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PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS ACTIVITIES IN MADZIWA AREA OF ZIMBABWE

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ABSTRACT

The participation and involvement of children in sustainable livelihoods activities (SLAs) in developing and least developed countries appears to be a common phenomenon. Children no longer look up to their parents and caregivers for the provision of all basic needs. This study analysed the extent to which children are participating and getting involved in SLAs in Madziwa area of Zimbabwe. This was a qualitative ethnographic study which was informed by phenomenological research philosophy. One hundred and ten (110) participants namely, 30 parents, 30 primary and 30 secondary school pupils and 10 primary and 10 secondary school pupils were selected using quota sampling. The data generation methods were in-depth face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. The seven main findings with respect to involvement of children in SLAs in Madziwa area were also focusing on farming (mushroom farming and rabbit rearing), weaving (rabbit rearing), and pottery (wood, water and clay soil fetching). The other finding from this study was that involvement of children in SLAs had to be sensitive to the needs of children. One key conclusion from this study is that while children's participation and involvement in SLAs was more likely to be seasonal-bound. They were largely engaged in SLAs throughout the year in a bid to help their parents and caregivers to raise income and ensure food security in the home. The study's recommendation was that children should be engaged in SLAs by adults not as full time workers, but as situational helping hands if ever the magnitude of children's rights through SLAs is going to be curtailed in Madziwa area. More research of similar magnitude should be conducted to create more knowledge in the area.

Key Words: Participation, involvement, sustainable livelihoods activities, sustainable livelihoods, children

1. INTRODUCTION

The role of child labour in the pursuit of SLAs of communities is similar to that of adults. Child labour is perceived as part of the violation of children's rights. In Zimbabwe, children's rights have been violated when communities pursue SLAs and this is also seen in other countries of Africa, especially in the agricultural sector (Eldring, Nakanyane and Tshoaedi, 2000). This can be vividly seen in the tobacco business, which is a hot spot in African countries such as Kenya, Malawi, Sudan and Zambia (Eldring et al., 2000), although it must not be mistaken to fully mean sustainable livelihood. According to Kakhome and Kuombola (2008), a baseline survey in Malawi found that:

- A. 12% of the children were injured or sick because of work.
- B. 24% of children are in remunerated activities.
- C. Of all the children, 8% are out of school because of work or their schooling is affected by work.



- D. This percentage is 10% for the 6-14 years old children from tobacco growing families (14% for the 12-14 years old ones).
- E. Illness is the main reason given by the children for school absenteeism.
- F. 16% of the parents said their children were out of school because of lack of school materials like uniforms, shoes and money for fees.
- G. 52% consider that their children (aged 6-14) are either too young or too old to be at school.

Despite the recognition of the value of children's rights in sustainable livelihoods by communities, it seems that observation of children's rights has been neglected. Moreso, despite the Save the Children's strong child protection work and that of many other committed organisations, children all over the world continue to experience abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation every day, and grave violations of their rights continue to be witnessed (Save the Children, 2013, p. 3). There appears to be limited uptake of the observation of children's rights when communities undertake livelihoods activities. A review of related literature revealed that the need to end abuse against children was pressing (UNICEF, 2014), because, like the provision of information related to norms and mechanisms to protect rights of persons belonging to the vulnerable, many were proposing that measures to end the magnitude of violations of children's rights during communities' pursuit of sustainable livelihoods need to be designed to reflect regional characteristics. They emphasize strong community participation and focus on economically and socially marginalized populations—including children, the elderly and families (Davis, Handa, Rossi, Winters and Yablonski, 2016) without earning power and people living with disabilities. In particular, Blake et.al. (2014, p. 123) gave examples of children's rights issues in relation to their engagement in sustainable livelihoods.

Table 1: Examples of documented human rights issues in developing country fisheries

| Issue and key international conventions | Examples reported | Location |
|---|---|---|
| Child labour (CRC, art. 32) | Children making up >30% of fish processing workers (Chhorvirith et al., 2005) | Stung Hav, TumnupRok and Koh Kiang, Thailand |
| | 60% of non-enrolled school children from fishing communities (Fentiman et al., 2001) | Amankwa Circuit, Afram Plains District, Ghana |
| | Children working on "jermals" (fishing platforms) under hazardous conditions (Markkanen, 2005) | North Sumatra, Indonesia |
| | 20% of fish processing workers aged 15–17 and 20% under 15; 2/3 of fishing vessel workers aged 15–17 (Pearson et al., 2006) | SamutSakhon, Thailand |

What is presented in Table 1 was just an appreciation of the nature of children's rights issues in connection with SLAs they in engaged in.

Children in different parts of the world have been involved in livelihoods to sustain themselves in their communities in various ways seen through forms of child labour. In Malawi, Kakhome and Kuombola (2008, p. 7) found that:

The report has taken the view that child labour goes beyond the employment of children below the age of 15 years and has included employment of children 6 to 17 years in hazardous work as stipulated by the Malawi Employment Act. It has included work, light or heavy, that makes a child skip going to school, work that makes a child work too long to the extent of denying the child the right to play and study and work for remuneration whether in cash or in kind. It should be noted that tobacco is an intensive activity. Domestic chores, taking care of siblings and generally household tasks are often delegated to children, when the



parents are working. The impact of tobacco production on child labour is hence not limited to tobacco related work.

These findings are supported by the United Nations Convention of Children's Rights (2013) which documented two points of note in this study. First, children market products such as cigarettes, and alcohol as well as foods and drinks in high saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, sugar, salt or additives. When business employment practices require adults to work long hours, older children, particularly girls may take their parents' domestic and child care obligations.

An unclear distinction between child labour and constructive child labour shows the degree to which children unconsciously get involved in sustainable livelihoods. According to Hanmer (2001), there is disagreement on the appropriate definition of child labour for policy purposes. Some notions reflect Western perspectives, which lead to a condemnation of all child work. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) in Hanmer (2001) and ILO Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour (1999) in Hanmer (2001), promote a clearer distinction between child work, a general term including work which is unlikely to damage educational opportunities, and child labour, which refers to harmful forms of work which deny children opportunities to fulfil their other rights, such as education.

Gender issues have also contributed to the degree to which children have been involved in sustainable livelihoods activities. In India, for example, gender norms can have an important impact on intra-household relations – in India the fact that women and female children are largely less valued household member means that they are often excluded from decision-making and more likely to lose out in times of scarcity (for example, the data on health expenditures in the section on vulnerability) (Farrington et al., 2002). It should further be noted that policy and institutional practices are often shaped by, and may reinforce social institutions such as, gender –thus, for example, in Twigg and Bhat's (1998) study in Gujarat cited in Farrington et al. (2002) described above, 36% of women among the respondents were the sole breadwinners in their households and another 18% contributed 50% of household income, but when dole for work is given by non-governmental organisations it is mostly for men. Deinger (2003), explains that women's control over land assets not only enhances their welfare and income earning capacity but also tend to increase spending on food and on children's health and education therefore increasing women's control over land potentially has a strong effect on the welfare of the next generation and the rate at which human capital is accumulated. These results are confirming previous research observations that landlessness and poverty produce the conditions of child employment today, and many children work not for their own family but for the wealth of a private employer (Loewenson, 1991).

In Ghana, children regularly resell certain products, such as prepared food, cigarettes, and provide services such as shoe-shining (Hitimana et al., 1995, p. 31-34; Maizi, 1991; Delgado 1989 in Hussain and Nelson, n.d.). In Mali, children undertake sustainable livelihoods that involve;

- trading financed by millet harvests;
- migration (to supply cash earnings for household expenses); and
- marriage alliances between households in different settlements (Hussain and Nelson, n.d.).

These early research observations were not particular to Zimbabwean settings since they were context bound. What remained to be established was the degree to which such findings were still relevant and were able to stand against the test of time, especially in the context of Madziwa community.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

I conducted this qualitative study against the background of phenomenological research philosophy with the intent to fully understand challenges associated with the involvement and participation of children in SLAs in Madziwa area, Zimbabwe. I employed an ethnographic research method to carry out the study. It allowed me to fully understand the culture of the people in Madziwa area because I had to stay with them for seven months. In other words, I was immersed in their culture since I attended in most of their societal functions such as 'nhimbe, hoka, majakwara, mapira and majanha' (communal tasks).

Selection of participants

The research site was purposefully selected because it had farming and mining activities which provided sustainable livelihoods to Madziwa area people. For the research sites, the researcher selected one primary school out of six primary schools and one secondary



school out three secondary schools, as well as one village out of the five villages that were close to the aforementioned schools in Madziwa area. The sites were chosen for five reasons. The first reason was their density characteristics. Their population was located in a rural area that had poverty experiences. The second reason was that they shared common broad livelihood sustaining activities such as farming, pastoralism, mining and fishing. The third reason for their choice was based on administrative and geographical characteristics. The population was located in Mashonaland Central Province which is well known for sound farming and mining activities. The fourth reason was on pre-existing vulnerabilities because the population was located in areas of high poverty and malnutrition despite the fact that the research site has good agro-ecological conditions. The fifth reason was that the selected village had pupils who were enrolled at the chosen primary and secondary schools. In this regard, quota sampling was used in this qualitative ethnographic study to identify and select information rich cases which were presumed for the most effective use of resources (Patton, 2002). In addition, Black (2010) supports the above by exhorting that quota sampling is a non-probability sampling that occurs when elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher. Since qualitative research does not work with predetermined samples (Berg, 2010), but the researcher entered the field with a kick of sample of 25 participants to enable the data generation to commence. The 25 participants comprised five primary school teachers, five secondary school teachers, five parents, five primary school children and five secondary school children. It therefore implied that the study's sample of 110 participants (30 parents, 10 primary school teachers, 10 secondary school teachers, 30 primary school pupils and 30 secondary school pupils) was determined when data generation reached data saturation. Data saturation occurred when the researcher and the research assistants when the sample reached 110 participants. It was at this point when the researcher and the research participants were no longer getting any new data from the same participants after administering repetitive interviews and focus group discussions on them. The participants were coded by means of open coding. The participants were coded as follows; primary school pupils (PSP1-30), primary school teachers (PST1-10), secondary school pupils (SSP1-30), secondary school teachers (SST1-10), and parents (P1-30).

The participants were selected by means of quota sampling which was then stratified in order for the researcher and the research participants to obtain data from participants in different age, socio-economic and power strata. It thus assisted researcher to compare and contrast experiences and perspectives of participants from different socio-economic backgrounds with respect to the phenomenon participation and involvement of children in SLAs. The researcher used expert judgment to select participants who had research sought characteristics. Thus, the researcher uses judgment to choose cases that help answer the research questions or achieve research objectives (Black, 2010; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Ten primary and 10 secondary school teachers were assumed to have knowledge children's participation and involvement in SLAs. This was because of the nature of sustainable livelihoods that obtained in Madziwa area. As of six parents, six primary and six secondary school pupils, their purposive selection was plausible because of their involvement into sustainable livelihoods activities. In this study, purposive sampling involved identifying and selecting individual participants and groups of participants that were knowledgeable about the phenomenon of sustainable livelihoods and children's rights in Madziwa area. Thirty parents, 30 primary school pupils and 30 secondary school pupils had experience and knowledge about children's participation and involvement in SLAs. Ten primary and 10 secondary school teachers were relevant participants in this study because of their knowledge and experiences based on their observations of how children participated and got involved in SLAs.

After selecting participants using quota, they were then stratified in order to place them in specific groups that permitted the researcher and researchers to obtain perception diversity. The researcher identified and defined the population in Madziwa area. She then determined the desired sample size of 110 participants. Furthermore, she identified strata and classified all members of the population as members of one subgroup (30 parents, 10 secondary school teachers, 10 primary school teachers, 30 primary school pupils, and 30 secondary school pupils). These strata had different social status, economic standing, knowledge and experience levels regarding the participation and involvement of children in SLAs. Thus, quota sampling, according to Kombo and Tromp (2009) enables researchers to obtain data from different participants belonging to varied socio-cultural backgrounds. To be included in this study the participants must have been staying in Madziwa rural community either intermittently or continuously for at least two (2) months. Special attention regarding the exploration of the subject under study was delimited to the participation and involvement of children in SLAs in Madziwa area of Zimbabwe. As a result of the use of quota sampling techniques, the researcher and the research participants were impressed by the level of availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner as noted by Bernard (2002) and Spradley (1979).

Data generation

Data generation in this study was done using the in-depth face-to-face interview guide and focus group discussion guide. The interview process enabled the researcher to gather the perspectives and experiences of children and thus made accessible to the researcher the voices of this marginalised social stratum (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Ten primary and 10 secondary school teachers were



interviewed by the researcher and the four research assistants at least twice between 1 August 2017 and 15 October 2017. A total of 40 interviews was reached after each of the above two strata was interviewed twice. The interviews were recorded using a mobile phone by the researcher and the research assistants, with each interview lasting between one (1) hour and one (1) hour 30 minutes. The interviews were conducted, transcribed and analysed by the researcher. The interview guide contained two sections with questions for the bio-data of the research participants and the actual research findings. The first section of the interview asked questions about the primary and secondary school teacher participants' sex (this one was not asked as it was obvious and could embarrass the participants), age, marital status, grade/form taught, employment status, subject taught if secondary trained, and length of teaching experience, educational qualifications and length of stay in Madziwa area. These data enabled the researcher and the research assistants to select participants who had relative knowledge about the nature of the the participation and involvement of children in SLAs. The second section of the interview guide contained five unstructured questions tailored to the research title.

Focus group discussions were used to generate data from 30 primary and 30 secondary school pupils. The researcher used two focus group schedules for 30 parents, 30 primary school teachers and 30 secondary school teacher. The researcher made sure that the child expert took part in all the 30 focus group discussions that involved primary and secondary school pupil participants. This move enabled the generation of consistent and credible data. Thirty focus group discussions were held between 1 August 2017 and 15 October 2017. Therefore, 30 focus group discussions were held parents and primary and secondary school pupils, that is, two per group same groups during separate days by the same researcher to ensure credibility of the findings. Each focus group had six participants, that is, six parents, six primary school children and six secondary school children were group interviewed twice by the same the researcher. These were conducted in Shona Language in order to obtain much more convincing data since the participants were not literate enough to enable them to effectively converse in English Language. The same instrument contained items written in English Language and Shona Language in brackets. The researcher prepared schedules two weeks before interview dates on 1 August 2017 and on 1 September 2017. The parents were organised with the assistance of the headman who was also a participant. In the schools, the head and teachers assisted with the facilitation of organising pupils into strata comprising pupils of equal number in terms of sex and different grade and form levels with the intent to obtain varied experiences regarding the effect of sustainable livelihoods on children's rights. They were useful in this study in three ways. First, they assisted the researcher to generate data in the shortest possible time (Gray, 2009; Flick, 2009). In this regard, focus group discussions enabled the researcher to interview five groups of six participants within the Madziwa area to obtain their perceptions with respect to the participation and involvement of children in SLAs. Each discussion occurred within a period of one hour or so, unlike in an interview session where a similar time actually lapsed while interviewing each individual participant.

Data presentation and analysis

The data profiling the research participants were presented descriptively without tables and figures, but words under the section called demographic data of participants. The actual research findings were presented using direct quotes and excerpts summarising long quotes, relating to the interface between the participation and involvement of children in SLAs with particular reference to Madziwa area of Zimbabwe. Use of direct quotes and excerpts from in-depth face-to-face interview data and focus group discussions in the form of explanatory, descriptive, analytical and evaluative narratives would give the readers the first hand information which affords them a sense of being present at the research sites during the data gathering process.

3. BIO-DATA OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

In this section, the research characteristics of the participants are going to be presented and described narratively in terms of number, strata, sex and age among other bio-data variables because they were selected by means of quota sampling. Altogether, 110 participants took part in this study. Thirty of them were parents, 30 were primary school pupils, and another 30 of the participants were secondary school pupils. The other 10 participants were primary school teachers and the last group of participants was made up of 10 primary school teachers. Thus, the research participants were categorised in the foregoing five strata. Diverse opinions from these groups of participants were meant to assess challenges associated with the participation and involvement of children in SLAs in Madziwa area. Parents, primary and secondary school pupils were exposed to focus group discussions twice in five groups of sixes twice in each group by the researcher, children expert and four research assistants. Primary and secondary school teachers were interviewed twice individually by the research and the research assistants. The children's expert did not interview adult participants. Thus, 30 focus group discussions were conducted on parents, primary and secondary school pupils, while 40 interviews were conducted on the primary and secondary school teachers.



The first stratum had 30 parents. Fifteen out of 30 parents were male, while the other 15 out of 30 were female. This distribution of participants by sex was balanced and could give sex-sensitive perceptions on the challenges associated with the participation and involvement of children in SLAs in Madziwa area. Eighteen out of 30 parents were aged between 30 and 39 years, while 12 out of 30 parents were aged at least 40 years. Twenty-five out of 30 parents indicated that they were married, while three of them were divorced, and two of them were widowed. Twenty-one out of 30 parents indicated that they had children of primary school going age, while 11 out of 30 parents pointed out that they had children of secondary school going age, and nine out of 30 parents reported that they had children of both primary and secondary school going age. They all reported that they were involved in some form of sustainable livelihoods activities and they sometimes involved their children as well. In that regard, the participants had some research sought experience in the area of sustainable livelihoods, although the participation and involvement of children in SLAs was yet to be known. The highest level of education among parents was Form 4. Three out of 30 parents were holders of an Ordinary level qualification. Twenty-seven out of 30 parents were holders of a Grade 7 qualification. In order to generate credible data from them, they were asked questions in Shona Language during the focus group discussion. Their level of literacy was not compatible with the English Language that was used as a medium of instruction in the focus group discussion guide.

The second stratum was made up of 30 primary school pupil participants. Fifteen out of 30 primary school pupils were male and another 15 out of 30 primary school pupils were female. Just as the case in parent participants, this distribution of participants by sex was balanced and could give sex-sensitive perceptions on the challenges associated with the participation and involvement of children in SLAs in Madziwa area. Ten out of 30 primary school pupils were aged 10 years, 14 out of 30 were aged 11 years, four out of 30 were aged 12 years, and two out of 30 were aged 13 years. Six out of 30 primary school pupils were in Grade 3, 12 out of 30 were in Grade 4, four out of 30 were in Grade 5, four out of 30 were in Grade 6, and four out of 30. These participants were relatively old enough to freely participate in the focus group discussions to air their opinions on the magnitude of violation of children's rights through sustainable livelihoods. In order to generate credible data from them, they were asked questions in Shona Language during the focus group discussion because their level of literacy did not match the level of English Language proficiency required during the focus group discussions.

The third stratum had 30 secondary school pupil participants. Fifteen out of 30 secondary school pupil participants were male and another 15 of them were female. Just as the case in parent and primary school pupil participants, this distribution of participants by sex was balanced and could give sex-sensitive perceptions on the children's participation and involvement in SLAs in Madziwa area. Six out of 30 secondary school pupils were aged 12 years, 12 out of 30 were aged 16 years, eight out of 30 were aged 17 years, and four out of 30 were aged 13 years. Eight out of 30 secondary school pupils were in Form 1, six out of 30 were in Form 2, 10 out of 30 were in Form 3, and six out of 30 were in Form 4. These participants were relatively old and mature enough to freely participate in the focus group discussions to air their opinions on the children's participation and involvement in SLAs in Madziwa area. In order to generate credible data from them, they were asked questions in Shona Language during the focus group discussion. Just like the parents and primary school pupils, the secondary school pupils' level of literacy was not compatible with the English Language that was used as a medium of instruction in the focus group discussion guide.

The fourth stratum was made up of 10 primary school teachers who comprised seven males and three females. Despite the small sample of 10 primary school teachers, the sex distribution appeared to be in favour of male teachers because most female teachers tend to be deployed in urban area primary schools where their spouses and families live. Eight out of 10 primary school teachers were aged between 30 and 39 years, while two out of 10 were aged at least forty years. All primary school teacher participants were married, although four out of ten teachers were not staying with their spouses. Six out of 10 primary school teachers had a teaching experience of at least 10 years, while four of 10 primary school teachers had a teaching experience of less than 10 years. Two out of 10 primary school teachers were teaching Grade 3 pupils, two out of 10 primary school teachers were teaching Grade 4 pupils, while Grades 5, 6 and 7 classes were taught by two primary school teachers, respectively. Three out of 10 primary school teachers were holders of first degrees namely, Bachelor of Education in Educational Management, Bachelor of Science in Special Education and Bachelor of Science in Physical Education. Seven out of 10 primary school teachers were holders of a Diploma in Education (Primary). These participants were interviewed in English Language since their literacy levels enabled them to understand and converse in English Language well. The primary school teacher participants also indicated that they taught pupils who complemented their parents' efforts in undertaking SLAs. The last stratum consisted of 10 secondary school teacher participants. Six out of ten secondary school teachers were male, while four out of ten secondary school teachers were female. In spite of the small sample of 10 secondary school teachers, just like the case in the primary school teachers, the sex distribution appeared to be in favour of male teachers because most female teachers tend to be deployed in urban area secondary schools where their spouses and families live. Ten out of ten secondary school teacher participants were married, although two out of ten teachers were not staying together with their spouses. One out of 10 secondary



school teachers was teaching History and Geography to Form 1 classes. Three out of 10 secondary school teachers were teaching Mathematics, Accounts and English Language to Forms 3 and 4 classes. Six out of 10 secondary school teachers were teaching Commerce, Shona, Bible Knowledge, Agriculture, English Literature and Fashion and Fabrics to O' Level classes. Five out of 10 secondary school teachers were holders of first degrees such as Bachelor of Education in Science Education, Bachelor of Education in Shona, Bachelor of Education in Home Economics, Bachelor of Education in History, Bachelor of Education in Religious Studies, and Bachelor of Education in Mathematics. The other five out of 10 secondary school teachers were holders of a Diploma in Secondary Education. The foregoing qualifications are indicative of the degree to which the secondary school teacher participants were comfortable with being interviewed in English Language. Just like the parent and primary school teacher participants, the secondary school teachers also indicated that their pupils were sometimes engaged in SLAs.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The extent to which children were involved in sustainable livelihoods activities is illustrated in the following Table 2.

Table 2: Participants' perceptions on how children are participating and involved in sustainable livelihoods activities in Madziwa area

| Theme | Sub-theme | Substantiation |
|---------|-------------------------------|---|
| Farming | Mushroom farming | 1. Children collect organic manure (PST6, SST4, and P16). Children sell mushroom (SSP3) |
| | Rabbit rearing | 1. Children hunt and gather food for rabbits (PSP13, SSP29). Children sell rabbits (SST1) |
| Weaving | Reed harvests | 1. Children harvest reeds (P11). Children prepare reeds for mat making (P19). |
| Pottery | Wood, water and clay fetching | 1. Children fetch wood, water and clay for use in clay pot making (P7; SST7) |

Findings in Table 2 show some of the ways in which children are participating and involved in Madziwa area. The ensuing participants' views on farming, weaving and pottery attempt to demonstrate how children in Madziwa area are involved in sustainable livelihoods activities.

Farming

In connection with farming, some participants had to say this:

Children collect organic manure such as cow, goat, sheep dung and chicken waste meant to enhance mushroom farming (PST6). Other children fetch compost in the form of dry leaves and grass from nearby mountains and forests (SST4). Composts and animal dung are a necessary input in mushroom farming (SSP3). I often see children watering mushroom (P16). Others sell mushroom during weekends and school holidays (SSP3). Regarding rabbit rearing, some participants pointed out I have observed children hunting and gathering food for rabbits from the natural environment (PSP13). Sometimes children are sent to purchase pellets from shops by parents who have the capacity to do so (SSP29). Children also market and sell rabbits by visiting butchers and indigenous food outlets at the growth point (SST1).



The preceding findings resonate well with what obtained in Ghana and Mali. In Ghana, children regularly resell certain products, such as prepared food, cigarettes, and provide services such as shoe-shining (Hitimana et al., 1995, p. 31-34; Maizi, 1991; Delgado 1989 in Hussain and Nelson, n.d.). In Mali, children undertake sustainable livelihoods that involve;

- trading financed by millet harvests;
- migration (to supply cash earnings for household expenses); and
- marriage alliances between households in different settlements (Hussain and Nelson, n.d.).

It can be deduced that children are largely participating and getting involved in SLAs to complement their parents and caregivers' efforts to sustain families.

Weaving

As far as weaving as a SLA that children participate and get involved in Madziwa was concerned, here is what the participants had to say:

With regards to weaving of mats, children participate in mat-making by fetching reeds from rivers (P11). I have seen children splitting reeds and drying them in preparation for the mat-making (P19). Children sometimes fetch reeds in deep rivers (PST2). Some children assist their elders with the actual weaving of mats (SST7). I wake up in the morning to go to the river to carry reeds that my father cuts in the river (SSP19). I use a thick needle with thread to help my father and brother to weave mats (PSP22).

These findings are supported by the United Nations Convention of Children's Rights (2013) which documented two points of note in this study. First, children market products such as cigarettes, and alcohol as well as foods and drinks in high saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, sugar, salt or additives. When business employment practices require adults to work long hours, older children, particularly girls may take their parents' domestic and child care obligations.

Pottery

Regarding pottery as a SLA that children participate and get involved in Madziwa, some of the participants indicated:

With respect to pottery, children hunt for areas with good clay soils so that they can assist adults with the digging and carrying processes of clay (P7). I have noticed that children fetch wood, water and clay for use in clay pot making (SST7). During the dry season children dig clay soil and fetch some water to wetten it (PST6), Girl children work with their mothers and other lady relatives to make pots (PSP10). Boys chop wood that will be used to strengthen pots by burning them in pits so that they also get an attractive colour instead of the original black or grey (SSP24).

What is emerging from the above findings is that children undertake farming, weaving and potter as sustainable livelihoods activities in Madziwa area. They appeared to do so as a way of assisting their parents and guardians to earn a living. These findings seem to be incompatible with Shackleton & Shackleton (1999) who found out that livelihoods in South African rural communities includes the collection of natural resources such as fuel wood, edible herbs and fruits, aquaculture, game meat, medicines and other items, either for direct consumption or for sale. On the basis of the researcher's observations, in Madziwa area wild animals like turo (hare), mhembwe (buck) and other animals there are extinct due to rampant cutting down of trees that caused deforestation so the concept of collection of edible herbs, game meat and other resources do not fit in since the scholar findings are biased towards South African rural communities where there are effective protection of the environment and its inhabitants. Communal Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) programme must be enrolled in Madziwa District in order to ensure protection of local natural resources.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One key conclusion from this study is that while children's participation and involvement in SLAs was more likely to be seasonal-bound. They were largely engaged in SLAs throughout the year in a bid to help their parents and caregivers to raise income and ensure food security in the home. It can also be concluded that children are largely participating and getting involved in SLAs to complement their parents and caregivers' efforts to sustain families. The study's recommendation was that children should be engaged in SLAs by



adults not as full time workers, but as situational helping hands if ever the magnitude of children's rights through SLAs is going to be curtailed in Madziwa area. More research of similar magnitude should be conducted to create more knowledge in the area.

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