ZIMBABWE RESILIENCE BUILDING FUND

SUSTAINABILITY OF INTERVENTIONS

May 2015- March 2023

Submitted: May 2023

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

The Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund (ZRBF) was set up in 2015 and the programme started with UNDP facilitating development of the Zimbabwe Resilience Building Strategic framework that laid the foundation of resilience work in Zimbabwe. This facilitated common understanding on what resilience means for Zimbabwe and laid the key principles for resilience programming.

The overall goal of building resilience of at-risk individuals, households and communities is to enhance their access to assets, resources, opportunities, and choices which enable them to withstand shocks and stresses and bounce back better from the effects of a shock or hazard. Thus, ZRBF sought to enhance the adaptive, absorptive and transformation capacities of the rural communities while improving early warning mechanisms and capacitating government stakeholders (both national and local) for improved evidence-based planning and policy making.

ZRBF was being managed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in collaboration with the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development (MLAFWRD). The programme was designed, in response to several severe economic, environmental, and social shocks and stresses in rural communities of Zimbabwe. The programme was a multi-sectoral programme, which focused on building the resilience of at-risk individuals, households and communities and received support from the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom's Foreign and Commonwealth Department Office (FCDO) and the Swedish Embassy (Sverige). Activities under the programme were implemented as a response mechanism to circumvent a plethora of severe climatic, economic, and social shocks and stresses that affect rural people and communities in Zimbabwe. Programme activities at the district level which started in 2016 cover 18 rural districts of Zimbabwe.

ZRBF had a strong focus on resilience building and evidence-based programming and the work focused on three overall sets of components namely:

Component 1: Evidence base and capacity building: This component entailed creating a body of evidence to improve the policy environment and stimulate informed service provision to enhance household and community resilience.

Component 2: Increasing adaptive, absorptive, and transformative capacities: Interventions were designed to support long-term household and community resilience in the face of climate shocks and trends.

Component 3: A crisis modifier: This was designed to respond to humanitarian shocks in support of the resilience interventions at community level in an appropriate, predictable, coordinated manner.

Interventions under the Programme were directly implemented by ZRBF Project Management Unit (PMU) and consortia partners. Activities at the community level under ZRBF were largely

implemented through a group of seven Consortia partners, with the leadership and guidance of Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) stakeholders.

2. Importance of sustainability of interventions

When talking about resilience building, it is estimated that results in terms of improved absorptive and adaptive capacities to withstand shocks in a 3–5-year period. However, positive changes in transformative capacities take longer.[1] Sustainability of resilience building interventions is critical given that socially, sustainable practices can help strengthen community bonds, improve quality of life, and provide hope for a better future. Furthermore, environmentally, sustainable practices can help protect natural resources, mitigate, and adapt to climate change and promote biodiversity.

With this background, ZRBF actively supported transformational capacities by engaging in constant dialogue with government at all levels, from central government ministries, over provincial government systems to district-level structures. Overall, to ensure the sustainability of interventions and continuity of analytical work beyond the life of the programme, the programme worked with existing structures and platforms within Government and at the community level. Sustainability strategies were embedded in the day-to-day implementation of the respective activities albeit with room for improvement, with the goal of strengthening ownership for the people and institutions to continue performing the functions beyond the life of the ZRBF interventions.

3. Sustainability of key ZRBF Interventions

In accordance with the 3 components in which the programme was operating in, Table 1 presents the sustainability report of selected key activities that were directly implemented by ZRBF PMU and Table 2 by ZRBF Consortia Partners.

TABLE 1: KEY ACTIVITIES THAT WERE DIRECTLY IMPLEMENTED BY ZRBF PMU

Component 1: Evidence base and capacity building	
Activity	**Embedded and effected Sustainability measures**
Support national data collection, analysis, and other studies that critical for resilience	The Resilience Framework has been embedded into the overall Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) framework and remains the guide for the formulation of key objectives for the survey. These include a multi-sectorial approach (several partners feed into the ZIMVAC

[1] Bond Resilience Learning Group. 2019. "Learning for Climate Resilience Programming." 2 July 2019. Retrieved from https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/learning-for-climate-resilience-programming.

programming and evidence generation e.g. ZimVAC surveys and Crop and Livestock Assessments (CLA).	process). Joint risk analysis, learning and early sharing of findings to inform programming. A resilience panel study has been incorporated into the ZIMVAC analysis and this will continue beyond the programme as the ZIMVAC process is government led and the incorporation of resilience principles was already adopted by the government. National-level and district-level capacity building on Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Open Data Kit (ODK) and Geographic Information System (GIS) as well as provision of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment to national and subnational stakeholders including tablets, laptops and desktops for maintenance and management of data utilising the local authority grant. This built the infrastructure capacity to enable the generation, analysis, and storage of the evidence. For sustainability, the trainings will be cascaded by those trained to capacitate other colleagues at the district level.
Update 5W Mapping (Who is doing What, When, Where and Why)	ZRBF contributed data to the Food Security Cluster group where the 4W mapping is now being done jointly. The Food Security Cluster is headed by Food and Nutrition Council (FNC) which will always be there even post the programme hence 5W mapping will continue. FNC coordinates the multistakeholder approach and 5W mapping will continue being conducted by government departments as assigned and this will further benefit from the envisaged Resilience Platform. To note is that, during ZRBF implementation, GIS training has empowered partners, especially the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Rural District Councils, and the Department of Civil Protection to perform 5W mapping at national and sub-national levels and this will continue since the capacity was built within government structures.
Policy Influences and advocacy	Policy influencing and advocacy was preceded by evidence generation to support the policy change arguments. The Ministry of Agriculture led the process with the programme providing the evidence. The programme focused on the production of policy strategy documents to facilitate policy amendment and operationalisation of the policy provisions. The programme has worked on building a common understanding of resilience and the need for an enabling environment through supportive policies and strategies. Building a common knowledge base is a key sustainable policy advocacy work and the programme has done this through inclusive consultative processes.
Documenting knowledge products on resilience-related themes	Capacity building of media houses on resilience reporting and impact reporting was done with several local media houses. This is expected to go a long way toward ensuring media is sensitive to reporting with a resilience lens. The capacitated officials in media houses are cascading the

	knowledge gained to their colleagues as the training provided by ZRBF was designed as a Training of Trainers to ensure sustainability. ZRBF Developed a resilience knowledge centre online platform as a repository for documented resilience related products and this will continue to be accessible all times. ZRBF generated interest and appetite for research on resilience related themes by academia through the support of post-graduation research through the Resilience Knowledge Hub and working with academic institutions that were initiated through ZRBF had led to the promotion of resilience thinking within the academic circles.
One-Stop Platform/ maintaining the MLAFWRD Database	The One-stop platform was developed with the full input of the Ministry to address their information needs making it a relevant platform for the Ministry. The Ministry aligned this platform with the strategic goals of the Ministry. The different departments within the Ministry have been trained and are solely responsible for data input and management ensuring ownership at all levels. Both the One-StopPlatform and HFM systems are accessible on this webpage, which is owned and managed by the Ministry, www. agriculture.gov.zw. Cognisant of staff turnover, there is ongoing regular training for incoming staff so that there is continuous data input and management of the system.
Support the establishment of the National Sendai Framework Tracking and reporting	The user needs which informed the development of the system were provided by the Department of Civil Protection (DCP) so that it is tailored to DCP needs at the same time meeting the Sendai reporting requirements. A validation workshop was held with all stakeholders to further refine the system and strengthen its acceptability and usability. The workshop led to the adoption of the system by all stakeholders that were present. The system was designed in a way that it is scalable and adaptable to changing needs, such that when contexts and needs change, the DCP can modify it accordingly ensuring continuity of relevance and use. Trainings were conducted for the different types of users to build their capacity. The system will be sustained through the technical working group which is in the process of being formed. The technical working group will conduct regular meetings and training workshops for government departments which contribute data to the Sendai Monitor. The Chief Director and Deputy Director within DCP are the focal persons for this.
Component 2: Increasing adaptive, absorptive, and transformative capacities	
Activity	**Embedded and effected Sustainability measures**
Promotion of adoption of best practices by consortia	The Programme improved and adopted sustainability measures based on activity trained e.g., during the water harvesting and water use efficiency

	workshop, the following were highlighted as some of the current sustainability measures: • Capacitation Water Point Committees, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Committees, Dam committees etc • Pump minder capacitation • Contributions invested to assets to guard against inflation • Working with District Water and Sanitation Committee (DWSC) • Handing over to the Government Departments • Linking communities with Solar Suppliers • Communities encouraged to have tight security measures to prevent theft
Disaster Risk Reduction	To ensure sustainability of DRM activities, support has been provided towards the review of DRM templates and these were adopted by DCP and institutionalised for national use. The adoption of new templates ensured that resilience concepts are integrated into DRM. DRM committees were trained and coached to continue using the new templates. The Programme supported the review of ward DRM plans to update new hazards and integrate resilience to ensure the promotion of best practices that work best. Support was provided for the integration of indigenous knowledge systems with local scientific forecasts and for linking DRM structures with national scientific forecasting institutions. This ensured that through continued Participatory Scenario Planning communities at risk continue to monitor and interpret community-level developments and utilise this together with scientific early warning alerts and take appropriate action. Senior members of the community that are knowledgeable about weather trends and DRM committee members responsible for tracking local indigenous signs and indicators on weather were invited to a DRM workshop each year around August/September when the seasonal forecast was out. These community early warning champions would present their 'indigenous forecast' alongside MSD seasonal outlook. Both scientific and indigenous knowledge would then be triangulated to come up with a hybrid forecast that would be used to develop advisories for the season. Review workshops were conducted during and after the season to validate the predictions. To strengthen disaster response mechanisms and build the resilience of systems, a trainer of trainers' workshop on lay counselling was conducted targeting district disaster response focal points. This ensures that basic counselling services are available at the local level. A preliminary analysis was done for districts with the greatest needs for post-disaster counselling. This mapping exercise will be used to inform the

	training of more lay counsellors to increase counselling skills in high-risk areas. Regular coordination meetings with DCP on the institutional, legal and policy framework ensured that there is integrated planning, and knowledge sharing that promotes sustainability. DCP will continue utilising the coordination meetings and committees that are in place to continuously discuss and plan for disaster risk management.
Facilitating exchange visits and cross learning	Exchange visits and cross-learning among partners were facilitated and the value of cross-learning was realised as evidenced by the adoption of best practices. Beyond the programme exchange visits will be facilitated with the support of government officials as part of extension services support to the communities.
Agricultural extension training support	ZRBF promoted Resilient Sustainable Agriculture (RSA) in operational districts through extension training i.e., on-farm demonstration plots, look-and-learn sessions, exchange visits and field days. In attempting to sustain RSA activities, a total of 1045 (542M, 503F) extension workers were trained. The trainings included: (i) use of climate-related information for farm decision-making, (ii) climate-smart production systems (including drought-tolerant crops, Integrated soil fertility management (ISFM), (iii) community seed banks, (iv) conservation agriculture systems for climate-smart agriculture, (v) agroforestry, (vi) water harvesting, soil conservation technologies and watershed management, (viii) climate-smart irrigation practices, climate-smart livestock production. Extension officers were trained as part of the programme sustainability plan. The Agritex officers will be training community farmers beyond the ZRBF programme lifespan as this is embedded in their job descriptions and will be part of their performance evaluation. RSA manual was developed and approved by the Ministry of Lands Agriculture Fisheries Water and Rural Development (MLAFWRD) in 2021. The manual was developed using participatory approaches, for instance, stakeholder consultations (including small-scale farmers) and validation workshops to ensure ownership and sustainability of RSA technologies. The production of the manual through the academia, research institutions, private sector, farmer consultations and MLAFWRD as part of the sustainability plan. The Agritex officers and led farmers were trained to ensure the knowledge remains within the field staff etc. ZRBF trained local youths on the operation and maintenance of two-wheel tractors and shellers as part of sustaining the promotion of mechanized conservation agriculture - field, shelling, and transport operations. The youths were trained in basic engineering and mechanics at the local technical colleges. Engineering centres were established in all the districts

	where mechanized conservation agriculture has been promoted to offer services to the community beyond the ZRBF phase. The centres are managed by Agritex, Department of mechanisation as part of ZRBF's sustainability strategy. SMS-based extension focusing on promoting climate-smart technologies, disease control, and Gender Equality was developed by ZRBF. The SMS allows farmers to enquire about the weather (as part of the early warning system), market information and extension support. The SMS system is moderated by Agritex and the Veterinary Services departments. They also use the platform for edutainment to foster behaviour change by speaking to the language and life of the community.
Markets/value chain development	ZRBF managed to establish and support sustainable market linkages (input, process, and output). Farmers were linked to the private sector companies for example Coopers, K2, Oakfin, Montana and Zvikomborero Farms. A record toolkit was developed and shared with district stakeholders. The involvement of the private sector within the value chains is to ensure continued business transactions beyond the ZRBF lifespan. Commodity associations and local business forums were established and capacitated. These forums are led by Agritex and other Government departments to sustain the market linkages. SMS-based market system was established in all ZRBF operational districts. The SMS market system is linking the farmer with the market. Farmers are financing the system. The SMS is managed by district Agritex officers and will be functional in the post-implementation phase of ZRBF. Farmers were trained on Win-Win contract negotiations, high-value farming, market-driven agriculture, farming records and projections, farming as a business and financing options.
Component 3: A crisis modifier	
Activity	**Embedded and effected Sustainability measures**
Sustainable Dipping Model (SDM)	The Programme trained Rural District Councils to implement the Sustainable Dipping Model as part of crisis modifier interventions and this has ensured that support is available at the local level. The adoption of the acaricide model in the districts where ZRBF was operational districts has helped communities improve their dipping cycles, procure dipping chemicals on their own and raise funds to support other needs for the dip tank i.e., some communities are raising income to drill a borehole close to the dip tank, some are looking into attending to some disaster risk reduction issues within their wards.

	The adoption of the sustainable dipping model as a risk reduction measure for tick-related diseases led to a 50 – 100% increase in the number of cattle dipped in target areas. The average number of dipping sessions per annum also increased from an average of 8 – 12 to 20 – 26 sessions in the districts which piloted the model. To note however, is that the Acaricide model faced some challenges in some districts due to limited commitment by some stakeholders who cited the absence of a national directive backed by relevant legislation. To ensure sustainability, advocacy efforts were conducted through ZRBF for the SDM to be integrated into the Animal Health Act during the review process of this Act. Adoption of the revised Animal Health Act will ensure that the model is adopted at the policy level and the relevant departments monitor and support its implementation.
Contingency planning (multi-hazard/hazard specific – locusts/flash floods)	Technical support was provided to consortia partners on contingency planning, and this enabled partners to continue with contingency planning and support was further cascaded to local-level planning processes. Subsequently, contingency planning has been embedded in local-level planning processes which will continue beyond the lifespan of ZRBF.
Strengthening High Frequency Monitoring system and revision of indicators	Indicators that are tracked in the system were developed in conjunction with the different government departments responsible for the generation of the data. Approved national thresholds were used leading to early adoption of the system. The different Government Departments were trained on the system and hardware support in the form of desktops was given to each of the 18 districts at roll out of the system to build both infrastructure and technical capacity. ZRBF Consortia partners, have handed over the system to their district government counterparts and since 2020, district officers have been actively managing the data collection and analysis at the district level. The consortia partners closely monitored this process and assisted in addressing gaps and challenges being faced, to ensure continuity post-ZRBF programme.
Produce monthly HFM Bulletin	The HFM Bulletin was developed to inform adaptive programming and Crisis Modifier in the ZRBF projects. The district stakeholders received it as a product of the system which they used to inform planning. The district officials were trained in generating their district-specific analysis and this adoption at the district level makes districts accountable, and they will continue to use the information gathered through the high-frequency monitoring system.
Strengthening sustainability of HFM and support to Ministry	The MLAFWRD provided the user needs that fed into the development of a nationwide HFM system. The consultant was based at the MLAFWRD to ensure that the developed system is relevant to the needs of the Ministry

HFM roll-out in all rural districts	and to foster early familiarisation of the system by Ministry HFMs focal persons. The M&E Department in the Ministry is the custodian of the system and is responsible for its management with no ZRBF support. The system is scalable and adaptable to changing needs if needed and a workshop was conducted to select indicators that feed into this system, with each Ministry Department contributing to their specific indicators.

TABLE 2: KEY ACTIVITIES THAT WERE DIRECTLY IMPLEMENTED BY ZRBF CONSORTIA PARTNERS

Activity	**Embedded and effected Sustainability measures**
Component 1: Evidence base and capacity building	
Contextual Analysis and scenario planning	The Programme embarked on contextual analysis of the environmental, institutional, social, economic, demographic etc and identified factors that affect how households, communities, and RDCs prevent, cope with, and recover from shocks. This enabled the design of context specific interventions to build resilience in the 18 districts of operation. ZRBF ensured that scenario planning in all the 18 districts was complemented by household level information gathered through questionnaires and an Environmental Analysis. In addition, Institutional mapping and institutional capacity assessments were conducted. This practice will be sustained given that major participants at the exercises were members of the Ward Development Committees, comprising village heads (VIDCO chairpersons), Ward Child Protection Committees, School Development Associations, church leaders, government extension staff, health personnel and Environment Committee members, among others. The importance of scenario planning inclusive of local-level scenario planning with ward-based committees has been well embraced and it has helped the development of district development plans with input from multiple district stakeholders (RDCs; Government ministries; ZFU; Private sector and community representatives). The adoption of this methodology at the local government level ensures the sustainability of the practice.
Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) Approach	The Programme promoted analysis of the risk landscape and capacity strengthening of CMDRR Committees was conducted. Furthermore, communities were assisted with the review of ward plans, managing transformational conflict and utilisation of weather information and advisories. Community participation in the development and review of Ward level plans through existing structures will ensure sustainability. Ward-level CMDRR committees were linked to District Civil Protection Units that are linked to Provincial Civil Protection Units for sustainability

	The programme promoted the use of Ward Plans to secure funding from other organizations e.g., Matobo Ward 14 Midlo CMDRR plan was used to secure funding from WFP and Caritas for fencing of the dam wall. Additionally, local leadership at the Ward level are part of the governance structures and they influence planning, and this ensures the sustainability of CMDRR
By-law development	The Programme ensured that by-law production was preceded by a multi-stakeholder assessment to identify the policy gap and operationalisation modalities and to allow for integrated decision-making. A multistakeholder approach to by-law development has been key in ensuring buy-in of proposed by-laws. The programme has capacitated district-level officials in evidence generation which promotes the development of evidence-based policies and strategies. The by-laws are tailored to protect and restore the ecological sustainability assessment, and they incorporate environmental, social, and economic considerations of the community. By-laws are a permanent product. Once approved, they are set for implementation by the council. This means that even beyond the project's life cycle, they can still be enforced without any need for partner support.
Component 2: Increasing adaptive, absorptive, and transformative capacities	
Crop production	The programme promoted Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and RSA technologies. GAPs included land preparation, farming systems, weed management, conservation agriculture, fertilizer application, soil, and water conservation Farmer field schools were established at the community level led by lead farmers. Each lead farmer is working with at least 10 follow-on farmers till graduation. The farmer schools are managed by Agritex officers to sustain capacity building gains and technical skills transferred by the program. The approach is crucial in scaling out RSA technologies and sustaining GAP at the community level. Community farmers and Agritex officers will be able to promote and sustain RSA technologies. RSA manual was developed and shared with Agritex to support future trainings. The manual will guide the officers when carrying out the trainings as a means of ensuring sustainability.
Livestock production	As part of resilience building, ZRBF promoted mixed farming season (crops and livestock farming season). Livestock genetics and fodder production were some of the major activities promoted by ZRBF. These activities were complemented by community water and fodder production. Livestock Commodity Associations were established at the community level to sustain livestock activities post-ZRBF implementation phase. The Associations were trained as part of the sustainability plan.

	Livestock Development Committees were trained in leadership, conflict management, gender and youth inclusion, business management, livestock management, crop management and learning exchange visits. An Acaricide model was piloted and promoted in the 18 operational districts and farmers are raising their own funds for the acaricides for dipping. An Acaricides policy paper was developed and shared with the MLAFWRD as part of national policy lobbying to sustain the model. Livestock farmers were capacitated on sustainable dipping through the acaricide business model. The model is linked to the diversification of income generating activities to enable farmers to raise their own resources for livestock dipping as a sustainable strategy. Pieces of training on the importance of dipping complemented the acaricide model to the extent that farmers will consistently dip their livestock beyond the implementation phase of the programme. Further, farmers were trained in fodder production and livestock feed formulation. To ensure the sustainability of fodder production, irrigation schemes have been developed to ensure the availability of water for the consistent growing of forage crops. The communities managed to widen income sources by replacement of expensive livestock feed with their own feed processing, toll milling services and feed sales. At least two hammer mills were distributed in each district except for Nyanga to support future production of feed processing at the community level. In the first year of the intervention, a total of 586 tonnes of bush meal has been produced across the 17 districts feeding 63 000 beasts of cattle and resulting in improved body condition, competitive market price and reduced poverty deaths of cattle. Farmers managed to contribute 30% of hammer mill cost to demonstrate ownership and commitment to the business particularly in the post-implementation phase of ZRBF. Livestock genetic improvements were promoted through artificial insemination, the introduction of improved bulls/bucks and trainings. Improved breeds were introduced in the communities and reproduction will continuously improve community livestock beyond the implementation phase of ZRBF.
Infrastructure development-dams weirs, dip tanks, pen fattening facilities	Through the Programme, there was sharing of information with asset management committees. The information was on the infrastructure that they manage i.e., investment costs, linkages with suppliers for after-sales support like major repairs, service, and supply of spare parts or replacements. There has been community participation in the Programme, and this instilled a sense of ownership of the programme in the farmers, hence, they are keen on seeing its success. Asset community members and management

	committees developed sustainable plans for assets like dams, weirs, dip tanks and pen-fattening facilities. The availability of a constitution for each of the groups gave members direction and a sense of responsibility to work towards the achievement of set goals. Capacity building of Asset management, water point, livestock development and DRR committees Empowered them with technical and business management knowledge and skills of how to sustainably run their projects. Layering with ISALS for additional income, group cohesion and support to operation and maintenance of equipment or infrastructure.
Borehole drilling, rehabilitation, and solarised boreholes	The Programme supported the establishment of Water Point Management Committees (selection and training) for each water point i.e., drilled/rehabilitated/solarized boreholes. The Committees were trained on governance, operations, and maintenance. They were also trained on replacement investment for the water points as part of sustainable strategies. This will sustainably enhance the management of public assets. Constitutions were developed and endorsed by the traditional leaders to enable effective management of assets beyond ZRBF. ZRBF supported National Solar Pumping Training focusing on solar basic engineering, operations, and maintenance of solar systems. The solar training targeted District Development Fund (DDF)and Rural District Council (RDC) officials in all the rural districts in Zimbabwe. As part of the exit strategy, this will sustain the operations and maintenance of solar-powered water points. The water points certification checklist for DDF and RDC was developed and shared with the stakeholders for effective management and supervision of borehole drilling and installations.
Irrigation schemes	The Programme ensured that all irrigation schemes are managed by community asset management committees with governing constitutions. The committees were elected by the garden/irrigation scheme members. These committees were trained in governance and asset management. Each irrigation scheme developed its own sustainability strategy which was agreed upon by all the members and stamped by the local traditional leaders. These will sustain the operations of the irrigation schemes beyond ZRBF. Furthermore, Commodity associations were formed in each irrigation scheme to sustain the marketing of their produce. These associations are managed by Agritex. The community association liaise with the private sector in marketing farmer produce and contract negotiations. Each irrigation scheme is managed by an Agritex officer based in the ward. The officer will remain in the community after ZRBF has ended and in

	Beitbridge, the Programme facilitated the establishment of a District Union for the irrigation Schemes which will go a long way in sustainability. Notwithstanding this however, there have been challenges at some irrigation schemes in Beitbridge regarding energy supply and the ZESA billing system. For these schemes namely Riveranche, Jalukange Bili, Ndambe and Kwalu the Programme only managed to support partial solarisation. Going forward, full solarisation of all the irrigation schemes as what the Programme did at Dombolidenje will go a long way in ensuring the sustainability of all the schemes. In the meantime, negotiations will continue to take place for government to consider Beitbridge irrigation systems as part of the ZESA Special Billing System that allows communities to continue using the irrigation schemes without being cut off power when the bill accumulates. Water points management committees were also established and trained on the operations and maintenance of water points. The water points management members work closely with District Development Fund officials and local pump minders at the community level.
Abattoirs and processing centres	ZRBF supported the diversification of products and activities, more products and have been introduced to the processing centres i.e., peanut butter, indigenous teas, dried vegetables, biogas powering of abattoirs. Processing centres and abattoirs have been linked to off-takers of their products within their districts and beyond. Processing centres were also linked with farmers who supply the inputs in raw form for processing. The Jotsholo abattoir in Lupane partnered with Private Players and community development initiatives to address community priority projects. The partnership between the Private Sector, Government and Communities with clear roles and responsibilities for each partner has contributed to the success of the model. Product certification has assisted in product acceptance and selling to bigger off-takers like hotels and butcheries. A sustainable business model was employed in the establishment of the abattoir where Private Public partnership with a 50%:50% cost share in the construction of the abattoir was implemented. Outback Safaris was identified as an eligible private partner for the establishment of the abattoir through the tendering process. As a cost-serving strategy, the project facilitated the identification of an existing building which was then renovated into an abattoir. Stakeholder mapping which entails the identification and engagement of stakeholders to work within the establishment & running of the abattoir was done. The Programme through the Sizimele consortium also facilitated the establishment of a Community Share Trust benefiting 10% of slaughter fees indefinitely from the cattle abattoir. 10 % of slaughter fees per beast is deposited into the Lupane Community Share Ownership Trust account monthly indefinitely to cover community development projects e.g.,

	ISAL groups, pen-fattening groups, pass-on gifts and entrepreneurship initiatives. This model can be replicated in districts with cattle, and where there is a willingness for co-investment between parties.
Non-Timber Forest production	ZRBF ensured that Non-Timber Forest production (NTFP) was preceded by ecological resource mapping to ascertain the quantities for commercial production and afforestation was promoted. NTFP was guided by the Forestry Commission and EMA to prevent unsustainable harvesting and environmental degradation. The Programme lobbied for better prices from off-takers and participants were organically certified to prevent unsustainable harvesting, enhance the traceability of harvesters and guarantee better prices for the NTFP. The Programme established community-run bulking and processing centres for NTFP. Both local and international markets were engaged to allow for a sustainable market and better prices and a diverse range of NTFP for participants were encouraged to allow for more options with different buyers and income. Participants were also trained in environmental management and sustainable harvesting and gathering of quality inputs and there was regular monitoring. Communities were also trained to do local processing, business management and different business models.
Entrepreneurship, Vocational skills training	The activity was done through the Ministry of Youth and Women Affairs through pre-existing structures. The training was done by vocational skills training government/public institutions and was certified after the training. The skills were empowering for the youth as this opened new income streams for their households. The programme provided basic tools for some of the trained youth to start their businesses and there was constant monitoring and technical backstopping support to improve the quality of products. Training institutions were supported with resources to strengthen their training capacity and the trained programme participants were made to participate in VSAL to ensure they have some money to support their businesses. Programme participants received training in business management and financial literacy to build their capacity to run successful businesses. Some of the trainees were linked to the Women's Bank and other funding opportunities with the Department of Youth and Women Affairs, to access loans to boost their businesses. Embedded in vocational skills training was the aspect of innovativeness and creativity for young women and youth, to enable them to find solutions to overcome challenges in their societies. This ensures sustainability as the beneficiaries will produce items that are fit for purpose. The capacity building in vocational skills also entails basic resilience skills such as the importance of layering and sequencing and diversification of livelihood options. This is enabling enterprise diversification which creates

	skilled employment opportunities as well as provides access to inputs and output market opportunities for communities. To ensure sustainability, the social enterprise component was implemented in conjunction with the established market governance committees which comprise of representatives from the relevant Ministries such as Ministry of Youth, Ministry of woman affairs and SMEs department. These have the mandate to capacitate and train young woman and youth in Entrepreneurship and Business management as well as Technical and Vocation Training services. Furthermore, through training on entrepreneurship and business management, the social entrepreneurs have been self-capacitated to conduct profit impact management strategies, and this will enable them to choose enterprises which are profitable and the increase in profits from the business acts as a motivator for them to continue with the business beyond the programme period. Additionally, the linkages with vibrant business personnel that was created by the Programme such as the Bulawayo Leather Centre for shoe making, IRAISER for Detergents making, and Tamba washables for sewing will continue to share practical knowledge of the business line. Such linkages will assist in input and output market opportunities as well as sustaining the businesses. Overall, the programme managed to reach out to youths who represented 25% of the total beneficiaries. To note is that according to the ZRBF Endline Survey, ZRBF managed to increase youth resilience with 83% of youth-led households in ZRBF having improved their resilience capacity. However, compared to the middle-aged and elderly, the youth-headed households participating in the ZRBF had lower chances mainly because of their mobility, and the appropriateness of interventions. In Mudzi and Mutoko, as an example, a total of 1,388(584M/804F) gained vocational and entrepreneurial skills in line with the ILO concept and used the skills in setting up 43 business enterprises in welding, carpentry, dressmaking, cosmetology, detergents making, food processing, leatherwork, motor mechanics, building, light engineering, and bakery. This has offered young people income access options whilst at the same time providing services closer to community members. On average, the enterprise members in these two districts make US$75 - US$105 per member in shared profits, and the amount can be higher for lucrative trades like welding. Working in groups, or as individuals; the members have been successful in diversifying their businesses, at the same time extensively applying their business skills and financial literacy skills in other ventures. The enterprises have also managed to re-tool or re-invest back into the business, thereby keeping the business

	growing. By the end of the Programme, 40% of these young entrepreneurs had established their individual businesses using proceeds from the vocational skills enterprises. Critical to note however, is that as a Programme, the Endline survey noted that while the ZRBF did invest in entrepreneurship, there was an opinion among the youth that the interventions in many cases were biased towards agriculture, meaning beneficiaries needed to own productive assets such as land which the youths do not have.
Grain and Seed banks	The Programme promoted adding value through the processing of grain into different by-products such as mealie-meal, samp, porridge meal etc. The Programme encouraged the restocking of grain banks every season by farmers, and these assisted the most vulnerable within local communities. The programme emphasised that when communities withdraw grain and feed their families during peak hunger periods, they should restock it in good seasons so that the grain bank is kept active and of material benefit. The programme promoted bulking different local/context-specific varieties of seeds to preserve biodiversity. It also supported the development of appropriate storage facilities and the establishment of seed banks at the community level. Furthermore, farmers were assisted to participate in seed fairs creating awareness and promoting use. This will be sustained through commitment from the communities given the realised benefits of both seed and grain banks.
Community/household health nutrition	To promote community and household health nutrition, ZRBF activities have been aligned with the Government Policy and Strategy. Activities were developed within the institutional framework and existing policies given that the Government of Zimbabwe has a multi-sectoral food and nutrition security policy and implementation plan that call for stakeholders in agriculture, social protection, health, nutrition, education, water, and sanitation sectors to address food and nutrition insecurity using a multi-sectoral approach. The effective participation of local government authorities and local/traditional leadership as well as their involvement throughout the project cycle increases the sustainability of the programme outcomes. This is because traditional leaders and local government structures at the sub-national level are considered the custodians of food and nutrition security issues.

Support to food markets development	Co-investment in infrastructure development – Local authorities contributed land, materials, and labour towards all the 4 markets constructed/refurbished and they are the ultimate owners of the markets operated by informal traders and benefitting the local communities. Interventions were informed by the Local authorities' informal sector investment plans, for example, the City decongestion and market decentralization strategy of BCC, as well as the market infrastructure development plan for Lupane local board and Insiza RDC. Hence infrastructure development, business training, and disaster management training interventions were aligned with existing plans. Capacity development of trader associations through training and business relationship building – Traders in all project districts received training on entrepreneurship and small business management (ILO-Start and Improve Your Business), and livelihood diversification. Traders have been linked to relevant private sector companies (e.g., Buntu Foods) and active producer groups (Tshongokwe irrigation scheme) for better business linkages. Linkages to structures and systems set up by ZRBF-Sizimele – e.g., traders and producers are part of the target beneficiaries of the Sizimele-Buntu revolving fund. The leadership of the trader and producer associations will replace ZRBF Sizimele in the joint management of the revolving fund (together with Buntu Foods). The fund will be open to support producers and traders in financing inputs, stock, working capital, equipment, and infrastructure. Capacity development of business mentors among traders and producers – The project trained selected lead traders and producers to work as Value Chain Champions of Change (VCCCs). These are resource persons available to be used as Business Development Service Providers (BDSPs) in refresher trainings, business mentorship, market linkage facilitation, and general business management support at a reasonable fee.
Village Savings and Lending schemes	Village Savings and Lending schemes (VSAL) were promoted across all project participants with a social fund component to allow participants to cope with small shocks. Furthermore, the Programme ensured that VSAL membership is self-selected and not imposed. Additionally, Government field extension officers were capacitated to roll out and establish VSAL as part of the extension services to ensure sustainability and the VSAL groups were trained to be agile and adapt to the changing economic environment. The groups were further guided to save in livestock to allow for the natural multiplication of the savings and they also received training in financial literacy and business management and income generation (buying and selling). This intervention is sustainable as ZRBF collaborated and utilized the Ministry of Women Affairs and SMEs, Agritex and other NGOs to provide the needed capacity building. Furthermore, ZRBF promoted the use of capacitated Village agents

	and cluster facilitators to cascade the knowledge gained and ensure the continuity of Village Savings and Lending schemes.
Service delivery feedback and scorecard system	Government stakeholders were trained on how to roll out the scorecard system for service feedback and communities were trained in productive engagement with service providers and encouraged to provide frequent feedback. This will be sustained through discussions in Rural District Council meetings.
Gender and youth transformation	The Programme supported interventions aimed at ensuring that women get tangible benefits from the gender integration engagements such as additional income, reduce labour burden, and improve dietary diversity. The interventions addressed entrenched and systemic harmful traditions and practices. Different business models were tested, including digital models, to identify what works for low-income women and men farmers when venturing into farming businesses. The Programme developed gender-disaggregated data as well as evidence on gendered trade-offs, benefits, opportunities, and vulnerabilities. The programme embedded proactively engagement of men and boys to illustrate the benefits of leadership and meaningful participation of women and girls in resilience-building structures and activities. The programme has also been building on and promoting existing leadership roles of women and youth in the cultural or religious context to encourage more women and youth in leadership roles. The programme has also embedded working with leaders of community resilience-building structures to encourage them to organize committee meetings and community activities in consideration of the time and location that enables women and youth in the community to participate. This will contribute to sustained gender and youth transformation as the daily routines of women and seasonal calendars need to be taken into consideration when organising community events to enable the participation of women, men, boys, and girls.

Environmental sustainability	The Programme through consortia partners executed various initiatives to promote environmental sustainability. These initiatives include mechanized conservation agriculture which served a dual purpose of reducing labour requirements for growing crops whilst also promoting environmental conservation and improving productivity. Environmental sustainability was also ensured through mushroom production where spent mushroom substrate replenished the natural biodiversity of soils as farmers used it as manure in their gardens to improve yields. Other environmental conservation works included: - • Dam catchment area management; • Stone pitching around boreholes and livestock drinking troughs; • Gulley reclamations by labour-endowed households and youth under the cash-for-asset component of the Crisis Modifier. • Biogas promotion and use; and • Promotion of efficient cook stove which uses less wood as compared to conventional cooking systems.
Component 3: A crisis modifier	
Promoting bush meal production	Stakeholders and farmers have been trained on bush meal production as part of the routine programming as well as a crisis modifier intervention. They participated in exchange visits and sharing of best practices to promote greater understanding, address emerging challenges and adapt their activities. Bush meal production will be sustained through the following measures: - • Business approach - business operators are required to co-finance 30% of the cost of the hammermill which enhances ownership and commitment to the business. • Income: business owners get income, and the farmers get affordable feed to save their animals from starvation. So, there is a win-win situation which motivates both parties to continue as there is a symbiotic relationship, droughts have been with us and will be with us. • Business Support: The operators are required to develop business proposals which have a sustainability component. This marks the first trainings that the group receive as they must think about their target population, size of the population, competition, business strategies, sourcing of raw material and the costs etc. • Hammermill Manufacturer linkage: direct link creates a relationship between the group and supplier so much that for any future breakdowns when the Programme is not there, they can easily contact the supplier. The group also received operation and maintenance training when the equipment was delivered to avoid mishandling equipment. • Technical training: Bush meal experts supported the groups with technical information on raw materials to use and the best feed formulation formulas depending on the raw materials available.

	• NB Raw materials are not only from the bush, but these also include crop stover, chicken litter, and fodder crops. • Ecological assessments: Working with the Forestry Commission, ecological assessments were conducted which informs on how much biomass can be harvested per year from the raw materials that exist in the communities and how communities can manage their forests. • Afforestation and Fodder: Each group of beneficiaries received fodder trees and fodder crops for planting to support their business and they were encouraged to plant more fodder. • Networking: A WhatsApp group created to discuss the bush meal as well as the broader resilience-building interventions with the farmers, equipment suppliers, and experts was created, and members share their successes and challenges. This enables continuous cross-learning and exchange of information.
Rehabilitation of destroyed infrastructure	The Programme engaged in community mobilisation and utilisation of locally available resources to rehabilitate infrastructure damaged by floods or cyclones. The use of locally available resources is sustainable as communities will be able to implement the same strategies when faced with future shocks.
Construction resilient model housing structures and footbridges	Following the impact of Cyclone Eloise and Cyclone Anna ZRBF intervened through the crisis modifier mechanism and supported the construction of resilient model housing structures in Matobo and Nyanga. The houses constructed were reinforced to withstand the effects of future hazards as compared to previous ones which were vulnerable to various hazards as they were constructed without following building codes. To ensure the sustainability of the construction of these resilient household models, the Programme set up building brigades involving youths who were trained on how to design resilient housing structures. The plans which were used for building the houses have been integrated into Rural District plans for use in the affected district. This adoption and integration into Council plans will ensure the continued construction of these resilient housing structures in areas that are prone to floods and cyclones. With regards to footbridges, the programme designed more resilient foot bridges working closely with the Rural Councils Engineering department. This Engineering department will continue constructing more sustainable footbridges and will continue monitoring and maintaining the constructed bridges.
Locust outbreak response	Following the sporadic locust outbreak in different parts of the country in 2021 the programme activated a crisis modifier mechanism to respond to the devastating effects of locusts in Mwenezi and Chiredzi where they had destroyed 7000ha of crops. To ensure an effective response to future outbreaks, ZRBF developed 7000 Pamphlets Trifold and 1000 A3 posters respectively in English and vernacular to create awareness of locusts. ZRBF through Agritex, the Plant Protection

	Research Institute (PPRI) together with community members conducted chemical spraying using biological insecticides that are environmentally friendly in both districts. Involving Agritex, the Plant Protection Research Institute and community members guarantees the sustainability of this intervention if another locust outbreak is experienced in future. Furthermore, an innovative strategy for community-based locust management was developed. This strategy entails the local community collecting the locusts and selling them to bush meal enterprise groups where they are dried and crushed, then milled and processed into powder. The powder will then be used in the formulation of animal feed as a rich protein source. This strategy enables widespread picking of locusts that prevents further crop loss, provides hard-hit farmers with a fresh revenue stream, and relieves pressure on authorities struggling to distribute locust-beating pesticides. Continued awareness raising at the community level for beneficial locust response strategy will ensure a sustainable response to any future outbreaks.

4. Conclusion

Sustainability and clear exit strategies have been essential in the Programme and efforts were made to ensure the continuity of the investment made over the years. Critical is the capacity-building element that transpired utilising existing Government structures at multiple levels so that they can develop, implement, coordinate, and monitor resilience-building initiatives to ensure continuity of interventions. Building transformative capacities, particularly at the local level, has been easier because of the government's devolution agenda, which enables Local Authorities to control interventions at the grassroots level. This has improved the ability of communities to actively engage their duty bearers, holding them to account and providing context-specific input into the development and resilience-building activities which allows for greater community ownership.