veterinary Officer or Doctor. Another common challenge that presented among Paravets was that of insufficient funds for transport and lack of payment from beneficiaries.

Dip tanks and water Krebs were also renovated under this sector. Evaluators witnessed the handover of Chipise dip tank in ward 1. Stakeholders present, led by Livestock Development Committee members and DVTs, pledged to look after the dip tank, an issue of taking ownership and improved sustainability.

At baseline, 20 % had received training in fodder production, harvesting and preservation. At end line the number of beneficiaries rose to 52.2 %. However, the number of households who were not trained in fodder production remained significantly high at 47.8%. This is most likely because there was no crop to work with since most of it had dried out. Evaluators observed that farmers had planted a few velvet stations for seed in their community vegetable gardens. Both, household interviews and FGDs indicated that farmers were trained in fodder production issues. As evidence, farmers brought sample bales to field days which were attended by evaluators as shown in the picture below.



Photo 2: Fodder from velvet bean in ward3, Beitbridge

### Subsector 1.2: Pest and pesticides

Interviews with Key Informants under AGRITEX Gwanda and Beitbridge confirmed that the project conducted Integrated Pest Management training with Conservation Agriculture activities, to adequately address food insecurity issues in targeted communities. Farmer training largely focused on Fall Army Worm (FAW) and quelea birds. For the period 2018-2019, 82 % of survey respondents in Beitbridge and 84.7 % in Gwanda indicated that they were trained in CA, which included training in diverse and appropriate crop protection practices. Overall, 83.4 % of farmers/beneficiaries were trained in both districts leaving out only 16.6 % who indicated that they did not receive training in CA.

### Farmers practicing Conservation farming

Farmers practicing conservation farming in the 2018/19 Season?			Q1. Sex of the household head:		Total
			Female	Male	
No	District	Beitbridge	39	39	78
		Gwanda	14	17	31
	Total		53	56	109
Yes	District	Beitbridge	36	58	94
		Gwanda	66	99	165
	Total		102	157	259

Table 2: Farmers practicing CA

The study showed that the majority of the farmers 259(70.38%) were practicing CA. Of that majority, the higher numbers were males 157 (60.62%). This shows that the head of households are serious about getting involved with the project. This is evidence to the fact

that there are limited sources of livelihood so males are taking up the rare opportunities which have come through the external support from CARE OFDA. The males seem to have adopted the programme as a means of sustaining their families.

### Benefits of Conservation Farming'

When respondents were asked on the benefits of conservation farming they indicated that the major benefits of conservation farming are: moisture retention 60.03%, preserving soil structure, 58.42% and enhanced soil fertility 43.48%. The poor response and confidence on the contribution of conservation farming methods towards increase in yields is due to the fact that farmers who employed conservation farming techniques did not yield more produce due to low annual rainfall. The figure below highlights respondent's response on various benefits of conservation farming.

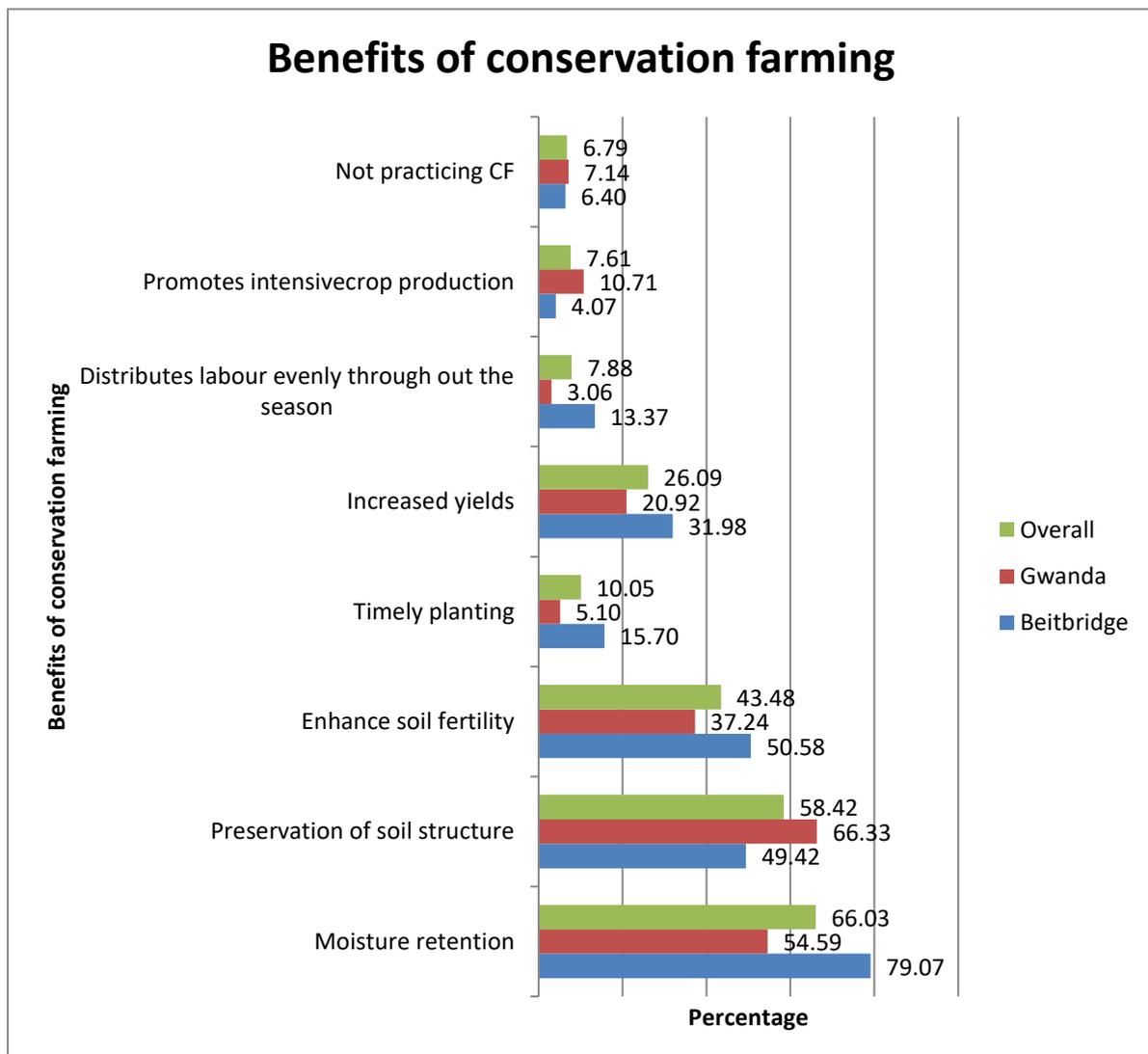


Figure 6: Benefits of Conservation Farming

### Subsector: 1.3: Seed System Security

The input distribution component of the project was designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable households that have not been able to purchase inputs like fertilizer and

certified seed or to retain seed from the previous seasons due to poor harvest and lack of money. The evaluation established that most of the households (95.7%) benefitted from the project Seed Systems Security facility whilst only (19.3 %) benefitted from own harvest and 13 % from local shops as indicated in the graph below.

### % of People benefiting from the seed system program

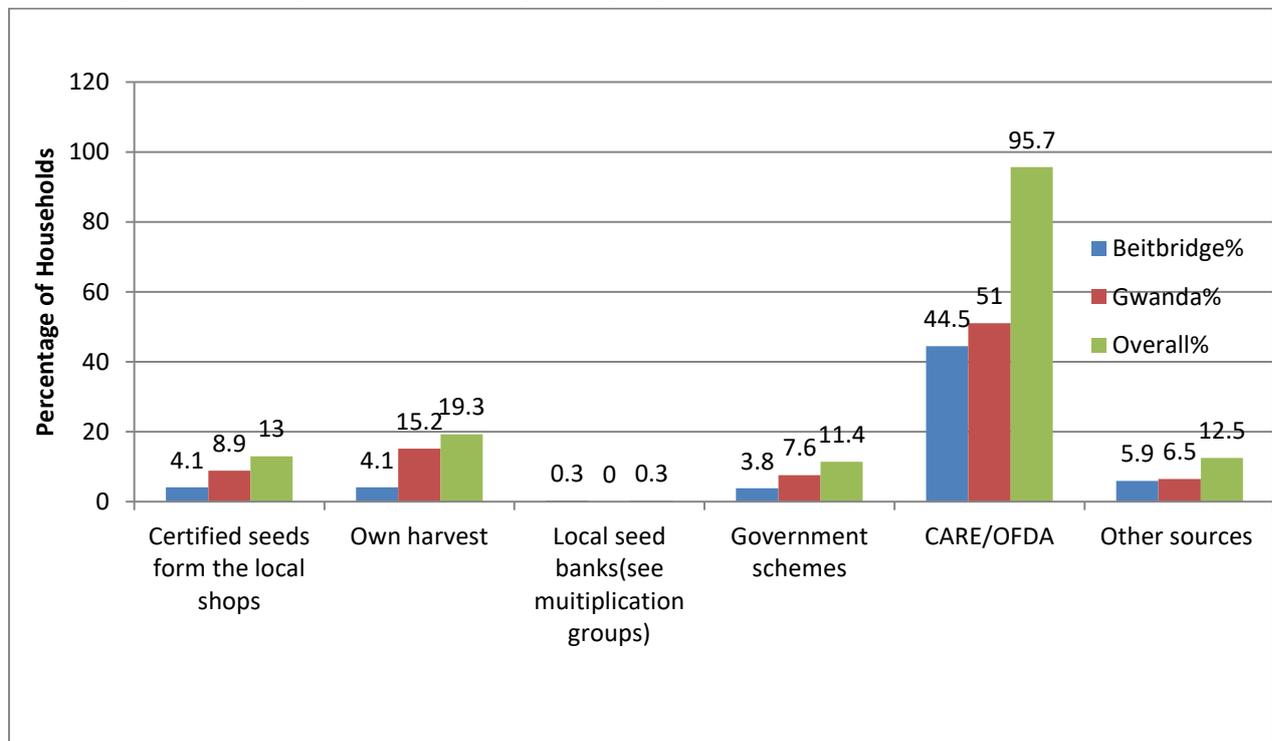


Figure 7: % of People benefiting from the seed system program

The post harvest report of 2019-2019 indicated that a total of **25MT** sorghum, **25MT** cowpeas, **12.5MT** groundnuts and **125MT** Ammonium nitrate were distributed. **25MT** of velvet bean seed was also distributed to **1000 (586F; 414M)** fodder producing farmers. In addition a total of **500** rain gauges were distributed to **500(318F:182M)** lead farmers. Recipient farmers received the following agricultural inputs each, **25kg** Ammonium Nitrate (AN) fertilizer, **5kg** sorghum seed, **5kg** cowpeas seed, **2.5kg** groundnuts seed and **1 piece** ripper tine.

The project encouraged the participation of women through its endeavours to improve food security since they are the primary producers of food at household level. Females received training in fodder production as shown below.

### % of Women that received training in Fodder production

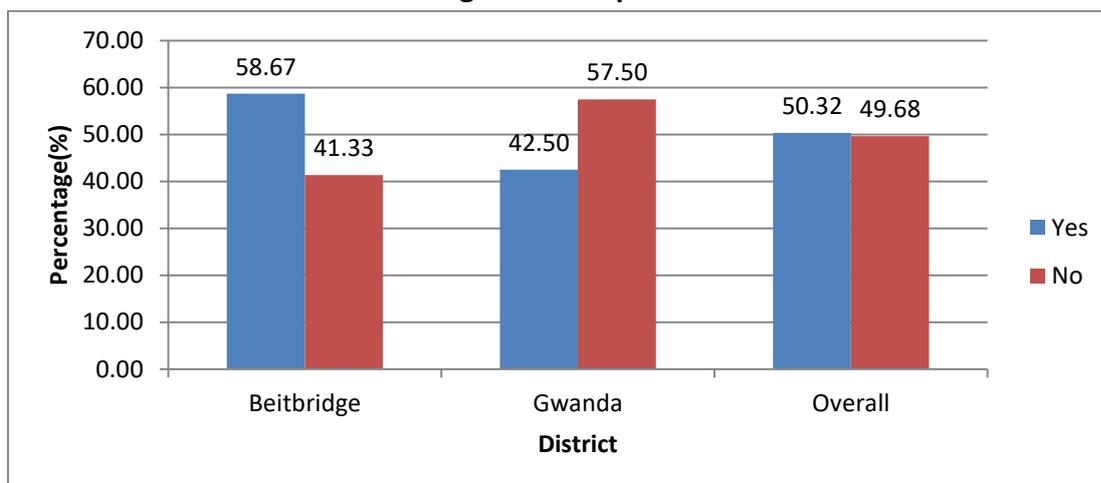


Figure 8 Women that received training in Fodder production:

The evaluation also proceeded to establish the amount of food in stock that the communities had and the extent to which it would last. The majority 69 % did not have food in stock as depicted in the graph below.

### Existence of food in stock in the household

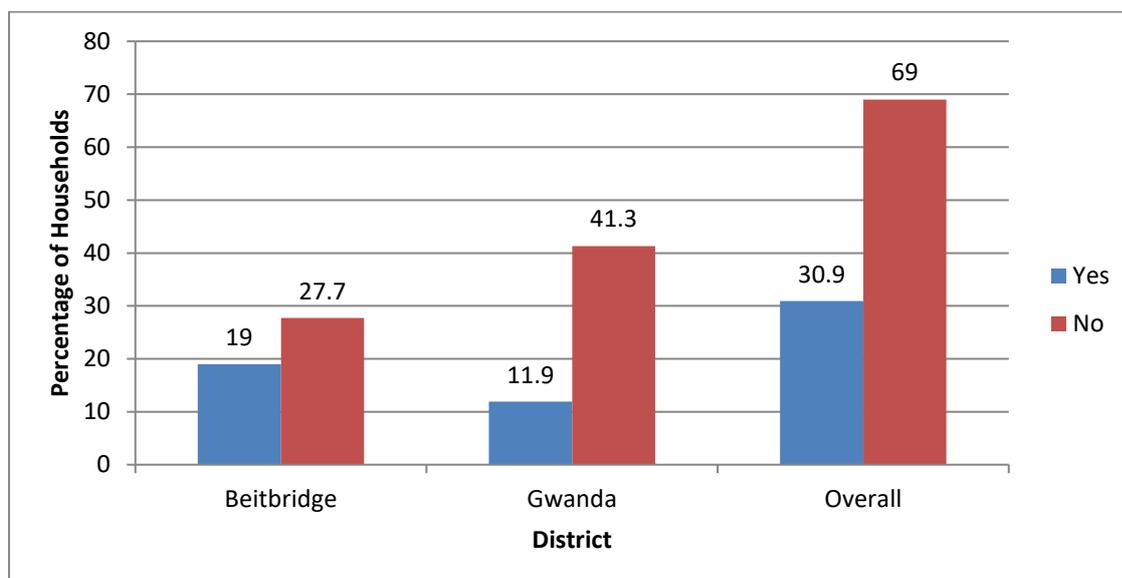


Figure 9: Existence of food in stock in the household

During the survey it was noted that 69.1% of beneficiary households who participated in the study had no food in stock whilst 30.9% highlighted that they have food in stock.

### Subsector 1. 4: Improving Agricultural Production/Food Security

In each district 2500 farmers were given a ripper tine, an innovation for CA so that they would save time and labour effort in land preparation. The innovation encouraged farmers to plant larger areas whilst conserving water. FGDs with participants confirmed that it was

easier to pull the ripper using one donkey. A total of **473 (314F; 159 M)** lead farmers (LF) were capacitated on CA so that they would in turn go and train other farmers. 83.4% of the respondents confirmed they received training in CA. Below is the number of hectares that were established using the CA technology. The table further indicates the number of hectares known to evaluation respondents for each crop variety in the two districts

### Number of hectares under improved agricultural methods

Number of Hectares- Gwanda				Number of Hectares- Beitbridge			
Crop	Min	Max	Total	Crop	Min	Max	Total
Maize	0.01	50	301.63	Maize	0.5	10	146.2
Sorghum	0.01	5	169.08	Sorghum	0.2	15	195
Millet	1	5	12	Millet	1	10	51
Cowpeas	1	5	67	Cowpeas	1	25	77
Groundnuts	0.01	5	109.64	Groundnuts	0.01	25	154.08
Velvet beans	1	5	9	Velvet beans	1	10	56

Table 3: Number of hectares under improved agricultural methods

In Gwanda, the highest area was planted to maize. With the sorghum seed tonnage distributed, (25MT), at a planting rate of 10kg/Ha it was possible to plant 2500 ha. In Gwanda, 169, 08 ha were put to sorghum or 6.76 % of the targeted area in hectares. In Beitbridge, the highest area was planted to sorghum, 195ha or 7.8 %. Targets under this subsector were not achieved due to insufficient rains justifying the need to assist vulnerable households with certified seed, technical backup, innovation technologies and markets. The trend of small areas being planted is maintained with all the crops with seed provided. This evaluation therefore, established that the CARE project was appropriate for the area selected.

#### 3.2.1 Appropriateness to particular needs, expectations and priorities

The project was suited to improve agricultural productivity among vulnerable food insecure farmers in Gwanda and Beitbridge as these districts are continuously failing to recover from the impact of successive drought years, erratic rainfalls, mid-season dry spells, floods, water logging conditions and poor macroeconomic conditions. These conditions were seen as perpetuating food insecurity among the most vulnerable households. Below is a table that shows the amount of rainfall required for each crop variety in comparison with the amount of rainfall that was received in Gwanda and Beitbridge.

## Suitability to rainfall variable

### Crop water requirements

Crop	Crop water need (mm/total growing period)
Cowpea	250-500
Groundnut	500 – 600
Sorghum/Millet	450-650
Velvet bean	650- 1200
Sugar Beans	300 – 500
Maize	500 – 800

Table 4: Crop Water Requirements.

Source:<sup>4</sup>

### Rainfall received (mm) in Gwanda and Beitbridge

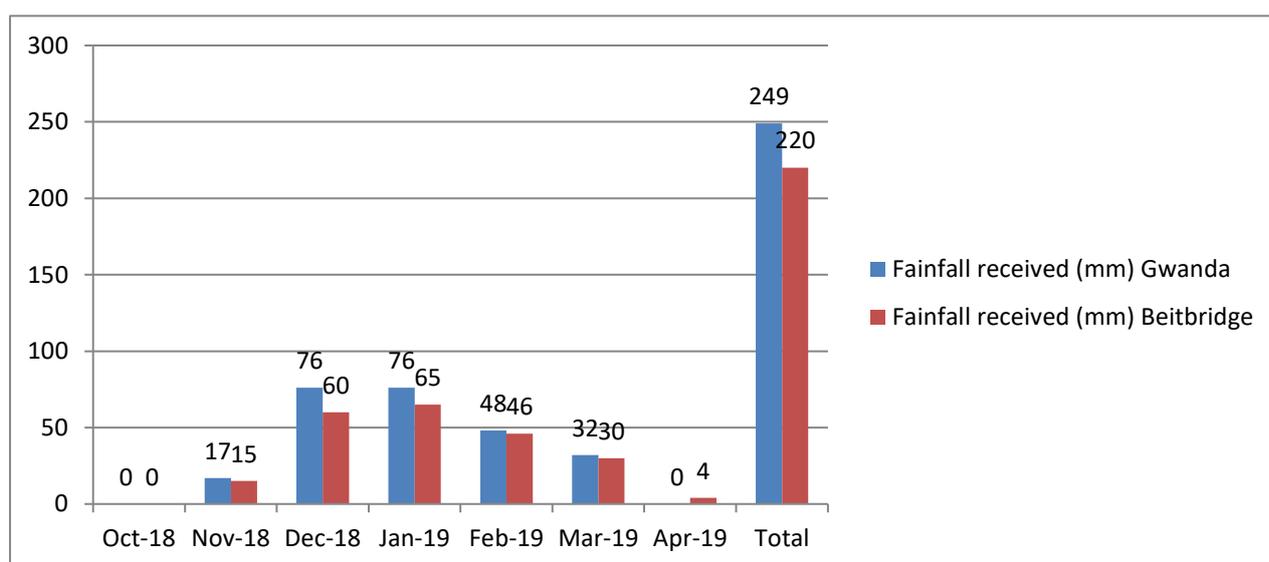


Figure 10: Amount of rainfall received in Gwanda and Beitbridge

Gwanda and Beitbridge are both in the Agro-ecological region or Natural Region V (NR-V) where precipitation expected is usually around **450- 650mm per year** and highly erratic. However, during the PROJECT implementation period, rainfall received from October 2018 to April 2019 amounted to a cumulative **249 mm** for Gwanda and **220mm** for Beitbridge which is way below what the crops require from planting to harvest. The region is known to be more suitable for extensive cattle and goats production and game-ranching as major sources of cash income. In an attempt to increase agricultural productivity, CARE managed to distribute small livestock such as goats with the objective of increasing goats' productivity. Observations from

<sup>4</sup> FARM MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK SECTION C: CROP PRODUCTION Compiled By S. CHIKOBVU AGRIBUSINESS AND MARKETING Edited By F. Gamu And S. Mangena Agronomy DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNICAL AND EXTENSION SERVICES (AGRITEX)

the field revealed that this objective was achieved as most of the goats seen were either pregnant or were already dropping kids, even under the poor feed conditions.

Although both NR IV and NR V are too dry for crop production, households on the communal lands in these regions grow grain crops such as maize and millet for their food security and some cash crops such as cotton. Crop yields are extremely low and the risk of crop failure is high in one out of three years.<sup>5</sup> In response to the situation, CARE promoted crops that are within the anticipated precipitation volumes in NR-V. Therefore, the selection of crop varieties was appropriate and suitable for the Matabeleland South region. However, due to the low volumes of rainfall received, the crop was summarily a write off on the majority of the farms. This was also highlighted in all focus group discussions as stated below;

*'We planted but we did not harvest any produce'* [FGDs in Gwanda ward 8]

#### ***Relevance to particular need***

Discussions with project beneficiaries revealed that communities in this region had two major priorities, food and water. They indicated that they needed food and water for humans first then for their livestock. Therefore, the distribution of goats and crops were an appropriate solution towards promoting food security. In Gwanda ward 8 farmers indicated that they were working on sand dams with Dabane Trust projects. So the projects are actually complementary to what CARE is doing, as a step towards DRR.

#### ***Relevance to national plans***

The principal guide to all development activities is the ***Beitbridge Rural District Council Strategic Plan (2016-2020)***, and the Gwanda one. These strategic plans are aligned to the Central Government's Economic blue print, Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimAsset). The aim of the district plan is to contribute to the national guiding vision "*Towards an empowered society and a growing Economy*". An interview with the Ministry of Local Government Administrator revealed that there were significant consultations by CARE with other stakeholders since project conception and that by the time the project ended, relations had improved greatly.

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<sup>5</sup> Moyo, 2000; FEWSNET 2018 Agritex 2019).

## Alignment to Disaster Risk Reduction priorities

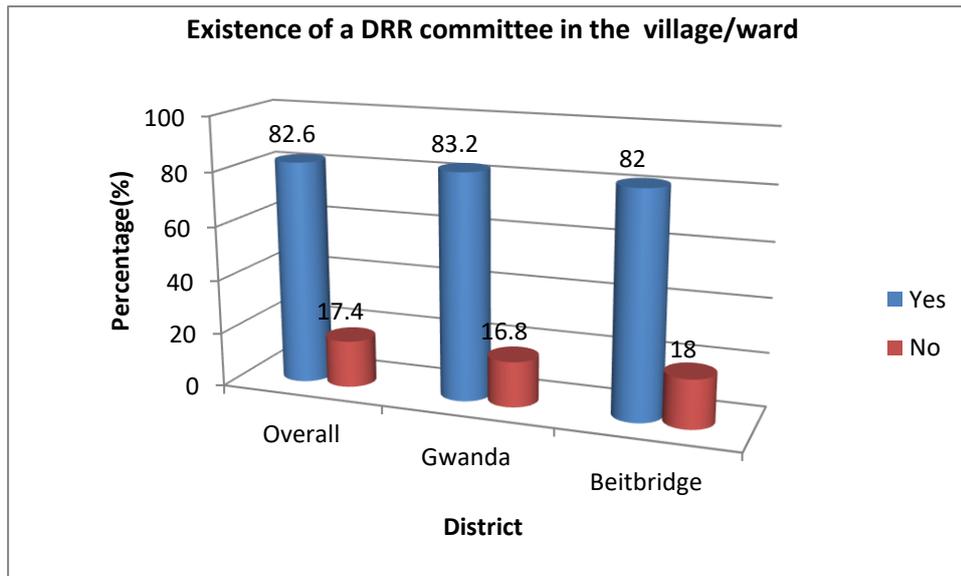


Figure 11 Existence of a DRR committee in the village/ ward:

The survey sought to establish if there was a disaster risk committee in the wards/villages of the two districts. At end line, an overall 82.6% of survey respondents for both Gwanda and Beitbridge indicated that there was a DRR committee in their ward.

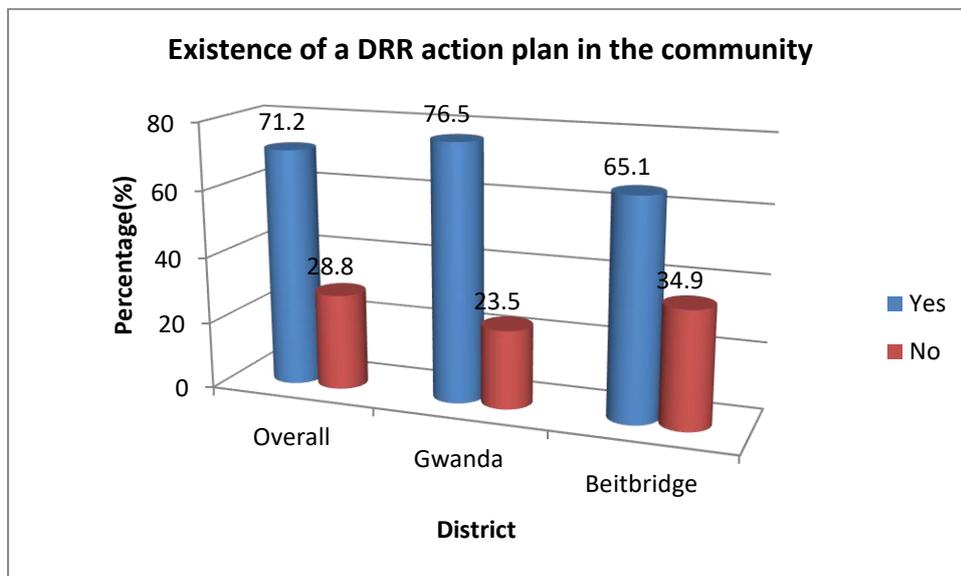


Figure 12 Existence of DRR action plan in the community

After seeking to identify the presence of DRR committees in the wards of the two districts, the evaluation also sought to establish if there was a DRR action plan in these communities. In Beitbridge **65.1 %** indicated that they have a DRR action plan in their committee and only **34.9%** indicated that they did not have. In Gwanda, the majority of respondents **76.5%** indicated that they had a DRR action plan in their community. On the overall, **71.2%** highlighted that they had a DRR action plan in their community whilst the other **28.8%** disagreed.

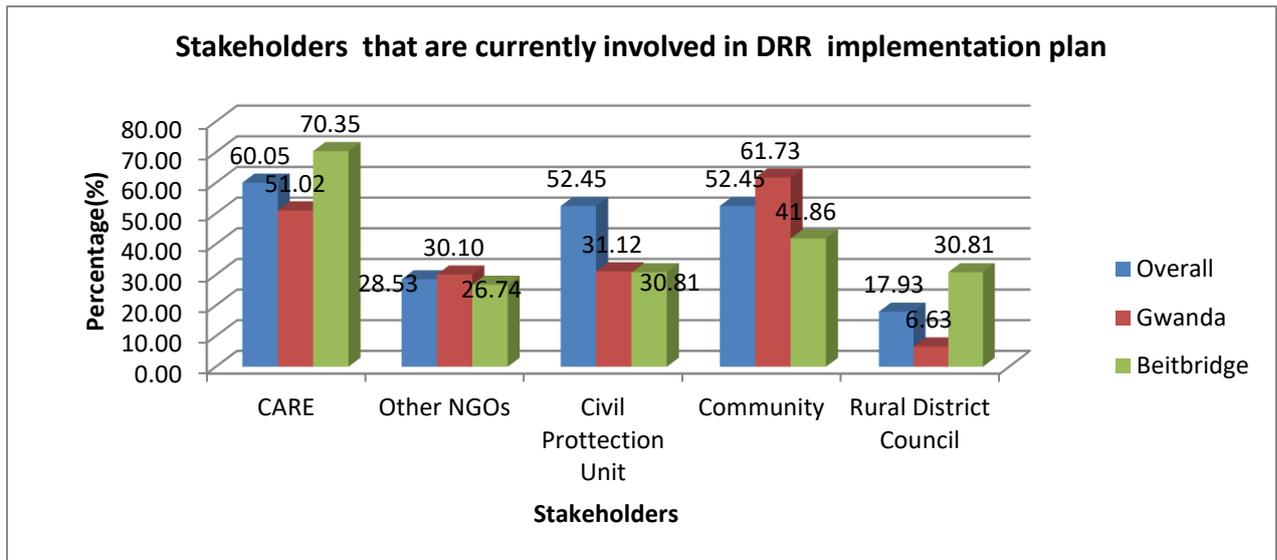


Figure 13: Stakeholders currently involved in the DRR Implementation plan

Various stakeholders were noted to be involved in the DRR action plan implementation, with Care 60.05% being one of the stakeholders with the highest involvement, followed by the community and the civil protection unity, 52.45 %. In both Gwanda and Beitbridge, 28.53 % of survey respondents highlighted that other NGOs were involved. The rural district council was noted as the least, 17.93 % stakeholder who is involved in the implementation of the DRR action plan in the two districts. The involvement of the rural district council was even lower in Gwanda (6.63%) than in Beitbridge (30.81%). Limited participation of the rural district council was highlighted during an interview with a District Officer who stated that;

*‘Some DRR meetings are poorly attended because of transport challenges under the ever increasing bus fares’ [KII with District Official, Gwanda]*

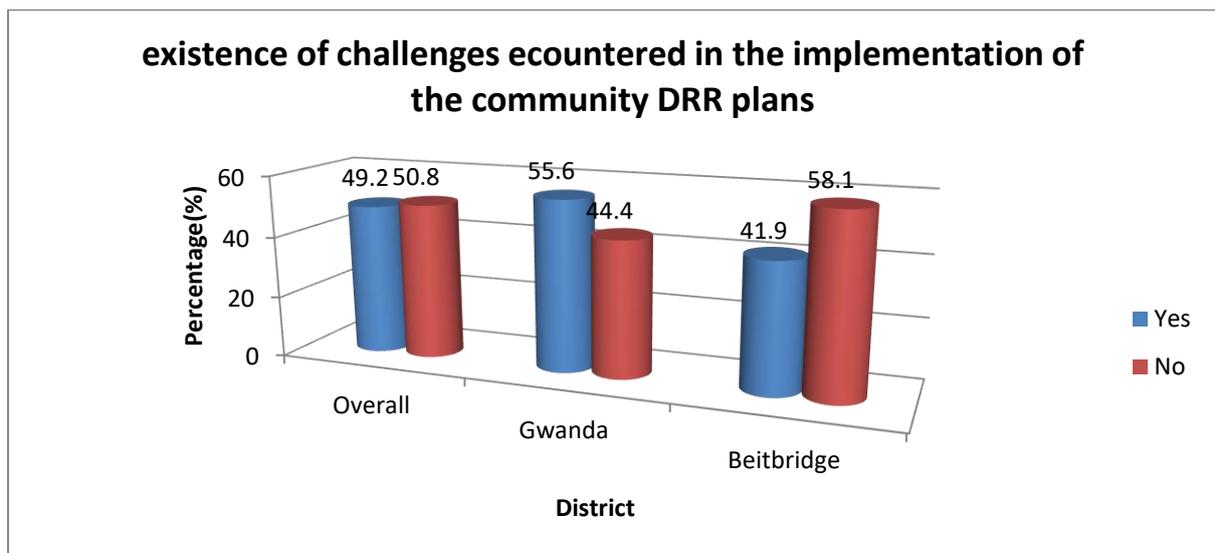


Figure 14: Existence of challenges in the implementation of community DRR plans

Despite the presence and the involvement in DRR action plans in both districts, 50.8% indicated that they were encountering some challenges in the implementation of DRR plans. These include lack of capital to implement planned projects. This was highlighted during an interview with the Councillor who sited that they have their plans but they are not being implemented due to lack of capital.

*'We have our DRR plans in place but these don't usually get implemented because of lack of capital'* [KII with Councillor, Beitbridge]

### 3.2.2 Quality of Project design

Interviews and discussion with stakeholders in all the wards that were visited corroborated the transparency of the selection criteria for beneficiaries. The general consensus explained that public notices circulated thereby enabling a wide spectrum of participant involvement. In most cases, registration was done in open spaces under supervision of multiple stakeholders including the local government represented by village heads and senior headmen, MLAWCR represented by AGRITEX and VET, Ministry of Defence represented by the Zimbabwe republic police ( ZRP), local business communities, farmers and members of the public. In Gwanda ward 8 and Beitbridge ward 15, few poor farmers identified refused to participate in the project because they feared follow up in case of failure. Isolated cases in Beitbridge were excluded from the project because of communication breakdown and lack of bus fares to travel from distant villages to the inputs distribution points in other wards. For instance, ward 15 has four villages, out of the four, two villages (Old Nuli and Shabwe) were represented and the other two (Dumba and Makwai) villages were not represented. It was indicated that their villages are remotely allocated and that it was likely that farmers did not have bus fare to attend the selection meetings.

All the goats that were distributed among project beneficiaries were purchased from within the local communities except in Gwanda where locals indicated nepotism involvement at ward or village level. Farmers from outside the project area came to sell their goats whilst the locals were not aware.

In all the seven FGDs conducted, it was trending that in the study area, culture associated small livestock with women's' wealth. Goats were found to boost the female gender asset base. Under the project, 684 women received goats from CARE. Women also took time to attend training so as to acquire knowledge on livestock management and feed production.

In Beitbridge, respondents indicated that 58.67% women received training in fodder production whilst a little less, 42.59% did the same in Gwanda. This evidence of awareness to fodder banking was witnessed at all the field day meetings attended by the research team.

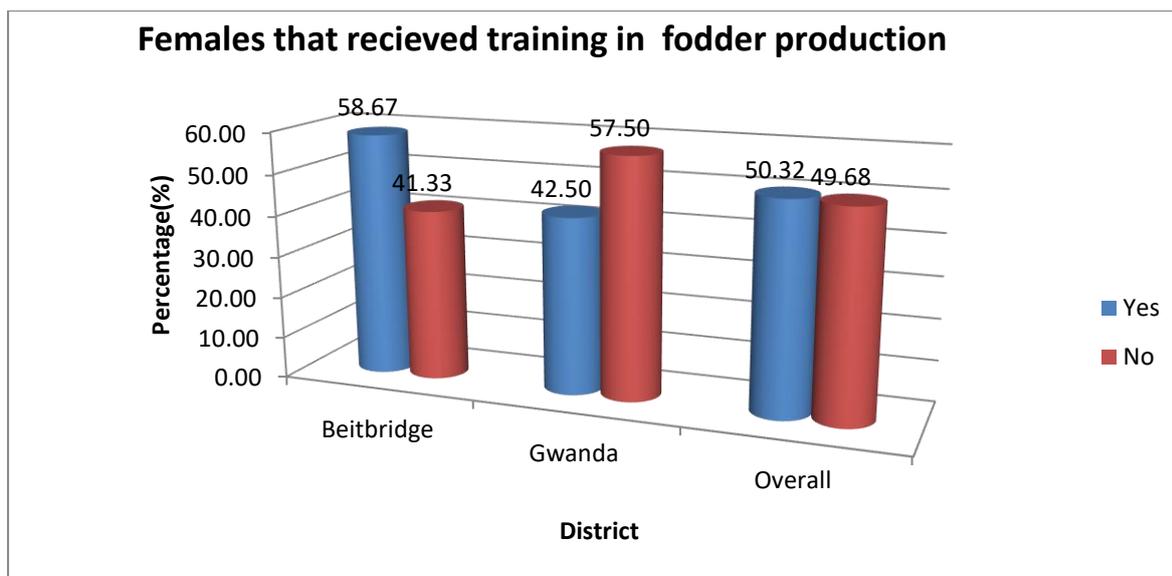


Figure 15: Females that received training in fodder production

At the same time women are responsible for putting food on the table. A combination of the various drought resistant sources of protein, i.e. velvet beans to feed the goats, cowpeas and groundnuts for human food and sorghum for starch was an appropriate design as it ensured a balanced diet. The study area is dry and women will spend less time doing other chores whilst they tie their goats to trees during the grazing periods. The design was appropriate because introduction of CA technology accompanied by the ripper innovation reduced the demand for labour when compared to the manual process of digging holes at planting stations. This was highlighted during a focus group discussion with woman in Beitbridge as stated below;

*'The ripper tine was good it was less labour intensive, fast and could be pulled by one donkey'* [FGD with women, Beitbridge]

However, the technical Agritex Officer in Gwanda indicated that the ripper tine was too thin and the row opened can easily be covered by waters that are flowing.

### Progress towards meeting stated objectives

The objective for Sector 1 was to *improve agricultural productivity among vulnerable food insecure farmers in areas affected by drought and erratic rainfall.*

The programme partially met its stated objectives because

- Most of the rain fed crop was a write off due to excessively dry conditions except for the velvet bean which was observed to be more drought tolerant
- On a positive note no project goats were reported dead or missing.
- The project indicators were also partially met as indicated under the section on effectiveness

### 3.2.3 Cross cutting issues

#### ***People living with disabilities and chronically ill relatives***

The projects activities identified, premised on hardy small livestock (goats), food and feed supplement production using short season variety grain and legumes, introduction of smart agriculture innovations using CA based precision farming referencing the rain gauge, facilitated labour alleviation performance by using ripper tine and Conservation agriculture invariably were intended to rescue the woman in particular and the household members in general. The sick would get a more balanced diet and the provider would spend less time fending for the sick. A case study identified involves a household with a blind husband and a deaf wife who were also given seed and two goats. The challenge was on their ability to raise money to pay the builder who was supposed to construct the goat house. As a way forward, AGRITEX used his interpersonal skills and negotiated for the community to assist all the same.

#### ***Influence of migration***

The Matebeleland South region is at the border of the Republic of South Africa (RSA). Due to economic challenges that Zimbabwe is facing, a significant number of males have crossed the border in search of jobs in RSA resulting in a significant number **42.1%** of female headed households. As a result females have to do work that is ordinarily done by males, such as renovating dip tanks funded by CARE, dipping and treating goats, and looking for food. Therefore, short season varieties crops and small livestock that are more drought tolerant are appropriate for improved food security and alleviation of poverty given that **90.91%** in Gwanda and **100%**(all survey respondents) in Beitbridge indicated that they will run out of food in two months' time as indicated in figure 10 and 11 below.

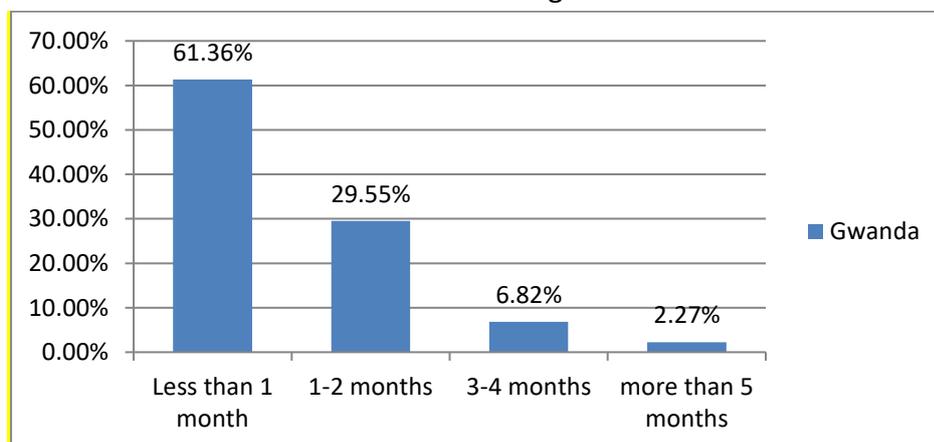


Figure 16: Duration of food stock in Gwanda

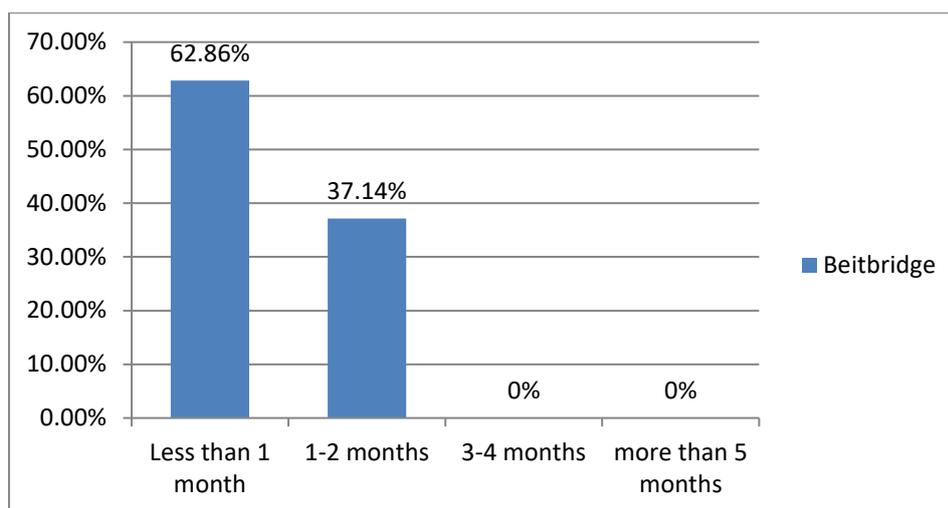


Figure 17 : Duration of food stock in Beitbridge

### 3.2.4 Efficiency in use of resources

#### 3.2.1.1 Inputs availability, use and management

The evaluation also sought to assess the efficiency of the project with regards to the utilization of resources including inputs availability, use and management. Efficiency sought to answer two questions;

(i) *Could the same or better results have been achieved with same or lower inputs or by doing things differently?*

Based on the evidence collected from individual and group interactions, the study established that the best was done under the short period. There were minor challenges with no major highlights. Discussions with farmers, programme facilitators and other stakeholders in the area largely confirmed delivery of all activities and inputs as planned. In Beitbridge communication breakdown caused distribution challenges and delays in the collection of building materials for goat housing at one site.

- By changing from sorghum Marcia variety, CARE was responding to the Matebeleland South communities and stakeholders input as they reported that indigenous species such as Shirikure, Rundende and Tsholotsho are more resistant to Quelea in their areas.
- Observations from the field revealed that some of the anchor wood poles at dip tanks in Beitbridge and Gwanda were already cracking, signaling compromised quality on the part of the supplier. The issue of quality of building materials was also highlighted by one of the Veterinary Extension Officers who stated that;

*'Facilities which were erected by STABEX years ago are still intact. Maybe you need to ask them where they bought their building materials from. With the case of the infrastructure it could be that the raw materials used was not of good quality like that used in the past.'* [KII with **Veterinary Extension Official, Gwanda**]

- In Gwanda, some of the project beneficiaries indicated that goats were imported from outside their catchment and they feared health issues. This also increased risk of losing goats as they would always attempt to go back where they came from. If these are purchased from within villagers claimed that they would easily identify stray goats and reunite them with their new owners.

(ii) *Are there any proposed acceptable cost effective approaches of accomplishing the same or better objectives?*

The evaluation study established that there were no major highlights but to involve local specialists who buy raw materials for all the donors that work in their area, taking advantage of experiential knowledge.

### **3.2.1.2 Activity Implementation**

The envisaged main project activities included:

- convening awareness meetings,
  - conducting a baseline survey,
  - selection and training of beneficiaries in conjunction with AGRITEX, VET and LPD ( later merged with AGRITEX), and village heads
  - Building the organizational capacities of the project beneficiaries and local support e.g. Paravets and Lead farmers.
  - providing and distributing assets and inputs including sourcing goats locally,
  - monitoring progress,
  - conducting market research for livelihoods Sector,
  - building the organizational capacities of the project beneficiaries and that of other institutions
- Activity implementation was efficient as CARE came in to complement government efforts at no cost.
  - The use of government stakeholders' i.e. Agritex Extension Officers to cascade information on livestock and agriculture production was cost effective as they offered their training services at no cost. However, a precedent set by past projects and other NGOs that were found making payments in cash or kind negatively influenced performance and commitment of government officials.
  - The process of mobilization, selection of beneficiaries, distribution of inputs and assets, and trainings were done in groups and that was efficient. However, for farmers that came from longer distances of more than 30km, and they could not afford transport costs, e.g. ward 1 Beitbridge and ward 24 Gwanda, they often missed out on physical items and knowledge obtained through training.

### 3.2.1.3. Output Achievement

- All the livestock related outputs were sufficiently achieved but crops production was severely affected by the drought.

#### Stakeholder contribution/involvement

- Interviews with major stakeholders AGRITEX and the VETERINARY services indicated their satisfaction towards their contribution and participation in the project through facilitation of trainings. However, the issue of transport challenges kept surfacing when it concerned Lead farmers and Paravets. This was highlighted in an interview with a lead farmer who stated that;

*'I can't be paying transport to go and provide service farmers all the time, I don't have money, I cannot afford it' [KII with Lead Farmer, Beitbridge]*

### 3.2.1.4 Effectiveness of programme interventions

The assessment on effectiveness of programme interventions sought to establish if the activities carried out achieved satisfactory results in relation to stated objectives/results. This also involved establishing how the programme performed against the log frame indicators and to identify if there were any unintended outcomes. The evaluation went on to establish the extent to which activities contributed to enhancing local capacities agriculture production and economic recovery and market system promotion. Where activities did not lead to achieving the objective, the study sought to explain why? The table below provides a summary of findings that shows the extent to which the project objectives were met in the view of the implementing agent, CARE and the evaluation team, EMCAD.

## Activity progress towards achieving intended objectives

### Sector 1 Agriculture and Food Security

**Objective:** To improve agricultural productivity among vulnerable food insecure farmers in areas affected by drought and erratic rainfall

Indicator #	Sector Name AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY	Target	Baseline Consolidated 2018/ 19	Extent to which objective was met consolidated (ITT)	Evaluation findings of the study consolidated	Comment
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Sub-sector name i. Livestock</b>					
1	1.1 Number of people benefiting from livestock activities	1600 (960W 640M)	71 (4.44 %) (44W 27M)	5307 (2234 W 3073 M)	2000 (97.5%)	The target was surpassed. Farmers were trained in fodder production, animal health and construction of goat housing among other. Others benefitted from Paravets, VET and AGRITEX
2	2.1 Number of animals benefiting from livestock activities (cattle)	37500	8625	54246	19575	This represents 52.2 % of the survey participants. However, during discussions farmers indicated that their livestock benefitted from such activities as dipping, Paravets activities like dehorning ,vaccinations at dip tanks, fodder training and production livestock training .

	2.2 Number of animals benefiting from livestock activities (Goats)	60000	5400	65105	31320	Objective was achieved. Farmers were impressed with the modern goat houses. Government departments and other stakeholders welcomed the renovation of dip tanks
	2.3 Number of animals benefiting from livestock activities (poultry)	19200	1152	37263	10022	Most of the farmers rely on indigenous poultry. Training was mainly supervised by Government, Vet services to ensure sustainability.
3	3.1 Number of animals owned per individual (cattle)	5	4	4	2	Farmers were actually culling and others were affected by the January disease ( Thelariosis)
	3.2 Number of animals owned per individual (goats)	20	14	47	38	Target was surpassed. It was established that goats are a reliable means of “mobile banking”.
	3.3 Number of animals owned per individual (poultry)	15	10	48	14	Most of the farmers rely on indigenous poultry. Culling rates are high because of insufficient food and income from other sources.
4	Number of people trained in livestock	300 (180W 120M)	81 (27%)(4 9W;32 M)	1084 (429 W 655M)	176 (47.8%) (69W 107 M)	Although the index is low, FGDs established that farmers attended training by AGRITEX, VET and Paravets. The challenge of transport came up.

1.2	Sub-sector name ii. Pests and Pesticides					
1.	Number of people trained in appropriate crop protection practices	5000 (3000W 2000M)	1000 (20%) (610W; 390M)	5188 (3077 W 2111 M)	156 (42.4%) Yes 69 (44.23% W) 87 (55.57%M)	Achievement was low. Considering that some training would happen way into the season that was not possible because the crop wilted or dried prematurely.
2.	Number and percentage of hectares protected against disease or pest attacks	16250 (50%)	0 (0%)	11116	1344	Target was not met because planting levels were cut . Plant germination was low, so was protection of crops from pests and follow up weeding.
3.	Number and percentage of people practicing appropriate crop protection	5000 (50%) 3000W 2000M	1350 (27%) (824F; 526M)	4554; 91.08% (2388W; 79.60% 2166 M: 108.20%)	259 (70.38%) 102 (39..38% )W 157(60.62% ) M	Objective was reasonably achieved predominantly by the male gender.

1.3	Sub-sector name iii. Seed System Security					
1.	Number of months of household food self-sufficiency as a result of seed system security programming	8 months	0 (0%)	2	2	Objective was not achieved. It was observed and verified that the drought was severe. The food reported by respondents was imported into the districts. From Baseline= 0 months to target 8 months was not realistic for NRV
2.	Number of people directly benefiting from seed systems/agricultural input activities	25 000 15000 W 10000 M	0 (0%)	26658(106.6%) (16751 W 9907 M)	352 (95.7%) 204 (58.%) M 148(42 %) W	Objective was reasonably achieved and the process led by the male gender as well
3. 3	Percentage of households with access to sufficient seed to plant	30	21 (70%)	60 100%	100%	Objective was achieved.

1.4	Sub-sector name iv. Improving Agricultural Production/Food Security					
1.	Number of months of household food self-sufficiency as a result of improved agricultural production	8	0 (0%)	2	2	Objective was not achieved. It was observed and verified that the drought was severe
2.	Number of people directly benefiting from improving agricultural production and/or food security activities	27500 (16500W 11000m)	0 (0%)	30522 (110.99%) (18985 W 11537M)	352 (95.7%) 204 (58.%) M 148(42 %) W	Objective was achieved.

3.	Number of hectares under improved agricultural methods	16250	3575 (22%)	12045 (74.12%)	70.4%	It may seem like the objective was achieved. However based on FGDs it is understood that some of the hectares declared were planted with seed not facilitated by OFDA because farmers retained about 50% of the CARE seed due to late and poor rains. Also the Baseline was done after the seed was distributed thereby compromising accuracy of responses collected
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### 3.2.1.5 Sustainability of Project Benefits

This section sought to establish if the resilience building strategies are likely to continue after the end of the external funding and if there are sufficient forums/structures capabilities to maintain the changes produced over time. It also sought to assess if the decision making processes by men and women are likely to be continued into the future, and how/why?

There was also a need to establish how the exit strategy was defined, and how it would be managed at the end of the funding period.

#### **Financial/economic viability**

The resilience building strategies are likely to continue after the end of external funding. It can be noted that the financial/economic viability is expected to continue in a self propelled mode when first round beneficiaries start selling their excess produce. This will encourage the skeptics to join and benefit from the project, if they witness the poorest of the poor coming back home with live goats which they also envied.

The crop Sector was deliberately set up as a subsistence level project to alleviate hunger at household level through increased outputs in vain because of the drought. Goats on the other hand have started to multiply as highlighted by one of the project beneficiary who stated that'

*'I had zero goats. I received 2 pregnant goats from Care and one of them has already delivered triplets. Now I have 5!'* [FGD with women, Beitbridge]

Farmers are already applying indigenous knowledge and selecting bucks with a high probability of siring triplets so that they expand their herd size quickly to be able to sell excess animals. If a goat purchased for US\$40 can produce a return of at least \$120 (200% profit) in the year the project will remain economically viable. It is also noted that farmers incur minimum expenses in drugs and chemicals for dosing and dipping.

#### **Project ownership**

The CARE OFDA funded project promoted project ownership through the distribution of assets such as goats and ripper tine. Each farmer was given 2 goats and 1 ripper as an individual. AGRITEX and other discussants in FGDs felt that though giving assets to one person or household was a dead end regarding growth and expansion of the project, the approach solved the ownership and maintenance problem. With options where assets are owned by a group, one found that no one ended up taking responsibility of looking after the assets.

#### **Policy Support and structures**

- Regarding the CARE-OFDA funded projects, it was observed that the Local Government (Office of the District Administrator) from district to village level, Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) VET and AGRITEX were involved in DRR implementation plans to ensure that

issues of vandalism to property, especially the ones renovated and houses newly constructed for livestock were prevented. Most of the areas under CARE- OFDA funded projects are very close to the borders with RSA and Botswana so crossing with stolen items was reported to be common. However communities and law enforcement agents had formed strong relations with a positive impact emanating from the CARE facilitated project.

- The goat house demo centre presented an innovation approach that most farmers appreciated. The advantages of using such innovations were seconded by student farmers who had attended vocational training at Esigodini agricultural college. They testified that goat meat from animals that do not sleep on their dung tastes different and better.
- The veterinary services department highlighted their willingness and ability to continue training trainers and support systems because their staff is too stretched to cover the expansion. So contingency measures are to improve Paravets and Lead farmers' knowledge and information to assist growers.

### **Gender and decision making processes**

Decisions making processes by men and women are likely to be continued into the future, because each one will be making a decision on their property and there is "no more fighting". The ownership of assets has enabled women to gain respect from their male counterparts. This was highlighted in a focus group discussion with women who stated that;

*'Owning assets has helped us to gain respect from our husbands...'* [FGD **with women, Gwanda**]

Previously it was harder for the woman to decide on the household livestock because in the past she was always reminded that these belonged to the father of the home.

### **Exit strategy**

- AGRITEX and the Veterinary Services are key to the success and continuation of the project. However, these government institutions are stretched for manpower and transport. It is therefore not possible for them to deliver requisite back up service efficiently and effectively.
- CARE strategized to incline towards self-sustaining options and reinforce capacity building of local lead farmers and Paravets to back up knowledge given directly to the farmers. The project also strengthened what was started by CARE under the ENSURE and the PRIZE projects so that there is no starting afresh per ser.
- The rain season was late; therefore farmers retained part of their seed to plant in the next season. They were advised that CARE will not extend and give out inputs or livestock. Improved infrastructure at household and community level (e.g. livestock housing, seed retention and storage, construction of watering points and dipping

facilities) are intended to reduce potential further livestock losses in the coming season enabling farmers' recovery and positioning for subsequent production.

### **3.2.1.6 Impact Prospects**

The project Sector was intended *to improve agricultural productivity among vulnerable food insecure farmers in areas affected by drought and erratic rainfall so that at the end of the day the beneficiaries recover from the negative impact*. It was felt that one year in which the project has been in existence, is a short period on which to base impact assessment especially in development terms at community level. Short-term benefits were therefore identified.

#### **Short term influence**

Regarding improving agricultural production and productivity among smallholder farmers in marginal areas prone to drought it was noted that the crops were a failure because of the drought but the small livestock can contribute positively starting at within a year and beyond.

#### **Long term effects**

The research team felt that it is rather too early to establish the long term effects of the programme based on implementation plans of less than a full agricultural season. However, based on discussions with the beneficiaries, they are convinced that they will grow the goats project at all cost. Challenges may present with the seed projects because farmers are only guaranteed to plant what they retained from last planting because they were not able to plant everything due to late and or insufficient rains.

#### **Environmental Considerations**

Environmental benefits of goat production include keeping wildlife corridors open, preventing the spread of noxious weeds, and promoting the growth of local vegetative species through moderate grazing. Goats are also more water-efficient than large ruminants such as cattle. However, if they become too many in numbers, they cause soil damage and overgrazing of native herbs, grasses, shrubs and trees. This grazing can cause erosion and prevent regeneration. Some of the water holes/ wells in the villages are not protected. Livestock e.g. cattle, donkeys and goats can also need to drink from the same place where there is no alternative provided. When that happens, livestock do dung and in the process they foul waterholes. In most cases that dung has weed seed so the animals can introduce weeds through seeds carried in their dung.

### **3.3 Sector 2: Economic Recovery and Market Systems**

Sector II: *The objective of the Sector was to reduce dependency on casual labour and negative coping mechanisms amongst vulnerable food insecure households in the targeted areas through building of household and community economic activities and establishing and strengthening Village Savings and Lending Groups.*

*This sector was premised on income generating activities based on livelihood restoration and financial services that include; SME business, petty trade, brewing, formal salary, mining, vegetables sales, crop production, pension, cross border, remittance, begging, other casual, livestock production & sales, art, fodder entrepreneurship, and brick moulding. The evaluation established that the three most prominent livelihood activities included cross border trading, remittances and vegetable sales.*

#### **Subsector 2.1: Livelihoods restoration**

Findings from the evaluation established that the project focused on resuscitating existing ISAL groups that were established under the CARE USAID PRIZE project as well as establishing new groups as a platform for promoting livestock centred livelihoods restoration activities. FGDs with participants revealed that the groups which have survived so far are doing very well. In Gwanda, some outliers testified that they had managed to start cattle pan-fattening businesses which resulted in them being able to purchase household furniture and even contributing towards the purchase of personal vehicles and setting up lighting solar systems at their homesteads.

A market assessment conducted in the 8 wards visited by the evaluation team established that there was at least one vegetable garden being run by a group of women in each of these wards. This was a clear indication that women are participating in livelihood restoration activities. However, they are facing challenges of markets for their produce that include price fluctuation, competition and dominance of the Rand current as the mode of trading. The picture below shows one of the gardens that are run by a group of women. The garden in the picture is 100km by dirt road to the nearest urban market in Beitbridge.



Photo 3: Nutritional Garden, Beitbridge

### **Subsector 2.2: Financial services**

Findings from literature, (Bi-annual Report) revealed that a total of **40** cluster facilitators in the two districts went through ISAL refresher training to enhance their capacity and knowledge in order to effectively cascade and spearhead ISAL activities in their communities. FGDs established that in both Gwanda and Beitbridge, the majority of the cluster facilitators were becoming invisible. Key Informant interviews with lead farmers in Beitbridge indicated that most of the ISAL groups have become inactive because group members are investing in non-income generating return assets like household furniture resulting in most of the participants dropping out. Issues and challenges of transport were sited with some of them indicating that they use scorch carts to go and attend meetings at distant venues.

#### **3.3.1 Appropriateness to particular needs, expectations and priorities**

The project was suited to enhance economic recovery and market systems in Gwanda and Beitbridge *through building of household and community economic activities and establishing and strengthening Village Savings and Lending groups*. In addition to the stressed agricultural livelihoods already being experienced due to recurring droughts, livelihood recovery has been further limited by the prevailing macroeconomic conditions, which are catalysed by migration of the male gender leaving the females to cope with increased demands for sustaining their households, all in the wake of liquidity crisis.

The area under study is an agro-pastoralist zone, supplemented by casual work/employment, remittances and cross-border opportunities. In these areas the majority of households own some animals and these are a key safety net. Findings from the research

revealed that that communities were selling livestock to buy food given that they reported zero harvest but still had a bit of food reserve to last them at least a month. So a focus on leveraging existing Internal Savings and Lending (ISAL) groups previously trained by CARE, which are popular with women farmers, as a platform for mobilising income generating activities that support and complement the food security activities, is appropriate for the community studied.

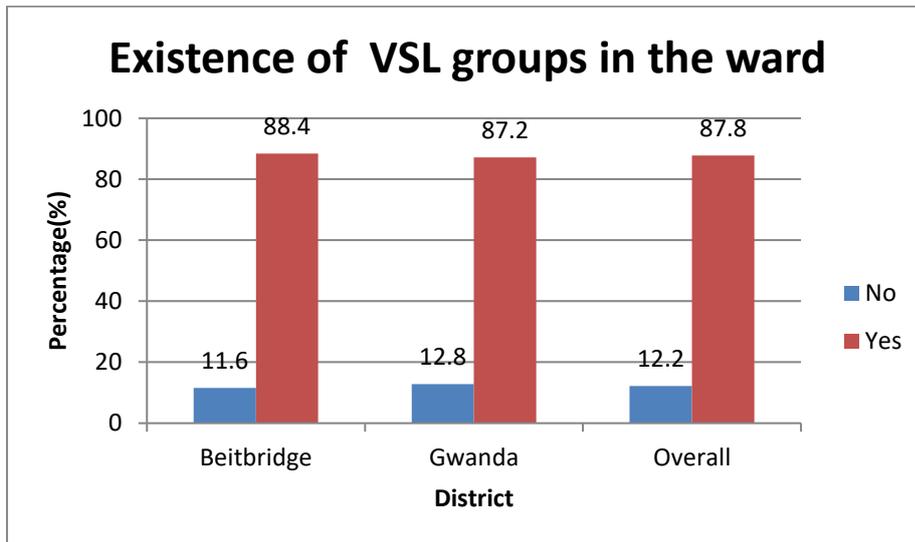


Figure 18: Existence of ISAL groups in the ward/village

During the survey, an overall 87.8 % of the respondents highlighted that there was an ISAL group in their ward. Of the 87.8 % who indicated that they had a ISAL group in their community, an overall 49.5% highlighted that they or one of the members in their household were part of the ISAL group in their community.

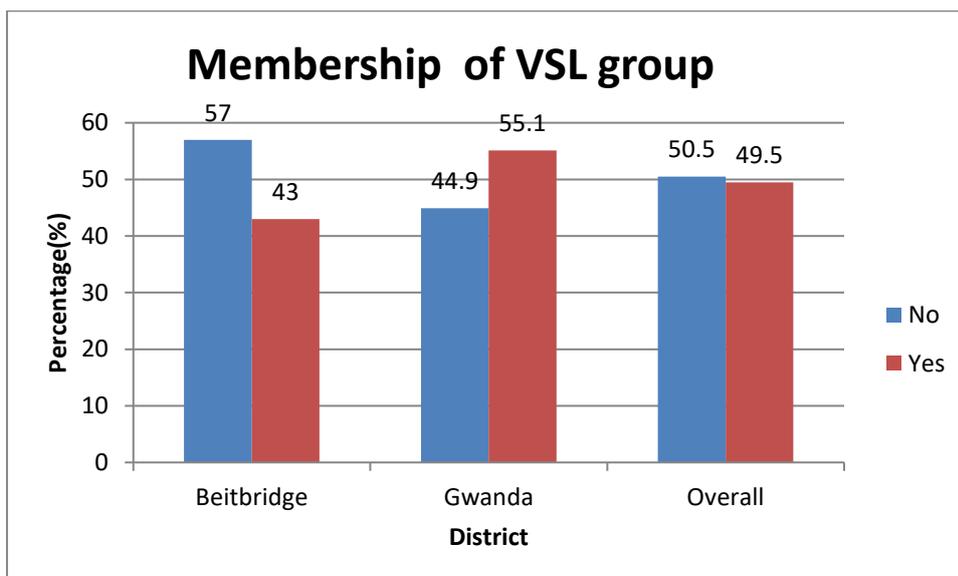


Figure 19: Membership of ISAL group

### **Relevance to particular need**

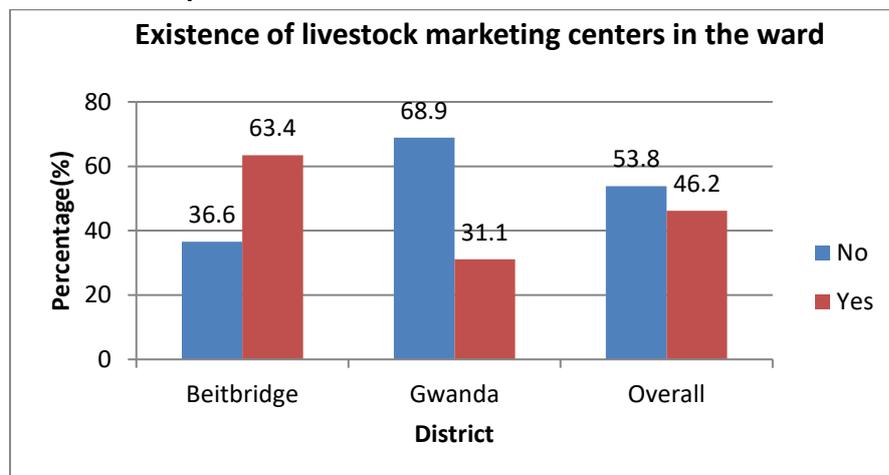


Figure 20: Existence of livestock marketing centers in the ward

The study noted that Gwanda has few marketing centres for livestock. Others may not even be aware of where the marketing centre is. It is highly likely that their livestock is some of that being sold to unscrupulous buyers paying very little money as there is no authority to arbitrate or assist the farmer. This concern was alluded to by the AGRITEX ward 8 officials together with his Veterinary colleague as they kept emphasizing that farmers should not attend cattle sales without an extension person. Officials had observed that farmers were being ripped off. At the field day farmers were trained on how to measure the size of their livestock using a belt, which is the bare minimum tape measure so that they always carry an estimate value to the market. This project is therefore appropriate so that systems are formalised and farmers are equipped to improve their own livelihoods.

### **Relevance to national plans**

The study established that most of the elements under the Economic Recovery and Market Systems Sector are relevant to National issues. The Sector II is also guided by the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation, whose implementation is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Alignment to Disaster Risk Reduction priorities**

The discussion presented under Sector I&11 are consistent. In addition to being aligned to ZIMASET it is also aligned to the Disaster Risk Reduction National Action Plan (2015-2030). In the areas of Beitbridge and Gwanda, farmers explained that the negative impact of disasters and risks are being addressed in the various sectors of development such as agriculture and irrigation, health, education, energy and transport infrastructure, water and climate. However a councillor in Beitbridge felt that other challenges, were man-made, and these included, technological hazards in

the form of road disasters, poor road quality both dirt and tarred roads, chemical spillage, land degradation, pollution, random cutting down of trees and veld fires.

An AGRITEX official in Gwanda explained that reasonable milestones had been reached in response to climate change as the stakeholders strive to inform and train communities on how to deal with different situations. The research team observed that in the areas close to the border, communities use RSA telephone line networks and even listen to foreign radios mostly because of expenses related and poor network. In such cases, dissemination of early warning information and any updates by electronic print media face dissemination challenges. This is also coupled by the resistance of communities to attend awareness campaigns due to high cost of transport or even hunger and thirst. In certain instances meteorological data is not specific to localities.

AGRITEX Beitbridge commended the advantage associated with CARE meetings and trainings. It was reported that farmers tend to flock to CARE meetings in their numbers because they know there will be food and water. So community organisations especially government departments like AGRITEX and VET, Councillors, Headmen, Teachers and NGOs collectively use such meetings to train and disseminate relevant information to communities. This collectiveness among facilitators was really an unintended objective which resulted from the CARE-OFDA funded project.

### **Progress towards meeting stated objectives**

Sector II: The objective of the project was to *reduce dependency on casual labour and negative coping mechanisms amongst vulnerable food insecure households in the targeted areas through building of household and community economic activities and establishing and strengthening Village Savings and Lending groups.*

The objective stated above was largely met in Gwanda and less in Beitbridge based on the following indicators achieved. The variance is further explained under effectiveness.

Under the sub-sector: **Livelihoods Restoration**, the number of people assisted through livelihood restoration activities is (**Gwanda 123.20%; Beitbridge 109%**). At the same time the percentage of beneficiaries reporting net income from their livelihood is (**Gwanda 124.29%; Beitbridge 86%**).<sup>6</sup>

**Comment;** *The first indicator measured the number of people that directly received USAID/OFDA assistance (such as in-kind inputs, cash, vouchers, or training) to resume their means of living. On the second one, Net income is defined as revenue greater than costs. It is synonymous with “profitability.” This indicator measured that percent of people self-*

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<sup>6</sup> Consolidated indicator tracking Tool 2018-2019. CARE International Zimbabwe

reported as earning more from the livelihood activity supported by USAID/OFDA than they are spending on costs (i.e., inputs, rent, transport, fees).

Under the sub-sector: Financial Services, the number of people and/or MSEs participating in financial services with USAID assistance is (**Gwanda 71%; Beitbridge 102%**). The percentage of financial service accounts/groups supported by USAID that are functioning properly are (**Gwanda 75%; Beitbridge 91%**).

**Comment;** *With the first indicator, it is noted that financial services include savings, credit, insurance, remittances, and other services. These services might be used to help people save for or recover from disasters, to smooth out the differences between income and consumption, or to start or invest in a business. A micro- or small enterprise (MSE) is a type of small business, either formal or informal, that has relatively few employees (OECD defines microenterprises as less than 10 employees, and small enterprises as less than 50). Microenterprises typically have little or no access to the commercial banking sector, so they often rely on microfinance or informal finance. Participating in financial services means taking out a Lending, depositing savings, sending or receiving a remittance, taking out an insurance policy, attending a financial education training, and/or participating in a community savings and lending group during the project period.*

### 3.3.2 Efficiency in use of resources

#### 3.3.2.1 Inputs availability, use and management

The inputs availability component of the project was designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable households that were not able to purchase inputs like fertilizer and certified seed or to retain seed from the previous seasons due to poor harvest and lack of money. The evaluation established that most of the households (95.7%) benefitted from the project Seed Systems Security facility whilst only (19.3 %) benefitted from own harvest and 13 % from local shops. KIIs and FGD respondents indicated that all the people (100%) selected to receive seed, fertilizer, goats and riper did receive their allocations.

FGDs and KIIs presented that the total annual rains received were below minimum required (249mm in Gwanda, 220 mm in Beitbridge; against a minimum of 250 mm) for cowpeas from planting to harvest. The statistical evidence captured on the rainfall record sheets at AGRITEX and on copies with Lead farmers validated the farmers' claim of having received insufficient rains in the two districts. It was also evident that challenges presented right from the start, very little rains received could not germinate all the seed sown.

Therefore the research established that resources were used efficiently but the drought was devastating.

### 3.3.3 Effectiveness of programme interventions

#### Sector 2 Economic Recovery and Market Systems (ERMS)

**Objective:** To reduce dependency on casual labour and negative coping mechanisms amongst vulnerable food insecure households in the targeted areas through Building of household and community economic activities and establishing and strengthening Village savings and lending groups.

2	Sector Name: ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND MARKET SYSTEMS	Target	Baseline Consoli- dated 2018/ 19	Extent to which objective was met consolidated	Evaluation findings of the study consolidated	Comment
2.1	Sub-sector name i. Livelihoods Restoration					
1.	Number of people assisted through livelihood restoration activities	500 (300W 200M)	0 (0%)	635 (127%) (296 W 339 M)	182 (49.5%)	Although some of the people dropped out of ISAL groups, It was established that those that stayed were able to trade and others to stock food and home furniture
2.	Percentage of beneficiaries reporting net income from their livelihood	70	0 (0%)	73.5 (105%)	51.63%	The objective was slightly above average. Observations during field visits revealed that the area is very dry, with little surplus from own farming activities. Income therefore will be from ISAL, imports and remittances.

2.2	Sub-sector name <i>ii.</i> Financial Services					
1.	Number of people and /or MSMEs participating in financial services with USAID assistance	2000 (1200W 800M)	1500 (75%) (915F; 585M)	1737 (86.85%) (1477 W 260 M)	182.16 (100 W 82 M)	It was observed that Women are participating more than men. Margin is small so males have good interest on the economic activity
2.	Percentage of financial service accounts/groups supported by USAID/OFDA that are functioning properly.	80%	0 (0%)	133%	83.08%	The objective fairly met even though farmers indicated that due to economic hardships some had dropped out.

### 3.3.4 Sustainability of Project Benefits

The evaluation sought to establish if the resilience building strategies are likely to continue after the end of the external funding and if there are sufficient forums/structures and capabilities to maintain the changes produced over time. It also sought to identify if the decision making processes by men and women is likely to be continued into the future, and how/why? There was also a need to establish how the exit strategy was defined, and how it would be managed at the end of the funding period.

- The resilience building strategies e.g. based on Village Savings & Lending groups and other smaller projects will most likely continue in Gwanda and Beitbridge. ISAL groups in Beitbridge have managed to survive the multicurrency system as they are saving their money in forex (ZAR). In Gwanda, participants grouped themselves by category and they contribute different amounts with most of the groups reinvesting into productive ventures like poultry and cross border trading. When women have got income generating activities supported by ISAL schemes they have a fallback position and source of capital to keep generating livestock based income generating schemes and the others.

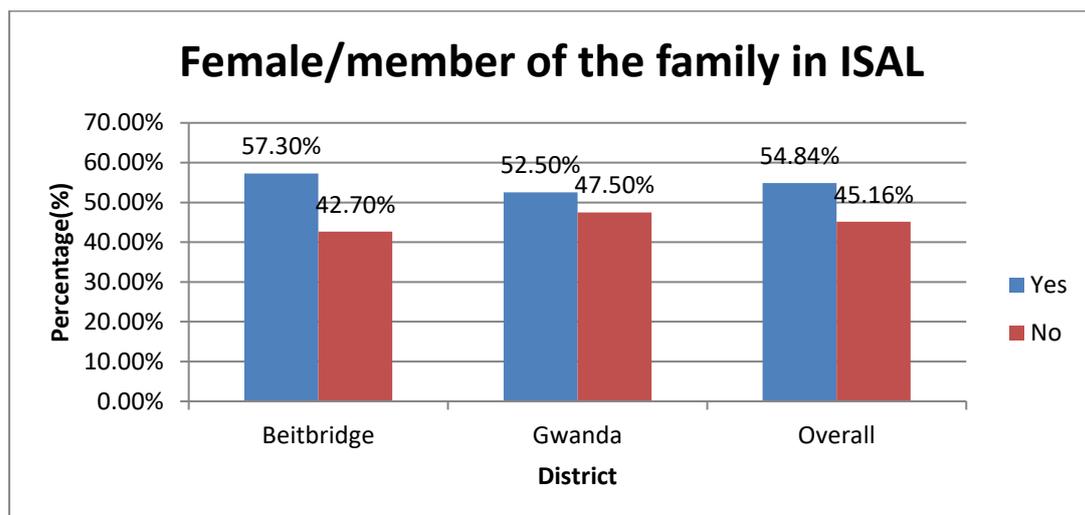


Figure 21: Female/member of the family in ISAL

- In Beitbridge it was noted that the trading currency is in South African Rand (ZAR) so not all group members are able to participate fully.
- The active groups in Gwanda have structures that are functional. In most cases the farming groups are the business groups as well.
- Once the women have a strong resource base, it is envisaged that they will have increased decision making powers as they preside over their own assets.
- The majority of the vulnerable are women who do not own substantive assets. Under the project they were also included in the allocation of small livestock. It was therefore imperative that they get training in fodder production in order to ensure that their livestock projects are sustainable.

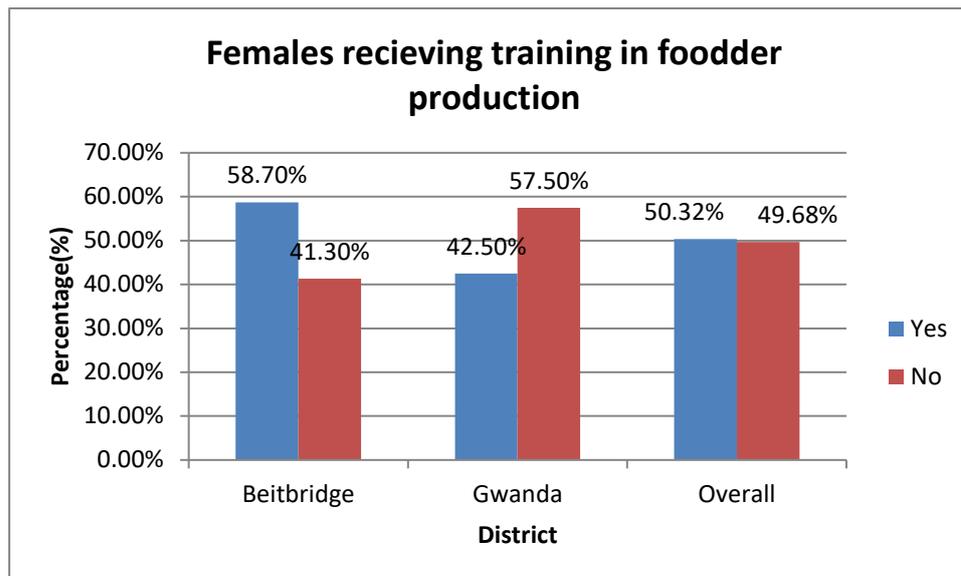


Figure 22: Females receiving training in fodder production

### Exit Strategy

Literature review presents that household investments in livestock management and asset-based savings through ISAL are intended to reduce the risk of unplanned disposal of livestock assets to meet emergency needs.<sup>7</sup> The project communication strategy emphasized that there were no plans for continued support for the project activities and that community ownership and capacity were key to sustainability, as indicated by FGD participants in Gwanda. In their concluding remarks they thanked CARE but still hoped for an opportunity that it would bring back the same or similar project.

### 3.3.5 Impact Prospects

The project Sector was intended to reduce dependency on casual labour and negative coping mechanisms amongst vulnerable food insecure households in the targeted areas through Building of household and community economic activities and establishing and strengthening ISAL groups. In the short period presenting, the project has continued making a positive impact on CARE PRIZE projects. It is likely that those that have survived the test on time will continue to stand as participants indicated that they have strengthened other working relationships because of the projects facilitated by CARE. From the ISAL groups some project beneficiaries have managed to purchase household furniture such as wardrobes, chairs e.tc, things that they never owned before and also send their children to school. Others also utilized their ISAL funds wisely by purchasing small livestock. This was highlighted by one of the project beneficiaries who had this to say;

*'From the money I got from our PROJECTISAL group I managed to buy 3 goats and the chair that you are sitting on right now'* [KII with Cluster Facilitator, Beitbridge]

<sup>7</sup> CARE M&E Plan

If participants are also able to have alternative projects and items to sell then they get to grow their goats and other livestock businesses. An interviewee in Gwanda Guyu showcased his green pasture plots. He also displayed velvet bean dried bales and Rhodes grass bales for urea treatment.

The general observation by the research team presents that the project period was too short to measure its meaningful impact. For instance the livestock that was distributed, the majority of the goats are still to give birth. Therefore, it is hard to ascertain the impact of the project as it can only be seen over a period of two years and upwards.

## **CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **4.1 Conclusions**

- The project suited the needs, expectations and priorities of the target communities, government and partners as it was crafted and implemented in tandem with the National plans and jointly adapted with other stakeholders to specificities of local communities on the ground.
- The CARE OFDA funded programme was fully aligned to the community needs, district requirements and national strategic agenda and plans.
- The project met part of the stated objectives, particularly the livestock section. Unfortunately it failed to meet crops production targets as a result of drought. About 92% had no harvest at all due to excessive drought. Only 8% got harvest which may last less than 4 months. The rest of the food reserves reported are imported or bought in.
- If beneficiaries are too far from the meeting point, they miss out due to high transport cost challenges. Smaller groups at grassroots level should be followed by an accompanying facilitator within walking distance of farmers. Alternatively the facilitator must be motorized so that he is the one who will travel to meet with farmers not the other way round.
- It was noted that youths and young adults below the age of 30 were generally excluded from the project. Therefore they need to be included since they are limited job opportunities
- Communities in border villages depend on foreign telecommunication and radio networks

### **4.2 Lessons Learned**

- It is important to consult with National agendas when planning and implementing development programmes. This enhanced relevancy of CARE projects.
- Selecting the appropriate means of development in the form of small livestock i.e. goats catalyzed success rate.
- Some farmers had neither seen a ripper tine, nor been trained on how to use it, so they simply stored away the tool
- Shirikure variety could have been resistant to Quelea birds but it presented a challenge of longevity.
- Limited information dissemination using local e-networks gets to the intended beneficiaries in the border villages

### 4.3 Recommendations

- Key informants like the Veterinary services should be involved in identifying sources that have traditionally supplied good quality raw materials e.g. materials used by STABEX were commended in both districts.
- Future projects may have to consider a water element to accompany both crops and livestock drought recovery mitigation attempts.
- The project should incorporate indigenous knowledge systems which enhance fitting into projects that have gone through natural testing.
- Training on usage of new innovation e.g the ripper tine should be carried out each time a new technology and innovation is introduced.
- Refresher courses must happen in case there are laggards
- There is need to station project officers/facilitators close to the beneficiaries and to have a reporting system which will make it easy to detect gaps because farmers were struggling to raise transport fares to go to meeting venues.
- The facilitator should have means of transport to enable him to travel to meet the farmers within their walking distance not the other way round.
- CARE may need to consider commissioning a study to understand the key success factors that have upheld the increased success of the ISAL groups in Gwanda
- The fact that some youth might not own a piece of land for crop cultivation, it is recommended that Care considers giving small livestock to start their own projects
- There is need for AGRITEX in conjunction with the Department of Research and Specialist Services and the Seed houses, in different wards to urgently mount trials and establish the most suitable varieties of crops which can be adopted by the development agents.
- There is need to setup communication hubs which for example in-cooperates foreign and local numbers. CARE may need to invest in a gadget allocated to a community representative especially in remote areas to disseminate information.

**ANNEXES TO THE REPORT**

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE..... **ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

ANNEX 2: CONSENT FORM ..... **ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

ANNEX 2: TOOLS ..... **ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

ANNEX 2.1: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE ..... **ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

ANNEX 2.2: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE ..... **ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

ANNEX 2.3: ENDLINE QUESTIONNAIRE TOOL ..... **ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

ANNEX 3: LIST OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS ..... **ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

ANNEX 4: LIST OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS CONDUCTED ..... **ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

ANNEX 5: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED..... **ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**



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**CARE OFDA CLEANED DATA SET**



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