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ENSURE

"Enhancing Nutrition, Stepping Up Resilience and Enterprise"

Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment:

The Journey So Far

The Experience of the ENSURE Program



January 2017

I. Introduction

The ENSURE Food Security Program is a USAID-funded, five-year intervention designed to profoundly and sustainably impact 215,000 vulnerable and food-insecure Zimbabweans in Manicaland and Masvingo Provinces. The program is a shared commitment by four partners and one service provider—World Vision, CARE, SNV, SAFIRE and ICRISAT—who work together to mainstream gender equity and natural resource management in the three key areas of maternal and child nutrition and health, agricultural production and marketing, and community resilience.

ENSURE focuses primarily on empowering and capacitating poor, rural households to become more food secure by way of the following three strategic objectives:

- Improving nutrition among women of reproductive age and children under the age of five.
- Increasing household income through improved agricultural production and marketing.
- Increasing resilience to food insecurity of communities through improved disaster risk reduction and natural resource management.

ENSURE acknowledges that gender equality and women's empowerment are key development components which are fundamental to the realization of food and nutrition security. In the various groups of praxis; ENSURE has implemented working gender equity models which include Social Analysis and Action; Male Engagement Synchronization Approach; Gender Dialogues; and Gender Outcome Mapping; all aimed at facilitating gender transformative changes at community level.

The success of ENSURE can be portrayed through the accounts of thousands of women and men whose lives have been changed through its various programme interventions. Tangible gender transformative changes can be noticed on several dimensions: joint household decision making; reduced violence against women;

increased women's leadership in community leadership; men assisting women with household chores and childcare; women's ownership of high value productive assets; and increased access and control over income.

The selected stories, photographs and descriptions contained in this document only reflect a small part of the transformational change related to women's empowerment and gender equity occurring in ENSURE program areas, that is the World Vision and CARE operational areas.

2. Gender Equality in the Zimbabwe Context

Zimbabwe has made commitments towards the promotion of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment by ratifying and signing international and regional conventions and declarations on gender. The country has made commitments through the following: Ratification of the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; SADC Declaration on Gender and Development; Millennium Development Goals; African Protocol on Women's Rights; and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Domestically, a number of legislative reforms and policy frameworks have been introduced as part of the national drive towards women empowerment and gender equality. The National Gender Policy, Domestic Violence Act and the New Constitution which explicitly includes women's rights as part of the Bill of Rights. The implementation of the national laws on gender is coordinated by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development.

Participation in Decision Making: Although significant progress has been made in recent years by Government, international partners, NGOs and civic society to promote gender parity in the country through a wide range of supportive interventions and legislation, large disparities still exist between men and women in terms of access to health, participation in the economy, participation in governance and decision-making processes and access to legal protection against abuse and gender based violence. Women are still largely excluded and under-represented in the social, economic, political and governance spheres and processes of Zimbabwe. In the 2013 Human Development Report, Zimbabwe was ranked 116 out of 148 countries in terms of the Gender Inequality Index (GII) in the 2012 index. Drivers of gender inequality include culture, religion, socialisation, statutory and common laws that still reflect patriarchal values, gender-based violence and limited women economic empowerment.

Key decision making public institutions are dominantly run by men in Zimbabwe. The graph below shows the current gender composition in local councils, house of assembly and senate (2014). Out of the 1,958 councilors across the country, only

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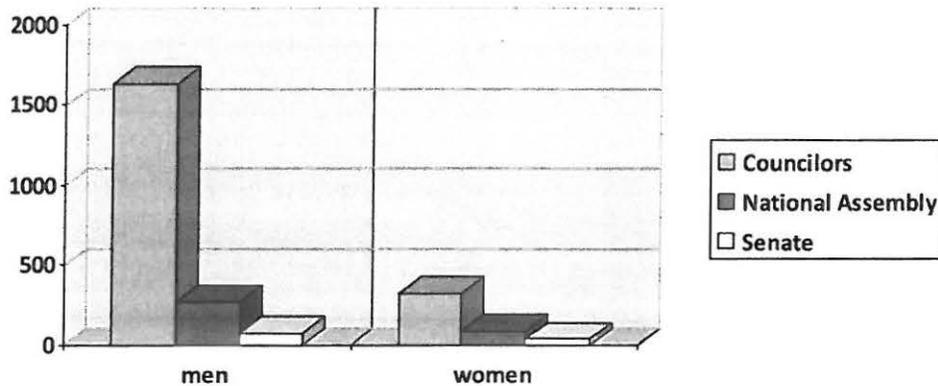
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16.5% (or 323 seats) are occupied by women, while only 32% of the house of assembly seats (86 out of 270) are occupied by women. In senate the proportion of women representatives is higher at 48% (out of 80 seats).

Gender composition in Local Government Councils, House of Assembly and Senate



The fact that decision-making positions in these institutions are dominated by men implies that patriarchal tendencies and values pervade the institutions which can culminate in prejudicial decisions against women.

Economic participation: Women are still largely excluded from the mainstream economy. Women perform 53% of all economic activity but their work is rendered invisible because it is not measured and is lowly paid. A UNICEF report noted that 90% of women in Zimbabwe are farmers, informal sector workers and community organisers. In sectors such as mining, tourism, construction and manufacturing entry barriers for women include lack of capital and lack of exposure as these sectors are dominated by men who control entry processes and resources.

Access to Productive Resources: According to FAO-The State of Food and Agriculture Report (2010-11), although women constitute 61.7 percent of the rural population and 53 percent of the agricultural workforce, traditional practices

have routinely restricted women from land ownership and equitably accessing productive resources. Women's access to land, (one of the most important productive assets for women considering that an estimated 65% of women derive their livelihood from agriculture), is limited with average arable land holding for male-headed households being 2.73 hectares while that for female-headed households stood at 1.86 hectares (FAO, 2006). At the conclusion of the Land Reform Programme, only 18% of beneficiaries under the A1 model (peasant farmers) were female-headed households while under the A2 model (commercial farmers) they constituted only 12% falling short of the gender parity ideal. Although the majority of labourers in the agricultural sector are women, only 20% are practicing farming as land owners as the majority are men. Other constraints faced by women in this sector include limited access to credit due to lack of collateral security, lack of sustainable markets and limited security of tenure resulting from discriminatory customary laws¹.

Gender Based Violence: According to the Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (2010-2011) thirty percent of women age 15-49 have experienced physical violence since age 15; 18 percent of women have experienced physical violence within the past 12 months; The most common perpetrator of physical violence against women is the woman's current or former husband or partner. Twenty-two percent of women who have had sexual intercourse reported that their first experience was forced against their will. Only 37 percent of women who experienced physical or sexual violence have sought help. Most turned to family (58 percent), in-laws (36 percent), and friends or neighbors (13 percent) for assistance.

As the above evidence shows, gender inequality is still prevalent within the Zimbabwe context despite national efforts aimed at empowering women and promoting gender equality. Progress towards achieving gender equality and women empowerment is curtailed by lack of resources to implement and monitor policies and slow change in patriarchal attitudes. The National Gender Machinery is also hamstrung by inadequate human and financial resources. The Minister of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development expressed dissatisfaction

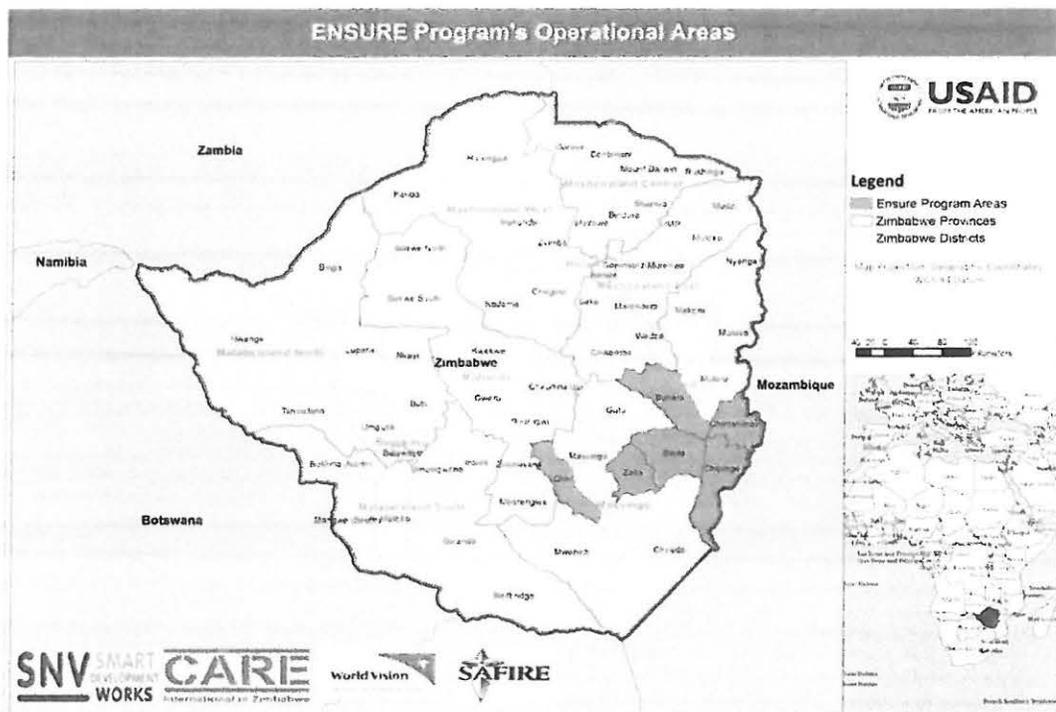
¹ Women Economic Empowerment Mapping Study, UNIFEM, 2010

with the level of gender mainstreaming and coordination of the National Gender Machinery. Although government ministries have Gender Focal Persons who are tasked with coordinating gender mainstreaming activities within their respective ministries, the effectiveness of these efforts is affected by the fact that the majority of the focal persons are junior staff members with very limited influence on strategic decision making within the ministries. As such, the presence of these Gender Focal Persons has not translated into meaningful coordination and mainstreaming of gender activities.

3. ENSURE AREAS OF OPERATION

ENSURE programme is operating in six districts of Bikita; Chivi; and Zaka districts of Masvingo province; and Chimanimani; Chipinge; and Buhera districts of Manicaland province.

Masvingo and Manicaland Provinces in Zimbabwe are impacted by poor food production, poverty, poor ability to cope with shocks and stresses, aggravated by 2015/2016 El Nino which causes warm and dry trends as well as great variability of rainfall. The largely rural population in these areas lack infrastructure, access to markets and financing, adequate coverage of health and nutrition services. Stunting levels in the six districts of operation range between 31% - 38%, whilst the national average is 34%.



4. WHICH KEY PATHWAYS DID ENSURE USE TO CATALYSE GENDER TRANSFORMATION?

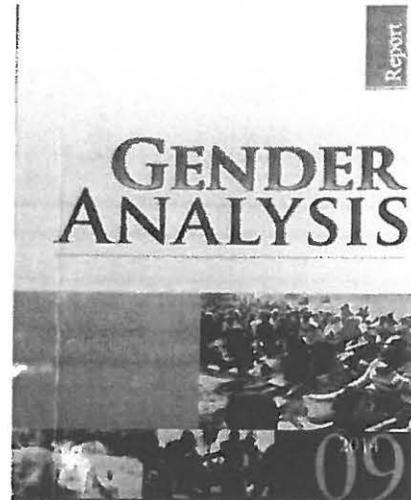
3.1 Gender Analysis Study

With the view to effectively address gender equality and promote women's empowerment in ENSURE, the project conducted a community based participatory Gender Analysis research in July 2014 covering the 6 districts of Masvingo and Manicaland. The objective of the study was to identify gender related constraints and underlying socio cultural norms that negatively impact on nutrition, agricultural productivity and marketing; and household resilience.

The study provided an analysis of gender issues using the following USAID Domains on Gender Analysis Framework:

- Gender Roles, Responsibilities and Time Used
- Household Patterns of Power and Decision Making
- Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
- Meaningful participation in Public Decision Making and;
- Gender Based Violence
- Opportunities and entry points for gender mainstreaming

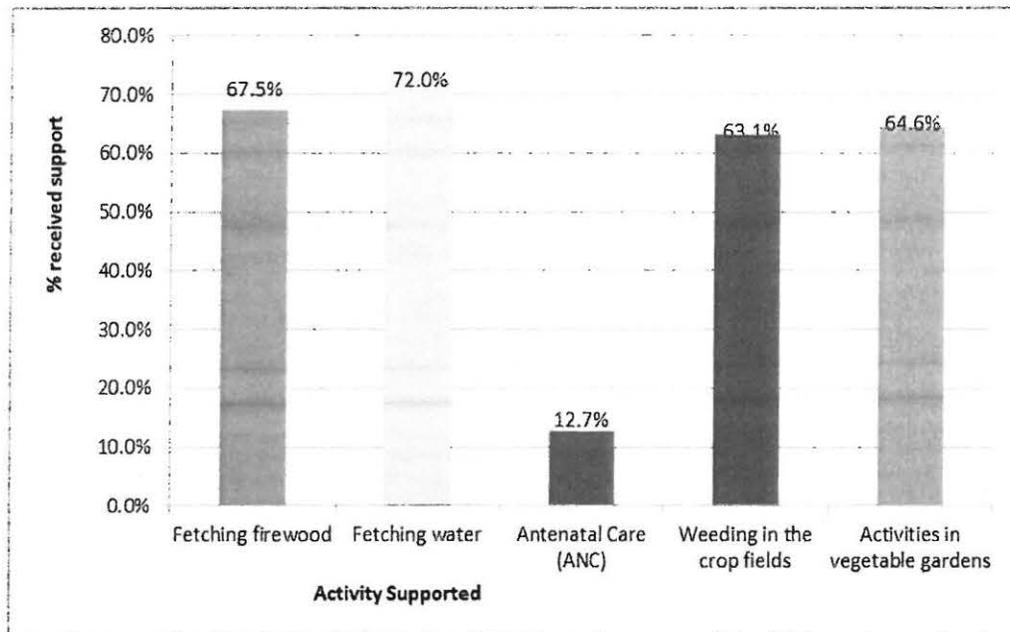
The findings brought to the fore the deep-rooted social, cultural and religious practices that negatively impact access to nutritious foods, agricultural productivity and marketing, and household resilience. Key recommendations drawn from this study include the need to conduct male engagement activities to support health and nutrition; introduce and test labour saving technologies to address women's workload and promote agricultural production; support women farmers marketing; supporting women to acquire and own high value productive



assets; and develop community engagement models that address negative social cultural practices.

Findings of the gender analysis have informed ENSURE gender interventions and approaches. According to the 2015 Outcome Monitoring Survey, ENSURE convinced 72% of men to help with “women’s work” like fetching water. Because the gender analysis showed that men do not typically help women with their chores which affect family nutrition and agriculture production, the program is focusing on men’s involvement in household tasks to achieve project outcomes. Men in the program are helping women with chores that they used to think only women should do.

Proportion of Women Receiving Support for Key Activities



Outcome Monitoring Survey, 2015

4.2 Gender and Advocacy: Collaboration with Ministry of Women Affairs



CARE Country Director, Phil Christensten officially handing over the Gender Analysis Report to Ministry Director for Gender, Caroline Matizha

ENSURE successfully conducted a Gender Analysis dissemination meeting which was held on the 5th of June 2015 at Holiday Inn, Harare. The meeting, graced by the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development; brought together Directors from the said Ministry; Ministry staff representing provinces, districts and wards; as well as representatives from UN Agencies, USAID and various other stakeholders.

The aim of the meeting was to share the Gender Analysis Report as well as a thorough reflection on how the findings can inform gender

programming when implementing similar programs. Further, the CARE Women's Empowerment Model which encompasses community gender and women's empowerment training tools currently in use within the ENSURE food security program operational areas was also shared. Lastly, but significantly the meeting aimed to strengthen synergy, partnership between all the stakeholders present as well as opening up platforms for dialogue between the Ministry of Women Affairs and the ENSURE program. A video entitled **"Empowering Women: Empowering Communities"** produced by ENSURE was viewed; highlighting the program's community women's empowerment interventions and this was received with much



Focus Group Discussion by participants

appreciation and support of the work being done by ENSURE by the participants present.

The Permanent Secretary reiterated her Ministry's commitment to collaborate with ENSURE in implementing women's empowerment initiatives. Two key outcomes of the meeting were the positive acknowledgement of the Gender Analysis report and the successive commitment by the Ministry to spearhead the dissemination of the report findings to all 10 provinces. Lastly, the Ministry endorsed and adopted the ENSURE Gender Training Guide for Field Staff for use by the Ministry staff at National, Provincial, District and Ward level. ENSURE's support was requested in reproducing these manuals.

3.3 Commemorations of United Nations International Events

Annually, the ENSURE programme join hands with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development; and stakeholders to commemorate International Women's Day and 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence. ENSURE takes advantage of these platforms including use of multi-media to disseminate information and celebrate women's empowerment achievements that have been realized as a result of programme interventions.



CARE Staff as part of IWD Commemorations

2014 Nutrition projects flourish in Chimanimani

Mercy Ngunjiri
Post Correspondent

THE Food supplementary programme and nutrition projects that were introduced by World Vision, under the Enhancing Nutrition, Stopping Up Resilience and Enterprise (ENSURE) programme in Chimanimani are fast transforming lives, with the beneficiaries expressing hope for better living conditions after fully utilizing the programme.

Speaking at the ceremony held in Chimanimani last week, the ENSURE project chief of party, Dave Evans said one of the project's objectives is to increase the long term food and livelihood security of households through the improvement of maternal health, nutrition, agricultural production, marketing and women's empowerment.

"The achievement of household security can be achieved by addressing domestic violence and promoting gender equality, based on the understanding that gender inequality is a root cause of food insecurity. Women are the majority of our beneficiaries and our commitment through the ENSURE project is to endeavour towards ensuring household food and nutrition security," he said.

Sharing her story with *The Manica Post* was Patricia Tarugaira, a member of the Nyarasi Maone cooperative in the Guhuma area, which has embraced the nutrition project and she said the project helped her understand the nutritive value of food as well as the importance of breastfeeding.

"Our group is made up of 10 women. Whenever we were told that breastfeeding is important, we took it for granted and we would sometimes introduce solid food to our children way too early in their growing up. However with the nutrition projects we are doing, I now understand the importance of upbringing children the right way. Because I appreciate the nutritional value of food, my family now eats balanced meals even from our meager earnings. Now that I am earning money, financial disputes with my husband have lessened and it feels good to be a happy family," she said.

Also sharing his testimony was Michael Mutambara who is a member of an irrigation scheme which came to life when World Vision repaired some of the worn out canals for the benefit of the Chimanimani residents.

Said Mutambara: "Ours is an irrigation scheme to which 300 households are beneficiaries. We are from Gornzi area and since the repair of our canals, we now have water throughout the year, something which helps us do our farming more efficiently. Now that we are doing efficient farming we are endeavoring on creating market linkages to ensure that we get money for the hard work we are doing."

The USAID funded ENSURE programme, being implemented by World Vision Zimbabwe, was officially launched on 16 February this year. It is currently implemented in Manicaland and Masvingo provinces focusing mainly on nutrition, agriculture, resilience, gender and environment.

Manica Post Article on IWD

Gender Based Violence a Threat to Household Food Security



Pisa-Pisa Drama group play on Gender Based Violence

Gender-based violence occurs across all societies of the world, within the home and far reaching into even into the communities. This atrocity is regrettably the fate of millions of women around the globe consequently affecting their productivity both in the homes, communities and places of work. In relation to gender, USAID Policy focuses on three critical outcomes which are: Reducing Gender disparities in access to control over and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities and services, Reducing Gender Based Violence by mitigating harmful effects through individual and community approaches and Increasing Capabilities of Women and girls by influencing decision making and realization of rights.

With the world theme **“From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let’s Challenge Militarism and End Violence against Women”** and the Zimbabwe national theme **“From peace in the home to peace in our nation; let’s challenge all forms of gender-based violence”**, the 2014, 16 Days Campaign



provided an opportunity for ENSURE to reflect on how the program can continue to assist the community to account and challenge the structures that allow gender-based violence to persist. The ENSURE program working in collaboration with the Ministry of Women Affairs Gender & Community Development organized and hosted the Masvingo provincial commemorations of the 16 days of activism against Gender Based Violence in December 2014. The event which was held in Zaka district and attended by an estimated crowd of 500 people, amongst them several government departments, the district resident magistrate, the Zimbabwe republic police, variegated NGOs, churches, ENSURE beneficiaries, school children and members of the public.

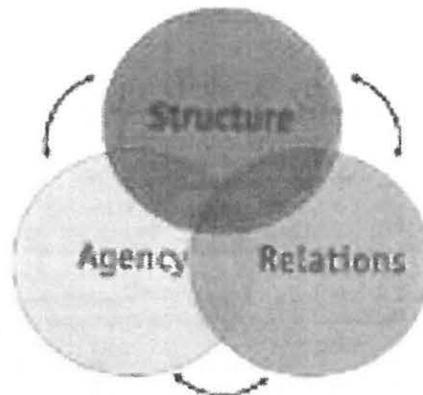
ENSURE recognizes that gender inequality is a critical factor that impacts negatively on food security, nutrition and household resilience. Consequently, gender integration, which is aimed at promoting the drive towards gender equality and women's empowerment, has been placed at the core of the ENSURE program strategy. Women are considered pillars of a home or nation, a notion generally agreed in a Zimbabwean Shona proverbial term "***Musha mukadzi***" loosely translated [a woman is a pillar in the home]. Women take up various gender roles in the society such as house chores, tending the fields, nurturing children and as such they are to be taken care of. It follows therefore that with such gender roles they become vulnerable to abuse when the people they serve are not satisfied.

As ENSURE, there is much more to be done, in the fight against GBV to ensure that the efforts put on paper through gender strategies, translate to collective actions that eradicate gender based violence in our society to ensure peace in the home and the nation.

3.4 KEY MODELS AND TOOLS FOR GENDER TRANSFORMATION

The ENSURE program has adopted engaging participatory tools to achieve gender transformation. Gender-transformative approaches aim to move beyond individual self-improvement among women and toward transforming the power dynamics and structures that serve to reinforce gendered inequalities. As defined by the CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems (AAS), a gender-transformative approach to development goes beyond the “symptoms” of gender inequality to address “the social norms, attitudes, behaviours, and social systems that underlie them” (AAS 2012, 3). This approach entails engaging groups in critically examining, challenging and questioning gender norms and power relations (Rottach et al. 2009) that underlie visible gender gaps. Transformative change can be measured by examining three broad domains of empowerment as illustrated below:

Women’s Empowerment Model



Source: CARE International Gender Network Publication

Agency: Women’s own knowledge, skills and aspirations. The ENSURE project will assist women to develop their “agency” and ability to exercise choices through diverse community platforms and groups including Care groups, Village savings and Lending and Producer groups. Through this project, women will learn to effectively negotiate, speak in public, manage groups, facilitate decision making, internally recognize and claim their rights and resources.

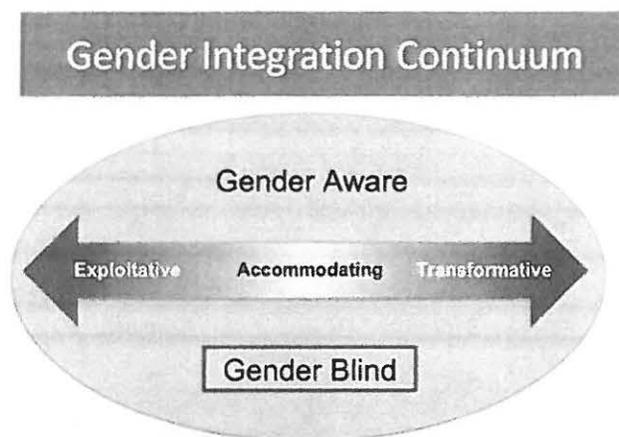
Structure: Gender biases are embedded in the environments and structures that influence or dictate the choices women and men can make. Structures include the existing laws, markets, religion; and the socio-cultural norms and values about what's appropriate for men and women. ENSURE will put increasing emphasis on guiding people to examine, question and alter the structures that surround them including societal norms and values that are a barrier to gender transformative behaviors such as workload sharing; men's engagement in care giving; deciding over use of household income; and making markets accessible and responsive to women.

Relations: Gender is a relationship of power, and addressing gender inequality means addressing the power disparities in the relationships through which women gain access to resources and negotiate their lives. CARE model looks at power from the analytical frame of power *over*, power *to* (act), power *within* (confidence), as well as power *with*. ENSURE, through Social Analysis and Action and gender dialogues will do a reflection of how power operates in relationships, particularly at household level, and how more equitable processes could benefit the entire household and community.

Beyond understanding power imbalances in relationships, ENSURE works to build relationships of solidarity, support, and equity not only between couples but within women's groups. VSL groups illustrate how women and men working together (relationships of power *with*) could serve as vehicles for accessing resources and opportunities and overcoming some gender-based constraints. Members do not only improve their income but thrive on exchange of ideas and using the VSL platforms to share development related information, or can develop skills to participate in other community fora.

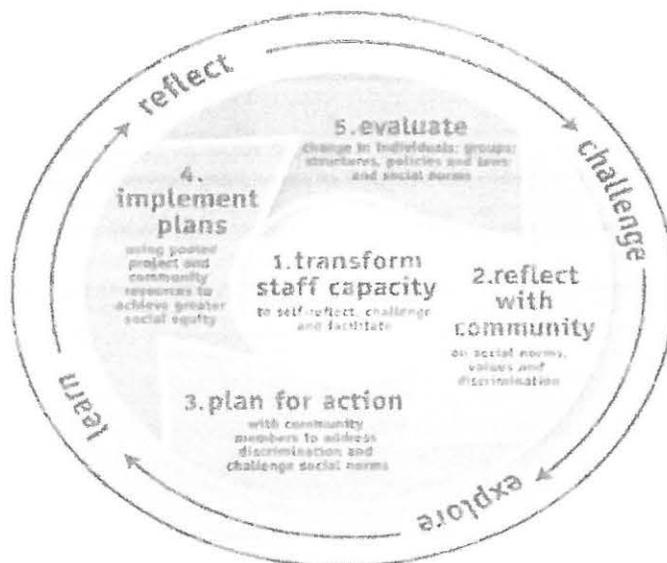
The Women Empowerment Framework helps ENSURE staff understand that progress in one domain is usually insufficient for a woman to fully realize her rights and aspirations. ENSURE takes into account the totality of how gender operates in women's and men's lives. For example, a woman who accesses resources through VSL may still be unable achieve her own aspirations, because

others in her household may prevent her from deciding on how to spend the income; or because social norms condone gender-based violence for women who pursue activities outside the home. Further, while microfinance may be accessible to women, there may be gender barriers within the institutions/ structures that put women at a disadvantage to building and sustaining productive enterprises. To achieve holistic empowerment for women, all three three women empowerment domains are to be addressed. In addition, activities toward women's empowerment must be paired with active engagement and participation of men as partners toward gender equality.



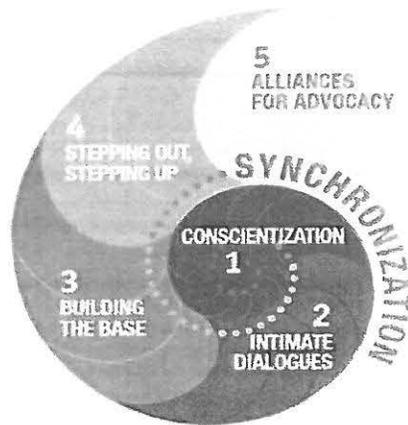
As illustrated in the Gender Integration continuum, the project is being implemented using Gender accommodative approach that acknowledges the negative effects of gender norms and inequities to achieving project outcomes. The project deliberately strives to achieve a gender equity in the participation of both men and women in groups and committees for instance producer groups and marketing committees. However the project is going beyond tracking the participation of men and women through the implementation of gender transformative activities by actively striving to examine, question, challenge and changing negative cultural norms and practices that deter women from equitably accessing and benefitting from the project food and nutrition security interventions. The below models are being used to facilitate community dialogues on gender targeting producer farmers; VSL groups; care group leaders and clients; men's groups and DRM committees.

Social Analysis and Action Model



Social Analysis and Action is a gender transformative approach that ENSURE is using to catalyze a process of exploration and reflection to facilitate individual and community actions that support more equitable gender norms and power relationships. The process allows for critical reflection and dialogue that helps communities to identify social, cultural and religious practices that affect equitable access to and control of productive resources and assets; control over income; decision making levels; and meaningful participation at household and community levels. The process helps community members to engage in problem solving dialogue that spur action to address the harmful social and cultural norms at all levels from individual, household level and community level.

Male Engagement for Gender Equality Model



Upon realizing that gender equity cannot be reached without the involvement of men, the ENSURE program has embraced the importance of constructive men's engagement as a key aspect for social transformation. Unless men are actively engaged in supporting better health and well-being for families and the empowerment of women, progress will remain slow and women will remain vulnerable to various challenges.

In response to this, ENSURE is using a five-staged synchronization approach of involving men not only as partners or allies, but also as part of a solution to gender inequality and promotion of food and nutrition security. This is meant to ensure that we do not focus solely on "one part of the puzzle" of empowering women without addressing the husbands and influential men at the community level. Through the establishment of men's fora (groups), the program seeks to create safe spaces for men to dialogue, reflect and transform power relationships.

In these groups, men are dialoguing about maternal health and nutrition, fatherhood & caregiving, and ultimately on how to promote gender equity. In FY 15, through the implementation of the male engagement strategy, **3,115 males** participated in **270 men's fora** events. Follow-up discussions with these participants revealed that many men now appreciate and understand the need for engagement with their wives/partners in joint planning, decision-making in income, agricultural production and household nutritional issues.

5. Gender Integration in Health and Nutrition

ENSURE employs two key approaches to improving the nutritional status of children less than 5 years of age (CU5); the 1,000 Days of Life approach recognizing the critical importance of child nutrition



from conception to 24 months of age. Utilizing imported food aid distribution targeted to pregnant women, lactating women, and children less than 2 years of age (CU2), the approach provides both an incentive for participation and a direct nutritional transfer to the target population. ENSURE works to improve the dietary intake of Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW) and CU2, by providing a food ration from pregnancy through 23 months of age. Secondly, the program combines the efforts of the formal health system with those of volunteers through the care group methodology to address dangerous nutritional practices such as discarding colostrum, early weaning, introduction of teas and water in addition to breast milk, and poor quality complementary foods.

In order to ensure that there is vital community and familial support for improved practices gender equity and women's empowerment approach is integrated in nutrition programming by supporting community social analysis and action dialogues targeting mothers, fathers, grandparents and community leaders. These are geared at addressing negative social norm practices that deter the adoption of nutrition behaviors; address time burden for women and promote equitable decision making at household level. The program supports men's fora dialogues to encourage change in men's attitudes, perceptions and behaviours resulting in the adoption of gender equitable nutrition practices. These dialogues create safe spaces for men to explore, reflect and transform socio-cultural and gender norms that kept them on the peripheral in nutrition related interventions.

Gender Equity Makes All the Difference



Dave Evans, COP, ENSURE

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. When asked what was the most significant thing that she had gained from participating in the ENSURE food security program in Zimbabwe, Memory Mushango did not cite the hundreds of dollars that she was able to save as part of a village savings and lending group, which she used to build a new home. She did not mention the fact that her young child is healthier and better nourished than he was prior to being in the nutrition program. What she said was that as a result of the gender training that she and her husband received in ENSURE, they have been able to save their marriage. Memory went on to talk very candidly about the domestic violence that she had suffered in the past. But she was very clear in stating that the violence has ended and her household is now at peace.

At the time, I confess that I was not expecting that answer from Memory. But I have now come to realize that responses like this regularly roll of the tongues of countless ENSURE program participants during focus group discussions that we periodically conduct. And it has finally caused me to have a full paradigm shift.

To further explain this shift, I need to go back in time. When I first started working in international development in Chad in 1984 (that dates me!), there was very little discussion about gender equity or mainstreaming. When we would conduct a village meeting to discuss ways to improve farming or increase potable water in the community, only men would show up. Being westerners, we respectfully requested that women also attend. The men said that it would not be culturally appropriate for women to come to such meetings. Still being westerners, we insisted that the women come. To our chagrin, a few did show up, but they seemed very embarrassed and did not utter a peep. There is something about forced change that doesn't seem to elicit the desired result!

Fast forward a decade later to the 1995 UN Conference on Women held in Beijing. Although that was actually the fourth such conference held by the United Nations, it was widely seen as a landmark gathering that significantly and substantially advanced the cause of gender equity, especially in the developing world. Since that time, the goal of increased gender equity in relief and development programming has grown steadily and is now commonplace in most programs. But I must confess that my true aha! moment in this area did not come until I saw firsthand the incredible impact of gender mainstreaming in our food security program in Zimbabwe.

One of the most interesting findings in our gender equity training and sensitization activities is the importance of getting men to buy into and be involved in women's empowerment in their homes and communities. In 2014, we conducted a gender analysis study that pointed to the need to increase the engagement of men in activities that had a direct impact on maternal and child health and nutrition. We followed this study with the implementation of a Social Analysis and Action (SAA) approach using gender dialogues within communities, which allows men and women to discuss gender issues in a non-confrontational manner and in the process to consider adopting social norms that promote gender equity at the individual, household and community levels.

Going beyond SAA, we also instituted Men's Groups as a means to further drive behaviour change among men. By the end of 2015, 3,115 males were participating in 270 men's group events in which they focused on open dialogue to encourage change in their views about the practice of gender-based violence, women's participation in household decision-making, and women's access to household and community assets. We then measured the impact of these trainings via a beneficiary-level outcome monitoring study that revealed significant positive changes in the number of women who reported receiving assistance from a male family member (usually a husband or partner) with household chores that are traditionally reserved for women. There has also been a marked positive change in the number of women who report that their husbands/partners actively seek their input on key household decisions that have normally been the sole domain of men.

All this is resulting in some pretty exciting conversations taking place every time we engage in community dialogues about gender. And we believe that it will translate into substantial and significant long-term, sustainable impact in food security in the ENSURE program area. It took me a long time to realize the power of gender mainstreaming. But I know that this confirmed knowledge will be a solid anchor for me in my remaining years of relief and development work. And I expect to see thousands more women like Memory Mushango telling their stories of changed lives and communities.

“Walking the Talk” - Male Advocate Leads by Example

“I used to think that my controlling behavior was a sign of love for my wife. Thank you ENSURE for changing my life”, Misheck Chapurura (41) of Honyera Village in ward 18 of Chivi district said.

Misheck, a father of three experienced a poor upbringing. As soon as he was born, his mother passed on leaving him under the care of his father who quickly got married to another woman. *“Though he did not live for a very long time, my father was a drunkard and very abusive to me and my step mother.”* According to Misheck, the memories that he still have of his father are of an abusive father. The father later passed on and Misheck was taken to an orphanage in rural Mberengwa where he grew up. Misheck is a classic example of a man who lacked a virtuous role model in his upbringing and it explained his violent behaviour towards his wife.

Sometime in 2016, he attended a village meeting where male advocates (lead fathers) were being selected. Misheck together with other male advocates received training in gender. *Because of the training and I felt a mixture of embarrassment and shame”* narrated the visibility remorseful Misheck.



Misheck Chapurura helping out with fetching water, ward 18, Chivi District, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

Misheck said *“I am a changed man. I asked myself the benefits of beating my wife and came to no meaningful conclusion.”* Misheck’s wife pointed out that her husband has since stopped beating her. Misheck is no longer ashamed to help his wife with household chores such as fetching water, firewood and cooking giving his wife more time for breastfeeding. Misheck has since learnt about the importance of purchasing nutritious foods for the good future of his children. Most importantly he has successfully formed a 9 member group with other men in the community which meets on a monthly basis to discuss gender equity issues. *“Now I know what it means to be a real man”, Misheck said.*

Engaging Men through Soccer



The winning Men's Fora Team from Buhera District with the ENSURE Chief of Party. Chipinge District, Manicaland, Zimbabwe

ENSURE organized a Men's Fora soccer tournament which was conducted in September 2016, Chipinge district with all six ENSURE districts participating. Within the districts 6 ENSURE districts, members of the men's fora groups formed soccer teams and during the soccer training sessions they would engage in discussions about male involvement in nutrition issues as guided by the male champions. ENSURE facilitated a learning forum where the six district teams would meet to compete as men's fora representatives. Soccer regalia was procured by the program with prizes such as ripper tines being given to the winners. While such improved technology fosters agricultural production, they also address gender time constraints through reduction of labor for women (who make up the majority of agriculture producer farmers). Ninety men comprising members of the men's fora participated in the tournament. The tournament was attended by more than 300 people, including officials from various government line ministries. The aim was to showcase the progress made on male involvement in health and nutrition activities through sharing of experiences and benefits for participating in men's fora.

Faces of Change



'I was not really concerned about my child's health before, as I thought it was my wife's role. Due to the knowledge acquired on the consequences of malnutrition, I now want to ensure that he is healthy', said David Mashonganyika, a male advocate from ward 4 Chimanimani district, while coming from Nhedziwa Clinic where he took his son for growth monitoring.



"I used to beat my 4 wives, take money they earned from vegetable sales and never assisted with household chores as I believed these were women duties. I received gender training from ENSURE and I am proud to say I am now a male advocate and I have since changed the way I treat my wives. We now plan together on finances and how to run our vegetable sales business" said Mr. Jestiere Muneri, a male advocate from the Apostolic faith group – Ward 24, Zaka District, Masvingo Province



6. Gender Integration in Agriculture and Livelihoods

Farmer, Mashoko Irrigation Scheme

ENSURE program aims to increase agriculture production and improve post-harvest storage, engage participants in a sequenced progression to economic empowerment by improving income generation and greater financial sustainability, and increase market integration through improved marketing skills and access to markets along selected value chains. Interventions target two levels of beneficiaries: those with poor financial literacy, understanding, and resources (VSL groups composed of the very poor), as well as those who have some basic knowledge and capacity to engage in market development and interaction (producer groups composed of the



poor). The graduation strategy of these interventions is built on locally specific and contextualized high impact value chains (groundnuts, beans, sorghum, chickens, and goats) that will operate in the open market improving HH income while also focusing on nutritional impact.

Gender equitable participation of men and women in agricultural production and marketing has remained an area of focus in ENSURE activities. ENSURE makes deliberate efforts in supporting women in agricultural value chains; access to markets and finance and use of gender sensitive labour saving technologies. Through gender dialogues; the program is promoting gender transformation for improved agriculture outcomes; including promoting access and ownership of high value assets; equitable decision making; support to household chores; equitable representation in leadership and ending gender based violence.

Of major highlight on women's empowerment is the Savings and Lending initiative which has increased women's access to financial resources and has created a platform to strengthen their capacity on women's rights issues. The agriculture and marketing component has seen 69% of producer farmers being women thereby increasing their access to nutritious foods by producing a variety of vegetables in their irrigated nutrition and market gardens. ENSURE strives to promote gender equitable opportunities for both men and women in Agricultural value chains. To date, 60% of goat and chicken producer farmers are women. Women are now engaged in income generating activities hence they have become a force to reckon with as they spearhead community development.



Bikita district: VSL clients on asset sharing ceremony (38 goats shared)

One Woman and a Success Story!

For many years after the death of her husband, Ms. Rachel John of Tanganda's Marwendo village in ward 4, Chipinge district, survived an arduous life. The 40 year old hardworking widow had endured many difficulties while singlehandedly raising her two children. Year after year, the poor rainfall patterns in the semi-arid Tanganda region have not made for favorable harvests in the widows farm, making her situation all the more dire.

When her supportive husband passed on in 2009 Rachel dabbled in various income generating activities and found herself supporting her family from the meagre proceeds emanating from her selling floor polish within the local area.

Already the eager entrepreneur, when the ENSURE program introduced the Village Saving and Lending concept she immediately joined the Kupfuma Ishungu VS&L group of Tanganda, ward 4 in May 2014 and this was a beginning of new opportunities. The ENSURE program through the village savings and lending groups train beneficiaries to manage funds, save and invest money in productive enterprises. Coupled with the ENSURE gender training sessions where women are encouraged financial independence and self-sustenance as well as supported to acquire assets and resources, Rachel tells us her resolve to be successful in all her endeavors was here further strengthened.

Using proceeds from the first share-out of her VS&L group in November 2014, Rachel successfully constructed a Blair Ventilated Improved Latrine in line with ENSURE's objective of promoting safe WASH practices. But why a toilet? *"The aspiration to build my own toilet was driven by the continued embarrassment I endured the countless occasions I had to ask my neighbors to use their toilets"*, Rachel said. As a way of strengthening her asset base, she also went on to purchase a goat to add to her goat run.



Ms Rachel John from Tanganda; Chipinge district standing in front of her constructed toilet and with her goat from her 2014 VS&L proceeds

Rachel narrates that through the various ENSURE trainings she has gained a vast array of knowledge and skills. Financial literacy and knowledge that has allowed her to make informed and effective decisions regarding money issues have been acquired thorough the VS&L trainings. Further, she adds that the principle of self-selection within the VSL component majorly influenced her decision to participate in the initiative; honesty, trust, reliability being essential attributes for group members.

The groups started with \$10 contributions in a group of 7 and eventually shared \$120 per individual after just 6 months! Her life changing experience was necessitated by the fact that she could borrow up to \$60(repaid every month with 20% interest) from her group and combine with other savings. Rachel has joined a goat producer group in the same village and through VS&L coupled with trainings on Agricultural production and marketing she is sure this is only the beginning to many sustainable ventures.

"VSL is good and inspires people to work hard and sustain their families", stated Rachel in conclusion.

Women's Access to Productive Assets Improved



Sikhathazile Masendeke and her husband, Thompson Ndaba of Marisa Village in Ward 15, Chivi District

Sikhathazile Masendeke is one of the few women who have been able to acquire cattle as a result of her participation in VSL. The husband Mr Thompson Ndava having attended a gender dialogue encouraged Sikhathazile to register the cattle in her own name. For Sikhathazile having a stock card was a defining moment. In Zimbabwe over 42% of the rural population do not have a heifer and most of these are registered in the name of the household head, even if he works in the cities (ZIMVAC 2015). The gender dialogues that were held with men and women enabled them to explore and challenge socio-cultural norms that inhibited women's acquisition of productive resources. Traditional practices, like women's properties reverting back to her family on her death were discussed in light of current legislation. Men are now appreciative and supportive of the women's desire to own high value productive assets.

Agro-Dealership Story

From Petty Trading to Agro-dealership



Joice Makovere in her Agro-dealer Shop

"I used to see trucks offloading farm inputs like seeds, ploughs, pesticides and groceries at the adjacent agro dealer shop but no one knew where they were coming from and I speculated use of juju"

The journey to Mashoko Business Center 97km south of Nyika Growth Point, in Bikita District takes us to Joice Makovere, a 43 year old widow with 5 children who is also a registered Agro dealer under the ENSURE program. "After losing a hardworking husband, life was unbearable for me. It meant working extra hard to sustain the only shop and children left under my care", said Joice.

As a shop keeper, Joice followed the typical rural tradition of shop-stocking where available goods stocked for customers consist of a few packets of sugar sweets, bread and other small items. Bringing in an average income of \$200 per month, this practice made it difficult for her to raise school fees for her children and to sustain even these meager supplies in the shop.

Joice was selected to partner with ENSURE in the input and output marketing program, and suddenly things began to look up. Having been afforded the opportunity to undergo Agro dealer training at Glen Livet in Masvingo, a new business horizon was opened for her. Joice was connected with input and output suppliers like SEEDCO, PANNAR, GMB, ZFC, NICORG and CBZ, expanding her network significantly. Subsequently, her business has improved immensely allowing farmers in her community and surrounding areas to acquire farming inputs from her, eliminating their previous need to travel 97km trip to Nyika Growth "My life will never be the same", she laughs.

Joice was also selected through ENSURE to attend the Harare Agricultural Show where she was able to buy her first stock of 20 mouldboard shares, 10 mouldboard wheels and a variety of additional agro- products. Purchasing products from reputable agro-marketing firms has made her products a favorite with local farmers as the demand for certified products rises.

Enjoying a profit margin of an average of \$400 per month, Joice not only has a thriving business, but has a vision to play a pivotal role in assisting farmers to market their produce and to enhance her business by bringing in more inputs and machinery to meet farmer requirements.

Watching their Gardens Grow was only the First Step

Life is full of daily challenges in Mahazu in Zaka district, a mountainous, semi-arid area located to the southeast of Masvingo province in Zimbabwe. Community members are often forced to choose between spending money to send their children to school or spending money to provide a balanced diet for their families.

For Shuvai Manjemure, like others, providing sufficient and diverse food for her family has been difficult due to repeated drought and poor soil that reduce annual harvests. Today Manjemure smiles as she works in her garden where she grows high-value, nutritious vegetables like beans, tomatoes and green leafy vegetables as a result of a USAID project that improved irrigation for her community. This irrigated community garden is 1.5 hectares in size (approximately 4 acres) with 60 farmers who have been assigned individual plots. "We have started seeing improvement in terms of food diversity for everyone who is a part of this garden," says Manjemure.



Shuvai Manjemure tends to vegetables in her garden

In 2014, USAID and its partners World Vision and CARE started working with over 220 food insecure community members from Mahazu to build and manage a dam and improve irrigation. Every day for five months, they came together and built a 7-meter dam wall across a perennial stream using large stones that they transported by hand to the work site. It was strenuous labor, but their hard work paid off. They completed the dam in time to catch the first November rains and irrigate gardens for 60 farmers. The dam has meant the difference between growing enough vegetables to support a family's basic needs and growing enough produce for farmers to both eat and sell. In exchange for their labor to build the dam, the people of Mahazu in Zimbabwe received sorghum—a grain that is considered a good source of protein, vitamins and minerals. Called Food for Assets, this USAID activity provides vulnerable community members with immediate food assistance, while at the same time helping them improve irrigation and boost nutrition gardens to provide lasting solutions to food insecurity. In one three-month cropping season, the 60 farmers increased their income by \$10,080. Prior to the project, these farmers had no income from irrigated agriculture and the production of the vegetables they grow now. "With food security risks such as droughts on the increase, these communities are desperate to find ways to become more resilient in absorbing

and adapting to both current and future shocks,” said USAID/Zimbabwe Mission Director Stephanie Funk.

Savings and Loan Groups Change Lives

Mahazu community members have gone a step further to develop village savings and loan groups (VS&L). On average of about 10 community members per group join together in saving on average \$20 per person per month for six months, which is then loaned to members at a group-approved interest rate. Each group has put in place administrative systems that track the money that has been saved and loaned.



*Respina Masarire displays the washing powder
for sale at her microenterprise*

With no prior access to credit through banks or financial institutions in this remote area, these community members now access loans to buy agricultural inputs like seeds and fertilizers to manage and sustain their gardens. Some farmers use their income to purchase food for their children or to invest in other income-generating projects, such as raising goats and chickens. Others use their money to build pit latrines to improve sanitation and hygiene for their families and protect their children from diseases.

Since 2014, these community members have collectively saved over \$418,000. In the long run, they will likely be less dependent on development assistance.

“This project means women’s empowerment. We are definitely going far,” declares Respina Masarire, a member of one of the loan groups. She borrowed \$250 to purchase washing powder in bulk and doubled her income by repackaging the washing powder into smaller units and selling it at retail price, within one month bringing in \$412. Now she has diversified into baking bread and pastries and selling them in the community. Masarire is using the additional income to purchase food for her family and pay school fees for her child.

Gosha Zimhatye, another member of a savings and loan group, said he had recently been struggling to produce enough food to feed his family and generate income for basic household needs.



"I jumped at the idea of taking part in a VS&L and this has changed my life. My income improved because the VS&L group I joined also formed an indigenous poultry producer group," Zimhatye says. "With the proceeds from my VS&L group, I was able to buy maize seed, which I successfully planted in the 2014-15 agricultural season."

Gosha Zimhatye and his wife show off a prize hen from their poultry project.

7. Gender Integration in Disaster Risk Management and Resilience

*Silt traps in the catchment area of Jorodhani weir
Chivi ward 26, Masvingo, Zimbabwe*

ENSURE builds the capacity of communities on disaster risk management, empowering them to identify, anticipate, and mitigate known environmental risk factors to food security and livelihoods. The growing impact of drought coupled with the prospect of more frequent extreme weather events means that communities need to adapt their livelihoods to new changes. ENSURE is facilitating a participatory process to recognize community assets and strategies



that support adaptation. Communities will utilize food for assets (FFA) to rehabilitate and develop agricultural productive assets, with a particular focus on the engagement of the most vulnerable households such as Female-No-Male (FNM) HHs. The project trains hundreds of communities to increase their resilience in the face of natural disasters. Through “food for assets” community men and women construct dams, weirs, and public stalls improving household food security.

Gender dialogue trainings are instrumental in changing people’s mindsets particularly raising women’s confidence to take up leadership roles. In this regard, 45% of the leadership positions in resilience committees are held by women, giving them a vital role in the planning and decision-making of community based disaster risk management systems. These women played an active role in Multiple Water-Use Systems (MUS) through the development of water sharing and rationing strategies at water points. Women also own plots of land in created nutrition gardens/irrigations giving them the opportunity to make decisions on the control and utilisation of these vital productive assets.

Gender dialogue sessions increased community understanding on the need for gender-sensitive work norms and practices (e.g., availability of child care facilities, provision of breast feeding times and time to start and end work and allocation of tasks on FFA works). Following monitoring done at FFA sites, women have developed skills in construction as there were a number of women builders who worked alongside their male counterparts.

Apollonia Crosses the Boundary Fence



When it comes to infrastructural development, such as dam construction men provide the semi-skilled labour whilst women take to gathering stones and collecting water. Most if not all communities in Chivi district find themselves in this situation in which the marginalization of women is a norm. Apollonia Mavengani, a 46 year old widow of Ward 26 in Chivi district believed that building was a preserve for men until ENSURE gave her and other women an opportunity to learn a new skill

In July 2014, as part of building community resilience, the community in Sadzangwena Village in Chivi District, Masvingo Province benefitted from the ENSURE FFA programme, funded by USAID. Apollonia registered to provide labour for the construction of Mudira Dam. FFA work was an opportunity to escape from hunger since in the previous year she had not harvested enough. Little did she know that a journey of change had begun. She initially was tasked to collect stones and water just like other women. Through regular gender sensitisation sessions, she took a leap into masonry work, which was a preserve of men. Initially males were reluctant in teaching her, undermining her capacity.

As the work demand increased, men slowly began to delegate more duties to her. She carried out the duties diligently, acquiring more skills in the process. In five months she had become one of the main builders at the site encouraging other women to join.

According to Apollonia, the experience was momentous not only for her but for fellow women who participated at the FFA site. Women had crossed the gender boundary fence. As a result of the skills transfer she constructed a pen for her three goats. Her plans are to undergo apprenticeship with seasoned builders and one day, build her own house. She will not stop with FFA projects, she says.

Improved Relationships within the Home



Tongai Chipiro and his wife at home in ward 20, Chimanimani

On May 12, 2014 Tongai Chipiro, of ward 20, Chimanimani district joined the ENSURE Food for Assets initiative; building an embankment to divert a river which often flooded and silted their most valued irrigation scheme in Gudyanga. In addition, together with the other farmers within the Producer Groups at the irrigation scheme they are receiving market access training and he is more positive about their livelihoods come the next agricultural season as they have been

linked to produce buyers such as Cairns Foods who pay in lump sums unlike individual sales which are never certain. Most significantly however, is the impact the ENSURE gender trainings have had on this family. The ENSURE gender intervention promotes more equitable relations between husband and wife by encouraging the sharing of resources and household tasks, joint planning and investing. Tongai says his marriage is slowly moving from one that was characterized by dominance, to one of greater harmony and collaboration:

"I typically would never consult my wife on matters of the household or on any decision making. But the gender training has changed my perception greatly and I have started involving her on issues that need decisions to be made for the family. If you were to ask my friends they will tell you that this year my harvest has improved at my garden because I consulted with my wife and she gave me ideas that I never knew she had and had not thought of implementing myself!"

Women in Leadership

Mrs. Grace Madechavo (41) never imagined herself taking up a leadership role let alone leading a team of men and women from her own community—Chabata Village in Buhera! Dating back to when she was a young girl her-self this village was infamous for only appointing men in all senior leadership positions. Grace is therefore not only viewed as having broken long standing bonds of tradition by leading such a massive community project but she is reported to be exceptionally good at it too! In October 2015, Grace was elected Vice Chairperson of the Chinyamazizi Weir.



Construction Project Implementation Team. However, due to unforeseen circumstances her male counterpart who had been appointed as chairperson could not continue in his role and community in consultation with the ENSURE Food For Assets project officers elected that she take the position of Project Chairperson. This came as a huge shock to Grace a member of the Apostolic Church where women are taught from a young age to always be submissive and let the men lead in everything.

‘This came as a surprise to me as a young family woman of the Mugodhi Apostolic Church considering that I had never led a team of both

males and females and now I have to lead a total of 180 of them! I consulted my husband who is a teacher in Makoni district and he was more than happy with the community’s arrangement. He even congratulated me. This gave me encouragement and I accepted the responsibility’ she said.

Since November 2015 to date, Grace has been successfully directing the project garnering support and respect from all the workers at the weir. She applauds the training that she and other Project Implementation Team members got from ENSURE and is particularly encouraged by other females in similar roles such as the program Engineer Miss Petronella Chinheya who leads the ENSURE support and supervision teams.

8. Improved Qualitative Gender Monitoring

The ENSURE programme conducted **Gender Outcome Mapping** in its operational districts targeting men, women and community leaders. Outcome Mapping is an actor-centred approach that focuses on behaviour changes of the actors with whom a project works. The objective of the Outcome Mapping was to develop an ENSURE context-specific framework of standardized gender behaviour change indicators. ENSURE did not use the full OM approach, but used key concepts, particularly Outcome Challenges and Progress Markers.

Outcome Challenges

ENSURE through a community consulted process developed Outcome Challenges of **An Empowered Woman and Role Model Man**. Outcome Challenges are the ideal, envisioned behaviours of impact women; their male partners or community leaders. They can be understood as goal statements, articulating the ideal behaviours that would be observed if the project is effective as a facilitator of change towards the goals of empowerment and gender equity. Below are ENSURE Outcome Challenges from a community perspective:

What is an Empowered Woman?

An **empowered woman** is organised, smart and has the power to make decisions. She participates in VSL and engages in income generating activities. She is self-reliant. She performs roles that are traditionally regarded as men. She takes care of the family and provides for family needs and sends her children to school. She has ownership of high value productive assets such as livestock and agricultural equipment and makes decisions over the crops that are grown. She is skilful and knowledgeable and can confidently articulate issues even in the public sphere. She listens and is respectful of her husband and community members. She takes up leadership positions, listens to what others say and takes appropriate action. She has a descent, modern home, which has all the necessities that include a toilet, borehole, rubbish pit and plate rake.



What is a Role Model Man?

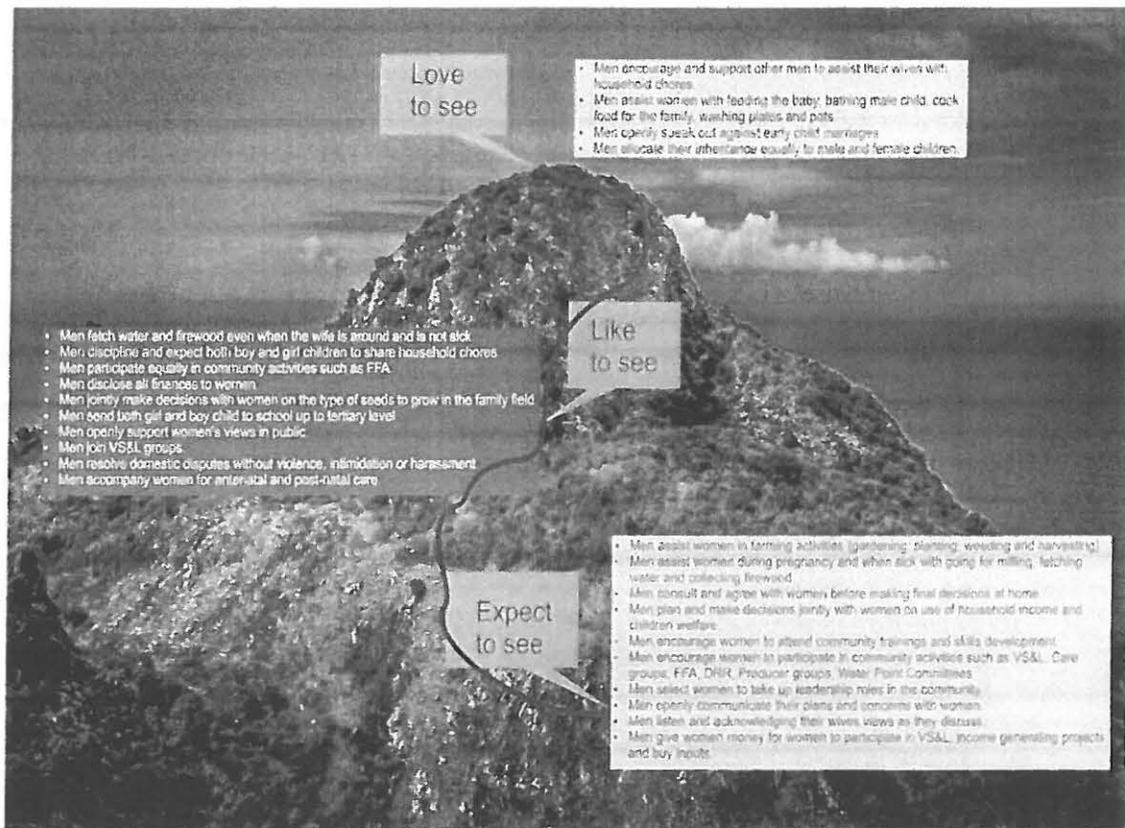
A **role-model man** is exemplary to his immediate family and community at large. He owns productive assets and provides basic needs for his family such as food, clothing and paying educational expenses. He supports his wife and does not expect her to carry all responsibilities. He assists his wife with household chores so that she can be able to engage in other economic activities. He enables his wife to own productive resources and assets such as livestock. He is respectful of his wife and consults her over use of income, and does not spend all the money on beer. He does not have extra marital relationships. He has an open and supportive relationship with his wife and children and treats boy and girl children equally. He resolves domestic disputes amicably and does not resort to violence. He provides financial support to his wife to engage in income generating activities and encourages her to participate in community activities. He speaks up for women and child rights and intervenes against abuse.



Gender Progress Markers

ENSURE developed graduated set of qualitative gender progress markers for men and women. Progress markers are statements describing a progression of changed behaviours of groups with whom the program works with directly, leading to outcomes described in the Outcome Challenge. The graduated set of progress markers refers to bringing an order in behaviour changes according to the profoundness or transformative nature of the desired changes. *Expect to see* changes are those changes that can be expected to happen rather soon as an early response to actions and interventions. *Like to see* interventions require more investment and active engagement of the people involved to observe results. *Love to see* changes mostly require a more profound transformation and will happen after continued action and engagement.

ENSURE Graduated Set of Gender Progress Markers for Men



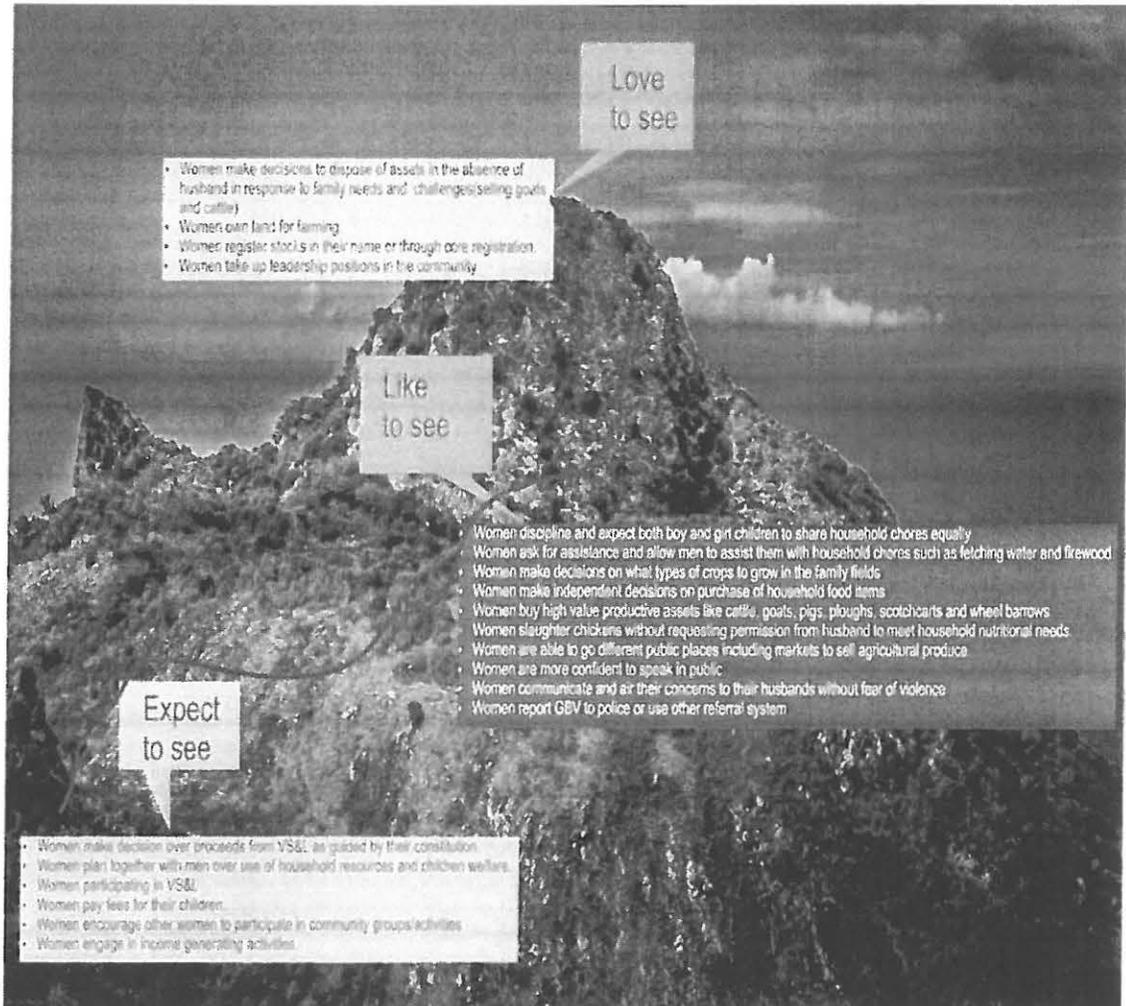
The progress markers are a complement to the ENSURE program indicator framework and are being used to measure, monitor and encourage positive changes in gender relations and potentially report on impact. The specific nature of the qualitative indicators allows for reporting on tangible observable changes, which can complement the quantitative indicators. The progress markers aims to trigger reflection and learning for community men and women and program staff in order to create collective insights on the challenges; hindering and contributing factors; and possible solutions and actions.

ENSURE Graduated Set of Gender Progress Markers for Women

USAID



Supporting Women's Economic Empowerment



Love to see

- Women make decisions to dispose of assets in the absence of husband in response to family needs and challenges (selling goats and cattle)
- Women own land for farming
- Women register stocks in their name or through core registration
- Women take up leadership positions in the community

Like to see

- Women discipline and expect both boy and girl children to share household chores equally
- Women ask for assistance and allow men to assist them with household chores such as fetching water and firewood
- Women make decisions on what types of crops to grow in the family fields
- Women make independent decisions on purchase of household food items
- Women buy high value productive assets like cattle, goats, pigs, ploughs, scooters/carts and wheel barrows
- Women slaughter chickens without requesting permission from husband to meet household nutritional needs
- Women are able to go different public places including markets to sell agricultural produce
- Women are more confident to speak in public
- Women communicate and air their concerns to their husbands without fear of violence
- Women report GBV to police or use other referral system

Expect to see

- Women make decision over proceeds from VS&I, as guided by their constitution
- Women plan together with men over use of household resources and children welfare
- Women participating in VS&I
- Women pay fees for their children
- Women encourage other women to participate in community groups/activities
- Women engage in income generating activities

9. Forward Looking: Gender and Sustainability

While ENSURE has realized and documented remarkable progress on gender integration and transformation; the program has taken steps to determine what factors enhance the likelihood of sustained project benefits. The programme is committed to use approaches and deliver in a way that will yield more sustainable gains over time. For sustained, more improved positive outcomes, ENSURE has considered the following key factors: Attention to Resources; Capacity; Motivation; and Appropriate Linkages.

Gender activities for the program target the different groups of praxis which include savings and loans groups; producer and marketing groups; care groups; men's fora groups and Disaster Risk Management groups. ENSURE has invested in increasing knowledge and skills on gender and women empowerment to communities through gender trainings and dialogues. Based on knowledge acquired observable gender behavior changes are being recorded. The motivation by men and women to adopt these gender practices has been noted due to immediate benefits being realized which include improved relationships at household; peaceful and more productive households; women's ability to own assets and pay for children's education. Gender champions and male advocates are cascading gender knowledge and skills to their different groups and have been able to provide support and encouragements for gender transformation. Based on the anecdotal information from the ENSURE areas; gender champions; facilitators and male advocates have been able to gain respect from community leaders to an extent that they are given an opportunity to share gender messages at different community meetings.

ENSURE has managed to create strong collaboration and linkages with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development whose presence is at provincial, district and ward level. This Ministry has partnered ENSURE to deliver community gender dialogues and Social Analysis and Action trainings. Ministry staff will continue to provide support and monitoring of gender activities when ENSURE programme comes to an end.

ENSURE is currently supporting communities to self-mobilize their resources for the different activities. Currently the men's groups have financed themselves to arrange community soccer matches as a way of mobilizing themselves for gender dialogues. The Village Savings and Loan groups are bound to continue meeting and sharing issues of gender.