

DRAFT DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION

**RNRRS: R7039 Analysing Changing Gender Relations for Monitoring and
Evaluation in the Renewable Natural Resource Sector**

Draft document for discussion prepared

by

Catherine Locke, Christine Okali and John Mims

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**Overseas Development Group
University of East Anglia
Norwich NR4 7TJ**

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INTRODUCTION

This document details a proposal for a programme to pilot test an approach for monitoring changes in gender relations within the context of crop post-harvest interventions in Zimbabwe. It begins with a presentation on the overall approach including generic questions to be adapted in the field. The approach is based on conceptual understandings derived from social and development theory and empirical studies discussed in the literature. This conceptual framework is presented in Section II of the document and is followed by a discussion of possible methods and tools for implementing the approach.

It is emphasised throughout the proposals that the successful application of any generic frameworks to the analysis of dynamic social relations requires understanding the context within which they are being applied, and the development of context specific research questions. In Section IV, a review of relevant literature relating to changing gender relations in Zimbabwe with special reference to crop post-harvest activities is presented as part of the process of contextualising the approach.

The document has been prepared for discussion with colleagues in Zimbabwe and presents work in progress. It is understood that changes will be made and that a final workplan will be prepared for each of the sites where a pilot test will be carried out. Only Section IV is fully referenced although the justification for a revised approach to the study of changing gender relations has been discussed in referenced documents circulated earlier¹.

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¹ Locke, C. and Okali, C. (1997) *Changing Gender Relations: Methodological Challenges for Gender Planning*.

I AN APPROACH TO GENDER ANALYSIS

Introduction

Our proposed approach to gender analysis is based on literature reviews of conceptual issues and empirical work relating directly to gender, as well as other relevant methodological material. The primary objective of this work is to contribute towards the development of a more sensitive approach to gender impact monitoring. We have a six month period within which to test such an approach. Within this time, we expect to be able to:

- assess the process we have used to develop a context specific approach;
- evaluate the chosen methods in terms of the ability of projects and programmes to work with them and in terms of the information generated.

The proposed approach is one which seeks to monitor past and ongoing changes and current ideologies about gender norms and roles, to record roles, low visibility strategies and covert negotiations, and to understand the value of changes, all within specific locations within Zimbabwe and in the context of crop post-harvest research and development programmes. The monitoring activities will, therefore, focus on:

- i) generating a set of essential macro and micro-level information relating to gender relations with a particular focus on crop post-harvest activities;
- ii) assessing the meaning and impact of past changes in crop post-harvest activities on these relations and the processes by which these occurred or are occurring (for example, changes resulting from improved sunflower oil processing).

The following proposals are prefaced with a general discussion of methodological issues relating to qualitative data, disaggregation, informants, low visibility changes and sampling. The proposals are for discussion with collaborators and include a conceptual framework (Section II) with generic research questions (Table 1) and possible methods and tools for disaggregation and for monitoring past and ongoing change (Section III). It is necessary that all collaborators understand the proposed approach set out in this document. Final decisions will be made on the approach including who will be directly involved in supervision, information collection and data analysis, during the setting up period in October in Zimbabwe

General Methodological Issues

Our conceptual framework attempts to focus on changes in gender relations which, because of their low visibility, subtlety and ambiguity, raise particular methodological challenges. Our review of research methods and tools to meet those challenges has been selective. We have concentrated on developing an overall monitoring approach which balances our need to select methods which will allow us to satisfy our conceptual framework while at the same time meeting the need of programme managers to be able to implement a gender impact monitoring plan which will not consume all the monitoring resources available.

We have concluded that the answers to these concerns lie in large part in developing a clear understanding of the present situation and setting appropriate research questions based on this understanding, before embarking on the monitoring of past and ongoing change. This approach does not dismiss existing frameworks which place emphasis on monitoring gendered patterns of access to and control over natural resources and inputs including labour, gendered work patterns and work loads, and gendered income streams associated with these. Rather, these data form part of the backcloth against which we propose looking at processes of change in the context of crop post-harvest activities.

There are a number of more specific methodological issues that underpin the approach. These include concerns about qualitative data and generalisation, about locally meaningful disaggregation and complexity, about informant identity and the social context of research, about men in gender analysis, and about low visibility processes. These are briefly discussed in turn below:

Qualitative Data and Generalisation: None of the proposed methods are quantitative in the sense of dealing with directly measurable variables (such as plant height) but, as qualitative

methods, they are useful for examining processes and meanings of change, as well as for capturing the diversity of experiences. Most of these methods are also based on data from a small sample of individuals and/or groups and sample size for methods designed to raise hypotheses, access hidden and or subtle processes, monitor behaviour over time, should be determined by purposive convenience sampling and redundancy of data. In other words, sampling should continued until no new themes arise. Whilst programmes need to be able to understand how interventions have impacted differently on individuals, they also need to arrive at generalisable descriptions of outcomes, say between different locations. Ultimately, programmes will need to decide what are reasonable levels of generalisation given a conceptual framework that lays emphasis on the meaning of change and the locational and historical specificity of these processes.

Locally Meaningful Disaggregation and Complexity: The usefulness of any of the methods suggested by the approach critically depends on paying greater attention to determining appropriate units of analysis and levels of disaggregation within these. Our literature reviews have drawn attention to the problematic use of the household as a key unit of analysis in Africa and stress the need to verify locally meaningful units of disaggregation through field research. There is also a need to identify appropriate variables for differentiating between individual women and men (such as age) and the domestic units to which they belong (such as 'women-centred hearth-holds'). The literature suggest that the developmental stage of domestic units (whether newly-formed, extending or disintegrating) and the economic status of these units (whether households are well resourced or not) are likely to be significant. In selecting disaggregating variables for individuals, a number of writers point to marital status (including polygyny) and seniority, as key for understanding how power relations are maintained and changed. Decisions about appropriate disaggregation must be made early on in research design and take into account the fact that disaggregation substantially increases the complexity of the data collection and analysis.

Informant Identity and Research Context: Information about gender relations is highly dependent on its source and the social context in which it was provided. We need to be very clear about (i) who is actually providing information and (ii) who is present during the provision of information. This is particularly so when domestic units or groups are the units of analysis. Time spent sampling particular households only to leave out information on who provides the information in what social context, is wasted time.

Men in Gender Analysis: A major premise of our approach is that men must be more effectively incorporated into gender analysis. Conventional gender analysis has tended to focus on women, to neglect the joint concerns of women and men, and to obscure the ways in which women and men attempt to manoeuvre within existing gender relations. We are concerned to include men in gender analysis, to clarify the ways in which women and men jointly resolve issues, and to analyse the strategies which both women and men use to relieve constraints on their ability to fulfil obligations/ responsibilities.

Low Visibility Processes: Many of the processes this approach seeks to investigate are of low visibility. Their 'everyday' nature means that methods need to be sensitive to subtle shifts. In-depth ethnographic research is capable of recording these processes and in some instances routine monitoring has also been effective at employing appropriate tools and indicators to get at these dynamics. Although the detailed information will not cover a large sample, it is not 'in-depth ethnographic research' which is being proposed and it is expected that, in the end, specific findings can be verified through a more random or at any rate generalisable sample using a specifically designed indicator/outcome variable.

The Proposed Approach

The proposed approach begins with:

1. the assembly of background information,
2. the identification of locally significant disaggregating variables, and
3. the framing of context specific research questions.

It proceeds with:

4. the recording of data on local gender relations, and
5. examining changes in these as they relate to crop post-harvest changes.

1. Assembling Background Information

Current understandings of gender relations emphasise their contextually specific nature. The approach, therefore, begins with the assembly of general background information necessary for data interpretation. This information includes:

- i) macro-level information on agriculture, crop post-harvest activities, gender relations and rural gender relations in particular;
- ii) similar information for the local communities under study;

The macro-level information relating to Zimbabwe is largely available in the literature and has been assembled by the principal investigators (Section IV). Where this material is not available in published form, or where there are serious gaps in the data, group discussion with key informants is likely to elucidate generic understandings of the context. These understandings, and those found in the literature, are likely to be contradictory and should be regarded as contributing different perspectives on gender relations from which specific studies can begin.

2. Identifying Locally Significant Disaggregation Variables

The identification of locally significant disaggregation variables is one of the critical first steps in the approach and answers to the following questions need to be established:

- What are local categories of diversity and difference?
- What variation exists within these categories of diversity and difference?
- What are the appropriate regional or social units of generalisation?

Secondary data may provide pointers towards important axes of difference within the local and regional context and bearing in mind the particular programme concerns. However, field research should be used to elaborate and verify categories of disaggregation based on the secondary data and on the opinions of research and field staff with knowledge of the particular locations concerned. At this micro level, answers to the following questions relating to individual women and men, domestic units and other social institutions are needed:

- What are local categories for differentiating between women and between men?
- What are the characteristics of the livelihood trajectories of women and men?
- How do local domestic institutions vary?
- What are the other important groupings and social institutions in which women and men are involved?

The answers to these questions need to feed into:

- i) the identification of appropriate units of generalisation using an explicit set of social and economic criteria, and
- ii) the development of a method of disaggregation that is locally meaningful and practicable.

3. Framing Context Specific Research Questions

The conceptual framework detailed in II suggests generic questions which need to be adapted for specific local situations and in relation to particular programme needs. The generic questions are given below and the link between these, the conceptual understandings and the implications for the approach are detailed in Table 1. **The process of framing context specific research questions will be the main business of a workshop day with research officers and field assistants.** The questions relate to local

gender relations in a general sense, and in relation to particular interventions, and to the way in which women and men strategise and bargain around these interventions.

Decisions about appropriate methods to use for the analysis are dependent on decisions about specific research questions and the data required to answer these. Once this process of matching methods and tools with data requirements has been completed, a programme of work can be prepared. Information derived from individual activities such as focus groups will likely satisfy data needs for a number of questions but this can only be determined once the data requirements have been specified.

4. Examining Local Gender Relations

The following questions for examining present gender relations and changes relating to crop post-harvest activities presupposes that categories of disaggregation have been established (and as such, answers will relate to these rather than to general categories of women and men) and that research questions have been determined.

The generic research questions are:

1. In relation to our understanding that gender relations are dynamic:
 - What are the historical directions of change in gender relations?
 - What is the nature of local gender relations?
 - What aspects of gender relations are currently relatively 'accepted' and stable?
 - What aspects are currently highly contested, fluid or changing?
2. In relation to our understanding that a relational analysis is important:
 - How do women and men maintain and renegotiate gender relations?
 - How are gender relations related to other aspects of social identity?
 - What is the nature of gender relations in different local institutions?
 - How do women and men use these institutions to maintain and renegotiate gender relations?
3. In relation to the need to focus on qualitative and symbolic aspects of gender relations as against a focus on physical tasks, resources and decision-making:
 - What are local values about gender roles, resource allocations and authority?
 - What are cultural perceptions of agricultural services and technologies?
 - How are these two related?

5. Examining Changes Related to Crop Post-Harvest Activities

Gendered constraints and opportunities related to any particular activities can only be effectively considered if situated within a broader understanding of gendered livelihood activities. Therefore, the examination of present gender relations begins with an appreciation of gendered livelihood activities at the micro-level, and follows with an appreciation of gender relations around specific crop post-harvest activities.

The key generic questions are:

1. In relation to strategising:
 - What are the shared and separate livelihood interests of women and men?
 - What strategies do women and men use to advance these joint and separate interests?
2. In relation to bargaining:
 - What are local understandings of the relative bargaining positions of women and men?
 - How do women and men use these local understandings in their bargaining strategies?
 - How is this worked out at an individual level?
3. In relation to valuing outcomes in relation to crop post-harvest interventions:
 - How do women and men strategise around interventions?
 - How do women and men experience and value outcomes?

Table 1: Implications of the Conceptual Understandings of Changing Gender Relations for Gender Analysis

Conceptual understandings	Generic questions for the analysis of changing gender relations arising from the conceptual understandings	Implications for the approach to the analysis of changing gender relations
<p>Dynamic Analysis: Gender relations are formed and constantly renegotiated and reconstructed by individuals and groups in direct confrontations or through everyday events, and in response to external changes, in available technology or government policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the historical directions of change in gender relations? • What is the nature of local gender relations? • What aspects of local gender relations are currently relatively 'accepted' and stable? • What aspects are currently highly contested, fluid or changing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a historical perspective • Focus on change • Develop a local understandings through field analysis
<p>Relational Analysis: The experiences and strategies of men and women and negotiations around separate and joint interests, both within households and supra-household institutions, are integral to a gendered analysis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do women and men maintain and renegotiate gender relations? • How are gender relations shaped by other social identity? • What is the nature of gender relations in different local institutions? • How do women and men use these institutions to maintain and renegotiate gender relations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate men into gender analysis • Include other social relationships in analysis • Include local institutions in analysis
<p>Social Analysis: Gender is an organising concept for all aspects of social reality, including situations not directly concerned with relations between women and men, and is indicated in local cultural values which affect behaviour although behaviour cannot be read directly from these.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are local values about gender roles, resource allocations and authority? • What are cultural perceptions of agricultural services and technologies? • How are these two related? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probe the links between local values about gender relations and the roles, resources allocations and authority of women and men • Probe the links between perceptions of particular technologies and local gender values
<p>Strategising: Women and men strategise to optimise their separate and joint livelihoods and security, and junior and disadvantaged individuals resist and contest powerful individuals and strategies may not reflect local cultural values about appropriate and acceptable behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the shared and separate livelihood interests of women and men? • What strategies do women and men employ to advance their joint and separate livelihood interests? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be alert to the joint and separate interests and strategies
<p>Bargaining: The relative bargaining power of women and men is determined by concerns about household survival, extra-household networks, economic variables and local understandings about legitimate acts, including drawing on and redefining cultural meanings in order to advance their interests in the process of negotiation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are generalised local understandings of the relative bargaining positions of women and men? • How do women and men use these local understandings in their bargaining strategies? • How is this worked out at an individual level? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the process of bargaining • Report on specific acts of bargaining
<p>Valuing Outcomes: In relation to gender concerns, women and men themselves interpret and value interventions for meeting their own needs and interests and for their own ongoing negotiations. Apparently similar outcomes can have different implications and valued outcomes may be unrelated to project objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do women and men strategise around interventions? • How do women and men experience and value outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect ambiguous and contradictory findings

II UNDERSTANDINGS OF CHANGING GENDER RELATIONS IN THE RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCES SECTOR²

Introduction

The gender-planning frameworks that are now commonly used in the analysis of gender relations within the natural resources sector are a substantial improvement over earlier 'gender blind' approaches since they emphasise the gendered nature of agricultural activities and enable intervenors to target women more effectively. However, research on the impact of targeting has led to the increasing realisation that gender planning frameworks need to incorporate more fundamental understandings about the relationship between women and men. Although the way in which gender relations are maintained or changed over time is not yet fully understood, there have been significant conceptual improvements in thinking about gender relations which can be incorporated into gender analysis. These are discussed below, and, together with the considerations about diversity and differentiation and institutional settings also presented, form part of the conceptual understanding underpinning this proposed approach to gender analysis.

Gender as a Dynamic Social Relation

Acknowledging the dynamic, relational and social nature of gender relations is the foundation for an improved approach to gender analysis.

Gender Relations are Dynamic: Gender relations within households, communities and other social institutions are not 'givens' but are formed and constantly being renegotiated and reconstructed in response to the changing needs and interests of the individuals and groups involved, but also in response to changing conditions, including for example the introduction of new technology and state policies.

Changes in gender relations may be highly visible such as those resulting from campaigns to change land rights, or more subtle resulting from everyday bargaining between individual women and men about meeting domestic needs. Regardless of apparent general trends in the direction of change, there are wide variations in gender relations and in the nature and meaning of any change, both because of differences in the social identity and particular situations of the women and men involved and because any specific situation is influenced by historical and contemporary local processes. At the same time, while certain delineated areas of gender relations may habitually permit a degree of negotiation, others routinely preclude negotiation.

The Relational Analysis of Gender : Despite real commitments to a gendered analysis, in practice, women are the centre of most gender analyses and other aspects of social identity e.g. age, marital status and economic position, are neglected. Furthermore, gender relations are often viewed as being located within households and not in other social contexts and the importance of links between for example households and community organisations, for maintaining and changing relations at other levels, are rarely considered.

By focusing on the relations between women and men, the experiences and strategies of men within gendered processes will be incorporated into the analysis and emphasis will be placed on similar and joint as well as different and competing interests between the individuals involved.

Information on gendered work patterns and differential access to and control over resources within households needs to be placed within an understanding of how such patterns are maintained and/or renegotiated within the wider range of social and economic relationships (within other households and in supra-household settings) in which women and men are engaged and which are part of their social identity. While a change in market relations for example does not necessarily lead to a change in

² This discussion is a summary of a fully referenced document based on a review of the literature which will be made available later.

domestic gender relations, these contexts are linked in terms of peoples' livelihoods and these linkages need to be understood in order to account for unexpected outcomes of interventions.

Gender as a Social Analysis : In order to appreciate the meaning of particular tasks and divisions of labour, resources and authority, and the value of specific changes in these for the relationships concerned, attention must be given to the symbolic and qualitative aspects of gender relations. For example, the value of women's weeding labour may vary depending for whom it is carried out and the particular crops concerned. Under certain conditions, wives may receive cash payment from husbands for weeding while under others, they may not.

Gender is an organising concept embedded in all aspects of social reality. Gendered constructions include signalling hierarchy in relations that are not literally about gender: the gender construction of technology, resources and the environment, and the gendered construction of knowledge that is used to manipulate gendered access to new technology, opportunities or activities. In large part for example, it has been demonstrated that women have been excluded from knowledge about new technology and consequently, opportunities related to these.

Processes of Changing Gender Relations

As noted, gender relations are constantly being renegotiated and reconstructed around joint and separate interests, rights, obligations and resources of women and men. The change processes have been variously conceptualised using a wide range of terms (see Table 2 for example) that reflect subtle theoretical differences. We do not attempt to separate these here, but to reflect the general thrust of these understandings and their implications for gender analysis.

Strategising: In contrast to earlier portrayals of women as helpless victims, recent understandings of gender relations have emphasised that both women and men strategise to optimise their separate and joint livelihoods and security, and that disadvantaged women and men even resist and contest male power (or more powerful men) in various ways. Both women and men may employ strategies that go counter to local understandings about their behaviour and roles.

Women's strategies in particular are viewed as being intimately related to general household livelihood strategies in ways that reflect the tensions between their joint and separate interests.

Bargaining: Although there is widespread evidence of conflict of interests between women and men within households, bargaining must be moulded with the general format of co-operation if the household is to survive, and this has been shown to influence the behaviour of women and men.

The relative bargaining power of women and men is also influenced by extra-household factors such as access to external networks of kin and others (non-conjugal relationships are important channels of investment, obligation and entitlement for both men and women in many contexts), economic variables such as employment, and local understandings about the various points of leverage to which women, for instance, have access (such as appealing to male relatives for support, withholding food or labour from their husbands or using 'the forum of women's groups to legitimise actions which are at the borderline of acceptable female behaviour'). Women and men may also individually and collectively draw on cultural ideas (or 'taken for granted knowledge about existing gender relations' or norms about relations between husbands and wives) in their struggle and bargaining over meanings, to advance their interests in the process of negotiation (over land for example).

A model of gender bargaining which highlights the importance of alliances, or 'interest coalitions' that women and men forge with parents, children, siblings and friends has been extended beyond households to understanding bargaining within the market, the community and the state.

Finally, the bargaining power of individual woman and men is related cumulatively and additively to their own and others' successful bargaining in relation to a particular issue - in other words successive and successful negotiation may open up particular areas of gender relations to increasing contestation.

Bargaining within the household is often covert, involving emotional manipulation and unspoken power games, and complex, often involving bargaining on behalf of others, especially but not only children, all of which makes both the process and the outcomes difficult to detect.

Understanding these processes going on around interventions is important for assessing outcomes of past interventions and for planning future work.

Valuing Outcomes: Conventional gender analysis may not only mistake significant elements of 'success', but implicitly prejudices the value of shifts in gender relations. The achievement of technical project objectives, such as 'grinding mill adopted', and the advancing of practical or strategic interests, such as 'increasing women's autonomy', is invariably interpreted as success with little or no attention given to how women and men themselves interpret and experience changing gender relations around interventions. Women and men may prioritise other interests, such as better enforcement of conventional female and male responsibilities, over project goals, and 'failed' projects may conceal substantial gains for women and men.

Efforts to channel resources to specific categories of clients often have unpredictable consequences which have little to do with intended goals. Resources gained may be used to strengthen bargaining positions vis-a-vis others or overt control over such resources may be surrendered to others while covert control is retained and used as a means of enforcing responsibility on the part of others.

Apparently similar outcomes can, therefore, have very different implications for gender analysis, and understanding the subtlety of outcomes requires being sensitive to the overall livelihood strategies of women and men and the way in which resources from one activity may be invested in others, to their motivations and their perceptions of the value of change. It is also important to note that changes in activities do not automatically lead to changes in socio-cultural perceptions of women and men.

Pre-Requisites For A Meaningful Analysis Of Changing Gender Relations

Diversity and Differentiation

A central challenge for an improved gender analysis is to better identify the units of joint and separate interests, particular networks or alliances of interests within or across these, and important social identities for the disaggregation of individuals. The precise nature of social differentiation is context specific.

Social Identity: While general trends may reflect a deteriorating position of women in relation to men in terms of resource control, some women may be able to attain relatively powerful and prestigious positions, both within households and communities, and there are also clear differences in the status and position of men. Other aspects of social identity, commonly age, ethnicity, and kinship in Sub-Saharan Africa, cross-cut gender identities and may be more important in the overall patterning of difference in some contexts. Attention to life cycle differences and changing livelihood trajectories, illuminates the way in which women's and men's interests and opportunities are shaped by their changing relationships

Institutional Analyses

Households: *"households may not be visible entities in terms of buildings or sets of room within residential units, but isolable only in terms of specific functions such as cooking or the pooling of finance; or there may be active inter-household networks of reciprocity and exchange which are regular features of multi-family compounds..." (Muthwa, 1994:167).*

Households need to be differentiated in ways that are locally meaningful and analytically useful and should include meaningful differences in structure and relations as well as characteristics such as size and wealth, all of which may be closely linked.

Research in SSA has demonstrated the variation in the nature and importance of the conjugal relationship in different kinship systems and domestic arrangements. For example, it cannot be

assumed that the gender relations between husband and wives are similar in polygynous co-residential households and monogamous households, nor can it be assumed that all households are defined by conjugal bonds or that domestic units are units of production and consumption.

Social norms about the appropriate roles, claims and obligations (in relation to goods, incomes and services including labour) of husbands and wives vis-a-vis one another and wider kin are referred to as '*conjugal contracts*'. Within households and kin-based organisations, members' entitlements are based on implicit rather than explicit arrangements whose legitimacy rests on customary (defined and redefined by members) norms and practices rather than legally enforceable ones. The working of the 'contract' - conjugal or otherwise - will vary and is subject to bargaining as already discussed. Change is also experienced as a result of changes in the life cycle of the domestic group and this also needs to be considered in delineating household forms.

Supra-Household Institutions: "*gender based studies of farming and rural production systems... draw attention to the range of overlapping groupings and social institutions of which women and men may be members, and which give them different kinds of rights and responsibilities*" (Leach, 1992:17).

Focusing exclusively on the conjugal relationship neglects the importance of relationships that women and men cultivate with children, siblings, parents, relatives and friends and their membership of extra-household institutions, including kin networks and church groups. The creation of extra-household networks commonly requires continuous investments of resources and time, and intra-household relations are reciprocally linked with relationships and networks that household members forge with those outside the household.

III RESEARCH METHODS AND TOOLS FOR INVESTIGATING CHANGING GENDER RELATIONS IN THE RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCES SECTOR

Introduction

There is a voluminous and ever-increasing body of information on research methods. Our review did not cover all of this material, or all possible tools. It concentrated rather on developing an overall monitoring approach which balances our need to select methods which will allow us to satisfy our conceptual framework while at the same time meeting the need of programme managers to be able to implement a gender impact monitoring plan which will not consume all the monitoring resources available, and is practicable.

The approach does not dismiss existing frameworks which place emphasis on monitoring gendered patterns of access to and control over natural resources and inputs including labour, gendered work patterns and work loads, and gendered income streams associated with these. Rather, these data form part of the backcloth against which we propose looking at processes of change in the context of crop post-harvest activities.

Information Needs

The proposed approach begins with two steps which set the scene for the monitoring activities and involve data collection:

- the assembly of background information, and
- the identification of locally significant disaggregating variables.

Background information relating to macro and micro-level information on agriculture, crop post-harvest activities and rural gender relations in particular is largely available in the literature and for Zimbabwe, has been assembled by the principal investigators (Section IV). Where this material is not available in published form, or where there are serious gaps in the data, these are likely to be filled in discussions with key informants, including extension and local development agency staff. The background information coming from different sources is likely to be contradictory and should be regarded as contributing different perspectives on gender relations.

Information relating to locally significant disaggregation variables will need to be assembled through discussions amongst researchers and field staff, including extension staff, but also from discussions with community members. Decisions will have to be made about the form which these discussions will take.

The subsequent monitoring data will depend on the actual research questions which are yet to be determined but will focus on 1) recording data on local gender relations and 2) assessing the meaning and impact of changes in crop post-harvest activities on these relations, and 3) on the processes by which these changes occurred or are occurring (for example, the way in which women and men have responded to changes in crop marketing policy and how this has impacted on gender bargaining processes).

Our conceptual framework attempts to focus on changes in gender relations which, because of their low visibility, subtlety and ambiguity, raise particular methodological challenges. In earlier documentation we have described how these processes and their determinants and outcomes are referred to in the literature as follows:

Table 2a. Change Processes, their Character, Determinants and Outcomes

General processes	strategising (covert + other proactive processes?) : bargaining, negotiating and re-negotiating, challenging, subverting (conflict?), manipulation (to gain access to/control over?), coping (reactive processes?) : resistance
Specific processes	investing in gender-specific assets; investing in kin/non-kin groups; investing in meanings; withholding of resources/ services; emotional manipulation; power games; manoeuvring to change exchange items- labour for cash; feigned ignorance
Determinants/ context	conjugal contracts; cultural constructions of gender; gender roles - eg interdependence of tasks; gendered access to and control over resources and decision-making; gendered interests; reciprocal needs/interests (co-operation to ensure survival); perceptions of interests, contributions claims and entitlements - own and others'; actual contributions to family 'opulence'; forms/character of control*; gendered access to kin and non-kin networks and to state support; relative bargaining power and breakdown (fallback) positions; outcomes of previous bargaining; access to points of leverage and 'weapons of the weak'; extent to which needs are immediate/ pressing; locally-specific social, economic and political context and household's position within it; macro-policy environment and wider political-economy (as expressed by the local community).
Outcomes	empowerment; exploitation/appropriation; patriarchal bargains; transactions; trade-offs; increased status/income/ autonomy/ livelihood security; crisis insurance optimised; contractual changes; breakdown- divorce/ separation.

* Each form of control is likely to generate its own form of (quiet?) everyday resistance (Scott, 1985).

Our initial list of proposed research methods for accessing these 'low visibility' change processes and the 'subtleties of gender relations' including interpreting cultural meanings, included the following:

Table 2b. Research Methods for Understanding Change Processes

Research methods	Purpose
Historical and longitudinal data derived from narratives about the past, present and future.	Mapping long term changes, processes of change and its meaning.
Attitude surveys, including focus group discussions.	Probing perceptions, meanings and values (about rights, obligations, roles of oneself and of others).
Notebook and diary records based on detailed observation by fieldworkers of conversations and daily activities, including exchanges and transactions between individuals and groups.	Discourse analysis and analysis of activities, exchanges and meanings.
Discourse analysis based on an examination of terminology used in proverbs etc.	Examining ideas and intentions rather than behaviour/ acts.
PRA methods and semi-structured interviews.	To assess well-being and welfare through the use of measures developed in participatory sessions.

None of these methods are quantitative in the sense of dealing with directly measurable variables (such as plant height or crop sales) and most raise problems of interpretation which are referred to later in this section as the problem of discourse analysis. Scott talks of the problem of 'automatic and unreflective speech' and suggests that this kind of information has to be judged by the standards of its logic, its economy and its consistency with other known social facts. On the other hand, as qualitative methods, they are regarded as versatile and 'a good match for examining the diversity of family forms and experiences' and for examining 'processes and holistic studies looking at interactions and dynamics rather than variables'.

Most of these methods are also based on data from a small sample of individuals and/or groups, and programmes need to be able to explain impact differences between individuals, and at some level, between areas. The issue of sample size has to be addressed for all the methods finally selected. For methods designed to raise hypotheses, access hidden and or subtle processes, monitor behaviour over time, purposive convenience sampling and redundancy of data (sampling continued until no new

themes arise) should determine sample size. In a study of empowerment, Shield (1995) experienced redundancy of data after 12 interviews and Travers (1996), studying the social organisation of nutritional inequities within families through in depth individual interviews spread over one month, reached saturation point with 5 families. The level of disaggregation selected also has implications for sample size and ultimately, programmes will need to decide what are reasonable levels of generalisation given a conceptual framework that lays emphasis on the meaning of change rather than on describing changes themselves, and an approach that emphasises the locational and historical specificity of the research questions.

Our review of research methods and tools to meet these challenges has been selective, based on apparently successful work focusing on similar types of information, our own experience, methodological reviews and our assessment of what is feasible given the programmes and staffing involved. Although individual methods are discussed here as though they are independent of one another, they are often usefully combined as suggested in the final table. However, in general, for a monitoring programme concerned with accessing subtle processes and understanding perceptions and values, the usefulness of most of the methods and tools discussed will depend substantially on the ability of researchers being able to construct relationships with informants (Gilgun et al., 1992).

Reviews of Methods and Tools

Central to a number of the methods likely to be appropriate for this work is discourse analysis. This brief overview of methods, therefore, begins with a commentary on discourse analysis and follows with discussions of others which are included in the final table (Table 3). The table links the methods and tools with the kind of information suggested as required by our generic questions (Table 1).

Discourse Analysis covers a wide variety of sources of information (diaries, life histories, proverbs, group discussion) for studying intentions, meanings, ideas and language. Discourse analysis in a linguistic sense is very complex involving the development of a computerised data base using key words and the identification and refinement of emergent themes which appear to be important topics among respondents (see Shields 1995 for example who codes detailed interview data on the basis of themes events phrases and concepts identified). It is also used in action research; Webber and Ison (1995) use their analysis to develop material for subsequent brainstorming sessions to develop issues on community networking needs with community members.

Our interest in discourse analysis stems from the emphasis we are placing on narratives of one kind or another, including written records of conversations, individual life histories but also verbal reports of social norms and tradition including stories which support cultural stereotypes for example. Rappaport defines 'Community narratives' as stories common to a group of people and called upon when needed. Communal narratives can be used by individuals who need the support of a collectivity for seeking change at personal or community levels (Rappaport, 1995:796) although earlier (1984) Scott describes the plasticity of normative discourse and warns that we need to look carefully at compliance with 'community norms and decisions' as expressed through everyday social relations. Narratives are, therefore, a resource and it is important to know who controls that resource in the sense of who legitimises the stories etc. Rappaport also refers to 'Dominant cultural narratives' which are those 'overlearned stories..... known by most people in a given society and serve as an influential backdrop against which more localisedstories are told'(803).

A growing number of studies warn about narratives based on traditional norms and practices. Cleaver (1997) suggests that 'Few of these [cultural narratives relating to tradition for example] can be taken for granted as the social and political history [in Zimbabwe] has been one of repeated disruption, resettlement of population and changing boundaries and authority structures'. Oboler (1996) demonstrates conflicting norms and interpretation of these with respect to rights to livestock and suggests that in expressions of customary rights, women more likely to put forward an interpretation that allows for greater rights for women, suggesting that the way traditional rights and obligations are framed by individuals occupying different positions in the social system can be looked upon as a discourse analysis. Thus, when both a husband and wife claim ownership (of cattle), each is emphasising an aspect of the truth since rights in livestock are highly ambiguous and contextual. Thus, interpretations of change depend on ones position in the system, the support one can muster for a claim

etc. Along with the work of Berry (1997), we are also reminded that many 'traditional systems' were historically flexible.

Vanlangenhove & Berloznik (1996) suggest that a complex web of discourses ('storey-lines') gather around any technological issue and that analysis of these provide insight into the continuous assessments being made. They categorise the questions around which the discourses revolve as the *why* and *how* questions and the *what will happen* and *what will be the effect of the event* questions, while the answers are in the form of accounts or justifications and prospects and 'Technology Assessment' is viewed as a 'confrontation of different constructions of a technology by different groups of stakeholders' (p712).

Case Studies (life history material) Information collected through case studies is in the nature of biographical material (Inheteen, 1990) and personal narratives and life histories (Miles and Crush, 1993). It is suggested in much of the literature reviewed for this work that we are witnessing a revival of the life history method for analysing 'patterns of socio-structural relations from individual lives' and for accessing 'otherwise hidden domains of social life' (Watson, 1993). They have long been established as a method for clarifying conceptual issues, raising new issues and even for demonstrating wider societal phenomena and possible change (Stubbs, 1984).

However, we are also reminded in all the literature reporting on case studies that individual life stories represent one of many analogous truths (viz discourse analysis). As such, neither of the two usual approaches to increasing the reliability (agreement on interpretation) of data, triangulation and internal consistency, will guarantee a single interpretation of case study material (Sokolovsky, 1996). Sokolovsky suggests that validity of meaning (rather than correctness) is the concern to be addressed in qualitative research of this kind, and this can be established by the persuasiveness of the case study - 'meaningful agreement with all the data in general and the broader context'.

Life history interviewing specifically focuses on how people make meaning of their lives. Inheteen (1990) distinguishes between the collection of biographical data as a means of gathering social data and approaches which analyse these data as social reconstructions. Case study methods preclude the former but the data can be used for reconstructing events and identifying processes around these events. They are potentially useful for a study of 'how women negotiate their gender status' (p88) uncovering 'not only what people did but also what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing and what they now think they did'... and for illuminating 'the effects of systemic and structural constraints within which life courses evolve' (p85) (Miles and Crush). Using biographical data to gather social data, Inheteen reports on interviews with 133 women used to construct a woman farmer's 'standard' or 'normal' biography and contrasts this with a piece of social reconstructions' research which produced stories around key events rather than a systematic structure and a perception of life as a process. A number of writers suggest that it is not possible to collect life histories as systematic processes.

Panel studies Panel studies of individuals (or groups) interviewed repeatedly over relatively long periods of time can be supported by single and multiple interviews with other similar individuals on similar topics. Oppong (1974) used this combination of approaches to analyse domestic organisation. Her panel data consisted of detailed information from 12 couples, about how the husbands and wives, separately and jointly, 'felt about their orientation to roles of themselves and partners' and, she continues, 'as the data began to be analysed they revealed potential areas of conflict between husbands, wives and kin as well as illustrating modes of conflict resolution and avoidance. Indeed because the interviews ...extended [over 6 months to one year] it was possible to document the course of one or two domestic conflicts and events leading to changes in the relationships of some of the husbands and wives' (17). Oppong concludes that it was this dynamic information (on structural tensions and change and the actor's strategies) which was the most valuable rather than the changes themselves. The material for her analysis came from answers to direct formal questions, informal probing and observation on a wide range of topics and the recording of incidental comments (revealing attitudes, aspirations, regrets, dissatisfactions and intentions), as well as the recording of past and present events.

Focus Groups Focus groups are one of the principal tools used in the early phases of market research by private firms to evaluate markets and develop and test product introduction and promotional activities by obtaining information about consumer attitudes and behaviour (Scheerer, 1981). As a small group approach, they are now used in many situations where client participation is valued and have been popularised more generally through their association with PRAs/PLAs. The term 'focus group' is frequently used to refer to a small group formed to discuss a particular topic. Others, following more closely the market researchers, suggest that focus groups provide a forum for more in-depth discussions of issues which arise in household interviews for example, as well as for clarifying the diversity of perceptions and opinions found in a community. Yet others point to their value for specific discussions, of the level and nature of resource awareness of men and women and their perceptions on institutional effectiveness (Thomas-Slayer and Rojas, n.d.). More rarely, group members are treated more as individual informants. Thus, Nicholscasebolt & Spakes (1995) point out that the small group size gives all group members the opportunity to speak. In their case, the recorded output was compiled (and counted) along with results from semi-structured interviews to arrive at a common listing of issues and understandings about these.

Stakeholder/ Actor Analysis 'Actors include anyone who is able to influence decision-making processes governing resource acquisition and allocation....These actors are variously referred to as stakeholders and decision-makers' (Kean, 1994). Stakeholder analysis is now widely used as a planning tool although rarely prepared in a participatory way. It is especially useful for developing a matrix of actors involved in specific activities (such as crop post-harvest activities) although if the information is not used in a participatory manner, the chance of omitting possible key actors is great. Biggs and Matsuert (1998) suggest using the basic stakeholder framework for impact assessment, recording past and present linkages and information flows between different stakeholder categories. This idea could be expanded and a matrix be developed for recording and discussing decision making and transactions relating to crop post harvest activities between various actors, during sessions with researchers and their clients. Its greatest value for this work possibly lies in its analytical nature and in the transparency it can give to existing linkages (in the example given) which can then be reviewed against the rationale for any past or future interventions.

Surveys for the collection of individual and household records of activities, income and expenditures (using interview schedules). The use of gendered activity and access and control profiles (the Harvard framework) along with some PRA/PLA tools associated with farming systems research are covered comprehensively in the edited volume by Feldstein and Jiggins (1994). The level of detail using the different techniques obviously varies: in some instances, actual time spent carrying out various activities is recorded while in others, only information on the timing of events is collected. We have suggested that many of the reports based on these activity and access and control profiles tend to provide a static picture of roles and patterns of resource use suggesting that new introductions (such as new technology) must fit into established patterns and ways of doing things. Detailed information relating to social categories of people involved are also rarely given which limits data interpretation. Leon (1984) along with many others points to problems of measurement with activity data and the usual methods of recall and proposes the use of a 'subjective assessment of frequency of completing an activity - sometimes, always, never doing' an activity because it is easier to handle by field staff and the programme will not be facing the major problem of calculating amounts of time based on recall. Actual day-to-day observations are the best measures, but costly to implement. Other critiques of time allocation studies suggest that what is really needed is greater insight into the nature and quality of time. It is not intended within this monitoring proposal to focus directly on these data although it is suggested that general patterns will be established for the different sites and rapid surveys are one possible method to use. Although emphasis throughout these proposals is placed on attitudes (about roles in crop post-harvest activities for example), and meanings (attached to roles etc.), these also need to be checked by looking at behaviour.

Attitude Assessments of individuals and groups possibly using rapid surveys. For this review, we also looked at literature covering self report measuring instruments developed and tested in North America. We looked at two in particular, the work of Beere (1979) and Sawin & Harrigan (1994). The value of the attitude assessments depend on the usefulness/ relevance of the items included. The scores (individuals' perception of how frequently each item applies to themselves and/or their partners', and or co-wife behaviour etc.) are used to evaluate behaviour (the problem solving capacity of families as

in Sawin and Harrigan). A number of the measures covered are very large consisting of 134 items at three levels -whole family - couple and individual. Oppong (1974) on the other hand, in her financial management score for Ghanaian families used only 4 items relating to the degree to which husbands and wives managed finances together. Some of the measures presented by Beere and Sawin & Harrigan are questioned for cross-cultural applicability and clearly all need adaptation but in order to assess levels of agreement between individuals and groups (on for example, acceptable behaviour and what this consists of) these kinds of measures are needed. Along with the verbal measures are various forms of 'genograms' which are visual representations of composition, structure, relationships etc. but care is needed in using these to adequately reflect the impact of context (the social aspects of gender analysis).

PRA/PLA: Participatory Rural Appraisal (now PLA) is an approach to community-based rural development derived from the work of Gordon Conway (1985, 1988), Robert Chambers (1983,1985) and others on Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) (1987). RRA provides a methodology for gathering data rapidly and flexibly, drawing on interdisciplinary expertise and local knowledge, using the principle of 'triangulation' whereby more than method or source is used to obtain the same data. The specific purpose of PRA is to enable rural communities to participate in designing and implementing more effective approaches to sustainable resource management. The range of tools commonly associated with participatory research and development activities have all been widely promoted as valuable for making qualitative assessments. The term PRA/PLA is used to cover a range of methods from semi-structured interviews to focus group discussions, ranking tools and mapping. The most valuable critique to date from a gender perspective has been provided by Mosse (1993). While Mosse's critique is broad ranging, it centres on the gendered character of public events such as PRA/PLA which tend to exclude and/or silence women and the ability of key actors to control such public events. In a more recent review by Joekes (1997), it is suggested that the tools themselves are inappropriate and that special tools, such as proverbs, drama and bodymapping, are needed for accessing women's knowledge. However, other material demonstrate the widespread integration of gender into the analysis (Grady et al.,1991; Robinson, 1994; Welbourn, 1992). There appears to be fairly widespread agreement on the value of mapping exercises and even Joekes observes that maps drawn by men and women separately yield the most concrete illustration possible of the differentiated sets of concerns for particular men and women, and makes these transparent. Welbourn compares a range of information prepared by men and women and reminds us that what we are looking at is different, not better/ worse, perspectives. She also demonstrates the value of getting different categories of people to complete maps, rankings etc. to demonstrate difference, and to indicate potential areas of disagreement and conflict. Household wealth ranking is another disputed tool in the sense that a number of field workers are not satisfied with its sensitivity to context, especially in situations where community poverty is regarded as 'shameful'. However, if carried out with the intention of arriving at understandings of difference and what this consists of, rather than with developing a faithful record of say poverty levels of each individual household, this tool could be invaluable for completing the second step of our approach. However, Guijt (1994) reminds us that the tools (and PRA as a whole) are not automatically gender sensitive and suggests that gender awareness needs to be raised first before the overall approach is used.

Table 3: Strengths and Weaknesses of Possible Tools and Methods

Methods/Tools	Strengths	Weaknesses
Case studies /life history material: from individuals, households and other groups.	For identifying eg areas in which change desired (including assets), and how resources are deployed over time to achieve these. Looking at livelihood trajectories and livelihood interests.	Not possible to generalise from individual experience.
Panel: Members purposively selected.	Allow for a continuous discussion of the research questions possibly with couples; to document how women and men maintain and negotiate gender relations; to record actual behaviour for comparison with local cultural expectations.	Panel members become more conscious over time and problems of interpretation increase (problems common to discourse analysis). Need to maintain anonymity of panel members: possible data loss in order to achieve this.
Focus groups: of like individuals with a direct interest in crop post harvest activities.	For probing especially sensitive issues about rights, obligations, roles of self and others - assessing priorities for change and ways of achieving change; complements and adds to information from rapid surveys, stakeholder analyses, panels and case material.	Depend on good moderation (high potential for moderator bias) careful selection of members and detailed recording.
Stakeholder analyses by actors/ stakeholders selected initially using key informants, group discussions and later, by the different stakeholders identified.	Ensures all actors vis-a-vis specific crop post-harvest activities included: to assess local values about gender roles, resource allocations and authority and establish levels of agreement and contestation about these by comparing views of different stakeholder groups.	Unless completed in a participatory manner, with all the different stakeholders, value depends on knowledge of planners etc. Time consuming to use in a participatory manner and therefore, the number of stakeholder categories must be kept small. Must balance with need to disaggregate.
Surveys using interview schedules.	To provide a quick assessment of the generality of particular patterns of behaviour, incomes and expenditure and intervention outcomes etc.	For quick assessment need careful design and pilot testing which requires time and resources.
Group discussions with wide community representation.	To describe/ list 'facts' (using PRA/PLA tools, for example gendered calendars, maps and venn diagrams) which can be discussed in greater detail using other methods; to ensure transparency of research activities and process; for selecting other 'samples'.	Not useful for probing sensitive issues. Care needed to avoid process being dominated by one individual or one group or category of individuals. May be necessary to hold more than one group meeting.
Interviews with key informants using checklists of information needed.	If well chosen, key informants are able to provide very specific information quickly; often invaluable for indicating other individuals and groups with particular information/ skills.	Need to be very clear about the purpose of using key informants. In some instances they may provide examples of eg enterprising agro-processors, in others, they may be a source of facts to be cross-checked.
Attitude/ assessments of individuals and groups using rapid surveys.	Useful for assessing perceptions, meanings and values of eg tasks and changes in these tasks; to assess local understandings about gender relations; status of desired change - by different categories of people amongst a larger sample of the community.	Need easy to score and understand items, usually developed from interviews, observation and the conceptual framework.
Diaries to be used by field staff and/or individual informants.	For recording relevant events and discourses - 'everyday' and unusual events eg giving insight into the value of different local institutions; for assessing priorities for change in gender relations and the value of outside interventions for achieving change - for specific individuals in particular situations.	Care in analysis: interpret as individual narratives not to be generalised upon. Field staff diaries will reflect selective observations of field staff.
PRA/PLA tools for use in group discussions; household wealth ranking to be completed with key informants and to be supported by visits/observation.	Especially useful in facilitating group discussion of subjects of general concern early in the process; wealth ranking useful for identifying important local disaggregating variables and different household/ domestic units.	Facilitators to be sensitive to the possible presence and influence of powerful interest groups, and to the absence, and 'silence' of particular social categories.

IV CHANGING GENDER RELATIONS IN ZIMBABWE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CROP POST-HARVEST ACTIVITIES

Introduction

In general for Sub-Saharan Africa, crop-post harvest literature is most often of a technical nature that makes no reference to gender. Of material that does mention gender, most refers to gender policy, with actual gender analysis or information about changing gender relations representing a substantial minority of references³. References to gender policy were very general and consisted of mention of the importance of women in the sector, recognition of increasing work burdens for women, women's restricted access to resources, their neglect in policy and the need for specific targeting of women. The gender literature on Sub-Saharan Africa is of variable quality but does include some detailed and sensitive accounts of changing gender relations.

For Zimbabwe itself, there is a small body of literature that refers to or directly address gender issues around agriculture, including crop post-harvest activities. Of this work, there are a few in-depth and dynamic analyses that effectively draw out some of the complexities and subtleties of changing gender relations. This document aims to summarise briefly existing secondary materials on rural gender relations in Zimbabwe with particular reference to crop post-harvest activities. It does not attempt to reproduce the full detail of these studies and can only inform the development of an improved approach to the analysis of changing gender relations in a general way. An additional omission is the quantitative data available on general contextual factors and indices of well-being. The document falls into four sections:

- the historical view of changing gender relations in Zimbabwe
- contemporary gender relations in Zimbabwe
- the everyday dynamism of gender relations in Zimbabwe
- the gendered impact of development interventions in Zimbabwe

Whilst it is clear that there is an insufficient knowledge base on gender relations around crop post-harvest activities in Zimbabwe, our approach also suggests that a more sophisticated approach to gender analysis might develop further some of the findings reviewed here. Within the secondary material reviewed there was a clear body of gender literature, but the majority of material focusing on crop post-harvest was 'gender-blind' and no attempt is made to represent that data here. A key weakness of most of the materials reviewed is the focus on women in gender analysis, neglecting men, masculinities and male livelihood strategies.

The Historical View

The general picture drawn of the history of changing gender relations in Zimbabwe argues that colonialism compounded pre-existing gender inequalities in 'traditional' society and that, despite women's participation in the Independence struggle and post-Independence commitments to improving their position in society, gender inequalities have proven rather tenacious. The summary is necessarily uneven reflecting the nature of the existing body of literature.

Pre-Colonial Gender Relations

Older women's accounts portray women's role in the 'traditional' division of labour as principal cultivators, gatherers and seed storers, and keepers of poultry and smallstock, in order to fulfil their responsibility to feed the family, whilst men hunted, herded cattle, and cleared ground (Gata and Kativhu 1991). Despite this, men decided upon division of household land (allocated out of lineage land), and principal crops; women were allocated land for 'women's' crops, had their own granaries and could build up small cattle herds from 'mombeyeumai' - a practice in which mothers are given a cow on the marriage of their daughter. On the basis of this oral testimony, Gata and Kativhu (1991) argue that colonial and post colonial policy have destroyed women's skills and resources, their

³ Of 22 references to gender in crop-post harvest articles, 17 referred to gender policy, 3 included some gender analysis and only 2 contained information about changing gender relations.

recognition and the complementarity of gender roles in 'traditional' Zimbabwe (Gata and Kativhu 1991) [see also Mugabe 1986, on file]. Rather more critically, Mugabe (Mugabe 1986) traces the basis of social disadvantage back to pre-colonial traditions and notes its subsequent 'aggravation' by colonial policy [see also Gata 1991]; (Batezat and Mwalo 1989).

Gender Relations Under Colonialism

In a review of studies related to the impact on women of the expansion of cash cropping and the difficulties that women have in entering rural markets, Burgess and Beilstein identify patriarchy as the principal obstacle, and discuss the role of colonial administrations in elevating male dominance to current levels (Burgess and Beilstein 1996). They claim that customary law was adapted by the colonial administration to further subordinate African women, reducing them to minority status with a "lack of power and control over family property" (Batezat and Mwalo 1989) and its codification "rendered it inflexible and unable to adapt to social circumstances" (Batezat and Mwalo 1989).

Schmidt's study of early colonial Shona women notes that before 1939 race and gender were crucial variables and that class was less important than it is today. This meant that "women's class positions could not be read off from those of their husbands... [and]... Junior wives of large-scale peasant farmers could be reduced to the status of 'fieldhands'" (Ranger 1995:32 paraphrasing Schmidt 1992). Under colonialism the wives of the new Zimbabwean Christian elite found that less prestigious roles were open to them than to women 'traditionally' (Schmidt 1992): "As the new mission-educated elites embraced Western values they rejected the long-accepted methods of indigenous female healers and midwives. The new professions open to Christian women, however, had little independence or authority compared to that of their antecedents" (Ranger 1995 citing Schmidt 1992:87). In this way, elite wives were caught in new forms of oppression where privileged status meant accepting European values and behavioural codes that circumscribed options outside the domestic sphere (Ranger 1995:33). Nevertheless, as Ranger points individual women did exceptionally achieve substantial power, sometimes within these constraints and sometimes in opposition to them.

Although early missionary portrayed women as superstitious drags on the progress of Christian men, in the Methodist Church, like others, Ranger describes how women came to be the faithful whilst men were the backsliders (Ranger 1995:40). The red-bloused Ruwadzano movement which developed from the African Women's Prayer Union of the Transvaal, structured the participation of women and implied an accompanying gender transformation. The cult of domesticity promoted by the Ruwadzano explicitly enjoined women to compliance, to curb their speech, to curb their independent economic activities, and to demonstrate altruism (Ranger 1995:40 citing Zvogbo 1992:98-99) The assumptions of these redefinitions of gender relations were hard on women whose sexuality or fertility did not fit its 'Victorian' nature (Ranger 1995:59).

However, it would be wrong to interpret this simply as a process of oppression or one in which female members of the emerging middle classes voluntarily subscribed to and advanced this cult of domesticity as Victorian improvers. In fact, these Zimbabwean women fought a quiet struggle with white missionary women for control over the Ruwadzano (Ranger 1995:40). Furthermore, the Ruwadzano acted to legitimate female evangelical authority and women were active participants in the Native Missionary Conferences adding their voice to progressives attempting to influence the reshaping of gender relations. For example, Annie Nyembesi addressed the Conference in 1944 on the matter of brideprice, saying "women have been property for such a long time that it has been hard to rouse them.... What distress and oppression some women have to suffer!" (Ranger 1995:46 citing Nyembesi 1944).

Ranger draws attention to an interesting contradictory trend: a movement of female healing arose from within the Methodist Church led by a Ruwadzano member. The prophetess, Mai Chaza, of Seke offered hope for barren women with her charismatic blend of healing and Christianity. Finding the Methodists unsympathetic, the prophetess founded a great independent church and her teaching were a "more readily innovative line of gender relations.... Women were barren, Mai Chaza said, because of the drunkenness and adulteries of their husbands" (Ranger 1995:62). Whilst the process of colonialism undoubtedly did involve the willing participation of elite Zimbabwean men and women with missionaries and settlers in redefining gender relations, these accounts also demonstrate the active

resistance and contestation of 'Victorian' interpretations of sexuality and fertility both within and outside the Methodist Church.

Gender Relations and Independence

Burgess and Beilstein (Burgess and Beilstein 1996) describe the emergence of the Zimbabwean women's movement from the involvement of women in the 1970s resistance war. However, Vukasin (Vukasin 1992) reports that although changes since independence have improved the economic status of women in some respects, that there has been little apparent improvement in their overall status. The impact of legal reforms (Legal Age of Majority Act, the Maintenance Act and Inheritance Laws) intended to benefit women has been ambiguous and Vukasin argues that together with social and economic changes they have eroded any protection offered to women by customary law and that rural women are unable to use new laws (Vukasin 1992). The spread of AIDS has placed an additional burden on women who have to care for the sick as well as maintain agricultural production (Natural Resources Institute 1995) and women who are sick themselves may find themselves in a highly vulnerable situations (Pilch 1997).

Batezat and Mwalo stress the current reluctance of men to relinquish control over women despite post-independence commitments and legislation (Batezat and Mwalo 1989). However, they describe the overhaul of customary law in this period as aiming at "improving the positions of women in society" in which endeavour they "succeeded... to a large extent" (Batezat and Mwalo 1989) [*This seems contradictory to their other statements?*]. For some rural wives of migrant husbands, the independence that they enjoyed in their husband's absence was valued (p. 54), but female household heads (43%-48% of households) are burdened with the dual roles of income provision and family maintenance and reproduction. The fight for liberation has brought about social change affecting family relationships, and men, reluctant to relinquish their control over women have resisted legislation intended to change the status of women (p. 55-6). Despite a commitment to remove discrimination, implementation of government policy addressing women's issues has been poor, and these issues have been marginalised (p. 66). Development programmes have taken little account of women's importance in the agricultural sector (p. 63) or have focused too much on income generation rather than addressing "division of labour and men's control over women *within* the household" (p. 66).

The next section move on to look at contemporary gender relations in Zimbabwe with attention to rural gender relations, gender relations in agriculture and gender relations around crop post-harvest activities.

Contemporary Gender Relations

Information of rural gender relations reflects the concerns of common frameworks for gender analysis with the household and gender roles in physical tasks, access to and control over resources and decision making. In general, women are seen as taking on additional burdens with limited access to resources whilst men are often absent yet still seek to retain authority over the domestic unit. Various micro-level studies, that are included here, appear to confirm the general thrust of these findings.

Rural Gender Relations

Today, in Zimbabwe 30-60% of households in communal areas are female headed (Natural Resources Institute 1995). In Mutoko district, where 34% of households are female headed (Anon. 19??), those with temporarily absent employed males are "*often among the better off*" households whilst permanent female headed households "*have the least access to productive assets and remittances and are consequently among the poorest*" (Natural Resources Institute 1995). Indeed, Vukasin (Vukasin 1992) portrays women as 'universally dependent...for supplementary income' on remittances from husbands, children or other relations working in urban areas. This is confirmed by the finding that female headed households in Zimuto Communal Area and Shagashe Small-Scale Commercial Area are mostly well-resourced farmers where husbands are in employment and sending remittances or mostly poorly-resourced farmers where they are single and have little or no source of outside income (Chatizwa, Ellis-Jones, Mazhangara, Riches, and Twomlow 1998).

Giga and Katerere's socio-economic survey (Giga and Katerere 1986) gives some gender related breakdown of household data for 1984 (pp. 15-17). Overall, the majority of household farms (82%) were "run jointly by the husband and wife" - or wives since 20% were polygamous (Giga and Katerere 1986). 14% of the households were female-headed, although this proportion increased with proximity to urban centres (Giga and Katerere 1986). With wage earners being predominately men, "there are more females than males in the farm labour force" (Giga and Katerere 1986).

Gumunyu provides a gendered analysis of household arrangements, community decision making and access to institutions and services found in Chipuriro Communal Area where 15% of 'housewives' were widowed or divorced (Gumunyu 1989). Pankhurst reports from a village in a 'successful' peasant farming area of Zimbabwe that men's income is used for household improvements or personal consumption whilst women's is used for household subsistence costs (Pankhurst 1991). She also notes that it is practically difficult to distinguish women's productive and reproductive roles, especially where surplus staple crop is marketed.

A wide-reaching survey of rural women (915) and men (572) confirmed the tenacity of gender inequalities between 1981-1991 despite legislative changes and development interventions (Vukasin 1992). Rural women were found to be aware of their problems, but powerless to overcome them, for whilst legislation and intervention had ostensibly improved their situation and opportunities, lack of information, misinterpretation, and cultural and economic constraints had prevented them from realising the potential for change.

Although in higher rainfall areas, women are making some income from cash cropping maize, tobacco, cotton and fruit, elsewhere they commonly generate income from market gardening, poultry keeping, craft work, processing peanut butter, brewing, keeping pigs or other small stock (Vukasin 1992). Vukasin reports that 50-60% of households report joint decisions are made about the use of income, but men tend to manage money in rural areas although women may still make decisions about the use of their own money from income generation (Vukasin 1992). Interestingly, Vukasin reports that this represents a shift between 1981-1991 from a situation where men would manage any surplus income from women's activities once immediate household needs (schooling, soap, groceries) had been met to one where women have a 'legal right' to bank money and apply for loans (Vukasin 1992). Whilst it is not clear that women avail themselves of this right and whilst Vukasin stresses that women are still spending their money on the same things, it seems reasonable to read into this evidence of a subtle shift into gender relations.

Women have earned only marginal amounts from income generation projects based on their indigenous activities, but appreciate the social benefits of group membership (Vukasin 1992). Batezat and Mwalo report that donor assisted income generating projects have offered opportunities for rural women with little education and some opportunities for paid employment, although they have had a number of problems, not least lack of time (Batezat and Mwalo 1989).

Gender Relations and Agriculture

It is generally held that "*women... perform most of the agricultural tasks*" in Zimbabwe (Chipika 1990). Mugabe (Mugabe 1986) notes that whilst Zimbabwean women can be seen to be innovative farmers, they are constrained by persistent social disadvantage despite post-independence equality policies (p. 7). Chipika & Chivso note that the unequal access to resources along gender lines and recognition of the importance of women's income generating activities to meet households needs, appear to have been ignored in policy design, and stress that agricultural expansion in export commodities is limited to a small minority of principally male farmers (Chipika and Chivso 1997). Batezat and Mwalo characterise post-Independence agricultural policy in terms of 'continuity' rather than change in which the scarcity and quality of land in communal areas, combined with traditional patriarchal systems threaten women's tenure of land and conditions of resettlement effectively exclude them (Batezat and Mwalo 1989). The World Bank acknowledges that whilst women in Africa are often resource-poor farmers, lacking access to land, credit, labour and extension services, they have sometimes substantially mobilised people and organisations: the proliferation of predominantly female rural savings clubs in Zimbabwe is alleged to have contributed to the widespread adoption of hybrid maize (Schwartz and Kampen 1992:22).

Batezat and Mwalo report that lack of control over land has led to women being deprived of their domestic food plots as their husband's expand cash cropping (Batezat and Mwalo 1989). Bell and Hotchkiss report that all land in communal areas including gardens on dambos are allocated to male household heads (Bell and Hotchkiss 1991). Hakutangwi et al provide baseline data from 1993 on the gendered division of agricultural labour and 'when to plough' decision-making within female and male headed rural households (Hakutangwi and Chinyemba 1995). The socially constructed nature of unequal access to 'technology' is demonstrated by Gill's report that whilst women and girls collected wood, the principal fuel in rural Zimbabwe, on their backs, men and boys would use animal drawn carts or sledges to collect wood (Gill 1983). The unequal allocation of household tasks and the burden of women's work has expanded, and this has happened at least partly as a result of development intervention (Batezat and Mwalo 1989).

Male bias in the extension services effectively denies women direct access to cash cropping even though they provide most of the labour (Batezat and Mwalo 1989). In 1989, the extension services were still dominated by men, although women extension workers were on the increase (Batezat and Mwalo 1989). The Zimbabwe Women's Bureau Survey of 1981 reported women's poor access to implements, inputs, water, credit, transport and difficulties in marketing (Batezat and Mwalo 1989). More women are now being issued with GMB (Grain Marketing Board) cards so they can sell their own crops, but these women tend to be from female-headed households (Batezat and Mwalo 1989). Millets, principally a woman's crop, are now included in the controlled crops for marketing, but it is unclear how this has benefited women (Batezat and Mwalo 1989).

Madondo, on the strength of evidence from a smallholder irrigation scheme in Manicaland Province, recommends an increase in the recruitment of female extension officers, greater involvement of women in administrative structures and independent access for women to essential agricultural resources (Madondo 1992). Reviewing the work of others, Burgess and Beilstein (Burgess and Beilstein 1996) discuss the persistence of Zimbabwean women fighting inequality of benefit from agricultural extension for communal farmers. Extension policy has ignored the value of women's indigenous knowledge and the importance of their role in production and post harvest activities (Gata and Kativhu 1991). AGRITEX estimates that 75% of Zimbabwe's communal farmers are women and found in their baseline survey that their contacts with women farmers were poor and that the services appreciation of gender issues in extension planning were similarly lacking (Hakutangwi 1995). They further noted that extension agent's reports of their success with farmers groups may not be reliable (Hakutangwi 1995). Gumunyu also investigates women's access to agricultural information in Chipiriro Communal Area (Gumunyu 1989).

AGRITEX are working to improve the gender awareness of the extension service through the Women's Extension Programme (Hakutangwi 1995) and emphasise the importance of the government's equitable growth policy for rural women (Hakutangwi and Chinyemba 1995). However, other commentators note that although "...the communal farmers ... constitute some of the poorest and most vulnerable population groups in the country", the impact of economic reform on this sector has been neglected (Chipika and Chisvo 1997). In an extensive review that is not primarily concerned with gender impacts, Chipika & Chisvo (Chipika and Chisvo 1997) acknowledge the need for extension and credit reform to "... remove discrimination against the poor farmers (especially women)..." (p. 24). The authors point out that structural adjustment policies target tradable commodities, and that since this sector is dominated by men (in producing export crops or providing wage labour), women are less likely to be able to benefit from reforms (Chipika and Chisvo 1997). As a result of discrimination, traditional gender roles and obligations, and reproductive demands, women's labour is less mobile and so it is argued women are less able to move into the tradable sector (Chipika and Chisvo 1997).

In a village in a 'successful peasant area' of Zimbabwe in which maize is the dominant crop both as a staple and for cash purposes, Pankhurst found that married women did not have independent access to land although some widows may be given land by the village committee. Women gained 'independent' income from poultry, sewing vegetables, beer and bricks. There is some full time resident employment, usually taken by men, and some male migration, however, women provide the bulk of agricultural labour, excluding ploughing, and the bulk of the casual labour force. (Pankhurst 1991). Most agricultural labour is also provided by women in Mutoko district and the pounding and stone grinding of cereals is recognised as a heavy burden on women (Anon. 1977).

Madondo, in a survey of gendered access to and control over agricultural resources in Manicaland Province, provides a comprehensive description of unequal gendered access to and control over labour, access to land, technology, credit, income, and decision-making in male headed households involved in a smallholder irrigation scheme (Madondo 1992). Bell and Hotchkiss explore different household strategies in Chihota, the area of most intense garden cultivation and draw attention to the differential strategies of a widow who grew and sold a greater range of crops over a greater part of the year than others because of her dependence on agriculture (Bell and Hotchkiss 1991).

Kundhlande et al's gender analysis of *dambo* farming in Chiota and Mutoko communal areas (Kundhlande, Govereh, and Muchena 1995) explored differences between production in different domestic situations: male headed households, de facto female headed households and de jure female headed households. Dambo production is gender sequential but actual control and contribution to various parts of the production system depends substantially on household type (Kundhlande et al. 1995); for example, absent husbands were only involved in major decisions and wives entirely managed the dambo garden using male labourers for male tasks, in monogamous households decision making was reported to be 'shared' and work divided 'equally'. However, this complementarity conceals the fact that men were responsible for land preparation, pesticide application and marketing whilst women and children were responsible for planting, watering and harvesting and men retained full control of income from dambo sales. However, women are reported to be in control of produce from the plots their husbands allocate them and which they use to feed their families, buy household utensils or livestock (usually goats) as an investment for their children. In contrast, husband's income from used to pay school fees, purchase livestock and large expenditures such as building. Despite variations in gender differences in dambo farming, women without husbands, whether present or not, faced relatively more difficulties in cultivation: they have a narrower income base resulting in comparative poverty, relatively smaller dambo plots, poor access to labour, particularly male labour, cash and draught power. The insistence of the Mbare City Council that trading fees be paid in advance presents particular difficulties for women.

Gender Relations and Crop Post Harvest Activities

With respect to crop post-harvest activities, women have played an important role in the saving and selection of seed appropriate to anticipated need and prevailing conditions (Gata 1993). Women also play an important role in the production and processing of cereal crops (Gata 1993). Rough classification of crops by gender by Mushita (1992) and Chidzonga (1992) (Gata 1993). Vukasin notes that market gardening, processing peanut butter and brewing as sources of independent income for women in lower rainfall rural areas (Vukasin 1992) and that women are 'still' spending their own money on grinding (Vukasin 1992). Simango notes that infant weaning and food preparation in general is the responsibility of women (Simango 1997). Pankhurst confirms that household work, including grinding, was predominantly women's responsibility in her micro-level study of a village in a successful peasant area of Zimbabwe (Pankhurst 1991).

McCall (McCall 1996) establishes the importance of locally brewed beer in terms of popularity and consumption, and of income. Having remained almost completely a women's activity, brewing offers the greatest potential for women's cash income - being comparable to men's income from cattle sales - although it gives a poor return to labour. The income potential encourages the take-over of these enterprises by husbands or by controlling middlemen, but nonetheless, women tend to retain control over brewing income.

Giga and Katerere's socio-economic study of maize post-harvest and storage losses gives some gender related information whilst also referring 'neutrally' to 'farmers' (Giga and Katerere 1986). They observe that "it is interesting to note that farms run by female heads of household produce as much as those with male heads" (Giga and Katerere 1986). In addition, they report that farmers resist communal storage of grain since "to have individual on-farm storage is a very deep rooted cultural habit" (Giga and Katerere 1986), and in polygamous families, each wife has her own granary in addition to the husband's (Giga and Katerere 1986) and grain for consumption "was regularly removed by farmer's wife" (p. 33).

Open-air sun drying is employed by women in communal areas to preserve both wild and cultivated vegetables, fruits and spices for sale or for domestic consumption; when sold, they are taken to either local or urban markets (Murphy 1996). Masendeke (Masendeke 1996) reviews women's roles in production of prominent oilseed crops grown in Zimbabwe. Women are the principal rural producers and supply most of the labour on commercial farms (Masendeke 1996). In the case of groundnuts, women's principal interest is in the nutritional value for domestic consumption rather than for oil cash cropping (Masendeke 1996).

Qualitative information on Zimbabwean women's indigenous knowledge collected from older women in workshop groups demonstrates women's varietal knowledge and recognition, seed selection and storage, food processing and storage and on gender roles and responsibilities in agricultural production, including crop post harvest activities (Gata and Kativhu 1991). The cultural norms held by elder women stress women's responsibility for family meals included responsibility for harvesting and storing relish crops (Gata and Kativhu 1991). These elder women also considered rice a woman's crop because of their expertise in its cultivation (Gata and Kativhu 1991). Interestingly, older women report that any form of cultivation that required patience, such as precision sowing or more intricate weeding, was also allocated to women, as was seed selection and storage, and their superior knowledge in these fields was acknowledged. This oral evidence should not necessarily be taken at face-value and the fact that women reported destruction of women's indigenous knowledge and undermining of their roles vis-à-vis the environment and agriculture imply that these practices of food processing and storage may no longer be practised.

In contrast to the historical perspective and portrayals of the current situation, the next section reviews evidence of the everyday dynamics of gender relations in Zimbabwe.

The Everyday Dynamism of Gender Relations in Zimbabwe

This section review evidence of the everyday dynamism of gender relations in Zimbabwe and relies on a relatively small number of secondary sources. However, these are sufficient to evidence the existence of co-operative conflicts, of gendered livelihood strategies, of changing bargaining power, of women's resistance and bargaining with patriarchy.

Co-operative Conflicts

The joint and separate interests of men and women in gendered livelihood trajectories is well illustrated by Scoones' participatory investigation into perceptions of wealth through three focus groups (women, men, local research team) (Scoones 1995). Women considered wealth to be associated with off-farm remittances that gave freedom from drought, ability to pay school fees, (cash) purchasing power and ability to employ farm labour. Men saw independence from the need to purchase food that good farming and cattle ownership provided as wealth. Women's association of wealth with off-farm remittances, and men's with good farming and cattle ownership, are compared with the fact that there was general agreement from (men and women) that women were better managers of cash and should be given control over it, whereas land and cattle are accumulated and retained by men (pp. 74-5). It was agreed between the groups that indication of wealth was given by modern housing, children's education, grocery purchasing and ownership of capital assets. These interests reflect "the gendered division of rights, responsibilities and resource access in Shona society" (p. 74) and the differences in the perceptions of men and women was found to effect the ranking between the women's group and the men's (p. 77- 82). These findings have implications for research methodologies, confirming the importance of comparing and contrasting data from male and female informants, and also reveal important aspects of joint interests in the 'conjugal contract' and well as different priorities of men and women within marriage.

Pankhurst's examination of gender relations in a village in one of Zimbabwe's 'successful peasant areas' describes variations in marital agreements and women's and men's strategies in different household types against a background of male dominance (Pankhurst 1991). Pankhurst differentiates households in terms of their receipt of off-farm remittances, assets and the presence of an adult male (Pankhurst 1991). She claims that the marriage contract is flexible - being based on shares of crops,

rather than fixed amounts - and is able to accommodate changes during the lifetime of a marriage. Although women gain certain rights as wives as well as certain restrictions, such as owning land independently, and obligations, such as providing labour for husbands on demand, Pankhurst notes that women's tolerance of adversity within marriage is affected by the risk of destitution on divorce (Pankhurst 1991). The poverty of widows is the result either of the poverty of their late husband or appropriation of goods by other relatives of their husband (*because of poor contract? Follow this up?*) (Pankhurst 1991).

The principal cause of intra-household conflict noted by Pankhurst, is the allocation of labour and the disposal of its product. In this conflict men have the advantage both of material security, law and the social acceptability of low levels of violence (Pankhurst 1991). [*Something in John's notes about public acceptance of contract? Follow this up?*] Violent control is most prevalent in households without remittances and less so amongst households with older male heads who are confident of their wives concern with material reproduction (Pankhurst 1991).

Gendered Livelihood Strategies

Gill's study of fuelwood use in Zimbabwe in 1983 demonstrates how the interlinked nature of women's livelihood activities means that factors relating to one activity can impact on their strategic management of other tasks: in peak labour periods pressure on women's time resulted in them opting for fast cooking methods, despite a recognised increase in total fuel consumption and consequently greater investment of dry season labour in fuel gathering (Gill 1983). This suggests that the gendered constraints and opportunities related to any particular activities, such as crop post-harvest, can only be effectively considered if situated within a broader understanding of gendered livelihood strategies.

Fortmann et al report that although both men and women have restricted breadth and assurance of land and tree tenure in two Zimbabwean villages in the Communal Areas, that women also have to content with the uncertainty of duration of tenure dependent on the duration of marriage. Legally household tree products are the property of a husband, but special rights of the planter, including women, are often recognised within households. However, all divorced women lost rights to trees they had planted on household land. Whilst women are less willing than men to plant trees on household land, they are equally willing to plant in communal woodlots where they have more independent rights (Fortmann, Antinori, and Nabane 1997). In communal woodlots, women active in the planting on their own behalf, as opposed to as household representative, generally retain their rights even if divorced. Also apposite is their confirmation that "poor women behave more like poor men than like rich women" (Fortmann et al. 1997).

Amongst the strategies that Pankhurst records are the following:

- Where a husband is absent but pays for labour, his wife can decide on the extent and nature of the work the labourer does and this allocation usually differs from that the husband would make should he be home. For instance, his wife may include domestic tasks in the labourer's work allocation, enabling her to pursue opportunities for generating some income of her own.
- Households where husbands are present and there are no remittances usually need to sell labour. Women in these kinds of households may accept lower rates of pay if the payment is 'hidden' but this strategy is recognised as being risky because her resultant neglect of household duties can lead to divorce (Pankhurst 1991)
- Wives strategies to ensure receipt of remittances can include open requests or demands, defiance or threats of defiance, but deference is more usual
- Where husbands are absent, women may have autonomy over agricultural production, but her husband will review her adequate fulfilment of her duties. However, this autonomy does not extend to cattle sales and women's own cattle are often appropriated by husbands (Pankhurst 1991)
- Where husbands are present, women focus on trying to obtain greater contributions from husbands or are deceptive about personal income.

Kundhlande's et al's gender analysis of dambo farming hints at the strategic use of gendered ideologies about business knowledge to shore up male control of marketing. The authors report that men took responsibility for marketing because "*women can easily fall prey to cunning produce buyers*" (Kundhlande et al. 1995). Such statements need to be treated as ideological rather than taken at face value.

Changing Bargaining Power

Women in rural Zimbabwe of different status have very different levels of access and control of resources - a head wife holds sway in the kitchen, but a junior wife, daughters-in-law and unmarried women can't be said to do so. In the fields when the man formally in charge is absent, a senior woman takes his place. *"In some plots collective management is involved: in these cases the senior woman then has to conduct complex negotiations concerning planting times and crop mix and may 'strike bargains with patriarchy' (Deniz Kandiyoti's phrase), taking over the male role, and exerting power over other women in the process. Older women, notably the husband's aunt, are often very dominant in this way, and are able to mobilise the labour of junior kin to farm their plot. In relation to farming choices, differences among women are highly significant because they affect the way individuals perceive and are able to respond to risk and uncertainty"* (Scoones 1997:718 in (Joekes 1997:718)). This evidence illustrates the way in which women's bargaining power and the negotiation strategies she uses are closely related to both life cycles and domestic cycles and will therefore vary between women and during any individual woman's lifetime.

There is some evidence of subtle shifts in gender relations as apparently ineffective legal reforms alter the taken-for-granted nature of 'customary' gender arrangements. For example, Zimbabwe's Legal Age of Majority Act, which technically included women in inheritance of property and gave them financial independence, is generally regarded as being ineffectual because of the persistence of customary law and traditional cultural attitudes (Morna et al. 1991). However, Morna et al report that "conversations with a broad cross-section of women farmers in Zimbabwe reveal that many are convincing their husbands to enter into informal arrangements that give the women some control over the land on which they depend" (Morna et al. 1991) and that in some cases this has led to greater independence in other areas of women's lives. The data hints that the existence and widespread knowledge of this legal reform may together with other social and economic changes have strengthened some women's bargaining power within the household by opening total male control over land to questioning, thus enabling women to press for more desirable outcomes.

Vukasin also reports contradictory responses to other 'failed' legal reforms intended to benefit women that are suggestive of low level changes (Vukasin 1992#411). For instance, Vukasin reports that young people are perceived as being more able to marry without parental consent as the Legal Age of Majority Act weakens traditional structures (Vukasin 1992#411): such a change is likely to enhance young women and men's bargaining power in vetoing choice of marriage partner. Similarly, the Maintenance Act is criticised by men and women as open to abuse by some women as a means of accumulating wealth, favoured by women who wish to control male promiscuity and criticised by men for making women and daughters more independent and stubborn (Vukasin 1992#411). This data suggests strongly that legal reforms are indeed enabling a renegotiation of gender relations in subtle ways.

Giving rare attention to masculinities, Scoones notes that men are also experiencing changing expectations: *"The normative view of maleness - the strong and reliable provider, owner of cattle, farmer of land, husband of wives and father of children - has become unattainable to many younger men... [they are] increasingly unable to find work or farm...unable to get formally married. Younger men are becoming totally dependent on kin, and increasingly disenfranchised from political influence"* (Scoones 1997:719 in (Joekes 1997:719)). In practice, it seems that despite the apparent tenacity of gender inequalities, that some important if subtle renegotiation of gender relations are taking place.

Jackson (1995) has argued for a nearby area in Zimbabwe that *"conjugal contracts are in a state of flux, being changed at least partly as a consequence of women's manipulation of their meaning and content... the availability of markets, access to technology and shifts in reliance on household plot farming have all opened up opportunities for women to press for changes in the forms of obligation arising through marriage and for greater independence, which are most strongly realised in situations of localised environmental decline."* (Scoones 1997:719 referring to Jackson (1995) in (Joekes 1997:719)). Scoones himself found that in higher productivity zones of the district where there were agricultural surpluses and good transport links that *"women marketed maize on their own behalf after the good harvest in 1993 and increased their share of household income. As a result, women are now arguing the case for planting more maize and sunflower, crops with the best commercialisation*

prospects...in this area, but not elsewhere, we see the redefinition of conjugal obligations as a consequence of expanded opportunities for women's agency" (Scoones 1997:719-720 in (Joekes 1997:719-720)).

Resistance and Agency

Scoones records some of the ways in which women exercise power in the context of unequal gender relations in rural Zimbabwe:

"Women in rural areas are often effective at wielding the 'weapons of the weak' (James Scott's phrase), notably use (or threat of use) of medicines and love potions, which are greatly feared by men. In the research area there were also two cases of women displaying public influence over development interventions. In one case, resistance to a pastoral resettlement scheme was mobilised around a relatively young divorcee who lived alone and was widely regarded as a witch. The scheme was redesigned to avoid her village, to the satisfaction of many in the area who objected to the scheme. The second case was an even clearer case of women's agency: it concerned a young woman who arrived in the area, during the 1991-2 drought, from the shrine of a territorial rain cult in the Matapos hills. She gathered large crowds in her crusade against the agricultural practices promoted by the extension service. She held these responsible for the drought, on the grounds that they damaged the environment and were upsetting the ancestors, the guardian of the land. She advocated a return to millets and sorghums and non-chemical fertilisation techniques, and called a halt to the use of cement in water projects, forcing NGOs active in the area to change their approach to dam and well construction. In both these cases women influenced events by recourse to culturally rooted discourses of power and influences, and through alliances struck between different groups of men and women" (Scoones 1997:719 in (Joekes 1997:719)).

The culturally rooted nature of discourses of power implies their embedded-ness in unequal gender relations and the final sub-section examines evidence of women bargaining with patriarchy.

Bargaining with Patriarchy

Although conjugal contracts appear to be being rethought or at least contested in various ways, it is nevertheless clear that women's bargaining power is constrained and that their strategies implicate them in the continuance of gender inequalities.

Pankhurst notes that women's bargaining power within marriages is limited in the following ways:

- public complaint is socially unacceptable(Pankhurst 1991)
- no apparent communication and support from other women(Pankhurst 1991)
- running to relatives less possible now because of loss of financial control by elders over younger men and spatial disruption(Pankhurst 1991)
- bridewealth now less important as a requirement of marriage or a form of protection for a wife (Pankhurst 1991)

Despite recording many ways in which women strategise within marriage, she concludes that " social rules about women's behaviour are enforced by men and accepted, even perpetuated by women" who have become the principle, if uncomfortable, socialisers of (Pankhurst 1991).

Moore's analysis of resource access in Nyanga District, eastern Zimbabwe, records a more visible 'bargain with patriarchy' in which women utilise appeals to male authority to achieve a highly significant gain for women (Moore 1993). Women's *tseza* cropping, which 'robs' soil of nutrients, is cultivated away from arable plots on unclaimed marginal sloping land. The production of *tseza*, and the allocation of these isolated plots is exclusively under the control of women, thereby by-passing patrilineal and male biased state land allocation policy. Even if men help to prepare these plots with oxen, where possible, no claim was ever made over the produce, which provided women with an independent source of income. Women often allocated particular plots to specific demands such as school fees. Whilst *tseza* cultivation was officially prohibited on grounds of soil degradation, it was generally tolerated if discrete, but women feared that increased concern for land degradation in the protected area of the neighbouring National Park would threaten their position. In response, women utilised the cultural logic of "*nhaka*, or rightful inheritance" (p. 395) for any person who has fought for land to put the case that the importance of their role in Chief Tangwena's struggle against the Smith regime for land, gave them rightful inheritance to 'freely cultivate' (*kurima madiro*) *tseza* plots. In this way women were able to strengthen local male commitment to defending *tseza* cultivation from the threats posted by national park management. Moore's description of women's 'retooling' of customary tenure rights for their own ends confirms the way in which acts of resistance are embedded in cultural logic and as a result are also imbued with the power relations of that cultural logic. Women

here are appealing to traditional patriarchal authority to legitimise their rights and defend them vis-à-vis the Park.

Development Interventions and Gender Impacts in Zimbabwe

This final section summarises information on gender policies and the gender impacts of development projects focusing on RNR activities and CPH activities in particular. There is inevitably some overlap with earlier sections, in particular readers should note that agricultural extension is dealt with in section 2.2.2. This section deals with gender policy statements and recommendations relating to the RNR sector and evidence of gendered impacts of particular projects, interventions or components.

Gender Policy for the RNR Sector

As in the general RNR and non-technical crop post-harvest literature, general commitments to greater inclusion of women are expressed, often with little support in terms of detailed gender analysis, planning and impact assessment. For instance, DFID, then ODA, "are committed to giving increasing attention to women in development issues" in Zimbabwe (Natural Resources Institute 1995). However, even some detailed descriptions of crop post-harvest practices and problems simply refer to 'farmers', 'processors' or 'traders' (Donaldson et al. 1996). Other general statements not supported by further gender analysis will not be repeated here.

ITZ also stresses the fact that "women are critical to the success of any farming intervention and are central to the Agriculture Programme" (Intermediate Technology Zimbabwe 1997) but their reporting on gender is variable. In reporting the development of small peanut butter mills, ITZ's annual report (Intermediate Technology Zimbabwe 1997) identifies women as the specific targets of this technology which is intended to increase production and offer income-generation potential whilst enabling women to remain in control of their activities at household level. It is not clear from the report how changes in gender relations will be monitored (p. 5) and in their annual report for 1994/5 (Intermediate Technology Zimbabwe 1996a) present an ungendered review their Tinytech oilseed mill project and report on the Chivi Food Security Project, although they do report that they have commissioned an investigation of gender relations in the Chivi Food Security Project.

In Mutoko, COOPIBO have included some gender sensitisation in their programmes and KDCA focus their income generating activities on women, for example in Kawere Ward they promote sunflower oil production amongst women's groups and have bought a ram press (Anon. 1977). In CARE's AGENT programme which establishes local agri-input dealers to supply smallholders, some of the agents are women (Stringfellow and McKone 1996).

Hagmann et al recommend that husbands and wives should be encouraged to participate since "the activities should address the households in the communities as units" to ensure the flow of information (Hagmann, Chuma, and Murwira 1995). Burgess and Beilstein review the potential for women farmers to overcome household and institutional male dominance, particularly in the marketing sector, and illustrate their argument using case studies drawn from a survey of small-scale Zimbabwean communal farmers (Burgess and Beilstein 1996).

Gata and Kativhu believe that technical solutions for sustainable agriculture alone are not appropriate, because the introduction of a labour market has disrupted the social balance of roles and responsibilities that previously existed (p. 111). Change in the endemic marginalisation of women in official policy is seen to be essential, and the authors recommend the participation of women not only in the planning and implementation of policy, but in evaluation of its success "using their own prioritised needs, values and standards" (p. 113).

Gender Impacts of RNR Development Interventions

Analysis of gender impacts related to CPH interventions is scarce and is sometimes unsatisfactory, arriving at unwarranted conclusions and being overeager to demonstrate 'success'. There are however a few pieces of secondary material that reveal more ambiguous and problematic outcomes.

A survey of 76 women and 124 male farmers which was "representative of the population of Zimbabwe's small-scale communal farmers" and investigated the extent and method of the respondents' demands upon institutions for priority assets and demands (Burgess and Beilstein 1996). The survey found that, in contrast to the men, women respondents "had done little or nothing", which the authors explain to be the result of "passivity and a lack of education which were by-products of patriarchy" (p. 28). Single *de facto* female household heads were found to be in the worst situation, lacking knowledge of institutions and procedures or feeling that "it was futile to try" (ibid.). Only 7 of the 76 women in the survey "exhibited significant levels of voice and activism", including single *de facto* female headed households, and their case studies are presented in detail. Four of these seven were being trained to be master farmers by AGRITEX (p. 36). On the basis of the case studies, the authors argue that the most important factors in the exceptional capacity of these women to overcome patriarchal obstacles was their involvement in collective action in co-operatives, in participation, and in skills development, assisted by the intervention of a development agency (p. 30-7). They stress the significance of the role of intervention in providing women with the skills and power to change their situation.

Moore describes the gendered character of conflicts that have arisen between the interests of farmers and those of the neighbouring National Park (Moore 1993). Consultation meetings dominated by men met the proposal to erect a border fence with approval because a fence would protect both cattle and crops. In contrast, women were particularly concerned that the park would restrict their access to firewood, wild fruits, culinary and medicinal herbs, and weaving reeds for the handicraft products which provided them with the opportunity to generate some income (p. 394). Many women, however, were denied the opportunity to raise these matters at public meetings, because a) those with absent wage labouring husbands were forbidden by their spouses to attend because of fear of 'adultery', and anyway found it difficult to find the time to attend, and b) those with resident husbands were required to provide the extra labour necessary for their husbands to attend and "shape the course of the discussion" (p. 394). The example demonstrates how women's voices are 'muted' in participatory development and appears to suggest that men manipulate cultural ideas about male political participation and the need for men to control women's sexuality in order to stifle women's viewpoints.

In Chivi, the organisation of farmers groups relies upon traditional social structures and a Kraal leader reports that ITDG work had re-established his traditional position of leadership and traditional sharing of labour within the group (Stringfellow and McKone 1996). In smallholder's Growers Associations organised by the Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (CCZ) chairmen are required to be literate (Stringfellow and McKone 1996). Both situations would appear to reinforce traditional gender relations of authority.

Dried fruit and vegetable is predominantly a woman's activity, but Murphy found it difficult to assess the extent to which institutional support to the dried produce sector is explicitly or implicitly targeted to women (Murphy 1996). This overview does not discuss the impact that the additional income generation and employment creation that could arise from improved drying technology or dried produce marketing might have on existing gender relations (Murphy 1996).

In the case of sunflower oil production, Masendeke (Masendeke 1996) points out that while all the Tinytech presses were owned and operated by men, most of the ram presses were operated by women. Although the author notes the physical demands of operating the manual ram presses, and the high cost of the mechanised presses (p. 6) and the greater number of women producers and their smaller per capita production of oil, Masendeke curiously concludes that this represents an "evenly balanced gender situation" (p. 5). The author's recommendations to overcome the constraints to a 'better' exploitation of this resource do not specify 'better for whom' (Masendeke 1996).

Discussions of Women's Garden Groups (Intermediate Technology Zimbabwe 1996b), farmers clubs (Hagmann et al. 1995) and the progress of women's group peanut butter processing enterprise (Intermediate Technology Zimbabwe 1996c), do not consider benefits to women or impact on gender relations. Although the committees of farmers clubs are still dominated by men, elitism had been broken down and women were being elected as club leaders - in the case of garden clubs, almost exclusively (Hagmann et al. 1995).

An ENDA-Zimbabwe prospectus (Anon. 19??) promoting milling machinery espouses its aim as being to reduce the labour load of rural women. The prospectus reports that 100 milling units have been established (p.1) but does not specify who runs the milling enterprises (8-9). However, the accompanying photographic images depict only men and it is mentioned that women have particular difficulties in raising funds to set up such an enterprise (19). ENDA-Zimbabwe emphasise that the mills release women from this area of food processing even to the extent that they do not have to carry grain to the mill, and that thus, "the dehulling process has broken the traditional gender ... barriers" (p. 3). They claim that where this technology has been adopted, women have developed vegetable gardens or craft enterprises, improving family nutrition and generating income (pp. 3-4). However the impact of milling on the control over grain and income and the wider reaching effects on gender relations are not discussed.

Although brewing is important to women, it is almost completely ignored in development intervention because of attendant issues such as drunkenness, domestic violence and fuel consumption that are particularly unacceptable to the implicit or explicit ethics of development agencies, particularly those with non-conformist religious backgrounds (McCall 1996). Nevertheless the work carried out by ZERO in Zimbabwe appears to demonstrate that development can successfully support women's brewing, and McCall uses this evidence to make the case for brewing to be included on the development agenda.

ITZ note that with respect to the Rural Communities Programme makes passing mention of a spin-off of organisational skills training into improved household relationships (Intermediate Technology Zimbabwe 1997). In-Zimuto Communal Area and Mshagashe Small-Scale Commercial Area it is reported that more women farmers are participating in the participatory development of tillage and weed control technologies with AGRITEX, DR&SS, NRI and Silsoe with women now "taking the lead in extending technologies onto their own farms" (Chatizwa et al. 1998).

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