

**The Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (NGP) 2013–2017 and
Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE): A study of small-scale
gold miners in the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts, Zimbabwe**

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DECLARATION

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I hereby certify that I, Sonja Bräsler, tended to the professional language-editing, proofreading and presentation of the PhD thesis, *The Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (NGP) 2013–2017 and Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE): A study of small-scale gold miners in the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts, Zimbabwe* by Phoebe Michelle Zibusiso Sandi Moyo to the best of my professional knowledge and ability, without compromising the integrity of her research, nor the style in which it was presented. This also serves to also indemnify me from any issues relating to plagiarism as I did not have **access to the student's resource material.**

Yours faithfully
Sonja Bräsler

DEDICATION

For Mum who has always believed in me and supported my dreams.

ABSTRACT

The study examines the impact of Zimbabwe's second National Gender Policy (NGP) 2013-2017 under the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development on women's access to and control over productive resources in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in Bubi and Gwanda rural districts of Zimbabwe. Despite the implementation of the NGP over the past fourteen years, its effect on the economic empowerment of women has not been investigated adequately. Women's economic empowerment (WEE) is recognized as a crucial development strategy. However, it faces challenges related to the tensions between structure and agency. Some perceive WEE as an entrepreneurial concept focusing on equal access and control over productive resources like credit, equipment, skills, and business training. Others argue that WEE should encompass more than just resource access and control by addressing structural factors that hinder women's agency e.g. unequal social relations between men and women, patriarchy, unpaid care work, and sociocultural norms.

The study employed a hybrid lens, combining structure and agency to analyse the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. Drawing on Kabeer's (1994) Social Relations Approach (SRA), the study utilized two key concepts from the SRA, namely social relations and institutional analysis, to examine the interaction between the NGP and various institutions (market, community, and family) where women are located. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which the NGP has supported or impeded WEE among the female small-scale gold miners in Bubi and Gwanda, a qualitative approach was employed as an investigative method. The findings indicated that the NGP adopts a liberal or agency centred approach to WEE. This approach emphasizes women's agency and their ability to fulfil their potential in the public sphere. The NGP has facilitated access to credit, equipment, skills, and business training. However, the evidence also highlighted the uneven implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs between the Bubi and Gwanda districts. Overall, the evidence revealed that, while the NGP has addressed gender inequalities to a limited degree, it has also reinforced class inequalities. The NGP's empowerment programs have overlooked the structural factors that keep women in subordinate positions, such

as the unequal social relations that exist between men and women, patriarchy, unpaid care work and sociocultural norms.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASM	Artisanal and small-scale mining
ASGM	Artisanal and small-scale gold mining
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GAD	Gender and Development Approach
GM	Gender mainstreaming
GNU	Government of National Unity
HAF	Harvard Analytical Framework
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
MDC–T	Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai
MDC–M	Movement for Democratic Change – Mutambara
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NGP	National Gender Policy
SRA	Social Relations Approach
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WAD	Women and Development Approach
WEE	Women’s Economic Empowerment
WEF	Women Empowerment Framework
WID	Women in Development Approach
ZANU–PF	Zimbabwe African Union – Patriotic Front
ZELA	Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association
ZUNDAF	Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The study aims to assess the impact of Zimbabwe's second National Gender Policy (NGP) of 2013–2017, which falls under the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development, on women's economic empowerment (WEE). It focuses on examining how the NGP addresses the issue of women's unequal access to, and control over productive resources, specifically, through a case study of women engaged in small-scale gold mining in the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts. This study aims to analyse the effectiveness of the NGP and its implementation in addressing gender and class disparities that still exist despite the government's efforts to prioritize women's economic empowerment.

Throughout history, 'development' has seen some changes over time, from an economy-only perspective to one that focuses on social, environmental, and human well-being. The concept of development has its beginnings in the early 20th century when it emerged as a response to the social unrest brought about by colonialism and industrialization. Escobar (1999) notes that the idea of development rose and gained popularity after the second World War when decolonization efforts led to the rise of new independent nations, each with a strategy to address the unequal economic distribution that existed. The establishment of the United Nations and the formation of Bretton Woods' institutions, such as the World Bank, further solidified the discourse of development (UNDP, 2003). Subsequently, scholars and development practitioners started pushing for the integration of economic growth, and social and political stability in their development plans. For this reason, development is described by the United Nations Development Program (2016) as a continuous process of enhancing people's well-being, prospects, and freedoms in realizing their full potential.

Development started out in the 1970s characterised by modernization perspectives. It was centred on the understanding that industrialization and economic growth would eventually lead to positive social and political change (Berman, 2009; Drolet, 2010; Wekwete, 2014). "The modern economy often brought new resources and opportunities to men, but tended to leave women on the margins of development" (Kabeer, 2003: 21). In this way, development was largely a male dominated field of enquiry and essentially

gender blind. Women were regarded as reproducers and not producers; welfare cases – recipients of mother-and-child health care, childcare and nutrition work – and not economic contributors (Jacquette, 1982; Muyoyeta, 2004). This positioning of women gave rise to a feminist critique which questioned the assumption that economic development was automatically beneficial to women (Momsen, 2004). For example, Ester Boserup (1970) argued in her book, *Women's Role in Economic Development*, that women should be part of development programs as many women in third world countries contributed to food production through agricultural work.

This feminist literature on women's participation in development progressed under the influence of three main approaches, namely the Women in Development (WID) approach, Women and Development (WAD) approach and the Gender and Development (GAD) approach (Everton & Charlton, 2014). WID was one of the first approaches that arose from within the economics discipline, arguing that the subordination of women had its roots in their exclusion from market production and their limited access to productive resources (Bradshaw, 2015; Muyoyeta, 2005; Patel, 2019). Though the WID approach never departed from the modernization perspectives, it increased the visibility of women in development. This approach advocated for women's paid employment, education, entrepreneurship, and access to productive resources such as microfinance. It was through this approach that a shift occurred from a welfare-orientated approach to one which emphasized equality, efficiency, and anti-poverty orientated, redefining women as active agents of development and change. However, this particular slant was later criticized for giving in to patriarchal conceptions of production, as it only looked at women's productive work in the public sphere and did not consider their unpaid work within the domestic sphere (Alfers, 2015).

The WAD approach arose in the second half of the 1970s, growing out of the limitations of the modernization theory embedded in the WID approach. This approach had its theoretical foundations on the Dependency theory and Marxist political economy. The WAD approach emphasised that women were always part of mainstream development. The approach focused on the relationship between women and development processes rather than purely on strategies of integrating women into development as recommended by the WID approach (Rathgeber, 1990, Moghadam 1990). Hence it's emphasis on increasing women's share in resources - land, employment and income.

The WAD approach focused on women's position highlighting that their position would improve if international structures were more equitable. This approach also focused on more than just the productive but reproductive roles of women, arguing that equality would be essential to improving women's positions in the public and private spheres (Rathgeber 1990). Though the WAD approach influenced policy and programmes of some development agencies, it was criticized for its focus on women's access to credit and income generating projects. The WAD approach overlooked women's time burdens, particularly women in third world countries who take much of their time performing household tasks, childbearing, caring for the elderly and sick. Furthermore, the WAD approach adopted western strategies which reinforced existing power dynamics within social structures.

A broader conception of women's economic role in development arose with the Gender and Development (GAD) approach which emphasized gender (i.e. the social relations between men and women), as opposed to sex, as a central analytical concept (Patel, 2019). The GAD approach argued that women had always been part of development, but were in subordinate relationships based on gender, class, race, and nationality (Everton & Charlton, 2014; Muyoyeta, 2005). Marxist feminists argued that it was important to give attention to women's productive role in the domestic sphere (Drolet, 2010). As such, GAD approaches argued for a deeper understanding of structural factors which kept women subordinated, for example unfair labour market practices, unpaid care work, lack of education, skills and training, as well as existing cultural norms and patriarchy (Marchand & Parpart, 1995). The GAD approach focused on a form of women's economic empowerment (WEE) that was concerned with transforming social and economic power relations in a way which WID and WAD had not addressed. Between the WID, WAD and GAD approaches, therefore, a tension of structure and agency exists, with WID and WAD approaches tending to emphasize agency and GAD approach tending to emphasize structural constraints to women's agency.

While the GAD approach continues to inform many feminist approaches to women's economic empowerment (WEE), important international agencies have tended to favour a more agency centred approach that focuses on increasing participation in paid employment or promoting entrepreneurship. The World Bank, for example, was one of

the first international organizations to develop a programme of work around WEE and they defined it as “making markets work for women”, and “empowering women to compete in markets” (Kabeer, 2012: 9). This form of WEE has emphasized the contribution that women can make to economic growth if the right market conditions (for example, access to credit and business training) are applied. This has been termed as “smart economics”, ensuring that women can utilize their productive capacities in the labour markets (Ola-David *et al.*, 2012: 4).

On the other hand, structuralist critics of the agency centred approaches have argued that the application of the right market conditions alone will not achieve economic empowerment of women without challenging the structural barriers mentioned earlier (Chant & Sweetman, 2012; Chant, 2016; Kabeer, 2003). Hence the need for WEE programs to reflect both the agency centred approaches informed by WID, WAD and the structural approaches rooted in the GAD approach in enhancing agency and social change for women with regards to their position in both the public and private sphere. Considering the tension of structure and agency, this study will focus on a hybrid approach to WEE.

The importance of gender equality and women’s economic empowerment has been recognized by many governments, including Zimbabwe. This is due to the fact that women continue to play a major role in economic development (Derera, 2015). The government of Zimbabwe, like many other governments, has complied to the international and regional protocols on advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment. This commitment is evident from Zimbabwe’s National Gender Policy which prioritizes women’s economic empowerment. Jannah (2020) emphasizes that economically empowered women can positively impact the country’s economy and contribute to sustainable development. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the impact of Zimbabwe’s National Gender Policy on women’s economic empowerment in the small-scale gold mining sector of the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts.

1.1 Background and context of the study

Since attaining political independence in 1980, the Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) government committed itself to attaining gender equality. Over the years, the Zimbabwean government continued to make commitments

towards the removal of all forms of sexual discrimination in the society through a number of international, regional, and national declarations and conventions (Chabaya *et al.*, 2009). These included the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action 1995, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa 2005 (The Maputo Protocol), the Millennium Development Goals, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to mention but a few. These various international and regional declarations and conventions continue to address the growing concerns of gender inequality.

Zimbabwean society is highly patriarchal, and, in many instances, men are more favoured than women in decision making, political participation and leadership, and in accessing capital (credit), land, education, skills and technology training, and employment. Women and girls exist in a subordinate role to men and boys due to cultural and social norms in Zimbabwe. Thus, men and women did not benefit equally from development (Parpart, 1995). These were some of the underlying reasons behind the government's determination to promote gender equality in the country. The government then enacted some legal and administrative measures to promote gender equality and the advancement of women, such as the Legal Age Majority Act of 1982, the Equal Pay Regulations of 1980, the Labour Relations Act of 1983 revised in 1993, and the Electoral Act of 1990 among others. These legal instruments opened up equal opportunities for women to participate in the public sphere alongside men. This emphasized Zimbabwe's commitment to the international and regional declarations in redressing gender inequalities and increasing the visibility of women in the public sphere.

Regardless of the aforementioned efforts, gender inequality persisted. To address this, the government developed the first National Gender Policy (NGP) in 2004. Zvobgo (2014) and Tarinda (2019) both agree that the NGP was a response to the gender disparities between men and women in decision making, political participation, income, education etc. Ushewokunze (2012) also asserts that the Zimbabwean government's gender policy acted as a principle that guided decisions on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment with the objective of achieving rational outcomes aligned to the international human rights framework with provisions for women's rights as

human rights. The NGP envisioned a Zimbabwean society where economic, political, religious, and social equality and equity among women and men would be evident in all spheres of life and at all levels (Gender Department, 2004). The first NGP (2004) spearheaded the mainstreaming of gender into all sectors in order to eliminate the social, economic, and cultural norms that impeded equality and equity to all the sexes (Ncube, 2014), following the recommendations of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995).

Despite this progress, the NGP did not succeed in closing the gendered disparities between men and women in access to productive resources. Hence, the policy was revised in 2013. The new policy set out clear principles and guidelines with regards to the participation of women and decision making in public life (Zvobgo & Dziva, 2017). The second NGP recognized women as equal partners in socio-economic and political development and called for their full participation in the public sphere (*ibid*). Under this second NGP, the government adopted an economic empowerment framework to ensure equal access to and control over productive resources for women in different sectors across Zimbabwe (Mutanana & Bukaliya, 2015). This study focuses on Zimbabwe's second National Gender Policy (2013–2017).

Historically, economic development has been valued as important, and mining is one of the key economic sectors that have contributed to Zimbabwe's economic growth. For many years, post-independence to the early 2000's, a period that saw Zimbabwe being dubbed as Africa's 'breadbasket' under SADC, agriculture was a major contributor to the country's economy (Malinga, 2018). The Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) conducted in the year 2000 by the Zimbabwean government resulted in many white farmers being evicted from their farms, making way for black Zimbabweans. The FTLRP brought about a decline in commercial agricultural activities which affected the title of Zimbabwe as Africa's breadbasket and even lessened the food distribution in the country. Malinga (2018), Mawowa (2013) and Scoones (2013) highlight that Zimbabwe's agricultural sector witnessed a decline in agricultural produce and exports due to a number of policies, but specifically the FTLRP.

The decline in Zimbabwe's agricultural sector opened up avenues for other economic sectors to be prioritized by the Zimbabwean government, amongst them being the mining sector. Mukodzongi and Spiegel (2019) confirm that there was a shift from the

agrarian structure to mining which became an economic pillar of Zimbabwe's economy. In his State of the Nation address, former President R.G. Mugabe noted that mining exhibited stronger growth (above 3.5%) regardless of the declining international prices (Segula, 2015). Nyoni (2015) also reported that the mining sector was contributing significantly to the country's economic development with 15% of gross domestic product (GDP) and 53% of foreign exchange earnings, and 8–12% of government revenue including employment creation. Hence the declaration by the Zimbabwe Chamber of Mines (2015) that Zimbabwe had moved from being an agriculture-based country to a 'mining country'.

Amongst the mining activities taking place in Zimbabwe, artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) had also become a major actor in the Zimbabwean economy. The ASGM sector, though controversial, became a vital sector in the economy and a form of livelihood for many Zimbabweans especially those in the rural areas. Mapuranga (2021) notes that the Mines and Mining Development Minister, W. Chitando even announced that his ministry was "relying on the small-scale gold mining sector to achieve at least 100 tonnes of gold annually by 2023, because there were gold mineral deposits that were not economically viable for large scale commercial mines". Not only did this highlight the ASGM sector as a contributor to Zimbabwe's economic development but it also acknowledged that it had become an economic activity undertaken by different social groups with different educational and economic backgrounds (Mabhena, 2012). It also provided a livelihood for millions of people in Zimbabwe.

While it is evident that mining is a male domain, women's participation in this sector has increased in Zimbabwe due to a number of factors such as the growing recognition of gender equality and women's rights which have led to more opportunities for women to engage in traditionally male-dominated sectors. Additionally, economic pressures resulting from unemployment and poverty and the need for income generation have motivated women to explore mining, for example by obtaining profits from selling the gold (Labonne, 1996). However, although literature suggests that there is a high proportion of women participating in ASGM, many of these women are situated in the lower, subordinate jobs like gold panning (Zvarivadza, 2018), crushing and milling (Jenkins, 2014), and transportation of materials (Yakovleva, 2007).

This study concentrates on a particular group of women small-scale miners with registered small claims under the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development in the rural districts of Bubi and Gwanda in Zimbabwe.

1.2 Research Problem and Theoretical Framework

Despite the efforts made by the Zimbabwean government in prioritizing women's economic empowerment, women in the ASGM sector still suffer from inequality and discrimination. The National Gender Policy has been rolled out for over fourteen years. However, its impact on women's access to productive resources remains inadequately investigated. The existing literature on the role of the NGP in Zimbabwe has tended to focus on women's access to leadership positions in universities and schools (Chabaya *et al.*, 2009; Zvobgo, 2014). Other studies have focused on the NGP's implementation of women's rights in political participation (Zvobgo & Dziva, 2017), whilst Matonhodze and Guzura (2014) examined the implementation and outcomes of Zimbabwe's first NGP of 2004 pertaining to women in parliament, tourism, agriculture, mining, education and employment. To date there have been no studies investigating the role of the second NGP and its implementation in various sectors, including artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) in Zimbabwe. Hence, this study stands out as one of the first to delve into the impact of the NGP and its implementation on empowering women small-scale gold miners in the rural districts of Bubi and Gwanda.

According to Mutume (2005), and Matonhodze *et al.* (2014), gender policies do not consider the differences between income and power between women and men. For instance, gender policies in many countries have failed to reduce the income and power gaps between men and women in paid employment. In this way, women often face discriminatory practices such as lower pay for equal work or limited opportunities in leadership positions despite their qualifications and abilities. Thus, gender policies have had little impact in addressing gender equality in access to finance, training, control, and ownership. Women are still excluded from power and decision making in both the public and private sphere because of the unequal gender and power dynamics that exist between men and women. These are also determined by cultural norms. Thus, women lose out on income and control over economic prospects (UN Women's Report, 2013).

This is why Derera (2015) states that the government's intended mandate towards women's economic empowerment and gender equality remains questionable.

Mwaba (2010) also argues that the legal frameworks or policies that have been put in place have failed as instruments to address the interaction of gender and other social relations such as class, ethnicity, race and age regarding access to productive resources. Therefore, gender is not the only key theme in this study. The interest is in both gender and class and how they interact. Class refers to enduring and systematic differences in access to and control over resources for provisioning and survival (Nelson, 1993). The study draws on Intersectionality as a way of understanding social relations by examining intersecting forms of discrimination between gender and class, which may occur at the same time in a person's life.

Having outlined the problem, the study draws on Naila Kabeer's Social Relations Approach (1994) in order to structure its arguments. The SRA provides a framework for analysing policy from a gendered perspective, focusing on inequalities in the gender distribution of resources, responsibilities, and power (March *et al.*, 1999). The SRA draws more from the GAD approach than it does with the WID approach:

It stresses the interconnections between efficiency and the unequal social relations that exist between men and women; arguing for a more equitable redistribution of resources and responsibilities between women and men (Kabeer, 2003: 270).

It asserts that there are systemic and structural causes of gender and other social inequality and that it requires their root causes to be addressed (Miles. 2016; Kabeer, 2003).

The underlying rationale for the SRA is the premise that all policy and planning must be judged in terms of its contribution to the final 'end' of development: the achievement of human wellbeing (Kabeer, 2003). In tackling gender inequalities, the emphasis is not on the integration of women into development, but rather on the transformation of the social structures, processes and relations which give rise to disadvantaged positions for women (Kabeer, 2003). Institutional patterns of inclusion, exclusion, positioning, and progress express class, gender, and other social inequalities (Kabeer & Subramanian, 1996). Institutional rules play a key role in gender policies by either transforming the livelihoods of women through access to and benefits from social and public resources

provided by the state (Masanjala, 2007), or in reinforcing class and gendered inequalities. In this regard, the unequal gender, and other social relations in terms of access to resources are not only produced within the family, community, and market levels alone, but are also reproduced and reinforced by the state and its administrative departments. This study is important because it pulls together an institutional and social relations analysis on the position of the women miners at different institutional locations such as the State through the NGP, the market, the community, and the household/family in Zimbabwe.

1.3 Research Questions

The main objective of this research is to examine the extent to which Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy (NGP), and its implementation has either reproduced or reversed gender and class inequalities in the small-scale gold mining sector of the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts. The study is guided by the following research questions:

- How does the NGP conceptualize WEE and why?
- What are the implications of the NGP's conceptualization of WEE on implementing programmes promoting women small-scale gold miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts of Zimbabwe
- What processes are involved in enabling the implementation of the NGP?
- How have women small-scale gold miners in Bubi and Gwanda districts of Zimbabwe experienced the effects of the NGP, and to what extent has its goals and implementation promoted economic advancement and well-being?
- How did the implementation of the NGP and WEE programmes influence the social status of women small-scale gold miners in Bubi and Gwanda districts of Zimbabwe?
- What alternatives have women small-scale gold miners utilized for their economic progress, and how might these strategies impact the NGP?

1.4 Conclusion and thesis structure

In summary, the government of Zimbabwe through the NGP regards women's economic empowerment and gender equality as one of its key goals. As such, the government of Zimbabwe saw it necessary to align the international and regional

instruments of their signatory to fit their national gender machinery. This was done in order to ensure the government's commitment towards addressing gender disparities and empowering women to participate in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors. Despite the efforts by government, women were still discriminated against and marginalized in access to and control over productive resources which called for stronger policies to address gender disparities in access to productive resources. For this reason, the second NGP (2013) was established, with a focus on women's economic empowerment to enhance and increase their participation in the economy of Zimbabwe. The SRA also provides this study with a framework in analysing the extent to which the NGP interacted with the market, the community, and the household in challenging the unequal social relations of gender and class for women miners.

Based on the research objective and questions, the structure of the thesis is as follows:

Chapter 1: This is the introductory chapter. In this chapter the background and context of the study are discussed. The chapter outlines the problem that this study seeks to investigate, followed by a presentation of the theoretical framework and research questions that guide the study. Lastly, the chapter summary and the structure of the thesis are presented.

Chapter 2: This chapter presents a review of related literature on WEE, gender and policy implementation, and women in mining. The wider objective of this chapter is to review the current literature and to identify the gaps which this study aims to address thereby outlining its contribution to knowledge.

Chapter 3: This chapter provides a theoretical framework of the study which is grounded in the Social Relations Approach (SRA). A theoretical framework is important because it helps establish a foundation for the study by grounding it in existing knowledge and theories. It is important as it situates the study within the broader theoretical context and shows how the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge. This chapter outlines the SRA and its concepts in guiding the analysis of Zimbabwe's second NGP as well as how the policy interacts with the market, the community, and the household in challenging or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda. This chapter also discusses gender analysis frameworks and justifies why the SRA is a suitable framework for analysing the NGP.

Lastly, the chapter situates the SRA within the wider feminist universe so as to recognize where and how feminist theoretical perspectives inform the SRA and policies, particularly on gender and other social relations.

Chapter 4: The research methodology adopted in this study is discussed in this chapter. A research methodology is important as it provides a ‘roadmap’ which guides the researcher through the entire research process. It helps the researcher to identify the research design, and to select appropriate samples and suitable data collection instruments. The chapter also presents the research paradigms underpinning the research methodology and the justification for the chosen approach.

Chapter 5: This chapter presents an institutional analysis of the National Gender Policy. The chapter begins by grounding the state and state policy as institutions that shape social outcomes. This is followed by a historical background on the processes of how the State (Government of Zimbabwe) established the National Gender Policy. The study also presents empirical findings regarding the WEE approach adopted by the NGP’s empowerment programs for women miners in Bubi and Gwanda, thereby answering the study’s first research question. The empirical findings also delve into the SRA’s five institutional dynamics: rules, resources, activities, people, and power by analysing the NGP, which answers the second and third research questions.

Chapter 6: This chapter presents empirical findings on the impact of the NGP’s empowerment programs on the ASGM sector (the market) in Bubi and Gwanda. This chapter answers research questions four and five. The market is defined as a social institution where firms, suppliers, customers, workers and the state (government) interact and shape market dynamics (Berket, 2009; Fligstein *et al.*, 2007; Philip, 2018). This chapter discusses the ways in which the NGP’s empowerment programs have supported women miners to participate in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda. The chapter looks into women’s conditions in the ASGM sector before they received access to resources from the State and post access. This assessment determines the extent to which the NGP’s empowerment programs works with the market in either challenging and/or reinforcing gender and class inequalities for women miners in Bubi and Gwanda.

Chapter 7: The chapter presents an institutional analysis of the NGP’s interaction with the community and household as the key institutions of focus, answering research

questions four and five. The study begins with a historical background on the position of women in the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial eras to see where and how policy has influenced social change. The study then presents empirical findings on the status of women in the household and community before and after the NGP's empowerment programs.

Chapter 8: This chapter provides the conclusion, focusing on how the analysis in chapters 5, 6 and 7 have helped in answering the study's research questions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review and synthesize existing literature on women's economic empowerment (WEE), gender and public policy, and women in mining. These themes are important in the analysis of Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy (NGP) (2013–2017) and its implementation on women miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts for providing the necessary conceptual background. The chapter is divided into three main sections. It begins with a review of academic literature on women's economic empowerment, the overall frame of this study. This is followed by a section which reviews literature on gender and policy implementation, which underpins this study. This section is divided into two subsections: one that reviews literature on gender mainstreaming, and the second reviewing related literature on public policy implementation and the role of public policies in either challenging or reinforcing gender and class inequalities. The third section reviews literature on women in mining, providing the rationale and focus of this study. Overall, the aim of this chapter is to point out the gaps in existing literature on the subjects mentioned, which this study aims to fill.

Before engaging with a review of literature relating to women's economic empowerment, the concepts of structure and agency need to be discussed first. This will aid a deeper understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of women's economic empowerment. The interplay between structure and agency provides important context to the discussions in this study, particularly with regards to women's economic empowerment in this chapter and the theoretical framework of this study in chapter 3.

Structure and Agency

The structure and agency debate has been a thorny subject in Sociology and the Social Sciences for a long time. As shall be seen in this chapter and following chapters, the various tensions of structure and agency runs throughout this thesis. Howarths (2013)

confirms that it is a constant, if not intractable problem in modern social theory. Prominent theorists such as Karl Marx, Emille Durkheim, Anthony Giddens, Max Weber and Margaret Archer have written about the tensions of structure and agency in their work. Some of these theorists have analysed the concepts separately while others have argued that structure and agency cannot be separated. As within the tensions of structure and agency, there has been a tendency to take up a hybrid approach which understands social phenomena to be a mixture of structure and agency. Outlining the tensions of structure and agency helped in analysing the NGP and its implementation of WEE programs from a hybrid lens.

According to Settersen and Gannon (2005: 35), “life course is the product of social forces broadly construed as ‘social structure’”. Thus, a human life is shaped by structure, particularly social structure. Structure refers to systems and patterns that are dominant and responsible for orchestrating the conduct of human individuals (Sewell, 1992). For instance, in Chapter 3 (discussion on feminist perspectives), we learn that systems such as capitalism, patriarchy, sociocultural norms, and social status (i.e. class) are some of the social structures that hinder women’s agency. In women’s economic empowerment literature, structuralists argue that it is critical to challenge the structural inequalities which impede women’s agency, such as the burden of unpaid care work on women, the unequal social and power relations that exist between men and women, patriarchy, and sociocultural norms. These are structural in the sense that they are shaped by a social system where men dominate in power and authority.

For instance, women are assigned roles of childcare, elderly care, and household management. Men do not participate in childcare or household duties. Thus, the unequal distribution of unpaid care work reinforces the unequal social and power dynamics between men and women. These traditional gendered roles are further reinforced by sociocultural norms and beliefs in shaping the way in which men and women behave and the roles assigned to them. Hence, these social structures make it difficult for women to escape unpaid caregiving and to exercise their agency. These factors contribute to a cycle where women are trapped and kept in subordinate positions.

Agency-centred approaches, on the other hand, stress the importance of individual judgments, decisions, and actions – in other words emphasizing ‘human agency’ in

social life. Scholars supporting agency-centred approaches argue for women's participation in the public sphere, for example, in employment, education, voting, political participation and in access to finance. Drolet (2010) found that although women have been involved in income generating projects, they were mostly educated about family planning, childcare, and health issues. Such programs restricted women to their maternal responsibilities. Hence, the agency-centred approaches to WEE advocated for women's participation in the public sphere through access to credit, education, and employment. This was to ensure that women had equal opportunities in the public sphere just like their male counterparts. The liberal feminist perspective is one of the most popular theories that informed agency-centred approaches during the early 1970s, when capitalism was at its peak. Liberal feminists did not seek to disrupt the capitalist system but to create an enabling environment within it for women to fulfil their potential as economic contributors.

Some of the most prominent work integrating structure and agency has come from Anthony Giddens through his Structuration theory and Pierre Bourdieu's view on 'Theory in Practice'. Giddens (1984) posits that structure and agency are an iterative process; they are connected to one another in what is called the 'duality of structure'. For instance, in socialist feminism there is a correlation of structure and agency: this feminist theory seeks to strike a balance by acknowledging that in society there are structures that influence human behaviour and, at the same time, these structures either support or limit individuals' choices, actions and decisions about their life. Giddens (1984) highlights that structure has two sides, namely rules and resources. Rules represent structure, while resources represent agency. Rules may either support or hinder action and the resources may expedite action. While some women have access to and control of productive resources which contributes to their agency, male power (patriarchy) and culture represent social structures (rules and practices) that may limit their decision making and expansion of choices (Apter & Garnsey, 1994).

From this discussion of structure and agency, it is clear that these two concepts are an integral part of the debates that are discussed in the following section on WEE. This is particularly relevant in understanding the rationale behind the interventions or programs adopted in enabling women's agency and enhancing their visibility in society. More so, it is important to note from this section that structure and agency are inter-connected and

thus should not be analysed in isolation, but rather through a hybrid lens. These concepts strengthen the foundation for understanding and critically analysing the literature on women’s economic empowerment.

2.2 Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE)

Women’s economic empowerment (WEE) is a prominent topic in the field of development, particularly in relation to interventions aiming to bring about social change for women (Laszlo *et al.*, 2020). However, the term is contested by scholars (Cornwall, 2016; Mosedale, 2005). Some see it as a purely economic and entrepreneurial concept – one focused on enabling women to gain greater economic opportunities as its core goal, and which tends to have an entrepreneurial focus (Hallward-Dremierre, 2003). An entrepreneurial concept involves the processes of developing and running small to medium businesses to generate profit. Others view WEE as a much more complex concept which, in addition to greater market opportunities, involves breaking down structural barriers to women’s participation in economic life, as well as including a sense of personal empowerment as a precondition for economic empowerment (Kabeer, 2012). There are two main threads to WEE literature: one that focuses on women’s agency, while the other has a more structuralist orientation. These are explained in detail in the following section.

A tabulated list of the issues addressed by an agency centred approach to WEE and those addressed by a structural orientation is set out below (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Issues addressed by an agency centred approach versus a structured orientation to WEE

Agency centred approach to WEE	Structural Orientation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to microfinance (credit and financial services). • Access to business and skills training. • Access to equipment/machinery • Access to income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing the unequal distribution of unpaid work on women. • Addressing the unequal social and power relations between men and women.

According to Kabeer (2005), there is substantial empirical evidence that proves that access to paid employment can increase women's agency in strategic ways. Whether this access to paid work for women is in the form of waged work, formal sector work or self-employment, it is a form of WEE that seeks to change women's lives (Sen, 1999). A study conducted in Tanzania revealed that women's income through work allowed them to save and provide for themselves and their children's needs (Vyas *et al.*, 2015). For some women, regular wage income from factory jobs and the opportunity to work outside the sphere of control of male relatives have empowered them and increased their influence in household decision making (Fontana *et al.*, 1998). Women in Bangladesh have used their wages to postpone marriages and renegotiate their relationships within marriage, while other women left abusive marriages (Kabeer, 2005). Some women reported that their work in the vegetable and flower industries in Guatemala and the Dominican Republic led to greater independence for them, also in terms of household decision-making and control over the money earned (*ibid.*). In Kenya, the vegetable industry created new opportunities for women and full control of the income they earned (Esplen & Brody, 2007).

The evidence above suggests that access to economic opportunities can empower women across multiple spheres of their lives and not just in financial aspects. Statistics show that in sub-Saharan Africa women's labour force participation has been on the rise from 51.7% in 2008 to over 60% in 2021 (ILO, 2021). Interestingly, there has also been a shift as women are increasingly moving out of traditionally waged employment in agriculture into other sectors such as services and manufacturing (Raj, 2014). Bayisenge (2010) reports that in the urban areas of Kigali (Rwanda) the largest proportion of women work in the service sector and have commercial occupations. Other studies by Miles (2014) and Fontana *et al.* (1998) also highlight that there has been a shift towards increasing the number of women in factory and manufacturing sectors. Paid employment has not only increased women's agency, but it has also increased their autonomy as obtaining employment outside their homes has enabled them to meet other women from different parts of the world.

Despite the increase of women doing paid work, studies have shown that there is a high proportion of women working in the informal economy sector. According to Bonnet *et al.* (2019), women make up 92% of the workforce who are employed informally, which

is significantly higher than the male workforce which makes up 87%. The informal economy consists of activities that are of market value but that are not formal or registered. This sector also comprises of employment outside informal enterprise such as domestic workers, temporary/casual or part-time workers (International Labour Organisation, 2009). In sub-Saharan Africa, 84% of women are employed in the informal sector as own account workers or contributing family workers, compared to 63% of their male counterparts – 86% in Rwanda, 77% in Ethiopia, 70% in Tanzania and 65% in Zimbabwe (ILO, 2021). These statistics indicate that the informal economy has been a primary source of employment and income for many women in the developing countries (Chen, 2001).

Chant and Pedwell (2008) also point out that there has been a significant increase of participation of women in the informal sector in the last decade that has led to the feminisation of informal labour. The high proportion of women in the informal economy suggests that the number of women employed in the formal sector is quite low. Also, the significant increase of women in the informal economy is attributed to lack of education, skills training, and the need for women to engage in social and family responsibilities (Olu-Owalabi *et al.*, 2020). For instance, the limited access to education can keep women from obtaining formal employment, and as a result they turn to informal employment as a means to earn income. Additionally, women are also subjected to traditional gender roles that prioritize their caregiving and household responsibilities to such an extent that it is a challenge for them to engage in formal employment due to inflexible hours of work and lack of support when it comes to childcare. As a result, women opt for informal employment arrangements as it provides them with flexibility in balancing their work and family responsibilities.

According to Meagher (2010), employment in the informal economy represents a trap for women due to their lack of skills and low productivity. Kabeer (2005; 2012) argues that within the informal economy, poorer women are concentrated in the more casual forms of waged labour and low value own account enterprises. The same is echoed by Chant and Pedwell (2008), namely that women tend to be concentrated in a range of increasingly saturated, low paying jobs aligned to their domestic responsibilities and constraints imposed by the gendered division of labour. The gendered division of labour is the way in which society divides different tasks among men, women, boys, and girls

– i.e. men go out to work while women and girls cook, clean, and take care of children. This reflects significantly upon Chen’s (2012) WIEGO pyramid, which demonstrates that, although both men and women engage in the informal economy, women are more likely to work in low-wage and high-poverty occupations. This highlights the unequal gender and power relations that exist between men and women in the labour markets. Gender relations refer to the ways in which society defines the rights and responsibilities of women and men differently. Women experience far worse employment conditions than men. This also confirms Meagher’s (2010) assertion that women’s employment in the informal economy is more of a survival strategy than a sphere of growth and empowerment.

The literature on women’s access to paid work as a form of WEE presents a mixed picture. Despite the significant benefits that paid employment has brought to women, such as increased independence, income, and decision-making power, it is important to acknowledge that women’s economic empowerment has not been fully achieved. The transformative potential of paid employment as a form of WEE is disputed by Vyas *et al.* (2015), arguing that social norms such as gender roles have a significant influence on how employment affects women’s bargaining power and their risk of intimate partner violence. Social norms are informal or unwritten rules that define acceptable and unacceptable actions that guide humans within a group or community. Kabeer (2005) and Mayoux (2002) also contribute to this argument by highlighting that employment does not automatically challenge the unequal power relations that exist between men and women. They argue that the process of economic empowerment should involve the dismantling of patriarchal values and other sociocultural norms that hinder women’s agency. There is no guarantee that employment alone can fulfil the objectives of women’s economic empowerment.

Another strand of the literature on WEE focuses on access to microfinance and the ways in which this can empower women. Microfinance provides the poor with basic services like savings, affordable credit, and skills training (Haimanot, 2007; Misrak, 2012). These services are extended to poor people, especially women, for self-employment projects that allow them to generate income and to care for themselves and their families (Drolet, 2010). Grown (2016) sheds light on the significant barriers impacting on women’s access to credit and financial services by highlighting the role of gender

biases fuelled by traditional gendered norms and discriminatory practices that disadvantage women when it comes to accessing financial services. In addition, many women do not own any immovable property which they can declare as collateral – a prerequisite in obtaining a loan (Wekwete, 2014). These are some of the underlying reasons why Mohammed Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, promoted microfinance, realising that women were more credit constrained than men (Coleman, 2004). Hence, micro credit programs have been instrumental in narrowing the financial gap between men and women by providing women with access to capital and financial resources that were previously unavailable to them. Women are able to start and expand their micro-enterprises such as small-scale farming, small-scale mining, or retail businesses, leading to increased economic independence and improved livelihoods.

Other studies have also shown that micro credit programs are generally targeted at women as women tend to take greater responsibility for the wellbeing of the family. Targeting women in this way therefore has the added benefit of reaching the entire household. Providing loans for women is predicated on the premise that their decision-making ability would increase, and the quality of their households would be better (Al-Shami *et al.*, 2017). A study in Vietnam found that more than half of the women who participated in a micro-credit program engaged more in decision making in the household and community (CEP, 2006). Women in Nigeria reported that access to micro credit allowed them to earn extra income, which improved their decision-making power in the household and increased their sense of self-confidence (Okunlola *et al.*, 2020).

In line with the reasoning above, Garikipati (2013), Tshuma and Selome (2014), and Kato and Kratzer (2013) state that micro credit programs are targeted at women because they are a ‘good credit risk’ and also because the whole household benefits. Women are more inclined to making loan repayments compared to men. And as highlighted above, the loans taken by women have a ‘multiplier effect’ such as that the family’s needs are met. Mayoux (2002) argues that once women’s practical gender needs are met, they are able to challenge gender and other social inequalities in ways they see fit and, along with the alleviation of household poverty, this is a win-win process. Li *et al.* (2011) affirm that women’s economic empowerment occurs in two ways. First, women

are able to access loans which then contribute to their income. Secondly, when women are economically empowered through micro credit, they also contribute to their families breaking the cycle of poverty and they have a sense of dignity and self-worth. The ability to eradicate poverty while economically empowering women has put micro credit programs on the map as the most popular development initiatives across the world.

It is not everyone, however, who believes that micro-credit is a guaranteed pathway to women's economic empowerment. Weber (2004) for example, argues that loan amounts are too small for women to start up profitable businesses and that the repayment schedule is too tight for a meaningful investment. Women are subjected to the intense pressure of timely loan repayment, thus producing new forms of dominance over women by families and the microfinance organisations (Mahmud, 2003). Li *et al.* (2011) also argues that the 'micro' means small loans extended to women often subjected to spousal control leading to the subordination of women. Hence, micro credit traps these women into debt, thereby increasing the poverty levels in the household.

According to Kabeer (2001), in Bangladesh, women's participation in micro credit actually led to the opposite of empowerment, as male relatives and spouses of these women aimed to control the money coming into the household. Evidence from Ghana shows that some women had to ask permission from their husbands before taking the loans and that their spouses had full control of how the loan would be used (Akpalu *et al.*, 2012). This reinforces the unequal gender and power relations that exist between men and women, so that women fail to exercise their agency. Women's access to micro credit thus fails to address the unequal gender and power dynamics between men and women. Most African societies are predominantly patriarchal, so much so that women have to obtain permission from their spouses or male relatives before taking the loans. The literature here shows that there is a distinction between women having *access* to resources such as credit and them having *control* over the said resources.

Another strand of literature focuses on entrepreneurship as a form of women's economic empowerment. Earlier on, we defined entrepreneurship as a process of developing, organizing, and managing small to medium businesses to generate profit and employment creation. Derera *et al.* (2020) notes that entrepreneurship forms an integral part of women's economic empowerment according to fifth of the UN's

sustainable development goals. It is fast becoming a popular strategy for WEE and it is recognized as a potential contributor to poverty reduction and sustainable development in many developing countries (Naude, 2011). Regardless of this significance, many of the women running micro enterprises are found in the informal sector where they are overshadowed by medium to large enterprises (Okeke-Uzodike, 2019).

Studies have shown that many women experience structural conditions that undermine entrepreneurship for them as a pathway to WEE. Women in general are confronted by challenges in developing their businesses, as well as gender-based challenges (Meyer, 2009). Access to credit, as highlighted earlier, is an issue that affects women's entrepreneurship in many developing countries. A study conducted by Agrawal (2018) in India found that women entrepreneurs faced difficulty in obtaining loans from banks and financing institutions due to doubts about their risk-taking ability and entrepreneurial expertise. The gender biases and discriminatory practices in accessing loans not only limits women entrepreneurs' access to financial resources, but also hinders their business growth and success.

In addition to the argument above, the limited or lack of property ownership is another condition that poses a major obstacle to female entrepreneurs' access to credit (Mashapure *et al.*, 2022; Wekwete 2014). The reason for this is that many women do not own any immovable property that can be used as collateral when applying for loans. This lack of access to credit further perpetuates gendered inequalities and limits women's ability to participate in economic opportunities. To encourage a more inclusive and enabling environment for women entrepreneurs, structuralist scholars like Agrawal (2018) and Razavi *et al.* (2017) contend that it is critical for policymakers and finance institutions to address gender biases and discriminatory practices that hinder women's access to finance.

Another constraint that undermines entrepreneurship for women as a form of economic empowerment is the lack of training, financial skills, and market access. These are gender-specific constraints that impede on women's entrepreneurship. Studies have shown that low education, lack of training and inexperience reduce the chances of success among women entrepreneurs (Hadary, 2010). Gasperani (2010) highlights the fact that lack of, or limited education and skills training hinder women's participation in more productive work and remunerative enterprises. This challenge is further

reinforced by women's lack of market access. "Women entrepreneurs faced difficulties in accessing markets and keeping themselves updated with the latest developments across the globe" (Agrawal 2018: 10). Such issues become a defining factor for women's entrepreneurship in society. Hence, developing women's entrepreneurial skills and knowledge would help to upscale their small businesses effectively and to formalise them.

Nonetheless, studies in the entrepreneurial environment have shown that equipping women with entrepreneurial skills and access to credit is an important component for women's economic empowerment. For instance, multilateral institutions such as the World Bank have adopted this approach (entrepreneurship) to WEE, in particular through its 'smart economics' approach (World Bank, 2006). Smart economics entails creating fairer market conditions for women entrepreneurs through the provision of small business training and access to credit. Ola-David *et al.* (2012) write that smart economics is about ensuring that women are given access to and are able to utilize their productive capacities in the labour market. This can, for example, include providing business training workshops to women entrepreneurs who then receive loans to start or upscale their various enterprises (Julia, 1999). This line of thinking argues that, if women receive adequate skills training and credit, they are better able to run their businesses and to contribute to economic growth. The smart economics approach positions women as entrepreneurs who are an important source for economic growth (Roberts & Soederberg, 2012). For this reason, Cornwall and Rivas (2015) argue that women's entrepreneurship is sufficient to reverse gender and other social inequalities.

However, according to structuralists, interventions aimed at providing access to credit and small business training for women entrepreneurs as a means to promote women's economic empowerment are unlikely to effectively address the underlying structural barriers. For example, unpaid care work makes it difficult for women entrepreneurs to compete effectively in the markets. A study conducted in Nepal found that unpaid care work limited the women's entrepreneurial activities (Ghosh & Chopra, 2019). One of the participants in this study said that they spend so much of their time doing household chores, fetching water and firewood, that they have little to no time for economic and social activities that could lead to their economic empowerment. Another study conducted by Moussié and Alfors (2018) on childcare and women's income in Ghana

and South Africa found that the working hours of women traders had to be cut short due to childcare and family responsibilities. The evidence from literature suggests that there is inequality in 'time-use' as women spend more hours each day in care work than their male counterparts. Hence, the dual roles of being carers and income earners become quite strenuous for women. This is why those who maintain a more structural view of empowerment have tended to argue for additional policy support to redistribute the responsibility for unpaid care work away from individual women.

In light of the discussion above, Derera (2015) argues that the equal sharing of unpaid care work is crucial to WEE but that it remains a 'pipeline dream' in most African societies where patriarchal values are reinforced. During a public speech in 2017, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma argued for the importance of reducing unpaid care work responsibilities for women in Africa. Esquivel and Kauffman (2017), however, note that the speech was in contrast to the agreements and policy documents of the African Union (AU) which tended to favour a familial framework, placing responsibility for care firmly on households and women. This shows how policy documents also reinforce traditional gender roles and the unequal gender relations between men and women by maintaining the burden of unpaid care to fall to women.

In summary, women's economic empowerment can be viewed as a process of social change that enables women to make choices that could improve their lives. The literature on WEE reviewed in this section has elaborated more broadly to show how access to paid work, micro credit, skills training, and entrepreneurship around the world is theorized to enable women's agency. These interventions suggest that once women participate in the economy, they are empowered to make their own decisions and to provide for their families. They also develop a sense of dignity, self-worth, and confidence.

However, as this review has showed, there are very different conceptions of what works best to bring about empowerment, and the concept of WEE contains a number of critical threads. Faveri *et al.* (2015) and Bradshaw *et al.* (2013) argue that women's access to 'economic' resources cannot be considered an end in itself. Instead, they emphasize that interventions and policies to promote economic development that include women but that do not challenge the structural inequalities may bring growth gains but not necessarily gender equality gains. Kabeer (2005) too, strongly emphasises that each of

these resources – paid employment, education, micro credit – have the potential to bring positive change to women’s lives, but their impact will always be limited unless unequal social relationships – the structural connections that exist between two or more people – that keep women in subordinate positions are addressed.

In summary, this section has provided a critical review of the literature on women’s economic empowerment which will act as a backdrop to the thesis. By examining the relevant WEE literature, the study has established a conceptual foundation that helps to contextualize the implementation of Zimbabwe’s National Gender Policy in relation to women’s economic empowerment.

2.3 Gender and public policy implementation

Having reviewed literature on WEE, we now turn to a review of related literature on gender and public policy implementation on which this thesis is situated. This section is divided into two subsections: the first subsection focuses on gender mainstreaming and the second focuses on public policy implementation. Gender mainstreaming is an important approach adopted by many national governments in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women.

2.3.1 Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a very significant concept in this study. It was developed as a global strategy for promoting gender equality (United Nations, 2002). It has also been defined as a ‘best practice’ by the European Institute for Gender Equality (2011). Gender mainstreaming is an important aspect of public policy in relation to gender equality and WEE in the sense that gender mainstreaming forms part of the gender equality policies that operationalise WEE. Thus, a review of gender mainstreaming enables this study to critically analyse the extent to which it is incorporated by the NGP. Before engaging with literature on gender mainstreaming, it is important to first define gender equality in order to clarify this concept and to understand the goal that gender mainstreaming aims to achieve.

According to De Wall (2006), gender equality refers to women having the same opportunities in life as men, including the ability to participate in the public sphere. It assumes that, once barriers to inequality are removed, there will be a level playing field.

The World Bank (2000) defines gender equality in terms of equality under the law, equality of opportunity, rewards and resources, and equality of voice to influence and contribute to the development process. Both of these definitions are agency centred. They represent a liberal feminist view that advocates for the integration of women in the public sphere so that women would access the same opportunities as men in paid employment, education, political participation, decision making and in access to and control of productive resources. The common theme taken from the definitions, is that women and men should be given equal opportunities to participate in the public sphere i.e. in politics, voting, education, paid employment, finance etc. This is discussed more broadly in Chapter 3.

According to the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development (2013) gender equality requires equal enjoyment by women and men of socially valued goods, opportunities, resources, and rewards. Achieving gender equality requires changes in the institutional practices and social relations through which disparities are reinforced and sustained (*ibid.*). Guzura (2017) argues that gender equality refers to the relational status between men and women. This statement indicates that gender equality must reflect equality within gender relations between men and women. The two definitions are more structurally oriented as they are concerned with how power is distributed between men and women. Essentially, this also suggests that gender equality is 'political'. "It encompasses different meanings and therefore fits into a broad range of contexts, depending on how actors from different contexts frame it" (Lombardo *et al.*, 2009: 2). Similar to the WEE literature, there are tensions of structure and agency within the meanings of gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming is a policy intervention that was promoted in the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and in the European Union (EU) Treaty of Amsterdam (1997). The underlying premise for gender mainstreaming is that all policies are gendered, that regular policies are a fundamental part of creating gendered social institutions, and that gendered social institutions are an important component in the continuous construction of gender equality (Verloo, 2001). This justification led to national governments establishing policies that included gender perspectives as a way of advancing gender equality. Verloo (2001) posits that the most notable feature of gender mainstreaming is its perspective of how gender inequality is perpetuated and the

range of strategies it provides to challenge and transform inequality. Therefore, gender mainstreaming is significant in that it describes the ways in which policies either challenge or reinforce inequality.

Gender mainstreaming has been widely accepted as a strategy for promoting gender equality. Similar to WEE, the term may be defined in several ways. It has been defined as:

... the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is integrated in all policies at all levels (sub-national and national) and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making (Council of Europe, 1998: 15).

Woodford-Berger (2012) gives a more elaborate definition, explaining that gender mainstreaming seeks to produce a change in the processes and practices that concern, engage and benefit women and men equally by systematically integrating explicit attention to issues of sex and gender into all aspects of an organization's work. Some examples of these measures include formulating and implementing gender equality policies and strategies; establishing or strengthening gender units/focal points; and strengthening staff skills and capacity to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes (*ibid*). The definitions above point out that gender mainstreaming considers a shift from the traditional or old systems to new systems and practices such as abolishing laws that discriminate based on gender. It is both a technical and a political process that involves the integration of a gender perspective and the promotion of gender equality in all activities (Guzura, 2017).

According to Moser (2005) there is need to consider two important components in gender mainstreaming. First, gender concerns need to be taken up within an organisation with respect to administrative, staffing, financial and other organizational procedures. These contribute to the long-term processes of change in an organisation in terms of attitudes, culture, goals, and procedures (Moser & Moser, 2005). The second component is gender empowerment which involves promoting the participation of women in decision making processes, as well as having their voices heard and the power to put issues on the agenda (*ibid*). Both components have been adopted by international development agencies, banks, and national governments (see Chapter 5). In Moser's (2005) article, the international development agencies adopted a twin

approach to gender mainstreaming by focusing on integrating a gender perspective throughout all their programs while also promoting women's empowerment programs.

According to Walby (2005), Jahan (1995), and Razavi and Miller (1995), gender mainstreaming can be implemented using the integrationist approach or the agenda setting approach. These approaches have an overall goal of promoting gender equality.

Agenda setting approach to gender mainstreaming implies the transformation and re-orientation of existing policy paradigms, changing decision-making processes, prioritizing gender equality objectives and rethinking policy ends (Walby, 2005: 323).

This approach seeks to change the status quo by re-organizing and reforming structure and process to one that includes a gender perspective. The integrationist approach to gender mainstreaming introduces a gender perspective without challenging the existing policy paradigm and, instead, 'sells' gender mainstreaming as a way of more effectively achieving existing policy goals (Walby, 2005). The agenda-setting approach resembles the definition given by Woodford-Berger (2012), in contrast to the integrationist approach which adds a gender perspective to existing policies that have long been biased and discriminating against women.

The integrationist approach to gender mainstreaming does not challenge the traditional policies and systems. Rather, it advocates for the integration of men and women's concerns into existing development agendas focusing on adopting institutional procedures to achieve this (Chauraya, 2011). For example, France, the United Kingdom, Greece, and Spain's gender mainstreaming efforts were highly fragmented as they were confined to a particular area or a specific program within a policy domain and disconnected from general government policy on gender (Daly, 2005). Verloo (2001) calls this approach a mere 'add on'. Judging from the case studies cited, Verloo highlights that the integrationist approach is not likely to suffer political backlash or rejection from policymakers. Also, Daly (2005) is of the opinion that many countries have implemented a mixture of policies under the guise of gender mainstreaming. Her analysis suggests that the mixture of gender mainstreaming policies has been used as a smokescreen to secure funding from the European Union (EU). In this regard, changes in one policy area do not automatically lead to gender equality.

The agenda setting approach to gender mainstreaming focuses on challenging the status quo by changing systems and processes that reproduce and reinforce inequality. “An agenda-setting approach to gender mainstreaming entails change in the manner in which decision-making processes are undertaken, by strategically positioning gender issues amongst other competing issues” (Guzura, 2017: 7). However, Walby (2005), and Meier and Celis (2011) emphasise that this type of approach is quite challenging to implement and remains unused by many. An analysis on the agenda setting approach in the Flemish government concluded that it was too difficult and also time consuming. This brings us to question that, if developed countries were failing to implement the agenda-setting approach to gender mainstreaming due to time constraints and difficulty, then how could this be achieved in African countries still deeply entrenched in strong patriarchal and cultural practices that keep women subordinated? The challenge of the agenda-setting approach to gender mainstreaming lies in its acceptance and implementation especially in African societies where the displacement of patriarchal gender hierarchies is not entertained (Chauraya, 2011).

The thoughts of Chauraya (2011) are also endorsed by Daly (2005) and Calgar (2013), arguing that questions of gendered power relations between men and women are not considered in gender mainstreaming. This is in spite of the fact that it is supposed to develop new systems and structures which not only value difference but also disrupt hierarchies and power relations based on gender (Rees, 2005). Gender mainstreaming fails to acknowledge the complex ways in which gender is produced and reinforced through power and social relations (Charlesworth, 2005). This why there has been a tendency by international development agencies and national governments to adopt gender mainstreaming as a means to development rather than a means to gender equality (Moser, 2005). Thus, “adopting gender mainstreaming gives the appearance of modernizing public policies without being committed to a clear agenda” (Daly, 2005: 425). The goal of gender mainstreaming therefore becomes void as it fails to sufficiently promote gender equality. Benschop and Verloo (2006) confirm the argument put forward by Daly (2005) by explaining that, to a lesser extent, gender mainstreaming does make some changes within an organisation, but it does not succeed in changing its gendered nature.

Although gender mainstreaming has been adopted by many national governments in Africa and around the world, it has also been criticized for its failure to tackle inequalities based on race, class, and ethnicity (Mannell, 2014). A study conducted by Ihalainen *et al.* (2020) in sub-Saharan Africa, addressing gender equality in charcoal value chains, established that gender and other social differences constrain the contribution of women to sustainable resource usage. Although their study did not make specific reference to the types of social differences that constrain women, the scholars advocated for an intersectional analysis drawing on the argument that gender inequalities intersect with other social inequalities at the same time. In doing so, no one would be left out.

While gender mainstreaming has faced criticism for its limitations, it is important to acknowledge notable achievements in certain countries. These include: bringing women to the discussion table during the Burundi peace process; strengthening and establishing organisations and networks to promote gender equality in mainstream agencies; mainstreaming gender issues into law reform processes in Botswana (including HIV/AIDS); gaining greater visibility for women's work through the census in Nepal, India and Pakistan; and protecting widows and orphans from dispossession on death of the male owner by supporting primary justice mediation processes in Malawi (Rao and Kelleher, 2005). Although these are positive outcomes from gender mainstreaming practices, there is still more that needs to be done in transforming structural inequalities such as the unequal gender and power relations between men and women and the intersections of gender and other inequalities such as class, race, ethnicity etc.

This section has reviewed related literature on gender mainstreaming, pointing out its importance in ensuring that a gender perspective is integrated into policies, programs, organizations, and institutions. The literature also identified two significant approaches to gender mainstreaming such as the integrationist approach and the agenda-setting approach. Both of these approaches have been applied in different European countries such as France, the United Kingdom and Sweden. Similar to WEE there are tensions of structure and agency in gender mainstreaming, the critics of this approach arguing that the unequal gender and power relations that exist between men and women are not addressed. Regardless of this, gender mainstreaming is a critical ingredient in the

implementation of public policy. It is also a significant topic in this thesis, as it enables a deeper understanding on how successfully Zimbabwe's NGP incorporates gender mainstreaming principles in its implementation. We now turn to a review of related literature on public policy implementation.

2.3.2 Public policy implementation

Having discussed gender mainstreaming, this section focuses on the literature on public policy implementation from a gendered perspective. Many countries, including Zimbabwe, have adopted public policies in promoting gender equality and empowerment. As highlighted earlier, the concept of gender mainstreaming is an important approach adopted in public policies. Therefore, reviewing literature on policy implementation allows for a deeper analysis of policy processes and the implementation thereof, which provides a solid foundation for this thesis.

According to Dye (1972: 2), "a public policy is something that the government chooses to do (act upon) or not to do". Anderson (2010) defines public policy as a purposive course of action followed by an actor or a set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern. Another definition is given by Stewart *et al.* (1998), stating that a public policy is a series or pattern of government activities or decisions that are designed to remedy specific problems. Dye (1972) offers the shortest definition of public policy but he outlines significantly that governments may choose to act upon the objectives or not. The other two definitions given by Anderson (2010) and Stewart *et al.* (1998) outline that a public policy is created when government or a set of actors try to find solutions for the problems experienced by citizens (public). The only difference between the definitions is that Anderson (2010) does not restrict it to government but outlines that an actor or set of actors may be involved in policy making. The other two, on the other hand, maintain that it is a course of action by government. Within this context, political actors formulate objectives, while administrators are responsible for developing instruments to effectively address the identified problems (Hill & Huppe, 2014). This is one of the reasons why a public policy is implemented.

Scholars have different perspectives of 'policy implementation'. Simon (2010) defines policy implementation as the application of a policy by the government's administrative machinery in order to achieve its goals. Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) view policy

implementation as those actions by public or private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions. Mthethwa (2012: 37) on the other hand, defines policy implementation as “mechanisms, resources, and relationships that link policies to programme action”. In light of this, policy implementation involves executing, fulfilling, producing, and completing assigned tasks to achieve a set of objectives. Therefore, public policy implementation from a gendered perspective should encompass actions aimed at promoting gender inequalities and addressing the barriers faced by women. Hence these definitions align well with the NGP. The decision to ensure equality across all domains and to support women in overcoming obstacles is being implemented in both public and private sectors.

The literature on public policy highlights the importance of assessing policy implementation processes, as it helps us gain insight into the reasons behind the success or failure of programs and the factors that contribute to their outcomes (Love, 2003). Mthethwa (2012) states that, based on the international case studies, the nature of policy implementation suggests that, even after policies are adopted, they are not always implemented as intended and may not yield the desired outcomes. This is why policy implementation is never smooth nor straightforward (Mutereko, 2009); it is complex. The implementation of policy involves a ‘political game’, in that once it is formally adopted it goes through complex processes of negotiation and opposition or resistance, leading to it being diverted, revised or terminated (Engeli & Mazur, 2018). Similar to this, Khan (2016) contends that the stakeholders’ motivations, flow of information, power dynamics and resources all have an impact on how policies are implemented. This is why it is crucial to evaluate how public policies are put into practice as it gives this thesis a better grasp of the circumstances in which the NGP was implemented.

According to Meier (2006), there are two important factors to consider in policy implementation processes: these are internal and external factors. Internal factors are directly related to the implementation stage of public policies and have a direct impact on the effective implementation of public policies, for example, the way in which the implementation process is structured. The implementation procedures, for instance, should be clearly articulated and organized. The implementing agency should be integrated hierarchically, and tasks describing who does what in pursuit of the policy objectives must be stated. This is why Kuye (2004) emphasizes the value of stakeholder

participation during the implementation phase – it makes it easier to establish a delicate governance structure between the government and other stakeholders. As a result, all parties involved in accomplishing the stated policy goals will be in perfect communication and coordination. Other internal factors include adequate time and resources, as well as human resources with substantial skills to undertake the policy goals set.

On the other hand, external factors are those that have an impact on the phase of policy implementation. “A first external factor affecting the implementation stage is the requirement that public policies be based on valid theory of cause and effect” (Meier, 2006: 186). This means that public policies need to have a strong foundation in understanding the relationship between actions and its intended outcomes. Therefore, when formulating policies there is a need to consider the cause and effect relationship between the proposed actions and the desired impact. As such this external factor affects policy implementation in such a way that when the policy is not crafted around a sound theory of cause and effect, it ceases to effectively address the intended problem or in achieving the desired policy outcomes.

The public policy literature identifies two main approaches to policy implementation: the bottom-up approach and the top-down approach. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) are the founding fathers of the top-down approach to policy implementation, according to Hill and Huppe (2014). The top-down approach posits that policy decisions are made by democratically elected officials and passed down to lower levels. Instructions are formulated at the top of the leadership pyramid and passed down the chain of command to the line personnel who carry them out with discretion (Fox, 1987). The proponents of this approach emphasize that effective policy implementation requires a good chain of command and capacity to co-ordinate and control. It seems that the top-down approach to policy implementation is founded on ‘authority and control’ – controlling resources, individuals, and organisations.

According to Hood (1976) there are five conditions for effective policy implementation in a top-down approach:

- The ideal implementation needs unitary ‘army-like’ organisation, with clear lines of authority.

- Norms need to be enforced, and objectives given.
- People have to do what they are told and asked to do.
- There should be perfect communication between units of organisation.
- There should be no pressure of time.

It is difficult to adopt gender mainstreaming, let alone a gender equality policy under these conditions. Many of the implementing officials/public office holders enjoy a certain degree of discretion and autonomy. Thus, they might not do as they are told. Nonetheless, the top-down approach to policy implementation implies that a policy remains solid and good from the time it leaves the national government offices to its implementation by public office holders.

The bottom-up approach to policy implementation, on the other hand, emphasizes that implementation consists of street-level bureaucrats solving day to day problems. Hill and Huppe (1992) regard Michael Lipsky (1980) as the founding father of the bottom-up approach to policy implementation. Lipsky (1980: 3) defines street-level bureaucrats as “public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work”. Street-level bureaucrats include teachers, police officers, social workers, judges, lawyers, health care workers and public employees. Lipsky (1980) emphasizes that the street-level bureaucrats are the ‘real’ policymakers because they understand and know when to use their discretionary powers and decisions to enhance successful outcomes from policy. Weiner and Vining (2011) also agree that street level bureaucrats implement all policies. This is unlike the top-down approach to policy implementation where everything seems to be centralized and under authoritarian rule.

The bottom-up approach to policy implementation seems ideal for gender mainstreaming and advancing gender equality. This approach to policy implementation brings together networks of actors with mutual goals and strategies to achieve certain goals, such as achieving gender equality in society at large (Meier 2006; Stewart *et al.*, 2008). Even Engeli and Mazur (2018) argue that the policy implementation process should be inclusive and should reflect various concerns and demands from groups and actors in the policy process. This could potentially mean that a bottom-up approach to policy implementation would be effective in maintaining a gender perspective in all

policy programs. However, this approach has been criticized for being too difficult to coordinate, and for being time-consuming and resource intensive in terms of engaging with the various stakeholders such as grass root organizations, community members, and local authorities, different groups and individuals. Regardless of this, both the top-down and bottom-up approaches to policy implementation are important and reviewing these two approaches will aid in determining which strategy the government of Zimbabwe has used to implement the NGP.

Other studies in the field of public policy and policy implementation literature have argued that numerous public policies have not effectively addressed the interconnections between gender inequalities and other social inequalities such as class, race, ethnicity, age, nationality and more. Meier (2006) argues that the complexity of gender inequalities interacting with other social inequalities complicates the process of simplifying the issue into a singular diagnosis and prognosis. As a result, empirical research on the application of gender and public policy implementation lags behind an intersectional perspective to policy implementation (Emeli & Mazur, 2018). This is how public policies reinforce gender and other inequalities in society. An intersectional perspective to policy implementation recognizes that individuals have multiple social identities and experiences that intersect, creating unique forms of discrimination and disadvantage. From an intersectional perspective, public policy implementation should aim to address the complex and interconnected nature of social inequalities. This perspective is discussed at length in Chapter 3.

The perception above indicates that gender must not be analysed in isolation. Many studies on gender and public policy have failed to capture the interactions between gender and other social inequalities. Having highlighted in Chapter 1 that this study focuses on the NGP's impact on gender and class differentials, we now turn to a review of related literature on how public policies reinforce gender and class inequalities. This too helps to contextualize and position this thesis within the larger economic, social, and political framework.

Many academics have looked into how gender and class interact in various contexts, including O'Connor (1993), Korpi (2000), Acker (2006), Iyer *et al.* (2008), McCall (2005), Ceballos-Bedoya (2020) and Korpi *et al.* (2013). In Chapter 1, class was defined as systematic differences in access to and control over resources for provisioning and

survival. As stated by Kabeer (1994: 56), “it has to be recognized that other social relations such as class mediate the way in which biological difference is translated into gender inequality”. Consequently, the intersections of class and gender privileges certain men over women, or some women over others. Gender and class are interrelated as they are two crossing processes of inequality that each construct and are constructed by the other (Whittle & Inhorn, 2001).

Acker (2006) provides an examination of how organizational processes, policies and structures develop and maintain gender and class inequalities. She analyses how organizations perpetuate gender and class disparities using the concept of inequality regimes. Inequality regimes are defined as “loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender and racial inequalities within particular organizations” (Acker 2006: 443). Scott (2000) argues that even organizations that do have explicit egalitarian goals develop inequality regimes over time. The framework for inequality regimes creates a connection between organizations and particular methods, such as economic approaches used to analyse and explain uneven outcomes. Despite the fact that organizations are dynamic and evolving, research by Healy *et al.* (2019) supports Ackers’ framework of sociological connections between organizational inequalities and existing inequalities in society through politics, history, and culture.

Empirical work on the intersections of gender and class has been evident in public policies in Africa. In Kenya, for instance, the Property Rights of Spouses Bill passed in 2013 overlooked the underlying social and economic barriers that prevented women from owning property. While the unequal gender and power relations between men and women are an important factor, the Bill failed to adequately account for the fact that many women in Kenya lacked the financial resources and capital to invest in property acquisition (Gaafar, 2014). Another setback of this Bill was that it was only applicable to registered marriages, excluding an estimated two-thirds of Kenyan women who lived in customary and informal unions. Another example is taken from gender budgeting in South Africa which was first introduced in 2000. While the policy aimed at ensuring that the State budgeting promoted gender equality and women’s empowerment, it has been criticized for reinforcing class and gender inequalities by prioritizing the needs of middle-class women. It ignored the needs of the marginalized women who lacked

access to basic resources such as financial services, education, and health (Budlender, 2000).

Empirical work on the intersections of class and gender have also been evident in access to healthcare. Iyer *et al.* (2008) conducted a literature-based analysis of how health policies affected differences in class and gender. Evidence from Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Peru suggested that people from vulnerable households often preferred less expensive health care providers due to financial difficulties. As such, they would take fewer medications, and delay treatment. In addition, they would also take high interest loans from informal micro credit markets and cut back on education and food related expenses (Oths, 1994; Russell, 2001). Studies in Cambodia and in several African countries have shown that such strategies leave households vulnerable and destitute (Russell, 2001). There are class related differences in that poor households and individuals end up seeking less expensive health care whilst the richer households and individuals utilize private health care services.

Additionally, the study by Iyer *et al.* (2008) also demonstrated that class related barriers were differentiated by gender. Women were more likely than men to self-treat or receive treatment from informal health providers. The fact that women were tied to traditionally assigned roles of childcare and household duties, leaving them with no time to seek health care services, contributed to these women needing to self-medicate. In Bangladesh, for example, women could not access adequate health care as they depended economically on their husbands or male relatives who were in some case not willing to spend any money on them (Schuler *et al.*, 2002).

The review of this literature is essential in understanding how policies either disrupt and/or perpetuate gender and class inequalities during implementation. As highlighted before, this analysis not only situates this thesis within a broader economic, political, and social framework but also provides a basis for analysing the ways in which Zimbabwe's NGP either disrupts or perpetuates gender and class inequalities in its implementation in Bubi and Gwanda.

To summarize, this section has provided a review of literature relating to the implementation of public policies. This review revealed diverse perspectives on policy implementation, highlighting that many policymakers fail to understand why the

procedures, rules and regulations outlined in laws and other official documents are occasionally not carried out in the way they were intended (Hill & Huppe, 2002). This is where the line between intention and output is broken. These academics further argue that one of the reasons government policies generally succeed is because they create a desire for more of the same kind of policy. It is worth noting that policy makers need to consider both internal and external factors in order to effectively address challenges and achieve successful policy implementation. The literature on gender and public policy is significant because it gives this thesis a more in-depth look at the processes involved in the implementation of the NGP in Zimbabwe. We now turn to literature on women in mining.

2.4 Women in Mining

This section reviews academic literature on the participation of women in mining. Overall, this is a topic that is not extensively covered in mainstream literature on women's economic empowerment. This thesis aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by drawing the debates and literature around women's economic empowerment into conversation with the literature on women in mining.

Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) is defined differently by various scholars. It is defined as a "low tech labour intensive mineral extraction and processing often conducted in rural areas" (Hilson *et al.* 2018: 3). This definition shows that ASM is characterized by the use of basic tools and techniques by individuals, groups, or communities to extract minerals such as gold, diamonds, and gemstones in rural areas. Gueye (2001) on the other hand states that the difference between small-scale and large-scale mining is simply related to the size of the deposits. Shen and Gunson (2006) are of the view that ASM can be legal, illegal, formal, or informal and that it can encompass everything from individual gold panners to medium-scale mining activities employing thousands of people. Dzvimbo *et al.*, (2019) argue that mining communities around the world are diverse, dynamic, and distinct in nature; they vary from culture to culture, region to region and mine to mine and they change over time. It seems that there is no universal view of ASM. The thesis shall adopt the definition of ASM by Hilson *et al.* (2018) as it reflects the technical conditions found in Zimbabwe's ASM sector, and the fact that many men and women have taken it up as an income earning activity.

According to Mawowa (2013), conflating ASM with a survival strategy of the poor is inadequate. In the Zimbabwean context, for example, senior civil servants, ZANU–PF politicians and military figures play a central role in ASM and the informal economy in general. Hilson (2009) is of the view that businesspeople looking to ‘get rich quick’ have populated small-scale mining in sub-Saharan Africa while Bashwira *et al.* (2014) writes that, in the eastern parts of the Congo, ASM has been used by armed groups to fund conflicts. In the DRC, ASM has been associated with and directly linked to conflict. In what became known as Africa’s World War (1996–2002), foreign armies, local militias and foreign non-State armed groups sought control of mining sites throughout the country, both for their long term value and as a means of financing the war effort (Hartung & Moix, 2000). These authors further highlight that trading of special minerals during armed conflicts assists armed groups in the purchase of weapons and in steering coup d’états. This depicts ASM as a driving force for rural populations in sustaining themselves, as well as the political elite, in driving their various political agendas.

Regardless of the views mentioned above, most academic literature on ASM, including that by Hilson *et al.* (2018), Dzvimbo *et al.* (2019), Werthman (2009), Laplonge (2017), Amutabi *et al.* (2001), Hayes and Perks (2012), Labonne (1996), and Vebrugge (2016), suggests that ASM is a poverty driven activity taken up by the rural and vulnerable poor (including women and children) in supplementing their agricultural activities. Yakovleva (2007) argues that ASM has occurred mainly in response to widespread unemployment within the African, Latin American, and Asian countries in which it takes place. Thus, rising unemployment levels, poverty, as well as climate change affecting the rural agricultural economy have contributed to the escalation of people participating in ASM. Case studies in Africa have shown that, due to unreliable rains, the rural populace has shifted its attention to ASM as a major off-farm activity in sustaining their livelihoods. In Burkina Faso, the traditional rural economy was severely affected during the 1980s and gold digging was adopted as an alternative source of income (Gueye, 2001). This is also true for other African countries such as Kenya, Zimbabwe and Ghana where many people have abandoned farming activities because of climate change and have instead taken up mining – some in the hope of sustaining their livelihoods and getting rich quickly, while others have taken it up only seasonally.

While it is evident that mining is a male domain, women's participation in this sector has been on the rise due to a number of factors. The feminization of poverty combined with other factors (for example cultural norms with respect to gender roles), lack of employment in other sectors and high fertility rates have led to the escalation of women's direct and indirect involvement in ASM as a way of improving their livelihoods (Dzvimbo *et al.*, 2019). In Zimbabwe, women's participation has been on the increase due to a number of factors such as "recurrent droughts, increased poverty, subsequent lack of alternative employment on the one hand, and the high price fetched by these precious metals" (Labonne, 1996: 118; see also Bhatasara, 2013). In the DRC, for example, when men are away at war, women often remain at home to provide for their families. As such, women seek informal livelihood sources, and these are visible in ASM (Hayes & Perks, 2012). The shift of gender roles, which can in this case be either permanent or temporary, increases women's responsibilities within the household from just caring for their children and the elderly to providing for them.

The importance of this section is to review the mining literature through a gendered lens so as to gain a sense of the debates and discussions about women's position and contribution to the mining sector. The history of women's participation in mining has been dominated by masculine perspectives. Benya (2016) argues that the historiography of mining has hardly ever featured women as miners in their own right. The contribution of women to mining is neglected or downgraded to the periphery leading to portrayals of women as outsiders or assistants. The same is echoed by Lahiri-Dutt (2006; 2008; 2012) in the Indian context that masculinity eliminates women and devalues their agency in an important economic activity. There is a possibility that the historiography of mining has overlooked the importance and contribution of women due to the traditional gender roles ascribed to them.

However, Laplonge (2017) and Fisher (2007) argue that women have a long history of working in the mines. In the European context, official records from the Belgian mines dating as far back as 1830 to 1914 show that quite a number of women had been working underground (Lahiri-Dutt, 2012). An analysis by Alexander (2007) in India and South Africa found that there was a high proportion of women working in the coal mines. While, in other countries it was normal for miners to work in pairs – a man and his son, or two 'buddies' – in India, the pair was often a man and his wife (*ibid*). Many

women in Zimbabwe worked alongside men in gold alluvial mining during the colonial era (Hove & Hlongwane, 2015). In Kenya, women have been involved in ASM for hundreds of years, each passing on their expertise and skill to their daughters (Amutabi & Lutta-Mukhebi, 2001). In a way, these studies have contested the notion that mining work was dominated by men, by providing empirical evidence of women's participation in mining.

Other literature has pointed to the lack of data on women's participation in ASM. The absence of a reliable baseline and accompanying country-level disaggregated population data for ASM makes it challenging to design interventions aimed at supporting women engaged in the sector and to source finance required to assist them (Hilson *et al.*, 2018). Although the numbers of women in mining are on the increase, mining literature still quotes country level estimates by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1999, implying that women's participation has remained stagnant over the years. According to Hentschel *et al.* (2003), several factors contribute to the challenge of accurately determining the complete scope of women employed in ASM such as the presence of informal sectors, the absence of official statistics, and the inclusion of seasonal and occasional workers.

Another strand of mining literature tends to group and conflate the issue of women in mining with the issue of child labour. This could also be why it has been challenging to ascertain accurate data/statistics on the number of women participating in mining. Dreschler (2001) is of the view that most studies handle women in mining and child labour within the same chapter or same paragraph, for example, Zvarivadza (2018: 50). Nevertheless, he recommends that intervention is needed to support women's rights and to ensure that women are equally treated like their male counterparts, and that their working conditions are improved. Grouping women and children together in this manner is suggestive of women's traditional roles as mothers and carers, de-emphasising their roles as miners and workers. The presence of children in the mining sector may actually serve to increase the invisibility of women as statistics have often tended to group women and children with the effect of infantilizing women and negating their status as workers (Lahiri-Dutt, 2008).

Another strand of women in mining literature is its focus on women's unpaid care work. Men are able to work in the mines without any care responsibilities while women bear

the burden of working in the mines with babies tied to their backs, some with toddlers alongside them. The role played by women within the families as carers for children is transferred to the mining sites in Ghana (Yakloveva, 2007). In South Africa, women were largely responsible for agricultural production and household responsibilities, making it difficult for them to be free to work in waged employment (Alexander, 2007). Women's role in biological and social reproduction ensured there were further pressures on them to remain at home. As highlighted earlier on in this chapter, the WEE literature emphasises the importance of equal sharing of unpaid care work to enable women to have more time and opportunity to seek paid work.

Adding to the above discussion, a study carried out by Koomson (2017) of women and ASM in the Talensi district of Ghana, shows that some women miners take advantage of their co-wives when it comes to unpaid care work. Ghana is among other countries in Africa that practises polygamy. During her field work, some of the women miners mentioned that they left their young children in the care of the co-wives. As a result, the senior wives were able to work in the ASM sector, while the co-wives were more limited to the traditional gendered duties of cooking, cleaning, and caring for the children. In other ASM communities, women are disadvantaged due to their inability to work lengthy shifts in the mines because of childcare and household responsibilities. Labonne (1996) states that unpaid care work hinders women's mobility, making it difficult for them to actively work in the ASM sector. This indicates the driving force behind the Talensi women miners in turning to their co-wives as an additional source of labour to carry out unpaid care work. Koomson's (2017) account of women in the Talensi district of Ghana shows the unequal power and class differences between the women who are the senior wives and the co-wives.

The literature on women also looks at women's subordinate roles in ASM activities. This work is reminiscent of the discussions around women's access to paid work in the WEE literature. The level of participation of women in artisanal and small-scale mining varies throughout the world. In some societies women have been placed in secondary roles in many economic sectors (Labonne, 1996; Lahiri-Dutt, 2008; Jenkins, 2014). One task that is chiefly carried out by women in Ghana is loading and transporting material (Yakloveva, 2007). Although there is a high proportion of female participation in ASM in Zambia, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe, women are

consigned to subordinate or subsistence work (Dreschler, 2001). Even in the WEE literature, subordinate roles of women are a recurring theme, not just in ASM but also in other economic sectors.

The subordinate roles of women in the ASM sector are related to a number of factors. Scholars such as Amankwah and Anim-Sackey (2003) assert that the barriers to female participation in ASM are linked to social and cultural norms. Earlier on in this chapter we highlighted that social and cultural norms are informal rules that define expected behaviour and actions within a specific culture. Some cultures strictly consider ASM as ‘men’s work’, thus preventing women from assuming leadership roles (Dzvimbo *et al.*, 2019). This also implies that women still hold lower positions in the ASM sector while men control the higher levels. In other cultures, women are not permitted to work at the mines because they attract bad spirits (Dreschler, 2001). Therefore, women struggle at the hands of social and cultural norms in ASM activities. These norms have influenced the division of labour in ASM, leading to women being assigned roles that are considered less lucrative. This is a recurring theme in WEE literature, as social and cultural norms are reinforced, keeping women in subordinate positions.

The responsibility of unpaid care work is another example that contributes to women’s subordinate role in the ASM sector. As previously mentioned in this section, men are free to work in the mines without any care obligations, while some women have to work at the mines with their babies tied to their backs. This limits women’s competitiveness in the ASM sector, resulting in them being assigned less physically demanding roles. Both Dreschler (2001) and Hilson *et al.* (2017) found that the independence and mobility of women to take the lead in ASM activities were hampered by the significant load of family responsibilities (unpaid care work), making it difficult for them to compete in markets.

Other studies have reported that there is a class of women who are increasingly formalizing to become legal small-scale mine owners. This is a fairly recent trend in Zimbabwe (Ndlovu *et al.*, 2019). However, this supports the argument by some scholars that it would be inaccurate to imply that women always occupy subordinate positions in ASM (Perks *et al.*, 2012), as some women are breaking traditional boundaries to become owners of mining titles (Fisher, 2007). In countries such as Ghana, Zimbabwe and South Africa, women have stepped up to the challenge of equal responsibility with

men and are now owning mining titles (Benya, 2016; Dreschler, 2001; Fisher, 2007; Ndlovu *et al.*, 2019). Although these cases are limited, it serves as an example of the empowerment of women in the mining sector around the world (Heemskerk, 2003).

According to Hentschel *et al.* (2003) women-owned mines and processing plants are better organized than those run by men, even though they are not given equal opportunities regarding access to financial, technical, or legal support. They are often overlooked by initiatives and development programmes directed at catalysing the transformation of artisanal and small-scale mining (Hinton *et al.*, 2003). This is quite similar to some arguments put forward in the WEE literature – that women are left out in access to finance, skills training, and information. Instead of closing these gaps for women in the ASM sector, women are still discriminated against. Women have difficulty obtaining capital and training because they do not know that it is available (*ibid*). Chirau (2018) echoes the same notion in the case of Zimbabwean women involved in micro enterprise. This author explains that the Government of Zimbabwe, through the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Gender, provided credit facilities to women, but that only a few women were aware of this opportunity. This statement suggests that the State is ‘lukewarm’ about disseminating information pertaining to access to finance and training to a wider audience. In a way this creates class differences in access to information among women.

Some studies have identified gender mainstreaming as an important strategy for increased and equitable participation of women in ASM. ASM in Ghana is an area of limited access to gender mainstreaming policy, where women have frequently been bypassed by programmes of assistance for their struggles and needs (Yakloveva, 2007). Bashwira *et al.* (2014) also share the same sentiments in the context of the DRC, arguing that there is a need to apply gender mainstreaming in mining reforms to accommodate the involvement of different kinds of women involved in ASM. Rwanda has taken several steps to extend its gender mainstreaming policies to the mining sector including setting a target for 20–30% women in the mining workforce (Buss *et al.*, 2019). Hayes and Perks (2012) argue that a gender mainstreaming framework that views the opinions, needs, status and the role of women in ASM as equal to men is mandatory. As it stands presently, in some countries the interventions in the ASM sector

are driven by agendas, needs and opportunities of individuals, organisations or sectors (*ibid.*).

In summary, the review of women in mining literature has pulled out the debates and discussions about the position of women and their contribution in the ASM sector. The literature also discussed the structural conditions that affected women's participation in mining such as the burden of unpaid care work and the social and cultural/patriarchal norms which also influenced women's subordinate roles in the ASM sector. The literature touched on women who were formalizing to become legal small-scale mine owners, also highlighting the structural economic barriers that hindered their participation in the ASM sector such as lack of access to credit, skills training, and information. Some of the issues raised in this section are connected to the literature on women's economic empowerment. Thus, this literature review provides this thesis with a foundation on which to analyse the experiences of women miners in the Zimbabwean context. This is discussed further in the following section to identify the connections and gaps between the literature regarding WEE and women in mining, and to outline the gap that this study aims to fill.

2.5 Identifying gaps and connections between literature on WEE and Women in Mining

The previous section discussed the literature on women in mining, touching lightly on the areas where it intersects with WEE literature. This section aims to deepen the analysis of the connections between the two concepts, focusing on the commonalities and the discrepancies, and through this process, to outline the rationale for this thesis.

Connections between WEE and women in mining literature do exist. The discussions and debates in WEE literature provide a structure to some of the analyses of women's participation in artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM). According to evidence provided in WEE literature by Vyas *et al.* (2015) in Tanzania, Kabeer (2005) in Bangladesh, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, Fontana *et al.* (1998) and Esplen and Brody (2007) in Kenya, access to paid work can strategically increase women's agency. The evidence also demonstrates that access to economic opportunities can empower women in more than just the financial sphere. It seems there is a feminisation of informal labour – an increase of women's participation in the informal sector – where

there is a concentration of women concentrated in low paying jobs with no value attributed to their domestic responsibilities that imposed on them by the constraints of the gendered division of labour (Chant *et al.*, 2008; Kabeer, 2012; Razavi, 2016).

These discussions in WEE literature also connect with women in mining literature. The ASM sector falls partly under the informal economy, which is also characterized by a large proportion of women in paid work and self-employment. Evidence by Labonne (1996), Jenkins (2014), Lahiri-Dutt (2008), Dreschler (2001) and Yakloveva (2007) reveals that women in the ASM sector are also concentrated in low paying subordinate jobs with poor working conditions. This signifies that the challenges that women experience in the ASM sector are also prevalent in the WEE literature. This connection supports Chopra's (2015) view that merely working does not satisfy the requirements of WEE. This form of WEE is characterized by 'agency' and fails to acknowledge the structural gendered inequalities that women experience in the labour markets, as shown in literature on women in mining.

Another connection between literature on WEE and women in mining, are the themes of patriarchy and sociocultural norms. In the WEE literature, studies have shown that, despite women's access to paid work, social norms determine their bargaining power and decision making. This portrays the unequal power relations that exist between men and women. As noted earlier, empirical evidence from literature on women in mining highlights the role that social and cultural beliefs also play in banning women from going down the mining shafts. These beliefs keep women in subordinate positions while their male counterparts continue to occupy the higher levels of the economic hierarchy. This connection is an indication that focusing on agency alone is not sufficient in fulfilling WEE without challenging the structural factors such as patriarchy and sociocultural norms.

Unpaid care work is another theme that connects the literature regarding WEE to that of women in mining. In terms of the latter, there are accounts of women working in mines with babies on their backs and toddlers trailing along, while men work freely without any care responsibilities. The WEE literature also outlines the double burden that women bear as paid workers outside and unpaid workers inside their households. The contribution that women make towards unpaid care work remains unacknowledged. This is because of the traditional gender roles assigned to women as mothers and

caregivers. The gendered hierarchies between men and women which are manifested through sociocultural norms, regard women as inferior and valueless while men are regarded as superior and powerful. Some of the WEE literature advocates for the equal sharing of unpaid care work between men and women so as to ease the pressure on women. This would also allow more time for women to seek opportunities that could contribute to their self-worth and dignity. This form of WEE literature emphasizes the transformation of unequal gender relations that exist between men and women which continuously impede on their agency.

Entrepreneurship as a pathway to WEE is another important theme that runs through the WEE literature, as well as that of women in mining. The WEE literature highlights that entrepreneurship has been adopted as a popular strategy that contributes towards employment and income for women (Brush & Cooper, 2012). Despite this, literature on women's entrepreneurship demonstrates that many women experience structural barriers in the markets which impede WEE, such as lack of access to finance, business and skills training, and information. The same issue is outlined in the literature regarding women in mining, particularly on women formalizing to become legal small-scale mine owners (Benya, 2016; Fisher, 2007; Ndhlovu *et al.*, 2019). These women are often overlooked when it comes to empowerment programs that offer access to credit, business and skills training, and market information which can help to improve their mining activities (Chirau 2018; Hentschel *et al.*, 2003; Hinton *et al.*, 2003). Access to micro credit, as well as business and skills training, is thought to be part of creating an enabling environment for women to actively participate in any economic sector.

Gender mainstreaming is also an important theme which runs through both the WEE and Women in Mining. Gender mainstreaming is an important strategy adopted by national governments in operationalising economic empowerment programs and in promoting gender equality (Mannell, 2014). Evidence from women in mining literature by Yakloveva (2007), Bashwira *et al.* (2014), and Hayes and Perks (2009) shows that there is a need for establishing gender mainstreaming policy in ASM to ensure that gender perspective is maintained by acknowledging women's struggles and needs and in the same way promoting gender equality.

The discussions above have described the more intricate connections between the literature on WEE and women in mining. It is clear that some of the WEE literature

provide a structure for the analysis of women in mining literature on the following themes: access to paid work, women in the informal economy, access to credit and skills training, women's responsibility for unpaid care work, patriarchy, sociocultural norms, and gender mainstreaming. These connections also bring out the tensions of structure and agency which are themes that run through both the literature on WEE and women in mining, clearly spelling out that neither structure nor agency may be analysed in isolation as approaches to women's economic empowerment. We now turn to a discussion on how this study aims to fill the gaps in knowledge.

2.6 The gap that this study fills

Having presented the gaps and connections between literature dealing with WEE and women in the mining industry, it can be noted that there are overlapping areas that continue to be problematic. This thesis therefore adds to the body of knowledge by bringing together the issues of women's economic empowerment with those of women in mining.

The WEE literature reviewed earlier on in this chapter, suggests that the concept itself is political, one that adopts an agency centred approach with women gaining greater opportunities as the main goal, with a focus on entrepreneurship (Hallward-Dremiere, 2003). The other component of WEE, taking up structural position, is the argument that it is a complex process which, in addition to greater market opportunities, involves challenging the unequal social relations that hinder women's economic advancement (Kabeer 2012). The WEE literature discussed earlier, outlined the different interventions that have been adopted by international development agencies and national governments. These have mainly taken up an agency centred approach by increasing participation in paid work and entrepreneurship. The World Bank, for instance, created women's economic empowerment programs centred on 'making markets work for women', and empowering women to compete in the markets. The World Bank argued that women could significantly contribute towards economic growth if the right market conditions such as access to credit and business/skills training were applied.

Although this form of WEE was addressing the economic inequalities facing women across the world, it overlooked the structural social factors that impeded women's

agency, such as the unequal gender relations between men and women, the burden of unpaid care work, patriarchy, social and cultural norms (Akpalu *et al.*, 2012; Kabeer, 2005; Mayoux, 2002; Vyas *et al.*, 2015). The agency centred approach was criticized for overlooking the role of these structural social factors in keeping women in subordinate positions. The structuralists, therefore, advocated for interventions to address the disproportionate distribution of unpaid care work, and to change the structural social and power relations that hindered women's agency (Cornwall, 2016; Kabeer, 2012).

When looking at these problematic and substantial overlaps between the agency centred approach and the structural approach to WEE, it can be observed that neither of these approaches can be analysed in isolation as they are intricately linked. The approaches are both part of and affected by social systems. This means that there is a need to look at these two approaches to WEE simultaneously. This thesis fills this gap in knowledge by analysing the NGP and its implementation of WEE in Bubi and Gwanda through a theoretical approach which allows for a mixture of structure and agency.

2.7 Why in Zimbabwe?

Literature on women in mining tends to focus more on the experiences of women working at the mines. However, there is a group of women who have formalized and own small-scale mining titles (Benya, 2016; Ndhlovu *et al.*, 2019; Fisher, 2007). Ndhlovu *et al.* (2019) highlights that this is a fairly recent trend in Zimbabwe. Although there is significant literature on the ASM sector in Zimbabwe and women's participation in the ASM, there seems to be limited literature focusing on female mine owners in the Zimbabwean context. Mawowa's (2013) study gives an account of the political economy of the ASM in Zimbabwe, while Spiegel (2015; 2009) discusses the formalization policies in the ASM sector in his research. Nyavaya's (2020) paper focuses on the rugged Zimbabwean ASM sector, while the study by Ndhlovu *et al.* (2019) analyses the experiences of women mine owners in the Gwanda district, Zimbabwe. Still, there is limited literature about the experiences of female mine owners in Zimbabwe's ASM sector. This thesis fills this gap in knowledge by concentrating on women miners with registered mining claims in the Bubi and Gwanda districts of Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is a country that is signatory to international and regional protocols on promoting gender equality and women's rights. Additionally, the World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) put gender mainstreaming on the agenda so that national governments across the world would improve the quality of public policies, programs and projects, ensuring a more efficient allocation of resources for both men and women. As a result, the Zimbabwean government established the National Gender Policy in 2004, which aimed to eradicate gender discrimination and inequalities in all spheres of life and development. This policy ran through 2004 to 2012. A second NGP was launched in 2013 to include women's economic empowerment as strategy to close the gender gaps in access to and control over productive resources and promote gender equality in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors.

However, many of these gender policies have tended to focus on addressing gender inequalities in isolation. Yet, there are other social inequalities such as class, race, age, ethnicity etc. that interact with gender to keep women in subordinate positions. Hence, there is a need to adopt an intersectional approach in analysing policy implementation. This thesis focuses on the intersections of gender and class. The literature on policy implementation in this chapter has captured various studies by O'Connor (1993), Korpi (2000), Acker (2006), Iyer *et al.* (2008), McCall (2005), Ceballos-Bedoya (2020), and Korpi *et al.* (2013) on the interactions of gender and class in different settings. However, there is limited literature and empirical evidence on the impact of the National Gender Policy on gender and class differentials in the Zimbabwean context. Therefore, this thesis fills this gap in knowledge by analysing the extent to which Zimbabwe's second NGP and its implementation disrupted and/or reinforced gender and class inequalities in the small-scale gold mining sectors of the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts, Zimbabwe.

2.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, the chapter has provided a review of literature of women's economic empowerment, gender and public policy, and women in mining which are important to the analysis of Zimbabwe's NGP in either reversing or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in the small-scale gold mining sectors of Bubi and Gwanda. Literature on women's economic empowerment presents access to paid work, credit, entrepreneurship, skills, and business training as a magic bullet in mainstream

development. Empirical evidence therefore paints a mixed picture of the transformative role of paid employment, credit, skills, and business training in fully satisfying the objectives of WEE. The interventions have indeed changed women's lives in a way by closing the financial gap between women and men through credit programs, thereby enabling women to participate in entrepreneurship and in alleviating poverty. These WEE programs are popularly promoted by international development agencies and banks such as United Nations, the World Bank, among many other development organisations.

However, the aforementioned interventions have been criticised by structuralists for not challenging the structural inequalities that continue to hinder women's agency. As mentioned in this chapter, these include unequal gender relations, patriarchy, and sociocultural norms. Some scholars such as Kabeer (2012) argue that these said programs overlook the structural inequalities that keep women in subordinate positions. Access to paid work, credit and entrepreneurship in many instances do not challenge the patriarchal and socio-cultural norms that hinder women's agency and which, in a way, keeps reproducing and reinforcing gendered social inequalities. This is an indication that agency centred interventions promoted by popular international agencies and banks do more harm than good. Hence, this thesis adopting a mixture of the structure and agency approaches to WEE in analysing the NGP.

The chapter also reviewed academic literature on gender mainstreaming which forms part of the many gender equality policies around the world. Gender mainstreaming is a popular strategy adopted to improve public policies, programs, and projects, ensuring that a gender perspective is maintained. The literature also shows the ways in which gender mainstreaming as a strategy in promoting gender equality and WEE is a contested concept through the integration and agenda setting approaches. These two approaches reflect the agency and structure debates that exist within WEE literature. The integration approach to gender mainstreaming, which adds gender perspectives in all sectors, seems to be adopted by most countries. In contrast, the agenda setting approach entails complete change in all traditional practices and processes and positions gender issues amongst other competing issues. However, the agenda setting approach has been critiqued for being too difficult and time consuming.

Therefore, the popular integrationist gender mainstreaming strategies fail to change the traditional organisational structures in terms of policies, programs, and projects, and thus continue to produce, reproduce, and reinforce social inequalities and the subordination of women. The chapter goes further in highlighting that gender mainstreaming promotes gender equality more than social inequalities such as class, race, ethnicity, and nationality. As highlighted earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 1, gender is an important theme, but class is equally relevant to the analysis of the NGP as it interacts with the social relations of gender in hindering or promoting WEE. Literature reveals that some policies and programs implemented by national governments fail to acknowledge the interactions of gender and class inequalities in access to and control of productive resources. Both men and women experience two intersecting forms of social inequalities which at the same time reinforces the low position of women.

The chapter also reviewed academic literature on women in mining with the aim of drawing on debates in WEE literature and that of women in mining. The literature on women in mining seems to have some connections with that on WEE, specifically on the issues that hinders women's agency such as unpaid care work, sociocultural norms, patriarchy, the lack of access to credit to finance their mining activities, and the need for gender mainstreaming in the mining sector. Women in the mining sector encounter structural inequalities just like women operating in other sectors of the informal economy. This thesis, therefore, notes the inadequate literature on the experiences of women with registered small-scale gold mining claims in Zimbabwe. It is with this background that the thesis analyses the extent to which the NGP has disrupted or reinforced gender and class inequalities in the small-scale gold mining sectors of Bubi and Gwanda.

CHAPTER THREE

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSING GENDER POLICY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a theoretical framework for analysing the implementation of Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy (2013–2017) for women in the small-scale gold mining sectors of the Bubi and Gwanda districts. A theoretical framework is one of the most important aspects in research processes because it provides a lens through which to examine the design and conduct of the research (Anfara & Mertz, 2015). It helps in laying a theoretical foundation that supports the study's analysis and in interpretation of the results. Its primary goal is in explaining the meaning, nature and challenges of a phenomenon that is often experienced but that remains unexplained in the societies we live in, so that we may use the knowledge and understanding to act in more informed and effective ways.

Kabeer's (1994) Social Relations Approach (SRA) is the framework guiding this thesis. It is centred on the role that institutions play in challenging and/or reproducing inequalities, thereby providing the basic theoretical foundations relevant to answering the research questions of this study. The SRA provides this thesis with components (rules, activities, resources, people, and power) that need to be considered in a social relations and institutional analysis. These components guide the thesis in examining the NGP's interaction with other institutions such as the market, the community and family/kinship in mediating WEE for women miners in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sectors (ASGM) of Bubi and Gwanda. The SRA explains the connections between institutions in advancing or limiting WEE. It provides the thesis with a framework to examine the extent to which the NGP and its implementation has either disrupted or reinforced gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda.

The chapter begins with a summary of the Social Relations Approach which is aligned to understanding and highlighting the complex ways in which a policy and its implementation interacts with other institutions such as the market, community and family in challenging or reinforcing gender and other social inequalities. This is

followed by a discussion of the SRA's key concepts, which provide the study with guidelines on how to conduct an institutional and social relations analysis of the NGP's implementation in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. The chapter then moves on to discuss gender analysis frameworks. Gender analysis frameworks have been significant in identifying gender and other social inequalities and developing responses through policies and programs to ensure that both men and women benefit. Although there are many notable gender analysis frameworks such as the Harvard Analytical Framework (1985), the Moser Framework (1993), and the Longwe Framework (1995), this section justifies why the SRA is the most suitable framework for analysing the NGP. The final section situates the SRA within the wider feminist universe as feminist theories hold dominant perspectives that inform gender analysis frameworks such as the SRA and policies to address and better understand the complexities of inequality and oppression.

3.2 The Social Relations Approach (SRA)

The SRA is a framework for analysing policy from a gendered perspective, focusing on inequalities in the gendered distribution of resources, responsibilities, and power (March, Smyth & Mukhopadhyay, 1999). The framework revolves around five core concepts:

1. Development as increased wellbeing
2. Social relations
3. Institutional analysis
4. Institutional gender policies, and
5. Immediate, intermediate, and long-term effects (Kabeer, 1994).

Each of these concepts is discussed in more detail in the following section.

The SRA provides a framework for policy analysis that incorporates gender and other social relations such as class as key components, which I considered critical to the analysis of Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy implementation towards women miners in Bubi and Gwanda. As defined in Chapter 2, social relations are any kind of relationships built within communities, societies, or two or more individuals. This may include a relationship between a husband and wife, relatives, acquaintances, co-workers, communities etc. Although there is limited literature on the SRA (Kabeer, 1994; Kabeer

& Subrahmanian, 1996; March *et al.*, 1999) it emphasizes the shifts in gendered social relations that continuously hinder women's economic empowerment.

Razavi and Miller (1995) agree that most development programs for women's empowerment ignore the impact of social relations in access to and control of productive resources. In Chapter 2, WEE literature described the different ways in which the social relations of gender can either hinder or support women's agency in various WEE programs and interventions e.g. access to credit, paid work, and entrepreneurship. Gender relations are an example of social relations that can impede on WEE. Other social relations that intersect with gendered social relations to limit women's choices and opportunities include class, race, ethnicity, and age. Several scholars (Heather, 2010; Hillenbrand *et al.*, 2014; Masanjala, 2007; Matonhodze *et al.*, 2014; Miles, 2016) have drawn on the SRA in their studies to show how policies and programs function and relate with other institutions at different levels to produce, reproduce and reinforce unequal social relations.

Although social relations and institutions are connected in the analysis of social inequalities, both have distinct features. Social relations determine people's roles, responsibilities, and claims over others (March *et al.* 1999; Miles, 2014; Kabeer, 1994). Institutions, on the other hand, produce and maintain gender and other social inequalities. Institutions are entities that are found everywhere in society, created by human beings to govern, or shape our lives. Given their use in many areas of study, institutions have been defined in several ways. Crawford and Ostrom (1995) explain institutions as rules, norms, habits, and operating practices. North (1991) defines them as structures devised by humans to determine political, social, and economic interaction. Hodgson (2006: 2) provides a fair definition of institutions as "systems of established and prevalent social rules that structure social interactions". This definition captures both the formal and informal rules and the enforcement procedures.

According to North (1991), there are three aspects of institutions: formal rules, informal rules, and enforcement procedures. Formal rules emanate from formal institutions described in the form of laws, policies, procedures, and forms of government such as the state, law enforcement agencies, business co-operations, labour unions, and religious organisations (North, 1991; Polski & Ostrom, 1999). Formal rules are enforced through channels that are widely accepted as 'official'. Informal rules are

supported by informal institutions which include customs, traditions and taboos which are normally evident in communities and households. Unlike formal rules, informal rules are not officially established, they are usually unwritten and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels. Enforcement procedures are the different ways in which rules are preserved. From this, North (1991) points out that, apart from the formal and informal rules, enforcement procedures are significant in ensuring that institutional rules are followed. This thesis considers both formal and informal rules in analysing the NGP's interaction with other institutions in either promoting or impeding WEE.

The SRA emphasises that institutions play a role in shaping human interactions. As a result, North (1991: 68) points out that “institutions tend to serve the interest of those with bargaining power to devise new rules”. Those who are in a position to make the rules can change them for their own purpose. In a way this is how institutions produce, reproduce, and reinforce the social relations of gender, class, race etc. This point ties in with the analysis by Masanjala (2007) by stating that the SRA helps in identifying how institutions, in the form of policies and programs, can play a key role in transforming the livelihoods of women by providing access to, and benefits from public (state) resources. But they may also reinforce unequal social relations of gender (gender and power relations between men and women) by overlooking the ways in which informal rules (traditional gender roles between men and women, patriarchy, and culture) are persistent in keeping women in subordinate positions. As mentioned earlier, social relations of gender intersect with other sets of other social relations such as class, race, and ethnicity that create and reinforce social inequalities which inhibit policy goals and outcomes. The SRA guides this thesis in framing the analysis of the NGP around gender and class.

Although the SRA is appealing to this thesis for understanding the ways in which various institutions interact in either disrupting or reinforcing inequalities, it has been criticized for being overly complex. Therefore, it presents challenges when attempting to implement it with limited information. For instance, the SRA requires that information should be gathered from multiple sources through interviews and observations. Thus, with limited information there may be gaps in the data, hindering a comprehensive understanding of the social landscape. However, Kabeer (1994) argues that an institutional analysis may be performed using two or three concepts rather than

all five of the key concepts of the SRA. For instance, Hillenbrand *et al.* (2014) and Kabeer *et al.* (1996) have successfully drawn on two of the five key concepts of the SRA in their analysis of institutions. Even its operationalisation proves difficult because of the overlaps between institutions as the State, market, community, and family are not neatly defined. For instance, OXFAM officials criticized the definition of a community as an institution, arguing that the community is not the same institution as the State (March *et al.*, 1999).

Even though the SRA has its limitations, it remains relevant to this thesis because it brings together institutions and social relations. It contributes to this thesis by providing a framework to examine social relations, and in clarifying the ways in which different groups are positioned in terms of access and control of resources. This positioning in turn determines roles, responsibilities, rights and claims over others. Apart from it providing a framework for this thesis in undertaking a social relations and institutional analysis, this is the first study which applies the SRA in the context of Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy through the lens of women small-scale gold miners.

3.2.1 The key concepts of the SRA

We now turn to a more detailed discussion of the central concepts of the SRA. As highlighted earlier on, the SRA is based on five key concepts:

1. Development as increased human wellbeing
2. Social relations
3. Institutional analysis
4. Institutional gender policies
5. Immediate, intermediate, and long-term effects

Although the framework has five concepts, the study primarily applied the social relations and institutional analysis concepts in examining the ways in which the NGP impacts on social relationships in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. In doing so, it has followed the example set by Hillenbrand *et al.* (2017), and Kabeer and Subrahmanian (1996). The two concepts allowed the study to look at how changes within the State (NGP) intersected with institutional rules and practices at the market, community, and family/household levels in disrupting and/or reinforcing gender and class inequalities. Hillenbrand *et al.* (2014) also used these two concepts in their gender analysis of the

Fish on Farm projects in Cambodia. Similarly, Kabeer and Subrahmanian (1996) drew on these concepts in their analysis on the causes and effects of reduced access to credit in Bangladesh.

The social relations concept is useful to this thesis as it delves into power dynamics, norms, and interactions within the market (the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda), the community and household. These are the different locations where women miners interact with others, for example household (spouse and extended family), community, traditional leadership (chief and village heads), councillors, men and women, and the market (buyers, sellers, sponsors, male and female miners and mine owners). The social relations concept helps in understanding how various social factors such as gender roles, sociocultural norms and hierarchies (gender, class and social status) influence women’s economic empowerment and the complex social dynamics that shape the women miners’ experiences in the ASGM sector of Bubi and Gwanda.

The SRA’s institutional analysis framework enables us to examine the ways in which policy, in this case the NGP, can impact on women’s economic empowerment. This institutional analysis looks deeper at the rules, power, activities, resources, and people in analysing the effectiveness of the NGP in enhancing women’s economic advancement and promoting gender equality within the small-scale gold mining sector in Bubi and Gwanda. Therefore, the interplay between social relations and institutional analysis is useful to this study as it explores the social dynamics and institutional factors that either hinder and/or support the economic empowerment of women in the rural districts of Bubi and Gwanda. Below is a table summarizing the key concepts of the SRA (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Key concepts of the Social Relations Approach

SRA Concepts	Theoretical Position
1. Development as increased wellbeing	Policy interventions must strive to move beyond access to material resources to challenging the structural factors that restrict wellbeing.
2. Social relations	At the centre of these interventions, people are bound by ‘social relationships’. These are structural relationships such as who we are, the traditional assigned roles and

	responsibilities between men and women, and the claims we can make that determine which people have access to resources and which of those are left out.
3. Institutional analysis	Institutions play a role in reversing or reinforcing inequalities. They are neither neutral nor independent. State policies interact with the market, community, and family in improving or decreasing wellbeing. For example, a change in one institution (State) impacts on other institutions.
4. Institutional gender policies	Institutional gender policies determine the commitment to improving human wellbeing. These policies are classified into different categories according to the degree to which they address gender issues.
5. Immediate, intermediate, and long-term effects	Policy makers need to examine the immediate, intermediate, and structural/long-term effects responsible for the challenges in interventions and their effects on beneficiaries.

Development as increased wellbeing

The first concept of the SRA defines development as increasing wellbeing through security, survival, and autonomy. However, ‘wellbeing’ is a contested concept. Amartya Sen (1999), Copestake (2008), and White (2010) are among the many scholars who pose differing views of wellbeing in different social settings. Wellbeing has been a central concern for Sen (1999) who argues that a proper understanding of wellbeing should be based on what people can be or can do rather than what they have. This form of wellbeing focuses on an individual’s capabilities more than anything else. In Sen’s view, an individual’s capabilities are centred on their freedoms. Freedom is an integral part in the understanding of wellbeing because it distinguishes between people’s capabilities (what they can potentially be and do) and what they choose to do with them (actual functioning) (Sen, 1999). This point is similar to the characteristic of autonomy in the SRA, which is essential to improving human wellbeing, as it gives the individual freedom to make decisions that shape their life.

In another view, Copestake (2008) describes wellbeing as rising income, alleviation of poverty, needs satisfaction, increased security, and empowerment. Most of the mainstream development programs and activities tend to draw on two of the factors listed above, such as poverty alleviation and basic needs satisfaction, while the other characteristics of wellbeing are often left out. This is also reflected in WEE literature (Chapter 2) where the rationale behind most WEE programs is centred on rising income and the eradication of poverty in their households. These projects come in the form of access to micro credit or cash transfers with the intention to empower both men and women to increase their household income and to eradicate poverty. White (2010) also adds that for some, well-being is all about personal success and happiness, while for others it is not only about what is good for an individual or a community but also about society. A locally grounded conception of wellbeing is evident in a Bangladeshi villager's description of an ideal society as one in which "we live in happiness with rice, clothes and respect" (Siddiqi, 2004: 50). Although wellbeing is difficult to define precisely, some of the aspects described here by the different scholars, such as freedoms and increased security, are also incorporated in the SRA's concept of development.

In advocating for increased wellbeing, the SRA emphasises the need to consider three categories: material resources, human resources, and human capabilities. Material resources comprising of land, micro credit, equipment, and education have been the most popular means implemented by development planners and policymakers in increasing human wellbeing. However, the other two categories – human resources (the labour power, health and skills of individuals) and human capabilities (which include the tasks that people perform to survive as well as intangible resources such as solidarity, contacts and information) – are usually side lined by development planners despite the fact that they are significant in contributing to an individual's survival, security and autonomy (Kabeer, 1994; March *et al.*, 1999). Planners and policymakers have tended to focus on economic sources without considering human resources and capabilities in achieving increased wellbeing. The SRA underscores the need to move beyond the material resources of development as the other two categories also occupy an important place in an individual's productivity, which contributes to their wellbeing.

Social Relations

In the introduction to the previous section (3.2 The Social Relations Approach) social relations was explained as the social or structural relationships between two or more individuals which create and reproduce systemic differences in how people are positioned by determining their roles, responsibilities and claims over others. “Most productive activities, whether concerned with human, tangible or intangible human resources, can be carried out through a variety of social relations and in a variety of institutional contexts” (Kabeer, 1994: 280). For instance, in a rural community where a development project is being implemented, social relations can determine who benefits from the project, and who is left out. A project manager may in his/her capacity work with traditional leaders or the rural elites in the community to assist in selecting beneficiaries for the project. The rural elites and traditional leaders hold certain decision-making authority in the community by virtue of their positions. So, they determine the terms of inclusion in the development project. These social relationships play a critical role in either contributing to or inhibiting women’s economic outcomes (Agarwal, 1997; Aukrah *et al.*, 2020).

Many studies have shown that social relations play a significant role in women’s access and control of productive resources. In the African context, a study by Kurebwa (2017) revealed that access to natural resources was based on rights held by a male. There was no recognition of how rights were differentiated between individuals based on gender, wealth, age, or other characteristics. The same is echoed by Row and Crow (2004) in their analysis of the ways in which social relations influenced women’s access to and control of water resources through gendered relations, productive asset ownership, and intra-household allocation of resources. Their findings revealed that formal rights over water resources were vested in men; thus, women could only access water on the basis of being wives or mothers to the farmers. Other women relied on social networks in negotiating their access to water resources. Not only does this reflect unequal gendered access to water resources, but class differences are also reinforced. As a result, it shows that gendered social relations intersect with class in producing crosscutting inequalities which ascribe to each individual a position in the structure and hierarchy of their societies.

The SRA argues that social relations change over time – they do not remain the same. Formal rules (legislation and regulations) may influence activities in an institution that can eventually alter social relations. Institutions such as the State and international organisations (macro) have the power and ability to transform rules and processes that reinforce inequalities in access to and control of resources. Another way that social relations can change is through participation in associations and social networks. This happens when people come together collectively to act on or against something, such as racism, corruption, or colonialism. March *et al.* (1999) uses the South African case study as an example of people who came together to overturn apartheid, with consequent changes to the country's social relations of race.

The concept of social relations is key to obtaining a comprehensive analysis of how women miners in Bubi and Gwanda negotiate access to State resources through the NGP's empowerment programs. The process includes looking into how social relations between men and women shift at work (ASGM sector), at home and in the community. Studies focusing on women's access to and control over productive resources have tended to ignore what happens to women after access has been facilitated, especially in rural areas where the stakes of women achieving economic empowerment are limited (Donner, 2015). This is one of the reasons that a social relations analysis is relevant to this thesis – it allows for a longer-term analysis of what has happened post access.

Institutional Analysis

Earlier in this chapter, institutions were defined as entities created by human beings to shape our lives. This section discusses how institutions are framed within the SRA.

In the SRA institutions are a framework of rules for achieving certain economic and social goals (Kabeer, 1994). The SRA identifies family/kinship (household and extended family), community (village committees, informal networks, NGOs, voluntary associations), markets (corporations, associations, firms, enterprises) and the State (administrative, legal, military organisations) as institutions. These institutions produce, reinforce, and reproduce social relations that create and perpetuate structural inequalities. The argument put forward by Kabeer (1994; 2003) is that underlying causes of gender and other social inequalities are not created and confined to family

only but are also reproduced across a range of institutions including international organisations. As such, the SRA provided the thesis with a framework in analysing the NGP's interaction with other institutions in either supporting or impeding WEE in the ASGM sector of Bubi and Gwanda.

Adding to this argument, Kabeer (1994) challenges the ideology that institutions are independent and neutral: institutions are connected to each other and do not operate independently. A change in one institution influences other institutions to change and inequalities in one institution are likely to get reproduced in other spheres of society if they go unchallenged (Kabeer, 1994; Miles, 2016; North, 1991; Rao & Kelleher, 2003). For instance, an intervention which provides inputs to enable men to grow cash crops will be self-contained and will not have an impact on the household. However, this picture depicts that such programs continue to reproduce unequal gender relations within the household as women are portrayed as welfare cases and not producers and economic contributors. It also reflects class difference in that women are not considered 'a working class' that can also grow cash crops, but that their responsibility is limited to growing food for subsistence purposes only. The idea behind the implementation of such programs reflects the gendered divisions of labour between men and women. These are important in outlining the terms on which women and men enter or have access to institutions (Kabeer 1994: 283). Therefore, the SRA emphasises the need to transcend mere examination of household dynamics that encompass roles and activities of individuals within, due to their influential implications on how various institutions design and execute programs catering to both men and women. In this study, the State is the main institution within which the National Gender Policy is located. The State, through empowerment programs under the NGP, interacts with other institutions – international organizations, market, community, and family – in impacting the status of women in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda.

Kabeer (1994) suggests that there are five distinct components that need to be considered when carrying out an institutional analysis. These five components are rules, resources, people, activities, and power. Assessing institutions on the basis of these five aspects helps in understanding who does what, who gains what, and who loses (between men and women) in access to and control of productive resources. An analysis of each of the aspects highlights the power and gender relations inherent in the context. These

components help in examining social relations and the ways in which people are positioned in access to and control of productive resources. These dynamics are briefly reviewed in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Dynamics of Institutions

<p>Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do things get done?</i> • <i>By whom it will be done and who will benefit?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An institution may allow or constrain the main goal of achieving increased human wellbeing. • The different ways in which rules are gendered shapes the way in which men and women behave (Lowndes & Roberts, 2013). For example, scheduled meeting times may have gendered effects on women because of their caring responsibilities. This indicates that formal rules interact with informal rules to perpetuate gender inequalities for women.
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is used?</i> • <i>What is produced?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions adhere to the rules that determine what men or women get in terms of resources. These can either be material resources, human resources, and intangible resources.
<p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who are in, who are out and who does what?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions deal with people and are selective about whom they allow in and whom they include. This reflects class, gender, and other social inequalities. For instance, the market may include and exclude a certain category of people, e.g. mining has always been a male dominated sector.
<p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is done?</i> • <i>Who does what?</i> • <i>Who claims?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities are the processes that take place in order to achieve policy goals. • These may take on different forms, such as a needs assessment of a certain group, productive, distributive, and regulative. • In some cases, activities implemented by planners or policymakers may hinder the wellbeing of women while favouring men. For example, when development programs interrupt cultural norms in favour of men, it is approved. However, when this is done for women's empowerment such as family planning, culture is invoked. This reinforces a situation whereby women continue to experience limited opportunities in development.
<p>Power</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who decides,</i> • <i>Whose interests are served</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions have authority and control to promote practices that entrench privileged positions that lead to maintaining the status quo. • The unequal distribution of resources and responsibilities, together with the official and unofficial rules which promote and legitimize this distribution, ensures that some institutional actors have control over others.

Source: March et al., 1999

The SRA's concept of institutional analysis provided the thesis with practical tools to analyse the NGP. Kabeer (1994) points out, however, that a narrow application of the SRA may be applied in examining how an institution reverses or reproduces social inequalities. For instance, the SRA can be used to analyse individual institutions, such as the market, by highlighting how gender inequalities are formed and reinforced within the market. The study then will adopt the social relations and institutional analysis concepts in analysing the policy and its interactions across institutions. It was important to review the ideas and methods employed by Miles (2016) and Hillenbrand *et al.* (2014) in their application of the SRA. These scholars applied the SRA on a broader scale by focusing on a number of institutions within one context. A broader application also revealed how gender inequalities crosscut one another through institutional interaction (March *et al.*, 1999). Hillenbrand *et al.* (2014) applied the SRA on the Fish on Farms (FoF) project in Cambodia and also described how the intervention changed the position of women and their outlook on women's economic empowerment. Miles (2016) on the other hand, focused on women factory workers in Malaysia as a form of WEE. The two studies presented an institutional analysis of social relations by identifying the institutional processes and rules that either supported or impeded on WEE. Both of the studies showed how institutional rules and processes are acted out by the State, influencing other institutions such as the market, community, and household.

Miles (2016) even went one step further by giving an institutional analysis of how women in the manufacturing industry experience inequalities from the State, market, and household. The application of the SRA on women factory workers in Malaysia found that at the *household level* working women were expected to balance work and family responsibilities, care for the sick and elderly. The traditional gendered roles and unequal gender relations were further upheld by the *community* by enforcing that women should remain subservient to men. This cycle of gendered social relations spilled over to influence the *market* by placing women in low-skilled labour-intensive jobs, with low wages that set them below the poverty line. The *State* also set up flexible labour policies allowing for the import of foreign labour which weakened the bargaining power of women and men local workers. The State thus failed to create policies that would change the subordinate status of women, and this is a cycle that is evident in the household, community, and market. This is a clear analysis of how

institutions interact with each other to produce and reinforce gender and other social differences in Malaysia.

The institutional analysis concept is useful because it provides the study with a framework for analysing the ways in which the NGP interacted with market, community, and households in supporting or impeding WEE in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda. The five components mentioned in the SRA's institutional analysis concept provided the thesis with ways to draw out the inter-connectedness of institutions by revealing the different social relationships that determine which women were supported by the NGP and which women were left out.

Institutional gender policies

The SRA classifies institutional policies according to the extent to which they recognize and address gender and other social issues (March *et al.*, 1999). This concept identifies three types of gender policies adopted by policy makers. These are gender-blind policies, gender redistributive and gender aware policies. A gender-blind policy is one that is premised on a male development actor and male biased in that it privileges male needs and interests in the distribution of opportunities and resources. For example, in 1993 the Ethiopian government introduced legislative measures in the Women's Policy to empower women in all sectors of the economy, specifically agriculture. This was in recognition of the fact that, although women constituted half of the farming populations, they had limited access to information and extension services. In spite of the new measures put in place, the extension services systematically ignored women. The services were too technical and there was limited understanding of the needs and realities of women and poor farmers (Buchy & Bazasnew, 2005). This led to the Women's Policy of 1993 being labelled a gender-blind policy.

A gender aware policy is one that recognizes the different and sometimes conflicting needs of women and men who are constrained in different and often unequal ways (Elson, 1993; Heather, 2010; March *et al.*, 1999). This type of policy incorporates a gender perspective into policy analysis. Kabeer (1994, 2003) maintains that a gender aware policy or intervention requires policy makers to be clear, consistent, and well informed about the relevance of gender in specific contexts to their goals, objectives, and strategies. This policy approach is quite similar to gender mainstreaming which

also requires the integration of gender perspectives into policies, projects, and institutions. Gender aware policies are further divided into gender neutral policies, gender specific policies and gender redistributive policies. Gender neutral policy approaches aim to ensure that interventions target both men and women in meeting their practical gender needs. Gender specific policy approaches, on the other hand, implement interventions that aim to meet the specific needs of women and men within the existing distribution of resources and responsibilities.

Lastly, a gender redistributive policy aims to transform the unequal power relations between men and women. Such a policy may work in the practical and strategic gender interests of either men or women. For example, for a long time, textbooks in India tended to utilize examples and illustrations focused on the traditional gendered roles: boys engaging in masculine activities while girls engaged in domestic activities e.g. cooking and cleaning. Thus, a gender redistributive policy is one that shows boys to also be participating in domestic work and girls aspiring to non-traditional roles. Roth (2016) outlines three strategies that can be distinguished in gender redistributive policies: First, seeking to provide equal access and to remove barriers and discrimination. Second, there are strategies acknowledging the gender division of labour and addressing the consequence of unpaid care work (such as day care policies and parental leave) to ease the double burden for employed parents. Third, there are strategies anticipating the gendered impact of policies – this can be adopting gender mainstreaming together with gender assessments – to prevent the unequal impact of policies on men and women. However, a gender redistributive policy is one that many may find politically challenging. It does not simply seek to channel resources to women within the existing social framework but almost inevitably requires men to give up certain privileges or to take on certain responsibilities in order to achieve greater equity in the development process (Kabeer *et al.*, 1996).

Immediate, Intermediate and Long-term Factors

This last concept of the SRA brings together all the four concepts by identifying the immediate, underlying, and structural causes along with the effect it has on beneficiaries. The analysis of these structural causes may be presented as a written report or in table format. This analysis reveals how interventions implemented by

development planners and policy makers play a role in either reversing or reinforcing gender and other social inequalities.

In summary, the SRA's key concepts have been discussed, justifying the reasons for the thesis to particularly adopt a narrow application of the SRA, drawing on the concepts of social relations and institutional analysis. The SRA argues for analysing the ways in which institutions (formal and informal) interact in impacting the social relationships which can either promote or hinder WEE. The SRA guides the thesis in bringing together how women miners in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda relate to the NGP (at State level) and other institutions such as the market, community, and family after receiving support from the State. Also, there is currently no study in the Zimbabwean context that brings together an institutional and social relations analysis of how women relate to different institutions at different levels. We now turn to a comparison of the SRA with other gender analysis frameworks.

3.3 Gender analysis frameworks

The study has provided an in-depth review of the SRA's key concepts and it presented how the social relations and institutional analysis concepts guided the analysis of the NGP. This section reviews alternative gender analysis frameworks and provides a justification for the use of the SRA specifically as a means by which to answer the research questions which were outlined in Chapter 1.

Gender analysis frameworks are methods adopted to understand the social relationships between men and women in access to the resources, activities, and constraints they face on a day to day basis. Caroline Moser (1993) stresses that many of those committed to integrating gender into their work at policy, programme and project levels lack the necessary planning principles and methodological tools. She argues that planners tend to draw on simplified tools which only contribute to the particular complexities of specific contexts. This is the rationale behind gender analysis frameworks, which allow for broader analyses across contexts. Gender analysis frameworks are not all the same, they have different characteristics and ideas with regards to the role of women in development and how development is set to change their (women) situation. Other gender analysis frameworks are adopted in order to inform development practitioners,

planners, and policy makers on how best they could be agents of change in disrupting social differences.

The SRA is identified among other popular gender analysis frameworks such as the Harvard Analytical Framework (HAF) or the Gender Roles Framework (Overholt, Anderson, Cloud & Austen, 1985), and the Moser Gender Planning Framework or the Triple Roles Framework (Moser, 1993). Other gender analysis frameworks are the Gender Analysis Matrix (Parker, 1993), the Women's Empowerment Framework (WEF) or the Longwe Framework (Longwe, 1995; Williams, Janet & Adelina, 1995). The theoretical background which informs these various frameworks determines which aspects of a situation it seeks to identify and the nature of the changes possible (Boateng, 2001). Each of these frameworks differ according to what needs to be analysed and addressed.

Some of the gender analysis frameworks focus on how social relations between men and women can either promote or alter the achievement of development goals. They also focus on how development outcomes affect men and women differently. Even so, Batliwala and Pittman (2010) argue that very few of them tell us about how changes happen or how gendered social relations have been altered. This study, therefore, reviews the Harvard Analytical Framework (HAF) as it was one of the first and most famous gender analysis frameworks, followed by the Women's Empowerment Framework (WEF), as a way in which to explain why the SRA is a more suitable framework for this thesis.

3.3.1 The Harvard Analytical Framework (HAF/GRF)

The Harvard Analytical Framework (HAF/GRF) was developed in 1985 at the Harvard Institute for International Development as a practical research tool for international development agencies. It principally maps the work and resources used by men and women in a community and highlights its differences. It helps development planners and policy makers understand the case for allocating productive resources to women as well as men. It comprises of a grid or matrix that provides planners and policy makers with information on the differences in roles and activities between men and women. March *et al.* (1999) confirms that HAF is a useful way of organizing information and it can be adopted to many situations.

The HAF has been applied in a study conducted by Wiebe (1997) in Guatemala. The study discovered that both men and women spent almost the same amount of time on their productive tasks, but that the reproductive work was left to women and young girls. The study also found that the community was highly traditional when it came to the traditional gender roles and that the political and higher status community roles were reserved for men. The application of the HAF therefore provided Wiebe's study with the gender and power dynamics at play through information on the different roles and activities carried out between men and women. From these findings, the HAF then informs planners in creating projects that aim to increase the visibility and productivity of women. In a way this gender analysis follows the WID approach that argues for the equal allocation of new resources to women and men to ensure efficiency of the project and program.

However, the HAF fails in guiding planners on how to challenge the structural inequalities that keep women subordinated, as seen within the context of Guatemala. The Harvard Analytical Framework has been criticized for failing to cross-examine the unequal power relations that exist between men and women. As shown in the case study above, the framework neglects the social linkages within different production processes and roles in a society which may determine women's agency. In contrast to the HAF, the SRA offers a way of understanding the root causes of inequalities and its connections to institutions. The SRA captures the ways in which institutions (State, market, community, and family) interact with each other in the production, reinforcement, or disruption of gender and other social inequalities. Hence, the SRA provided a significant framework for this thesis in examining the social relationships between men and women in the distribution of resources and how these social relationships between people and resources are re-worked through institutions. This is unlike the HAF which emphasises the separation of individuals (men and women) and different groups.

Another weakness of the Harvard Analytical Framework is that it fails to acknowledge other social relations such as class, race, ethnicity, age, and nationality in access to and control of productive resources. March *et al.* (1999) confirms that HAF does not pay attention to other underlying inequalities nor does it consider the different types of households in various contexts. This information is critical for development planners

and policy makers to ensure that the policies, programs, and projects are more inclusive, and no one is left behind. Men and women have different interests and needs. Therefore, one project may be beneficial for some while it may not adequately address the needs and interests of others due to the different household contexts. The SRA, on the other hand, does not confine itself to gender only, but also considers assessing other social relations that intersect with gender such as class, age, ethnicity, and race in hindering women's access to and control of productive resources. Generally, the SRA's framework encourages policymakers and planners to look more closely at other factors of influence that determine women's access to and control of resources that might have been overlooked during development planning processes.

3.3.2 Women's Empowerment Framework (WEF)

The Women's Empowerment Framework (WEF) was developed in 1995 by a Zambian feminist, political activist and consultant on gender and development Sara Longwe. The WEF seeks to enable women to take an equal place to men, and to participate equally in development projects (Longwe, 1995). Development planners, researchers and policy makers can use this gender analysis framework to analyse the degree of commitment of a programme, project, or a policy to women's equality, access to and control of productive resources. Longwe (1998) argues that programmes and policies concerning gender equity need to be evaluated in terms of how they address the hierarchical matrix of empowerment to test their commitment to the active and genuine goal of empowerment. The importance of the WEF is its intention to assist policy makers and planners to assess a programme or policy's commitment to women's empowerment and the extent to which this form of empowerment has brought about a positive outcome.

The WEF identifies five levels, arranged in hierarchical order of equality and empowerment in examining the impact of empowerment programs and policies. These levels are: Control, participation, conscientisation, access and welfare. They are also seen as tools that can enable planners and policy makers to assess the extent to which there is increased equality and empowerment. Jones (2009) posits that the levels are assessed by the extent to which each of them exist in social or economic situations or programming. Control is the highest level of the women's empowerment framework. It focuses on balancing the power relations between men and women. This level ensures that neither men nor women dominate. It is followed by participation which may include

women's participation in decision-making and leadership roles. This level puts emphasis on women being able to voice their concerns without any judgement or discrimination in society.

Conscientisation is understood as a conscious understanding of the difference between sex (the biological difference between men and women) and gender (socially constructed roles e.g. women involved in taking care of the family while men take up leadership and decision-making roles). It is believed that through conscientisation, gender roles and the division of labour can be changed in order to make gender equality possible (Leach, 2003). This level of the framework is parallel to a form of WEE which focuses on women's self-empowerment and self-worth which may be used as a way to disrupt the structural inequalities that discriminate against women. Access is concerned with equal opportunities for women and men in the modes of production and in all public services and benefits. The equality of access is obtained by applying the principle of equality of opportunity (March *et al.*, 1999).

The last level of the Women's Empowerment Framework is welfare. It measures women's material welfare in relation to that of men. It covers a vast number of social, economic, and political components such as women's equal access to medical care, income, food supply and educational incentives. Scholars such as Jones (2009) and Leach (2003) have drawn on the Women's Empowerment Framework in assessing the impact of policy in girls' secondary education. This framework has also been applied by Madanda *et al.* (2007) in assessing and linking the extent to which the provision of ICTs as an intervention in Makerere University affects women's empowerment. The findings of the study indicated that provision of ICTs and training at Makerere University may not have led to women's empowerment. The scholars cited that policy and institutional gaps hindered women's empowerment, and that there was an emphasis on technological and technical issues while ignoring human and gender relations. One of the good things about the gender analysis framework is that its assessment gives development planners and policy makers a sense of direction in terms of what has been achieved and the gaps that still need to be addressed (March *et al.*, 1999).

However, WEF has been criticised for failing to address other social relations that hinder women's empowerment such as the unequal gender relations that exist between men and women. The SRA is unique because it provides a social relations analysis where not only

gender, but also other social relations are examined – hence, its suitability in analysing the extent to which the NGP has either reversed or reinforced gender and class inequalities in the ASGM sectors in Bubi and Gwanda. Another point is that the WEF hardly assesses the inter-connectedness of institutions, organizational culture, and practices, contrary to the SRA, which further provides this thesis with an institutional analysis on how institutions interact with each other to mediate WEE. The institutional analysis concept allows for the thesis to delve into institutional practices such as the processes that enable the implementation of the NGP’s WEE programs. The WEF seems to align itself with liberal feminism (see later in this chapter) by focusing on the relationships between men and women only in terms of equality in the public sphere, instead of focusing on the structural relationships that impede women’s economic empowerment (which the SRA addresses). Structural relationships refer to the structural connections that exist between two or more people.

Given the nature and context of this study, the SRA was found to be more suitable as a research framework because of its emphasis on gendered power relations, institutions and the interactions of policy and practice at different institutional locations (Hillenbrand *et al.*, 2014). The uniqueness of the SRA is that it gives a relational analysis of how inequalities are produced and reproduced from the household through to the State. This is what makes the SRA fit more consistently into this study compared to the HAF and WEF frameworks that were discussed in this section.

The following section discusses feminist theory and situates the SRA within the wider feminist universe. It discusses the prominent feminist theories such as liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, and intersectional feminism in order to understand the different factors that shape gender inequality and oppression. This also includes the ways in which these feminist theories effectively address issues of inequality and oppression. More so, the feminist perspectives mentioned here offer differing viewpoints and experiences that reflect the diversity of women’s lives. The study situates the SRA within the wider feminist universe as it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities of gender inequality and oppression, and how these issues can be addressed effectively through policy.

3.4 Feminist perspectives

This section situates the SRA within wider feminist theory in order to highlight its theoretical underpinnings. By situating the SRA within wider feminist theory, we recognize where and how feminist theoretical perspectives influence the policy sphere. For example, in the early 1970s liberal feminism influenced the Women in Development (WID) approach. Feminism has helped identify the social processes that constructed females as inferior, and that discriminated against women and favoured men. It is broadly defined as a theory that problematizes the subordination of women (Connelly *et al.*, 2000; Kasakabalarat, 2015). Thus, feminism argues that gender is a social construct which recognizes the complexity and intersectionality of gender and other social relations, acknowledging that these issues need to be addressed. As a result, the SRA is one level of theory which aims to analyse gender and other social inequalities in the gendered distribution of resources, responsibilities, and power. But feminism, on the other hand, is a larger level of theory that influences theoretical roots of the SRA by not only identifying specific gender-related issues, but also challenging the broader social and cultural norms that perpetuate gender and other social inequalities.

Feminist theories have changed over time. However, rather than tracing the earlier roots of feminism, this section will focus strictly on the important theoretical developments relevant to this study. It is important to note that feminist perspectives vary in terms of the causes of women's subordination, as well as their alternatives in challenging patriarchal systems and strategies for change. This thesis situates the SRA within prominent feminist theories such as liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, intersectional feminism and African feminism. This section on feminist perspectives also brings out the structure-agency debate, as shown in Chapter 2. Structure and agency provide important context to feminism in understanding gender inequality and oppression, as well as in providing effective strategies that promote gender and social equality. The section will begin with a review of liberal feminism highlighting its principles, contributions, and short comings, followed by Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, intersectional feminism and African feminism. The section will end by situating the SRA within this theoretical base.

3.4.1 Liberal feminism

Liberal feminism was one of the pioneering feminist theories that sought to redefine the status of women in society. “It has its roots in the 16th and 17th century liberal philosophy that focused on the ideals of equality and liberty” (Connelly *et al.*, 2000: 115). Early feminist work from prominent theorists such as Mary Wollstonecraft (1752) and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) laid the foundations for liberal feminism. They advocated for equality on grounds that ‘women’ are rational beings capable of making their own decisions, even though they had been denied such a privilege. As such, the liberal feminist school of thought assumed that women could be liberated within the capitalist system. Capitalism was based on an economic system in which private actors owned and controlled property according to their own interests. The significant feature of the capitalist system was the motive to make profits as the prices were controlled freely by the demand and supply in the markets. It encouraged people to achieve their goals through their own potential and it gave women a central place in the workplace rather than being solely in the homes. And so, liberal feminism attempted to shift the traditional perspectives of women as reproducers, caregivers, and welfare cases to that of producers and economic contributors.

Liberal feminists advocated for administrative and legislative reforms in order to give women the same opportunities as men. While liberal feminists recognized the social inequalities and injustices that women experienced, it saw them as irregularities in an ultimately desirable system that could be altered through legal procedures and changes (Connelly *et al.*, 2000; Bandarage, 1984). These included paid employment, education, entrepreneurship, and access to productive resources such as microfinance for women. The emphasis of liberal feminism on legal and administrative measures was evident in the United States of America in matters such as the right to vote, the Equal Rights Amendment and affirmative action. These are examples of some of the legal and administrative measures that opened up equal opportunities for women to be integrated into the formal spheres of the economy. Women received higher education and were employed in high level public positions (Bandarage, 1984). The legal and administrative reforms influenced changes in mainstream development by presenting opportunities to women who were once left in the margins. Generally, liberal feminists did not seek to challenge the capitalist system, but they rather advocated for the system to create an

enabling environment for the inclusion of women by presenting arguments that were agency centred.

The focus of liberal feminism was primarily on 'sexism' which is described as discrimination based on a person's sex or gender i.e. male or female. This was based on the belief that that men ring fenced their territories and created artificial barriers to women's participation in the public world, beyond the family and the household (Summers, 2003). Wendell and Wollstonecraft share similar views in arguing that women were highly discriminated against because of their sex but that, in essence, they were capable individuals who could exercise their choices in full:

Central to liberal feminism is the assertion that women are valuable in themselves, as individual human beings, and not just as sources of pleasure and providers of service for men and children (Wendell, 1987: 79).

In the same way Wollstonecraft (1792: 115) had stated:

A woman is not a 'mere means', or instrument, to one or more man's pleasure or happiness. Rather she is an 'end-her-self', a rational agent whose dignity consists in having the capacity of self-determination. To treat someone as a mere means is to treat her as less than a person, as someone who exists not for herself but as an appendage to someone else.

The above statements argue that women are more than just reproducers and primary caregivers. Liberal feminists sought to eliminate limiting sex roles by giving women equal opportunities in the public sphere including education, and economic and political activities. They believed that opening up the public sphere would eventually lead to gender equality. However, the private sphere, which encompassed the domestic/household sphere where women experienced much gender discrimination from men, was overlooked.

Although liberal feminists performed a pioneering task in bringing to light the invisibility of women in the public sphere, they were criticized for failing to acknowledge the role and position of women in the private sphere. The private sphere maintained the unequal gender relations between women and men by reinforcing traditional gendered roles. For example, women were still portrayed as 'reproducers and caregivers' while the men were portrayed as the 'breadwinners'. Women therefore

maintained a subordinate status to men in the private sphere despite the progress made by liberal feminists in the public sphere.

Another criticism of the liberal feminist theory was the 'one size fits all' approach to addressing women's inequalities in different societies. Mendes (2009) criticizes liberal feminists, specifically highlighting Betty Friedan (1963) for their limited perspective rooted in the 'white middle class' experience which assumed that all women could work, regardless of their personal desires or preferences. The first world women's voices were quite dominant in arguing for their problems and priorities while ignoring the voices of third world women who argued that oppression not only lies in sex, but also in gender, class, race, ethnicity and age (*ibid.*). Nonetheless, liberal feminists have been responsible for the welfare, education and health reforms that have benefited the lives of millions of women around the world.

3.4.2 Marxist feminism

Marxist feminism was influenced by the work of Karl Marx and focused on how the structures of capitalism reinforced unequal relations between the sexes. Unlike liberal feminism, Marxist feminists argued that women's oppression was as regarded as the product of economic, political and the social structures of capitalism ((Bandarage, 1984). They stressed that opening up the public sphere to women as equals to men was not adequate to liberate women. The Marxist movement sought to understand the structural and economic processes that affected the fate of working people and, most importantly the fate of women who made up the majority of the working class (Gimenez & Vogel, 2005). Although, original Marxist theory had little to say about gender, the work of Friedrich Engels created a platform for a new and different thought in understanding women's subordination and social life (Connelly *et al.*, 2002; Jacquette, 1982). Marxist feminists argued that women's subordination could only be ended by dismantling the capitalist system. The Marxist feminists explained that the capitalist system created an economic underclass for women because much of women's labour (unpaid care work in the private sphere) remained uncompensated. As such Marxist feminists added to the traditional Marxist analysis by considering women's care work as a key element of gender relations.

Marxist feminists turned to the work of Friedrich Engels (1884), *The Origins of the Family: Private Property and the State*, in arguing that the capitalist mode of production contributed to gender inequality in its various forms. Capitalism, in Engels's argument increased the domination of men in social and political societies, whilst women became the 'head servants' (Armstrong, 2020; Jacquette, 1982). When domestic animals and land under settled farming conditions started to create a surplus of wealth, the basis for private property and its domination by men was set. As this shift in the mode of production gave men economic power, men became dominant inside the family (Donavan, 2000) and women remained heavily dependent on them. Engels also pointed out, however, that not all men were property owners, meaning that class divisions within sexes also existed. The capitalist mode of production, therefore, created both social class and gender structures in societies. This caused Engels to speculate that women were subordinated to guarantee that men would be able to pass on the property to their biological children, thereby maintaining the class structure.

Though a capitalist society relied on mass production and social reproduction, it also emphasized the gendered division of labour. It is through the gendered division of labour that Marxist feminists viewed the private/domestic sphere as contributing to the oppression of women in society. Hurst (2010) and Vogel (1983) explain that capitalist society institutionalized the division between public and private spheres, enabling men to dominate. While men met the demands of industrial production and creating surpluses by working outside and participating in the public sphere, women worked in the homes and were involved in the biological reproduction processes in the private sphere (Vogel, 1983). As a result, women spent most of their time in the private sphere not earning an income and depending on men to secure the economic sustenance of the family (Hossain *et al.*, 2016: 14). Hurst (2010) presents a similar view: as men worked outside, they gained more economic and political power than women who were confined to care work in the domestic sphere. This led to Marxist feminists to extend their argument to include the recognition of women's unpaid domestic labour which liberal feminists had overlooked. In this way, unlike liberal feminism which adopts an agency centred approach, Marxist feminism espouses a structural approach.

While Marxist feminists strongly argued for the disrupting of the capitalist system as a way of addressing the structural causes that contributed to women's subordination, it

was criticized for focusing solely on Marx's economic analysis of capitalism and overlooking other structural forms of women's oppression. Marxist feminists were accused of overlooking the different ways in which women's exploitation was a consequence of multiple forms of oppression (Armstrong, 2020), such as patriarchy. Patriarchy is a social system in which men dominate and hold power in all spheres of life and which exists independently of (although intertwined with) capitalist structures. These criticisms were supported by socialist feminists arguing that patriarchy, too, contributed to the unequal gender relations between men and women by buttressing the traditional gendered roles of women in society. Essentially, the goal was to eliminate both the capitalist system and patriarchy in order to shift the position of women in both the private and public spheres.

3.4.3 Socialist feminism

Socialist feminism rose in the 1960s as a product of the Chicago Women's Liberation Movement (CWLM) in the United States of America. The socialist feminists developed their own theory, partly because they felt that existing feminist theories, such as liberal feminism and Marxist feminism, were not capable of fully understanding and dealing directly with women's oppression. Socialist feminism is also part of a much wider Marxist movement which included the structural critique of capitalism. However, socialist feminists believed that both capitalism and patriarchy were systems that needed transformation because of their very exploitative and oppressive nature, especially towards women. Their argument was based on the assumption that women are a class, and that therefore there was a need to challenge both the capitalist class system and the patriarchal system which oppressed women specifically. Although Marxist and socialist feminism are sometimes grouped together, socialist feminists challenged the Marxist feminists' perceptions of capitalism, emphasizing patriarchy as a form of power which shaped women's lives (Armstrong, 2020).

Socialist feminists' arguments on women's oppression went beyond capitalism and the economic system to much deeper structural inequalities such as race, class, and gender. They recognized that, although women were divided by class, race, ethnicity, and political belief, they experienced a common oppression – that of being a woman. They argued that liberal feminism did not appreciate the depth of the structural oppression of women both in the domestic and public sphere in terms of the burden of unpaid care

work, and unfair labour market practices which placed women in the lowest paying jobs. Added to this, women in the working class experienced a double shift of work: as they clocked out from their formal employment, they continued to engage in the domestic and care duties of their households. These are some of the structural factors for which socialist feminists fought, stating that there was more than just one form of women's oppression (unlike other feminist theories). Their argument took into consideration race, social class, nationality, sexuality, and gender differences between individuals.

Socialist feminists emphasized that within a just, egalitarian, and classless system of government, driven by the socialist ideology of equality of all people before the law, patriarchy and capitalism would not survive. According to them, capitalism and patriarchy operate as mutually reinforcing units of an exploitative system (Ferguson, 2011). The belief is that equality between men and women is achievable only if capitalism and patriarchy are transformed into a set of processes that regards all people as equal at all levels of society. The vision espoused by socialist feminists is to develop strategies to bring about change and equality by challenging the institutional patterns of capitalism and patriarchy which continue to produce and reinforce gender, class, and other social inequalities. The goal of socialist feminists was not just to increase women's access to and control of productive resources but also to challenge institutions that enforce rules which favour men more than women in society. Institutions such as the State, labour markets, community, and the household play a role in either shaping or hindering women's agency. We now turn to a discussion on intersectional feminism.

3.4.4 Intersectional feminism

Intersectional feminism is a framework that was coined by Kimberlè Crenshaw in 1989 as a way of understanding social relations by examining intersecting forms of discrimination such as race, class, gender, sexism and ageism which may occur at the same time in a person's life. This feminist thought is situated within black feminism which is centred on understanding the experiences of black women's position in relation to racism, sexism, class, and other social identities. "Black feminism is the recognition that African American women are status deprived because they face discrimination on the basis of race and gender" (Simien, 2004: 83). The main point here is that both black feminism and intersectional feminism share the view that race, class, gender, and other social relations cannot be studied as separate categories. Instead, these feminists suggest

that the cross pressures of race, gender etc. be studied simultaneously, making it easier to explain the experiences of black women who have been doubly side lined politically, economically, and socially. Davis (2008) and Risman (2004) are of the notion that intersectional feminism has become prominent in many academic disciplines and that one should always take into consideration the multiple axes of oppression that are present and active in people's lives or in certain groups. This paints the picture that intersectional feminism is not only relevant within the wider feminist universe but also in other disciplines.

Crenshaw developed the concept of 'intersectionality' and intersectional feminism in her capacity as a Harvard Law School graduate and professor. Crenshaw's intersectional feminism explained that race and gender intersect in a way that causes inequalities. For instance, she argued that the law was not favourable to black women in particular because it only recognized one form of discrimination based on gender. Thus, other forms of oppression experienced by black women were ignored. Crenshaw (1989) was worried that overlooking the way in which the intersectional experiences of black women differed from white women and black men, made black women invisible in plain sight. As shown by socialist feminism, gender inequalities are not the only form of discrimination that women face but race, class, age, ethnicity, and nationality also intersect with gender inequalities to further oppress women. Intersectional feminism shares similarities with socialist feminism in simultaneously assessing gender inequalities with other forms of social inequalities. It is quite different from Marxist feminism because Marxism focuses on the intersections of gender and class which arise from capitalism – this perspective does not delve deeper into identity.

Scholars such as Barvosa (2008) have worked around expanding the conceptualisation of intersectionality/intersectional feminism. This scholar identifies three distinct modes of intersectional feminism:

The first mode is one emphasized by Crenshaw (1989) in which multiple identities and social relations produce compound or additive meanings or influence on individual experience, group relations or social outcomes. The second mode is one in which social identities generate alternative or cross cutting meaning or influence. The third mode occurs when social identities and relations are overlapping in their content such that they share group specific meanings, values, or practices (Barvosa, 2008: 78).

As highlighted at the beginning of this topic, the three modes further reinforce the notion that intersectional feminism is centred on identity. Identity refers to a person's characteristics, values, qualities, and beliefs. It also includes other aspects such as personal and cultural backgrounds, experiences, and interests. Identity shapes our sense of self and how we perceive and interact with the world around us such as, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, class, nationality, religious beliefs, and race. Intersectional feminism differs from other feminist perspectives discussed in this chapter as it addresses the experiences and challenges faced by individuals with multiple overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalization. Liberal feminism, Marxist feminism and socialist feminism include the economic system. Intersectional feminism ignores it, even though it is critically important.

Although intersectional feminism has gained momentum in feminist theory and in some other disciplines, it has been criticized for being too ambiguous and confusing. It has been critiqued as being vague in its definition and lacking in empirical evidence (Nash, 2008). "Its methodology has also been questioned in terms of whether it's a theory, a concept or an exploratory device or a reading strategy for doing feminist analyses" (Davis, 2008: 68). McCall (2005) extends this critique by stating that the vagueness and confusion emanate from the complexity of the term. She further argues that not all methodologies allow for such complex analysis, leaving a limited choice of methodologies to use. For instance, intersectional feminism may be applied in qualitative methodology but would prove difficult or have limited application in quantitative methodology. Therefore, it is not clear whether intersectional feminism must be restricted to understanding individual experiences or to theorizing identity.

Another critique of intersectional feminism is based on class. Although this form of feminist theory describes the effects of multiple oppression, the theory does not give an adequate explanation in addressing class in its analyses. Marxist feminists argue that class needs to be reinserted in the analysis of intersecting forms of inequalities (Walby *et al.*, 2012). However, it has been argued that intersectional feminists do not count class as a social relation derived from exploitative relations, instead they observe class as a form of discrimination and prejudice (Jankie, 2019). Even though class is important in the analysis of inequalities, there is a distinction between class as an identity and class as a relationship to the means of production and the economic structure. Nevertheless, it

should be noted that intersectional feminism is based mostly on identity. It draws on structural orientation in addressing the multiple intersecting forms of gender and other inequalities.

3.4.5 African Feminism

African feminism emerged from the historical struggles and oppression of African women for equality, autonomy and recognition of women's rights. It was a response to the intersecting oppression encountered by African women as a result of colonialism, patriarchy and other forms of discrimination. Amina Mama's work has been influential in shaping African Feminism. African feminism is a political project that challenges the oppression and marginalization of women within Africa and seeks to promote gender equality and social justice (Mama 1995). Goredema (2010: 34) also asserts that African feminism is:

a justice that aims to create a discernible difference between women who were colonised and those who were deemed the colonisers, and a social movement that aims to raise global consciousness which sympathizes with African women's histories and present realities and future expectations.

This is to say that African feminism advocated for the world to not just view women's struggles through the perspectives of Western feminism. African feminists argued that the experience of African women's oppression differed from women in the West due to a number of factors, particularly, colonialism, identity and their culture (Akinbobola 2015). The same point is echoed by Tamale (2006: 1) that "African feminism considers the history and diversity of Africa including colonialism". Some of the prominent figures who have contributed to the development of African feminism include: Amina Mama, Ama Ata Aidoo, Nawal El Saadawi and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

Importantly, the struggle against colonialism and oppressive systems is a central theme in African feminism. "African feminism recognises that certain inequalities and limitations existed in traditional societies and that colonialism reproduced and reinforced them" (Mango 2023: 11). For instance, in some African societies, men (the father, husband, elder brother) made decisions on behalf of women. During the colonial era in Zimbabwe, the British colonialists further strengthened these inequalities by reinforcing patriarchy – women were not recognized as 'adults' capable of making their own decisions (see Chapter 7 on the status of women in Zimbabwe). These are some of the

inequalities with which African feminism grapples. In response to this, Ahikire (2014) argues that African feminists have made significant gains within the political sphere as African women now constitute a political constituency, within which women have a platform to engage and make decisions on their collective and various interests and needs. The author further references that, “four out of the ten African countries with the highest number of women in national legislatures are African countries with Rwanda topping the list with 63.8%” (*ibid*: 13).

Another interesting theory within the context of African feminism is intersectionality. As highlighted earlier on, intersectionality recognizes that individuals can experience multiple forms of oppression and discrimination based on their intersecting identities such as race, gender, class, ethnicity, age, sexuality etc. In African feminism, intersectionality is crucial because it helps to understand the complex and interconnected nature of discrimination encountered by African women. Thus, by recognizing the intersections between gender, class, race, and culture, African feminists seek to create a more inclusive and diverse movement that addresses the diverse needs and experiences of women in Africa. Such a movement can also enable African women to come together collectively in solidarity to share their experiences and to fight against oppressive systems and all forms of inequality. One of the most popular movements is the Pan-African Women’s Organisation (PAWO) founded in 1962 which aimed to promote women’s rights, gender equality and social justice.

Another central theme in African feminism is ‘mothering’. This theme has played a crucial role in challenging patriarchy and traditional gendered roles and in advocating for women’s rights. Scholars such as, Mama (1995) and Cherrie *et al.*, (1993) argued that the roles and experiences of African women as mothers, caretakers, and community builders should be acknowledged and value the labour as contributions of women in these roles. In essence, mothering is seen as a way of empowering African women to take control of their own choices and experiences. The theme of mothering in African feminism also brings out a part of WEE literature which advocates for the recognition of women’s contribution in unpaid care work.

Although African feminism has made significant strides in promoting gender equality, women’s rights and social justice, it has its pitfalls. One of the major pitfalls of African feminism is ‘resistance and backlash’ from traditional and patriarchal structures. In

many African societies, African feminists receive resistance from patriarchal or traditional institutions that seek to maintain the status quo and limit women's freedoms and rights. This is evident in this study's findings in chapter 5, for instance, where the official policy document stipulates that WEE is not only about access to and control of productive resources but also eliminating the structural gender inequalities in the labour market. However, in practice, the structural inequalities are seldom addressed. Regardless of this, African feminism remains crucial to this study because it details the unique struggles and discrimination against women in the small-scale gold mining sector, a male-dominated domain in the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts in Zimbabwe.

3.4.6 Situating the SRA within Feminist Theory

At the beginning of this section (feminist perspectives), we highlighted the importance of situating the SRA within feminist theory. It is within socialist feminism that the SRA is mostly closely linked. Even March *et al.* (1999), Hillenbrand *et al.* (2014) and Manyungwa *et al.* (2019) agree that the SRA has socialist feminist roots. As mentioned earlier, socialist feminism advocates for challenging the deeper structural factors that keep women in subordinate positions. Inspired by socialist feminist roots, Kabeer's (1994) SRA asserts that development is a process of increasing human wellbeing (survival, security, and autonomy) and not economic growth and increased productivity. Socialist feminism and the SRA maintain that the economic system is still important in producing and reproducing inequalities, unlike intersectional feminism which tends to ignore the economic system, and which focuses instead on identity.

Both the SRA and socialist feminism maintain that access to productive resources do not automatically lead to the liberation of women unless the patriarchal structures, which determine and shape gendered social relations and wellbeing, are challenged. For instance, literature on WEE in Chapter 2 indicated that, while women's access to micro credit is a step ahead in terms of closing the financial gap and promoting economic empowerment, it can also have negative impacts. Studies in micro credit show that some men and male relatives take control of the loans, leaving women without any decision-making power and further disempowering them. This is one of the examples of how patriarchal practices in the household limit women's agency, and it is this argument which the SRA and socialist feminists seek to address.

Another way in which the socialist feminist roots of the SRA are made clear is through the emphasis on promoting policies which seek to transform the structural factors that keep women in subordinate positions. This includes the unequal sharing of unpaid care work, unequal gender relations between men and women, unfair labour market practices, class inequalities, etc. The SRA, too, makes it clear that the focus is on rethinking existing systems and policy approaches, concepts and tools from a gendered perspective in order to reveal their biases and limitations and to discard and transform them in achieving gender equality (Kabeer, 1994). It is a clear indication that socialist feminism and the SRA take up a structural orientation in challenging social inequality by focusing on the processes through which equal power sharing between men and women is achieved. Thus, their aim (socialist feminism and the SRA) is to disrupt the systems that have contributed to women's oppression. The notion put forward by socialist feminists is that equality may only exist upon the elimination of patriarchy and the transformation of the capitalist system. A similar view is shared by the SRA in that there needs to be a transformation of institutional rules and processes in addressing the structural inequalities that hinder wellbeing. Although socialist feminism and the SRA acknowledge agency, they both draw on structural roots that locate the interaction of institutions within a network of social relations that oppress women.

Socialist feminism does not focus on gender alone but also on other forms of inequalities that intersect with gender to oppress women such as class, race, and ethnicity. Drawing on intersectionality, socialist feminism examines the intersections of gender, class, race, ethnicity, and other factors to understand how they collectively contribute to the oppression of women. An example here would be the case of domestic workers, predominantly women, who face multiple layers of oppression based on gender, class, race, and ethnicity. Socialist feminism would then draw on intersectionality to analyse how gender intersects with class, race, and ethnicity to perpetuate the exploitation and marginalization of domestic workers. An interpretation based on gender shows us how domestic work has historically and culturally been associated with women's traditional roles and responsibilities. The gendered expectation that women should primarily take up domestic tasks devaluates domestic work. Another aspect based on class depicts that domestic work is often poorly paid without benefits or job and social security. Many domestic workers also come from low income households and so their economic vulnerability further reinforces their exploitation. The class aspect of their (women's)

oppression further intersects with gender as domestic work is seen as 'women's work'. Regarding race and ethnicity, in many countries there is a disproportionate number of women from marginalized racial and ethnic backgrounds, such as migrant workers or racial minority groups, who perform domestic work. Hence, they face additional challenges due to racial discrimination, xenophobia, and limited access to rights and protection. By drawing on intersectionality, socialist feminism recognizes the challenges faced by domestic workers, which cannot be solely attributed to their gender. Intersectionality brings out the inter-connectedness of gender, class, race, and ethnicity in shaping the experiences of women's oppression and inequalities.

The SRA, too, does not confine itself to the social relations of gender and it also focuses on other cross-cutting social relations that create and perpetuate social difference and inequalities such as race, class, and ethnicity etc. Overall, while socialist feminism and the SRA recognize that economy plays a crucial part in changing women's position in society, the core argument is that there is a need to dismantle the systems that have overlooked the structural root causes of women's oppression.

Now that we have clarified the theoretical roots of the SRA as located within socialist feminism, we discuss the differences and inconsistencies between the two theories. Socialist feminism originates from feminism which is a range of movements that advocate for the social, economic, and political equality of men and women. Although the SRA is rooted in socialist feminism, it is categorized under the gender analysis frameworks. Gender analysis frameworks are a variety of methods adopted to understand the relationships between men and women in access to and control of productive resources, as well as the activities and constraints that each of them face in their day to day lives.

They are a means to a bigger end: that of devising and implementing policies and programs which do not exclude or harm women, which take their needs and perspectives into account and which may help redress some of the gender imbalances (March et al., 1999: 15).

Thus, the analysis of the NGP is better understood through the SRA as it offers a more pragmatic angle in examining the ways in which the policy interacts with the market, the community, and family in either disrupting or reinforcing gender and class differences. As discussed in the section on gender analysis frameworks, the policy orientation of the SRA helps in answering the study's research questions.

Earlier on, we highlighted that socialist feminism argued for the transformation of capitalism and patriarchy because of their very exploitative and oppressive nature especially with regards to women. Alternatively, the SRA's central focus is on social relationships in access to productive resources and how these social relationships are reinforced through institutions such as the State, market, community, and the family/household. The SRA draws on a multi-level approach in analysing how social differences and inequalities are produced, reproduced, and reinforced through the interaction of institutions. This framework further emphasises that gender, class, and other social inequalities are not only found in the community and family alone but also within the State, the market, and in international organisations. Despite the differences and consistencies between the SRA and socialist feminism, it is clear that SRA is situated within socialist feminism.

From this discussion, there is no doubt that structure and agency are important aspects of understanding social life, whether they are debated individually or pieced together. These concepts allow for a deepening of the analysis of the NGP. This is done by analysing the NGP and its implementation through a hybrid approach that integrates both structure and agency.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed in detail the theoretical framework that the researcher used to contextualize the study, namely the Social Relations Approach (SRA). The SRA is the main framework that guided this thesis: it focuses on transforming institutional rules and processes that create unequal social relations. Kabeer (1994) emphasises that the SRA does not seek to 'add' women but to reverse the structures and unequal social relations that have hindered women's agency in access to productive resources. Through its five key concepts, the SRA shows how institutions interact with each other through their rules, activities, resources, people, and power in either producing, reproducing, or challenging social inequalities in access to productive resources. Therefore, it provides the thesis with a framework for analysing the extent to which the NGP reversed or reinforced gender and class inequalities for women miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. This will enable the researcher to effectively analyse the impact of the NGP across a range of institutions – the market, community, and

household/family – and to see how these institutional interactions affected the social relations in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda.

The chapter also explored prominent feminist theories such as liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, intersectional feminism and African feminism in order to highlight the theoretical underpinnings of the SRA. Hillenbrand *et al.* (2014), March *et al.* (1999) and Manyungwa *et al.* (2019) all agree that the SRA is rooted in a socialist feminism, however, the scholars do not detail the ways in which the SRA is inspired by socialist feminism. This chapter, then, discusses the prominent feminist theories and situates the SRA within socialist feminism detailing the ways in which the framework is inspired by socialist feminism. The key point or similarity is in the way that socialist feminism and the SRA advocate for the transformation of structures and processes that create and reinforce inequality. The SRA and socialist feminism acknowledge the importance of the economic system, but also advocate for a deeper understanding of the structural root causes of gender inequality, unlike liberal feminism which does not consider the structural factors.

This chapter also explored another important aspect of the thesis as a whole, namely the tensions of structure and agency that run through feminist theory and women's economic empowerment literature as highlighted in Chapter 2. The section on feminist perspectives shows the ways in which prominent feminist theory has drawn on either structure or agency in addressing gender equality. Although scholars have undoubtedly justified which of the concepts is better than the other, there has been a tendency to take a more hybrid position. The structure-agency debate is an important theme in this thesis because it aids the analysis of the implementation of the NGP through a hybrid position.

In as much as the SRA has its theoretical underpinnings within socialist feminism, it is categorized under gender analysis frameworks. The chapter went further to explore alternative gender analysis frameworks such as the Harvard Analytical Framework (HAF) and the Women's Empowerment Framework (WEF) in order to justify why the SRA fits more consistently with this study. Though the HAF and WEF are equally important gender analysis frameworks, they fail to address the underlying structural factors hindering women's economic empowerment. Furthermore, these gender analysis frameworks do not consider how institutional rules and practices produce and reinforce social inequalities like the SRA does.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes and justifies the methodology and procedures adopted in this study in order to analyse the impact of Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy on women's economic empowerment. A research methodology provides the road map which guides the researcher through the entire research process. In this study, the methodological approach was informed by the research questions posed at the outset and the Social Relations Approach (SRA). The SRA provided this study with a framework for analyzing the NGP policy with a more hybrid approach – a mixture of structure and agency. The chapter spans across several sections, beginning with a focus on research paradigms and placing the study within a suitable research paradigm. This is followed by a review of the methodological approach adopted for the study. The third section focuses on outlining the research design, which is then followed by sections on sampling and the data collection methods that were employed. Finally, the last part of this chapter provides a comprehensive review of the data analysis methods that were used, including discussions around data credibility and trustworthiness, and the ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

4.2 Research paradigms

Research paradigms can be theorized as an approach that guides the process and method of how a research study should be carried out. They are viewed as shared beliefs and practices in the field of research. Rehman and Alharthi (2016: 51) highlight that a “research paradigm is a basic belief system and theoretical framework with assumptions about i) ontology ii) epistemology iii) methodology and, iv) methods”. Creswell (2013) defines research paradigms as philosophical world views defined by different ontological and epistemological views. Epistemology is intimately related to ontology and methodology: Ontology involves the philosophy of reality, but epistemology addresses how we come to know that reality, while the methodology identifies the particular practices used to attain that knowledge (Krauss, 2005).

As mentioned above, ontology is how we view reality. It is the interpretation or perception of the nature of reality. Crotty (1998) suggests that ontology is the study of 'being' and is concerned with 'what is', for instance the nature of existence and the structure of reality as such. Snape and Spencer (2003), define ontology as the nature of the world and what we are able to know about it. Thus, ontology is our theory of truth and the reality that exists. Ontology can help researchers understand how certain they can be about the nature and existence of phenomena they are investigating. It is important to note that the different paradigms that are discussed in this chapter have different ontological assumptions. For instance, realism or positivism assumes that there is a singular reality. On the other hand, a relativist or interpretivist approach assumes that reality is constructed within the human mind, so that no one 'true' reality exists. According to an interpretivist, reality may exist, but it is hidden under different layers of social construction.

Epistemology entails how we know that reality exists. It is the philosophy of knowledge (Trochim, 2000). It is in essence about 'knowing' – the quest for finding knowledge. Both Krauss (2005) and Slevitch (2011) are of the view that epistemology addresses the fundamental questions: How do we know what we know? What is the truth? What is the legitimate knowledge? And what is the relationship between the knower and what is known? Epistemology is important because it informs the way in which researchers frame their research in their efforts to discover knowledge. Epistemological assumptions are concerned with how knowledge can be created, acquired, and communicated – in other words, what it means to know (Creswell, 2003). For instance, the main research question of this study is aimed at finding out the extent to which the NGP and its implementation has either disrupted or reinforced gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda. Therefore, the epistemological position of this study is rooted in subjectivism. Through interactions with different individuals describing their experiences of the NGP, the researcher would analyse the NGP by constructing meaning from their experiences.

In seeking knowledge, researchers adopt a methodology which is an approach that is used to uncover the truth. "It is an articulated and theoretically informed approach to the production of data" (Ellen, 1984: 4). Some scholars say it is a plan of action, a process or design which informs a researcher's choice of research methods (Crotty,

1998). Significantly, a methodology guides the researcher according to his/hers ontological and epistemological views in deciding what type of data is required for the study and the type of research methods that should therefore be adopted in the research. Methods are the different instruments that a researcher may use in collecting and analysing data such as interviews, questionnaires, and surveys. There are also other research methods a researcher may use such as experiments and participant observation.

According to Dawson (2009), Creswell (2013) and Mertens (2014) there are four major types of research paradigms that compete in research methodology, which include positivism, post-positivism, interpretivism/constructivism, and transformativism. These paradigms have different assumptions, concepts and propositions which guide the direction of research through ontology and epistemology. Mittwede (2012) points out that every paradigm is based upon presuppositions regarding reality and how it is understood; thus, these paradigms are essential foundations of deeply held assumptions.

4.2.1 Positivism

The term ‘positivism’ or ‘positive philosophy’ refers to a branch of philosophy that rose to prominence in the early 19th century through of the works of French philosopher Auguste Comte (Acton, 1989; Richards, 2003). It is also referred to as the ‘scientific’ method. In positivism, reality exists independent of the human mind; it is governed by ‘absolute’ laws and different mechanisms that are put in place by an authority. The ontological position of positivism is that of realism: it is a practice of accepting a situation as it is. The realist researcher strives to understand the social world like the natural world. This all points to the positivists’ view that there is one single reality that exists. The epistemological position taken by positivist researchers is ‘objectivism’. The researchers come in as objective observers to study a phenomenon that exists independently of them and they do not affect or disturb what is being observed. These positivist views are commonly aligned with quantitative methods of data collection and analysis (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999) which include experiments, questionnaires, and surveys.

Although positivist research has prevailed for nearly 60 years in mainstream educational and administration research in countries such as Britain and the United States of America, it has come under heavy criticism (Xinping, 2014). Observing its

ontological assumptions which state that only a single truth exists, this eliminates other perspectives and dimensions of a subject. Therefore, it may not be successful when applied to social phenomena. The complex laws governing individuals within society are in contrast with the order and regularity of what one may find in the natural world. This led to the emergence of the post-positivist research paradigm which advocated for adopting a hybrid approach that includes positivism and interpretivism/constructivism.

4.2.2 Post-positivism

Post-positivism stepped forward as a reaction to the limitations of positivism as a research paradigm (Aliyu *et al.*, 2014; Panwhar *et al.*, 2017). Educational researchers found that positivism as a research paradigm could not meet the requirements for social science research because it based itself on observable data (Panwhar *et al.*, 2017). Thus, post-positivism was an attempt to address the weaknesses of the positivist research paradigm. The ontological position of post-positivists is critical realism. Critical realism assumes that a single reality exists independent of the researcher, but it can be apprehended ‘imperfectly’ because of the complexity of social phenomena. Healy and Perry (2000) confirm this by stating that post-positivism concerns itself with multiple perceptions about a single reality. Furthermore, this paradigm recognizes that there may be a possibility that the researcher’s own beliefs and values might affect what is being investigated.

Post-positivist researchers adopt a ‘mixed methods’ approach which includes qualitative and quantitative research methodology in finding the truth. This paradigm challenges the traditional approach of positivism and interpretivism that solely draw on one research methodology to produce the results. It focuses on observation and measurement. Critical realists value the perceptions or realities of people and measure their varying realities against theoretical reasoning and experiments. The post-positivist paradigm draws on different methods derived from qualitative and quantitative methodology for their research. Methods such as case studies and unstructured or semi-structured in-depth interviews are acceptable and appropriate within the paradigm, as are statistical analyses (Bisman, 2002).

4.2.3 Interpretivism/Constructivism

The interpretivist paradigm is sometimes referred to as the constructivist approach because it emphasizes the ability of individuals to construct meaning. Interpretivism, just like post-positivism, rejects the notion that only a single reality exists independent of the human mind. It also emerged as a response to the dominance of the positivist paradigm which eliminated the realities of human experience. Interpretivism believes in socially constructed multiple realities, therefore, the truth is hidden under different social layers. Researchers working within this tradition assume that people's subjective experiences are real and should be taken seriously (ontology) and that we can understand other's experiences by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us (epistemology) (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). The epistemological position of interpretivism is subjective – the researcher engages with other individuals and society and then constructs meaning of social phenomena. The main goal of interpretive research is to try and understand the interpretations of individuals about the social phenomena with which they interact. Peoples' life experiences are usually not the same, but every individual has had different experiences which has led to different outcomes in their lives.

According to Lincoln *et al.* (2011) the methodology of constructivism is predicated upon dialectical interchange, which aims to bring out informed interpretations from research participants. As such, constructivists collect mostly qualitative data from participants over an extended period of time, for example ethnography and case studies (Cohen *et al.*, 2017), in order to produce better knowledge which would be subject to more assessments. Social constructionist researchers want to show how understandings and experiences of individuals are derived from (and feed into) larger discourses (Blanche *et al.*, 1999). However, interpretivism has been criticized for being incapable of yielding theories that could be generalized to larger populations. Another disadvantage of the interpretivist research paradigm is subjectivity, where a researcher's experience and cultural beliefs may influence participants' behaviours. Despite these criticisms, Richards (2003) emphasizes that qualitative inquiry is not a 'soft' approach – it demands rigor, precision, and careful attention to detail.

4.2.4 Transformativism

The transformative research paradigm was championed by Mertens (1999; 2007; 2009) as a viable and compelling framework for research that incorporates a social justice orientation and advocacy for marginalized community voices (Jackson *et al.*, 2018). This paradigm seeks to challenge the social injustices of the marginalized people in a society, such as women, children, youth (young men and women) or people living with disabilities. The transformative paradigm arose due to dissatisfaction with the traditional research approaches (i.e. positivism and constructivism) by people who had experienced discrimination and oppression, such as women, people living with disabilities, and people of colour (Mertens, 2014). This type of research paradigm influences how research is done by including the voices that have long been marginalized. This paradigm thrives to examine power relationships in promoting social justice. In other words, it seeks to disrupt the unequal power relations that exist between different groups of people such as men and women, people of different ethnical backgrounds and colour, as well as those who are discriminated against in society.

Similar to constructivism, a transformative paradigm may emphasize the use of a qualitative methodology; alternatively, it could also adopt a mixed methods approach in drawing out the voices of those who have been marginalized. Jackson *et al.* (2018) have applied the transformative paradigm by using a mixed-methods approach in evaluating a needs assessment of a marginalized Latino community in the United States of America. Their study found that utilizing a social justice perspective in line with the transformative approach helped in creating a platform for the marginalized to express themselves to funding institutions and NGOs. This has also led to institutional changes that continue to have wider impact on their community organisations through their grant making processes, amplifying for change (Morris, 2015).

Although the transformative paradigm places central importance on the marginalized groups, in this study, the researcher intends to obtain a deeper understanding on the perceptions and experiences of women and men small-scale gold miners regarding the implementation of the National Gender Policy in Zimbabwe. The following section situates this thesis within a research paradigm.

4.2.5 Situating the study within a research paradigm

This section situates this thesis within the interpretivist research paradigm, clearly laying out the reasoning behind it. The interpretivist paradigm rejects the notion that a single reality exists independent of the human mind. The interpretive researcher aims to explore participant's perspectives and shared meanings so as to develop a deeper insight and understanding of phenomena occurring in the social world. In analysing the NGP and its implementation, the researcher engaged with different groups of people. The State officials under the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the officials from the UNDP country office were engaged for their understanding of the structure and processes involved in the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. This was followed by the researcher interacting with representatives of mining associations, men and women miners in Bubi and Gwanda, who were both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the policy's empowerment programs. These interactions aided the researcher in bringing out the different realities of men and women miners in Bubi and Gwanda after the implementation of the policy's empowerment programs.

As presented above, the study required that the researcher interacts with the individuals who implemented the NGP's empowerment programs and the people who were affected by the policy. Literature in Chapter 2 revealed that many women have experienced social inequalities in access to and control of productive resources that are unique to their own settings. These inequalities have been created and reproduced across a range of institutions such as the family/household, the community, the market, and the State. The circumstances that either support or impede on women's access to productive resources from the State (State institutions) are usually determined through social relations (Chapter 3). This is why the study is grounded within an interpretivist paradigm: to bring out the different realities of the women miners within the family, market, community, and State in access to and control over productive resources. In this regard, it is also important to emphasize that one reality could be apprehended differently by different people – for example, the perspective of the women will be quite different from the men and also different from that of government.

The main purpose of the interpretivist research paradigm is to understand human experiences. These experiences were better captured through an interpretive research paradigm, given that this study draws on two of the SRA's key concepts (social

relations and institutional analysis) together with the research questions from the NGP's analysis. As highlighted in Chapter 3, the thesis applied the social relations and institutional analysis concepts of the SRA, as they allowed the researcher to assess how changes within the State (NGP) intersected with other institutions such as the market, community, and family/household levels in disrupting and/or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. In addition to this, it enabled the researcher to explore the NGP through the lens of the people in government (as noted in Chapter 2, these are termed 'street-level bureaucrats': government or public office holders) and the men and women small-scale gold miners by understanding their perceptions of WEE and what adequate support meant for them. It also helped to provide an understanding of the role played by the NGP in changing the social and work relationships within the State, market, community, and family. Thus, the diverse experiences, assumptions, and conceptions of the men and women miners in Bubi and Gwanda contributed to the ongoing construction of reality with regards to the NGP and its implementation.

Interpretivist researchers seek to obtain truth through a qualitative methodology. The interpretivist epistemological assumptions assert that truth or meaning arises through engagement with different realities of the world. This thesis drew on a qualitative methodology in analysing the NGP. Qualitative methodology helped the researcher understand the complex dynamics of the State and State processes in implementing programs under the NGP. The qualitative/interpretivist approach also allowed the researcher to look more deeply within the perceptions and understandings of State officials and State processes which underpin policy making. Although the interpretive research paradigm has been criticized for failing to generalize its findings to a larger population, it was appropriate for this thesis because of its flexibility in allowing the researcher to immerse herself within the participants' natural settings to gather their experiences and perceptions of the role that the National Gender Policy played in women's economic empowerment in the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda.

4.3 Qualitative methodological approach

This section discusses the methodological approach used in answering the study's key research questions. The methodological approach applied to this study was purely qualitative. This approach has been used across a variety of disciplines to describe how

things are or the way in which people behave or interact. A qualitative approach enables researchers to probe into questions of meaning, to examine institutional and social practices and processes, to identify barriers and facilitators to change, and to uncover the reasons for the success or failure of interventions (Starks *et al.*, 2007). This study therefore adopted a qualitative approach as it allowed the researcher to examine the NGP and the processes of its implementation.

A qualitative approach broadly refers to a category of research approaches that produce findings without reliance on quantitative measures or statistical conclusions (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Unlike the quantitative approach, a qualitative approach pays careful attention to institutional processes and interventions, as well as people's lived experiences (Rahman, 2020). The qualitative research approach helps in gaining an understanding of why some interventions either work or do not always work in the real world. A study by Hamilton and Finley (2019) found that a qualitative research methodology helped them in understanding why clinical interventions did not work. These scholars indicated that a qualitative approach helped in understanding the reasons behind the successes and failures of healthcare interventions. A qualitative approach was therefore also most suitable for this thesis for the particular reason that it helped the researcher to fill the gaps in knowledge by examining the impact of the NGP on gender and class differentials (see Chapter 2).

There are three main reasons why a qualitative approach was used in this study and these will be outlined in the following paragraphs. Firstly, according to Taylor (1997), there has been limited attention on methodologies used in analysing public policies. The same is echoed by Ball (1994), pointing out that most policy studies and analyses have been dominated by commentary and critique instead of providing empirical evidence of how the policy is performing on the ground. A suitable methodology is one that gives a comprehensive analysis of the State and that states policy processes rather than drawing conclusions from the policy document. One of the advantages of drawing on a qualitative approach is that it can be used to advance an understanding of how institutions work as well as the gendered practices embedded in them (Miller, 1997). Influenced by the SRA and the study's research questions, a qualitative approach was appropriate for the researcher to conduct an institutional analysis of the State and the processes in implementing the NGP's empowerment programs and its outcomes

(Chapter 5) as political processes and policy development shape or are shaped by social power relations and the powers of the State (Meitzenfeldt, 1992).

Similarly, Hickey *et al.* (2020: 6) highlight that “across sub-Saharan Africa policy makers face choices not only between what interests to promote but also on which policies to prioritise”. This is made possible through ‘social power relations’: these involve other actors (or institutions) who have the ability to change the structures of other actors in order to bring about policy outcomes. Examples of social power relations are State institutions, as well as political, economic, and social elite and non-elite groups which are shaped by the formal and informal institutions that distribute resources and impact on the wider society. Programs, resources, and activities that are run under State policies are subject to negotiation and bargaining by political elites within the State. Hence, a qualitative approach is vital in understanding a policy or intervention from the perspective of those creating and implementing it to those that would be affected by it. This approach helped ascertain an understanding of the politics of the State, and the processes of how resources flow from the State to the Ministry of Women’s Affairs in facilitating empowerment programs run under the NGP. These are all very fundamental facts that contributed to the way in which the NGP’s empowerment programs were implemented. `

Secondly, according to Maxwell (2020), there are certain key strengths of qualitative research which are important in the analysis of public policy. These are the analyses of meaning, context, and process. These strengths are often ignored in defending the value of qualitative research (*ibid.*). Meaning in qualitative research refers to peoples’ beliefs, values, theories, and understandings – it is sometimes termed the ‘participant’s perspective’. It is important to consider people’s beliefs, values, theories, and understanding when developing or assessing a policy. This is one of the reasons why this study considered engaging with men, women and stakeholders in the analysis of the NGP in order to find meaning regarding the role played by the NGP and its empowerment programs in supporting and/or impeding women’s economic empowerment in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda.

Context, also a key feature identified in qualitative research, refers to identifying the relevant features of the setting where the policy is being implemented (Maxwell, 2020; Cartwright & Hardie, 2012). The authors highlight that the setting in which the policy

is being implemented can either support or impede the goals of the policy. For instance, Becker (1992) assessed social organisations developed in male and female prisons to provide prisoners with items of which they felt deprived. This resulted in different outcomes. Her study found that the context in which these organisations were set up was different and that women's needs were different to those of men. It is important, therefore, to consider the policy and the setting (where the policy is implemented) in how they relate to each other to shape policy goals. In this study, context was a key strength in a qualitative approach that enabled the researcher to analyse the NGP by focusing more on how relations between men and women shifted at work, in the community and at home. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 analyse the impact of the NGP in the market, the community, and the family in either challenging and/or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda.

The third reason for using the qualitative approach to research, is its ability to focus on process. A qualitative research can be used by the researcher to identify the actual processes of how a policy may have managed to successfully reach its goals or encounter some unexpected challenges. As will be shown in Chapter 5 (the institutional analysis of the State), the qualitative approach allowed the researcher to focus more on the processes of the NGP and its implementation. Overall, qualitative research is a critical approach to discovering and documenting: the context(s) in which implementation occurs, the environment in where implementation occurs, the processes that occur during implementation, and the effectiveness of implementation strategies (Curran *et al.*, 2012). Qualitative research added value to the NGP analysis by helping to describe what was happening and why.

4.4 Research design

This research study used a case study research design in analysing the NGP and its implementation in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. A research design is a detailed description of a proposed study aimed at investigating a problem. It is a plan of action or a strategy that a researcher picks to integrate the different aspects of the research study in a more logical way. Blanche *et al.* (1995) emphasise that a research design is a framework that is developed by making decisions about the research paradigm, the purpose of the study, the methods used, and the environment within which the investigation takes place. In essence, a research design is the way in which the

researcher moves from the research questions to the conclusion (Rowley, 2002). Aligning the research questions of this study with the theoretical framework was an important step in getting clear and valid conclusions on the extent to which the NGP's empowerment programs reversed or reinforced gender and class inequalities.

4.4.1 Case study research design

As outlined above, the study made use of a case study as a research design or strategy. Yin (2003) defines a case study as a method of enquiry which investigates a phenomenon within its real-life setting. Creswell (2003) explains that many case studies focus on a specific issue with the case (individual, multiple individuals, programs/interventions, or activities) in order to provide insight into the issue. The main purpose of a case study is to identify certain characteristics and key attributes of a specific object by focusing on an individual unit, i.e. a program. By so doing so, it provides an in-depth description of the phenomena based on its real-life setting (Njie & Asimiran, 2014).

There are several reasons for choosing a case study research design as a research strategy. First, in the case of this study, the SRA would be better apprehended through a case study. The researcher made use of it because it allowed her to pay careful attention to the processes and practices of the State in implementing empowerment programs under the NGP and in understanding how these processes interacted with women miners lived experiences in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. A case study design provides a reasonable method for collecting data and analysing the results, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

Secondly, a case study is able to provide a rationale for 'how' and 'why' things are the way they are. Yin (2003) posits that, in a case study, a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked regarding a set of existing events over which the researcher has little or no control. Rowley (2002) builds on this statement by emphasising that the types of research questions are also significant in determining whether to draw on a case study research design or not. For example, the research questions guiding this study probed into 'how' the NGP conceptualised WEE, as well as what had been the limitations to this study. Furthermore, the research questions probed into asking who benefited from these empowerment programs and why. The fact that 'how' and 'why' questions are being

asked in this study, means that it conforms to the basic requirements of a case study research design.

Thirdly, a case study has quite a number of other advantages. The great strength of a case study is that it allows the researcher to make use of diverse sources and techniques during the data collection processes. Baxter *et al.* (2008) confirm that qualitative case studies afford the researcher an opportunity to explore or describe phenomena in context, using a variety of data sources. The researcher used key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), open-ended semi-structured interviews, and document analysis in obtaining information from target participants in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. This variety of data allowed the researcher to triangulate data during the data collection process. This process resulted in a detailed analysis of the NGP and its implementation as demonstrated in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

In most instances, a case study research design selects a small geographical area or focuses on a certain group, intervention, or a limited number of individuals as subjects of the study. “The case study is a demarcation of a group, an area, or a situation for the purpose of concentrating intrinsically on it to understand and explain how it is living its case of interest” (Njie *et al.*, 2014: 37). This is sometimes referred to as ‘binding’ the case, which is significant in that it helps to put limitations to the case, which enables researchers to concentrate fully on bringing to light the issues that are at play within the case (*ibid.*). Therefore, it assists researchers in avoiding ambiguity in terms of focusing on larger areas and the difficulties associated with analysing large volumes of information.

Some scholars of research methodology have suggested that there are three ways to bind the case. These are: time and place (Creswell, 2003); time and activity (Stake, 1995) and definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The present study is bound by time and place as it focuses on the implementation of Zimbabwe’s second National Gender Policy (2013–2017) and women’s economic empowerment through women small-scale gold miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. The places – Bubi and Gwanda – gave the researcher an opportunity to make an empirical contribution to understanding the ways in which the NGP and its implementation either disrupted or reinforced gender and class inequalities.

According to Babbie (2003), there are three different types of case studies, namely descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory case studies. A descriptive case study research design is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon. This type of case study enables the researcher to answer the ‘how’ question, fully describing an intervention or a program. An exploratory case study is used to explore those situations where the interventions being evaluated do not have a clear, single set of outcomes (Yin, 2011). Explanatory studies are useful when conducting causal studies. Blanch *et al.* (1999) asserts that explanatory studies aim to provide casual explanations of phenomena. This research study adopts a descriptive and exploratory case study method. Drawing on the study’s research questions and the SRA, the use of a descriptive and exploratory case study was of importance because of the kinds of questions the study needed to pose. These ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions required the researcher to attain an in-depth description of how the NGP’s implementation played a role in supporting or impeding women’s economic empowerment.

Limitations of a case study research design

Although numerous studies have argued that case studies are useful in gathering in-depth data, they too have shortcomings. One of the shortcomings is that case studies are often said to lack rigor. Zainal (2007: 21) emphasizes that “more often than not, case study researchers have been slovenly, fraught with ambiguous evidence or biased views thus, influencing the direction of the findings and conclusions”. To avoid this, the researcher remained focused and objective by sticking to the interview guides which were guided by the study’s research questions. Another limitation of a case study is that one cannot generalize the findings/results to a wider population. Yin (2014) described case studies as being ‘microscopic’ because of the small sample sizes. However, Zainal (2007) argues that a big sample is of no significance – what is important is establishing parameters and setting clear objectives for the research. These shortcomings also apply to this study as it utilizes the case study research design. Furthermore, the findings of this study were not generalized to a broader population or geographical area.

4.5 Sampling

The participants for this study were derived from the Ministry of Women’s Affairs And Gender and Community Development (MOWAGCD), the UNDP country office

(Zimbabwe), and men and women miners from the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts, as well as executive members from the BSSMA and Mthandazo women miners' associations. Sampling is a system used by researchers to select suitable participants for a study. In order to answer the research questions, it is essential for the researcher to collect data, however, there is a need to define a sample first (Taherdoost, 2016). This is an essential process in research as achieving representation is one of the most important components of sampling. A sample is that representative subgroup of the population that is chosen for direct participation (Creswell, 2013). It is a group of individuals selected from a population. For example, if by any systemic device or any sampling technique you pick out 100 undergraduate students from a total of 1500 on the rolls of a college to test their physical fitness that means you have selected a sample from the population (Sharma, 2017). It is impossible for researchers to interview the entire population. Population is defined as a group of people or animals within a particular place that a researcher might be interested in investigating. Thus, researchers resort to adopting a sampling procedure as they neither have the time nor the resources to analyse every single individual in the population (Sharma, 2017; Taherdoost, 2016).

4.5.1 Sampling procedure

The researcher used purposive and snowball sampling procedures in the NGP's analysis. These are non-probability sampling procedures regularly associated with case study research design or qualitative methodology. Yin (2003) emphasises that case studies tend to adopt smaller sample sizes because they intend to examine real life phenomena, not making statistical inferences in relation to the wider population. Because this thesis focused on the implementation of the NGP on the small-scale gold mining sectors of Bubi and Gwanda, there needed to be specific participants selected for the study rather than the whole population in both districts. Non-probability sampling is defined as sampling in which not all members of the population will have an equal chance of participating. The types of sampling techniques in non-probability sampling include purposive sampling, snowball/referral sampling, quota sampling and convenience sampling.

Purposive sampling

According to Maxwell (1996), purposive sampling is defined as a strategy in which particular participants are selected deliberately in order to provide rich in-depth

information that cannot be obtained from other participants. A purposive sample was used in selecting six (6) participants which comprised of three (3) officials from the Ministry of Women's Affairs, for the particular reason that they are the implementing ministry of the NGP's empowerment programs. This assisted the researcher in obtaining rich in-depth information about the policy and processes in the implementation of the empowerment programs run under the NGP. Saunders *et al.*, (2009) asserts that purposive sampling enables the researcher to use his/her judgement to select cases that best answer the research questions and meet the study objectives.

Purposive sampling was also used in selecting two key representatives from the mining associations: one from BSSMA, Bubi and another from Mthandazo Women Miners Association in Gwanda. Mining associations are institutions that play a role in determining women's access to productive resources and their access into the ASGM sectors. Essentially, the mining associations have extensive in-depth information regarding the ASGM sectors in Bubi and Gwanda. The same (purposive) sampling procedure was used in selecting the programs officer from the UNDP Zimbabwe country office. As presented in Chapter 5, the UNDP country office partnered with the Ministry of Women's Affairs in the implementation of the empowerment projects run under the NGP in Gwanda district. The advantage of using this sampling procedure was that it provided the researcher with a quick and easy way of collecting data.

Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling – which is sometimes called referral sampling – was utilized in recruiting women and men miners in Bubi and Gwanda. Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling where existing case subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances in order to increase sample size. Because of the researcher's previous work experience as a district officer in the Ministry of Local Government in the Bubi district, it was easy to identify two women miners who benefited from the policy's empowerment programs during the 2013–2018 period. The researcher then recruited six (6) more women miners who benefited from the State through referrals from the women miners who had been identified. Eight (8) other women miners who had not benefited from the State were selected through referrals from the women that had benefited, this was done in order to increase the sample size as well as to bring out the impact of the NGP on class differentials. The researcher also used the women

miners in recruiting fifteen (15) male miners in Bubi district so as to bring out the impact of the NGP on gender differentials.

With regards to snowball/referral sampling procedures, the researcher worked through the Gwanda district development coordinator's office in the Ministry of Women's Affairs to recruit women and men miners for the NGP analysis. The district officer then referred the researcher to the chairperson of the Mthandazo Women Miners Association to recruit more subjects. Through referrals from the chairperson the researcher recruited ten (10) women miners who had benefited from the NGP's empowerment programs, and 10 other women miners who were not beneficiaries. A total of twenty (20) men miners were recruited through the DDC's office. As highlighted in the paragraph above these sampling procedures helped to analyse the impact of the NGP through gender and class differentials within the districts.

Snowball sampling is significant as a suitable and relevant technique in encouraging other participants to take part in the study. Sharma (2017) and Breweton *et al.* (2001) emphasise that this sampling method is drawn on in hidden populations which are difficult for researchers to access due to their nature, for instance secret societies and inaccessible professionals etc. "As the sample builds up, enough data is gathered to be useful for research" (Sharma 2017: 752). This sampling technique has some limitations, one of them being that the representativeness of the sample is not guaranteed. Despite this limitation, snowball sampling is cost effective, convenient, and not as expensive as other sampling methods. The researcher made sure that referrals selected to participate in this study proved to be reliable subjects, which made it easier in conducting fieldwork. Overall, the use of these two non-probability sampling techniques supported the researcher in generating interesting empirical findings.

There have been debates about how big or small a qualitative sample should be. Mason (2002) states that, for practical reasons, qualitative samples are usually small, especially in terms of time and money, of generating and analysing qualitative data. Similarly, Blanche *et al.* (1999) argues that a sample size is determined by a number of limitations such as the number of people the researcher has access to, time available for the study and how much money is available to conduct the study. Most importantly, the types of research that are not concerned with attaining statistical data do not draw large or random samples. Thus, this thesis did not require a large sample.

The following section provides demographic information about men and women miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts who were the target participants. This was done to ensure that the findings of the research were applicable and representative of the population being studied.

4.5.2 Demographic information of target participants

To gather participant information such as age, marital status, and the number of children, the researcher distributed survey forms for participants to complete. This data helped to identify the target participants based on their age, marital status, and other relevant factors.

Table 4.1: Age range of participants

Participants	Actual Sample Size	20-29 years	30-39 years	40-49	50-59	60 years and above
Bubi District						
Women	16	-	5	7	4	-
Men	15	1	5	6	3	
Gwanda District						
Women	20	3	6	7	4	-
Men	20	4	4	8	4	

The age ranges presented in Table 4.1 show that women miners in the Bubi district ranged between 30 and 59 years of age. Five women fell within the 30–39 year group, seven of the women fell within the 40–49 year group and four women in the 50–59 year group. The variations tell us that there is a presence of younger women participating in small-scale gold mining activities in Bubi district. The women who were between 40 to 49 years old, indicate another age group of females participating in mining activities, potentially representing a different demographic and level of experience. The women that fell between 50 to 59 years of age, also challenges the notion that participation in the ASGM sector is limited to younger individuals. In Gwanda rural district, the female participants represented four age ranges from 20–29 to 50–59 years of age unlike Bubi district which represented three age ranges of women participating in small-scale gold mining. This also confirms the presence of both young and older women actively

participating in the mining sector. Overall, this highlights the diverse demographics and the potential for women of different age groups to contribute to the sector's success and development.

The age range among male miners in Bubi and Gwanda districts suggests that men across different ages are actively participating in the ASGM sector. In Bubi district, one male fell within the 20-29year age group, five men fell in the 30-39years age group, six men fell within the 40-49 years and three in the 50-59 years age group. The variations also show a large presence of middle-aged individuals participating in the ASGM sector of Bubi district. In Gwanda rural district, four men fell within the 20-29year age group compared to Bubi district which had 1 male from population sample. Four men fell within the 30-39age group, eight men fell within the 40-49 age group and four men within the 50-59year age group. The demographics from both men and women in Bubi and Gwanda districts indicates that the mining sector offers employment opportunities to men and women across various stages of their careers, from younger individuals to older individuals.

Table 4.2: Marital Status

Bubi District	Actual Sample Size	Married	Widow	Divorced	Single
Men	15	11	1	1	2
Women	16	8	2	2	4
Gwanda District					
Men	20	13	-	1	6
Women	20	7	3	2	8

Table 4.2 shows the distribution of marital status of the target participants. The variations show that married men have a higher representation in Bubi and Gwanda compared to married women in both districts, followed by a high concentration of single women in Bubi and Gwanda compared to single men in both districts. The divorced women and widows also exceed their male counterparts. The marital status of target participants is crucial when taking a closer look at household decision-making processes before and after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs.

This helped to evaluate whether the NGP had a wider impact in challenging the traditional gendered norms and the unequal gender relations between men and women in Bubi and Gwanda (see Chapter 7).

Table 4.3: Children

Bubi district	Actual Sample Size	Children under 18years/minors
Men	15	13
Women	16	12
Gwanda		
Men	20	15
Women	20	18

Table 4.3 shows that both men and women participating in the small-scale gold mining sector had minor children, i.e. children under the age of 18 years. In Zimbabwe, section 81 (1) of the Constitution defines a child as a boy or a girl under the age of 18 years. The majority of the female miners indicated that they have minor children. This also suggests that motherhood and care giving responsibilities are prevalent among them. Generally, the presence of women and minor children could also indicate the challenges they may face in balancing their mining work with their roles as mothers and caregivers. This information provided insight on how the women miners handled care responsibilities and mining activities before and after the implementation of the NGP’s empowerment programs and whether the NGP provided any solutions to the disproportionate distribution of unpaid care work towards women miners. Having provided demographic information of the male and female miners, we now focus our attention on the data collection instrument employed for this study.

Table 4.4: Participants in Mining Associations

Bubi district	Non-Association	Association members	Actual Sample Size
Men	8	7	15
Women	12	4	16
Gwanda district			
Men	20	-	20
Women	10	10	20

Table 4.4 shows the number of men and women in organized mining associations. In Bubi, 7 of the men miners were part of the Bubi Small-scale Miners Association (BBSMA) and 4 of the women miners were active members of BSSMA. In Gwanda, none of the male miners were part of a mining association, however, 10 of the female miners were part of the Mthandazo Women Miners Association (MWMA). There is a higher proportion of men miners in the Bubi district associated with mining associations, compared to the female miners in Bubi district. In Gwanda, however, none of the male miners were part of a mining association compared to 10 of the female miners who were part of a mining association. Overall, mining associations can provide their members with access to resources such as credit and equipment which may be costly to obtain individually (see Chapter 5).

4.6 Data collection methods

This study pursued case study research through primary and secondary sources. Primary sources refer to the original data that the researcher collects in his/her personal capacity for the purpose of the study which they are conducting (Welman *et al.*, 2007). This study relied on three primary data collection instruments to acquire data from the targeted participants: key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and semi-structured interviews. The study also made use of secondary sources, these are original documents that can be obtained from meeting agendas, leadership reports, policy documents, government publications, published books, newspapers, or any other documents that are connected to the investigation (Creswell, 2003).

At the time of writing this thesis, the Corona virus (COVID-19) had plagued the whole world. Countries across the world implemented 'lockdown' restrictions in accordance with the World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines. The lockdown restrictions limited individuals from travelling internationally, regionally, and even locally. This was a strategy used to limit the spread of the virus from one person to another. On the 2nd of January 2021, Zimbabwe's Vice President and Minister of Health, Constantino Chiwenga announced tough lockdown regulations that saw the banning of movement, the closure of non-essential businesses and the prohibition of large gatherings, including weddings and church services (Matenga, 2021). The purpose of restricted movement between districts and provinces was to mitigate the rate of infections among

the population. Meanwhile, government offices were instructed to reduce their working capacity to 10% and other officials were advised to work from home.

The researcher was not able to travel to Bubi and Gwanda to collect data due to the lockdown restrictions. At that time, Bulawayo (where the researcher was living) and Matabeleland North Province (where the Bubi district is located) were declared COVID-19 ‘hotspots’. A COVID-19 hotspot is most commonly defined as a place (geographical location) where more than ten people have tested positive to Covid-19. The researcher considered her health and safety, as well as that of the participants during that period, by waiting until the lockdown restrictions were relaxed to collect data from the target participants. The researcher considered using telephone interviews for the State officials, UNDP officials and the mining associations’ leaders during the lockdown period and also conducted follow-up face to face interviews after the restrictions were lifted. However, for the men and women miners it proved to be a challenge as some of them were located in areas without any accessible mobile network. Despite these challenges, the researcher successfully conducted data collection from all target participants. The primary data collection instruments used in this study are discussed below.

Table 4.5 Response Rate of Respondents in the study

	Proposed Sample Size	Actual Sample Size
Bubi District		
Women	30	16
Men	30	15
Gwanda District		
Women	30	20
Men	30	20

4.6.1 Key informant interviews (KIIs)

According to Blanche *et al.* (1999), conducting an interview is a more natural form of interacting with people than making them fill out a questionnaire, do a test, or perform some experimental task, and therefore it fits well with the interpretive approach to research. The study conducted key informant interviews, which are face to face interviews with an expert source of information. Good key informants are people with whom the researcher can interact easily and people who understand the information

needed. “Particularly within policy related research, KIIs are often used with specific value” (Lokot, 2021: 1). The key informants selected for the study provided valuable knowledge of the NGP and the State processes in ensuring the implementation of the empowerment programs.

Drawing on purposive sampling, a total of six key informants were interviewed. The key informants were made up of a State official from the national office of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, two State officials from the Bubi and Gwanda districts, the officer from the UNDP country office, and leaders of BSSMA and the Mthandazo Women Miners Association. These key informants were directly involved in the implementation of the NGP’s empowerment programs in Bubi and Gwanda. The researcher first conducted telephonic interviews with State officials from the Ministry of Women’s Affairs from the head office in Harare to the district offices due to the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, and follow-up interviews were conducted face to face. The KIIs enabled the researcher to draw out rich information regarding the process involved in implementing the policy’s empowerment programs in Bubi and Gwanda.

It is important to point out that the initial case study for this research was situated in the Bubi district only. However, the study’s policy analysis expanded to the Gwanda rural district after an interview with the State official from the head office who had informed the researcher about the establishment of the Women’s Gold Service Centre through a partnership with the UNDP-Zimbabwe for women miners in Gwanda in Collen Bawn’s ward. This key informant interview with the State official compelled the researcher to include the Gwanda district in the study. The two locations, Gwanda and Bubi, allowed for the researcher to examine the commitment by the State and the NGP in supporting and/or impeding women’s economic advancement.

The other key informants were very important to this study as the researcher was able to continue to probe, validate and corroborate some of the issues raised with regards to the NGP and its implementation in Bubi and Gwanda. Some of the most significant issues that were covered during the interviews concerned how the key informants viewed the NGP and its implementation; the selection criteria for beneficiaries; and the changes that may have been evident in their places of work, communities and household after women miners received support. These discussions aided the researcher to grasp

in-depth information on the different perspectives of the NGP and its implementation of empowerment programs in Bubi and Gwanda. The researcher made use of a KII interview guide and each of the interviews with the key informants lasted an hour. The KII also fed into the questions for the FGDs. Some of the key informants gave the researcher consent for an audio recording of the interviews but others did not. Hence, the researcher resorted to taking down their responses in a notebook.

4.6.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

This study made use of focus group discussions to extract valuable information from women small-scale gold miners pertaining to the empowerment programs run under the NGP. As a qualitative method for gathering data, focus groups bring together several participants to discuss a topic of mutual interest to themselves and the researcher (Morgan & Spanish, 1984). Focus group discussions tap into a wide variety of opinions which provide different forms of interactions, including direct and subtle challenges to opinions (Smithson, 2000). A focus group discussion is a semi-structured interview or a group in-depth interview with six to twelve participants to talk about a relevant topic guided by a researcher who will play the role of a moderator (Bless *et al.*, 2000; Chisaka *et al.*, 2013). One important distinction between focus group discussions and interviews is the ability to observe interactions about a discussion topic during the focus group session (Berg, 2007).

Focus group discussions were important to this study because they helped generate important discussions about perceptions of the NGP's support for women miners in Gwanda and Bubi. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 restrictions limited the number of FGDs the researcher could conduct. During field work in 2021, the researcher managed to conduct one FGD with women miners in Bubi district who had not benefited from the NGP's empowerment programs. Other women and men miners who had been recruited for the FGDs in Bubi and Gwanda were not keen, citing that they were still scared of meeting in groups because of COVID-19. Regardless of this, the researcher adhered to the protocols set by the WHO and the Ministry of Health and Childcare on physical distancing (respondents to sit two meters apart), wearing of masks and hand sanitizing before the discussion began. The researcher also reduced the number of respondents from ten to six participants. The FGD helped in understanding the ways in which the NGP was implemented through the women miners who had not benefited

from the empowerment programs. It also aided in understanding the role of the NGP in shifting the dynamics of power and social relations between the women who had not benefited and the women who had benefited from State support.

The FGD technique encouraged women miners to open up more and to participate. Focus group discussions allowed the researcher to better understand the participants' different views. Berg (2007) also states that focus group discussions give a better understanding of how members of a group arrive at, or alter, their conclusions about a topic or issue and provides access to interactions. This also helps to bring out the members' attitudes and experiences which are a very important aspect of the qualitative research approach. Although the researcher managed to conduct only one FGD, it was significant in enriching the researcher's understanding of women's experiences of access to productive resources from the State.

On the other hand, focus group discussions also have their disadvantages. Berg (2007) notes that focus group attendance is voluntary, and that an insufficient number may attend a given planned session. In light of this view, the researcher made sure that participants were contacted a day before the discussions began to confirm their attendance and again on the day, an hour before the meeting. In addition, if focus group discussions are not properly constituted, a few individuals may dominate the discussion at the expense of others (Alexis, 2010). The researcher set out some ground rules before the discussions began. Overall, using a focus group discussion allowed the researcher to collect much needed data in one sitting. Below is a table showing the response rate of respondents that participated in the study.

4.6.3 Semi-structured interviews

The study also conducted semi-structured, open-ended interviews with women and men small-scale gold miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. The researcher interviewed altogether thirty-six (36) female miners and thirty-five (35) male miners from the Bubi and Gwanda districts. A total of sixteen (16) women miners were situated in the Bubi district. The first group of eight comprised of women miners who had benefited from the NGP's empowerment programs during the 2013–2018 period. The second group of eight comprised of women miners who were not beneficiaries of State support under the NGP. The researcher went on to interview fifteen (15) male miners. From the fifteen

male miners, seven (7) are active members of the BSSMA. The same procedure followed in Gwanda where the researcher interviewed a total of twenty (20) women miners (comprising of female mine owners, and those women working in the mines). The first group of ten (10) women miners interviewed were active members of the Mthandazo Women Miners Association – the group that received State support under the NGP’s empowerment programs. The second group of ten (10) comprised of women miners who were non-beneficiaries of State support under the NGP. The researcher also interviewed twenty (20) male miners in the Gwanda district. These interviews were conducted face to face.

Open-ended semi-structured interviews are conducted when the researcher asks a series of predetermined questions which are open-ended. The intention behind these interviews is to allow for the interviewer and participants to engage in a discussion rather than straightforward questions. Yin (2016) highlights that interviewing and conversing with participants in a study enables the researchers to understand the participants’ reality. Creswell (2008) also states that individual interviews allow participants freedom to describe their world and reality.

This data collection method provided flexibility in that the interviewer could explore more deeply the opinions of the respondents than with a structured interview. The researcher used an interview guide, which served as a basic checklist during the interviews to ensure that all relevant issues were covered (Pitcoin, 2002). The researcher concentrated on questions that unpacked the respondents’ understanding of WEE, as noted in the list in Chapter 2. According to the arguments in WEE literature in Chapter 2, respondents were asked if household and child care duties should be part of WEE. This provided the researcher with essential information on how the respondents understood WEE. From the WEE literature we see that there are tensions of structure and agency, and thus conducting open-ended semi structured interviews enabled the researcher to probe more on the respondents understanding of WEE through a hybrid lens and not just agency alone.

Through semi-structured interviews the researcher was able to ask respondents on their knowledge about the NGP and its empowerment programs. This was an important way in gaining information from the respondents on the ways in which the NGP was implemented in Bubi and Gwanda rural districts. In chapter 2 under the policy

implementation literature section, we learned that there are two main approaches to policy implementation - the top down approach where policy decisions are made by elected officials and instructions are passed down to the lower levels (Hill and Huppe 2014; Fox 1987). The bottom up approach to policy implementation consists of street-level bureaucrats (public service workers) solving the day to day problems as well as enhancing the successful outcomes from policy. Meier (2006) and Stewart et al., (2008) state that bottom up approach to policy implementation brings together different networks of actors with mutual goals and strategies in achieving policy goals and outcomes. Therefore, the use of semi structured interviews on the men and women small-scale gold miners guided the researcher in digging deeper in determining which policy implementation approach was adopted by the government of Zimbabwe in undertaking the NGP. Also, the policy implementation literature as well as the semi structured interviews enabled the researcher to gain insight on whether the men and women were involved in the different processes of policy implementation under the NGP.

Importantly, the researcher adopted a ‘historical approach’ during the interviews where she asked the target participants to think about the situation prior to the implementation of the policy’s empowerment programs, as well as the situation after the implementation. Some of the questions reflected on social relations before and after the NGP’s empowerment programs: whether there was a shift in the work relations between men and women miners, and also among women miners after the beneficiaries had received State support. In chapter 2, part of the WEE literature advocated for addressing the unequal social relations between men and women. Thus, part of the WEE literature guided the researcher on whether the social relations between men and women had improved. In addition, the literature on gender and class (see chapter 2) also enabled the researcher to gain deeper knowledge from the semi-structured interviews on how social relations among women miners in Bubi and Gwanda rural districts changed over time before and after the implementation of empowerment programs under the NGP.

The researcher also probed participants about the changes that had occurred within the community and family institutions. Some other important issues that the researcher probed focused on how women miners managed their mining activities with family responsibilities (unpaid care work), and the views from the men miners on women’s

participation in the small-scale gold mining sector. These have a bearing on WEE, and if not addressed may hinder women’s agency. Challenges participants faced in trying to access productive resources from the State were also of paramount importance.

The interviews were conducted in IsiNdebele (local language) and English. With participants’ consent, the researcher took down notes and used an audio recorder during the interviews to capture the views expressed by the miners. The recordings were transcribed after the interviews. Rubin and Rubin (2011: 17) state that “qualitative interviewing requires intense listening and a systematic effort to really hear and understand what people tell you”. Thus, the point taken from this statement was for the researcher to learn from the participants’ opinions about their experiences of the NGP and its implementation in Bubi and Gwanda. This enabled the researcher to understand what was being said by the participants.

One of the challenges associated with semi-structured interviews, is that it is time consuming to sit down with respondents and conduct an open-ended interview. However, due to the nature of this research, in-depth information was important in the analysis of the NGP. Another challenge is interviewing enough people to be able to draw conclusions and make comparisons. Considering that small-scale gold miners in general are very difficult to access, the researcher sampled according to theoretical relevance and saturation – this is the point reached by the research when recruiting more participants would not add new knowledge. Below is a table presenting methodological information for a better understanding.

Table 4.6 Methodological Information

Target Population	Actual Sample Size	Sampling Techniques	Members of Mining Associations	Non-members of Mining Association
Government Official – Harare	1	Purposive Sampling	-	-
Bubi				
Government official – District	1	Purposive Sampling	-	-
Women	16	Snowball Sampling	4	12

Men	15	Snowball Sampling	7	8
BSSMA Rep	1	Purposive Sampling		-
Gwanda				
Government Official – District	1	Purposive Sampling		
Women	20	Snowball Sampling	10	10
Men	20	Snowball Sampling	-	20
Mthandazo Rep	1	Purposive Sampling		-

4.6.4 Secondary documentation

The researcher also collected and utilized secondary documentation relating to government policy documents, policy reviews and government data on access to empowerment programs. These were collected straight from the key informants and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs offices. This type of data provided the researcher with information regarding the NGP and the implementation of its empowerment programs nationwide. All in all, the documentation provided insight on issues that were either raised or excluded from the focus group discussions and interviews.

4.7 Data analysis

The data collected from the KIIs, focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews was analysed using content analysis. This is one of the most common techniques in analysing qualitative data. Content analysis is a research method used in determining themes within qualitative data through texts, audio, and video recordings. Thus, in order to analyse the data collected, the researcher needs to break down the data into different categories or themes to help summarize the data even further. For instance, the different views expressed by the key informants, women, and men small-scale gold miners in their understanding of ‘women’s economic empowerment’ emerged as a theme while arranging the data. This theme also reflected that the researcher was determined in answering one of the study’s research questions which focused on the conceptualization of WEE and its limitations. The research questions and the SRA guided the study on data analysis and on what themes to create.

Content analysis has been criticized for being extremely time consuming. This is because content analysis involves transcribing, translation, and breaking down the data collected into themes and or codes. Despite this, the researcher did not use any computer-based software in analysing the data, but rather analysed the data manually. One of the advantages of content analysis is that it is a readily understood and inexpensive research method. Furthermore, it seeks to provide insight into complex models of human thought (Creswell, 2008). The themes that were identified from the data collected, informed the basis for the empirical research. The empirical research was divided into three chapters: data drawing on the research questions, the Social Relations Approach, and the empirical data. The first chapter focused on an institutional analysis of the National Gender Policy, the processes of policy development and implementation within the State and how it impacts the final form of policy. This was followed by another chapter that focused on an institutional analysis of the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda. Lastly, the third chapter focused on an institutional analysis of the community and family. These chapters brought out the different ways in which the State and the NGP as institutions interacted with the market (the ASGM sector), the community and family in either disrupting and/or reinforcing gender and class dynamics in the Bubi and Gwanda districts.

4.8 Data credibility and trustworthiness

The researcher was determined to uphold trustworthiness through the use of multiple data collection methods. Trustworthiness or rigor of a study refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation and methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Pilot & Beck, 2012). Thus, trustworthiness is embedded in the multiple methods the researcher employs so as to ensure the quality of the study. To minimize using one specific data collection method, the researcher used key informant interviews, focus group discussions, open-ended semi-structured interviews, and primary documentation. Although most experts agree that trustworthiness is necessary, debates have been waged in the literature as to what constitutes trustworthiness (Leung, 2015). In qualitative research validity and reliability refer to research that is credible and trustworthy. Criteria outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) includes credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. However, not all of these criteria are necessary in each study.

Credibility is one of the most important benchmarks in a study. It refers to confidence in the truth of the study. The question a reader might ask him-/herself is, is whether the study was conducted using standard procedures typically used in the indicated qualitative approach, or whether adequate justification was provided for variations (Connelly, 2016). Credibility in this study was ensured through member-checking. Member-checking means that a researcher, after gathering data from the interviews or focus group discussions, invites participants to check the accuracy and the validity of information as recorded by the researcher.

Another criterion in ensuring the trustworthiness of a study is dependability. Dependability is established when a researcher maintains an audit trail on the documentation of data, data collections methods and the decisions made regarding the research. The use of an inquiry audit allows reviews to examine both the process and the research for consistency (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In this study, a record of the research processes was kept and shared with the supervisor. Conformability is also another relevant principle in qualitative research. It refers to the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the participants and not the researcher's own bias, motivation, or interest (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005). In order to achieve conformability, the researcher engaged in a self-critical reflective analysis of the methodology adopted in this study.

Pilot testing was done to test the data collection instruments. For this study, the researcher tested the KII interview guide on three government officials. The selected government officials were selected from the proposed population sample. The researcher through pilot testing realized that a critical part of the KII guide which focused on social relations between the men and women, the state and women small-scale gold miners was omitted. The researcher added the missing information to the interview guide. The focus group discussion guide and the semi-structured interview guides for the men and women miners were tested on five (5) women and five (5) men small-scale gold miners. The researcher tested the instruments on these individuals as they had access to WhatsApp video and audio calls. Pilot testing was conducted during the COVID-19 lockdown period and respondents could only respond through WhatsApp individual and group video calls. Pilot testing assisted the researcher to make

modifications to the interview guides based on the responses. Yin (2011) states that pilot studies help researchers test and refine some aspects of a study, which includes the design, fieldwork instruments and even the data analysis. The pilot testing was done to ensure that the questions in the interview guides were clear and had less ambiguities or repetition.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

According to Welman *et al.* (2007), ethical considerations are of great importance to research. It enables researchers to conduct research in a dignified and systemic manner with honesty and respect for human rights. In this regard, the researcher applied to the Rhodes University Human Ethics Committee in March 2020. The application was partially approved pending gatekeepers' access/permissions from the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing and the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Small to Medium Enterprise Development. The researcher then compiled access letters addressed to the district development coordinators' offices to seek permission to conduct research in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. A letter was also sent to the Permanent Secretary of MWASMED requesting permission to interview State officials about the NGP and the empowerment programs implemented. The district development coordinators' office responded promptly by granting access to the researcher in June 2020 while the Ministry of Women's Affairs responded in December 2020.

After submitting the letters granting access to conduct research, the ethics application was approved by the Rhodes University Human Ethics Committee and the researcher was granted an ethical clearance certificate in January 2021. The researcher ensured to maintain anonymity and confidentiality so that none of the research participants were harmed. The researcher also explained to the respondents during the distribution of participation informed consent forms, that they were free to withdraw at any stage, even after the interviews. Informed consent is when an individual understands what the researcher wants him or her to do and consents to participating in the study (Zikmund *et al.*, 2012).

4.10 Limitations of the Study

As with most studies, I encountered quite a number of challenges which threatened the successful completion of this thesis. The primary logistical limitations included time and resource constraints. Being awarded the Rhodes University Prestigious Scholarship in 2021 helped to cover the budget constraints of travelling to two different districts in two provinces. While sufficient data was collected, there was a need to make some methodological adjustments as highlighted. The researcher was forced to adapt to the reality of the global pandemic, COVID-19, which limited movement from province to province and inter-district in Zimbabwe. Despite the many approaches that were introduced such as online interviews through Zoom, Google Meet, Skype etc., the researcher was not able to conduct online meetings, especially with men and women miners, because of their geographical locations. The participants were in hard to reach areas where mobile network was a challenge. Thus, the researcher had to wait for the lifting of lockdown restrictions. However, some of the interviews conducted with State officials were conducted through telephone and also in person (face to face). The intended number of target participants had to be reduced considering that the researcher had to adhere to the World Health Organizations and Zimbabwe's Ministry of Health and Childcare guidelines, particularly on focus group discussions.

The case study research design that was employed by the study focused on the analysis of Zimbabwe's NGP and its implementation of women's economic empowerment programs in two districts located in two different provinces. While this thesis captured the experiences of women miners in these two districts, the study did not capture the experiences of other women miners in other parts of Zimbabwe that are playing an important role in contributing to the country's economic development.

Another limitation of the study was the unavailability of literature, specifically, on Zimbabwe's second National Gender Policy. Although the policy document is available online, the researcher faced difficulties in accessing reports and statistics on the implementation of its empowerment programs during the period 2013–2018 from the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development. Musasa (2021) posits that it is challenging for qualitative researchers to obtain information from government offices as a result of Zimbabwe's politically hostile environment. Despite this setback, the researcher used available literature and parliamentary reports

published in 2017. Although these documents provided credible information pertaining to the policy's empowerment programs, they did not adequately cover the topic of women in mining it pertained to women in general. The document gave context on funds and challenges faced in implementing empowerment programs in all ten provinces of Zimbabwe.

Another limitation in conducting this study was the willingness of the target participants to provide information that was considered to be 'trade secrets'. Some of the male miners withheld information pertaining to access and information about markets and general business-related information. Having underscored that the mining sector in Zimbabwean society is highly patriarchal, some of the men in Bubi and Gwanda were quite hesitant in giving out information, let alone participating in interviews, because I was a woman. I quickly used my work experience as a former administration officer in Bubi district under the Ministry of Local Government to my advantage as I did not have any male research assistants.

4.11 Conclusion

In summary, the chapter has presented an outline of the qualitative approach used in this thesis. One of the most significant points in this chapter, is that the SRA and the study's research questions influenced the methodological approach used in analysing the NGP. The chapter began by exploring different research paradigms and situated the study within the interpretivist research paradigm. This is because the research questions guiding this study and the SRA necessitated the researcher to interpret the realities of men and women miners after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. The intention was to obtain more information of the NGP and its implementation. The researcher then captured how women miners in Bubi and Gwanda experienced the NGP and how its implementation affected the social relations at work, in the community and in the family. Here, an interpretivist paradigm was suitable for analysing the NGP as the researcher could capturing multiple realities presented by the participants in their descriptions to her of the role played by the NGP in either supporting and/or impeding women's economic advancement and wellbeing.

This was followed by a discussion of the qualitative approach used in this study and how it fit into the study. The qualitative approach helped significantly to bring out the

policy's goals and outcomes through the lens of women miners, especially considering that literature in analysing policy through a qualitative approach was limited. One of the advantages mentioned in this chapter was that a qualitative approach could be used to understand the ways in which institutions work, including the gendered practices established within them. This was ideal in examining the NGP and its processes of implementation. It was also useful in exploring how the NGP's implementation of the empowerment programs interacted with other institutions such as the market, community, and family in either disrupting and/ or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda.

The chapter also described how the data collection was conducted, considering that in January 2021, COVID-19 hard lockdown restrictions were launched. The researcher explained that some of the KIIs were conducted through telephone interviews, followed by face to face interviews after the lockdown restrictions were lifted. The focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews for the men and women miners in Bubi and Gwanda districts were conducted in person as these happened during the period that the lockdown restrictions were lifted.

CHAPTER FIVE

INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS OF ZIMBABWE'S SECOND NATIONAL GENDER POLICY (2013–2017)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an institutional analysis of Zimbabwe's second National Gender Policy (NGP) (2013–2017) of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MWAGCD). As highlighted in Chapter 2, a State policy is one that is shaped by the government to find solutions for citizen's problems. The State, its policies and administrative departments are among the institutions that produce and maintain gender and other social inequalities, as indicated in Chapter 3. An institutional analysis helps us to look at the ways in which Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy disrupted and/or reinforced gender and class inequalities in the small-scale gold mining sectors of the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts in Zimbabwe. Drawing on the study's theoretical framework, which is centred on the role that institutions play in disrupting and/or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in access to productive resources, this chapter argues that the NGP has followed a liberal/agency centred approach in its implementation of WEE in Bubi and Gwanda. In following this approach, it has ignored other structural inequalities that hinder WEE, such as the unequal gender/power relations that exist between men and women, unpaid care work, and social and cultural norms, including patriarchy. A liberal agency centred approach draws on liberal feminism which advocates for equality in the public sphere through administrative and legislative reforms in order to give women the same opportunities as men.

The liberal/agency-centred approach adopted by the NGP in a way aligns with Morsy's (2019) argument on the importance of implementing gender policies in Africa. Morsy (2019) identified three key reasons for implementing these policies. Firstly, the valuable contribution of women to the economy needed to be acknowledged. Secondly, the issue of women having unequal access to financial services needed to be addressed. Thirdly, empirical studies across the world have shown that achieving gender equality in terms of women's access to and control over productive resources would effectively eliminate the gender inequality gap (*ibid.*). This line of reasoning aligned with liberal

feminism, as it addressed the historical marginalization of women in mainstream development, particularly in areas such as employment, education, and finance. Liberal feminism played a pivotal role in shaping the Women in Development (WID) approach, which sought to promote women's participation in the economy and their access to productive resources. As discussed in Chapter 1, the WID approach primarily focused on eradicating gender-based discrimination by advocating for the inclusion of women in the public sphere as producers and economic contributors. It was believed that such inclusion would ultimately lead to the achievement of gender equality. However, the WID approach faced criticism due to its failure to address the intricate dynamics of the public/private sphere divide. By overlooking the unequal social and power relations that exist between men and women, as well as the intersectionality of gender with other social factors such as class, race, age, nationality, and ethnicity, the WID approach fell short in fully capturing the complexities of women's access to and control over productive resources.

The primary data used in this chapter is key informant interviews with the government officials from the MOWAGCD, the UNDP official, and structured interviews with the female and male miners of Bubi and Gwanda districts. To maintain anonymity, the participants are classed in the following way:

- Government interviewees are 'Govt officials A, B and C'
- Miners from the Bubi district are indicated as
 - 'Female miner 1B and 2B' for the female miners who were NGP beneficiaries
 - 'Female miner B 01–08' for female miners who were NGP non-beneficiaries, and
 - 'Male miner B 01' onwards for male miners.
- Miners from the Gwanda district are indicated as
 - 'Female miner GM 01–10' for those female miners who were NGP beneficiaries
 - 'Female miner G 01–10' for female miners who were NGP non-beneficiaries, and
 - 'Male miner G 01–20' for male miners.

Whilst identifying the basic approach of the Zimbabwean government to women's economic empowerment in its gender policy, this chapter acknowledges that the NGP's empowerment programs have gone some way in challenging gender inequalities in the limited sense proposed by liberal feminism. However, it has done little to challenge the class inequalities for women in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda. In arguing this statement the chapter is divided into two major sections. The first section focuses on grounding the State and its policies as institutions and understanding how they shape social outcomes. This provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the NGP and its implementation and situates this thesis within a broader policy context. We then move on to a second section that focuses on how the processes of development of the NGP and its implementation within the State impacted the final form of policy. This provides us with an understanding of the policy's priorities and intentions, as well as the specific issues or concerns that policymakers sought to address. The third section focuses on the roll-out of the NGP's empowerment programs in the rural districts of Bubi and Gwanda. The last section concentrates on the impact of the NGP on the State and women miners' relations in Bubi and Gwanda. This provides us with an understanding of the effectiveness of the NGP in promoting women's economic empowerment and gender equality in Bubi and Gwanda.

5.2 The State and State policy as institutions

Earlier on in this chapter, we defined the state and its policies as institutions that are key to reproducing and reinforcing inequalities. In Chapter 3, we outlined that institutions are entities that are found everywhere and that are created by human beings to shape or govern our lives. In other words, they refer to structures or mechanisms of social order and they regulate the behaviour of individuals within a particular community. Skockpol and Amenta (1986: 131) define the state as "organizations that extract resources through taxation and attempt to extend coercive control and political authority over particular territory and the people residing within them". This means that the state has the power to extract financial resources from its citizens through taxes and utilizes this power to enforce its control and exercise authority over people living in a particular geographical area. Alternatively, "a state is one that becomes deeply embedded in the everyday experiences of virtually every citizen. Our personal life is structured by the welfare state and so is the entire political economy" (Esping-Andersen,

1991: 141). Both of these definitions are particularly connected to North's (1991) definition of institutions as structures shaped by humans to govern the lives of citizens. Thus, the state, according to Esping-Andersen are structured systems intended to govern social behaviour.

In light of the above, the state identifies with one of North's (1991) three aspects of institutions, namely 'formal rules', discussed in Chapter 3. The formal rules are established by formal institutions and are described as laws, policy, and procedures. These ground State policies as institutions as they comprise of formal rules, structures and objectives devised by political actors in government to remedy certain problems. "Policies are lines of action pursued through states" (Skockpol & Amenta, 1986: 131). For instance, it is necessary for states to have military policies to defend and protect their territory. Economic policies are important too as State revenue depends on the successes of production and trade (*ibid.*). Pierson (1993) and Reynolds (2014) both maintain that State policies serve as important 'rules of the game' that influence resource allocation in terms of the costs and benefits of various political strategies ensuring political growth. In this way, State policies have a profound impact on social outcomes as they directly influence the distribution of resources, opportunities, and access to essential services, such as healthcare and economic distribution.

Some of the ways in which State policies shape social outcomes is through education. State policies determine the allocation of resources for education, shaping social outcomes by influencing the rate of literacy, the quality of education, and people's access to educational opportunities. For instance, Finland is one of the countries where education is highly prioritized and adequately funded. Sahlberg (2007) highlights that the most important aspect about Finnish education policies is that, after four decades of systematic and intentional development, it has established a culture of trust, diversity, and respect within the Finnish society and in the education system. The Finnish education policy comprises of significant guidelines that contribute to the high performance of its schools and individuals, such as basic schooling for all regardless of socioeconomic background. Another significant guideline of this education policy is the need for well-trained teachers. Simola (2005) confirms that a master's degree is the minimum requirement for being employed as a permanent teacher in Finland. With such rules guiding their education policy, social outcomes such as high literacy rates

and active academic achievement are prevalent. Unfortunately, the reverse is also true that inadequate State investment in education may lead to low literacy rates, limited education opportunities and the perpetuating inequality as seen in certain developing nations.

State policies regarding healthcare determine the accessibility and the quality of health care services for citizens. Countries with adequate healthcare services such as Canada have better social outcomes in terms of life expectancy, lower mortality rates and overall improved health indicators. The Canadian health policy is founded on a national principle that access to health care is based on need, and not the ability to pay (Martin *et al.*, 2018). The State has a universal healthcare system that is publicly funded, known as Medicare, which provides the public with equitable access to physicians and hospital services (*ibid.*). In contrast, societies where the State policies fail to ensure access to quality healthcare, especially in marginalized populations, this results in poorer health outcomes and greater health disparities. In Zimbabwe, for instance, the 1997–2009 economic crisis negatively affected health care services. Masiyandima’s (2016) study revealed that both the health sector’s public and private finance systems were adversely affected by the crisis as high inflation rates reduced and eroded the financial bases in government further perpetuating inequality in access to public health care.

Another strand of policy literature highlights that some State policies focused on welfare, taxation and labour regulations significantly impact economic distribution within a society. For instance, social welfare policies can reduce income inequality and alleviate poverty in countries. Denmark has been hailed as a model welfare State with generous social policies that the American government seeks to emulate (Heckman, *et al.*, 2021). According to a report by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration (2011), the Danish social welfare policy is founded on the principle that all citizens are guaranteed certain fundamental rights if they encounter social problems such as unemployment, sickness, or dependency. On the other hand, State policies that favour the concentration of wealth and deregulation often observed in certain developing countries, has led to worsened social outcomes with increased income inequality, limited social mobility, and persistent poverty. Thus, the State also plays a role in influencing the ways in which State policies can either alleviate social ills or perpetuate inequalities.

From the case studies discussed above, it could be noted that many of these State policies are grounded by certain principles and rules. These rules, norms, principles, and traditions govern the ways in which State policies are implemented and, in turn, shape the social outcomes of citizens. As it is outlined in the Social Relations Approach (Table 3.1), rules can either allow or constrain the main goal of increased wellbeing. Overall, State policies play a crucial role in shaping outcomes and by focusing on education, health care and economic distribution we can see how State policies directly influence the wellbeing and opportunities available to individuals within a society. Effective governance through State policies that prioritize quality health care and equitable economic distribution are crucial for promoting favourable social outcomes and building a more just and prosperous society. In this study, the Zimbabwe National Gender Policy is categorized as a State policy. This thesis, therefore, aims to analyse the ways in which the NGP shapes the social outcomes of women miners in Bubi and Gwanda's rural districts in Zimbabwe.

5.3 Processes of development of the NGP within and outside the State

Since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) government has stated a desire to introduce people-oriented policies (Hove & Hlongwana, 2015). These policies were guided by the international expectations of the Lancaster House Agreement (1979), concerning political representation and land resettlement (Ranchod-Nilsson, 2006). Issues that affected women were not included under the Lancaster House Agreement. Yet, women who had fought in the liberation struggle and those who had remained in Zimbabwe's rural areas were concerned about the new ZANU–PF government's commitment to transforming unequal gender relations and improving women's circumstances in terms of access to resources and education (*ibid.*). The year in which Zimbabwe gained its independence was significant for it occurred in the middle of the United Nations Decade for Women. This influenced the new ZANU–PF government to work towards addressing the social, economic, and political inequalities inherited at independence.

In the midst of the high profile conferences in Mexico, Copenhagen, and Nairobi and the 1979 passage of the Convention on the Elimination on All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), women's rights had moved to the forefront of the international agenda and the ZANU–PF

government was under pressure to signal its support (Ranchod-Nilsson, 2006: 59).

The new government crafted administrative legislation to signal its commitment to the global agenda on gender equality. Some of the laws that were passed included the Equal Pay Regulations (1980), Growth with Equity Initiatives (1980), Legal Age of Majority (LAMA) Act of 1982, and the Electoral Act of 1990. A significant change in legal measures was the Legal Age Majority Act (LAMA) of 1982, as this act recognized both men and women as equal human beings upon reaching eighteen (18) years of age. They would be regarded as ‘adults’, capable of making their own decisions. Before the institution of this law, Zimbabwean women were regarded as minors and ‘second class citizens’, as their fathers and spouses had to make decisions on their behalf. The government of Zimbabwe then established a Gender and Women’s Affairs Department that benefited both women and men. These pieces of legislation signaled the new government’s pledge to transform unequal gender relations between men and women in the public sphere; women were able to participate in politics, vote and make decisions concerning their lives.

The reforms implemented by the new Zimbabwean government soon after independence reflected a liberal/agency-centred approach to gender equality. Liberal feminists genuinely advocated for equality through legal and administrative reforms to give women the same opportunities as men and the new Zimbabwean government acted. The idea behind liberal feminism was to create an environment that would accommodate women within the capitalist system to participate as producers and economic contributors just like men. Similarly, the new Zimbabwean government intended to shift the traditional perspectives of women as welfare cases to them being producers and economic contributors by ensuring that administrative and legal measures were put in place to advance gender equality in the country.

Even with the said reforms put in place, the global community kept pushing for more efforts in promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment by national governments. The Beijing World Conference of 1995 was a significant turning point on the global agenda for gender equality. The conference received considerable attention worldwide with its Beijing Platform for Action 1995 which advocated for transformative processes and practices that would concern, engage and benefit women

and men equally by systematically integrating specific attention to issues of sex and gender into all aspects of an organization's work (Woodford-Berger, 2012). The Beijing Platform for Action 1995 set out recommendations for national governments to make significant efforts in the areas of gender equality.

Zimbabwe was among the countries that signed and ratified several international and regional protocols, treaties, and conventions to protect and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (Tarinda, 2019). Apart from signing the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995, the government also signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on all Forms of Discrimination against women, the Millennium Development Goals (2000), the African Union Protocol on Women's Rights, and the SADC Declaration of Gender and Equality in 1997. These were the protocols that influenced governments' commitment to developing gender policies that promoted gender equality and women's empowerment.

According to the Zimbabwe Gender Department (2004: 6):

The Zimbabwean government being a signatory to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action worked together with the local NGOs to jointly develop the Zimbabwe Plan for Action in 1999.

This refers to the act of incorporating foreign concepts into a specific framework or institutional context in order to harmonize them (Clark *et al.*, 2015). Earlier on, we stressed the importance of the government interest in achieving gender equality since its political independence in 1980. This may have been a key driver behind the government's interest in working jointly with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the development of the Zimbabwe Plan of Action. Involving NGOs in the development of the Zimbabwe Plan for Action allowed for the government to tap into expertise and resources these organizations had, making the policy-making process more comprehensive and effective.

Since independence, the State-NGO relations in Zimbabwe were mediated by the Ministry of Public Works, Labour and Social Welfare (Doorman, 2006). But on a day to day level some national and international NGOs interacted with individual ministries and described their interactions as 'co-operative', 'good' and 'positive' (*ibid.*). This could have been one of the ways in which NGOs were able to collaborate and exert influence on the government. Julia (1999) confirms that NGOs often play an enabling

and leadership role as catalysts and vehicles in the promotion of gender equality and development, although they are at times met with criticism.

The developments above were followed by the government of Zimbabwe launching its first National Gender Policy in 2004, as well as the National Gender Policy Implementation Strategy Framework to ensure the implementation of gender mainstreaming and empowerment (Mawere, 2013; Zvobgo, 2014). This policy was implemented until 2012. The NGP's (2004) goal was to eliminate all negative economic, social, and political policies, as well as cultural and religious practices that impede equality and equity of the sexes (Chabaya *et al.*, 2009). This policy sought to address four key areas: women in politics and decision making; education and training of women; women and the economy; and institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women (Gender Department, 2004). This was followed by a reintroduction of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development in 2005 to pioneer gender mainstreaming in the country (Matonhodze *et al.*, 2014). At this time, other countries included their national gender mechanisms in welfare ministries, while South Africa placed their gender unit in the President's office (Guzura, 2017). The reintroduction of the Ministry of Women's Affairs may have signified the government's dedication to promoting gender equality. However, there is also an argument that segregating women into a separate ministry could unintentionally have marginalized women's issues, thereby deviating from the objective of gender mainstreaming.

The State went a step further by establishing Gender Focal Persons (GFP) in all ministries and parastatals, women's groups, and the Gender Commission. This in response to a circular sent by the Public Service Commission (PSC) to all government ministries requesting their input on how best to promote and maintain a gendered perspective in the respective ministries (Chabaya *et al.*, 2009). These were intended to be transformative processes to guarantee that departments and institutions incorporated gender perspectives and paid attention to the goal of gender equality. In 2011 the NGP established the Broad-Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework (BBWEEF) to ensure equal access to and control of productive resources. Despite women constituting 52% of Zimbabwe's population, they still faced significant disparities in education, politics, economy and in decision making (Gender Department,

2004). Although the BBWEEF came in seven years after the launch of the 2004 NGP, this did not negate the effect of the other measures taken in addressing the NGP's four critical areas.

According to Matonhodze *et al.* (2014) the 2004 NGP made some positive efforts in addressing equal access to education, economy, political participation, and decision making. In the education sector, the Education Act was amended and harmonized with the NGP in an effort to eliminate gender discrimination (Mawere, 2013). The literacy rate of 15–24-year olds reached 99% for both males and females (MDG Report, 2010). “Female university student enrolment increased from 23% to 37% in 2007”, according to Kanyenze *et al.* (2011: 235). Interventions such as the Girl Empowerment Movement, gender resource books for teachers and *Gender Sensitivity – Handbook for Headmasters/Headmistresses* were developed to deal with gender issues in education (Mavhunga *et al.*, 2015). Thus, one can argue that although gender parity in education had not been reached, commendable efforts were made as a result of these measures.

Other commendable efforts from the implementation of the 2004 NGP were also witnessed in politics, decision making, and the economy. The share of women participating in parliament increased from 14% in 1990–1995 (14% in the Lower House and 33% in the Upper House) to 16% in 2005 and 18.5% in the 2008 elections (MDG Report, 2010). On top of this, in 2005, a female vice president was appointed while a deputy Vice Prime Minister was elected in the Government of National Unity (GNU) 2009–2013. According to Matonhodze *et al.* (2014), the more women are placed in higher level and decision-making positions, the more they are able to assist other women in contributing to the country's economic growth. In other key economic sectors such as mining, Maturure (2008) posits that the Ministry of Women's Affairs encouraged the participation of women in mining through a window called ‘women in mining’. Women received funding to start and upscale their mining and agricultural activities through the BBWEEF.

In spite of the implementation of the NGP measures, women's representation remained low in the stated four key critical areas mentioned earlier. Chabaya *et al.* (2009) found that even after the implementation of the NGP's measures, the number of women as headmistresses and deputy headmistresses remained low in primary schools. “There were 246 school heads in Masvingo Province, and only 14 (5.60%) were female heads

and 8 (3.25%) were female deputy heads” (*ibid.*: 237). In political participation, Maphosa *et al.* (2015), argued that despite the high population of women in Zimbabwe, the political representation in parliamentary seats were low. The scholars presented a table in their article describing the gendered composition of House of Assembly and Senate seats in Zimbabwe from 1980 to 1985, and 2005 to 2008. From 1980 to 2005 the composition of women in the House of Assembly changed from 9% to 16% with men occupying the majority of the seats, and in the Senate, women occupied 7.5% in 1980, compared to 36.36% in 2005 (*ibid.*). According to the statistics presented above, one could say that the NGP mildly attempted to address the under representation of women in political participation and decision making.

The same has been recorded in other key economic sectors of Zimbabwe. Matonhodze *et al.* (2014) noted that not all women had access to land and capital as prescribed by the 2004 NGP in its analysis of critical areas. “Women constituted 18% of land allocated under the A1 model and 12% under A2, this is despite the fact that the Lands Committee had recommended a quota of 40% of land allocated to women” (*ibid.*: 46). This indicates that little was done to ensure that women had equal access to land considering that 70% of women in Zimbabwe live in the rural areas and are key contributors in agriculture. Despite the first NGP running from 2004 to 2012, the evidence above confirms that more work needed to be done to reduce gender disparities in politics, decision making, education and training, and in access to and control of productive resources such as land, capital, and infrastructure.

Upon realizing that the first NGP was characterized by mixed fortunes, there was a need for policy reform to address the gender disparities in education and training, politics, decision making, access to capital, land, and infrastructure. There were many advocacy efforts from development partners and civil society organizations that pressured the government of Zimbabwe to look at policy reforms to reduce gender parity in the different sectors of the country in 2013. Tarinda (2019) confirms that development partners, civil society organisations (CSOs) and women’s organisations lobbied government and other institutions on matters related to women’s rights, empowerment, and equality. The gender disparities mentioned earlier, pushed the government and its partners to do more in harmonizing women’s issues into the gender policy. Granted that the Zimbabwean government was a signatory to a number of international and regional

instruments for promoting gender equality, a second gender policy was put on the agenda to continuously show the country's commitment in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

5.4 Developing the 2nd National Gender Policy: An institutional history

The previous section described the processes and the rationale behind the development of the NGP within and outside the State to have a better understanding of the policy's priorities and intentions. This section forms part of this study's analysis by focusing on the development of the 2nd NGP, and the processes involved in its creation and implementation.

According to MWAGCD (2013: IV),

the development of Zimbabwe's second NGP was as a result of extensive consultations and an in-depth analysis of the situation by a number of stakeholders. Stakeholders were drawn from the public, private sector, CSOs and the UN agencies all participated in the review processes.

It is significant to note that the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) partnered with the Zimbabwean government under the Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework (ZUNDAF).

ZUNDAF is a strategic planning instrument that identifies national priorities for the government of Zimbabwe which will benefit in terms of financial and technical assistance from the United Nations and other cooperating development partners (ZUNDAF 2011: 1).

This confirms the notion by Hickey *et al.* (2017), that transnational actors (TNAs) engage with domestic, institutionalized actors in building successful partnerships for the acceptance of new policies or policy reforms. TNAs comprise of international organizations such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and United Nations, and they also include advocacy groups and communities. A key informant interview with an official from UNDP–Zimbabwe confirmed the following:

We have what we call 'Five Year Cycles' where projects are run by UNDP and government ministries on output and outcome. This means that the end result has to be sustainability and trying to reduce social ills and poverty. Some of these projects fall under investing in the health of children, eradication of poverty, political participation and so forth. We have been working with the

Ministry for Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development for some time now, from the first gender policy, second gender policy through to the current gender policy through our institutional strengthening cycle.

- UNDP Official

The statement above from the UN official confirms the longstanding partnership with the government of Zimbabwe with the UNDP as outlined by ZUNDAF and the aim of the projects highlighted to achieve sustainable outcomes and address social issues such as poverty reduction. These projects encompass various areas such as investing in children's health, poverty eradication and promoting political participation. By implementing these projects, the aim is to create a positive impact and improve the quality of life for individuals and communities. The emphasis on sustainability suggests that the projects are designed to have a long-lasting effect beyond the five-year period, ensuring that the benefits will continue well into the future.

In addition to the above, the UN official's statement describes a continuous collaboration between the UNDP and the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development. This partnership has existed for some time starting with the development and implementation of the first NGP, and then progressed through to subsequent policies and finally reaching the current NGP. The emphasis on the 'institutional strengthening cycle' also suggests that the collaboration aims to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of the ministry in addressing gender-related issues in the society. This could possibly involve providing support, resources, and expertise to strengthen the ministry's ability to implement policies and programs that promote gender equality and women's empowerment as emphasized by ZUNDAF. The quote by the UN official indicates a long-term commitment to advancing gender equality and reflects a positive work relationship between UNDP and the Ministry of Women's Affairs. It also signifies a collaborative effort to bring about positive change within the Zimbabwean society ensuring that gender issues are addressed and that women are actively involved in decision-making processes.

According to interviews with government officials, the ministry also conducted consultations with local citizens to ensure that their concerns were addressed during the development of the second NGP. The government official pointed out:

As a ministry we are always communicating and consulting with men and women on the ground through our ward coordinators.

- Govt Official C

The statement from the government official indicates that the Ministry of Women's Affairs utilized the district and ward structures to capture the views and concerns of the people so that they would be incorporated into the NGP. Another government interviewee noted:

Every time when a policy is being crafted, same with development and empowerment programs there are consultations done in rural and urban communities to identify areas of concern where women and men have felt that there are some inadequacies. In reality this has not reached all people and in all areas. In Bubi district, when people are called to a meeting to either as a village or a ward not everyone attends as this depends on who is relaying the message. For instance, it could be elected councillors or traditional leaders. Bubi district has 23 wards and not all wards have ward development coordinators so we usually use councillors and traditional leaders for those wards in relaying the information in the hope that it will be disseminated to everyone. However, people do not look at the big picture that this is a meeting to discuss and inform them about a policy or development program, therefore issues of participation become a challenge. Once a councillor calls a meeting for development purposes or for community consultations for the purposes of policymaking, most people assume that it is mainly about politics.

- Govt Official B

The statement by government official B shows that the Ministry of Women's Affairs makes an effort to include the perspectives and concerns of various communities in the policy-making and decision-making processes. Despite these efforts, the government official asserts that there may be areas where these consultations have not reached all people. The official provides a specific context of the Bubi district regarding how meetings are organized and information relayed. The government official highlights the

challenges encountered in ensuring the widespread attendance of these meetings, which vary based on the person delivering the message. An interesting point was raised about the availability of ward development coordinators. The fact that not all of the wards in Bubi district have ward coordinators indicates a potential gap in resources and capacity of the MWAGCD. To compensate for this, the MWAGCD seemed to rely on councillors and traditional leaders to disseminate information, with the hope that it would reach everyone in the community. In similar vein, a report presented to the Zimbabwe Parliamentary Committee on Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development (2017) observed that there was a critical shortage of ward officers on the ground and also that the ministry relied on other rural local governance structures, public meetings and public gatherings to announce information and consult on any development programs.

The government official highlights an important issue related to community participation. The officer points out that many people attending the meeting may not fully understand or appreciate the purposes of these meetings. Instead, they tend to view it through a political lens, assuming that the meeting is about politics rather than policymaking and development. This misconception can create challenges of meaningful participation. If individuals believe the meeting is solely focused on political matters, they may not actively engage or contribute their perspectives on policy or development programs. This could result in the lack of diverse input and potentially hinder the effectiveness of the decision-making process. At the same time, there is a connection between politics and policy, leading individuals in Bubi district to reasonably perceive that the meetings are about political matters. Drawing on the connections between politics and policy, it becomes evident that politics profoundly affect and mould policies through their influence on policy development, implementation, and evaluation. Consequently, the reciprocal relationship between politics and policy shows the substantial impact that they exert on each other. Thus, it would not be illogical for the local people to consider that the meetings are about politics.

The discussion sheds light on the role of street-level bureaucrats in policy making and implementation discussed in policy implementation literature in Chapter 2. Street-level bureaucrats are public service workers who interact with citizens on a day-to-day basis

in their line of work. The government officials cited in the discussions above identify as ‘street-level bureaucrats’ because of their line of work in policy-making and policy implementation (Lipsky, 1980; Weiner *et al.*, 2011). These officials exercise discretion in applying guidelines and rules to specific situations or cases. The statement given by government official B provides us with insight that, by granting discretion to street-level bureaucrats, the MWAGCD acknowledges that their expertise and experience on the ground are best suited to determine the appropriate course of action taken in cases such as utilizing rural governance structures (councillors and traditional leaders) for community consultations and development programs in Bubi district. By so doing, the discretion held by these government officials signifies their importance and role in policy making, and their decision-making abilities which in turn shape the outcomes of the citizens. However, Keiser and Soss (1998) argue that when political actors influence the work of street-level bureaucrats the latter may favour certain groups over others and harm the welfare of society.

The development of the second NGP was influenced by significant events that had a profound impact on various aspects of the country. The economic crisis of 2000, the Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) and political instability in the country influenced political direction on the impact of policy development. The economic crisis was primarily caused by hyperinflation, the Fast Track Land Reform Program, and political instability (Bond, 2000; Dansereau, 2005). The hyperinflation that Zimbabwe experienced, peaked in 2008. It eroded people’s purchasing power, it lowered their living standards, it caused unemployment, and increased vulnerability among women. The economic crisis alone highlighted the disproportionate impact it had on women: they faced heightened levels of poverty and limited access to resources and opportunities (Nyambara, 2002). These factors then led to a shift in State policy towards an “intervention in production” reforming policy so that it would support the “creating of an enabling environment” (Dansereau, 2005: 13). In practical terms, this meant that the government adjusted their approach to policymaking and implementation. As a result of the highlighted factors, the government underwent a shift towards providing a supportive environment for economic activities. This shift could entail measures such as streamlining bureaucratic procedures and establishing initiatives or programs to facilitate economic growth, such as enhancing investment opportunities and access to microfinance.

The land redistribution program (also known as the FTLRP) implemented in the early 2000s had a significant effect on the country's economy. The policy aimed to address historical land disparities by seizing commercial farms predominantly owned by white farmers and redistributing them to black Zimbabweans. This process was largely characterised by violence, corruption, and lack of proper planning. As a result, the once booming agricultural sector significantly declined in production, leading to food shortages and economic instability (see Chapter 1). Women who were heavily involved in agriculture were particularly affected as they faced challenges accessing land and resources necessary for farming. The political instability in Zimbabwe due to the economic crisis, characterised by widespread social unrest, protests, and political repression, had a profound impact on the political direction of the second NGP. Mususa (2012) argues that the economic crisis in Zimbabwe created a sense of urgency among policy makers and activists to find sustainable solutions to address gender inequality.

At the time of developing the second NGP, Zimbabwe was governed by an 'inclusive government' from 2009 to 2013 constituted by ZANU–PF and the two Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) formations (Vollan, 2013) – the first one led by Morgan Tsvangirai and the second by Prof Arthur Mutambara. An inclusive government refers to a case in which all major political parties in a country form a governing coalition (Mukuhlan, 2014). Part of the recommendations of this inclusive government was to draft and adopt a new constitution before the harmonized elections of 2013. Also, during the 2009–2013 period the political atmosphere between the political parties was very tense. Ncube (2014) confirms that the coalition government was characterised by 'an acrimonious relationship' between the political parties especially in constitutional reforms. However, they successfully managed to stabilize the economy and improve service delivery.

Zimbabwe's second NGP was launched in 2013 by the MOWAGCD. The year 2013 was significant in Zimbabwe for two reasons: First, ZANU–PF, became the ruling party after a landslide victory in the 2013 harmonized elections, which saw the end of the Government of National Unity between ZANU–PF and the MDC (Chuma, 2020). Second, that same year, a new constitution of Zimbabwe was introduced. Zimbabwe's new 2013 constitution, whose provisions for gender equality and equity had far-

reaching implications for policy and programming, initiated the second NGP (MWAGCD, 2013). The old constitution of the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979 was largely viewed as a compromise document which had been amended many times. “The year 2013 saw the drafting and resounding ‘YES’ vote for the new homegrown constitution which replaced the 1979 Lancaster House constitution” (Maphosa *et al.*, 2015: 146). There was a push and a desire to have a “people-driven” constitution that would relate to the citizens day-to-day lived realities (*ibid.*). Section 56 of the 2013 constitution provided a strong framework for the protection and promotion of the rights of women and men, boys and girls in Zimbabwe. It recognized the equality of all persons and went further to explicitly outlaw discrimination on the grounds of sex and gender (Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013).

The provisions of Zimbabwe’s 2013 constitution had a significant impact on shaping and directing the development of the second National Gender Policy. According to Fombad (2016) and Mwangi (2014), the main purpose of the second NGP was to address gaps and emerging issues from the first NGP of 2004. The government official stated:

The main aim of the policy was to pick up from where the 2004 NGP had left off. We wanted to create equal opportunities for men and women in key economic sectors, the statistics had shown that women were still lagging behind in key economic sectors and yet they are the majority population working in agriculture, mining, tourism, and manufacturing.

- Govt Official A

The statement by the government official suggests that the aim of the second NGP was to build upon the progress made and to address the gaps left by the first NGP. It appears that the objective was to ensure equal opportunities for both men and women in Zimbabwe’s important economic sectors. As highlighted earlier, there were significant events that also contributed to the development of the second NGP such as the FTLRP and the economic crisis. These events also worsened the disparities and unequal gender access to and control over productive resources. Thus, the motivation for the policy was supported by statistics indicating that women continued to be underrepresented in Zimbabwe’s key economic sectors, despite being the majority population in industries

such as agriculture, mining, tourism, and manufacturing. The policy also confirmed that the need for a new gender policy arose from the fact that the targets that had been set in the first NGP of 2004 were yet to be achieved (MOWAGCD, 2013).

From the government officials quote we can deduce that the policy is concerned with addressing the gender disparity present in these specific industries (agriculture, mining, tourism, and manufacturing). It recognizes the importance of providing equal opportunities for women to participate and prosper in these economic sectors. Acknowledging that there had been a gap in the statistics, shows us that the government, through the NGP, aimed at creating equal opportunities for women, as well as a level playing field for both men and women. However, neither the government official nor the ministry could provide statistics in gender parity between men and women from the 1st NGP. “The 2011 Human Development Report revealed that the Gender Equality Index (GII) was set at 0.583 compared to an ideal of 0” (MOWAGCD, 2013: 3). This index presents a low representation and status of women in respect to decision making, reproductive health, empowerment, access, control and ownership of economic resources and economic opportunities (*ibid*). The other two government officials also pointed out:

The goal was to improve the status of women in access to resources mainly resources and machinery where possible. These programs came to address the unequal distribution of resources between men and women in terms of financial inclusion. We wanted to create a level playing field between men and women. Trying to promote and protect the rights of women in acquiring resources and participation in decision making.

- Govt Official B

The policy was addressing the level of participation of women in key economic sectors. We realized that in terms of statistics women were highly involved in key economic sectors as workers and not owners. So, the policy was coming up to address such issues in terms of ownership and participation in decision making. When you are an owner of a mine you become a key decision maker in that area.

- Govt Official C

The views from the government officials concerning the NGP's goals are agency centred. As shown in Table 2.1, the agency centred approach to WEE focused on women's access to credit, equipment, skills and business training and entrepreneurship. The statement by Govt official B, shows that the NGP's aims were to improve women's access to resources and machinery. The policy was focused on addressing the unequal distribution of economic resources between men and women in terms of financial inclusion. The objective was to create a level environment where both men and women would be afforded equal opportunities, and this could also be achieved through the promotion and protection of women's rights in acquiring resources and participating in decision making. Signifying the policy's commitment to empowering women and ensuring that their voices were heard, the policy seemed to prioritize enhancing the status of women and creating equal opportunities for their participation in various sectors.

Similarly, government official C also touched on the policy addressing women's level of participation in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors. The official acknowledged that many women were present in key economic sectors as workers, but not owners. Hence, the policy was created to address the issue of women's lack of ownership and participation in decision making. The policy aimed to address this by promoting ownership for women in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors (mining, agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing). By gaining ownership, women can attain greater control over their work and lives, ultimately fostering increased participation in decision making processes and gender equality (UN Women, 2015).

Another area of concern the NGP was trying to address was the adoption and coordination of the gender policy across the public and private sectors in Zimbabwe. A standard definition by Lindblom (1965) explains that coordination is when the decisions that are made in a program or organisation consider those made in others and attempt to avoid conflict. However, Scharpf (1994) deems this definition as 'negative coordination'. Peters (2018) also argues that coordination problems are not just about conflicts, they often also result from program redundancy or gaps in coverage. In the light of this, a government official noted:

The National Gender Policy is a guiding framework for the empowerment of women across sectors and what has happened is that it also states the institutional mechanism for implementation which brings about issues of coordination, flow of information between the implementing agencies, the roles of various agencies including the independent commissions in terms of oversight. It brings a compact implementation structure for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the country. The constraints it was addressing was the disenfranchised implementation where one women's group would move this way and the other government entity is moving that way and so on.

- Govt Official A

The statement by the government official highlights the importance of coordination and information flow between different implementing agencies to ensure effective implementation of the policy. A coordinated way of implementing the gender policy across sectors would eliminate the duplication of programs which leads to unnecessary costs. Naidoo (2013) explains that promoting coordination between government entities and the private sector policy synergy and making the most of available resources, using them efficiently to achieve policy goals. Another reason for emphasizing coordination is to eliminate contradictions – as shown in the statement by the State official, other organisations were implementing programs that were directly contradictory and not aligned with the gender policy.

This section has provided an overview and historical background of the NGP in Zimbabwe, leading to the development of the second NGP. The section also provided insight on the second NGP's aims and the challenges that it sought to address. The basis for this was to gain an understanding of how the State, as an institution, influences and shapes policy by promoting gender equality in access to and control over productive resources. By understanding these dynamics, it sheds light on how State policy as an institution shapes the social outcomes of its citizens this is evidenced in Chapters 6 and 7. Thus, the discussion and analysis in this section provided insight into the priorities of the State and the critical issues it aimed to address through the NGP. The State through the NGP prioritized an agency centred approach. As highlighted by the government officials, the NGP was useful in filling gaps, most importantly in enabling

women to take full control of their economic activities and finances as well as to make independent decisions. This NGP, therefore, provided interventions or programs that would enable women to exercise their agency, to become self-reliant, confident and to be agents of change in their lives. The ultimate goal was to ensure that women had equal opportunities and could actively participate in the decision-making processes that shaped their lives and their work. We now turn to a discussion on the NGP's conceptualization of women's economic empowerment.

5.5 The NGP and its conceptualization of Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE)

This section addresses this study's first research question in understanding the NGP's conceptualization of WEE, and the underlying reasons for this conceptualization. This is done to highlight the NGP's position in addressing women's issues (such as unequal access to and control over productive resources) and to identify discrepancies between the policy's objectives and its actual implementation. The section incorporates views from government officials, men, and women miners about their understanding of WEE. This is done to provide a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding the role of women and their empowerment in different institutional settings. It also provides insights regarding the challenges, barriers, and opportunities that women face in accessing and participating in economic activities.

In Chapter 2, we learned that WEE is a 'political' concept because it is contested by many scholars. Some scholars view WEE through an economic and entrepreneurial lens, focusing on women obtaining economic opportunities such as access to credit and small business training (Hallward-Dremeire, 2003). On the other hand, others argue that WEE should not only focus on gaining economic opportunities alone without confronting the structural barriers that impede on women's participation in the market. These structural barriers have been identified in Chapter 2 as unequal access to microfinance, skills and business training, unequal gender and power relations between men and women, the unequal distribution of unpaid care work, patriarchy, and sociocultural norms. The contrasting viewpoints on WEE highlight the tensions of structure and agency. Importantly, exploring the NGP's contextualization of WEE provides valuable insight into whether it prioritizes structure or agency or a combination of the two.

The policy document defines women's economic empowerment as:

... the process which increases women's real power over economic decisions that influence their lives and priorities in society. This can be achieved through equal access to and control over critical economic resources and opportunities and the elimination of structural inequalities in the labour markets (MWAGCD, 2013: 35).

This definition recognizes the importance of economic agency for women, acknowledging that decisions about finances, employment and resources significantly impacts their lives and ability to shape their own priorities. It emphasizes granting women equal access to economic resources and opportunities as well as removing any barriers or biases that exist within the labour markets that perpetuate inequality. This is the official definition contained in the policy document. It is interesting as well to consider what government officials thought of WEE. When prompted, two government officials provided their own definitions as follows:

Women's economic empowerment is the process of empowering women through economic programs, respecting and observing women's rights in access to resources and financial inclusion.

- Govt Official B

Women's economic empowerment is assisting women to have control in key economic factors in Zimbabwe which enables them to make key decisions and priorities for their life. We are looking at various processes of equipping women with resources to actively participate in key economic sectors - agriculture, mining, tourism, and manufacturing.

- Govt Official C

The definitions of WEE provided by the two government officials are similar in context to the definition of WEE in the official policy document. However, they differ slightly in wording. Government official B's definition defines WEE as a process that combines economic programs with a focus on upholding women's rights and promoting equal access to resources and financial inclusion. The definition underlines the significance of promoting financial inclusion, ensuring that women have access to financial tools and opportunities to participate fully in economic activities. Hendriks (2019) argues

that being financially included can have transformative effects for women. Also, empowering women with tools such as access to credit enhances their decision making and control over productive resources, and in this way supports their families (*ibid*). More so, the definition also emphasizes the need for equal opportunities and fair treatment in accessing productive resources such as credit, education, employment, and equipment.

Interestingly, government official C highlights the concept of WEE within the Zimbabwean context. It emphasizes the goal of assisting women to gain control over the key economic sectors of Zimbabwe identified as agriculture, mining, tourism, and manufacturing, as well as allowing them to make important decisions and set priorities for their lives. The official's understanding also recognizes the importance of women's participation in sectors that conform to traditional gendered roles. This means that women should have agency and influence in determining their outcomes. Similar to government official B's view, official C's standpoint also suggests the need to provide the necessary tools and support for women to actively participate in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors. This conceptualization of WEE reflects a commitment to providing women with necessary resources to enhance their economic agency and to contribute to the country's development.

The definitions of WEE by the official policy document and the government officials emphasize the process of empowering women through economic means and ensuring that they equally have access to and control over productive resources. They highlight the importance of addressing the gender inequalities in the labour markets and respecting women's rights. However, the first definition from the policy's official document mentions increasing women's real power over economic decisions, while the definitions by the government officials focus on observing the rights of women and supporting their participation in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors.

The NGP's conceptualization of WEE is agency centred. It underlines the need for women to take full control and ownership of their economic activities and finances. It also enables women to exercise agency and make choices. However, the policy's official definition of WEE acknowledges the structural inequalities in the labour market rather superficially, however its actual focus is agency centred. This is because labour markets perpetuate structural gender inequalities (Elson, 1991) such as women being

placed in lower, vulnerable jobs aligned to their domestic responsibilities, lower wages, unpaid care work, discrimination, and bias (Chant & Pedwell, 2008; Kabeer, 2012; Meagher, 2010). These structural gender inequalities hinder women's economic empowerment, however, the policy's empowerment programs do not address these issues. This is demonstrated in the following section which discusses the NGP's empowerment programs.

The policy's conceptualization of WEE, therefore, takes up a liberal/agency centred position. As outlined by the official policy document, it recognizes the need for women's agency in making their own decisions about finances, employment, and their lives. Agency refers to the capacity of individuals to act and make choices that shape their lives. The policy's conceptualization of WEE focuses on women to exercise their agency through making decisions, exercising free will to make choices and to take action within the public sphere. This is in line with the perspective of liberal feminism discussed in Chapter 3, which argued for women's participation in the public sphere – employment, education, voting etc. Tong (2009) argued that liberal feminists advocated for reformation of the system in order to make it possible for women to participate and succeed to the same extent as men do within the public sphere, in this case the labour market. Thus, the policy's conceptualization of WEE aligns with liberal feminism because it recognizes women as producers and economic contributors.

Earlier on, we emphasized the importance of understanding how male and female miners perceive women's economic empowerment. A sizeable number of female miners in Bubi and Gwanda acknowledged that WEE encompasses more than just access to and control over economic resources and opportunities. They highlighted the importance of challenging the unequal distribution of unpaid care work, and the unequal social and power relations between men and women. Their responses revealed the following:

Equal sharing of unpaid care work between men and women should be part of promoting WEE. Unpaid care work remains a burden to many women because of traditional roles which are more advantageous to men.

- Female Miner 2B 03

I agree that we should share household and childcare responsibilities as women's economic empowerment. It cannot be equal access to finance, land, equipment alone without equal distribution of care work in the household. We need to be equal at all levels.

- Female Miner GM 09

The male miners on the other hand, highlighted the importance of women's economic empowerment as giving women equal opportunities to participate in the economy through access to capital to grow their enterprises. Unlike the women, they rejected the idea of sharing household responsibilities and childcare.

As a man I do not have it in me to do those duties. I do not see household responsibilities being included as part of women's economic empowerment, because since a long time ago women have been doing the work. In our culture women are in charge of the household responsibilities just as it is our role as men to provide for our families. There are roles for men and women.

- Male Miner B 08

I don't see why I should be doing household duties and looking after children when I am married, and my wife is there. Our culture doesn't allow such.

- Male Miner G 13

The perceptions from both women and men miners reveal the complex gender dynamics within the context of women's economic empowerment. The female miners acknowledge the importance of equally sharing household and childcare responsibilities and understand that it is essential for women's economic empowerment. It is not just about equal access to economic resources such as finance, land or equipment but also ensuring an equal distribution of unpaid care work within the household. Female GM 09 expands on this point by emphasizing the need for equality at all levels. She also suggests that achieving gender equality involves addressing access to and control over resources, as well as the internal dynamics within the household such as the responsibility of unpaid care work. In Chapter 2, Bradshaw *et al.* (2013), Cornwall and Edwards (2010), and Kabeer (2012) stress the need to tackle gendered

norms underpinning women's disproportionate 'care load', with the aim of increasing men's practical involvement in unpaid care work.

The perceptions from the male miners, show that traditional gender roles between men and women should be maintained. Men are primarily responsible for providing financially and women are primarily responsible for household tasks. The male miners believe that women have always been expected to fulfil the household and childcare duties, while men have been tasked for providing for their families. The male miners do not see the need for changing the traditional gendered roles, nor do they associate 'care work' with women's economic empowerment. Noting that it may be a difficult task to challenge and change the perspectives of traditional gendered roles across cultures, scholars have suggested the need for programs to support women through infrastructural development such as electricity (rural electrification programs), water and sanitation to ease the time spent by women doing household tasks. However, this does not change the way in which unpaid care work is conceptualized and valued. Interestingly, one of the male miners, who is also the chairperson of the Bubi Small-scale Mining Association (BSSMA), emphasized the need to recognize women's contribution to unpaid care work as productive work and to be included in WEE discussions:

When you begin to salary and wage the kind of activity or work, she does in the household, you find that she is a maid, and an 'early childhood development teacher'. When you put value on the kind of contribution that women put in, you'd find that it is more than the money I make as a man. We need to look deeply and adopt a radical approach to women's economic empowerment for the recognition of unpaid care work as productive work.

- BSSMA Representative

The statement from the BSSMA representative indicates a change of attitude towards including unpaid care work in WEE. His statement highlights the need to recognize and put value to the unpaid care work that women typically do in their households. Similarly, African feminists (see Chapter 3) also advocated for the recognition women's value and labour contributions in the private sphere. This work is often overlooked and not considered as important as formal employment. However, it is crucial in understanding

this unpaid care work has significant economic value and contributes to the wellbeing of the family and society at large. Therefore, by valuing this work and acknowledging its economic significance, traditional gendered norms and roles that reinforce gender inequality are challenged.

In reality, many women face structural gendered inequalities beyond the labour market, such as unpaid care work and unequal gender relations in the family/household and the communities – these too impede women’s economic empowerment. Amis *et al.* (2018) argue that policies tend to worsen the effects of social inequalities entrenched in families and communities. For instance, the official policy document does not offer any provisions for addressing the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work on women. Instead, it reinforces it. The SRA also points out that the State and State policies are institutions that reproduce and reinforce the social inequalities experienced by women. These inequalities are evident in various institutional contexts, such as the community and family, which are further intertwined with existing inequalities.

Essentially, the NGP’s conceptualization of WEE seeks to empower women to take control and to make decisions independently so that they could participate effectively in the economy (labour market). Due to the structural factors entrenched within these institutions such as patriarchy, sociocultural norms and the unequal social relationships between men and women (see Chapter 2), this form of WEE does not have that much of an impact on the household and community. Chapter 7 evaluates the ways in which the NGP interacts with the community and household/family of Bubi and Gwanda in either eliminating or reinforcing social inequalities as part of the discussion on the NGP’s contextualization of WEE in this section.

The primary and secondary data presented in this section provided insight on the NGP’s position on WEE. Its position on WEE is limited to creating the right market conditions for women to actively participate as producers and economic contributors in the market only, hence the argument that it adopts a liberal/agency centred approach. Consequently, the policy overlooks the structural social barriers that impede on women’s agency in the private sphere (family/household) such as the burden of unpaid care on women, and the unequal social relations between men and women.

Having outlined the NGP's conceptualization of WEE, we now turn to a series of analytical sections that focus on the SRA's five institutional dynamics in analysing the NGP. Table 3.1 describes the five institutional dynamics that need to be considered when analysing institutions, namely are rules, resources, people, activities, and power. Analysing the NGP according to these five aspects is important in understanding the complexity of policymaking, and in uncovering how power structures effect policy outcomes. The focus on the five institutional dynamics also helps in uncovering the dynamics of social relations, and how these dynamics are influenced by various factors and actors involved in policymaking and implementation.

5.6 Empowerment programs run under the NGP

In the previous section we gained insights from the official policy document and primary data sourced from the government officials on the NGP's conceptualization of WEE. From this information, it became evident that the policy's main focus on WEE revolved around enabling greater control, management, and ownership of economic activities by women. While on paper the NGP's official definition of WEE acknowledged the goal of eliminating structural gender inequalities in the labour market, in practice the NGP adopted an agency-centred approach.

This section focuses on the 'activities' implemented under the NGP in order to achieve its goals towards WEE. As presented in Table 3.1, 'activities' are part of the SRA's five institutional dynamics – these are defined as the processes that take place in achieving policy goals. Kabeer (1994) points out that activities may take on different forms based on a needs-assessment of vulnerable groups e.g. orphans and the disabled, and can be distributive, productive, or regulative activities. It is important that this thesis also analyses the activities undertaken by the NGP to provide an understanding of how the policy aligns with its conceptual framework and to add depth and evidence to the argument of the policy's WEE approach.

The activities undertaken by the NGP towards women's economic empowerment were mainly distributive. They involved:

Access to micro credit: Women's access to micro credit is crucial for promoting women's economic empowerment and social change. Historically, women have faced numerous barriers in accessing financial services, thus, hindering their progress in

starting or expanding their own businesses. This empowers women to have control over their financial decisions, it enhances their autonomy, and fosters economic and social equality between men and women.

Access to equipment: Women's access to equipment is another pathway in achieving WEE. Access to equipment enhances women's productivity and competitiveness in the market.

Skills and business training: Education plays a vital role in women's economic empowerment as it provides women with the necessary tools to develop entrepreneurial skills and start their own businesses. By equipping women with business skills, they gain confidence and competency in actively participating in the economy.

The official policy document and primary data gathered from the government officials indicates that the National Gender Policy in Zimbabwe was guided by the Broad Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework (BBWEEF). As previously mentioned, the goal of the BBWEEF was to ensure that women have equal access to and control over productive resources. One of the government officials noted:

The key guiding policy on women's economic empowerment is what we refer to as the Broad Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework (BBWEEF) which was developed after some studies were done in the sectors of mining, agriculture, and tourism with support from World Bank and what then came out was the government came up with a framework that would guide institutions in WEE across all sectors.

- Govt Official A

Unfortunately, at the time of writing this chapter, the researcher was still unable to access the documentation of studies conducted by the government of Zimbabwe and the World Bank from the MOWAGCD after making numerous requests. It would have brought more context in understanding the NGP's empowerment framework. The statement by government official A highlights that the BBWEEF was developed after studies were conducted in the mining, agriculture, and tourism sectors with support from the World Bank. It would appear that the research outcomes from the government and the World Bank with regards to the key economic sectors were adopted as a

framework for WEE across all sectors in Zimbabwe. This was due to the fact that many women faced entry barriers in mining, agriculture and tourism posed as lack of capital, equipment, business, and skills training. Also, these sectors were dominated by men who controlled the entry processes and resources (Kabeer, 2012). Overall, the statement by the government official emphasized the collaborative effort between the government and the World Bank in developing the BBWEEF.

In reality and practice, the NGP's activities comprised of two components: access to microfinance and business/skills training. The World Bank (2006) and Selome *et al.* (2014) both agree that investing in women's skills training together with access to capital would increase productivity, efficiency, and sustainable growth. This form of empowerment is linked to the agency-centred approach to WEE described in Chapter 2, emphasizing the importance of women's choices and capabilities in exercising their agency. According to this way of thinking, by recognizing women as active agents in their own lives, agency centred approaches enable women to become self-reliant, to make decisions that benefit themselves and their families and to take control of their economic future. Agency-centred approaches enable women to access and participate in economic opportunities leading to improved livelihoods and greater development outcomes. The government officials highlighted:

The Ministry of Women's Affairs worked with other government ministries and departments to provide business and skills training across sectors. The financial component involved the ministry unveiling some loans through the Women's Development Fund (WDF) facility under the NGP. This is a 'revolving fund' for women in all sectors; and we encourage them to apply for loans/capital to assist in the take-off of their various trades be it in mining, agriculture and cross border trading etc.

- Govt Official C

The conditions under the WDF facility under the NGP were:

After completion of business and skills training by the beneficiaries we had, through the Women's Development Fund, women's groups from provinces receiving loans. The WDF disbursed loans to women in groups because the WDF operates as a non-collateral fund, it relies on group collateral.

- Govt Official A

The activities highlighted by the government official (access to credit and skills/business training) signify the policy's effort in addressing the structural economic inequalities in access to and control over productive resources in the labour market. As indicated in WEE literature, many women lack the necessary capacity (knowledge, skills, and finance) in starting and expanding their economic activities. This lack limits women from actively participating in economic activities. The policy opened up a pathway through the WDF facility for women to access funds and skills training. This was a significant effort in closing the gendered disparities in access to micro credit, education, and training.

An interesting aspect noted from the discussion above is the policy's willingness to embrace 'microfinance', through its use of the Women's Development Fund facility as a central component of its drive towards WEE. As noted in the literature review (Chapter 2), it is one of the most popular development strategies used by development planners and policy makers in promoting WEE. "Microfinance, including micro-credit which the Women's Development Fund facility provides, is considered an instrument that promotes effective women's economic empowerment" (WDF, 2017: 6). "Despite the role played by women in economic development, the financial inclusion gap between men and women remained at 9% for developing economies since 2011" (Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, 2019: 1). This is why the policy's WEE framework created a Women's Development Fund facility to close the financial gap between men and women in Zimbabwe.

The Women's Development Fund facility is administered by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender, through the Peoples' Own Savings Bank (POSB). The fund empowers women across all sectors in Zimbabwe. The government of Zimbabwe, through the policy's fund facility, emulated a number of women's development funds from around the world, for example the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) established in 1976 to provide financing for the advancement of women. There was also the African Women Development Fund established by the African Union in 2001 to finance local, national, sub-regional and regional women's organizations working towards women's economic empowerment.

The NGP's women's fund facility operated like many popular and successful microfinance programs across the world by implementing group lending systems without 'physical collateral'. Microfinance programs run by the the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, the Amanah Ikhitar Malaysia (AIM), and the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) are some of the schemes that give out loans to women's groups without a physical collateral. Physical collateral refers to any immovable property which is pledged as security for repayment of a loan (see Chapter 2). Many women are unable to secure loans because they do not have equal ownership rights to immovable property (Morsy, 2020). This is because of the unequal gender relations, patriarchy and cultural norms deeply entrenched in most African societies, Zimbabwe included. The policy's WDF facility recognized group collateral in access to micro credit as an important aspect of WEE – it provided a supportive environment of mutual accountability among group members. It also enabled women to overcome barriers and take control of their economic lives, contributing to their overall empowerment and well-being.

Likewise, the discussion above on the NGP's WDF group lending system brings out the theme of 'social capital'. The sentiments by government official A provides that the NGP builds on women's intangible resources of trust and common values as a key element in making financial services possible for them (women). Social capital is defined as the social relations that facilitate access to resources and protect the commons whilst co-operation makes the markets work more efficiently (Putnam, 1993). Social capital is similar to Kabeer's (1994) social relations concept in the SRA (Chapter 3) which builds on the participation of informal networks and associations through which people may increase or access productive resources. The group lending system adopted by the NGP's Women's Development Fund facility, therefore, enabled women to group themselves according to their shared values and trust to coordinate action and achieve desired goals.

Other than the policy's Women's Development Fund facility, the NGP established the Zimbabwe Women's Microfinance Bank (ZWMFB), another microfinance initiative under the policy for women to access financial services. The women's bank complimented the WDF in providing finance for women's small to medium enterprises in Zimbabwe. According to government official A, "*it was necessary to implement the*

ZWMFB, as the WDF facility was failing to meet the demands in supporting all women". Unlike the policy's WDF facility, the ZWMFB accepts both individual and group loan applications. Individual women and women's groups are required to open accounts with the bank and, once the loan is approved, the funds are credited to either the individual's account or that of the group. The ZWMFB was founded and officially registered in 2017. It opened its doors to the public in 2018, coinciding with the launch of the third NGP.

That being said, the NGP's activities discussed in this section reflect the policy's liberal/agency centred approach to WEE. The policy's activities draw on a form of WEE where women have equal access to financial resources, and tools and are equipped with the necessary skills to competently participate in economic activities and exercise agency and greater control over productive resources (Hendriks, 2019). The NGP's approach is similar to the World Bank's 'smart economics' approach – a form of WEE that capitalizes on the contributions women can make to economic growth if the right market conditions (for example, access to credit and business training) are applied. The official policy document (MOWAGCD, 2013) recognizes that that economic growth programs that target women, 'womenomics', make for good economics. Through this, the policy highlights the importance of supporting and investing in women's economic empowerment in that it can yield substantial results for the country's economy.

5.7 Processes involved in enabling the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs

This section explores the processes involved in enabling the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. It provides insights on how the allocation and disbursement of resources in the State can support WEE programs under the NGP. The section answers one of the study's research questions regarding how resources flow from the State to facilitate the NGP's empowerment programs. Therefore, this section focuses on one of the SRA's institutional dynamics – resources: what is used and what is produced. The study revealed that National budget was key in the allocation of resources to support the empowerment programs run under the NGP. The government officials noted:

At the beginning of the year, the government draws up a National Budget, where the Ministry of Finance allocates a portion to support gender equality initiatives and this includes policy empowerment programs.

- Govt Official A

And:

The government of Zimbabwe would finance some of the programs. For the policy empowerment programs, funds were budgeted for under the National Budget.

- Govt Official B

The statements from both government officials suggest that the government of Zimbabwe is actively involved in supporting and financing policy programs aimed at empowerment and development of the country. Both statements indicate that resources for the NGP's empowerment programs are allocated under the National Budget. This implies that the government of Zimbabwe sets aside specific funds for these programs, which also indicates a focused and intentional approach towards WEE, gender equality and development as a whole. Government official A explains the processes more elaborately by indicating that funds are sourced from the National Budget, where a portion is dedicated to gender empowerment initiatives. Once the funds are allocated through the Ministry of Finance, the government collaborates with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to implement the policy's empowerment programs. However, the government officials also noted that they were experiencing delays in the disbursement of the funds from Treasury.

The disbursement of funds from National Treasury to the Ministry's WDF facility has been very slow. The funds are availed six to seven months later from the time of budget announcement.

- Govt official B

The statement by the government official raises concerns about the disbursement of funds from the National Treasury to the Women's Development Fund facility under the NGP. The government official highlighted that the fund disbursement processes for the

policy’s empowerment programs had been quite slow, such that funds were availed six to seven months later after the government announced the budget. This shows us that there could be delays or bureaucratic obstacles in the distribution of funds, which in turn hinder the timely implementation of the policy’s empowerment programs. The policy implementation literature in Chapter 2 highlighted that there had been incidences of funds for policy implementation not being released by virtue of these being gender equality policies (Engeli & Mazur, 2018; Franceschet, 2013). The sentiments echoed by the government official could also imply that the NGP’s empowerment programs are not at the top priority list of national programs or initiatives, even though the Zimbabwean government through the NGP emphasized that it would prioritize gender equality and women’s economic empowerment. Meier (2006) confirms this by arguing that gender equality policies have not received priority status in many government settings. This further confirms the perception by Mutereko (2009) that policy implementation is never a smooth process.

The table below outlines the budget amounts allocated and disbursed for women’s empowerment projects in Zimbabwe under the NGP’s Women’s Development Fund facility.

Table 5.1: Budget amounts for WEE projects in Zimbabwe under the WDF 2013–2017

YEAR	BUDGET AMOUNT (USD \$)
2013	\$245 000.00
2014	\$350 000.00
2015	Nil
2016	\$300 000.00 was allocated but not disbursed in 2016.
2017	\$700 000.00 was allocated but not disbursed in 2017.

Source: Women’s Development Report (2017)

The table shows that the State allocated over USD 1.3 million for women’s projects during the 2013–2017 period. However, there were no funds allocated and disbursed in 2015. Probed about this, the government officials did not give any clear answer. They said that, “*treasury did not avail any funds for the policy empowerment programs*”. This is also the case with the US\$300 000.00 and US\$700 000.00 budgets of 2016 and 2017, where Treasury had allocated the funds, but these were not disbursed. The government officials said that “*there was no money*” (Govt Official B). The governments’ commitment to women’s economic empowerment is brought to question

when one sees that the State failed to disburse the funds. The fact that there are no reasons provided as to why there were no fund disbursements in 2015, 2016 or 2017 suggests that, while there was a policy rhetoric around access to credit for women, this was not matched by the budgetary provision.

According to the WDF Report (2017), the State allocated less than 1% of its annual budget for the NGPs empowerment programs during the policy's five-year period (2013–2017). This is despite the commitment to gender budgeting that the government of Zimbabwe had made in 2007 (Kapungu, 2008; Maruzani *et al.*, 2012). Gender budgeting is an approach adopted by governments to assess whether the State budgetary allocations, disbursement, and programs address the needs of men and women independently (Nakray, 2009). There have been success stories of gender budgeting in Australia, South Africa and India where there have been efforts to adhere to gender budgeting by allocating more than 2% to the gender budget for schemes focused on mitigating the prevailing gender gap (Goswami, 2006). In the Philippines, for instance, the government allocated 5% of its budget for gender and development (*ibid.*). Thus, it is not unrealistic to suggest that the State could have made more provisions for allocating at least 3–5% of the annual budget to the NGP's empowerment programs, considering that 52% of the Zimbabwean population are women.

Apart from the National Budget allocations that the Ministry of Women's Affairs receives to support empowerment programs under the NGP, the government officials also pointed out that partnerships between the Ministry of Women's Affairs and international NGOs such as the UNDP “*have also played an important role in supporting specific empowerment programs under the NGP*” (Govt official C). The government officials also noted that, when receiving resources for the NGP's empowerment programs, there are quite a number of processes to follow because the NGO has to approve the program.

For the project in Matabeleland South Province, in Gwanda district, the Ministry of Women's Affairs wrote a concept note about how best they could empower women miners facing difficulties around the processing of their ore in a male dominated environment under the NGP's empowerment programs. Once the concept note was approved, UNDP released funds into Ministry's WDF facility to support the specific programs under the NGP.

- Govt Official A.

The evidence above indicates the collaborative efforts between the MOWAGCD and UNDP Zimbabwe in investing in and supporting women miners. The Ministry of Women's Affairs took the initiative to draft a 'concept note' with the objective to empower women miners who had been facing challenges in processing their ores in the ASGM sector of Gwanda. This shows us the Ministry's understanding of the challenges faced by women and their intention towards empowering women in the mining sector. The concept note by the Ministry was approved, signifying that the proposed program aligned with the NGP's objectives as well as the UNDP's commitment under the five-year cycles under ZUNDAF, mentioned by the UNDP official earlier on.

Based on the evidence presented in this section, it is clear that the State primarily funds the empowerment programs run under the NGP through its annual budget. Evidence shows that the Ministry also collaborates with international agencies such as the UNDP in funding the NGP's empowerment program. The discussion surrounding the flow of resources and budget allocations further reinforces the point raised by Kabeer (1994) in the SRA that institutions adhere to rules that determine what men and women will get in terms of resources. The evidence largely suggests that the institutional rules that determine the budget allocation and disbursement for women's programs under the NGP are perpetuated by patriarchy and the unequal gender relations between men and women. The mere fact that, for three years of the NGP's 5-year period no fund disbursements were made, leaves one questioning the government's commitment towards closing the gender gap in access to and control of productive resources in the country.

Having discussed the ways in which resources flow to implement empowerment programs under the NGP, we now turn to focus on the ways in which the policy's empowerment programs were rolled out in the rural districts of Bubi and Gwanda.

5.8 The roll-out of the NGP's empowerment programs in the Bubi and Gwanda districts: A tale of one empowerment program and two districts.

Empowerment programs under the NGP were implemented in Zimbabwe's ten provinces: Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, Manicaland, Masvingo, Midlands, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland East, Bulawayo Metropolitan

and Harare. This thesis primarily centres on the Bubi district situated in Matabeleland North Province, and the Gwanda rural district in Matabeleland South Province, as discussed in Chapter 4. To effectively comprehend the Social Relations Approach (SRA), a thorough case study research design was emphasized in Chapters 3 and 4. This approach offered a practical means of analysing the extent to which the NGP challenged and/or reinforced gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda's rural districts. This section is divided into two subsections: the first subsection focuses on the roll-out of the NGP's empowerment programs in the Bubi district. It will introduce Case Study 1 by profiling the Bubi district according to its socio-economic background and then move on to a discussion of evidence of how the State implemented the empowerment programs. This will be followed by Case study 2: Gwanda district, a profile of the district, followed by the NGP's implementation of empowerment programs in that district.

5.8.1 Case Study 1: Bubi district, Matabeleland North Province

Bubi district is situated in the Matabeleland North Province of Zimbabwe. It has 23 administrative wards which are divided into 155 villages. Of the 23 wards, five are communal areas while six are old resettlement areas. The rest of the wards are new resettlement areas comprising of A1, A2 and small-scale commercial and large-scale farms (WFP, 2022). Of the 23 wards in the Bubi district, ten wards were ranked most vulnerable by the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee Report (ZIMVAC, 2016). "The service centre of the district is in ward 11 which is about 65km from Bulawayo, most of the government offices and local authority offices are also found in ward 11" (*ibid*: 7). There is one main police station in ward 11, one police post and five police bases. Most service institutions face mobility and accommodation problems for both office and residential purposes.

The district has an estimated population of 65 940 people – of the population, 49% are female and 51% are male with ward 11 having the highest proportion of the total population in the district (CSZ, 2015). The district lies in agro-ecological regions IV and V, characterized by low erratic rainfall and high temperatures (Mungure *et al.*, 2021). The land is suitable for cattle ranching, tourism, and wildlife programs. The district is endowed with two minerals, limestone and gold, with gold being the major mineral deposit spread throughout the district (WFP, 2016). Bubi district boasts big

mines such as Casmyn, Billboes Holdings and Inviga, with more than 200 formal and informal small-scale gold miners operating in that area (Nsingo, 2017; WFP, 2016). Despite the high concentration of gold mining activities, the district lags behind in infrastructural development. Poor road network has been noted as a stumbling block for private NGOs and government service providers to reach (WFP, 2016; 2022). There is also very poor mobile network coverage in some of the district's wards, as some of the network service providers do not have any communication towers (*ibid.*).

Most of the water sources in the district such as dams, rivers and boreholes have dried up. The livestock has been heavily affected, as well as cropping and gardening which have been reduced to topics for conversation as planting has not been done by many for quite a long time (Mambondiyani, 2016). Household sources of income are dependent on formal and informal employment, petty trade, agricultural production, and remittances. Most of the able-bodied men and women seek employment in the mines or in Bulawayo.

In Chapter 4, a concise overview of the target participants was provided. Now we will explore the participants' background information in greater detail to evaluate the extent to which the NGP's empowerment programs either supported or impeded women's economic advancement.

Two groups of women were interviewed in Bubi district. The first group comprised of eight women with small-scale mining titles who had benefited from the NGP's empowerment program. Four of these women miners are active members of the Bubi Small-scale Miners Association (BSSMA) and were allocated small-scale mining titles by BSSMA in 2015. One of the women miners from the group is a widow who took over her husband's mining claim. Two of the women miners in this group purchased and registered their own mining titles – they highlighted that they “*had to sell cattle*” in order to meet the expenses that come with prospecting and registering a mining title. The last respondent from this group highlighted that she took over one of her late father's mining claims. The second group also comprised of eight women, three of them active members of BSSMA who were also allocated mining titles by BSSMA, while three of the women miners are working under a syndicate, raising funds to register their mines and the last two are employed in the mines.

The monthly average incomes of the female miners (beneficiaries) varied from US\$150–US\$500. Meanwhile, the second group (non-beneficiaries) comprised of three female miners with mining titles who reported monthly incomes ranging from US\$150–400. The other three who working under a syndicate highlighted that they use the ‘share system’, stating that the amount they receive monthly depends on the output of ore. In essence, they share in profit and loss – they estimated that their monthly earning varied between US\$100 and UD\$350. In addition, the two women miners employed at the mines stated that they received a monthly salary of US\$150 per month.

The economic status of women miners in Bubi prior to the NGP’s empowerment programs

The survey and interviews conducted revealed that the women miners came from socioeconomically vulnerable backgrounds (more evidence in Chapter 6). For instance, three of the female miners from the first group indicated that they depended on their husbands’ salaries but highlighted the financial constraints of depending on a single income in the household. The widowed female miner mentioned that she encountered significant challenges in providing for her family, and this suggests that she had limited financial resources. The women miners from the second group (non-beneficiaries of State support under the NGP) also emphasized that they were faced with financial challenges in providing for the day to day needs of their families. In this regard it is important to highlight that the overall economic hardship in Zimbabwe has played a significant role in shaping women’s socio-economic background (Hilson, 2003).

Having provided a profile of Bubi district, we now focus our attention on the roll-out of the NGP’s empowerment programs in the Bubi district. The study found that during the 2013–2017 period, five groups of women benefited from the policy’s empowerment programs and, of the five groups, two were involved in small-scale gold mining activities. The government official explained:

Women miners in Bubi received cash loans under the policy’s WDF facility. The first group received a cash loan and the second group received 25% in cash and 75% of the loan was paid to suppliers for mining equipment.

- Govt Official B

The women miners also confirmed:

I was in a group with two ladies that received a cash loan amounting to \$10 000 in cash for our mining operations.

- Female Miner 1B 03

I was in a group with four ladies, we received a loan for \$20 000 but the condition was 75% goes to suppliers and we receive 25% in cash.

- Female Miner 2B 02

The evidence presented above indicates that the women miners in Bubi district received cash loans under the policy's WDF facility. The funds were distributed in two ways: the first group of women received a cash loan, while the second group of women received 25% of the loan in cash and the remaining 75% was paid to the suppliers to secure mining equipment. The provision of the cash loans under the policy's Women's Development Fund facility reflects on the policy's support and recognition for women's economic agency. These loans empower women to make important financial decisions concerning their mining activities. It also reflects on the policy's conceptualization of WEE by allowing the women to exercise control over economic resources and to make choices aligned to their goals.

By providing access to credit the policy aimed to close the gendered disparities in access to financial resources for their (women) mining activities. This also signifies the policy's commitment to investing in mining equipment. The allocation of a portion of the loan to suppliers of mining equipment demonstrated the policy's focus on enhancing women's productivity, as well as improving their operational capabilities and increasing their output. The evidence links back to the viewpoint of Hendriks (2019) on the importance of providing women with financial tools and resources to actively participate and succeed in economic opportunities.

On the other hand, the evidence also indicates that the policy did not live up to its expectations as described by the Broad Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework. Although, the women miners in Bubi district had access to credit through the policy's WDF facility, the government official also confirmed that "*there were no*

business or skills trainings conducted for these women” (Govt Official B). This is besides the fact that the policy’s empowerment framework aimed to provide skills training. It is widely acknowledged that business and skills training are important factors to WEE because they equip women with the tools needed to actively manage their economic activities. The government officials earlier on (see section 5.7 on the NGP’s empowerment programs) explained that the policy’s activities comprised of two components: a financial component and capacity building component.

One of the government officials also highlighted that the Ministry of Women’s Affairs partnered with other government departments in providing business and skills training. And the condition was that after receiving training, these women would then receive their loans from the policy’s WDF facility. But this was not the case in the Bubi district. A strand of WEE literature (discussed in Chapter 2) stresses the importance of equipping women with entrepreneurial skills as an important element of women’s economic empowerment. This form of WEE enhances women’s entry and participation in the markets.

Probing on the issue why women in Bubi had received credit, with no training, the government official pointed out that “*the national office had instructed that capacity building would be done in 2021 on groups selected to receive funds from the WDF*” (Govt Official B). The government official explained that the national office had instructed that training would be conducted on the groups receiving loans in 2021. Therefore, the women’s groups selected earlier than 2021 to receive loans from the WDF were excluded from business and skills training. It also reflects that the policy had no intention to empower the women miners in Bubi district in access to education and training. This evidence reflects on the rules (Table 3.2): *how things get done*, noting that rules can be changed at any particular time and influence the activity *what is done*. Judging from the evidence presented by the government official, rules guiding the policy’s empowerment programs can be changed at any particular time and influence the activities: *what is done* and not done (Table 3.2). The SRA highlights that institutional rules and practices are a key factor in the production and reinforcement of gender and class inequalities (Kabeer, 2003). From the evidence above, it is not unwarranted to suggest that the policy’s roll-out of empowerment programs in Bubi district perpetuates gender inequalities in access to education and training.

Information dissemination, application procedures and beneficiary selection

Having provided a background on Bubi district and the type of support that women miners received, we now examine in more detail how the Ministry disseminated information about the NGP and its empowerment programs, the application procedures, and the selection of beneficiaries.

According to the government officials, the Ministry of Women's Affairs worked through its district and ward structures in disseminating information about the NGP's empowerment programs. The government officials stated:

After we receive a circular from the national office, we call for an inception meeting through the office of the District Administrator. This is to notify other government departments in the district of the intended programs. Afterwards we then disseminate information to the public through our ward development coordinators (ward and district structures), traditional leaders and councillors.

- Govt Official B

The NGP's empowerment programs were communicated in a decentralized manner through ward officers, village heads and politically elected councillors. The goal was to ensure that information about the policy's empowerment programs reached everyone in the district. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Bubi district lacked sufficient ward officers. Therefore, the Ministry's district office utilized politically elected councillors and traditional leaders to share information. Unfortunately, this approach resulted in some women being left out and unable to access information regarding the NGP's empowerment programs. During interviews some of the women miners pointed out:

Information was circulated by the district office through our ward councillor. We were told that the Ministry was accepting proposals for women that wanted to start projects or even women's groups that already had running projects but required a financial boost.

- Female Miner 2B 05

Another female miner in Bubi district explained:

Information is really a challenge in Bubi district because most of the times some get information from these WhatsApp groups, others from the ward officers and councillors. I heard it as a rumour that was going around in our village and I asked one of my friends to accompany me to the district office to get more information.

- Female Miner B 06

The primary data above highlights the challenges of obtaining information regarding the NGP's empowerment programs in Bubi district. Female Miner 2B 05 received information about the policy's empowerment programs through the Ministry of Women's Affairs ward officer, while Female Miner B06 faced difficulties in accessing information about the NGP's empowerment programs. Although the Ministry of Women's Affairs uses local government structures to disseminate information it does not reach everyone. Furthermore, not all individuals in Bubi district have 'smart phones' with WhatsApp to receive information about the policy's projects. Women who had smartphones with WhatsApp and those who were informed by the councillors were privy to information pertaining to the policy's empowerment programs. The poor dissemination of information forced Female Miner B 06 to travel to the district offices to obtain information about the empowerment programs run under the policy. This primary evidence is supported by the findings from WDF Report (2017) which noted that communication of the empowerment programs continued to benefit the few well-connected groups of women while the majority of women were excluded from the policy's empowerment programs. Therefore, the policy perpetuated class inequalities in access to information within Bubi district.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs could have done more in ensuring that information reached everyone, for example, through roadshows and social clubs for women and youth. The SRA argues that development planners and policy makers need to support informal networks because they are "critical means of creating intangible resources through which people defend and improve their material resources" (Kabeer, 2003: 280). Social networks in rural communities are also another significant way to ensure that information about the gender policy's empowerment programs reaches everyone. Evidence from the government officials implies that conducting road shows for reaching wider populations would be a challenge considering that their district office

was already under-funded. It was difficult to even move around those wards as they had no ward officers to disseminate information about the empowerment programs under the NGP. A suggestion from one government official noted that:

We do not have adequate resources to even move around the district to check most of the projects undertaken by some women that received money from the WDF. As it stands our district does not have a vehicle and this is a setback when it comes to monitoring and evaluating women's empowerment projects.

- Govt Official B

Therefore, if the district is under-funded and has no adequate resources to physically monitor the progress of women's projects, then ensuring that information reaches a wider audience would be an even greater problem. Findings presented by Mutanana and Bukaliya (2015) found that lack of resources and transport to go into the community to promote empowerment programs were some of the major challenges that affected the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development. The WDF Report (2017) also noted that there were no vehicles and bicycles for WDF projects. This lack of resources on the side of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and policy perpetuates gender inequality in access to information that could possibly transform these women's lives.

Earlier on, one of the female miners interviewed (2B 06) highlighted that the Ministry was accepting project proposals as part of the application process to obtain loans from the WDF facility under the NGP. The government official also noted:

The Ministry accepts applications for the Women's Development Fund from women's groups, the groups have to compile a project proposal, proof of residence of each group member, certified copies of their National Identity cards, and submit quotations from three suppliers of the equipment required for their economic activities.

- Govt Official B

The aforementioned evidence presents the application procedures for the WDF facility under the NGP. Specific prerequisites must be met by women in order for their

applications to be considered for the fund. The acceptance of applications from women's groups by the WDF facility further supports the statement made by the government official earlier, indicating that the fund is intended for such groups and not available to individual women. Emphasizing the importance of women's groups, the government official has highlighted that the fund operates on 'group collateral'. This means that WDF does not require women to provide property as collateral but that it rather relies on 'social collateral', which encourages mutual accountability among women in repaying the loan. The emphasis on the group dynamic signifies that the NGP's empowerment programs foster collaboration and collective action among women, potentially nurturing solidarity and empowerment.

Furthermore, the requirements for a project proposal meant that women's groups should have a clear plan on how they intended to utilize the funds. This portrays the policy's interest in supporting sustainable economic activities rather than just funding projects that do not lead to long-term benefits. However, for women in the rural areas, compiling a project proposal may prove challenging because they lack the know-how. The submission of three quotations from suppliers could also reflect the policy's focus on promoting transparency and accountability. The exercise, however, encourages women to explore other suppliers, compare prices and make informed decisions. Such an exercise also guards against corruption and favouritism in the procurement processes. The women miners highlighted that meeting the WDF's application requirements was challenging, particularly writing a proposal, and accessing banking services. The women noted that:

The disadvantage about this type of support is the long and tiresome application procedures, of submitting a project proposal, a constitution and opening of a bank account. The demands are just too much because for opening bank accounts we need to travel to Bulawayo.

- Female Miner 1B 02

I felt that the administration related to the application processes were just too much. The requirements of a bank account, constitution, and a writing a project proposal was difficult because I do not know how, it's all new to me, we had to find assistance from the teachers in our village.

- Female Miner 2B 04

We are required to have a constitution, a project proposal and a bank account. We have no banks here in Bubi so that means travelling to Bulawayo at my own expense.

- Female Miner 1B 01

The women miners' statements provide valuable insights into the challenges encountered when applying for loans from the WDF facility under the NGP. One of the key challenges is the lack of banks in Bubi district, which forces women to travel to Bulawayo in order to access banking services. This adds additional costs and time constraints to the already demanding job of being a miner. Furthermore, Female Miner 2B 04 expresses her frustration with the amount of paperwork and administrative responsibilities involved in the application processes. She admits to having no knowledge on how to write a project proposal and that she had to ask some of the teachers in the district to assist her to compile a project proposal for her and her group members. These statements underline the need for support and guidance in navigating the application processes and accessing the necessary resources. Morsy (2020) highlights that some women fail to apply for loans because of factors such as low literacy as indicated by Female Miner 2B 04. This further emphasizes the importance of equipping women with financial tools, and the knowledge needed to effectively engage in the loan application procedures (*ibid.*). Without such tools, women in the rural areas face barriers in accessing the funds from the WDF's facility under the NGP.

The government official interviewed reported that, after the women's groups submit their applications, applications go through a vigorous process of selection from the ward up to the national office. The government official highlighted that "*the final selection of the beneficiaries was done by the national office*" (Govt Official B). This reflects a centralized 'top-down' approach to the selection of beneficiaries. According to the WDF report (2017) the selection of beneficiaries involved i) ward development coordinators ii) the ward loans committee iii) the district loans committee iv) loans technical committee v) and representatives from different sections of the community. This too reflected a highly centralized approach dominated by the national office without any clarity on the roles played by the committees mentioned.

This section has presented an analysis on the implementation of the policy's empowerment programs in Bubi district using primary data. The policy provided access to credit and equipment for two women's groups in the mining sector through the WDF facility. However, it failed to fulfil the capacity-building component outlined in the policy's empowerment framework, BBWEEF. Although the government official interviewed mentioned partnerships with other government departments for women's skills training, this did not happen for the beneficiaries in Bubi district. Instead, the policy provided the funds through the WDF facility and left the rest to the women to work out. Additionally, the women miners found the application process arduous and it presented significant challenges. The women miners faced the inconvenience of having to travel to Bulawayo in order to access banking services and they encountered difficulties in drafting a project proposal due to a lack of knowledge in this area. The findings from this case study indicate that the rules governing the NGP's WDF facility are overtly strict, especially for rural women who do not have access to banking services in their area and who lack knowledge regarding writing a proposal. This highlights the need for the MOWAGCD to provide resources and training workshops to help navigate the application procedures.

One noteworthy aspect highlighted in this case study analysis is the 'unstructured' approach employed in implementing the NGP's empowerment programs in Bubi district, especially in terms of the lack of uniformity in the implementation of the programs. For instance, the first group of women miners received a cash loan to support their mining activities whereas the second group received a loan divided into 25% cash and 75% allocated for the purchasing of mining equipment on their behalf. There was no uniformity in implementation. The WDF's rules pertaining to purchasing equipment on behalf of the women miners indicates that they were avoiding a situation where the funds would be misused by the beneficiaries. Alternatively, the absence of uniformity in implementation could suggest a flexibility in adapting institutional rules for each project. Despite this, it is important to note that the policy remained committed to a liberal/agency centred approach in practice. We will now look at the implementation of empowerment programs of the NGP in the Gwanda district.

5.8.2 Case Study 2: Gwanda rural district, Matabeleland South Province

Gwanda district is also known as the capital of Matabeleland South Province in southeast Zimbabwe. It is divided into two areas: Gwanda town and Gwanda rural. This thesis' analysis is based on the Gwanda rural district which has 24 wards. It lies in the natural region V, characterized by very low rainfall resulting and frequent droughts (Runda, 2017). According to the 2012 census, Gwanda has a total population of 137 461 with 116 939 (85%) residing in rural areas. There are 26 776 households in the rural areas. There are 29 health facilities, including one provincial hospital and one mission hospital with the rest being clinics. In terms of industrial and economic growth, Gwanda is the commercial hub of Matabeleland South Province. Its major economic drivers are gold mining at Vubachikwe mine, Blanket mine, Jessie mine, Freda mine and lime mining at Colleen Bawn. There are also numerous gold ore processing plants (gold stamp mills), some of which lie within the municipal areas of Gwanda town. Apart from gold mining activities at large, and also medium to small-scale, the people also engage in subsistence farming.

Similar to the Bubi case study, two groups of women miners were interviewed. The first group comprised of ten women miners who are active members of Mthandazo Women Miners Association (MWMA), seven of whom are owners of registered small-scale gold mining titles, while the other three are jointly working on two small-scale mining claims under the Mthandazo mining association. The second group comprises of ten women miners in the Gwanda district: three of them are small-scale mine owners with registered mining titles, four of them are women miners working on registering their mining titles, and the other three women miners are employed at the mines. The average incomes per month for the female miners under MWMA ranged from US\$250 to US\$800. The income of the second group, particularly the three female miners with mining titles, ranged from US\$150 to US\$500 per month, while the four women who are not registered indicated that their incomes varied between US\$100 to US\$400 and the women employed at the mines US\$130 to US\$200 per month depending on output.

The economic status of women miners in Gwanda prior to the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs

Evidence from the survey and interviews showed that six members of the Mthandazo Women Miners Association were from affluent households. These women highlighted

that they had been mining for a long time and that they had also been recipients of a government assistance program before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. The other four Mthandazo women miners indicated that they were financially constrained and were facing challenges in meeting their day to day needs. These non-beneficiaries highlighted that, prior to engaging in small-scale gold mining activities, they were struggling to provide for their families. Although three of them indicated that they were also engaging in farming, the income from farming did not adequately cover the many expenses of their households e.g. school fees, health care and taking care of their parents and in-laws. Therefore, Gwanda's women miners from Mthandazo presented diverse socioeconomic backgrounds with some coming from affluent socioeconomic backgrounds, while others were from vulnerable socioeconomic backgrounds.

According to the background shown above, it is clear that the two districts Bubi and Gwanda differ in terms of status. Gwanda district, for example, is part of the capital of Matabeleland South Province and Bubi district is a rural district in Matabeleland North with a centre where most of the government district offices are situated. Ten of the wards in Bubi district were ranked as vulnerable by a report by ZIMVAC, which means that Gwanda district may be more developed than Bubi district.

Having outlined Gwanda's demographic background we now turn to analyse how the NGP's empowerment programs were implemented in that district. It is significant to point out that during key informant interviews with the State officials, the senior government official insisted that the policy's empowerment programs for women miners were more visible in Gwanda district. The government official interviewed explained:

The Ministry of Women's Affairs in partnership with the UNDP established a women's gold service centre with equipment, as a pilot project that would be replicated in other mining provinces.

- Govt Official A

As previously mentioned in this chapter, the establishment of the women's gold service centre was to address the challenges faced by women in processing their ores within a male dominated environment, where the gold processing mills were still predominantly

owned by men. A women's gold service centre comes as a benefit for the Mthandazo women miners. Firstly, it provides them with a sense of ownership and empowerment. By having equipment on site and a stamp mill, the female miners gain control over the gold extraction process, from mining to processing. This would also boost their confidence, their decision-making capabilities, and their competitiveness in the ASGM sector. Also, having equipment at the gold service centre helps to cut down costs by not needing to hire equipment from 'sponsors' – individuals who hire out equipment for a fee or a share of the gold from the small-scale gold mining (see Chapter 6). The gold service centre also stands to profit from the women miners' operations and sustainability.

Additionally, a women's gold service centre would provide a safe working environment for women miners, so that they no longer have to encounter harassment or unscrupulous millers when processing their ores. Access to credit is valuable as it supports various aspects of improving mining activities, but a service centre appears to offer a comprehensive solution. In light of this, the persistent efforts of the senior government official to prioritize and showcase tangible evidence of the NGP's empowerment programs in Gwanda raises the possibility that Gwanda might have been the sole district where visible results were evident due to the Ministry's collaboration with UNDP. The Mthandazo women miners confirmed:

The Ministry of Women's Affairs and UNDP helped us by establishing a gold service centre with equipment and a stamp mill for processing our ore.

- Female Miner GM 08

We received a women's gold service centre and equipment for gold processing.

- Female Miner GM 10

The statements above from the Mthandazo women miners confirm that a women's gold service centre was indeed established as a response to curb the difficulties women were facing in processing their ores. This initiative by the Ministry in partnership with UNDP shows the policy's commitment to empowering women economically. By establishing a women's gold service centre, women miners are provided with resources needed to process their ore more efficiently. This could significantly contribute to women's

productivity and improved economic outcomes from their mining activities. The women's gold service centre truly brings out the collaborative efforts by the Ministry and the UNDP in providing practical solutions and opportunities for women miners in a traditionally male dominated sector.

However, three of the female miners under the Mthandazo Women Miners Association expressed that they preferred “*receiving loans compared to a women's gold service centre*”. Initially, these sentiments were coming from the female miners who were allocated a mining claim by MWMA. This could mean that these women had an interest in using the funds according to their needs or even possibly to start the processes of pegging and prospecting so that they could also have their own small-scale mining titles. Essentially, access to credit provides flexibility and immediate financial assistance to cover unexpected expenses. Otherwise, these female miners may have found it more appealing and easier to manage cash-based transactions compared to the women's gold service centre which might involve new and unfamiliar processes.

In spite of these issues, the policy's empowerment program by means of establishing a women's gold service centre in Gwanda rural district indicates that the Ministry might have taken a different turn from the traditional way of implementing the policy's empowerment framework (access to credit and business training) due to its partnership with the UNDP. The UNDP official interviewed, explained:

I argued during the implementation of this project with the Ministry of Women's Affairs that we don't just give women equipment without knowledge on how to use it. That is why we needed to train these women on all processes of small-scale gold mining to avoid the middleman.

- UNDP Official

The statement by the UNDP official highlights the importance of not only providing equipment for women miners but in also the necessary knowledge and training to effectively utilize the mining equipment in the women's gold service centre. In addition, the official emphasizes the need for women to avoid middlemen by empowering them with the knowledge of all processes involved in small-scale gold mining. The official further noted that, “*in mining men are usually the middlemen that often take advantage*

of these women because they lack the knowledge and skills to process their gold ore themselves”.

This approach also reflects the understanding of challenges encountered by women in the small-scale gold mining sector. Offering training in all processes involved in the small-scale gold mining sector, shows that the women can gain the skills and knowledge required carry out all the mining processes independently from start to finish. As highlighted in earlier sections of the NGP’s empowerment programs (activities), equipping women with necessary knowledge and skills can enhance greater control over their economic activities and can also contribute to the development of an inclusive mining sector. The women’s gold service centre provided the women in Gwanda district with equipment for their mining activities such as compressors, a stamp mill, and a transformer (Moyo, 2015). A stamp mill is a machine that is used for processing or extraction of metallic ores. The purpose of a stamp mill in small-scale gold mining is to crush gold-bearing rock into sand so that it can be further processed. The most common use for a compressor in small-scale gold mining is for exploration drilling underground. Considering that the women’s gold service centre is located in rural Gwanda, a transformer is necessary for electricity provision – for example, a stamp mill functions better with electricity.

In light of the above, the women miners in Gwanda were empowered with comprehensive business and skills training from different government ministries and departments, as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Below is a list of the training that women miners received:

1. Fundamentals of Mining by the Zimbabwe School of Mines
2. Sensitization and Elusion by the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development
3. Health and Safety by PACT Zimbabwe
4. Gender Based Violence and HIV/AIDS Awareness workshops by the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Gender and Community Development in partnership with PACT Zimbabwe.

These workshops were attended by men and women. Part of the content of these workshops was based on issues of Machete violence¹ which was rampant in the mining sector and to eliminate the myths and misconceptions of women's participation in mining.

In contrast to the Bubi women miners, the Gwanda women miners benefited from the empowerment framework of the NGP as implemented in partnership with UNDP. It provided them with more advantageous resources. For instance, learning about the fundamentals of mining equipped women with the right information on pegging sites and registering their mining titles. These are important aspects in formalizing mining activities. This implies that the Mthandazo women in Gwanda were equipped with necessary knowledge and tools to effectively engage in mining activities, compared to the beneficiaries in Bubi district. Health and safety are also important fundamentals in the ASGM sector, as mines can be hazardous environments, possibly involving a fire or explosions. Therefore, training women in health and safety equipped them with necessary knowledge and skills in mitigating risks. Phiri (2022) highlights the need for women to be equipped and trained in appropriate mining standards, including health and safety issues, as these are important in the mining industry.

The Gender Based Violence and HIV/AIDS awareness workshops were attended by men and women miners. *“Part of the content for these workshops was based on issues of machete violence² which is rampant in the mining sector and in eliminating the myths and misconceptions about the participation of women in small-scale gold mining”* (Govt Official C). By focusing on workshops on GBV, the policy aimed to address specific issues and challenges that affected this particular group of individuals. More so, these workshops educated both men and women on the various forms of gender-based violence such as physical, economic, emotional, and sexual abuse. The inclusion of men in the workshops aimed to foster discussions on their involvement in promoting gender equality and preventing violence against women. The HIV/AIDS awareness workshops aimed to educate participants about the transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS. The small-scale gold mining sector is often associated with high prevalence of transactional sex (Hilson *et al.*, 2020), which increases the risk of transmitting

¹ Machete Violence is caused by Machete gangs. These are rival mining gangs armed with machetes and axes who have been causing conflicts and raiding mines in Gwanda district.

HIV/AIDS. Thus, the workshops also provided an opportunity to inform and address the misconceptions and sociocultural norms related to women involved in the ASGM sector.

Information dissemination, application procedures and beneficiary selection

Having provided an overview on Gwanda and the policy's implementation of empowerment program, the following section will be focusing on information dissemination and beneficiary selection of the women miners.

In the Bubi case study, the government officials highlighted that information dissemination of the policy and its empowerment projects was conducted through the provincial office, district, ward coordinators, councillors, and village heads. In Gwanda, the MWAGCD adopted a unique approach by not only disseminating through the decentralized local governance structures but by also conducting road shows to inform people of the policy and its empowerment programs. This was made possible through “*funds from the Ministry and UNDP*” (Govt Official C). Resources made it possible for information of the policy's empowerment program to reach a wider audience, unlike in the Bubi district. The women miners also confirmed:

There was a ward meeting, and then some road shows held at some ward and district centres.

- Female Miner GM 07

In our ward we were informed by the district and ward coordinators about the empowerment projects from the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

- Female Miner GM 09

We were informed by the chairperson of Mthandazo Women Miners Association, we also had a meeting with the district officer and a roadshow at the district centre about opportunities for women in mining.

- Female Miner GM 03

The study found that a different approach was used in selecting beneficiaries for the empowerment program under the NGP in Gwanda. The government official noted:

The Gwanda project is a unique because our Ministry was in constant dialogue with women on the ground. Upon receiving a number of reports from women miners on the unfair treatment and violence encountered in processing their ores. The Assessments that were conducted together with answered questionnaires from the ground was an indication that a Women's Gold Service Centre would be ideal for servicing the majority of women miners in the district.

- Govt Official C

Unlike Bubi district, where the selection of beneficiaries passed through different committees, Gwanda presented a different scenario that involved processes such as conducting feasibility studies and distributing questionnaires to the communities asking about ways in which the Ministry could address the challenges women faced in the mining sector. Despite this exercise, there were no clear procedures on how beneficiary selection was done by the government official. A clearer view of how selection was done was given by the UNDP official, stating that a 30-member association of women miners was selected to directly benefit and manage the women's gold service centre. She further indicated:

We had a professor come in from Namibia, with extensive expertise in mining to conduct an assessment on the participation of women in small-scale gold mining in all provinces of Zimbabwe. From that assessment, two mining districts that had potential investment were identified. One in Mashonaland Central and the other was in Gwanda, Matabeleland South province. UNDP and the Ministry of Women's Affairs then selected Gwanda because of several reasons:

- 1. There was an active women's mining association - Mthandazo*
- 2. They had a constitution*
- 3. A bank account*
- 4. Previously these women had been allocated sites from the Ministry of Women's Affairs in partnership with the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe where they could peg their claims. The site was also a feasible area to establish a women's gold service centre.*

These reasons were strong enough because it meant that the project would quickly move from project implementation to sustainability.

The rationale behind the selection of the Mthandazo Women Miners Association as direct beneficiaries for the women's service centre points to the aspect of 'people' according to the SRA (*who are in, who are out, and who does what*) as set out in Chapter 3 (Table 3.2). Institutions are selective and specific in the categories of people; few are totally inclusive, despite their official ideologies of promoting inclusiveness (Kabeer, 1994). Also, the selection criteria conducted in Gwanda indicated that State support is better managed through economic organizations like the Mthandazo Women Miners Association because they are registered and would be able to make loan repayments.

Before the establishment of the women's gold service centre some of the members of the Mthandazo Women Miners Association had been recipients of the RBZ empowerment initiative. The women miners confirmed:

We were informed about program headed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the RBZ and we submitted our names. Months later we were allocated some sites to engage in mining activities and we were assisted by the RBZ in registering our mines.

- Female Miner GM 02

I was part of a group of women that was allocated a mining site through an empowerment program by the Ministry in partnership with RBZ.

- Female Miner GM 05

It seems the Ministry of Women's Affairs and UNDP selected Gwanda because it was the lowest hanging fruit – the project would quickly move from implementation to sustainability. The Ministry already had a history of empowering women in the small-scale mining sector prior to the establishment of the women's gold service centre. This also indicates that, unlike other district mining sites that were examined for suitability as a women's gold service centre, Gwanda rural district and the Mthandazo Women Miners Association were in a much better position to benefit from the project. It seems the decision to select Gwanda district and Mthandazo Women Miners Association for

the women's service centre was also supported by the fact that there had been an established relationship between the Ministry and the women miners dating back to the first empowerment program that was initiated by the Ministry and RBZ. In this way, Ministry would have been able to tick off one of its boxes under policy objectives or goals to say that they had accomplished women's economic empowerment as there was already a viable and functional structure (gold service centre) in place.

Based on the evidence presented in Gwanda and Bubi district, it is clear that there were differences in the roll-out of the policy's empowerment programs. This extended right from the dissemination of information about the NGP's empowerment programs to the selection of beneficiaries and the type of support granted to beneficiaries. The study observed that the policy reinforced class inequalities among the women miners in Gwanda and the women miners in Bubi. The data provided in both case studies at the beginning (district profiling) shows a difference in the economic status of the Bubi women compared to the Mthandazo women in Gwanda rural district prior to the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. The Mthandazo women miners had been engaging in small-scale gold mining activities for quite a bit longer than the women in Bubi district, noting that four of the Bubi women miners were allocated mining claims under the BSSMA in 2015. This is unlike the Mthandazo women miners who had already been allocated mining claims in 2010 under an empowerment project by the MWAGCD and the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe.

Additionally, the monthly average incomes between the Bubi women miners and the Mthandazo women miners also shows us that the Gwanda women are wealthier and better off than the women miners in Bubi district. For instance, the monthly average incomes of the women who benefited from the policy's empowerment programs ranged between US\$150 and US\$500 whereas the Mthandazo women miners were earning more with an average income of US\$250–US\$800 per month. Apart from this, the policy further reinforced class inequalities for the beneficiaries in Bubi because they did not receive any skills and business trainings. A strand of WEE literature in Chapter 2 emphasized equipping women entrepreneurs with business and skills training as a pathway to women's economic empowerment. This enables women to make informed decisions about their enterprises and to effectively compete in the markets. Overall, the NGP's empowerment programs in Bubi and Gwanda may have addressed the gender

disparities in access to credit, equipment and training to a certain degree, but at the same time it perpetuated class inequalities between the Bubi women miners and the Mthandazo women miners in Gwanda.

5.9 The impact of the NGP's empowerment programs on State-women miners' relations in Bubi and Gwanda

The previous sections discussed the roll-out of the NGP's empowerment programs in Bubi and Gwanda's rural districts for women involved in small-scale gold mining. This section, therefore, discusses the impact of the policy on State-women miners' relations after the implementation of the empowerment programs under the NGP in Bubi and Gwanda districts. It provides us with an understanding of the effectiveness and outcomes of the policy's empowerment programs towards fostering women's economic empowerment and gender equality in Bubi and Gwanda rural districts of Zimbabwe.

The NGP's empowerment programs have had a significant impact on the relationship between the State/Ministry and women miners. The empowerment programs have provided greater opportunities for women miners to participate in decision-making, and participation in economic activities. The government official also noted:

The relationship between our Ministry and women has been good from the beginning but with the key project of the women's gold service centre it has improved. Even when women have their own programs/activities they invite our office. When the Ministry celebrated 'Women's Day' we also engaged them [Mthandazo Women Miners Association]. Recently these women have been involved in corporate social responsibility (CSR), and they remembered that they have a Ministry of Women's Affairs who in these difficult times of COVID-19 pandemic might be in short supply of sanitizers and face masks, they came in and donated to the Ministry. They also extended the same hand to nearby schools in West Nicholson and Collen Bawn. Even us as the Ministry's district office, when we are looking for donations for a national event or other district activities for women like the cooking competition headed by Zimbabwe's First Lady, we approached them for donations, and they assisted us. They assist where possible, inspire and mentor other women in our district.

- Govt Official C

The evidence above highlights the positive impact of the Women’s Gold Service Centre project on the relationship between the MOWAGCD and the women miners. The government official acknowledges that the relationship was already good, but that it had been further enhanced by the implementation of the NGP’s empowerment project. The fact that the women miners invited the Ministry’s district office to their programs and activities shows a sense of collaboration and recognition of the Ministry’s support. The Ministry’s involvement in celebrating Women’s Day and engaging with Mthandazo women miners further strengthened their relationship. Also, the actions by the Mthandazo women miners in donating sanitizers and masks, not only to the Ministry but also schools within the district, signifies a sense of social awareness and their willingness to support and assist the Ministry and other institutions within the community. The women also contributed their intangible resources by mentoring and inspiring other women in the community. In general, the evidence provided demonstrates the improved relationship between the Ministry and the women miners emphasizing support, partnerships, and recognition of each other’s roles and contributions. The women miners in Gwanda also confirmed:

We have a good working relationship with the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, if there are any small business workshops, I am called to speak to women too.

- Female Miner GM 03

We have good relations with our district and provincial offices, we have been called a number of times to mentor other women who are interested in mining. We are also active in the sense that we also donate when there are community and State occasions, for instance, the First Lady’s Cooking Competition.

- Female Miner GM 08

The above is an indication that the NGP has had a positive impact on the women in Gwanda. The Mthandazo women miners are not only beneficiaries of the NGP’s empowerment programs but have also become important members in the community who assist, mentor, and inspire other women to actively participate in mining and other key economic activities. In Bubi, the government official also highlighted that the policy’s empowerment programs had a positive impact on the relationship between the Ministry and the women miners. The officer mentioned that, “they are able to call

women that benefited from the policy's empowerment programs to come and speak to other women awaiting their loans from the WDF's facility" (Govt Official B). However, the majority of the women miners in Bubi district highlighted that their relationship with the State hardly changed for the better.

My position with the State has not changed much, we hardly see the officers anyway and when we made repayments of our loans, we would do that through the bank.

- Female 1B 03

The perceptions from the female miners presented above show the lack of interaction with Ministry, which further suggests that there is a gap in communication between the State and women miners in Bubi district as mentioned by Female Miners 2B 01 and B 03. This also presents a mixed picture, because the government official indicates that the implementation of the policy's empowerment project improved the relations between the Ministry and women miners. The women miners on the other hand, emphasized that the relationship had not changed much due to some factors. Female Miner 1B 03 mentioned that, even when they made repayments, they did that directly with the bank. Perhaps the repayment arrangement made it quite challenging for some of the beneficiaries to create, or rather maintain a good relationship with the ministry. Had these repayments maybe been paid at the district offices it would also be a good way of maintaining rapport with the project beneficiaries and also to keep informed about the progress on their projects and repayment, considering that the district office was incapacitated to move around the wards. Female Miner 2B 01 also acknowledges that the relationship with the Ministry has not improved. She expresses that the public officials do not engage with them, however, she also highlights that the COVID-19 pandemic could have contributed to the lack of interaction. The female miners also suggest the need for government to improve the situation by employing more ward officers to improve the lack of interactions between the State and women miners.

Therefore, one can note that there is a difference in the way the NGP's empowerment programs impacted the relations between the Ministry and the women miners in Bubi compared to the women miners in Gwanda. In Gwanda the government officer and the women miners agreed that the establishment of the gold service centre positively

enhanced their relationship. Even before the implementation, the officer states that they had established a good relationship with women miners in the district. The Ministry and women miners continued to interact and collaborate, as seen by evidence provided by the women miners and the government official. In Bubi district, the NGP's empowerment programs did not make a significant difference in the relationship between the Ministry and the women miners. The women miners mentioned that the lack of interaction was also caused by the fact that there were insufficient ward officers within the district. Even in earlier sections of this chapter (regarding the development of 2nd NGP, and information dissemination of the policy's empowerment programs), the issue of the Ministry's incapacity of ward officers posed a gap in effective communication channels for facilitating positive relations with the women miners. Although the government official indicated that the relationship had improved, evidence on the ground does not match with his statement.

5.10 Conclusion

In the introduction of this chapter, we argued that the NGP follows a liberal/agency-centred approach to its empowerment programs and this has been demonstrated by the roll-out of the policy's empowerment programs in the rural districts of Bubi and Gwanda. We have traced this evidence from the time the new ZANU–PF government came into power in 1980, when it passed pieces of legislation to promote equality and to transform the status of women in the public sphere. The chapter follows through with this argument by presenting both primary and secondary evidence on the policy's conceptualization of women's economic empowerment. Evidence from the government officers, as well as the policy document, highlights that policy's conceptualization of WEE was concerned with equal access to and control of productive resources. Although it acknowledges the need to eliminate the structural gender inequalities in the labour markets on paper, this was not the case in practice.

The NGP was concerned with increasing the number of women owning, managing, and controlling their businesses specifically in the country's key economic sectors (mining, agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing). The policy assumed that, as more women had equal access to credit and education/skills training, this would automatically translate to women controlling their businesses and economic agency, contributing to economic growth, and closing the gender gap. As emphasized already, the policy's approach to

WEE was limiting because it failed to acknowledge the structural factors that inhibit women's economic empowerment such as unequal gender relations between men and women, unpaid care work, patriarchy, and sociocultural norms etc. Also, the market is not the only institution where structural gender inequalities exist for women – the State and State policies as institutions, the community and household also hinder women's economic empowerment.

The chapter also showed, through empirical evidence from Bubi and Gwanda, the NGP's attempt to challenge women's traditional gender roles which have limited women to more domesticated projects such as sewing and cooking. The NGP stressed the importance of women participating in the country's key economic sectors. However, the empowerment programs and the new resources established by the State through the NGP still fail to address the structural factors that hinder women's economic empowerment. Some scholars in WEE and microfinance literature have applauded institutions and governments that have implemented microfinance programs to improve access to credit for the poor. However, giving women money in the form of credit is no remedy for women's economic empowerment without confronting the social relationships that hinder women's agency.

The chapter further explored the implementation of the policy's programs in the Bubi and Gwanda districts, describing the uneven distribution of resources in the two districts resulting in reinforcing class inequalities in access to and control of productive resources. The findings of the study revealed that women in Bubi district only benefited from the financial component of the policy's BBWEEF, while Mthandazo women miners benefited from both the financial and capacity building components. The NGP's WEE thrust of creating the right market conditions for women to participate in key economic sectors was more visible in Gwanda than it was in Bubi district. This was based on information provided by each of the case studies presented in this chapter as it captured the economic status of the women miners (beneficiaries) prior to the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs as well as their average monthly incomes from mining activities. It is clear that NGP produces and reinforces class inequalities in Bubi district through the various processes of the policy's implementation of its empowerment programs. The Mthandazo women miners, for instance, consisted of more women who were from affluent households and who had

also benefited from government support in 2010 prior to the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. As such, women miners did not fully benefit from the NGP's BBWEEF framework.

CHAPTER SIX

INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE MARKET

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 focused on an institutional analysis of the NGP and the ways in which the processes of policy formation and implementation, disrupted and/or reinforced gender and class inequalities for women miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. This chapter focuses on an analysis of the market – the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector (ASGM) in the districts of Bubi and Gwanda. This thesis draws on Kabeer's (1994) Social Relations Approach (SRA) in analysing multiple levels of institutions ranging from the State, market, community, and family instead of just focusing on one institution (refer to Chapter 3). It is important to focus on multiple levels of institutions because institutions are not independent nor neutral, instead they interact with each other in producing, reproducing, and reinforcing social inequalities. This chapter concentrates on the way in which a State institution – the NGP – interacts with another institution – the market. Thus, the market is an arena where structural factors affecting policy outcomes can be explored. The chapter presents empirical findings on the experiences of women and men miners in the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sectors (ASGM) of Bubi and Gwanda both before and after the implementation of the women's empowerment programmes of the National Gender Policy (NGP). It aims to provide an understanding on the policy's commitment to closing the gender disparities in access to and control over productive resource, as well as eliminating the structural gender inequalities in the labour market, as stressed in Chapter 5.

In Chapter 3 we learned that institutions and organizations play a key role in producing and reinforcing inequalities. As Chapter 5 argued that, in as much as the State through the NGP implemented empowerment programs to enhance women's participation in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors, the liberal/agency-centred approach that it adopted only challenged gender inequalities to a limited degree while reinforcing class inequalities. As shown in Chapter 5, the Bubi women miners received credit and equipment from the NGP's WDF facility. However, these women (Bubi) did not receive any skills and business training as prescribed in the policy's official document

and as highlighted by the government officials. On the other hand, the Mthandazo women in Gwanda benefited from a women's gold service centre with equipment (stamp mill, compressors and transformer) and skills and business training courtesy of a partnership between the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the UNDP–Zimbabwe. Despite these interventions, the NGP overlooked structural inequalities such as unequal gender/social relations, sociocultural norms, patriarchy, and unpaid care work. Building on this institutional analysis, this chapter analyses the policy's interaction with the market in reversing and/or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector by using primary data collected from women and men miners and representatives of the Bubi Small-Scale Miners Association (BSSMA) and the Mthandazo Women Miners Association (MWMA).

The chapter begins by defining the market, what makes up a market and how institutions interact with the market. This helps in analysing the ways in which the policy influences the market and market dynamics in either disrupting or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector. This is followed by an overview of Zimbabwe's ASGM sector and a section presenting empirical evidence of Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. Here, the various actors operating in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector are delineated as they significantly influence market dynamics. The chapter then delves into the barriers and challenges faced by female miners in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sectors before the implementation of the empowerment programs under the NGP. These sections encompass empirical evidence grouped under several thematic categories, encompassing workplace relationships and cultural dynamics, harassment and unscrupulous millers, lack of access to credit, equipment and costs related to legal mining, access to markets and illegal gold miners. The final section explores the empirical evidence of Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. Here, the evidence is also presented organized around specific themes, starting with the issues that the NGP sought to address. By examining the impact of the NGP on the market, we aim to assess whether it has effectively made the markets fairer for women miners or inadvertently reinforced the existing gender and class dynamics.

6.2 Defining the market

In Chapter 3, we outlined that the market is classified across a range of institutions that are key to producing and reinforcing inequalities. However, there is no mutually agreed definition of the ‘market’. Some have opted to define the market based on modern economics as a place where buyers and sellers can meet to facilitate the exchange or translation of goods and services. This is a logical definition that signifies the interaction of buyers and sellers. Others have opted to draw on sociology, which defines the market as an arena of social interaction. Scholars such as Weber (1979), Berket (2009), Stilgitz (2017); Philip (2018), Hodgson (2006) and Fligstein & Dauter (2007) have studied markets to understand how they function and influence people’s lives.

According to Philip (2018) and Hodgson (2006) markets are everywhere and part of society. They are viewed as social institutions where firms, suppliers, customers, workers, and the State (government) interact. Unlike the definition given by modern economists, the definition by Berket (2009), Fligstein *et al.* (2007) and Philip (2018) draws more attention to the social structures, institutions and actors that exist in a market. Their definition suggests that the market is influenced by social, cultural, and political factors that shape social relations. As a result, social interaction within markets extends beyond the mere exchange of goods and services – it is intricately woven into social relations (Philip, 2018). The market exists alongside various non-economic institutions.

Although the SRA does not quite define what the market is, Kabeer (1994) identifies that there are various actors that make up the market, namely: firms, financial corporations, farming enterprises, associations, multinationals etc. Notably, markets are not set in a vacuum or any pure form, but they exist in various forms such as physical marketplaces, online platforms, or informal networks and they operate at different levels. In this study, Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sector is described as the physical marketplace where the social interaction of male and female gold miners (owners and workers), mining associations (BSSMA and MWMA), customers (gold buyers – individuals and organisations), sellers and the State (government) interact with each other in shaping the market dynamics. The way in which these are set out, sheds light on the connections between economic processes and social structures (Stilgitz, 2017).

Furthermore, the market is governed by a set of formal and informal rules. The state, for instance, interacts with the markets through laws and regulations. For example, a study by Miles (2016) in Malaysia found that the State's regulation in permitting the import of foreign labour to work in plantations weakened the bargaining power of the local workers to negotiating for fairer wages. While this regulation by the State reinforced social inequalities within the market, plantation owners were at an advantage in terms of obtaining cheap labour from migrant workers for more production output.

Despite the important role played by the State in establishing laws and regulations that govern the markets, Philip (2018: 204) argues that there are "other powerful mechanisms through which the social construction of markets also takes place locally and globally – some of which elude the rules of the game set at State level". These include mechanisms within the market themselves, which entail the interaction of stakeholders within sectors and value chains. What this means is that markets are organized in different ways which straddle the national boundaries through monopolies and competitiveness between stakeholders which in turn then determine the level of competition and power relations within them.

Apart from the formal rules and laws governing the markets, there are cultural and social norms that shape the behaviour of different actors. As discussed in Chapter 2, both in WEE and women in mining literature, the marketplace is often a highly male dominated arena. In the mining sector, for instance, a culture of patriarchy, male dominance, and beliefs that women are subordinate to men has negative implications for women's participation in the ASGM sector as miners or mine owners. Even with women's participation in the informal economy, women occupy the lower, subordinate jobs while the men occupy the higher paying and competitive jobs. The unequal gender and power relations that exist between men and women are still intrinsic within the market despite their (women's) position as miners in the sector. This will be explained in more detail later on in this chapter when analysing the relational aspect between men and women miners in the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda before and after the NGP's empowerment programs. We now turn to an overview of Zimbabwe's artisanal and small-scale gold miners (ASGM) sector.

6.3 Zimbabwe's artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector (ASGM): An overview

Having defined the market and outlined how institutions interact with the market, this section sets out the historical background of Zimbabwe's ASGM sector. The discussion includes the role of the State in regulating the ASGM sector and how the regulatory laws and processes alter the market dynamics. This will help in understanding the complex relations between the NGP as a State institution and the ASGM sector in terms of informality and formality where various actors, including women miners, interact.

ASGM is not a new phenomenon in Zimbabwe. This activity dates back to pre-colonial times when both men and women participated in artisanal and small-scale gold mining activities to meet their human essential needs, such as the manufacturing of tools and implements to use during agriculture and hunting, shelter, trade, weapons, ornaments, and structures (Dzvimbo *et al.*, 2019). In the colonial era women also worked alongside men in alluvial gold panning (Hove & Hlongwana, 2015). Gold mining, generally, was seen as an important source of economic activity for both men and women. But this was short-lived for women, especially, with the advent of colonialism that enforced certain legislation that alienated women from mining.

In spite of the above, the mining sector in Zimbabwe has played a major role in contributing to the country's economic growth. In 1986, mining contributed 7% to the gross domestic product (Zimbabwe School of Mines, 1997). A shift occurred in 1996, establishing the mining industry in Zimbabwe as a major contributor to the economy and the world in general. Ncube (2021) states that, in Zimbabwe, gold has contributed the highest percentage of the country's annual revenues, and that artisanal and small-scale gold mining contributes 60% of the country's gold revenue. According to a report:

Gold output from the ASGM sector increased from 26.5 tons in 2017 to 35.1 tons in 2018 with registered gold miners contributing 62% of this output. The large-scale mining companies' output during the same period was only 33% of the total gold produced (Chamber of Mines, 2019: 11).

This literature suggests that the miners with less resources and equipment were producing more than large-scale, commercial mining companies. This is in line with Mawowa's (2013) contention that the ASGM sector in Zimbabwe is not just associated

with poverty and survivalist strategies but, since it has a high gold output, it has become an arena for political players and military figures to control and exploit.

Realizing that the ASGM sector was fast becoming one of Zimbabwe's key economic drivers, the government decided to initiate formalization policies. In general, the Mines and Minerals Act of 1961 is the primary, overarching legislation governing mining (artisanal/small-scale mining and large-scale mining) in Zimbabwe. The gold output from ASGM, and the impact of the sector being a major employer, pushed the government to introduce regulations for formalizing the sector. Mawowa (2013) argues that the government's regulation of the sector tended to be half-hearted, inconsistent and election driven. According to Nyavaya (2021) the laws and regulations governing the ASGM sector were unclear and Dube (2022) adds that it was characterised by a complex regulatory and governance environment. These scholars' sentiments echo those of Mawowa (2013) that the motivation behind the formalization policies of the ASGM sector was more political than inclusive. Still, this did not change the fact that Zimbabwe's ASGM sector was and still is an important source of income for many (Spiegel, 2009; 2015).

In 1991, the government introduced the Statutory Instrument 275 (SI 275), which regulated alluvial gold panning in streams and riverbeds. This meant that the market dynamics had shifted to accommodate those mining in streams and riverbeds so as to increase the gold output in Zimbabwe. SI 275 rendered power to Rural District Councils (RDCs) in issuing licenses to gold panners. The introduction of this statutory instrument indicated that the State was also aiming to be the sole buyer of gold from gold panners to avoid the movement of gold out of the country through 'grey markets' (also known as 'black markets'). Black markets entail the illegal trade of officially controlled or scarce commodities.

At the same time, Zimbabwe was going through an economic crisis. Mabhena (2012) and Scoones *et al.* (2012) indicate that during the 1980s and early 1990s, Zimbabwe faced significant economic challenges, including high levels of inflation, a large fiscal deficit, and a collapsing agricultural sector. During this period, the government adopted the Economic Structural Adjustment Policies (ESAP) to resuscitate the economy. Unfortunately, this did little to ease the situation. There was a decline in formal employment and a movement of labour to informal sectors in search of livelihood

(Hove & Hlongwana, 2015; Mabhena, 2012; Zwane *et al.*, 2006). Thus, the introduction of SI 275 also created space for new partnerships and development linkages to support ASM livelihoods (Spiegel, 2015). NGOs such as the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) and the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) funded and supported artisanal and small-scale gold miners in the Insiza District, Matabeleland South Province. The program focused on educating gold panners on reducing ecological impacts on the environment.

The measures taken by the Zimbabwean government to formalize the ASGM sector received international recognition. Hentschel *et al.* (2003) note that the Shamva project was hailed as a best practice project and that the incomes of artisanal miners rose by 30%. Spiegel's (2015) analysis shows that there was confidence both internationally and within Zimbabwe that the country was a leader in Africa's gold mining sector, as a result of measures that not only created incentives and rewards for artisanal miners to become formalized but that also inspired other countries' policy development. This resulted in Zimbabwe hosting the United Nations' International Seminar on Guidelines on the Development of Small and Medium Scale Mining in Harare in 1993 (UN Dept. for Economic and Social Development, 1993; see also Labonne, 1996; Spiegel, 2009). The purpose of the seminar was to assess progress in promoting and establishing small to medium-scale mining operations across the world, and to provide new commitments for poverty-reduction-oriented development assistance for ASGM (Spiegel, 2009). These guidelines put Zimbabwe on the global map as a leader in regulation and formalization of artisanal and small-scale gold mining.

The developments above led to more programs being made available for artisanal and small-scale gold miners in Zimbabwe. Despite the progress of Zimbabwe's ASGM sector, the literature did not mention women's contribution to the sector in the early 1990s. This is an ongoing trend in the historiography of ASGM and that is why this thesis focuses on the role of the NGP in either supporting or impeding women's advancement in the ASGM sector of Bubi and Gwanda. Nonetheless, microfinance was presented as an incentive for miners to formalize their mining operations (Spiegel, 2015). Loans amounting to ZW\$50 billion were extended to miners so as to capitalize and boost the ASGM sector in Zimbabwe (Spiegel, 2009). However, miners expressed that the loans were poorly disseminated with delays in disbursement. This is a recurring

trend, as was shown in Chapter 5 where the disbursement of funds under the policy's WDF's facility too were delayed and some not even disbursed.

In 1996, the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development introduced Statutory Instrument 274. SI 274 authorized the Ministry of Mines to issue gold panning licenses. This legislation created an overlap and confusion between the Ministry of Mines and local government licenses issued by Rural District Councils. In as much as the SI 275 of 1991 and SI 274 of 1996 had mostly the same conditions, there was a shift of power from the RDCs to the Ministry of Mines which, in a way, signified that the mining licenses issued under the Ministry of Mines were more appropriate than those issued by RDCs. However, both SI's functioned simultaneously until the government rescinded both statutory instruments in 2006, implementing crackdowns on gold panners and miners.

The government launched operation *Isitsheketsha sesiphelile/Chikorokoza chapera* meaning gold panning has ended. Gold panning and riverbed mining were now illegal. This was an unexpected move by the State, granted that Zimbabwe had received high praises from the regional and international community for leading the formalization of the ASGM sector. However, this seemed to be a common pattern in Zimbabwe as with the case of the Chiadzwa violent crackdowns on artisanal miners. Nyamunda & Mukwambo (2012) give a detailed discussion on the violent crackdowns on illegal elements in Chiadzwa diamond mines highlighting that governments role in the creation of 'amakorokoza' was no longer a significant factor. Spiegel (2014) also gives an account of the violent crackdowns on illegal miners in Zimbabwe. In this study, the author highlights that before the crackdown on artisanal miners began in 2006, the then governor of the reserve bank Dr. Gideon Gono mentioned that artisanal and small-scale miners had become a threat to the nation. Such statements from the governor demonstrated the government's continuous shifting position on artisanal miners in Zimbabwe.

According to Gukurume *et al*, (2020) in 2007 the military was deployed in Chiadzwa following the failure of the Zimbabwe Republic Police in driving out artisanal miners. The government, then ordered a joint operation between the military and police on 'operation *hakudzokwi kumunda*' meaning operation no returning to the fields to drive out artisanal miners (Spiegel 2014). During this time, the Human Rights Watch (2009)

reported on the brutal and bloody crackdown that descended on artisanal miners, highlighting that many lives were lost. This is why Mawowa (2013), Spiegel (2009; 2014; 2015) and Mabhena (2012) claimed that the regulation of ASM in Zimbabwe was tainted with contradictions. This also depicts that it was never a win-win development in the sense of everyone benefiting equally – the government treated the ASM sector as an ‘easy’ route to increase the country’s mineral output. Even on artisanal and small-scale gold mining, the literature suggests that, once the government of Zimbabwe had reached their target in gold production, an imminent order to end artisanal gold mining was the necessary next step.

Despite the complex regulatory environment in Zimbabwe’s ASM sector, women have continued to participate in the sector. The government of Zimbabwe has made inroads in supporting women in mining and women participating in other key economic sectors through the National Gender Policy (NGP) (see Chapter 5). According to Koomson (2019: 100):

... the intent of these policies is to offer empowerment opportunities to women, guarantee protection against rape and violence and ensure women’s participation in public and economic spheres through the identification and establishment of interventions focused on gender.

As discussed earlier, the State launched the first NGP in 2004 which set the tone for gender mainstreaming in both public and private sectors. The policy ran from 2004 to 2012 focusing on establishing transformative processes and practices set to engage and benefit women and men equally. This NGP was met with mixed emotions as there were some gaps that were not adequately addressed such as the under-representation of women in economic decision-making, access to and control of productive resources, education, income, employment, and politics (MWAGCD, 2013).

A second NGP (2013–2017) was then introduced to fill the gaps of the first NGP (2004–2012). As highlighted in Chapter 5, the second NGP primarily played a role in creating an enabling environment for women in the ASGM sector to actively participate without constraints and discrimination. In addressing the gaps from the first NGP, the State through the NGP adopted microfinance (access to credit), business and skills training as part of their empowerment approach to eliminate the structural gender inequalities in the labour market.

Granted that the policy adopted a liberal/agency-centred approach to the policy's WEE thrust, the findings in Bubi and Gwanda districts revealed that to a limited degree the policy attempted to disrupt gender inequalities in terms of access to credit, machinery and skills training while also reinforcing class inequalities in the distribution and allocation of resources among women miners in the Gwanda and Bubi districts. It is against this background that this chapter now focuses on how the NGP as a State institution interacted with the market dynamics in either reversing or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector. As stated in Chapter 4, a historical approach was adopted in this analysis during the interviews, as the target participants were asked to think about the ASGM sector before and after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. Hence, the analysis is presented in two major sections: The first section focuses on the ASGM sectors in Bubi and Gwanda districts before the implementation of empowerment programs under the NGP. The second section presents evidence on Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs.

6.4 The ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda district before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment program

Now that we have defined the market and discussed the overview of policy regulation in Zimbabwe's ASGM sector, we turn to an analysis of the artisanal and small-scale gold mining sector in Bubi and Gwanda before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. Earlier on in defining the market, we outlined that Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector is the 'physical' marketplace where a number of actors and institutions interact. It is therefore important to look at the arrangements and the organisation of the ASGM sector in both Bubi and Gwanda. Primary data collected from men and women miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts show that the small-scale gold mining sector is dynamic and often fluid as miners can be involved in either formal or informal arrangements over time. For analysis, the study focuses on these social actors: title/claim owners, sponsors, syndicates, mining associations, gold millers and buyers. These actors play a role in the market dynamics of Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector.

6.4.1 Title/claim owners

Mining title/claim owners are individuals or groups of miners who legally own a gold claim or claims and have obtained a license from the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development. Claim owners may have a minimum of 10 claims, and a claim covers one hectare of land (Ministry of Mines, 2021). Claim owners are often labelled the elite group in the ASGM sector by virtue of rights through legal licenses – for some through political connections and for others as beneficiaries of State empowerment programs. Hwehwe and Thebe (2021) state that in Shurugwi, claim owners are at the top of the hierarchy in the ASGM sector also for being politically connected to the ruling party, ZANU–PF. “Through this association and ownership of claims, which they use as capital in their interaction with artisanal miners they are cast as powerful” (*Ibid*: 3). In Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sectors both men and women are claim owners. Some claim owners also grow and diversify their mining operations to gold milling and gold buying.

6.4.2 Sponsors

These are informal financiers who partner with some claim owners who do not have adequate equipment and are thus paid in gold. Nyavaya (2021) explains that a sponsor is an individual or individuals that provide tools such as picks, shovels, explosives, ropes, generators, blasters, and hammers among other required resources. Sponsors also include claim owners themselves, pit operators and investors from within and outside the ASGM sector who sponsor different mining operations while offering short term credits for a share of gold (Jonsson & Fold, 2011). Sponsors are found through networks within the ASGM sector.

6.4.3 Gold millers

These are individuals or an association that is licensed to process gold ore in the mining sector who are registered with the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development. In Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sector most of the artisanal and small-scale gold miners do not have equipment for processing gold ore – their role is only in gold extraction. Thus, they rely on gold millers to process their gold ore. The Mthandazo Women Miners Association in Gwanda and the Small-scale Miners Association in Bubi are some of the mining associations in the country that have gold mills and who are licensed to mill ore from small to medium scale mines.

6.4.4 Gold buyers

Zimbabwe has an official centralized gold buying system through Fidelity Printers and Refiners (FDR) which is a subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. The State purchases gold from registered small-scale gold miners, while other men and women miners (unlicensed) sometimes sell their gold to informal gold buyers who tend to move around the mines to avoid being arrested for the illegal possession of gold. The government of Zimbabwe also gives out gold buying licenses to individuals who then purchase gold from small-scale gold miners as agents for Fidelity Printers and Refiners. In other provinces with mining districts have FDR offices set up within the mining districts to make it more accessible and convenient for miners to sell the gold.

6.4.5 Illegal gold miners/*amakorokoza*

Amakorokoza are illegal gold miners who are sometimes contracted by claim owners to work on their mining claims. Dube (2020) notes that they are often nomadic and that they tend to move together as a disorganized group of unregistered miners who would work on any land whether owned by large scale mines, cooperatives, associations, individuals, or the community. The men and women miners from Bubi and Gwanda described them as a group of ‘rowdy individuals’ who sometimes work as a gang and also invade other mining claims owned by individuals. Some of the women miners in Gwanda also highlighted that ‘they were violent and use machetes to scare them’. Apart from this, some of these illegal miners are members of the community who farm, but who venture into illegal mining as a secondary source of income.

6.4.6 Mining associations

As mentioned earlier on, mining associations are part of the social actors that make up the market. These associations impact market dynamics in terms of formalization and access to productive resources and markets. Rutherford and Buss (2019) indicate that formalization of ASM activities now takes place through the formation of mining cooperatives and associations. Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sectors are also organized into small cooperatives and associations to support women and men miners in their mining activities. Many countries, Zimbabwe included, are experiencing an increase in the emergence of associations for women and men in mining. These associations are formed because there is a need for mutual support and to collectively voice concerns and ideas (Ecker, 2020). Philip (2018: 45) highlights that associations or co-operatives

are formed when members who are self-employed (such as farmers, taxi drivers or fisherman) come together “to create economies of scale in relation to inputs, processing activities and marketing”. Banda and Chanda (2021) also confirm that mining cooperatives and associations empower men and women by uniting and representing them. Kabeer (2012) further expands this point by stating that collective organisations are usually created to address issues in a particular sector. Others are organized in order to make demands to the State, which is a strategy that increases their visibility as workers and citizens.

The Bubi Small-Scale Miners Association (BSSMA) is one of the most prominent and active associations in Bubi district. In an interview, the BSSMA representative noted that, “*ASM gold miners in Bubi district came together and formed an association called Bubi Small-scale Miners Association that became active in 2012*”. It appears that the BSSMA has made efforts to have a diverse executive committee with individuals possessing different skills and expertise. The breakdown of the executive members includes a male chairman who has prior experience as a bookkeeper at World Vision, a male youth representative who is a mechanic by profession, a female treasurer who is a successful entrepreneur and a female organizing secretary who is a retired teacher. The association has a total of 288 registered ASM gold miners of whom 70 are women. While this indicates female participation in the sector, there is still room for improvement in achieving a more balanced representation of women in mining. Also, the association comprises of individuals from different socioeconomic backgrounds such as formal employees, business owners, politicians and local men and women. This suggests that the association has a diverse membership in terms of class dynamics, with individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds.

The association has a gold service centre established in 2018 through a partnership with the Zimbabwe Mining Development Cooperation (ZMDC). This gold service centre is counted among other gold service centres earmarked for equipping artisanal and small-scale gold miners with information and skills which help them realize ideal returns from their ore just like the Women’s Gold Service Centre in Gwanda. Since the government rescinded the statutory instruments formalizing ASM in Zimbabwe (refer to section 6.3 regarding the overview of Zimbabwe’s ASGM sector), the small-scale mining associations have acted as a bridge between miners and the government. The service

centres offer various services to miners such as the hiring of equipment and milling ore. As is the norm with government funded gold service centres, members are obliged to sell their gold to Fidelity Printers and Refiners – a subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe which is the sole buyer of the precious metal in the country.

Amid another looming economic crisis in 2008 (see Chapter 5), the government of Zimbabwe introduced the Indigenous and Empowerment policy through the Indigenous and Empowerment Act 2008 (Chapter 14: 33). This policy deliberately aimed to empower and emancipate Zimbabweans to actively participate in the mainstream economy. The act recommended that foreign-owned companies operating in communities should give at least 10% of their shares to the communities (Zvavahera *et al.*, 2018).

In compliance with the Indigenous and Empowerment Act, Duration Gold Zimbabwe a foreign owned large-scale mining company operating in Bubi district allocated mining claims to the Bubi community through BSSMA.

- BSSMA Rep

This is how some of the men and women miners in Bubi district were able to start their small-scale gold mining activities.

As illustrated in Chapter 5, Bubi district had two groups of women miners selected for interviews: those who benefited from the policy's programs and those who were not beneficiaries. Of the eight beneficiaries, only four women miners were active members of the BSSMA, while three out of eight women miners from the group that did not benefit were active members of the BSSMA. From the fifteen male miners selected for interviews, seven of them were active members of BSSMA. The men and women miners gave accounts of how they managed to join the BSSMA:

While working at the mines, I met the chairperson of Women in Mining Bubi who encouraged me and other women I was working with to joining BSSMA so that we could also benefit from their programs, so I did. In 2015 I was allocated a claim by BSSMA through their empowerment program and I have been working on my claim.

- Female Miner 1B 03

I joined BSSMA because I could see that there was order and opportunities there. The time I joined in 2013, there were mining claims donated by Duration Gold Zimbabwe and some women, including myself benefited. We were put into groups and allocated some claims, and this is working out so much better for me.

- Female Miner B 03

Men miners under the BSSMA also highlighted the advantages of being part of a mining association:

Ever since I became a member of BSSMA, it has been quite easy for me to navigate around the mining sector. We were allocated a claim as a syndicate and the association works with other government departments who come and conduct some workshops on license registration, health and safety.

- Male Miner B 13

I joined BSSMA because I wanted to be part of an organized group of miners and not 'amakorokoza' whom are always being hunted after by the police because they do not have any documentation and they engage in mining activities illegally.

- Male Miner B 10

The responses above demonstrate that being part of the BSSMA brought some positive outcomes for some of the men and women miners in Bubi district. Evidence from the respondents indicate that joining BSSMA was an advantage for them because there was a sense of organization and opportunities available. Thus, both men and women miners were able to capitalize on opportunities by being members of the Bubi miners' association. Female Miner 1B 03 highlighted that, while she was working at the mines, she was approached by the chairperson of Women in Mining Bubi, who encouraged her and other women she was with to join the BSSMA. Based on this evidence, one can see that that chairperson for Women in Mining Bubi aimed to empower the poorer women working in Bubi's ASGM sector. Furthermore, this reflects African feminism

concept of ‘mothering’ which extends beyond the mother to child bond to encompass communal aspects that involve fostering relationships and solidarity among all members of society. A brief summary of economic status of women prior to the implementation of the NGP’s programs in Chapter 5 shows us that the women miners in Bubi were coming from socioeconomically vulnerable households. The remarks by Female Miner 1B 03 and B 03, indicate that their status as workers shifted to ‘owner’ after the BSSMA allocated mining titles to them.

The evidence from both the male and female miners indicate that the BSSMA was openly accepting individuals from different backgrounds to join the association. The evidence also points to what was highlighted in literature earlier on by Banda and Chanda (2021), and Kabeer (2012) that associations are created to empower both men and women as well as to address certain issues. This shows that mining associations offer miners better opportunities – for instance, access to a registered mining claim as highlighted by female miner B1 03 and male miner B10, means that these miners would not need to go through the challenging process of acquiring a mining license. Rutherford and Buss (2019) assert that the ASM’s cooperatives and associations provide a means for miner self-advocacy and better identification of needs that seek to improve the miners’ occupational, environmental, and social conditions. One can see that joining BSSMA changed the status of these men and women from workers to claim owners.

Gwanda rural district also has a number of mining associations operating, but this study focuses on the Mthandazo Women Miners Association (MWMA). In Chapter 5, it was explained that the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and UNDP supported the MWMA by establishing a women’s gold service centre with equipment such as a stamp mill, and compressors. In this section, we focus on the role played by the MWMA in gaining access to the markets and influencing market dynamics in Gwanda’s ASGM sector. The Mthandazo Women Miners Association was established in 2002. It is legally registered and started out with 30 members. The membership has since increased to 50 (ZELA Report, 2020). Unlike the BSSMA which includes both men and women as members, MWMA is an association that accommodates women only. Though it was established in 2002, much earlier than BSSMA, it is a smaller association compared to BSSMA.

Though the association was established in 2002, it became active only in 2014 after the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Gender and Community Development had partnered with the UNDP–Zimbabwe Country Office to establish a service centre as part of the State’s empowerment thrust for women in mining. This is because the leadership of the association had been trying to recruit more women to join the association, “*but delays in funding and support from the government slowed things down and many of the women pulled out*”, reported the chairperson. This is an important point that further reinforces Fransechet’s (2013) point made in Chapters 2 and 5 that the biggest obstacle to women’s rights is ineffective implementation of policies, insufficient financial resources, and lack of political will to enforce women’s empowerment. Regardless of this, other women miners remained in the association as active members.

The Mthandazo Women Miners Association aims to secure collective economic empowerment of women miners, millers, and traders (UNDP, 2019). The Mthandazo Women Miners Association joins along the proud tradition of groups such as the Tanzania Women Miners Association (TAWOMA), Association of Zambian Women in Mining (AZWIM), Wives of Miners in Bolivia and, more recently, the Malawi Women in Mining Association (MAWMA) (Weldegiorgis *et al.*, 2018). This is quite a transformation considering that women miners had often been excluded from trade unions and associations on the basis that women’s concerns were irrelevant (Kabeer, 2018; Lahiri-Dutt, 2010). Although the BSSMA deviates from typical women-only associations by including both men and women, it is worth noting that it has a higher proportion of active male members. However, it is important not to discount the significance of the BSSMA based solely on gender proportions. It can be considered as part of the traditional groups that support women as it has actively opened its doors to women and acknowledges their contributions in the mining sector.

The MWMA also works with various NGOs and government departments to build capacity building and raise awareness of practicing safe and environmentally friendly mining. The association comprises of women from various backgrounds: retired women, women in politics, women in formal employment, as well as poor women who turned to mining to survive. It was during the key informant interviews that the chairperson of the MWMA mentioned that she had been a former officer of the Ministry

of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development. This suggests that the MWMA is also an association that is politically connected.

The suggestion above indicates a correlation in Zimbabwe, between politics, women's economic empowerment and their intersection with political patronage networks and systems. Particularly, links with ZANU PF (ruling party) and how these links, possibly mediated access to and control over productive resources. This demonstrates a complex interplay between political influences, economic advancement efforts, and the utilization of patronage networks by women's associations to navigate, access productive resources and support within the broader political and economic sphere.

According to Jenkins (2014) there has been an emergence and increase of women's associations and cooperatives to address the challenges faced by women in the marketplace. Similarly, Kabeer (2012: 54) points out that "collective organisations i.e. associations and cooperatives plays an important role in addressing the 'multiplicity of constraints' [access to credit, business and skills training etc] that underpin women's disadvantaged position in the market". For instance, the Tanzanian Women Miners Association (TAWOMA) represents 26% of small-scale women miners and supports them through training, advocacy, and lobbying work. Women in Mining and Energy Indonesia (WIME)'s mission is mainstreaming gender in Indonesia's mining and energy sector and working to end rampant gender inequalities. This association has formed partnerships with NGOs, as well as organisations in the government and private sector in advocating for the elimination of gender inequalities in Indonesia's mining sector.

Having identified and outlined the different social actors that operate within Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector, it can be noted that the marketplace operates through an organized hierarchy where actors and individuals are governed by various forms of authority. Buss *et al.* (2019) explains that these hierarchies provide important contexts in which men and women navigate their mining related livelihoods. We now turn to an analysis of the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs in understanding the challenges faced by women miners in the sector.

6.5 Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector before the NGP: Barriers and challenges

Prior to the implementation of the NGP, the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda was dynamic with quite a number of men and women venturing into mining activities and it also revealed the class dynamics underpinning it. Most of the respondents (both men and women) in Bubi and Gwanda highlighted that they ventured into mining as a result of lack of employment, poverty, and the unstable economic conditions in the country.

I chose mining because to me it was the easiest way to support my family. The money I get from mining has helped me cover a lot of gaps in terms of paying school fees for my children, our upkeep and I have also purchased more cattle for my herd. It is a better way for me to live than focusing on farming.

- Male Miner G 06

I heard that more women in our ward were now participating in small-scale mining (ukutsheketsa), so I stopped doubting myself and joined the ladies too. It was the best thing because it took me and my family out of poverty and I educated my children.

- Female Miner B 02, FGD

I started mining in 2004, after I saw other women in mining really making it. I couldn't get employment anywhere in our district, so I also opted to be one of those women that got into mining activities to provide for my family.

- Female Miner G 08

I decided to do small-scale gold mining because I am unemployed formally and so gold mining was my only alternative given the mouths I have to feed.

- Male Miner B 10

While Mawowa (2013) contends that the ASGM in Zimbabwe should not be exclusively associated with poverty and survivalist strategies, primary data from this study implies that men and women in Bubi and Gwanda have turned to artisanal and small-scale gold mining to alleviate poverty, and earn an income. However, as per the contention by Mawowa (2013), a few respondents, mostly men, highlighted that the

ASGM for them was a second source of income to complement their income from formal employment.

I work for the civil service in Inyathi Township and I saw that the money I am getting from my salary does not adequately cover me and my family's expenses so I joined my friends who are into mining as a side income. Small-scale gold mining has so many opportunities because even now our government has come up with different strategies to support people who are into mining.

- Male Miner B 03

I ventured into mining as a second source of income. I am employed but my salary is not sufficient to adequately take care of my family. I decided to take up mining because there are more profits and when we sell gold we are paid in foreign currency which is much better than our local currency.

- Male Miner G 02

The findings of the study reveal the conflicting reasons behind the increased participation in ASSM. While some respondents stated that escaping poverty motivated their involvement in ASGM, a small number of male respondents participated in ASGM as a supplementary source of income to their formal jobs. This suggests that the male miners in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sectors have better economic situations due to their employment and income, unlike the aforementioned respondents who cited poverty, unemployment, and the difficult economic climate in the country as their reasons for mining. Consequently, this highlights the varying household welfare conditions prior to engaging in ASGM activities, indicating the differences in social class between the miners.

Significantly, the findings also suggest that more women participate in mining to break the cycle of poverty. A total number of 30 women miners indicated that lack of employment, poverty and income motivated them to penetrate the small-scale gold mining sector as a way of providing for their families, compared to a total number of 22 male miners. As pointed out in Chapters 2 and 5, the high proportion of women working in the informal economy is linked to the fact that women are affected more by poverty than men. Although some of the male miners from Bubi and Gwanda mentioned that

they ventured into mining because of poverty, women are more disadvantaged given that the majority of them did not own any property or cattle compared to the men. For instance, male miner G 05 highlighted that a lack of employment pushed him to start mining and the income from mining helped him purchase more cattle, thus expanding his herd. Despite him not being able to obtain any formal employment anywhere, he still had cattle that he could sell to care for him and his family in the event that things turned out really bad. It seems that women, on the other hand, had no other material resources/livestock or financial means to contribute to sustain their families.

Needless to say, women miners in Bubi and Gwanda districts expressed the fact that they had been facing a number of adverse operational challenges in the ASGM sector that reproduced and reinforced inequalities before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment program. These challenges are discussed in the following subsections.

6.5.1 Workplace relationships and cultural dynamics

In defining the market earlier, it was observed that the market is a social institution where various actors such as firms, customers, workers, suppliers, and the government (through State institutions) interact. The market is influenced by cultural, social, and political factors that shape social relations, indicating that the social interaction within markets goes beyond the exchange of goods (Philip, 2018). In this regard, there are quite a number of challenges that have negative implications towards women's participation in the Bubi and Gwanda ASGM sector such as cultural, social, economic, and even psychological challenges. The study found that cultural dynamics were a major impediment to women's participation in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda. The women miners expressed that:

It has been very hard because men still have that mentality that women belong in the kitchen.

- Female Miner 2B 01

To tell you the truth men are a problem. They still believe in the old times that women are supposed to be home looking after children.

- Female Miner 1B 02

The work relationship between men and women still needs improving in the Gwanda small-scale gold mining sector because men believe that women should be home keepers taking care of the children and family and not working in the mines.

- Female Miner G 05

In the same vein, some of the men miners emphasized that:

Mining is not an environment for a woman, that is why my wife is at home taking care of the family and I am here mining. My job is to make sure that I am providing for the family, that is why I am saying that there are jobs for men and there are jobs for women. Mining is not a place for a woman.

- Male Miner G 03

The mine is not a place for women, whether she is coming to dig or has a claim they do not belong here. Our culture emphasizes that a woman must look after the household.

- Male Miner B 08

The statements from the female miners indicate that the work relations between men and women are not great. These women miners highlight that men do not recognize women as miners, instead they emphasize that women should prioritize their traditional gender roles such as taking care of the household and children. Gender norms and cultural taboos are prevalent in the Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector and influence entry access and exclusion from work or owning mines. In some cultures, Zimbabwe included, the main responsibility of a woman is still considered to be that of a nurturer and caretaker of the household. According to Lo (2002), women who have family responsibilities are socialized to look for less-demanding jobs when seeking employment outside their homes. Dreschler (2001) supports this notion, emphasizing that cultural factors place significant constraints on women by limiting their mobility and opportunities to start entrepreneurship activities.

The ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda functions under informal rules and practices mainly structured by culture and patriarchy, such as the type of jobs or roles that women

should engage in (traditional gender roles). This was indicated by the male miners who emphasized that mining is not for women; instead, they should be at home taking care of the household and children. These informal rules influence gender roles and practices which then reproduce gender inequalities in places of work. This is the reason why some of the male miners in Bubi and Gwanda also view women's participation in the ASGM sector as a social taboo, arguing that it goes against culture. Browne (2000) argues that men hold the traditional responsibility of providing material sustenance for their families, while women are responsible for taking care of the household such as cooking, washing clothes and cleaning. These traditional roles are reinforced, because the women are now participating in the non-traditional roles, as with the women miners.

As women began to be employed outside the home, household patriarchal values and ideologies entered the workplace creating a division of work by gender (Koomson, 2019). For instance, surveys conducted in Kivus in the DRC, showed that only 1 in 5 men, and less than 1 in 5 women believed that women had the right to work in extraction, suggesting that both women and men had opinions about their capacity to do physically demanding work (Perks *et al.*, 2015). The findings by Perks *et al.* (2015) highlight the existence of gendered perceptions and stereotypes regarding the suitability of women for physically demanding industries like extraction. The low percentage of men and women who believed in women's rights to work in extraction indicates a prevailing cultural belief that associates extraction or physically demanding work with masculinity.

The findings mentioned above align with a specific aspect of African feminism that delves into how colonialism and cultural norms contribute to the oppression of women in third world countries. As shown in Chapter 7 (status of women) during the precolonial, colonial and post-colonial era, colonization, patriarchy, culture and gendered norms have reproduced and reinforced women's subordinate position. This is also depicted by the resistance and backlash from the male small-scale gold miners who have a shared perception that mining is purely a male domain, not suitable for women. However, this also presents an opportunity to challenge and transform these perceptions by providing equal opportunities for women to participate in these industries as they too are capable of doing physically demanding work, as seen with women miners in Bubi and Gwanda.

The study also found that some women miners in Bubi district faced numerous forms of marginalization that kept them at the less-economically productive margins of the ASGM sector. According to the women miners:

The other thing is that when you are a woman working for people with mine claims, you are told not to go down the pit/shaft. They tell us to mine on the surface (rubble). Women are not allowed to go deeper into the shafts because there is a myth that when a woman goes down the pit it brings bad luck. There is still that superstitious belief that women should not go down in the pits. They have to dig on the surface (rubble) of which digging on the surface doesn't give us money, so we want to go down the pits.

- Female Miner B 06 FGD

You can find that when working with men in the mines, as women we work really hard and dig up the ore. After processing the ore, we are given small amounts of money knowing that the ore we dug up from the mine would have given us more than the amount paid to me. This is where we see that as women we are not being fairly treated.

- Female Miner B 03 FGD

A study by Arthur-Holmes and Busia (2020) found that women miners in the Prestea-Bondage mining community in rural Ghana faced cultural marginalization which kept them in subordinate positions. In Bubi, the cultural marginalization in the ASGM sector provides a structural basis where the male miners have power over women concerning which roles to be done and how much they would earn. These are the normative cultural beliefs that reproduce and reinforce gender inequalities. The findings from the Bubi women's focus group discussion suggests that the male miners have tended to invoke the sanctity of culture and superstitious beliefs because of the women miners' eagerness to move on to remunerative tasks/jobs. This impedes women's economic progress.

More so, this also implies that the Bubi ASGM sector is segmented according to gender roles. Gender segmentation refers to the division of roles or jobs in the market based on gender (Friedman, 2019). This division of roles is influenced by societal norms and cultural beliefs. The same is echoed by Rutherford and Buss (2019): that women face

barriers to better-paid tasks in the ASM as the sector is often segmented according to gender norms that dictate the proper roles for women. For instance, “many male miners at the Huri site in claimed that women are not able to extract minerals from the shafts, saying that they’re weak” (*ibid*: 71). Thus, the gendered norms that determine which tasks women should do, devalue and limit women’s mining work. Despite this, Hove and Hlongwana (2015: 99) stressed that women played a critical role in religious functions which were conducted to promote mining businesses: “For example during mineral searching rituals, female spirit mediums led the way to ensure successful exploration, prospecting and mineral mining”. However, it is odd and inconsistent that the female spirit mediums could be consulted and lead rituals in search for minerals, but that women in general are then discriminated against when it comes to extracting the minerals.

Generally, women miners in the ASGM sector face multiple inequalities due to entrenched gendered norms and taboos in society. This is why women occupy the most menial and the lowest paid jobs instigated by gendered norms that constrain women from obtaining more lucrative jobs.

6.5.2 Harassment and unscrupulous millers

Harassment in the workplace is widespread and pervasive and the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda is no exception. The majority of women working in male-dominated mining environments face a range of obstacles, including all forms of harassment (Badenhorst, 2009; Fourie, 2009). Women miners in Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sector emphasized that:

Men are rough, they do not treat us well. Apart from telling us that we do not belong in the mines, they call us names e.g. ‘amawule’ – prostitutes, some even ask for sexual favours.

- Female Miner 2B 05

We are insulted almost on a daily basis even when we are going to process our ores at the stamp mills, they think we are at the mines to sell our bodies. But we are there to work and make sure that our families are taken care of.

- Female Miner G 08

I think the working relationship with men needs improvements. Men abuse us verbally, we are called names, they call us prostitutes, some of them show their interest in us just to come and take advantage of us.

- Female Miner GM 01

The findings above reveal that male miners often do not perceive women as miners but as prostitutes coming to the mines to target men miners for their money. The women miners describe experiencing verbal abuse from men at the mines. The female miners mention being called names, and specifically being referred to prostitutes. This indicates that gender-based derogatory language is used to belittle and demean female miners.

Prejudicial beliefs concerning women's proclivity to engage in sex or prostitution at the mines serve to augment the numerous barriers women face in accessing certain job, compounding their vulnerability and perhaps therefore increasing their need to resort to sex work as a coping strategy (Danielsen & Hinton 2020: 24).

Irrespective of the harassment, the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda districts aim to earn an income from mining and not to resort to sex-work as an option for work.

The majority of the women miners in Gwanda and Bubi highlighted that they were facing challenges of being cheated when taking their ores to the stamp mills. The women miners reported:

As women we have to be present during the whole process of taking our ores to the stamp mill because these men may steal our gold.

- Female Miner 2B 01

'Nxa sisiya gigisa istofu sethu kuyasalela igolide kodwa abasiniki ngaloluhlobo bona bayazithathela thina sibabhadele imali enengi'. When we are taking our ores to the stamp mill for processing, there's mud with gold that remains in the mill, but they don't give us they cheat us despite the amount of money that we pay them.

- Female Miner GM 06

During a focus group discussion in Bubi one of the women miners added:

It is also painful for us women that even when we did the rubble and get good ore pockets, and get them processed at the stamp mills, the men hide part of the ore. This is a continuous trend that they follow when women are coming to process ore and by the time the ore is processed, we get small amounts of money. Men are just greedy.

- Female Miner B 03 FGD

A similar incident was highlighted in a study conducted by Ndlovu *et al.* (2019) on the challenges faced by female small-scale mine owners in Gwanda. The study found that, among other challenges, women encountered countless incidences of dishonesty throughout the whole mining processes by virtue of the fact that they were female. One of the female respondents in their study highlighted:

*After grinding the owner of the stamp mill remains with certain ore which will be having gold, this is cheating and it disadvantages us as they freely benefit from our labour. Some owners of compressors refuse to hire out their machinery to women instead opting that we bring out ore to them so that they cheat us. Ndlovu *et al.*, 2019: 144).*

The primary and secondary data both indicate that men short-change women after the processes of grinding their ore for them. The findings reflect on the power dynamics in the ASGM sector, the fact that men feel entitled to the gold, and the unequal gender relations between men and women that position men as the dominant group. Also, women may struggle to assert their rights to the gold they have rightfully earned, which creates an opportunity for men to exploit the situation. This implies that women potentially face difficulties in owning and benefiting from the fruits of their labour due to gender-based power dynamics within the ASGM sector. Greed seems to be another factor as men at the stamp mills could decide to keep the remaining crushed gold for their own selfish interests. While cultural dynamics such as the traditional gendered roles are factored in, they interlock with the unequal gender and power relations reinforcing lower, subordinate position of women in the market. As such, unequal gender relations are further legitimized by the market.

Despite the often-unfriendly working relationship between men and women miners in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector, women miners have developed a 'thick skin'. In a

country where there are high inflation rates, lack of employment, and poverty, women have found no other option but to be hard-hearted despite the working conditions in the ASGM sector.

‘Umsebenzi wokugebha unzima kakhulu ngoba sihlanguka lokunengi day in, day out sihlukumezwa ngabo baba abenza ezemining, kodwa sisebenza ngenkani ngoba lathi siding ukuphila’. Working in this sector is hard because there are so many challenges we experience daily, especially the working relations with men in the sector, they’re not so good. We have to be stubborn because we also want to improve our livelihoods.

- Female Miner GM 09

Can I just say that in this field you need to be stubborn and have a ‘thick skin’ because we get so much opposition from men.

- Female Miner B 10

Penetrating a male-dominated sector is very difficult if you are a woman. What I can tell you is that some of these women were met with so much resistance from men. I know quite a few women that developed a ‘thick skin’ in order to operate in small-scale gold mining. You have to be a ‘man’ in the strictest sense.

- BSSMA Rep

Regardless of the challenges that women miners have and continue to experience in Bubi and Gwanda, they have resorted to not letting the oppressive working relationship with their male counterparts affect them all that easily. They have developed the ability to remain unaffected, and hard hearted so that they are able to handle any challenges without being discouraged. The BSSMA representative further highlights that, in order for the women miners to succeed in the ASGM sector, women are often expected to adopt masculine traits and behaviours, so that they are essentially being forced to conform to the expectations of being a ‘man’. This reflects largely on the systemic differences and unequal social relations that exist between men and women. This is why Danielsen and Hinton (2020) strongly advocate for critically examining the social positioning of women and men in their activities and interests.

6.5.3 Lack of access to capital, equipment, and costs associated with legal mining

The study found that lack of funding has remained a major challenge for women in the ASGM sector of Bubi and Gwanda. The majority of women miners expressed that lack of capital negatively affects their mining operations. On top of that, a lack of equipment hinders the smooth operations at their mines. Women had to look for sponsors who hire out equipment and pay those sponsors a certain percentage after processing their ore. Earlier we mentioned that sponsors are individuals or organizations who provide miners with equipment or cash in exchange for a share of the gold.

Generally, small-scale gold mining is a very hard sector without any capital and equipment, so for me, I had to build good working relationships with sponsors and also make payments on time.

- Female Miner B 05 FGD

‘Ukuswelakala kwemali ngokunye okusihluphayo kumining ngoba kumele sidinge imitshina yokusincedisa kuma sponsors. Njalo ma sesivela gigisa istofu sithengise lomkute wethu, asiboni ama profit esiwatholayo ngoba sibhadalela imitshina esiyabe siyithole kuma sponsor.’ Lack of capital is a great challenge in our mining activities, we also don’t have the equipment and have to hire equipment from sponsors to assist with our mining activities. After taking our ores to the mills and selling the gold we then have to split the money between myself, workers and sponsors hence I do not see the profits coming from mining.

- Female Miner G 10

Another female mine owner in Bubi shared the same sentiments by stating that lack of capital makes it difficult to formalize mining activities:

I think it is important to emphasize to you that starting off on a mining claim is hard work there is so much that is required from the prospective mine owners such as prospecting fees for a prospecting license, land surveys, registration of a mining license and that all amounts to huge sums of money so people get into these syndicates to try and raise funds for mining licenses and fees.

- Female Miner B 06

A similar study on female small-scale mine owners in Gwanda conducted by Ndlovu *et al.* (2019) found that lack of capital and administration costs of formalizing their mining operations was a major crippling factor for women's mining activities. One of the respondents from their study (Respondent 3) emphasized:

It is not easy to be a small-scale miner because what is required at first is a prospecting license and it costs USD \$1000 and the person who does the prospecting was charging USD\$600, for you to get the certificate you pay USD\$200. The costs just make the whole process expensive. The application fee for the registration of base mineral blocks is pegged under ordinary license which costs USD \$2000 and for mineral blocks placed under a special prospecting license costs \$4000, which is just beyond most of the women who have, therefore, limited themselves to alluvial gold mining (Ndlovu *et al.*, 2019: 140).

In the same vein, Ncube's study on the governance of Zimbabwe's ASGM sector suggests that,

while the size of an ordinary claim is 200 by 500metres, the license fees listed by the Ministry of Mines refer to a block of claims (i.e. 10 hectares) or mining sites in line with specific provisions of the Mines and Minerals Act (Ncube, 2022: 45).

In reality, this means that the costs associated with registering the special block are too exorbitant and push the miner to join hands with other miners (syndicate) in order to pool resources (*ibid*). While the lack of financial capital and expensive costs associated with mining are a major challenge, women miners have drawn on social networks within the ASGM sector by mobilizing resources to aid in the progress of their mining activities through the syndicate system.

Women's lack of access to financial capital and machinery in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector is as a result of the structural economic factors that have marginalised them from the 'cash economy' because of their positioning in society. A study conducted by Hove and Hlongwana (2015) of women in the ASGM sector in the Kwekwe district of Zimbabwe noted that the lack of funding was worsened by their subordinate position in society. Thus, women remain victims because they do not have equal rights to property, which is one of the structural differences stemming from unequal gender relations between men and women. Maramba (1998) further adds that financial institutions only grant loans to women if their husbands support their applications. And so, this leaves out women who are not married, thereby reinforcing

class differences among women. Ndlovu *et al.* (2019) argue that lack of financial capital is not unique to women alone as this has been a common challenge for entrepreneurs around the world. Granted the structural inequalities faced by women, their lack of access to financial capital and equipment is more acute as these constraints are attached to cultural dynamics which dictate that all property belongs to the husband or male relatives.

The analysis above reflects on the significance of microfinance as a pathway to women's economic empowerment. In Chapter 2, part of the literature on WEE suggested that access to microfinance is an intervention that has been used by many international development agencies and governments (see Chapter 5) to empower women with financial services and skills training in order to enhance their participation as entrepreneurs, generate income and care for themselves and their families (Drolet, 2010; Haimanot, 2007; Misrak, 2012). The evidence from the women miners above, supports this notion that having access to microfinance would significantly support their mining activities and help to formalize their mining operations.

The study found that some of the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda have found solace in working as syndicates to raise funds for mine registration and purchasing other equipment needed at the mines. In this context, the word 'syndicate' refers to a group of artisanal miners (between six and ten miners) who work together to extract ore which they then share out equally after processing, thus suggesting a horizontal network (Chipangura, 2019; Mawowa, 2013). As mentioned already, these women miners are actively organizing themselves economically to achieve a specific goal: the registration and formalization of their mining operations.

Working relations have improved even though some of the men miners here still do not acknowledge women as miners. But like I said times are changing now, some men are now working with women. Women with mining claims are also employing men. So, this is evidence that things are changing in the Bubi mining sector.

- Male Miner B 04

There has been good working relations because even some men and women are now coming together to work as syndicates.

-Female Miner 1B 01

Times are changing, with an increasing number of women and men involved in small-scale gold mining, the working relations are improving through working as groups of men and women in syndicates and also in associations. This shows that together as miners we can support each other and reach our goals of earning an income.

- Female Miner GM 06

The BSSMA representative indicated:

With the introduction of mining associations and syndicates women are coming together and working together, it has actually attempted to change the work relations because we have some of these men working with women in syndicates. I suppose it's a continuous process of sensitization.

- BSSMA Rep

The responses above signify a shift in gender and organization in the ASGM sector. The response by the BSSMA representative suggests that there have been positive changes with the introduction of mining associations and the syndicate system, where women have the opportunity to work together. This collective effort among women has attempted to change work relations in the ASGM sector. This also shows us that when men and women work together in syndicates, there is an opportunity for a more respectful and equal environment to be fostered. Again, the BSSMA representative emphasizes that the idea of improving the work relations between men and women in the ASGM sectors requires an ongoing and continuous sensitization efforts.

The views from the miners and BSSMA rep significantly link to another part of WEE literature that focuses on collective action and its transformational gains. A component of the WEE literature suggests that collective action can contribute to achieving a certain goal, which can either be social or economic (Kabeer, 2012). The syndicate system mentioned here depicts that collective action can contribute towards economic and social goals as indicated by the evidence that, in spite of women coming together, there are also other syndicates that comprise of both men and women. In a way, this

system has changed the social norms and restrictive attitudes of men in denying access and raising barriers for women to equally participate in the ASGM sector. Thus, collective organisation can lead to transformational gains for gender equality in the market, the community, and the broader political structures (Domingo *et al.*, 2015; Kabeer, 2012).

According to Mawowa (2013) the syndicate system is a legacy of government-sponsored small-scale mining cooperatives that were introduced during the 1980s and 1990s. The syndicate system attempts to transform the ASGM sector by accommodating women and ensuring that they too have a stake in Zimbabwe's key economic sector. The syndicate system presents another way of collective economic organization in the ASGM sector. These networks have direct 'economic payoffs' that allow both men and women to realize the advantage of increased productivity which contribute to their livelihoods (Agarwal, 1994).

While doing ethnographic research in the Mutanda Range in the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe, Chipangura (2019) observed an organized ASGM sector in which *amakorokoza* were working together in syndicates, operating as 'one big happy family' with the goal of alleviating themselves from poverty in a country with high unemployment rates. However, the syndicate system is not limited to the *amakorokoza* (illegal miners). The ASGM is organized around legally registered claim owners who have mining certificates as seen with organizational arrangements in Bubi district under BSSMA where three or more individuals may work on a registered mining claim. The statement by the BSSMA representative aligns with the SRA's notion that social relations may change over time as highlighted by the syndicate system adopted in the ASGM sector in Bubi.

6.5.4 Access to markets

Earlier on we highlighted that the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda had quite a number of social actors and, for this analytical category, we look at the ways in which men and women miners access markets. The study found that both men and women miners in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector sold their gold to both licensed and unlicensed gold buyers:

We sell our gold to licensed gold buyers and sometimes to unlicensed gold buyers. Sometimes it is challenging for us as miners with registered mining claims to travel to nearest towns to sell our gold to Fidelity. In terms of security we risk being followed and robbed.

- Male Miner B 06

It is a challenge as a woman to sell our gold because we fear being cheated by some of these gold buyers. Regardless of this, we sell our gold to licensed gold buyers in the district. Bubi district does not have a resident Fidelity office so we sometimes travel to the nearest town, which is Bulawayo, to sell the gold. But you see we do not have security and reliable information pertaining to the market buying price, it really makes the whole process quite difficult.

- Female Miner 1B 02

One of the women in Gwanda also highlighted that:

We end up resorting to selling our gold to these men that say they are gold buyers. Some of them are usually stationed at the stamp mills where we take our ore for processing. We are not really sure of the gold buying price because the prices are different all the time.

- Female Miner G 07

The empirical evidence above shows the difficulties women and men miners face in accessing reliable markets. While Male Miner B 06 highlights that they sell their gold to licensed and unlicensed gold buyers, they fear travelling to the nearest towns to access more reliable and formal markets for risk of being followed and robbed. The women miners from Bubi and Gwanda districts have also highlighted the difficulties in accessing formal markets. One of the challenges they have outlined is the lack of information pertaining to pricing and reliable market centres within reach of their mining operations. As stated by Female Miner G 07, they resort to selling their gold to unlicensed gold buyers. However, selling their gold to unlicensed gold buyers may have negative implications for their mining businesses. For instance, unlicensed gold buyers may pay these women a much lower price for their gold compared to licensed buyers.

As such, this financial exploitation may diminish women's earnings and profits, making it even harder for them to sustain their mining operations or to invest in equipment and technology etc. This also highlights the need for policies to address these challenges by situating gold buying centres within the reach of the small-scale gold miners. Having formal access to markets within the reach of women miners may increase their market visibility, showcase their products, and establish networks or business relationships that can attract investment or access to financial services.

While it is acknowledged that Fidelity Printers and Refiners (FPR) is the sole legal buyer of gold in Zimbabwe, the findings suggest that the black market is also thriving because of the lack of market centres within the reach of these miners to access information on price, as well as to sell the gold. Weldergogis *et al.* (2018) explain that the lack of information regarding reliable markets and prices is one of the major bottlenecks in artisanal and small-scale mining sectors, so much so that women end up not getting the lion's share of the mineral's value. Lack of access to reliable market information for women has consequences as it limits their economic opportunities in the mining sector. Thus, it is important to provide women miners with the necessary information about market prices and markets so that they can make informed decisions, negotiate better deals, and secure a significant portion of the mineral's value.

6.5.5 Illegal gold miners – *amakorokoza*, *Mashurugwi*/*machete* gangs

The women miners expressed that illegal gold miners (*amakorokoza* and *amaShurugwi*) were terrorizing them in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector. However, the study found that this was not only a challenge for women miners, but for male miners too.

Another thing that has been rampant in these mines is these illegal gold panners (amakorokoza/Shurugwi) they are very violent people, they steal too. You can never feel safe around such people. So, for me, I had to look for security just to be on the watch at my mine.

- Female Miner G 03

Challenges are a lot because you deal with so many things as a woman, like I said there are these makorokoza's, they steal and use violence just to get what

they want. There is nothing that we can do but to report them to the police, who also delay in responding.

- Female Miner 2B 05

I think all mine owners can say that the illegal gold miners are a problem because they can invade your claim. This is not a problem for women but also men miners. There is nothing that we can do but to report them to the police.

- Male Miner G 02

Mkodzongi (2020) offers a comprehensive analysis on the rise of Mashurugwi in Zimbabwe's ASGM sector. The scholar argues that the rise of the machete gangs emanates from class conflicts over the control of gold mines. Many men and women miners have been left very unsettled and constantly living in fear because of these violent gangs.

Empirical data gathered across various sites along the Great Dyke geological formation Hungwe, Makonde, Norton, Chegutu, Kadoma, Battlefields, and Zvishavane demonstrates the evolution of mashurugwi from economically marginalized youths into violent gang members committing violent thefts and robberies across mining areas (Mkodzongi, 2020: 1481).

Although these violent machete gangs attack both male and female miners in Bubi and Gwanda's districts, women are targeted disproportionately more frequently compared to men, due to their perceived nature.

This section has presented primary data on the challenges and barriers faced by women miners in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sectors before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. Evidence presented in this section shows that women encounter quite a number of challenges in their day to day mining activities, such as lack of access to financial services and equipment, and lack of access to reliable markets and market information. Among these challenges, there are social and cultural norms that are reinforced in the ASGM sector that determine the roles of women and men in society. These traditional gendered roles imply that a woman's place is not in the mines but in the household taking care of the family, while men work and provide for their families. These social norms are a significant contributing factor to the unpleasant work relations between male and female miners. In Chapter 2 it was noted that structural

market conditions – such as lack of access to financial services like micro credit, business and skills training; unfair labour market practices such as placing women in secondary/vulnerable positions, and the gender pay gap where women earn less than men for similar work – made it difficult for women to actively participate in economic opportunities (Agrawal 2018; Kavuma *et al.*, 2022; Razavi *et al.*, 2017). Even the evidence presented in the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda before the implementation of the NGP’s empowerment programs indeed confirmed that the mentioned market dynamics negatively affected women’s participation in small-scale gold mining activities.

Despite the challenging market conditions in Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sector, the evidence also points to the significance of collective organization in the mining sector through mining associations and the syndicate system. Active members of the BSSMA and MWMA in Bubi and Gwanda respectively, highlighted that joining mining associations brought a sense of organization, representation, and confidence that many of their issues would be addressed. Furthermore, the syndicate system enabled more women to organize themselves collectively and to pool their resources in order to register and formalize their mining activities. This collective organization was not limited to women only as evidence indicates that both women and men were coming together under the syndicate system to work in the mines. This points to the importance of collective action in also enabling a respectful and equal work relationships between men and women miners in the ASGM sectors, as described by the primary evidence and literature. By and large, the challenges noted in this section point out women’s subordinate position in society, which is further reinforced in the market as seen by the empirical evidence presented in Bubi and Gwanda. Given this background, we now turn to a discussion of the findings and analysis of Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sector after the implementation of the NGP’s empowerment programs in addressing the challenges faced by the women miners.

6.6 The impact of NGP’s empowerment programs on Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sector: Perspectives from the miners

This section presents findings from Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sector after the implementation of the NGP’s empowerment programs for women miners. It describes the marketplace after the implementation of the policy’s empowerment programs to

assess whether the challenges pointed out by the women miners were adequately addressed by the policy. The same analytical categories from the previous section will be used here. The section will start with the analytical categories that the policy addressed first: access to capital, equipment and costs associated with legal mining.

6.6.1 Access to capital, equipment, and costs associated with legal mining

Chapter 5 discussed the second NGP and its goals, which were to address the shortcomings that were not resolved by the first NGP, including the gender inequalities in accessing and managing productive resources. This was thought to increase women's participation in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors. The policy's empowerment programs comprised of two components: First, the Women's Development Fund facility provided access to credit, although the Mthandazo women miners did not receive any cash loans. However, they were granted US\$50 000 under the WDF facility and the UNDP for a Women's Gold Service Centre. All of these were under the NGP's Broad Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework (BBWEEF). Chapter 5 identified that two groups of women miners in the Bubi district (Group 1B and Group 2B) received loans from the WDF, but group B2 received a cash loan and equipment. In Gwanda rural district, the Mthandazo Women Miners Association (MWMA) were recipients of a 'women's gold service centre' with equipment (compressors, stamp mill and a transformer for their service centre to run on electricity). They also received business and skills training from various government departments and NGOs. The program in Gwanda was implemented through a partnership between the MOWAGCD and the United Nations Development Program Country Office – Zimbabwe.

Women miners in Bubi district reported that receiving credit from the WDF was a step in the right direction as it improved their mining operations. Beneficiaries of the NGP's empowerment programs highlighted the advantages of the support they received from the WDF:

The loan was a life saver because when you're in mining you need capital to run the business and also purchase equipment. Mining is hard when don't have a starting capital or equipment so for me the cash came at the right time because I managed to purchase a generator and a jack hammer for my mining activities.

- Female Miner 1B 02

One of the advantages is that as a woman I have stepped up from before because mining without equipment is a challenge. So, this also shows that I am determined to make a difference as a woman in mining.

- Female Miner 2B 05

I am happy that I managed to purchase some equipment, this has made operations at the mine much easier than relying on the manual practices which take a lot of time. Part of the cash I received did wonders for my mine because there was a lot that was needed, such as fuel for the generator, explosives and protective clothing and provisions for my workers.

- Female Miner 2B 04

The empirical evidence from this study, shows that the access to credit and equipment for women miners in Bubi's ASGM sector improved their mining operations. The women miners were able to exercise their agency by making decisions that would improve their mining operations as evidenced by the statements from female miners 1B 02 and 2B 04. The primary evidence from the Bubi women miners aligns with the policy's official conceptualization of WEE which recognizes the importance of increasing women's economic agency and decision making. The WDF facility achieved this by eliminating the structural gendered inequalities in access to credit. As mentioned in the WEE literature, women were socially excluded from accessing loans from banks and lending institutions due to discrimination and bias in regulatory frameworks, as well as lack of ownership of property. Female miner 2B 05's statement shows that she is now more confident and that she has been elevated from before, acknowledging the contribution of the mining equipment from the policy's empowerment programs. This is also significant for aligning with WEE literature that emphasizes that access to credit for women not only enhances their decision making, and their income, but it also increases their self-confidence (Kabeer, 2005; Okunlola *et al.*, 2020). This signifies that the policy's empowerment programs (access to credit and equipment) provides the women miners with necessary resources to enhance their economic agency and active participation in economic activities.

In Gwanda, the Mthandazo women miners also highlighted that the women's service centre was what women needed, considering the challenges they had faced in acquiring

equipment for their mining operations. The MOWAGCD, in partnership with the UNDP sourced some compressors, a stamp mill and a transformer for the gold service centre (Moyo, 2015). The provision of equipment at the service centre ensured that women miners were able to hire equipment for their mining operations at affordable prices compared to the arrangements that had been made in the ASGM sector where a miner would hire equipment from a sponsor for a share of gold. Another advantage of this type of support was that women were now able to process their ore at the gold service centre without needing to worry about the unscrupulous millers who would short-change them after grinding their ore at the mills.

The women's gold service centre was an added advantage for women miners. This type of support empowered the women to familiarize themselves with all the processes of small-scale gold mining, including business management, because the Mthandazo Women Miners Association was managing the centre as well as the processes of grinding the ore. The Mthandazo women miners noted:

'Uhlelo lokuthuthukisa omama ngeservice centre lemitshina iyasinceda kakhulu ngoba siyakhona ukubona umahluko emisebenzini yethu yokugebha'. The women empowerment program through the service centre is helpful because we are now able to see a difference and an increase in our gold productivity.

- Female Miner GM 08

The good thing is that we are able to process our ores and run our own service centre as women because we had been reporting to the ministry that men harass us especially when we process our ores.

- Female Miner GM 01

The evidence presented here matches with what the government official stated in Chapter 5. Government official A noted that they drafted a concept note on how best they could empower women miners facing difficulties around processing their ores in a male dominated environment. Evidence from female miner GM 01 also coincides with a statement by government official B, who in an interview also highlighted that they had been receiving reports from women miners on the unfair treatment and violence encountered in processing their ores. Thus, the policy's empowerment

program of establishing a service centre for women was a positive response to the challenges women miners were facing in processing their ores.

The Mthandazo women miners also highlighted that, apart from receiving the equipment and the service centre, the skills and business training they had received increased their knowledge about the mining industry and how to manage their mining activities.

The advantages about this type of support is the trainings that we received. I was informed more about mining, how to register a mine, and the processes of prospecting.

- Female Miner GM 04

The knowledge that has been imparted on us has helped us to actively manage our mines and service centre.

- Female Miner GM 06

The views from the Mthandazo women miners shows that the various training they had received provided them with valuable knowledge and information about mining, including topics such as how to register a claim and the processes of prospecting. The training equipped the women miners with a deeper understanding of the mining industry and various processes involved. This runs parallel to the view asserted by the UNDP official during the implementation of the policy's empowerment programs as he argued, "*we don't just give women equipment without any knowledge on how to use it. That is why we needed to train these women on all processes involved in small-scale gold mining*". The evidence from the Mthandazo women miners and the views from the UNDP official indicates the importance of skills and business training as a pathway to women's economic empowerment. The evidence presented here also shows us that the policy's empowerment programs were addressing the gender inequalities in access to skills training. As pointed out in Chapter 2, many women who start entrepreneurial activities lack the necessary skills and knowledge in effectively running their enterprises (Irene, 2017; Kavuma *et al.*, 2022; Nyowe, 2011). This is one of the ways that the policy's empowerment programs were addressing women's lack of business and skills training.

While the Mthandazo women miners have highlighted the advantages of the women's gold service centre, three other women miners expressed concerns about this type of support and how it affected their productivity at their mines. These women noted:

The disadvantage for me was the waiting period for the equipment.

- Female Miner GM 07

We are happy about the service centre but when we book for compressors, they can delay because another miner would be using it. We now have to wait for some days or a week because of the high demand so that I get my turn, and this in affects productivity.

- Female Miner GM 09

The statements above not only highlight the positive aspects of the women's gold service centre but also points out a specific challenge related to hiring and booking of equipment from the service centre and its impact on productivity. The women miners emphasize that they are forced to wait for days or even a week before it is their turn to use the equipment. This delay in accessing equipment due to the high demand negatively affects their mining operations. However, this also indicates that the service centre is serving its purpose by providing services to other women in the district and not strictly confining the services to the members of Mthandazo Women Miners Association.

The evidence from the Mthandazo women miners and Bubi women miners who received support from the policy's empowerment programs shows us that access to credit, equipment, skills training is necessary for women to actively compete in the markets. In the previous section, the women miners indicated that "*without access to capital, equipment and knowledge it becomes difficult to penetrate the small-scale gold mining sector*". The policy's empowerment programs have had a positive impact for the beneficiaries in Bubi and Gwanda, allowing them to exert greater control over economic decisions that influence their lives and priorities. This is evident in the case of beneficiaries in the Bubi district who were purchasing mining equipment, highlighting the significance of women exercising agency in the ASGM sector. Additionally, the establishment of a women's gold service centre with equipment

provided the Mthandazo women, and women miners in general, with a harassment free environment to process their ore. Although there were challenges such as waiting for equipment, it is important to acknowledge that the support from NGP's empowerment programs has empowered these women miners to enhance their knowledge of mining and to manage their mining activities better.

6.6.2 Workplace relationships and cultural dynamics

The progress made by the policy's empowerment programs in access to credit and equipment further improved the work relations in Bubi's ASGM sector. A considerable number of women miners in the ASGM sector in Bubi highlighted that, since receiving State support, there had been an improvement in work relations with their male counterparts. Women miners indicated that they had created favourable working arrangements with their male counterparts who owned processing mills, equipment, and transportation services.

For me, it has been partly good because I am recognized as a 'sponsor' - a sponsor is someone with equipment and hires that equipment out to other miners and is paid a percentage of their gold.

- Female Miner 2B 03

Some male mine owners are okay because they come and hire my equipment. Some of them that were in the habit of saying, mining is not an environment for a woman are now coming closer to me because of the equipment I have.

- Female Miner 1B 02

The men also confirmed:

The relationships have changed in the sense that men have learned to respect women who have funding as some men are also employed by these women to work on their claims.

- Male Miner B 07

Men will always accommodate women that have received State support because of the equipment they have, we now view them as sponsors, and we have arrangements of supporting each other.

- Male Miner B 10

The responses above are significant as they point to the changes in gendered relationships at work as a result of the empowerment programs from which women miners benefited. Kabeer's (2005; 2008; 2012; 2016) studies on women's economic empowerment in Bangladesh also found that after women had received financial support, they were able to challenge the cultural dynamics that kept them in subordinate positions. Similarly, the evidence from Bubi women miners suggests that women were now recognized as miners in their own right. The cultural and gender norms that had influenced the roles of women were no longer expressed by the male miners. This is another policy outcome of making the markets work for women in the small-scale gold mining sector. The findings also point to the SRA's key concepts (Table 3.1), arguing that social relations change and do not remain the same. This is evidenced by the change in the work relationships between men and women miners in Bubi district after the women miners received support from the NGP's empowerment program. This proves that State institutions such as the NGP and its activities interact with the market to alter social relationships.

The beneficiaries in Bubi district also mentioned that they were regarded as sponsors and recognized as miners because of the equipment they received and the funding from the policy's WDF facility. One of the male miners explained this about this development:

I'll give you an example of how the mining sector operates – the person who's got equipment is king. Without equipment you can own a piece of land or a mining claim but then it's difficult to extract ore or work that area.

- Male Miner B 01

The statement by Male Miner B 01 depicts that once an individual either men or woman has equipment in the mining sector, his or her positioning is elevated. Hence the statement, "*the person who's got equipment is king*". However, this shift in positioning

is limited to women who received support, further marginalizing other women miners who did not benefit from the policy's empowerment programs. The non-beneficiaries in Bubi district indicated:

I would have expected that work relations would have improved after some of the women miners in the district were empowered. But it is surprising that, for us who were not beneficiaries of the government program we are not treated with the same respect by our male counterparts. It's only for the women that benefited.

- Female Miner B 03

In many cases the male miners still look down on me because I am not like the other women in this district that were part of a government empowerment program. They only want to work with those other women because they have equipment.

- Female Miner B 02 FGD

The statements above also indicate the class differences in Bubi's ASGM sector perpetuated by the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. Men and women previously highlighted the positive working relations after women miners had been empowered. However, the non-beneficiaries felt that male miners still failed to recognize them as miners in their own right simply because they were not beneficiaries of the NGP's empowerment programs. In this way, the market interacts with the NGP in reinforcing class inequalities in Bubi's ASGM sector so that the non-beneficiaries are undermined and do not receive the same treatment as the beneficiaries in the same sector. In relation to this, one of the male miners added that women miners who had received support from the State were "untouchable":

The relationship has changed in the sense that they are untouchable, and you can't do anything to them but to maintain a good relationship with them.

- Male Miner B 14

This could also suggest that some of the beneficiaries were politically connected, hence, the term ‘untouchable’ and so, the male miners preferred to be in good work relations with them.

The study revealed that there were poor working relations between the women who had benefited from the policy’s empowerment programs and those women who had not benefited from it. The majority of the non-beneficiaries in Gwanda and Bubi mentioned that some of the women who had benefited from the policy’s programs were not keen on assisting them.

Women that benefited from the State tend to be very stingy with their equipment, they say that the machinery belongs to BSSMA. They forget that they received machinery during the time government was trying to promote and support ‘women in mining’; even these women that are starting out at grassroots need to be empowered by women that benefited.

- Female Miner B 01 FGD

Another respondent added during an interview:

It has been hard working with the women that benefited from government support because they look down on us. We have no equipment and use manual tools to do most of the work in our mines which is very hard. There is a division between those that benefited from government and those who did not benefit.

- Female Miner B 05

In the same vein, men miners also confirmed the above remarks, stating:

The problem is that women like to undermine each other. Those that have equipment from the government do not assist other women in the mining sector.

- Male Miner B 03

In some places, women that have benefited from the State support have had good working relations, but, at times these women that would have received State support also oppress the women miners who have not received support so it defeats the whole purpose. It’s supposed to be gender equality but now women

are oppressing other women. Because the women that would have received equipment from the State would say this is mine and you don't have anything.

- Male Miner B 09

Women find it hard to be united and work together. Here in Gwanda there is a lot of looking down upon each other especially with those Mthandazo women and women that are not direct beneficiaries.

- Male Miner G 05

You know that it's just chaos because the women that have been supported by the government are connected and tend to undermine the other women that are not part of an association or part of the group that received support.

- Male Miner G 08

The statements from both male and female miners above suggest that social status and class dynamics play a role in the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda. The groups of women miners who had benefited from the NGP's empowerment programs were undermining the other women miners who had not received support in the ASGM sector. The view expressed by male miner B 09, also suggests that while State support for women may have had some positive effects on the working relationships among women, this State support could also lead to some women oppressing other women who have not received the same type of State support. The views expressed by the male miners above highlight the complex nature of addressing gender equality in isolation, without considering other social relations such as class which, as we have seen, can have negative consequences. Kabeer *et al.* (2013) explain that many women in the labour markets are in direct competition with each other for work, products orders, space to sell their goods and services which may prove difficult in supporting each other.

This is why the SRA stresses the importance of analysing policy and programs through the interaction of gender and other social relations such as class, race, ethnicity, and age, which can occur at the same time in a person's life so as to address the interlocking inequalities that women may experience at the same time. The same is explained in intersectionality/intersectional feminism, where Crenshaw (1989) argued for the need

to recognize other forms of discrimination that can occur simultaneously with gender inequalities. Therefore, gender, class, race, and other forms of discrimination cannot be studied in isolation. Instead, intersectional feminists and the SRA agree that gender, class, race, and other social relations need to be analysed simultaneously so as to understand the experiences of women in access to and control over productive resources (Davis, 2008). Furthermore, this also helps in creating programs and policies that address the multiple forms of discrimination affecting women.

In addition to other intriguing discoveries, the study revealed that the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda exhibited greater support for women in mining associations compared to female miners in conventional mining roles. During a focus group discussion in Bubi, one of the female miners noted:

Usually women that benefit from government programs are from 'executive', you could be part of women in mining in Bubi but if you're not in the executive or in a mining association it is very hard for them to assist. They put their own names when opportunities like this come. I think the government should resist from initiating projects through small-scale mining associations because they cease to benefit everyone. Associations may appear as genuine on the surface but when it comes to assisting other women with equipment and other mining issues, they hardly do it.

- Female Miner B 04 FGD

In Gwanda, a respondent also said:

Working relations among women miners is a challenge, even to join the association you have to be someone in the community and some of us haven't reached that level you see. So even when you approach them on entry into the association you can see that you're being looked down upon.

- Female Miner G 07

Apart from the many inequalities that women generally face in labour markets, social relations of class also interact with gender inequalities. This is why socialist feminists criticized both liberal and Marxist feminism arguing that women's oppression moves

beyond the capitalist and economic systems to much deeper structural inequalities such as race, class, and gender etc. (see Chapter 3). And so, without membership or any connections to these organized groups, some women miners are marginalized in the market on the basis of class and social status. Although the Mthandazo Women Miners Association in Gwanda has had more women joining their association, other women still find it difficult to access associations as admission is based on class and social status. It is quite ironic, when we consider the extensive literature on women's organizations, especially within trade unions and mining associations, on how they initiated their own organizations due to being marginalized and disregarded in those unions (Ford, 2008; Gammage *et al.*, 2016). The evidence from the non-beneficiaries reveals that the very mining associations intended to assist women miners are actually hindering their progress and access in the ASGM sectors of Bubi and Gwanda. The findings above also suggest there is a real tension between the importance of economic organization in order to advance in the market, and the fact that such an organization can help reinforce class inequalities.

The beneficiaries, however, mentioned that they have a good working relationship with other women in the Bubi and Gwanda ASGM sector. The women miners who had benefited stated:

I believe that as women we need to uplift each other, so I am always willing to assist other women mine owners like myself.

- Female Miner 2B 04

Other women miners have approached me, and I have tried to assist them here and there, truth is it is not easy because women tend to talk a lot, some are jealous. But those women that approach me for help I try my best to assist with equipment.

- Female Miner 1B 02

In Gwanda, members of the Mthandazo Women Miners Association highlighted:

The service centre is open for all women in Gwanda and the province at large. We do not select on who is supposed to come and process their ores or hire

equipment from the centre. It is here to service all women in Matabeleland South Province.

- Female Miner GM 07

For women that have not directly benefited from State support, the Women's Service Centre is still open to them and they are able to hire equipment when they need it. The working relationship is good.

- Female Miner GM 08

The statements from the women who had benefited directly from State support in Bubi suggest that they are open to assisting women who did not receive any State support. However, there seems to be a difference of opinion between women beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. As highlighted by Kabeer (2013) in the previous section, women are in direct competition with each other and this competition could possibly strain the work relations between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. While female miner 1B 02 highlights that it is not easy, given the nature of women, she does not discriminate, and she works with them regardless. In Gwanda's ASGM sector both respondents emphasized that the women's gold service centre does not discriminate, and that it is open to all women regardless of their background or circumstances. The same was echoed by government officials A and C in Chapter 5, that although the Mthandazo Women Miners Association is managing the day to day operations of the centre, it is open to each and every woman in the district as well as the province. The purpose of the gold service centre is to provide a space for women to come and process their ores and to hire equipment as needed. Most importantly, the views from the Mthandazo women miners also show that the market works with the NGP to ensure that resources are made available to women miners in the form of service centres and equipment that can help promote gender equality and support women's participation in small-scale gold mining.

6.6.3 Harassment and unscrupulous millers

Despite the NGP's empowerment programs, the study found that women miners were still being harassed in Gwanda's ASGM sector. During a key informant interview with the chairperson of the Mthandazo Women's Association, she said:

There hasn't been much of a change in the working relations in the Gwanda ASGM sector, in fact I think it has turned out for the worst because some of these men do not like it when women are empowered while other men celebrate the progress that we have made so far. You see ever since we had the one stop service centre, it is located in a central area making it easily accessible to everyone who wants to process their ores. I can tell you now that some of the men have mounted stamp mills just behind our service centre because they want us to run at a loss. Some of these men have also gone to the extent of trying to get women to process their ores at their stamp mills instead offering cheaper prices. This is an indication that men are not happy about this development.

- Chairperson, GM

Another member of the Mthandazo Women Miners Association also indicated:

We are still not working well with men in our district because they have come and put gold processing mills near the service centre. Another thing is they have gone to the extent of proposing to us (women) because they want to control us by saying that we must process our ores at their stamp mills and not with the women's centre because their prices are much cheaper.

- Female Miner GM 07

The responses above indicate that men miners in Gwanda's ASGM sector are not too happy with the progress and the support women have received from the State. Thus, the male miners have exploited two avenues in Gwanda's ASGM sector: Firstly, they set up their stamp mills in close proximity to the service centre in an effort to jeopardize its operations and cause financial losses. These male stamp mill owners have gone a step further by persuading women to process their ores at their stamp mills by offering lower prices. Secondly, they have been courting arguably vulnerable women in exchange for cheaper prices for milling their ores at the men's stamp mills – an uncouth practice, but subjectively justifiable in the eyes of the competitor who is the 'male miner'. Overall, the perceptions of the chairperson and female miner highlights the power dynamics and conflicts that can arise between men and women in the ASGM sector. This also sheds light on the challenges that women miners continue to face in the mining industry even after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment

programs. The women miners have to deal with sabotage from their male counterparts, and such actions hinder the success and profitability of women miners.

In Bubi district, too, three out of the eight beneficiaries of the NGP's empowerment programs highlighted that they still experienced harassment in the ASGM sector. Similar to the Gwanda women's case, some male mine owners have also tried to court women miners so that they could benefit from the equipment they had received from the policy's empowerment programs. The women miners said:

Working with some male mine owners has improved but with some it's not easy. Some of them don't even respect that I am a married woman, and they start asking for sexual favours, some will even go to the extent of trying to 'date' you thinking that I will give them my equipment for free.

- Female Miner 1B 01

Another respondent also pointed out:

There have been some slight changes here and there because I have arrangements with other mine owners to assist with equipment but with other men, they see us with equipment they think they can exploit us. One time, one of the male miners here proposed to me thinking that because he has shown interest in me, I will then give him my equipment for free without paying for it. So, these are some of the challenges that we're still experiencing.

- Female Miner 2B 05

The statements above show that harassment continues to take place in Bubi's ASGM sector regardless of the policy's empowerment programs. Chen (2012) emphasizes that various forms of violence or harassment of women in the labour market is employed as means of exerting control over them. A similar notion is echoed by Danielsen and Hinton (2020) that, within the context of relative positions of power, the most common ways that male dominance is sustained is through sexual and gender-based violence. The market reinforces gender inequalities by attempting to maintain the status quo of male power as a way of contesting the policy's empowerment programs. In this regard, the ASGM sector has its own unsanctioned norms and practices that reinforce structural

gender inequalities which may not be effectively addressed by women's access to financial capital, equipment, and skills training.

6.6.4 Access to markets

Before the implementation of the policy's empowerment programs, we learned that women in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector faced challenges in access to reliable markets and information regarding the markets where they could sell their gold. One of the challenges highlighted by the miners in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sectors was that reliable markets were not in close proximity. After the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs, the study found that the women's gold service centre acted as a one stop shop where women could sell their gold through Fidelity Printers and Refiners, a legal gold buying agency for the government. The Mthandazo women also confirmed:

'Sesithole igold service centre, uhulumende wabona ukuthi asincede ngokusilethela abantu beFidelity khonapho ukwenzela ukuthi sithengise igolide lethu ngomthetho njalo lokuvala uhlupho lokuthi sihambe umango sisiyathengisa.' *Now that we have a gold service centre, the government also assisted us by establishing an office for FPR where we can access reliable information on gold prices and as well sell our gold.*

- Female Miner GM 01

At first it was difficult because we had to travel to sell our gold and it is not safe because nowadays people will be knowing we are carrying gold and we risk being followed and robbed. Now we have people from Fidelity within our reach and this helps us with not only selling the gold but also for information on prices and other opportunities.

- Female Miner GM 02

The statements above show that the NGP's empowerment programs have gone further in ensuring that women have access to reliable information about markets, and also that the gold buying agency is within close proximity, situated at the gold service centre. Apart from the policy's support in addressing the challenges women faced in processing their ores, the policy and UNDP ensured that women miners were able to access other

services such as markets at the women's gold service centre. In Chapter 2, some of the WEE literature highlighted the difficulties women faced in access to markets and lack of information which often restrained the growth of women entrepreneurs (Agrawal, 2018). Thus, as per the argument from the UNDP official regarding the women's gold service centre, situating a market within the establishment could be one of the ways in which women could be involved in all processes of small-scale gold mining without the 'middleman'. As mentioned in the previous section on access to markets prior to the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs, access to formal markets makes women more visible to other market opportunities by building networks, attracting potential investors, and even accessing financial services. Through this we see that the policy interacts with the market to ease the information asymmetry that women face.

However, the women miners who had received State support in the Bubi district confirmed that they still faced challenges in accessing reliable markets. The fact that FPR was not within their reach made it quite difficult for them to access the right markets and information pertaining to the prices of gold. The women miners highlighted that, "*they had to travel to towns to sell their gold if the gold buyers did not come to them*". Some also highlighted that when they would go and process their ores at the stamp mills, "*the owners of the gold mills would also act as gold buyers*". The same is echoed by Nyavaya (2021) in his analysis on access to markets for small-scale gold miners in Kenzamba, Zimbabwe. The author asserts that sponsors and stamp mill owners tended to become buyers of gold, purchasing the gold in bulk and travelling to towns to resell it either at Fidelity printers or on the 'black market'. While the empowerment programs are supposed to empower women in contributing to Zimbabwe's economic growth, access to reliable markets limits the visibility of women's contribution to the country's economic growth.

Adding to the above, the findings, therefore, suggest that the policy has failed to disrupt gender inequalities in access to information and reliable markets. Evidence from the previous section on unscrupulous millers (before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs) showed that the women miners were often cheated by the stamp mill operators when taking their ores for processing. There is no guarantee that the very same stamp mill owners, who are also gold buyers, would be honest enough to

purchase the women miners' gold at competitive market prices. Two of the women miners (non-beneficiaries) in Gwanda highlighted that they sold their gold to unlicensed gold buyers because their mining operations were not registered with the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development. These women said:

I have resorted to selling gold to unlicensed gold buyers because I risk being arrested for illegal possession of gold because my mine is not registered.

- Female Miner G 01

It is easier to sell the gold to unlicensed buyers because they don't ask any questions about where the gold is coming from. I am still in the process of raising funds to register my claim and I cannot go to Fidelity to sell the gold because I am scared they will ask for documentation or a certificate to prove that I have a mine. Even though they say that those without registered mines can still sell their gold at Fidelity, with no questions asked, you can never be too sure with this government and its regulations.

- Female Miner G 05

The evidence above suggests that women miners who still have not registered their mines prefer to sell their gold to “*unlicensed gold buyers*”, because they do not want to be arrested for possession of minerals without adequate documentation. Nyavaya (2021) states that Fidelity Printers allows miners without registered mines to sell their gold at Fidelity without any questions asked. Although, this may prove to be risky as female miner G 05 pointed out, the findings also suggest that State is welcoming of unregistered miners selling their gold to Fidelity Printers.

However, given the history behind the formalization and regulation of the ASGM sector in Zimbabwe, the view echoed by female miner G 05 is logical as the government can change its views about unregistered miners at any time. It could be the reason why the women miners opt to play it safe by selling gold to unlicensed buyers. The disadvantage is that selling gold to unlicensed buyers for the women miners run at a loss. As mentioned in the section on markets before the NGP, the women who sell to unlicensed gold buyers are financially exploited by paying them lower prices for their gold, and so this diminishes the women miners' earnings and profits, making it harder for them to

sustain their mining operations. The other disadvantage is that they miss out on opportunities due to reduced market visibility.

6.6.5 Illegal gold miners - *amakorokoza*, *Mashurugwi/machete* gangs

Before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector, the findings indicated that illegal gold miners – *amakorokoza* – had been making it difficult for miners to be productive at their mines. The Mthandazo women miners in Gwanda reported that machete violence had escalated in the ASGM sector and that property was damaged, while some of the female mine owners' workers had been injured. One female miner gave an account of the attacks by the illegal gold miners:

Although the government has supported us with equipment and the gold service centre, we are still being harassed by 'amakorokoza' and these 'machete gangs'. Some of my property at my mine was damaged and two of my security guys were injured.

- Female Miner GM 04

The chairperson of Mthandazo Women Miners Association also confirmed:

As women in mining we are living in fear because at any time these 'boys' can attack us, our workers and the developments we have made at our mines. Two women miners in the district have reported that their mines were attacked and some of their workers were injured in the process. Valuable materials and equipment was stolen.

- Mthandazo Chairperson

The quotes by both the female miner and the chairperson of Mthandazo Women Miners Association shed light on the broader issues of security and safety in the mining sector, revealing the need for better protection measures and support for women involved in mining activities. The mention of reported attacks on the women's mines reinforces the notion that these threats from the *amakorokoza* are not hypothetical but have already resulted in harm to both individuals and resources. The attacks not only resulted in

physical injuries to the workers, but also led to the loss of valuable materials and equipment through theft.

The female miners in Bubi district (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) also complained about *amakorokoza* and *machete* gangs who were still harassing them. The women miners felt that there was need for government to intervene with safety and security programs and for the law enforcement agencies to respond swiftly to the *amakorokoza* issue.

I think all miners can say that illegal miners are a problem because they can invade your mining claim. This is not a problem for women only but also men miners. There is nothing we can do but to also report them to the police, who also do not respond most of the time. Something needs to be done about amakorokoza; they are so violent, and the Zimbabwe Republic Police should be active when we report cases.

- Female Miner 2B 04

We need to be protected from these violent amakorokoza. Even if we report them to the police nothing is done so we are living in constant fear of our lives and property.

- Female Miner 2B 03

Both of these female miners express frustration over the fact that there is a lack of action from police who often fail to respond to their reports about *amakorokoza* that are causing havoc at their mines. Female miner 2B 04 calls for the police to be more active in addressing these cases. One of the local newspapers also reported that, “these people [amakorokoza] are disregarding authorities, there has to be heavy policing around the area in order to flush out illegal miners” (Kazunga, 2017). This could also explain why the police in Bubi districts have not responded satisfactorily to the cases of violence from the miners: these violent gangs disregard law enforcement agencies. Female miner 2B 03 also highlights that they are constantly living in fear because of these illegal small-scale miners. Similarly, an article from a local newspaper captured the Minister of State for Matabeleland North Province, Mr R. Moyo, saying:

Our people are living in fear because of the violent behaviour of illegal gold miners who come from other districts. The guys who are called amashurugwi/amakorokoza attack locals if they find them panning for gold. They are always carrying axes and machetes. They are also daring that if the gold belt is stretching to people's homesteads, these criminals violently force them out of their homes so they can extract the minerals (The Zimeye, 5 December 2019).

6.6 Summary

This section has presented primary data on the extent to which the NGP's empowerment programs has interacted with the market in disrupting and/or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda districts. The findings in this section have shown that despite the implementation of the policy's empowerment program, the policy as a State institution interacted with the market in disrupting gender inequality in the ASGM sector to a limited degree through women's access to credit and equipment. The findings of this study indicate that after women miners received loans from WDF and benefited from the women's gold service centre the working relations with their male counterparts slightly shifted. More so, the male miners have stopped making comments such as that 'a woman's place is not in the mines but in the kitchen'. The NGP's empowerment programs have interacted with the market in challenging the gender and cultural norms that dictated women's roles outside the household. The NGP's empowerment programs also increased women's visibility within the ASGM sector in Bubi and Gwanda as they were also now recognized as 'sponsors' who could also make profits from hiring out their equipment to other miners.

The evidence also shows that the NGP's empowerment programs worked with the market in disrupting structural gender inequalities as seen in the improvement of the work relations between some women and men. The primary data also indicated that the policy interacted with the market in reinforcing class differences among the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of State support. Another case of the NGP working with the market to reinforce class inequality is evident in access to markets. The Mthandazo women miners were advantaged because, as part of the gold service centre, Fidelity agents (gold buyers) were housed there so that they could sell their gold, and also have access to information pertaining to prices and markets. Beneficiaries of the policy's empowerment project in Bubi's ASGM sector reported that they still had to

travel to towns to access markets or look for buyers within the ASGM sector to sell their gold. While this points to class differences among women in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sectors, the NGP has also reinforced gender inequality in terms of access to reliable markets for women miners in Bubi.

The section also outlines how small-scale mining associations can be used as a strategy for women miners to access productive resources from the State. The women miners in Gwanda highlighted that access into those associations was quite difficult. The data indicated that, despite the importance of economic organization in the market, penetrating such organizations proved to be difficult. The small-scale mining associations also tended to act as barriers for women who want to enter the ASGM sectors.

6.7 Conclusion

The chapter has described the market before and after the implementation of NGP's empowerment programs for women in mining. Granted that Zimbabwe's ASGM sector has been tainted with contradictions, men and women still venture into artisanal and small-scale gold mining as an important source of income. More so, the ASGM sector in Zimbabwe is regarded as a key economic sector contributing to the country's economic growth, even though the State itself has failed to come up with sustainable formalization policies. The SRA has been quite helpful in analysing multiple institutions and how they interact to reverse or reinforce gender and class inequalities in the small-scale gold mining sector of Bubi and Gwanda. In this chapter it was argued that, regardless of the efforts made by the State in supporting women miners, the market reinforced gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda.

The chapter described how cultural dynamics, gender norms and unequal gender and power relations were persistent issues for women in the mining sector. These three factors interlock to reproduce and reinforce gender and class inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector. These dimensions include expectations such as women being limited to domestic and care work, and the market maintaining the assumption that men are the miners, rendering women's work invisible, and women thus not being recognized as miners in own right. Another dimension includes social taboos that restrict women from mining, for example myths that the presence of women makes

minerals disappear, and the assumption that mining for women is directly linked to prostitution. Sexual and gender-based violence was also one of the ways that male miners maintained male dominance in the market. Male dominance was also perpetuated by women miners' lack of access to and control of productive resources as reinforced by their lower, subordinate position. These were some of the structural inequalities affecting women in the market before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs.

The chapter also described the changes in the market after the women miners benefited from the policy's empowerment programs. Although the State supported women significantly through access to and control of productive resources, the empowerment programs transformed the position of women miners in the market. However, this was limited to those women miners who benefited from the State support, This therefore reproduced and reinforced class and gender inequalities on the basis that women who were not beneficiaries continuously faced inequalities from both male and women miners because they lacked equipment and were not part of the empowerment programs. This makes it clear that access to and control of productive resources alone is not adequate in eliminating gender and class inequalities in the labour market and that structural inequalities need to be confronted. The marketplace is more favourable to men and to the women who benefited from the policy's empowerment programs. The small-scale mining associations that are supposed to support women miners regardless of class and social status, have also played a role in reinforcing class differences in access/entry into the associations. These are some of the ways that the market reinforces inequalities. As concluded in Chapter 5, this continues to point to the need to address the deeper structural inequalities such as the unequal gender and power relations between men and women and cultural and social dynamics.

CHAPTER SEVEN

AN INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE NGP'S INTERACTION WITH COMMUNITY AND FAMILY DYNAMICS

7.1 Introduction

The chapter presents an institutional analysis of the NGP's interaction with the community and family dynamics in Bubi and Gwanda rural districts. In Chapter 3 we learned that the State or State policies interact with different institutions at different levels in either disrupting or reinforcing inequalities. The community and family are institutions where women miners experience gender and class inequalities. The SRA describes the community as consisting of village tribunals, informal networks, voluntary associations, non-governmental organizations, and women's organizations. The family/kinship comprises of the household, extended families, and lineage groupings (Kabeer, 1994). Chapter 5 and 6 explored the Social Relations Approach as a framework for the study to conduct a multilevel analysis of the extent to which the State, through the policy, interacted with international organizations such as the UNDP and the market in reversing and reinforcing gender and class inequalities for women miners in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector. Such an analysis is not limited to the State, market and international organizations but also includes the family and community as these are institutions where women experience structural gender inequalities.

A multi-level institutional analysis of the NGP is important because it allows us to understand the different ways in which the State interacts with other institutions at different levels in bringing change or in producing and reinforcing social inequalities. The SRA has been particularly useful in examining the NGP on three different institutional levels:

- Chapter 5: how the processes of policy development and implementation within the State impacted the final form of policy,
- Chapter 6: the policy's impact on making the markets work for women miners in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector.

- Chapter 7: the policy's interaction with the family and community in changing women's subordinate status. Status, here, refers to the position of an individual in society (Wekwete, 1994).

The SRA's institutional analysis through its five distinct aspects – rules, people, resources, activities and power – provided a framework for this study to analyse the underlying factors which enforce gender and other inequalities such as the gendered nature of institutions, the unequal gender and power relations that exist between men and women, and who is included and who is left out. Although the NGP's empowerment programs have to an extent transformed the status of women in the public sphere, this chapter argues that the NGP interacts with the family and community in perpetuating and reinforcing gender and class inequalities in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. The State's liberal/agency centred approach to the implementation of empowerment programs for women under the NGP is primarily focused on addressing the structural economic inequalities such as equal access to credit, equipment, skills and business training. However, it overlooks the important underlying structural social factors that hinder women's agency.

Structural factors such as the unequal gendered relations between men and women, unpaid care work, patriarchy, social and cultural norms hinder women's agency. Liberal feminism was more fixated on women's visibility in the public sphere, for example education, labour force participation, political participation, and access to and control of productive resources (credit, land, infrastructure, equipment). While liberal feminists focused on the public/private sphere divide, they overlooked the significance of women's productive and unpaid care work within the household. These factors remain relevant and contribute to continued subordination of women.

The chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section focuses on the role and status of women in rural Zimbabwe. This enables us to understand the status of women in the family and community. Some of the themes discussed in the section are gender relations, gendered division of labour, patriarchy, and sociocultural aspects that have continued to shape life and position for women in Zimbabwe. The second section provides empirical evidence and an analysis of the status of the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda, both before and after they received State support. This section aims to analyze the impact of the NGP's empowerment programs on the status of women

miners within their families and communities. Most importantly, we understand the extent to which the policy works with and/or against the institutions of the family and community in addressing the structural social inequalities that keep women in subordinate positions in Bubi and Gwanda. We now turn to a historical overview of the status of women in the family and community in Zimbabwe.

7.2 The status of women in the family and community in Zimbabwe

This section discusses the status of women in the family and community in rural Zimbabwe to obtain a deeper understanding of their roles and position. As noted in Chapter 3 and in the introduction of this chapter, this background helps the study in analysing the different ways in which the NGP has interacted with the family and community in Bubi and Gwanda in either transforming women's positions or reinforcing their subordinate position in the private sphere. Rather than simply evaluating and giving a general discussion of the status of women in Zimbabwe, the study evaluates the status of women in the family and community through different time periods. The study draws on a structure adopted by Seidman (1984), Cheater (1986) and Vengesai (2019) in presenting women's inequality and status in the context of pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial Zimbabwe.

The approach adopted by the various scholars examines the status of women and gender inequalities in Zimbabwe. Each of these time periods helps us understand the ways in which inequalities were produced, reproduced, and reinforced in Zimbabwe. Seidman (1984) also argues that each of these legacies have different implications for the roles that women were expected to play. For instance, pre-colonial Zimbabwean society was deeply entrenched in culture and customs. Customs like paying 'bride price' for a woman to become a wife meant that she was subservient to the husband. The colonial Zimbabwean society was dominated by both customary law and colonial law that further kept women in subordinate positions. In post-Independence Zimbabwe, there has been a major shift in the status of women through the adoption of international and regional conventions, as well as the laws that have been passed by the new government in order to increase the visibility of women in the public sphere. Still, the 1980 constitution did not do much to challenge the unequal gendered power relations between men and women as it did not prohibit customary law from the constitutional prohibition against discrimination.

Therefore, tracing the different legacies helps us to understand who and what influenced and contributed to shaping the status of women in Zimbabwe. We now turn to a discussion on the status of women in pre-colonial Zimbabwe.

7.2.1 The status of women in pre-colonial Zimbabwe

Historically, culture, tradition, and patriarchy have played an important role in defining the roles and responsibilities of men and women in many parts of Africa, including Zimbabwe. Zimbabwean society is generally very patriarchal, meaning that the social status of women and men is largely determined by cultural practices which promote male superiority (Vengesai, 2019). Cultural practices often promote male domination in the household, sexual and reproductive decision-making, as well as access to and control of productive resources (Montgomery *et al.*, 2012). In pre-colonial Zimbabwe, family generally referred to a wide kinship network of extended family units which played a large role in shaping their lives and caring for each other. Within the family, the oldest male (usually the father) was the patriarch and head of the household while the brother or the male child was regarded as the second father (Evason, 2019).

One strand of literature focuses on ‘bride price’, also called *lobola/roora* as an important aspect that determined and shaped women’s roles and responsibilities in the family. Among the Shona and Ndebele speaking tribes in Zimbabwe men paid *lobola/roora* (bride price) to their bride’s parents. Payment of the bride price gave husbands legal control of their wives, children, and labour (Montgomery *et al.*, 2012; Siedman, 1984). The wife and children were considered the husband’s property (Montgomery *et al.*, 2012). Chitsike (2000) argues that husbands had the right to own their wives through *lobola* paid to the bride’s parents. The exercising of patriarchy, as well as the payment of bride price reinforced the unequal gender relations between men and women in the traditional family structure. Women were expected to be respectful and obedient to their husbands – it was a taboo for a wife to challenge or disagree with her husband’s views or decisions.

According to various scholars, bride price is the biggest obstacle that hinders the attainment of equality between men and women in the household. Mubaiwa (2019), states that bride price is a representation of unequal gender relations because, according to men, bride price implies that ‘I paid for you so we cannot be equal’. Montgomery *et al.* (2012) argue that traditional practices such as the payment of bride price reinforced

the notion of women's subordination to the male head of the household. Thus, it became the foundation of the oppression of women within the households. Women were confined to reproductive and care roles, traditionally defined as 'female roles', so that they were left with little to no amount of time to focus on other aspects such as economic and political participation as these were reserved for males.

According to Hindin (2000), before colonization women were allocated a plot of land for food production, which reinforced women's role as subsistence workers and food producers. "Through food production, women played an essential role as providers in the family, and surplus produce was used to improve the family's economic standing" (Hindin, 2000: 259). Boserup (1989) confirms Hindin's (2000) findings, stating that women were inclined to work in the fields, and that, in most African societies, all agricultural work was done by women and their children. One of the most important roles of women in pre-colonial Zimbabwe was to provide labour and to serve males/husbands and their families. The women worked in the land but had no direct access or control over it – it belonged to the husband. These are some of the cultural practices that further reinforced women's subordination in the family.

Other studies highlighted the difficulties women faced in obtaining the resources they needed as a result of the traditional structure of the Zimbabwean family. Scholars have attributed women's deprivation of access to and control over resources and family property to the payment of bride price, or *lobola/roora*. This is because all property on that land, livestock included, belonged to their husbands, fathers, or male relatives. Although these women had no right to access land, they could invest in livestock (Cheater, 1986). In the light of this, one would argue what use it would be for women to invest in livestock without having the means to own land? On the other hand, Seidman (1984) notes that some scholars have argued that women and men were equal in the traditional society because access to communally held land gave everyone equal status. However, this argument is a romantic view of the past that completely ignored the reality of the traditional society and male domination (*ibid.*).

Another strand of literature highlights the lack of control women had over their bodies, their sexual and reproductive decision-making. When it came to sexual and reproductive decision-making, husbands were socialized to believe that they controlled the number of children their wives should have (Njovana & Watts, 1996). Once a

woman was married in the traditional African society, her subordinate status did not permit her to control her own fertility (Boserup, 1989). Furthermore, in many African family structures the parents felt the pressure to maximize family size as being a father or a mother of a large family gave them higher status in the community (Boserup, 1989). The increased number of children (family size) also meant that the husband had sufficient labour force in many forms such as agriculture, animal husbandry, and domestic work, as well as for the gathering and transporting of food, water, and firewood.

According to Seidman (1984), pre-colonial Zimbabwean society had a strong impact on culture and tradition which is still relevant in present-day Zimbabwe, especially with respect to family and personal relationships. With regards to marriage, men were allowed to marry other women (polygamy); if a woman's husband died, the husband's family would practise 'wife inheritance' where the brother of the deceased husband or male relative would be expected to provide for his wife. Polygamous marriages in traditional society was a sign of economic wealth. The bride price was normally paid using cattle, and the more a man acquired cattle in his kraal the wealthier he was considered to be, and this gave him the leeway to marry many wives. Even in a polygamous marriage, the practice of bride price gave husbands legal control over their wives and children, and their wives' and children's labour. So, in Cheater's (1986: 66) words, women in the pre-colonial Zimbabwe were regarded as an "equivalent to the class of labour in industrial systems of production". This class equivalence helps to explain the traditional gendered division of labour with women as food producers and reproducers while men exercised control over the family.

Pre-colonial Zimbabwean society systematically excluded women from political participation such as in chieftainships and in allocating land. This practice was reserved for males. Women took up family roles, such as the care of children and the elderly, as well as being the primary producers of food for family consumption. Chengu (2015) confirms that African women were responsible for the greatest invention for the well-being of humankind, namely food security. The senior female members, such as the 'aunts', would exercise authority over the junior females. For example, the aunts were responsible for giving advice to their brothers' daughters on their reproductive, and caregiving roles, as well as all other skills required in the household (Vengesai, 2019).

Despite their subordinate status in the household, some women held high and influential positions in the community and in politics as 'spirit mediums'. "Arguably the most interesting and ambiguous role of authority occupied by women during the pre-colonial period was that of a 'spirit-medium'" (Cheater 1986: 68). Women who were possessed by male spirits would relay the spirits' messages to the living. The most prominent example of famous women who were spirit mediums was Charwe, the medium of Nehanda, who was executed by the colonial administration in 1898 for her role in the death of a Native Commissioner during the first Chimurenga in Zimbabwe. Once a woman was said to be a spirit medium her roles within the household changed. The woman's reproductive roles would cease, and childcare would be conducted by the spirit medium's assistants (*ibid.*). Even though women were not permitted to participate politically, the women who possessed spirits were able to choose and validate a chief's successor. They would continue to exercise influence over the chiefs by virtue of being a spirit medium.

Cheater's (1986) article on the roles of women in pre-colonial Zimbabwe illustrates that women had a subordinate status with limited authority and control over economic and political participation. In some rural communities, women wielded political power without being spirit mediums. In the Mutasa district, spirit mediums also legitimized 'headwomen' and they wielded much political power in their jurisdictions. The headwomen were not permitted to get married and Bazeley (1940) described them as having loose morals. These incidences show that in minority areas such as the Mutasa district, political participation by women was an exception made for daughters of chiefs; however, women were generally excluded from political participation and decision making like this was reserved for the men.

Although there have been quite a few scholars (Beach, 1980; Chengu, 2015; Moyo & Kawewe, 2002) arguing that both men and women were equal in pre-colonial Zimbabwe, there is insufficient evidence to support this claim. The discussion in this section has shown through various incidences e.g. the payment of bride price and wife inheritance, the gender roles and gendered division of labour that indeed women occupied a lower status compared to men. Women's primary role was childbearing, childcare, and in providing labour for food production for subsistence purposes only. Decision-making, political participation and access to and control over land was

reserved for men only. Women occupied a subordinate position within the family, and even in the rural communities, with the exception of minority areas such as Mutasa and Umtali, where women who participated in politics were part of the leadership structures in rural local governance. We now turn to look at the status of women during Zimbabwe's colonial period.

7.2.2 The status of women in colonial Zimbabwe

This subsection focuses on the status of women in the family and community during Zimbabwe's colonial period. Colonial Zimbabwe was quite different from the society discussed above as this was the era when Zimbabwe was under British Settler Rule, 1890–1980. This period had different implications for the status of women in the family and community. Even Vengesai (2019) asserts that the status of women in colonial Zimbabwe entered a different phase from that of pre-colonial Zimbabwe. The British settler government reproduced the unequal gender relations by taking the traditional practices and codifying them so that they became more exploitative. The colonialists used these traditional practices to their advantage to control the African men and women. The colonial government marginalized women in various ways: waged labour for men (which in many instances caused family disintegration), the adoption of Christianity and masculine fundamentalism, and the phenomenon of the 'Victorian woman' – a woman confined to the domestic domain. This is one of the reasons why Oyewumi (1997) argues that that an analysis of gender relations in Africa needed to recognize how much those relations were not only produced, but also reproduced and reinforced by historical social formations such as slavery, colonialism, and Christian missionary.

The legislation created by the British colonial administration led to the disintegration of families. The introduction of waged labour affected women by uprooting men from villages to work in urban areas which had a profound negative economic impact on women (Chengu, 2015). "While men worked in towns or on white farms, black women remained in the overcrowded, eroded Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs), where they were responsible for feeding children, the aged and surviving from what they could scratch from the soil" (Seidman 1984: 423). Even then, women were not permitted to own land. They could only claim land under the Tribal Trust Land in the absence of a male. This was not much considering that the TTLs were overcrowded and the land was infertile.

This was similar to the status of women during pre-colonial Zimbabwe as Hindin (2000) had pointed out that, even before colonialism women could not own land, despite their role as food producers. Thus, colonialism further reinforced the subordinate status of women in access to and control over land during the colonial Zimbabwe era.

The colonial administration created pieces of legislation that took most of the fertile land from the black majority and reserved it for settlers. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and the Land Tenure Act (LTA) were used to regulate land. Under these laws, the settlers seized the best and biggest portions of land, while blacks were given the worst land in areas that were overpopulated (Mazur, 1991). This made it difficult for many women to produce food for their families. The colonial administration went further to create the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951, where land distributed to blacks was registered in the name of the father, husband, or male relatives. Further to that, the Native Land Husbandry Act 1951 reduced the land rights of widows and divorcees. Using dipping cards, even the livestock of the whole household was registered in the name of the husband or father. In doing this, the colonial administration continued to maintain unequal gendered relations between men and women. More so, these harsh legislations further reduced women's roles as producers and providers of food as this forced many of them to depend heavily on their fathers, husbands, and male relatives.

The British colonial administration intensified the traditional gender roles and unequal gender relations between men and women by emphasizing masculinity and the 'Victorian woman'. "Victorian ideas of female domesticity confined women to the private life of the household space" (Mubonderi & Rwodzi, 2015: 64). These ideas were reinforced by the kind of patriarchal missionary education that emphasized dignity and male guardianship over women in all spheres of life. The colonial administration in conjunction with missionary influence contributed to shaping the social order of Zimbabwe and the lower subordinate status of women. Moyo & Kawewe (2002) state that missionary education taught boys to be 'breadwinners' and heads of the household while the girls were taught that it was their duty to stay at home, cooking, cleaning, raising children and being respectful to their husbands. Even the education system for Africans in colonial Zimbabwe reinforced unequal gender relations and the traditional gendered roles that kept women in subordinate positions in the family. The colonial

education system prepared boys for the ‘public sphere’, and girls as mothers and wives confined to the ‘private sphere’.

In terms of inheritance and property after the death of a husband, the colonial administration followed customary practices where the widow would be inherited by the late husband’s male relatives (i.e. older or younger brothers). This again reveals that women had no say about their life and property inheritance after the death of a spouse. The widow would be asked which of her late husband’s male relatives she preferred to stay with, while the property and estate would have been distributed through the Native Wills Act which favoured men. Thus, the colonial administration did not alter the customary inheritance of men in the family (Vengesai, 2019). Even in the absence of a will, the inheritance and estate would be determined by customary law which regarded women as minors (*ibid.*). An example of this scenario is the case submitted to the court of Dokotera versus The Master of the High Court: Mr Dokotera was married and formally employed, and jointly purchased a farm with his wife. He continued with his formal employment while his wife managed the farm. At the time of his death, his widow received gratuity and immovable property, while the farm was given to the late Dokotera’s brother who then passed the farm to his son as he had another farm (Cheater, 1986).

This case in point above shows that women were hardly considered as landowners in their own right, despite their contribution in the production of food. In further keeping women subordinated, the colonial administration never permitted them (women) to present a case in court – they had to be represented by senior male relatives or husbands if they were married. For instance, in Dokotera vs. The Master of the High Court, Dokotera’s widow was represented by her father. Men were regarded as guardians and women as minors – the colonial system buttressed the idea that women had to be fully dependent on their fathers, husbands, and male relatives. Even after two appeals made to the High Court, Dokotera’s widow did not get the farm. The colonial judiciary system maintained that the farm had to be given to the deceased’s brother. Notably, the customary courts were also dominated by men and not women. Laws were enforced by men, and the courts predominantly staffed by men who knew and were familiar with traditional customs and norms (Ndulo, 2011). This was an advantage for men as they were inclined to defend traditional patriarchal customs which favoured men at the

expense of women. Thus, women did not have a ‘voice’, either in customary or in colonial law.

Even during the years leading to Zimbabwe’s liberation struggle against colonial rule, women’s roles hardly changed. Women in the rural areas were responsible for growing food, cooking, carrying, and delivering supplies to the guerrillas while men attended military training. Seidman (1986) gives a good example of this scenario in an article where he tells of a man called George Rutanhire who attended military training while his wife Susan carried and delivered arms on her head from Tanzania to the banks of Zambezi. Though women eventually joined in military training, gender relations between men and women remained the same.

7.2.3 The status of women in post-independence Zimbabwe

Having discussed the status of women in pre-colonial and colonial Zimbabwe, we now look at the status of women in post-independence Zimbabwe. As highlighted in Chapter 5 (the analysis of the State), soon after Zimbabwe gained independence in April 1980, the new ZANU–PF government was faced with so much pressure to change the status quo for Africans. Ranchod-Nilsson (2006) and Seidman (1984) emphasizes that many women who had joined the liberation struggle had high hopes that the socio-economic issues affecting women such as access to education, labour force participation, and unequal gender relations would be addressed by the new government. In the same vein, there were expectations of change and, during the first years following independence, the political climate was ripe for major legislative initiatives for men and women regarding family and personal status (Riphenburg, 1997). While access to resources, education, and employment were important, addressing unequal gender relations between men and women was the most important issue that the majority of women in Zimbabwe were hoping for. “In the first year of independence, ZANU leaders regularly mentioned the need to challenge attitudes and institutions that kept women subordinate” (Seidman, 1984: 430).

This section will focus more on the social changes than the legal/policy changes in increasing women’s visibility and in promoting gender equality as the latter have been discussed in depth in Chapter 5. Social changes refer to the changes and transformation that occur within society’s attitudes, behaviours, and norms over time (as seen with Tongogara’s reflection on women below). On the other hand, legal or policy changes

pertain to modifications made to laws, regulations, and government policies. Law (2020: 253) asserts:

In 1979 as the Lancaster House negotiations were under way Josiah Tongogara, a prominent ZANLA commander, reflected on the position of women in the post-colonial dispensation. There must be a change to some extent: under the old Zimbabwean system the man, as the hunter, held the gun. In the struggle, men and women participated equally; both held guns and some women were promoted to high ranks. We can't push them out.

Tongogara's reflections reveal a shift in societal attitudes regarding the traditional gendered roles of women from the old Zimbabwean system to the new one. He emphasizes that there needs to be a transformation from the old Zimbabwean system to a new one, as women too contributed equally as soldiers and high-ranking officers during Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. Tongogara's reflections revealed the beginning of social change especially in traditional gendered roles.

During the first years of Zimbabwe's independence, the State through the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender was more concerned with challenging the unequal gender/power relations that existed between men and women. The ministry also sought to confront social institutions that viewed women as 'minors' and childbearing objects (Seidman, 1984). This view is congruent with remarks by Ranchod-Nilson (2006) (see Chapter 5: processes of the NGP's development) who highlighted that the women who had fought in the liberation struggle and those who remained were concerned more about the State's commitment to challenging the unequal gender relations that existed between men and women. This suggested that the Ministry was taking women's concerns into consideration and thus moving in the right direction in terms of disrupting customary and colonial beliefs that women were in a lower position than men. The State, through the Ministry, was committed to transforming women's subordinate position by attempting to reverse the perverse social relations that were produced and reinforced during the pre-colonial to the colonial society (Toro, 2016).

Despite the Ministry's efforts to challenge the unequal gender relations between men and women, it faced opposition from men within the government. This opposition led to continuous changes in the Ministry's programs which aimed at providing women with equal access to education, employment, property, and material resources. It seemed the new government wanted to maintain the status quo of patriarchy and male

supremacy within the private sphere. That is why the government never abolished customary law. In a bid to abolish payment of bride price, the Ministry was again challenged and they had to retract as the male government officials argued that payment of bride price was part of national heritage and an essential element of stable social relations (Seidman, 1984). Even after independence, the government of Zimbabwe reinforced the traditional family structure of male headed households as an ideal family model where the male had the ultimate decision-making role and right in the family.

The new government also introduced a ‘universal education’ at independence where no one would be discriminated against in terms of race, sex, and ethnicity. Kanyongo (2005) points out that most governments of developing countries transformed their education systems to align with new government goals, and Zimbabwe was one such country. The government of Zimbabwe adopted a socialist principle: Growth with Equity for all – to redress the inequalities in access to education. And so, education was declared a basic human right. “The proportion of female students in primary schools in 1980 was 47.6% compared to 52.4% males” (Kanyongo, 2005: 70). Although the percentages did not reflect equity, it shows that the number of girls enrolling in primary schools was increasing. The progress here shows the shift in societal attitudes towards girls’ access to education.

According to Gudhlanga (2013), Zimbabwe’s independence ushered in a new era for women’s political participation. “Women had participated together with men during the liberation struggle and through this they had re-negotiated their roles and statuses” (*ibid*: 157). At independence this translated into having women, particularly those who had participated in the liberation struggle included in parliament and in cabinet (*ibid*; Manyeruke, 2018). Prominent women such as the late Jane Ngwenya, Ruth Chinamano and Joyce Mujuru were appointed as cabinet ministers and members of parliament (Manyeruke, 2018). This shows that the government of Zimbabwe promoted women’s participation in politics and decision-making. It also shows that the ZANU–PF government was compliant with international and regional treaties and protocols on promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment, as discussed in Chapter five regarding the processes of the development of the NGP within and outside the State.

The Economic Structural Adjustment Programs (ESAP) implemented in 1991 also had negative implications for the status of women in the family and community in post-

independence Zimbabwe. ESAP was adopted as a strategy to stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty (Riphenburg, 1997), but it increased the marginalization of women and reduced their bargaining power in the household. “Some females stated that the ESAP had affected women much more than men because when situations became difficult men left women to care for the family alone” (*ibid*: 39). Apart from women being the primary carers of children and family in general, women faced a lot of economic hardships as they had to seek employment or venture into small businesses to provide for the family. As outlined in Chapter 6, ESAP strained most families as the ‘breadwinners’, i.e. fathers, brothers, and husbands, were faced with job losses and retrenchments. They returned to their family homes in the rural areas with no income and that became a double burden on women. All the while, the contributions that women continued to make in the domestic sphere remained unpaid and undervalued because of their low subordinate status.

The government continued to create more policies and to make amendments to legislation in order to increase the visibility and status of women and to ensure the promotion of gender equality. In 2013 a second NGP was launched to address the gaps left by the first NGP. However, many of these policies and administrative amendments addressed the economic structural gender inequalities in access to and control of productive resources. The primary data presented in Chapters 5 and 6 indicate that, even after the introduction of the 2013 Constitution of Zimbabwe and the progress in promoting WEE and gender equality in Zimbabwe, the State still overlooks the structural factors that keep women in subordinate positions such as the unequal gender relations that exist between men and women. Similar to the 1980 constitution that was adopted at independence, the 2013 constitution too exempted customary law from the prohibition of sociocultural practices that kept women in a lower position than men, such as unpaid care work, and unequal gender power relations that continued to exist between men and women.

In the SRA, Kabeer (1994) stipulates that social relations may change over time, they do not remain the same, but, in the Zimbabwean context, political elites contributed to the subordinate status of women by maintaining patriarchy and male domination (Riphenburg, 1997).

The sections above have revealed the status of women under three different phases in Zimbabwe. The difficult issue that stands out in all of them is in the continuous reproduction and reinforcement of unequal gender/power relations between men and women which have kept women subordinated. We now turn to the analysis of empirical evidence on the status of women in the family and community in the Bubi and Gwanda districts before and after women received support from the State. This is to understand whether the State's empowerment programs have managed to change the women miners' position in the family and community or not. Having discussed the status of women under three different legacies in Zimbabwe, the difficult issue that still stands out, is the production, reproduction and reinforcement of social inequalities that have kept women in subordinate positions.

7.3 Status of women in the household and community in the Bubi and Gwanda districts

This section presents empirical evidence on the position of women in the family and community in Bubi and Gwanda's rural districts. The section is divided into two subsections that analyse women's status before and after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. This will show how the families and communities in Bubi and Gwanda interact with the policy's empowerment programs in either challenging or reinforcing the structural social inequalities that determine women's subordinate position.

7.3.1 The status of women miners in the household before receiving State support

This section presents empirical evidence of women miners' experiences within the household before receiving State support: their living conditions, their position in the household before receiving support from the State under the NGP, how they managed their family life, unpaid care work, and income. This enables an analysis of the extent to which there were changes in women's status in the household and community after the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda had received support from the State.

Household welfare

During interviews, women miners from socioeconomically vulnerable households in Bubi and Gwanda reported that they struggled to provide food and education for their children and that they were barely making ends meet. A total of eight women miners in Bubi (beneficiaries), including four members of Mthandazo women miners in Gwanda stated:

I was not able to contribute to household expenses such as school fees for my children, food and clothing, because I was not getting enough profits from the mining activities.

- Female Miner GM 03

With the little money I was getting from my work I was not able to contribute towards food, upkeep, and medical needs for my children.

- Female Miner 2B 05

Even though I was mining, the profits I would get could not sustain myself and my children.

- Female Miner 2B 03

As a woman I was facing a lot of challenges because I did not have adequate money to make sure that there is enough food, and even medical expenses to say even in the event any of us are unwell we can go to the hospital, clinic or buy medication it was quite a challenge. And worse, that burden of taking care of the household is mine.

- Female Miner GM 09

Based on the above, it is clear that the women miners from socioeconomically vulnerable backgrounds were faced with financial challenges prior to receiving support from the State. Even though they had been engaged in mining, the financial challenges made it difficult for them to provide basic necessities for their household, like food, school fees and medical expenses in the event that they, or anyone in their family, fell ill. It is also worth noting that the burden of providing for the household appeared to

fall disproportionately on the women as pointed out by female miner GM 09. Meanwhile, three married women with employed spouses pointed out that, despite their husbands' employment in various economic activities such as farming and small businesses in and outside the district, they still continued to encounter challenges in providing food and other basic needs for their households.

Waiting for my husband who would sometimes come back home from working at the farms with no money in sight was quite disturbing for me considering we have four children.

- Female Miner 2B 05

Other women miners from Gwanda also reported:

My husband would just leave the house silently going to his work in a different ward from our homestead. When he would come back from work after a week, I would be expecting that he has some money at least for us to buy food and other things that we need but all I would get is excuses and that he used the money for what I don't know. So, the burden fell on me to then try and provide basics for the house. My children have to eat, you see.

- Female Miner GM 08

It has been challenging because as women we are told to take care of our families. That means that we have to feed, clothe, and take care of our children even when they fall ill. You see with the farming done by my husband the rains have not been reliable enough like before where he would sell grain to the Grain Marketing Board and cover other expenses but now it's a difficult.

- Female Miner GM 02

The findings suggest that the women miners and their husbands were struggling financially to provide for their families within the household. The view expressed by female miner 2B 05 also suggests that her husband's work on the farms was unstable with him coming home with no money at all. Overall, the evidence from both of these women also implies that additional pressure is exerted on women to provide for the family. These findings could also be interpreted as an example of the 'feminisation of

poverty’, which refers to the disproportionate number of women who experience poverty compared to men. As highlighted in Chapter 2, women are more likely to be the primary caregivers for children and elderly family members, and may face challenges related to unequal pay, limited access to job opportunities and systemic barriers that hinder their ability to achieve financial stability. The statements made by the women miners also suggested that the responsibility of childcare and welfare fell to them.

Earlier on in this section we highlighted that the findings indicated that the burden of providing for the household falls disproportionately on the women. This is an example of how gendered roles are reinforced which then negatively impact on economic outcomes for women. “Decisions about who does what within the household are not simply logical manifestations of household needs, but rather, reflect and reinforce the broader organization of society around assumptions of gender” (Davies & Carrier, 1999: 36). In rural societies, taking care of housework, food production, and childcare is part of what they believe women and men should do despite their capabilities outside the household. In most African societies, women are obligated to feed men and their children while men have no obligation to do so (Boserup, 1989). The men are the major decision-makers in the family, while food production for the family is left to the women. The burden falls disproportionately on women, compared to men, to continuously put their time and energy towards unpaid care work to ensure that their families are well taken care of.

Despite the contribution that women continue to make towards the well-being of their families, they still maintain a lower position in the household than men. The same is echoed by Acker (1992) who argues that the family is the only institution where women have a central role to play, yet they still retain a subordinate status. This also emanates from the unequal gender relations that exist between men and women. As cited earlier on in this chapter, women were not even allowed to speak in courts – their fathers, spouses or male relatives would speak on their behalf. Due to these unequal gender relations, women have been reliant on their fathers, husbands, and male relatives, resulting in a lack of agency. While some scholars (Kabeer, 1994; March *et al.*, 1999) argue that culture and social relations can change, it may take time to challenge the informal rules that perpetuate women’s subordinate status in the family. Again, this

another reflection on how the findings are linked with a certain aspect of African feminism, where the crumbs of colonialism, patriarchy and cultural norms further reproduce and reinforce women's subordinate position. African feminists therefore, argue that such elements need to be disrupted to change the status of women.

The issue of men not contributing to household welfare also affected the married women miners who were not beneficiaries of the NGP's empowerment programs in Bubi. During a focus group discussion, three out of the seven women miners highlighted that their husbands spent their money with 'girlfriends' and had since stopped giving them money for the household. Therefore, despite the fact that some of their husbands were in paid employment in the district, this situation forced some of these women to take up small-scale gold mining so as to provide for the family.

My husband was preoccupied with 'small houses' girlfriends that he forgot about our family. This is what made me take up small-scale gold mining and I became a miner.

- Female Miner B 01FGD

The reason for me to venture into small-scale gold mining, was the challenges that I was facing at home. My husband was no longer giving me money for our expenses at home. This encouraged me to start working in the mines, I had seen other women that started before me really doing well for themselves and their families.

- Female Miner B03 FGD

The reason I started mining is my husband would go and work for other people in their mines, and he would get his salary and spend it by himself. With mining there is no fixed amount on what you would be paid, my husband would bring US\$1 and say that is what he was paid after processing the ore.

- Female Miner B 06 FGD

These women were motivated to take up small-scale mining activities because their husbands were not fulfilling their responsibilities as the 'primary breadwinners' in the household. For instance, female miner B 06 FGD highlights that, although her husband

would go and work in the mines, he would not bring any money home. At times, he would bring US\$1 with which, in Zimbabwe currently, one can buy a loaf of bread or two bunches of spinach. The pattern seems to be the same with the married women who are beneficiaries of State support, as described earlier (female miners 2B 05 and GM 08). These women indicated that, despite their husbands working and engaging in various economic activities, they still failed to contribute income towards household welfare. The statement by female miner B 01 FGD, also implied that she felt neglected by her husband due to his preoccupation with ‘girlfriends’, and that this led her to take up small-scale gold mining so that she could be able to provide for her family. Overall, the women saw that engaging in small-scale gold mining activities would eventually help them “*break out of poverty than relying on their husbands*” (Female Miner B01 FGD). So, the women miners realized that engaging in small-scale gold mining would help them earn an income with which to provide for their children and would gain them a sense of independence.

The findings above confirm the notion by Boserup (1989) that many men do not feel obliged to support women and children. Husbands’ spending money with their girlfriends is an issue of concern because married women are humiliated by their husbands’ philandering with girlfriends (Goebel, 2002). Money becomes the major concern as highlighted by female miner B 01 FGD. Girlfriends pose an immediate threat to the family budget. Some interviews with married women conducted in Goebel’s study (2002) also indicated that their husbands would spend money recklessly on girlfriends, money that was needed to help manage the household. Another study by Ranchod-Nilsson (1992) revealed that in the Wedza district in Zimbabwe, the major problem some married women faced, was errant husbands who withheld funds for food and school fees while taking second wives out and spending it on them at the local bars. It is clear, therefore, that women’s dependence on their husbands’ income embodies their lower subordinate position in the household.

The findings from the married women in Bubi and Gwanda also bring out the unequal gender and power relations that exist between men and women in controlling the income earned. While societal norms are reinforced for women to fulfil their roles by carrying the burden of caregiving and household responsibilities, the societal norms for men to be the primary breadwinners is rather slanted. While the men/husbands are in

paid employment and are paid for the work they do, Marxist and socialist feminism (Chapter 3) reminds us that capitalism and patriarchy have never considered women as producers and contributors, regardless of their contribution in the domestic sphere. They were still regarded as welfare cases, reproducers, and carers. Cheater (1986) explains that the amount of work conducted by women in the household is equivalent to the class of labour in the industrial systems of production. However, these women's decision to take up small-scale gold mining is another way in which they exercised their agency to participate in economic opportunities and earn an income for themselves and their families. This could also be seen as a form of resistance to gender-based inequality and power imbalance in the family and society at large.

Household decision-making

The study also found that some of the married women miners in Bubi and Gwanda had to seek approval from their husbands first before they could venture into small-scale gold mining activities. This paints a picture of household power imbalance where one partner, usually the male, dominates in household decision-making.

When I asked my husband to go out like other women and venture into gold mining he was a bit sceptic, he didn't want me to be associated with mining saying that it was not a place for a married woman, I pleaded with and made him see that there was a lot more that we could achieve when both of us are earning income.

- Female Miner GM 01

Our living conditions were not good, and my husband was not making enough money to sustain us. So, I asked him if I could join other women who were venturing into mining because I had seen that these women were making it.

- Female Miner 1B 03

My husband who is a cross border driver hadn't worked in a while because of his illness (diabetes) so I had to seat down with him, to discuss the way forward for our lives and the future of our children. That is when he agreed that I can

also start mining because I had told him that I had seen other women that were working in the mines and they were doing quite well for themselves.

- Female Miner B 05

The findings above show the power imbalances within the household. The women miners are seen here pleading with their husbands so that they would allow them to participate in small-scale gold mining. Female miner GM 01 appears to have been facing resistance from her husband when she suggested that she also engaged in small-scale gold mining. Her husband appears to maintain the belief that mining was not a suitable occupation for a married woman, and he was therefore hesitant to allow her to participate. Despite the husband's resistance, the female miner convinced him that they could achieve greater financial stability if both of them were income earners. Overall, the views expressed by the female miners above indicate that they had an interest in participating in economic activities and contributing to the household despite the social norms that inhibited economic opportunities for women. The views from the married female miners also indicate the challenges that women face in pursuing non-traditional jobs, and the way they need to bargain in household decision making.

The evidence also portrays that the marital status of a woman comes with a complex interplay of power and cultural dynamics. While being a married woman entitles them to a certain degree of power and status among other women, specifically single women, there are some setbacks to being married as shown in the responses from the married women miners above. Kambarami (2006) emphasises that the relationship between men and women is one of male domination and female subordination. However, the fact that the women miners were able to persuade their husbands to support their decisions to participate in small-scale gold mining also shows that gender roles in the household are not fixed and can be negotiated.

The single mothers and widowed women, on the other hand, did not have to seek approval to venture into small-scale gold mining. Their family responsibility was one of the major reasons that motivated them to make decisions that would eventually change their lives for the better. This is what they had to say:

I am a single mother with five children, so with one salary I saw that I was unable to cater for my children. My children need to eat, they go to school, I

also have to buy clothes for them. At school, I would want to get the best education for them, so it means taking them to boarding schools. So, with one salary you cannot manage looking after five children. So, venturing into mining was a better option than other enterprises such as vending.

- Female Miner B 02 FGD

My husband passed away a few years ago and it hasn't been an easy journey. We had just started building our home then he died just like that. I now had to start looking for opportunities to look after myself and our children because even my husband's family was not assisting us financially. I took it upon myself to also go into small-scale gold mining as a way to support myself and my children.

- Female Miner G 08

Being a single mother of four children is very hard considering that I had two roles of playing the father and the mother at the same time. Sometimes it was difficult to feed, clothe and educate my children, which is why I decided to join Mthandazo women's association because I wanted to do something that would give me money and improve myself and my children.

- Female Miner GM 04

As shown above, the single and widowed mothers are in a better position in the household in terms of decision-making and autonomy than the married women who had to seek approval from their husbands. However, the evidence above also shows the pressures that single and widowed women face in ensuring the wellbeing of their families. Female miner B 02 FGD also pointed out that mining was a far better option than other enterprises such as trading. This could be due to the potential of higher earnings from selling gold, as well as the availability of mining opportunities for women in the district. The findings also reflect on the difficult decisions that these women have to make in order to provide for their families, and the importance of having access to a range of economic opportunities.

Unpaid care work

In Chapters 2 and 5, we learned that unpaid care work was a hindrance to women's economic empowerment as most of their time is taken up by household responsibilities. This is also one of the aspects that have kept women in subordinate positions in the household. The majority of the women miners (single, married, widowed, and divorced) expressed that it was a challenge to manage their childcare duties with their small-scale gold mining activities. They described that in mining one needed to be present and spend long hours at the sites to monitor all processes from digging to processing ore, as well as the selling of the gold to the buyer. Such an environment, however, is not one suitable for children.

It is a challenge as I have children at primary school going age, especially when they are on holiday it means that I have to be home full time but with mining once you do that you lose out and that's when people start stealing from you.

- Female Miner 2B 02

I would take my daughter with me because I was breastfeeding, while the other two children I would ask my neighbour to look after them. Once you are absent at the mines the workers there take advantage. We have to be there from morning to evenings to monitor what is going on.

- Female Miner B 06 FGD

I could not afford to get anyone to help me with my children, I have two primary school going children, but they are still young, grade 1 and 3 and my small baby who is 10months old. As a woman I really want the best for my children but now I have to take the baby with me to the mines while the other two go to school. Once they dismiss from school, I also have to make sure that I dismiss early from work to wash uniforms, assist with homework, cook, and just ensure that they are ready for the next day. I lose out because now, I won't be knowing what is happening at the mine. Although I call my team to check on the progress you never know if they are being honest or not.

- Female Miner G 05

The evidence above indicates the challenges women miners face in balancing their roles as caregivers and miners. Female miners B 06 FGD and G 05 pointed out that they are forced to take their small children to the mines for breastfeeding which also reflects the limited options available for them in terms of childcare services. The women also pointed out the risks associated with being absent from the mines as some of the workers might take advantage of their absence which in terms of theft or other forms of exploitation. The findings underscore the complex challenges that women face in combining their roles as caregivers and miners/income earners, as well as the importance of support networks and safe work environments. This highlights the need for policies and development programs to address the specific needs of women in the mining sector, including access to childcare and protection against exploitation and harassment.

In Zimbabwe there are some sayings/proverbs that reinforce the gendered division of labour and the heavy labour burden for women (Samman, 2018: 8): “*Umama oqotho ubonakala ngokwenza imisebenzi yangekhaya*” – For one to be called a good woman she should be hard working and do all the care and domestic work. “*Mukadzi chaiye haazorori*” – A respectable woman does not rest; she is always working. Despite women’s double burden, such statements continue to shape and reinforce women’s labour burden and subordinate status in the household. A component of the WEE literature discussed in Chapter 2 pointed out the tensions in women’s dual roles as caregivers and income earners (Folbre, 2010). Women endure a double burden of labour: unpaid labour in the household such as childcare, cooking, cleaning, and washing; as well as paid labour in the form of outside employment and income generating projects. Though these women are income earners through their small-scale gold mining activities, their contribution in unpaid care work still goes unnoticed in the name of traditional gendered roles. A study conducted by Samman (2018) in understanding gender norms and the gendered division of labour in Zimbabwe found that women’s engagement in farming and other income generating projects added to their workload, and despite the double labour burden they experienced, this was often not acknowledged within their households.

Other women miners seemed to be managing their dual role as caregivers and income earners by asking their relatives to assist with household responsibilities. This is a

strategy that women have come to use in order to have a balance between mining and household duties.

I have managed to get one of our relatives to come and assist with the household responsibilities while I'm at the mine.

- Female Miner B 10

Unity within the family assists me especially with looking after my younger children who are in primary school. Some of our relatives have come to stay with us, to assist with domestic chores, looking after my children while I'm at the mines.

- Female Miner G 03

I have been staying with my niece who is in her mid-20s. She is the one that has been helping me with looking after the children while I'm at the mine. She also does the cleaning and cooking. During the weekends I try by all means to be at home to spend some time with my children.

- Female Miner GM 03

Extended family units comprising multiple generations are still visible in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. The empirical evidence presented here emphasizes the collective nature of culture and the approach to parenting. These extended family networks are still very close and important in one's life (Evason, 2019). They play an important role in raising and caring for children, especially in the rural areas. The views above also symbolize the social differences between women miners and their relatives. It shows the social relations that exist within a household: while there are unequal gender and power relations between men and women in the family, the same is true for women staying with their relatives or extended family as they (women miners) have more authority over their family members. In Zimbabwe, a woman may have more authority over family members in the household who are not their husbands. In spite of these social differences, women miners are still obliged to make time from their paid work to take care of their children and other household duties.

Having presented primary data on the status of women miners in the household, it is clear from the findings that women still hold a subordinate position in the household as evidenced by the discussions on unpaid care work, decision-making and household welfare. The traditional gendered roles are still reproduced and reinforced despite the fact that these women are also engaged in small-scale gold mining activities. This is despite the fact that Zimbabwe is a signatory of regional and international treaties and protocols on gender equality and women's rights. Legislation on women's rights and gender equality seems to be more applicable to the public sphere than it does to the domestic sphere.

Furthermore, customary law continues to be an institution which embodies and reproduces patriarchy, and this is still a very integral part of Zimbabwean culture and heritage. This is why Riphenburg (1997) argues that the passing of new laws alone is insufficient to remove all forms of discrimination against women and to upgrade their social and economic status. Chitsike (2000) also points out that, during a workshop in Lupane (Matabeleland North Province), rural women complained that they could not be assertive with men or their husbands because 'culture' did not allow them. The legacy of patriarchy, power and male dominance has always been an important aspect of gender relations in Zimbabwe, even still today (Hindin, 2000). The empirical evidence from the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda clearly shows that women still maintain a lower subordinate position to men in their households despite their contribution as the 'household managers' and income earners providing money for food, medical care and education.

We now turn to a discussion and analysis of empirical data on the status of women in the household and community after some women miners in Bubi and Gwanda had received support from the State through the implementation of the NGP.

7.3.2 The household and community after women miners received State support

In Chapters 5 and 6, we discussed the challenges that women miners experienced in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector, e.g. lack of access to credit, training, and inaccessible markets. To curb these challenges the State, through the National Gender Policy, implemented women's empowerment projects that included access to credit and equipment for women in the Bubi district while the Mthandazo women in Gwanda district received skills and business training, and a women's gold service centre with

equipment. This type of support transformed the women miners' position in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector as they were acknowledged as miners as well as sponsors in their own right. While this type of support worked towards challenging gender inequalities in the labour market such as access to credit, equipment, business and skills training, we now analyse how the NGP interacted with the community and household in transforming women's position using the indicators used in the previous section: household welfare, decision-making and unpaid care work.

Women's position in the community

It was highlighted earlier on that the family/household and communities in Zimbabwe, have perpetuated cultural norms that women are subservient to men. These norms portray women as the weaker sex to men and have shaped women's roles and responsibilities accordingly in the family and community. They represent the underlying unequal gender and power relations that hinder women's agency (Overseas Development Institute, 2015). The majority of the women miners who benefited from the policy's empowerment programs in Bubi and Gwanda expressed that they had seen some changes in terms of their position in the community after they received support from the State:

It is slow progress, but our community is now coming to terms with the fact that women are now standing up and taking up positions in the mining sector. I have been approached by some women who also want to apply for funding from the ministry so it's good because they come to me for advice.

- Female Miner 1B 01

In my community, there have been some changes because even during meetings where we are preparing for ward ceremonies or some commemorations. I am able to speak without being judged. I have also worked with other women in mining here to donate some maize meal to the orphans and elderly and our local leaders have acknowledged that because they talk about the work we are doing in the community.

- Female Miner 2B 03

There is a certain advantage that comes with being a beneficiary of a government empowerment program in the community. We are respected and consulted especially when there are community events, and when there are other business-related events such as the Gwanda Show we are also called.

- Female Miner GM 06

In the community too, women and youth look up to us with much respect because we have broken down some barriers, especially in the mining sector.

- Female Miner GM 02

As a result of the NGP's empowerment programs, women miners (beneficiaries) have become more assertive and the policy's programs have increased women's visibility as miners not only in the ASGM sector (as described in Chapter 6) but also in their respective communities. The statements given by the beneficiaries from Bubi and Gwanda indicates that empowering women with necessary tools – be it finance, equipment or skills training – enables them to be more assertive and to have a voice. This means that women are able to confidently voice their concerns and contribute during community meetings without fear of culture or judgement. This is unlike the view given by Chitsike (2000) in the previous section where she highlighted that one of the women in a workshop in Lupane, Matabeleland North Province, pointed out that they could not be assertive because culture did not permit them. Furthermore, the NGP's empowerment programs interacted with the community in recognizing the beneficiaries as miners and not as primary caregivers based on the traditional gendered roles. These women now enjoyed a sense of respect and dignity from the community because of their work in the ASGM sector through the NGP's empowerment programs.

The NGP as a State institution interacts with the rural communities of Bubi and Gwanda as informal institutions in challenging the social and cultural norms that have for some time influenced women's subordinate position in the community. As mentioned by female miner GM 06, the Mthandazo women miners are now consulted and they contribute to business related events like the Gwanda show. This is a large-scale event where individuals come and showcase their different agricultural, mining, tourism, and other business-related products and services. These shows are usually attended by government ministers, heads of government departments, international and local NGOs,

private sector, investors (local and international) and individuals from all Zimbabwe and other countries. This opens further opportunities for local businesses, women entrepreneurs, and miners to networking and development in their communities. Findings in Chapter 6 indicated that the Mthandazo women's association exhibited political connections. Consequently, it is important to recognize that the community's perception of the Mthandazo women miners may not be representative of other women in the community. Furthermore, their contributions may appear to advocate for women's interests, but they might also be driven by personal interests.

Similar views of increased women's visibility and having a voice were also cited by the male miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts:

When it comes to community meetings these women are now confidently voicing out their concerns.

- Male Miner B 07

We are definitely seeing some positive changes in the community because Mthandazo women are making a difference in the community and it is showing. In meetings women now have a platform to voice out their concerns whether it is during community engagements or other meetings like mining forums, community businesses, and even in social corporate responsibility we see these women doing more community outreach.

- Male Miner G 02

The Mthandazo women are making their mark in mining and community development. I have seen them assisting other women who are keen on venturing into small-scale gold mining. I have also witnessed them making some donations to schools and even government offices. In community gatherings and celebrations, they are also present and are confident enough to speak during meetings.

- Male Miner G 17

There have been some changes within the community since our country has a high unemployment rate because there is an increase in the number of women

participating in small-scale gold mining. Even in the community, these women miners are now more active in other areas for instance in community development projects, meetings there now have a voice and their decisions are being factored in.

- Male Miner B 14

The male miners in Bubi and Gwanda also recognize the changes in their community's after the women miners benefited from the policy's empowerment programs. The statements from the male miners show that beneficiaries of the NGP's empowerment programs have a 'voice', and some of these women miners are mentoring other women (non-beneficiaries) who are keen on participating in small-scale gold mining activities. The fact that these women are keen on assisting the non-beneficiaries in their respective communities demonstrates solidarity which in Kabeer's (2003) view is a critical means through which people may continue to improve their material resource base.

Other women in the communities can truly learn a lot from the beneficiaries (intangible resources) through their mining experiences and gains after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. This also confirms the comments made by eight women miners (non-beneficiaries) from vulnerable households in Bubi and Gwanda districts who indicated that their reasons for engaging in small-scale gold mining were that they "*saw other women participating in small-scale gold mining, making it*" and that this enhanced their sense of confidence so that they stopped doubting themselves and joined mining. This also shows that just by these women (the non-beneficiaries) observing the women miners who had benefited from NGP's empowerment programs and its positive impact on their position in the community, in a way empowered them to stop doubting themselves and to also engage in small-scale gold mining activities. Thus, women's economic empowerment can come in different forms and these experiences indicate that the women in the community are tapping into the intangible resources through the beneficiaries' mining experiences and gains after the implementation of the women's empowerment programs under the NGP.

The primary evidence also corresponds with the comments from the UNDP official in Chapter 5 as she pointed out that one of the goals of the policy's empowerment projects was to give women a 'voice'. She further explained that, "*this would enable women to*

start taking leadership positions in their households, school development committees (SDCs), and community development programs". This effort also reverses the longstanding perception of women's concerns being overlooked and concealed in collective terms such as 'the people' or 'the community' without specificity (Mudimba, 2020). This also connects to the SRA that changes made at State level can influence other institutions such as the market, community, and family to transform their norms and rules, making it more conducive for gender equality. Therefore, one can see from the empirical evidence presented that the NGP has in a way given a voice to women miners who benefited from the empowerment programs, and it has increased women's visibility as decision-makers and leaders in other responsibilities not linked to their household responsibilities. Their experiences and gains have also impacted a few of the women miners who have not benefited from the empowerment programs under the NGP yet, by building their self-confidence to engage in mining activities.

The primary data presented above also shows that the impact of the NGP's empowerment programs can positively shift women's position within the community. In the same way, as seen in Chapter 2, women's access to micro credit can challenge gender and other social inequalities in different ways (Mayoux, 2002) such as challenging women's subordinate position in the community. Although there is no indication of the NGP's empowerment programs challenging the unequal gender relations that exist between men and women in the communities of Bubi and Gwanda, it shows however that women's subordinate status can shift if they are equipped with the right tools such as access to credit, equipment and skills training. These women would then be more assertive and confident in challenging gender and other social inequalities in ways they see fit.

Household Welfare

In the previous section the study found that the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda were facing financial challenges which affected them in providing food, clothes, and education for their children. More so, three of the married women pointed out that, despite their husbands working on farms and in other sectors, they were still failing to make ends meet in the household, causing them as women to carry disproportionately more of the burden in ensuring the wellbeing of their families.

This subsection now analyses household welfare after the women miners received State support.

The married women (beneficiaries), particularly those from vulnerable socio-economic households in Bubi district, reported that they were now able to contribute towards household income after receiving State support under the NGP. The previous section presented evidence that these married women were living in vulnerable households, largely dependent on their husbands for provisions. Their husbands, in most cases, failed to contribute to household welfare, some citing that salaries were low, while others were just not inclined to contribute to household welfare. The women miners expressed that:

I feel better than before because I can now decide on what I want rather than waiting to be given. Family life has also improved in the sense that I am able to assist with things that are needed in the household. I am able educate my children and to comfortably look after myself.

- Female Miner 2B 05

I am able to look after myself, make informed decisions about my life and my mine. I have managed to buy some cattle because my husband and I also have a plot. My children are well taken care off, in terms of education and anything that they might need. It is now much easier to look after my parents and my in-laws too.

- Female Miner 1B 02

Four of the Mthandazo women miners (beneficiaries) from poor households also highlighted that the empowerment programs under the NGP significantly changed their lives within the household:

There has been a significant change in my life and in the household. Looking back at the days when I would wait for my husband to provide, it is no longer the same. I am now able to provide food and pay fees for my children. I don't have to wait for my husband.

- Female Miner GM 04

After the passing of my husband, things were just bad. But the support we received from the government also empowered me as a widow to continue with my small-scale gold mining activities and provide for my family. Things are much better now as I do not feel that much of a gap in terms of my husband's absence. I have also managed to extend my homestead, have added two more rooms. My children now have their own rooms and I am able to feed them, provide clothing and education.

- Female Miner GM 02

There is a great difference in my homestead now because I am able to look after my children, provide for them their education even up to college. As a single mother you have to be very innovating with the money that you get from mining, so I decided to purchase some cattle and goats. If I wasn't part of Mthandazo association, I wouldn't have been able to reap all these fruits. The support from government together with UNDP as well as the trainings contributed to what I am today.

- Female Miner GM 06

The evidence from the beneficiaries from poor households from both the Bubi and Gwanda districts highlighted that the support that they had received from the State under the NGP's empowerment programs significantly addressed their practical gender needs. Practical gender needs are defined as basic needs like shelter, food (nutrition), health care, water, opportunities or earning an income. The views from female miners 2B 05 and 1B 02 from Bubi district also show that benefiting from the policy's empowerment programs has enhanced their agency, self-worth, and self-esteem so that they do not need to wait for their husbands' income for household welfare anymore. The findings also link into a component of WEE literature (see Chapter 2) which emphasizes that access to micro credit programs for women has a 'multiplier effect' in that even the household benefits (Garikipati, 2013; Kato *et al.*, 2013; Selome *et al.*, 2014). Mayoux (2002). Li *et al.* (2011) also point out that access to micro credit contributes to families at large by breaking them out of the cycle of poverty, as well as increasing women's self-worth and dignity. On the negative side, micro credit traps women in the sense that they end up with huge amounts of debt.

Although the Mthandazo women miners did not have access to micro credit, the services at the women's gold service centre increased their productivity and income such that their practical gender needs were met. A similar pattern followed with the beneficiaries in Bubi district due to the fact that these women could make informed decisions pertaining to how they would use the money in their households. Even the single and widowed women from poor households in the Gwanda district under the Mthandazo association highlighted that they were able to make decisions on how to use their money. Not only did these women provide for their children in terms of food, education etc, these women were also investing their income towards other projects such as livestock – purchasing of cattle and goats – or extending their homesteads.

A sizeable number of the male miners in Gwanda and Bubi district also acknowledged that the NGP's empowerment had made significant changes within the beneficiaries' households.

Those women that have benefited from the Ministry's empowerment programs have built nice homes as they have more money.

- Male Miner B 13

The beneficiaries of the government programs have better incomes. Problem is you cannot exactly tell about what happens in households because that is personal territory, but it is a given that better incomes come with an improved household.

- Male Miner B 08

Some of these women are now breadwinners in these homes.

- Male Miner G 15

Mthandazo women have not only shown that when women work on something it multiplies. Some of these women have gone a step further not only in fencing their mines, you can actually see some developments in their homesteads. It's unfortunate that you can never really tell what happens inside their families but the work from outside shows. Some of them are buying cattle, others are now in a much better position to educate and provide for their families.

- Male Miner G 03

The views from the male miners shows that the NGP's empowerment programs have transformed women's position in their households. The male miners have indicated that beneficiaries of the empowerment programs under the NGP have increased their incomes which also means that their household welfare is improved. Some of the males acknowledged that it is quite difficult to really tell the extent of improvement in the household as it is personal territory. However, development within the households are visible as some of the beneficiaries extended their homesteads while others purchased livestock.

The findings above are also a good example of female breadwinning. Female breadwinners are women who are the primary or sole earners in their families (Barrat, 2019; Jurczyk *et al.*, 2019; Meisenbach, 2010). In this case, evidence presented above indicates that some of the women are now able to provide finances for the home, suggesting that they could be primary earners or at the very least significant contributors to the family income. Thus, female breadwinning increases women's visibility in the household as contributors and not welfare cases. This social change affects the norms and rules of gender roles of members of the family as can be seen in dual-earner couples. This has been the beginning of the challenge to the traditional male role as the provider (Akanle & Adesina, 2018).

Although female breadwinning has been on the rise in Africa, it has not been appreciated largely due to patriarchy and cultural norms that are deeply entrenched in the African societies. This could be the reason why most of the men miners in Chapter 6 strongly emphasized that a woman's place was in the kitchen and not at the mines. Adding to this, a few of the male miners in Bubi and Gwanda, who resisted the notion of female breadwinning, stated that their culture did not permit it.

In the family I am not sure, but in our culture 'umfazi ngumntwana' simply translated as the man is the head of the household and women are counted as children. So, it depends which household that is, but for me in my household I do the mining while my wife looks after the children and our homestead.

- Male Miner B 12

It doesn't matter how much money a woman brings into the household, as a man and a husband I am still the head and breadwinner. We can agree that these government programs like the service centre here in Collen Bawn has empowered women miners but, in my family, I am the head and provider for the home.

- Male Miner G 11

The comments presented above show us that some of the male miners were threatened by the fact that women had become significant breadwinners in their households, contributing to the welfare of their families and developing their homesteads after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. Bubi male miner B12 invokes the sanctity of culture in maintaining that men/husbands are the breadwinners while women are categorized as children and confined to the traditional gendered roles such as caring for the children and the elderly. This is similar to the example given in Chapter 3 where the development of programs interrupting cultural norms in favour of men are welcome. However, when empowerment programs transform women's position in the family, culture is invoked (Mukhopadhyay, 2015).

Additionally, male miner B 12 explicitly mentions that a wife/woman is 'a child', *umfazi ngumntwana*, regardless of the Legal Age Majority Act and Zimbabwe's other legislation on gender equality. Similarly, a study by Akanle and Nwaobiala (2020) in Nigeria found that even where women contribute to support the household in a 'dual-earner system', husbands and males are said to be the ultimate breadwinners providing most, if not all of the family finance. In spite of women's economic contributions towards the family, they are still discriminated against and assigned a secondary position.

Consequently, the findings in this section reflect the tensions of structure and agency (see Chapter 2). While some of the male miners show support and acknowledge that the NGP's empowerment programs have in a way challenged the subordinate position of women in the household, other male miners continue to reproduce and reinforce the notion that, despite the amount of money a woman contributes to supporting the household, they can never be breadwinners. Cultural norms are still deeply entrenched in Bubi and Gwanda's rural areas so much so that women are still categorized as

'minors' in spite of the legal measures put in place, as well as the NGP. This is why scholars such as Kabeer (2005) and Chant (2012) emphasize the need to disrupt the unequal gender and power relations that exist between men and women. To a certain extent this also demonstrates that a liberal/agency centred approach cannot fulfil the objectives of WEE without challenging the structural inequalities that keep women in subordinate positions, such as patriarchy and culture.

Household decision making

Prior to the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs, we learned that some of the married women had to seek approval from their husbands to work in the mines. The findings also demonstrated that much of the household decision making was left to the husbands, while the single, widowed, and divorced women miners battled with making tough decisions in their households on a daily basis. After the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs, the married women miners (beneficiaries) in Bubi and Gwanda's districts reported that they were now able to make decisions independently, although three of the married female miners reported that they were jointly making decisions with their husbands.

In my family, my husband has started softening up because he has seen that I am really making progress and trying to improve our home and lifestyle through mining. He doesn't mind me making decisions pertaining to anything in our home, so things are much better now. Just that he hates the long hours that come with being a mine owner because you have to be there all the time, you can't trust people.

- Female Miner 1B 01

My husband never wanted me to work or get into small-scale mining but now there is a difference in our home because I am also now providing from the income I am getting and I make some important decisions about how we use our finances of which that used to be done by my husband.

- Female Miner GM 06

You know, before, my husband would not even let us sit down to make some decisions or discuss about family budgets and so on. He would just decide on his own because he is the Father and head of the household (ngoba ngubaba wasekhaya). Now we both discuss our family concerns, budget with the income we are both bringing in and we decide together.

- Female Miner GM 03

The fact that some of these women miners' husbands were now open to consulting, or to referring family matters (e.g. in-laws) to their wives, also shows a change in social relations of gender between men and women in household decision making. This is in spite of the customary culture and tradition that reinforces males/husbands/fathers as head of the household and the major decision makers in the family. This also underscores the conception by the SRA (concept 2, see Chapter 3) that social relations can change over time. As a result, the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs transformed the cultural norms within the household/family by supporting married women miners (beneficiaries) in the Bubi and Gwanda districts in exercising agency in the household. It is also important to note that these findings are specific to this group of married women in the study and not to Bubi and Gwanda in its entirety. On the other hand, two women miners (beneficiaries) from Bubi and Gwanda highlighted that they were still facing resistance from their spouses even after they had received support from the State.

Family – not much has changed. It has been quite hard to convince my husband despite the progress that I've made with my mine. He still wants me to quit mining and still doesn't see that I am making a difference, especially in our home.

- Female Miner 1B 03

In my family I am still under my husband, although I work very hard to make sure that the children's fees are paid and there's food my husband still does not acknowledge the effort I am putting in to ease the pressure from surviving on one income.

- Female Miner GM 01

The statements above suggest that there were no significant changes in these households despite them benefiting from the policy's empowerment programs. Their husbands still failed to recognize the contributions and effort these women miners had made in supporting their families. Instead, the respondents, particularly, female miner 1B 03, mentions that her husband is insisting that she quits. The evidence here shows us that patriarchal values and traditional gendered norms are still a very large part of the family structures in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. The findings therefore, are linked to the remarks made by the male miners in the previous section (regarding household welfare after the implementation of the policy's programs) that women are 'children' and the men are the breadwinners and major decision makers in the family.

The findings presented above are similar to Kabeer's (1998; 2005; 2012) findings in Bangladesh on women's access to micro credit as a pathway to WEE, stating that even after women had received loans, the household decisions and loan use would be controlled by their spouses or male relatives. It is also not surprising that male miner B 05 referred to a woman/wife as a minor. This also suggests that many men, particularly those in the rural areas, are continuing to undermine the Legal Age Majority Act of Zimbabwe (LAMA) which recognizes that once a man or a woman reaches 18 years of age they are deemed adults, even in customary law. Customary law and traditions have deeply impacted the lives of many Africans with regard to marriage, inheritance, and traditional authority (Ndulo, 2011). As such, the policy interacts with the family/household in reinforcing the unequal gender and power relations between men and women, despite Zimbabwe's efforts in promoting women's rights and gender equality. One of the male miners from Bubi district had an intriguing outlook on household dynamics and decision-making. He pointed out:

Some women in their households now have a voice, they were voiceless. As men we need to recognize that whether a woman is my wife or my partner or a shareholder in a syndicate, I now need to actually listen to her when she is voicing out her concerns. Times have changed and this is unlike the olden days where we say a woman does not have a 'say' in the household or anywhere else in our society.

- Male miner B 11

It is quite interesting to note that, despite the deeply entrenched cultural norms and patriarchal values in the districts of Bubi and Gwanda, the comment by the male miner highlights the significant impact of the NGP's empowerment programs on the lives of women. The male miner also acknowledges that, prior to the implementation of the policy, women were voiceless, meaning that they did not have the opportunity to express their opinions, concerns or needs. Thus, the NGP's empowerment programs have allowed women to have a voice and be heard. He further underscores the importance of listening to women when they raise their concerns, indicating that regardless of the relationship between a man and a woman (whether she is a wife, partner or business associate), he must actively listen to her when she speaks up about her concerns. This also implies a shift in attitudes and expectations towards women, indicating that their perspectives and opinions are no longer considered less valuable or insignificant. He acknowledges that times have changed and that it is important for women to exercise agency not only in the household but also in other parts of the society. This suggests that the NGP in a way has disrupted the traditional gender roles and power dynamics that keep women in subordinate positions and silence their voices. Overall, the remarks by the male miner recognizes the importance of listening to women's perspectives as a vital step in building a more inclusive and equitable society.

The findings also indicated that the position of single, widowed and, divorced women beneficiaries in Bubi and Gwanda remained unaltered. These women were able to make decisions without seeking permission from any of their relatives or former spouses:

In my family, all decisions fall on me.

- Female Miner GM 07

I am a single mother, so my family looks up to me for support that's why I have worked so hard.

- Female Miner GM 06

I continue to run things in the household, taking care of myself and my children's welfare. I am divorced and I have no support from the father of my children.

- Female Miner 2B 05

Despite their marital status, these women continue to exercise agency and provide for their families. This is unlike some of the married women e.g. female miners GM 01 and 1B 03 who had reported that nothing had changed in the household despite them being beneficiaries of State support under the NGP's empowerment program. The single mothers, widows and divorced women continue to grapple with hard decisions on a day to day basis in the household.

Unpaid care work

In the previous subsection, the women miners pointed out that the burden of unpaid household responsibilities largely fell on them despite being income earners. The women had to balance primary caregiving and their small-scale mining activities, and this proved to be a challenge. We now analyse if the policy's empowerment programs challenged the unequal burden of household responsibilities on women, or whether it further reinforced it after the women miners received State support.

The majority of the beneficiaries from Bubi and Gwanda indicated that they now had the financial means to hire domestic workers to look after their children while they went to their mining sites:

Having a house helper [domestic worker] has helped me a lot because I have to wake up early and prepare to go to the mining site. I don't have to worry that my children will come back home from school and be alone. I am at ease knowing that there is someone taking care of them and cooking for them.

- Female Miner GM 02

I have employed a young lady to take care of my children during the week while I am at work, because the mines demand so much of our time. At times we come back home after 6pm.

- Female Miner 2B 03

The responses from the female beneficiaries of the NGP's empowerment programs confirm the assertion by Phillips (2011) that a common reason for hiring domestic

workers is to assist with household duties. The findings also suggest that women's access to credit, equipment and economic opportunities has allowed the beneficiaries to hire domestic workers to take care of their household duties while they are working at the mining sites. Interestingly, female miner 2B 03's response indicates that there are days where she gets home late, after 6pm, due to the demands of her mining activities. This means that the domestic workers of these women miners are required to work for long hours. Maqubela's (2016) study on domestic workers in black families in rural areas found that these domestic workers often face exploitative conditions such as long hours and low paid wages. Another study by Tolla (2013) found that domestic workers in rural areas are exposed to poor work conditions. Despite attempts to regulate and equalize power dynamics, the domestic work sector still perpetuates exploitation and maintains hierarchical relationships between the employer and domestic worker (Maqubela 2016). Thus, class differences are reinforced as female miners prioritize their mining activities, and consequently place their care responsibilities on domestic workers who now work under exploitative conditions.

Still on the working conditions of domestic workers, female miner 2B03 indicated that her house helper only works during the week, implying that over the weekends her helper is off duty and she takes over the household. The comment by female miner 2B 03 in this way challenges the notion that domestic workers are consistently exposed to poor working conditions. This also shows that the living and working arrangements between the domestic worker and the female miner do not isolate her (the domestic worker) from her family and community as she can visit her family during the weekends when she is off-duty.

Other women miners from Bubi and Gwanda (non-beneficiaries and beneficiaries) pointed out that they continued to "rely on their relatives and support networks such as neighbours in taking care of their children", while they work at the mines. This perspective offers an interesting insight related into the practice of women miners hiring their own relatives as domestic workers. In the specific context of domestic work within black families, the exact definition of a domestic worker is not clearly defined (Bayane, 2021). Dilata (2010) also points out that domestic work within black families often involves the employment of family members and friends. This raises the question of whether these friends or relatives are employed in a formal capacity. However, existing

literature suggests that the practice of hiring family members or friends to assist with care work is reciprocal. One of the female miners that had benefited from the-NGP's empowerment programs indicated:

Things have improved, I don't have to take my children with me to the mine. There's a cousin of mine that has come to stay with us, and she looks after my children while I'm at the mine.

- Female Miner GM 09

The comments made by female miner GM 09 in a way reflect that, when family members assist with care responsibilities, it is reciprocal. Therbon (2004) and Mosoetsa (2011) argue that black families are characterized by including extended members such as uncles, aunts, and cousins and that, hence, reciprocal caring and sharing of resources is the norm. Similarly, one of the respondents, Mary, in Bayane's (2023: 51) study on why she hired her sister as a domestic worker indicated:

She was unemployed and I was helping her with a job to provide for her family, because she was looking for a job in other houses, while I do not have a helper as well. I decided to hire her because I have children who are still going to school so having a domestic worker helps...knowing that they are safe and other duties in the home are taken care of.

Mary's narration shows an example of hiring family members as reciprocal caring within black families, in return, empowering her sister to provide for her family. The dependence on relatives for childcare and household duties suggests that these women may come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, which further strengthens class divisions. In essence, the ability of female miners to seek external assistance for caregiving is influenced by their financial resources and the presence of caregivers within their kinship and social networks. This also implies that the empowerment programs of the NGP inadvertently widened the class divisions as the women miners, who benefited from the support, had greater access to financial resources and, subsequently, also to support for caregiving responsibilities.

The non-beneficiaries, along with four of the beneficiaries from Bubi and Gwanda expressed their reliance on their older children for childcare and household duties.

My children look after each other. I have two older children that have just completed high school and two younger ones that are still in primary school. The old siblings are old enough to care for the younger ones, they can cook and clean. I have no issues at all.

- Female Miner G 06

I have my eldest daughter, she turned 18 years old, she is the one that stays home with three younger siblings, taking care of them.

- Female Miner B 08

The comments from the female miners indicate that they have placed responsibilities on their elder children to look after their younger children and to assist with household duties while they themselves focus on mining activities. Significantly, female miner B 08 mentions that her eldest daughter, who had turned 18 years of age, looks after her younger children. In a way this might also affect the daughter's personal growth and opportunities, as she now has to stay at home full-time to look after the young children.

The challenges faced by female miners in seeking assistance with care and household responsibilities from their relatives and even their children highlight the significant issues surrounding unpaid care work and the gender and class inequalities associated with it. This situation also reveals the NGP's failure to address the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work on women, thereby further reinforcing existing gender and class inequalities. The primary data collected from the female miners clearly demonstrates that men do not participate in unpaid care work, resulting in women having to shoulder the responsibility predominantly. Consequently, the policy continues to uphold and perpetuate traditional gendered roles by maintaining women's care responsibilities. In addition, the primary data also reveals a clear distinction in class inequalities, as the beneficiaries of State support under the NGP tend to have a higher socio-economic background and tend to rely on relatives from poorer backgrounds to assist with care responsibilities. Furthermore, the NGP exacerbates the class division as domestic workers are exploited and end up working longer hours while the women miners prioritize their mining activities.

In the previous section (regarding unpaid care before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs), we highlighted that there was a need for policies and development programs to address the specific needs of women in mining, for instance, childcare. As seen in Chapter 5, the women miners called for the government to start lobbying for changed behaviour from men, including men taking part in household responsibilities and childcare. The policy, however, did not directly address this issue. Quite a number of studies have reported that establishing public childcare centres is another way to ease the pressure for women from unpaid care work and to enhance women's economic empowerment. A WIEGO Report by Alferts (2016) recommends establishing high quality childcare centres, catering to the needs of both informal and formal workers. These centres should be conveniently located, encourage parental and community involvement, and ensure that the care workers are provided with decent working conditions. In Brazil, for instance, "the municipality of Belo Horizonte established a successful day care centre in response to the demands of the local waste pickers" (Folbre 2021: 113). These are some of the ways in which the government of Zimbabwe, through the NGP, could enable WEE by providing affordable childcare centres. But this has not happened.

Thus, the family/household works with the policy in reproducing and reinforcing the burden of childcare and unpaid care work on the female miners. Razavi (2007) asserts that the ways in which society and policy makers address the issue of unpaid care work influences the policy goals of achieving gender equality by either establishing avenues through which men and women's choices are broadened, or by confining women to the traditional gendered roles of motherhood. Thus, the liberal/agency centred approach to WEE adopted by the State would rather focus on women's visibility in the public sphere while taking for granted the gender inequalities in the domestic sphere.

This section has presented an analysis on the changes that have occurred after women mine owners in Bubi and Gwanda received State support. The findings suggest that, while the policy's empowerment programs have challenged to a limited degree the gender inequalities in access to credit, equipment, skills and business training in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector, the family/household has worked with the policy in reinforcing structural gender inequalities such as unpaid care work, patriarchy, sociocultural norms, unequal gender and power relations that have kept women in

subordinate positions. There have been some changes, such as women making decisions in the household, some husbands being open to making joint decisions with their wives, women voicing their concerns, and being visible in community meetings. However, the unequal gender and power relations are still prevalent in some of the households.

Some studies on WEE have emphasized that women's access to credit and other material resources have the potential to challenge the structural factors that hinder women's agency. The primary data presented in both sections confirm that women's access to economic resources cannot be considered as an end in itself without confronting the social relations that keep women in subordinate positions such as the unequal gender and power relations that exist between men and women. Sen (2010) argues that policy implementation requires more than just rational choice, good information dissemination, and education. There is a need for altering the underlying gendered relations which keep women in lower positions.

7.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have shown how the NGP interacts with the family and community in reversing and reinforcing gender and class inequalities. The chapter also presented a historical background on the status of women during the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-independence time period as a way of assessing the ways in which different systems produced, reproduced, and reinforced women's subordinate position in the family/household. Cultural norms during the pre-colonial Zimbabwean society kept women from owning land even though they would be given a plot to cultivate for food production. The payment of bride price, for instance, produced and reinforced the unequal gender and power relations in the household. Women were portrayed as objects and property after bride price was paid by their husbands.

The colonial administration also introduced the ideas of masculinity and female domesticity which confined women to the household, at the same time also reinforcing the traditional and cultural norms that shaped women's position in society. Such ideas reinforced the tasks and roles ascribed to men and women individually. Although women were in charge of taking care of the family, they also played a central role in food provision for the family. Despite their roles, they were still considered to occupy

a lower status compared to men who were portrayed as breadwinners and major decision makers in the family and the community. The post-independence era ushered in a new dawn with the new Zimbabwean government working towards challenging the subordinate status of women by increasing their visibility in the public sphere through administrative and legal legislation. However, the legislation did not address the unequal gender and power relations that exist between men and women in Zimbabwe.

The chapter also described how the NGP's empowerment programs slightly transformed the status of women miners in the family and community in Bubi and Gwanda. Evidence indicates that, in the community, women miners were confident, had a 'voice' and were more visible; while, in the family, some were making major decisions independently without their spouses. Similarly, the findings in this chapter reflect on the redistribution recognition dilemma raised by Nancy Fraser in the sense that women experience two kinds of injustices: economic and cultural. Economic injustices are characterised by the unequal access to productive resources. Fraser, therefore, opines that women's struggles for economic injustices have tended to focus on issues of redistribution e.g. access to finance. Cultural injustice is characterized by the unequal distribution of social recognition and respect, e.g. social relations. Cultural injustices have tended to focus on issues of recognition, and how different groups in society are valued and respected. Thus, the findings reveal the tensions between economic and cultural inequality in the sense that, while the policy's empowerment programs promote economic redistribution, these may not adequately address issues of cultural recognition.

Another point to consider is the rise of female breadwinning in Bubi and Gwanda, even in dual income earning households, due to women's access to economic resources. This topic has received so much attention from scholars and also brings out the different ways in which female breadwinning has increased women's visibility and status in the family and community. However, as shown in Chapters 5 and 6, and also this chapter, the liberal/agency-centred approach to women's economic empowerment does not adequately address the structural inequalities that keep women in subordinate positions, specifically in the family and community. One of the major reasons, as outlined throughout this chapter, is that Zimbabwe is a country that is embedded in patriarchal values and customary law. In as much as gender equality and women's visibility are

described in the public sphere (Chapters 5 and 6 regarding women's participation in key economic sectors, and gender equality legislation), gender inequalities remain pervasive in the family and community.

The chapter has described how the family and community in the districts of Bubi and Gwanda reinforce gender inequalities more than it does class. The findings suggested that married women experienced unequal gendered and power relations in the household, while the single and widowed women grappled with needing to make hard decisions themselves. Even though there have been some slight changes to women's position in the household, the unequal social relations of gender are still maintained despite the policy's empowerment programs.

This is one of the reasons why the study adopted the Social Relations Approach: it provided the study with a framework for institutional analysis on the extent to which the policy interacted with formal and informal institutions in either disrupting and/or reinforcing gender and class inequalities in the districts of Bubi and Gwanda. The study was able to identify the WEE approach implemented by the NGP and to also assess the different ways in which the policy interacted with the market, the community and family in challenging and reinforcing gender and class inequalities for women in the Bubi and Gwanda districts. Over and above, the chapter has also revealed that agency itself cannot be fully achieved without confronting the structural and social factors that hinder women's economic empowerment. Therefore, the liberal/agency centred WEE approach worked well towards eliminating the structural economic factors affecting women, but these reforms were not adequate enough to eliminate the structural social factors. Unequal gender relations and unpaid care work have kept women subordinated in the domestic sphere.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Despite the efforts internationally, regionally, and locally in enhancing the economic empowerment of women, gender inequalities and discrimination still affect many women in Zimbabwe. These inequalities are produced and reinforced through various institutions such as the State, market, community, and family/household levels that continue to impede women's agency (Hillenbrand *et al.*, 2014; Kabeer, 1994; Miles, 2016). Hence, there remains a vital need for understanding the different ways in which Zimbabwe's second NGP either challenged or reinforced inequalities that impeded women's economic advancement. The first NGP was launched in 2004 and remained implemented until 2012. As discussed in Chapter 5, its main goal was to eliminate all negative economic, social, and political policies, as well as cultural and religious practices that impeded equality and equity of men and women (Chabaya *et al.*, 2009). This policy made some positive milestones in addressing equal access to education, land, economy, political participation, and decision making (Matonhodze *et al.*, 2014). Even with these milestones, the MOWAGCD (2013) emphasized that there were gender disparities in access to and control over productive resources.

Thus, a second NGP was launched in 2013 with the aim of addressing the gaps and emerging issues from the 2004 NGP. One of the government officials stated:

We wanted to create equal opportunities for men and women in key economic sectors, the statistics had shown that women were still lagging behind in key economic sectors and yet they are the majority population working in agriculture, mining, tourism and manufacturing.

- Govt Official A

And so, the NGP was guided by the Broad Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework (BBWEEF) which composed of two components: A financial component with access to credit and equipment through the Women's Development Fund facility under the NGP; and a second component with access to business and skills training.

These were some of the ways that the NGP aimed to support women's economic advancement.

The study adopted Kabeer's (1994) Social Relations Approach (SRA) which provided this thesis with a framework for the institutional analysis of existing gender and other social inequalities in the distribution of resources, responsibilities, and power. The study aimed to generate two sets of findings: The first set of findings needed to focus on identifying the NGP's WEE approach (Chapter 5) and its impact on gender and class differentials in access to and control over productive resources for women miners in Bubi and Gwanda. The second set of findings needed to focus on the interactions between the NGP and other institutions such as the market (Chapter 6), and the community and family (Chapter 7) in either challenging or perpetuating and reinforcing gender and class inequalities in the districts of Bubi and Gwanda.

This final chapter summarizes the study by revisiting the research questions that guided the study, summarizing the key findings under each of the research questions. The chapter also concludes with the contributions it has made to the body of literature on policy implementation, women's economic empowerment, women in mining, gender, and class.

8.1 Summary of the key findings according to the research questions

The study's aim was to examine the extent to which Zimbabwe's NGP and its implementation reversed and/or reinforced gender and class inequalities for women miners in the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts. In doing so, the study was guided by the gaps identified in literature and the Social Relations Approach (SRA). The SRA incorporates five concepts: development as increased wellbeing; social relations; institutional analysis; institutional gender policies; and immediate, intermediate, and long-term effects (Kabeer, 2003). This thesis utilized two of the SRA's concepts in analysing the NGP. These are concept 2 – social relations – and concept 3 – institutional analysis. Thus, the study brought together institutions and social relations by focusing on how social relations between men and women miners shifted at work (the market), in their communities, and within the household/family levels in the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts, Zimbabwe.

The following research questions guided the researcher in meeting the major research objective of this study.

Research Question 1: How does the NGP conceptualize WEE and why?

This research question was answered in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. The NGP's official document, as well the government officials interviewed for this study stated that women's economic empowerment referred to the equal access to and control over productive resources. The official policy document acknowledges the need to eliminate structural gender inequalities in the labour market, however, it fails to effectively address this in practice. The policy's official document defined women's economic empowerment as:

... the process which increases women's real power over economic decisions that influence their lives and priorities in society. This can be achieved through equal access to and control over critical economic resources and opportunities and the elimination of structural inequalities in the labour markets (MWAGCD 2013: 35).

The gender inequalities affecting women in the labour market were identified as a lack of access to credit, equipment, business and skills training, unpaid care work, and unfair labour market practices such as women being placed in secondary vulnerable jobs and low pay. These are 'structural' inequalities in the sense that they are systemic and interconnected stemming from longstanding biases, discrimination, and power imbalances within society. The policy's official conceptualization of WEE acknowledged the importance of agency for women, emphasizing that women need to be able to make decisions about their finances, employment, and resources as it shapes their lives.

The government officials had a similar conceptualization of WEE. Government official B highlighted: "*Women's economic empowerment is the process of empowering women through economic programs, respecting and observing women's rights in access to resources and financial inclusion*". This official's conceptualization of WEE is one that also emphasizes on the promotion of financial inclusion and ensuring that women's rights are upheld in access to financial resources and opportunities to participate in economic activities. Government official C stated:

Women's economic empowerment is assisting women to have control in key economic sectors in Zimbabwe which enables them to make key decisions and priorities for their life. We are looking at various processes of equipping women with resources to actively participate in key economic sectors - agriculture, mining, tourism and manufacturing.

Government official C's understanding of WEE also focuses on the processes of increasing women's access to and control over productive resources by providing the necessary tools to support women's participation in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors. One of the constraints that the NGP was addressing through this conceptualization of WEE, was the way in which gender inequalities affected women from participating and contributing to economic growth, such as unequal access to credit and equipment, business and skills training.

From this perspective, the NGP was more concerned with ensuring the equal access to credit and productive resources (equipment, skills, and business training) for women and empowering them to compete in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors. Findings of the study in Chapter 6 demonstrated women's situation in the ASGM sector before receiving State support. Women miners in Bubi reported that it was challenging for them to run their small-scale mining activities without adequate capital and equipment. One of these women miners indicated that "*small-scale gold mining is a very hard sector without any capital and equipment*" (Female Miner B05 FGD). In Gwanda, the women miners also echoed the same issue and added that they faced challenges of being cheated when they would take their ore for grinding at the gold processing mills. A female miner in Gwanda reported that, "*when we are taking our ores to the stamp mill for processing, there's mud with gold that remains in the mill but they don't give us they cheat us despite the amount of money that we pay them*" (Female Miner GM 06). These were some of the constraints that hindered the effective participation of women in the small-scale gold mining sector which the NGP sought to address.

Having discussed the structure-agency debates in Chapter 2 and the feminist theories in Chapter 3, the study concluded that the NGP and its empowerment programs were influenced by a liberal/agency centred approach to women's economic empowerment. The activities adopted by the NGP under its WEE framework included access to credit through the Women's Development Fund (WDF) and business/skills training through

partnerships with government ministries and departments, UNDP–Zimbabwe Country Office and NGOs such as PACT Zimbabwe. The liberal/agency centred approach to WEE by the NGP promoted entrepreneurship. Access to credit, equipment, business, and skills training for the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda was the policy’s way of strengthening women’s economic agency in the market. Significantly, liberal feminism advocated for women’s participation in public life through productive work. It draws on ‘agency’ which emphasizes the importance of people making their own decisions, judgments and also being able to take responsibility for their actions.

Women’s entrepreneurship has been adopted as an important strategy in women’s economic empowerment policy framework as shown in Chapters 2 and 5. The NGP’s liberal/agency centred approach to WEE addressed the economic structural inequalities (access to credit, equipment, business, and skills training) for women miners in Bubi and Gwanda’s ASGM sector. However, the limitation of this type of approach was that it overlooked the social structural inequalities that hindered women’s agency – such as the unequal gender and power relations between men and women, unequal distribution of unpaid care work towards women, patriarchy, and cultural norms. Findings of the study in Chapter 6 highlighted that, even after the female mine owners had received State support from the NGP’s empowerment programs, they still encountered challenges, particularly with their male counterparts. In Gwanda, for instance, the Mthandazo women miners reported that they continued to face harassment from the male miners. They indicated that there was not much of a change in work relations after the Women’s Gold Service Center started running. Instead, “*some of the men have mounted stamp mills just behind our service centre because they want us to run at a loss*” (Mthandazo Chairperson). This depicts the power dynamics and conflicts between male and female miners in Gwanda’s ASGM sector, affecting women’s active participation in the ASGM sector.

In Chapter 6, empirical evidence from the findings of the study indicate that, although the NGP’s empowerment programs addressed women’s access to credit, equipment, and training, it did not address the unequal gender and power relations between men and women. Another example is found in Chapter 7 in the analysis of the interactions of the NGP with the community and family dynamics in the rural districts of Bubi and Gwanda. For instance, there appears to be no significant changes to the disproportionate

burden of unpaid care work on women in Bubi and Gwanda. While the policy's empowerment programs empowered the female miners (beneficiaries) to hire domestic workers and relatives to assist with childcare and household duties, still the burden fell to women and not men. This therefore implies that the policy maintained the status quo regarding the unequal gendered relations between men and women in the household. As institutions embody 'power' – who decides and whose interests are served – it can be concluded that the NGP's liberal/agency centred approach to WEE focused more on the contributions that women could make in economic growth than dealing with the unequal social relations that kept them in subordinate positions in the private sphere.

Research Question 2: What are the implications of the NGP's conceptualization of WEE on implementing programmes promoting women small-scale gold miners in the Bubi and Gwanda districts of Zimbabwe?

This research questions was addressed in Chapter 5. Whilst the NGP's conceptualization of WEE has been outlined, the conclusion that can be drawn from this, is that the policy's empowerment programs were limiting because they only addressed part of the structural gender inequalities affecting women such as the unequal access to credit, equipment, and business/skills training. As outlined in Chapter 5, the NGP's empowerment programs attempted to address two key areas: the potential of women's contribution to the economy as owners and active decision makers in their mining activities; the constraints associated with women's unequal access to credit, equipment, and training. This would also entail that, once these two key areas were addressed, that the State would have successfully achieved closing the gender disparities and increasing the visibility of women in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors. For instance, the government officials in Chapter 5 pointed out that, "*we realized that in terms of statistics women were highly involved in key economic sectors as workers and not owners. So, the policy was coming up to address such issues in terms of ownership and participation in decision making*" (Govt Official C). This shows that the NGP's empowerment programs were also set to address the potential of women's participation in Zimbabwe's key economic sectors as owners, producers and major contributors to the economy and not workers.

In this instance, the government of Zimbabwe seemed to benefit more because the official policy document highlighted that "economic empowerment programs targeted

at women (*Womenomics*) makes good economics” (MWAGCD 2013: 12). The State through the NGP benefits more by outlining the efforts made by the policy’s empowerment programs implying that the policy succeeded in closing the gender gap in access to and control of productive resources for the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda.

While the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda benefited from the NGP’s empowerment programs, there was still a need to address the unequal social and power relationships between men and women, that inhibited women’s economic empowerment. Findings of the study in Chapter 7 reveal that even after women had received State support, the social relations within the household and community for some of the women in Bubi and Gwanda were still determined by cultural and patriarchal norms. For instance, some of the married women miners indicated that, despite being beneficiaries of State support under the NGP’s empowerment programs, their spouses were still the major decision makers in the households and did not acknowledge their financial contributions to the household (Female Miners GM 01 and 1B 03). Also, one of the male miners from Gwanda confirmed: *“It doesn’t matter how much money a woman brings into the household, as a man and a husband I am still the head and breadwinner”* (Male Miner G 11). In Bubi district, one of the male miners B12 also indicated that, *“in our culture ‘umfazi ngumntwana’ simply translated as the man is the head of the household and women are counted as children”*.

As a result, women miners did not fully benefit from the NGP’s liberal/agency centred approach to WEE. The primary evidence of this study suggests that the NGP’s empowerment programs did not adequately respond to women’s strategic gender needs. In Chapter 5, women miners in Bubi and Gwanda highlighted that WEE encompasses more than just access to and control over productive resources. It also involves ensuring the equal distribution of unpaid care work between men and women, recognizing women’s contribution in the domestic sphere, and transforming unequal gender and power dynamics between men and women.

Research Question 3: What processes are involved in enabling the implementation of the NGP?

The third research question was answered in Chapter 5 in the analysis of the NGP. The processes involved in the development of the NGP are an important part in addressing this research question. Zimbabwe being a signatory to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action worked together with the local NGOs to jointly develop the Zimbabwe Plan for Action in 1999 (Gender Department, 1999: 6). This stressed the importance of the government's commitment to promoting gender equality in Zimbabwe since attaining independence in 1980. Evidence in Chapter 5 also shows that the Zimbabwean government worked with international agencies and local NGOs to influence prioritizing gender as a policy issue. For instance, the UNDP in Zimbabwe partnered with the government of Zimbabwe under the Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework (ZUNDAF).

ZUNDAF is a strategic planning instrument that identifies national priorities for the government of Zimbabwe which will benefit in terms of financial and technical assistance from the United Nations and other cooperating development partners (ZUNDAF 2011: 1).

The UNDP official interviewed indicated that they had a longstanding partnership with government, particularly with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development over five-year cycles. He also indicated that they had worked with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, from the first NGP through to the current NGP, as a way of prioritizing and advancing gender equality in Zimbabwe.

Some of the processes that enabled the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs were associated with identifying the constraints that many women faced in access to and control over productive resources, as well as the gender disparities that existed from the time the first NGP was implemented. These were solid enough reasons for the government of Zimbabwe to establish empowerment programs run under the policy. It can be concluded that the State, through its National Budget, enables the implementation of the policy's empowerment programmes. As discussed in Chapter 5, the government of Zimbabwe finances the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development through national budget allocations. The funds are then disbursed to the WDF which runs under the policy's WEE framework to enable women to gain access to credit to start or improve their businesses. The Ministry's national office then sends out a circular to the provincial and district offices to inform them that

funds have been allocated and disbursed by the State and that they can start accepting applications from women's groups to be granted loans from the WDF.

Another component, apart from the government's national budget allocations, is the technical and financial assistance which comes from partnerships between the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development and also international development agencies such as UNDP. Although such organizations may not be able to assist in all empowerment programs nationwide, they enable the implementation of the policy's empowerment programs by providing technical assistance and funding to a specific project which is used as a 'pilot program'. This pilot program can then be adopted in other provinces of Zimbabwe as seen with the Gwanda Women's Gold Service Centre run by the Mthandazo Women Miners Association. The UNDP Zimbabwe Country Office provided equipment for the Women's Gold Service Centre in Gwanda. The equipment included a transformer, compressors, and a stamp mill.

Research Questions 4 and 5: How have women small-scale gold miners in Bubi and Gwanda districts of Zimbabwe experienced the effects of the NGP and to what extent has its goals and implementation promoted economic advancement and well being? How did the implementation of the NGP and WEE programmes influence the social status of women small-scale gold miners in Bubi and Gwanda districts of Zimbabwe?

The fourth and fifth research questions were addressed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. It can be concluded that the women miners in Bubi had a different experience of the NGP, compared to the Mthandazo women miners in Gwanda. The distribution of resources through the policy's empowerment programs was uneven for both Bubi and Gwanda. Firstly, the women's groups in the Bubi district were required to make applications to the Ministry of Women's Affairs to receive loans from the WDF facility under the NGP. The application process included a written proposal, proof of residence, copies of national identity cards and a bank account with POSB to be submitted. Three of the beneficiaries from Bubi district, highlighted that the application process was 'daunting', because they had to travel to Bulawayo to access banking services, while some of them also did not have any knowledge of compiling a project proposal (see Chapter 5, Case Study 1: Bubi District). Despite these challenges, one of the beneficiaries highlighted that they engaged someone with experience and paid them to write their project proposal. The first group of three women miners received a cash loan from WDF and

the second group received 25% of the cash loan, while 75% of the loan was used to pay suppliers of equipment such as compressors, generators and hummer mills on behalf of the women miners.

In the other case, the Mthandazo women miners in Gwanda did not receive any credit. Instead, they received a women's gold service centre with equipment (transformer, compressors, and a stamp mill) through a partnership between the Ministry of Women's Affairs and UNDP–Zimbabwe. The Mthandazo women miners also received business and skills training funded by the UNDP, PACT (Zimbabwe) and other government departments such as the Environmental Management Agency (EMA). Unlike the women miners in Bubi, the Mthandazo women miners did not need to go through any application processes. The government officials from the head office and district offices highlighted that they had also acted upon receiving reports from the women miners that they were being short-changed when processing their gold ores at male owned stamp mills.

The findings of the study in Chapter 6, before and after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs shows us that these programs improved the beneficiaries' mining activities. One of the female miners from Bubi district reported that lack of capital was a serious challenge which hindered productivity. After women miners had received support from the WDF's facility under the NGP, the beneficiaries in Bubi district highlighted: *"The loan was a life saver because when you're in mining you need capital to run the business and also purchase equipment"* (Female Miner 1B 02). Another beneficiary also added that the cash loans and mining equipment made the mining process much easier and more productive in terms of digging, increasing the amount of ore taken to the stamp mills. This shows that the NGP's empowerment programs had a positive impact on women's lives and by addressing the unequal access to credit and equipment for women, it improved the women miners' mining activities.

In Gwanda, the Mthandazo women miners were recipients of the Mthandazo Women's Gold Service Center in Colleen Bawn, which contained equipment such as compressors and a stamp mill. Before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs in Gwanda, the women miners had reported to the Ministry of Women's Affairs the challenges they encountered when taking their gold ore for processing. According to a government official, after receiving reports from these women miners, they decided to

draft a concept note to empower women through a gold service centre. The Mthandazo women (beneficiaries) indicated: *“The good thing is that we are able to process our ores and run our own service centre as women because we had been reporting to the ministry that men harass us especially when we process our ores”* (Female Miner GM 01). Another beneficiary added: *“We are now able to see a difference and an increase in our gold productivity”* (Female Miner GM 08). Apart from the gold service centre, the Mthandazo women miners also received comprehensive training that helped them in managing their mining activities effectively, as well as their service centre. This one of the ways in which the NGP’s empowerment programs positively impacted the Mthandazo women miners in Gwanda.

On the other hand, some of the Mthandazo women miners in Gwanda indicated that it would have been better if they received cash loans. This suggests that they were not quite happy with the gold service centre. In Chapter 5 case study 2, we see that a couple of the Mthandazo women miners highlighted that one of the disadvantages about the type of support had been that they were not given any cash loans, which would have assisted their mining activities in covering other expenses such as the purchasing of explosives and protective clothing. This also shows that not all the experiences of the NGP’s empowerment programs aligned to their lived realities.

In Chapter 7, the study found that the NGP’s empowerment programs in Bubi and Gwanda have in a way shifted the position of women in the community. For instance, the beneficiaries from Bubi and Gwanda pointed out that they now have ‘voice’ and that they are respected in the community. Similarly, primary data in Chapter 6 also indicated that the beneficiaries, particularly the women from Bubi district, highlighted that they were now respected and acknowledged as miners and ‘sponsors’ because of the support they had received from the NGP’s empowerment programs. This goes to show that, to some extent, the policy’s goals and empowerment programs allowed for women’s economic advancement and wellbeing.

In the household (Chapter 7), women miners pointed out that before the implementation of the NGP’s empowerment programs they were failing to make ends meet in terms of household welfare. After the implementation of the policy’s empowerment programs, the beneficiaries from poor households experienced a difference in the household because they were contributing to household welfare and wellbeing. One of the

beneficiaries from Bubi district indicated: “*I am able to look after myself, make informed decisions about my life and my mine. I have managed to buy some cattle, and my children are well taken care of*” (Female Miner 1B 02). In Gwanda, one of the Mthandazo women beneficiaries said:

There is a great difference in my homestead now because I am able to look after my children, provide for them their education even up to college. As a single mother you have to be very innovating with the money that you get from mining, so I decided to purchase some cattle and goats. If I wasn't part of Mthandazo association, I wouldn't have been able to reap all these fruits. The support from government together with UNDP as well as the trainings contributed to what I am today.

- Female Miner GM 06

This evidence shows us that the policy's goals and programmes indeed allowed for economic advancement and wellbeing.

The primary evidence discussed above links to the literature on WEE in Chapter 2, specifically in terms of access to credit, equipment, and entrepreneurship as a pathway to women's economic empowerment. The literature suggests that, as women start earning an income and improving their entrepreneurship activities, they also spend more on their children's education and the wellbeing of their families and themselves. Evidence from the beneficiaries in Chapter 7 shows that the NGP's empowerment programs to some extent helped strengthen decision making in the household. The married beneficiaries indicated that they were able to make decisions independently, while six of the beneficiaries indicated that they were jointly making decisions with their spouses. However, this differs according to status, considering that the single, widowed, and divorced women (mothers) are tasked with making decisions on a daily basis.

Beneficiaries of State support in Gwanda gave accounts about how there were no significant changes after the implementation of the policy's empowerment programs (Chapter 6). The Mthandazo women miners pointed out that since the establishment of the Mthandazo Women's Gold Service Centre, their male counterparts in the ASGM sector were more jealous. Some of the male miners began mounting gold processing

mills near the gold service centre to pull more clients towards them. This goes to show that some of the male miners were not pleased with the NGP's empowerment programs for women miners. This also portrays the power dynamics and conflicts within the ASGM sector in Gwanda, thus depicting that the establishment of the gold service centre may have caused tensions with regards to work relations between the men and women miners. This evidence shows some of the issues that hinder women's economic advancement.

In Chapter 7, a small number of married women in Bubi and Gwanda also emphasized that nothing had changed in their households after the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs. They indicated that their husbands were still the major decision makers in the household: "*In my family I am still under my husband*" (Female Miner GM 01). While the policy's empowerment programs allowed for women's economic advancement to some extent, it failed to challenge the unequal gender and power relations between men and women in household decision making for some of the married women in Bubi and Gwanda rural districts. Therefore, it can be said that the NGP interacted with the family/household in reinforcing the unequal gender and power relations between men and women in the private sphere.

Chapter 7 also showed that the burden of unpaid care work fell on the female miners both before and after the implementation of the policy's empowerment programs. However, ten of the female beneficiaries from Bubi and Gwanda indicated that they had hired domestic workers to assist with childcare and household duties. This also shows that the NGP's empowerment programs opened up ways in which the female miners could hire domestic workers to assist with unpaid care work. Two of the female miners reported that they felt a sense of relief because they had hired domestic workers to assist and this afforded them the opportunity to work at their mines till late (Female Miner GM 02; Female Miner 2B 03). This reveals that domestic workers are required to work for long hours. Additionally, this reinforces class differences between the female miners and the domestic workers such that they displace their care responsibilities on domestic workers and prioritize their mining activities. Overall, the NGP reinforces the existing gender inequalities in the disproportionate burden of unpaid care on women. One would think that the NGP should consider establishing

childcare centres or conduct workshops in the districts on the importance of sharing household responsibilities with men.

The findings in Chapters 5 and 6 suggested that the impact of the policy's empowerment programs differed according social status. This is depicted in the way in which some of the non-beneficiaries highlighted that those who had benefited were not keen to assist them. Many of the non-beneficiaries mentioned that it was quite challenging working with women who had benefited from the policy's empowerment programs because some would actually refuse to help them with their equipment, particularly in Bubi district. The women miners from Gwanda who were not part of Mthandazo Women Miners Association pointed out the difficulties in accessing information about the NGP's empowerment programs, stating that the Ministry's district office preferred to work with organized groups of women, such as the Mthandazo women miners, rather than women who were just starting out. This finding also reflects on the sentiments mentioned by the UNDP official regarding the selection of women miners who would benefit and run the gold service centre. The official highlighted that for the selection of beneficiaries they considered an active mining association, a constitution, and an active bank account. Apart from this, some of the members had also received support from the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe in the form of registered mine claims.

Similarly, women miners who had not benefited from the NGP and its empowerment programs felt that the Ministry of Women's Affairs tended to focus on giving support through small-scale mining associations, side-lining other women. The men miners in Gwanda district echoed the same sentiments highlighting that NGP's empowerment programs did not reach all women in the district – it was for women who were politically connected. A similar perspective was also aired by some men miners in the Bubi district, stating that the women who had benefited from the policy's empowerment programs were affiliated to the ruling party, ZANU–PF. This is one of the ways the NGP reinforced class inequalities among women in Bubi and Gwanda.

Research Question 6: What alternatives have women small-scale gold miners utilized for their economic advancement, and how might these strategies impact the NGP?

Apart from the empowerment programs run under the NGP, women miners from Bubi and Gwanda reported that they had attended some workshops with various NGOs that had worked in the mining sector, for instance, Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (ZELA) on Health and Safety and PACT on GBV as well as Health and Safety. Although these trainings were coming from NGOs, they continued to have a positive impact towards access to education and training for the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda. More so, these workshops aligned with the NGP's Broad-Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework in terms of equipping the women miners with adequate information regarding environmental, health and safety procedures whilst working at the mines. It was important that the women miners also adhered to the environmental laws of Zimbabwe. The trainings conducted by the NGOs complimented the policy's empowerment programs in a way, by filling the gaps in the policy in terms of further education of women miners.

After discussing the main findings related to the research question, this study discovered that, to a limited degree, the NGP and its empowerment programs challenged the gender inequalities in access to and control over productive resources for the women miners in Bubi and Gwanda. The policy's empowerment programs contributed to addressing women's constraints in access to credit, equipment and business training, and in enhancing their increased participation in small-scale gold mining which is one of Zimbabwe's key economic sectors. The liberal/agency centred approach to WEE adopted by NGP was determined to enhance women's participation in the markets and their contribution to economic growth.

Although the NGP played a vital role in addressing the gender inequalities in access to and control over productive resources in Bubi and Gwanda through access to credit, equipment, business and skills training, it did not address other structural inequalities that continued to negatively affected women's agency. These structural inequalities included the unequal gender and power relations between men and women, patriarchy, social and cultural norms found in places of work, communities, and households. These structural inequalities are produced, perpetuated, and reinforced through the interaction of formal rules (laws, constitutions, and governance) under the State and market; and informal rules (these are taboos and culturally determined) under the community and family/household. Hence, the uniqueness of this study: Its adoption of the SRA brings

together an institutional and social relations analysis of women's position at different institutional locations in Zimbabwe after receiving State support through the NGP's empowerment programs.

Unfortunately, the NGP did little to challenge the class inequalities among women small-scale miners in Bubi and Gwanda. While the Mthandazo women miners benefited from the women's gold service centre and received comprehensive business and skills training, the two groups of women miners in Bubi district benefited from loans and equipment but were socially excluded from business and skills training component under the NGP. The NGP, therefore, reinforced class differences between women miners in Bubi and Gwanda in access to business and skills training.

8.2 Contribution to knowledge

It can be concluded that the study fills the gap in knowledge on three interconnected subjects in the field of development. The study combines the concepts of- women's economic empowerment, women in mining, gender and State policies that impact these areas by either disrupting or reinforcing gender and class inequalities. This area is under researched in many developing countries, including Zimbabwe, yet, these concepts are essential to enhancing women's agency in both the public and private sphere.

As highlighted in Chapter 5, the NGP draws on a liberal/agency centred form of women's economic empowerment. This approach integrates women into an existing system. What the government of Zimbabwe does, is to establish legal and administrative measures to ensure women's visibility in the public sphere such as education, employment, business, voting and political participation etc. Although a liberal/agency centred approach is significant in addressing the gendered disparities, and increasing the visibility of women, it overlooks structural gender inequalities that hinder women's economic advancement. For example, the unequal distribution of unpaid care work, unequal gender and power relations between men and women, patriarchy, and sociocultural norms. These are some of the underlying structural factors that impede women's economic empowerment.

The study found that these underlying factors are reproduced and reinforced at different institutional locations by the State, the market (workplace), community, and the family/household. Although the policy has to some extent been able to address the

structural gender inequalities (access to credit, equipment and business training) in Bubi and Gwanda's ASGM sector for the women miners, findings in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 suggests that, while the policy appears to have addressed the structural economic inequalities that women miners face in the market (such as access to credit, equipment, business and skills training), the policy still does not sufficiently address the structural factors that keep women in subordinate positions in their communities and households. Although the SRA highlights that institutions are not independent nor neutral, the policy, therefore, interacts with the market, the community, and households in reinforcing the structural gender inequalities in Bubi and Gwanda.

Granted that Zimbabwe is a country deeply rooted in patriarchy and cultural norms, it seems the informal rules interact with formal rules in keeping women in subordinate positions. In Chapter 6, the findings presented revealed that some of the male miners did not acknowledge women as miners in their own right. Instead, they maintained the notion that 'a woman's place was not in the mines but in the kitchen or household', even after some of the women miners had received State support. It shows that some of the men in Zimbabwean society still uphold the culturally determined gendered roles of what woman, girls, men, and boys should do. Even in Chapter 7, some of the women miners from Bubi and Gwanda highlighted that they still had to fulfil their household responsibilities despite their mining activities and having received State support. On the basis of the evidence available, it seems fair to suggest that the policy does interact with the market, the community, and the family/household in reinforcing the structural gender inequalities that hinder women's economic advancement.

The findings of this study contribute to the body of knowledge in applied policy-making and implementation by highlighting the role played by the NGP in supporting and/or impeding women's economic empowerment for women miners in Bubi and Gwanda – a study that has been under researched in Zimbabwe. The study's analysis of the NGP's implementation of empowerment programs towards women small-scale gold miners contributes to a form of women's economic empowerment that integrates both concepts of structure and agency into women's economic empowerment, rather than focusing on analysing a policy or program using each of the concepts independently. The study contributes to a body of knowledge that draws on a hybrid approach to women's economic empowerment by prominent scholars such as Kabeer (1994; 2005; 2012;

2017), Cornwall (2016), Chant (2008; 2012; 2016), Chant and Sweetman (2014), Razavi (2007; 2012) and Moyo *et al.* (2019) among others.

The study also found that the NGP and its empowerment programs did not take the intersecting forms of inequalities, such as gender and class, into account. While the findings of the study suggest that the NGP has made progress in challenging gender inequalities in access to and control of productive resources, class inequalities have been reinforced. The study's findings also emphasize the importance of policies to adopt intersectionality in their empowerment strategy as a lens to analyse the subordination and oppression of women in society. These findings contribute to literature on the intersections of gender and class by scholars such as O'Connor (1993), Korpi (2000), Acker (2006), Iyer *et al.* (2008), McCall (2005), Ceballos-Bedoya (2020) and Korpi *et al.* (2013).

The findings also contribute to widening the base of knowledge of women in the small-scale gold mining sector, which is a subject that is not adequately examined in women's economic empowerment literature. Although there are overlaps in literature on WEE and women in mining as discussed in Chapter 2, the findings also show that women small-scale gold miners face challenges in access to and control of productive resources, which is also echoed as one of the major challenges for women in the informal sector in Zimbabwe and across the world. Although many women in the ASGM sector are participating as workers, this study particularly contributes to the findings of several authors who have written about female small-scale mine owners such as Fisher (2007), Ndlovu *et al.* (2019), Dreschler (2001) and Lahiri-Dutt (2008; 2012).

This thesis makes an important contribution to the debates around the blurring distinctions between the formal and informal as well as the legal and illegal actors in the ASGM sector in Zimbabwe. Granted that claim owners often work with amakorokoza and Mashurugwi's and some of these may become claim owners and continue operating as before.

8.3 Areas for further research

This study would benefit from areas of future research in the following:

This study focused on the Women's Development Fund facility under the NGP's Broad-based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework (BBWEEF) on access to credit, skills and business training. Future research should explore the Zimbabwe Women's Microfinance Bank (ZWMFB) to understand issues with access to funding and to gather insights from women small-scale gold miners regarding their interactions with the bank and applications for funding from a financial institution that caters to women in business.

Further research is recommended to investigate the impact of the NGP in other mining districts and provinces in Zimbabwe. This research should aim to uncover any recurring patterns or similarities with regards to the effects of the NGP and its empowerment programmes for women engaged in small-scale gold mining in Zimbabwe. Given that the results of the present study are confined to the Bubi and Gwanda rural districts of Zimbabwe, it is also suggested that research be conducted in other sectors such as tourism, agriculture and manufacturing where women are also actively involved. This would aid a better understanding of the effects of the NGP and WEE programmes in these areas.

Despite the implementation of two National Gender Policies, women continue to face limited access to and control over productive resources, as well as low representation in decision-making positions. This disparity highlights a disconnection between the existence of well-formulated policies and their actual implementation, which is affected by factors such as political support, allocation of resources, and reception of empowerment programmes. Consequently, it is crucial for ongoing research to scrutinize public policies that are heavily promoted to ensure that grassroots participation and access to public resources are maximised.

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APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

Project Title: The Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (NGP) and Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE): A Study of Small Scale Gold Miners in the Bubi and Gwanda Districts, Zimbabwe.

Phoebe Moyo from the Department of Sociology, Rhodes University has requested my permission to participate in the above mentioned research project.

The nature and the purpose of the research project and of this informed consent declaration have been explained to me in a language that I understand. The aim of this study is: to examine the extent to which the National Gender Policy and its implementation has either reproduced or reversed gender and class inequalities in the small scale gold mining sector in Bubi and Gwanda districts.

Through your participation I hope to understand the role played by the National Gender Policy in supporting (or impeding) women's economic advancement in the small scale gold mining sector in Bubi and Gwanda districts. The results of this survey is intended to contribute to the completion of my Ph.D. studies. Participation is entirely voluntary and you are free to leave the interview/discussion anytime you want without a reason. The discussion will be audio recorded if you agree, and the anonymised transcripts of the audio/video recordings will be used by the researcher working on the project. The recordings will be deleted at the end of the research. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project.

The findings will be written up into my thesis and published in academic journals. However, confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained and that my name and identity will not be revealed to anyone who has not been involved in the conduct of the research.

I, Have read the above information / confirm that the above information has been explained to me in a language that I understand and I am aware of this document's contents. I have asked all questions that I wished to ask and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I fully understand what is expected of me during the research.

I have not been pressured in any way and I voluntarily agree to participate in the above-mentioned project.

.....

.....

.....

Participants signature

Witness

Date

Rhodes University, Research Office, Ethics
Ethics Coordinator: ethics-committee@ru.ac.za
t: +27 (0) 46 603 7727 f: +27 (0) 86 616 7707
Room 220, Main Admin Building, Drostdy Road, Grahamstown, 6139

**APPENDIX 2: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE - STATE
OFFICIALS**

POSITION OF KEY

INFORMANT:

DATE:

.....

Introductory script:

- Thank you for agreeing and taking the time to meet me today.
- Are you happy for me to record this so interview? If so, the recording and any transcriptions will be kept on my personal password protected laptop and destroyed once my study is finished.
- The topic looks at Zimbabwe’s National Gender Policy of 2013 – 2017 and women’s economic empowerment through a study of small scale gold miners in Bubi and Gwanda Districts.
- The purpose of this study is to find ways in which the NGP has disrupted or reinforced gender and class inequalities in access to and control of productive resources in the small-scale mining sector of Bubi and Gwanda District.
- All the data collected will be anonymous, so no one will know who you are, and your name will not be in any project outputs.
- This interview is going to last 45 minutes to an hour, and as the interviewer I am interested in your honest opinions and expertise as an expert on Zimbabwe’s National Gender Policy and women’s economic empowerment. We are here to learn something from you.
- There are no right or wrong answers and all views are valid.
- Your participation in this interview is voluntary and should you want to end the interview or not answer any specific questions this is okay - just let me know.

We are going to talk about Zimbabwe’s National Gender Policy (2013-2017) now.

1. What is the Ministry’s understanding of women’s economic empowerment?
2. What were the goals of Zimbabwe’s second National Gender Policy?
3. What type of programs were rolled out under this NGP?
4. What new resources were being made available by the NGP’s empowerment programs?
5. How were the programs under the NGP financed? What were the major challenges in ensuring these were adequately financed?
6. What constraints or potentials were being addressed through the NGPs empowerment programs? How were they identified and who was consulted?
7. What were the expected outcomes from the empowerment programs implemented under the NGP? How were they achieved? (**Please may you kindly provide data**)
8. How has the empowerment programs changed the relationship between the state and the women small scale gold miners in Bubi/Gwanda district?
9. How has the NGP changed the relations between the state and the small scale mining workers?
10. Who decided on which programs were prioritized and implemented under the NGP?
11. How did the Ministry of Women’s Affairs disseminate information on the roll out of the NGP and its empowerment programs in Bubi/Gwanda District? What were the processes?

12. What criteria was used in selecting beneficiaries for the NGP's empowerment programs? Who made the decisions on the criteria and on what basis were these decisions made?
13. What challenges did the Ministry face in implementing empowerment programs under the NGP?
14. What other sources of state support have women small scale gold miners in Bubi/Gwanda District benefited from?
15. How did these other sources of support either complement or hinder the implementation of the NGPs empowerment programs?

**APPENDIX 3: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE: KEY
STAKEHOLDERS/MINING ASSOCIATIONS**

Introductory script:

- Thank you for agreeing and taking the time to meet me today.
- Are you happy for me to record this so interview? If so, the recording and any transcriptions will be kept on my personal password protected laptop and destroyed once my study is finished.
- The topic looks at Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy of 2013 – 2017 and women's economic empowerment through a study of small scale gold miners in Bubi and Gwanda districts.
- The purpose of this study is to find ways in which the NGP has disrupted or reinforced gender and class inequalities in access to and control of productive resources in the small scale mining sector of Bubi and Gwanda Districts.
- All the data collected will be anonymous, so no one will know who you are, and your name will not be in any project outputs.
- This interview is going to last 45 minutes to an hour, and as the interviewer I am interested in your honest opinions and expertise as an expert on Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy and women's economic empowerment in the small scale gold mining sector. We are here to learn something from you.
- There are no right or wrong answers and all views are valid.
- Your participation in this interview is voluntary and should you want to end the interview or not answer any specific questions this is okay - just let me know.

We are going to talk about Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy (2013-2017) now.

1. What is your understanding of women's economic empowerment? Do you consider this important?
2. What were the aims of Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy?
3. What type of programs were rolled out under the NGP that women small scale gold miners in Bubi district benefited from?
4. How were these empowerment programs under the NGP financed? What were the major challenges in ensuring that these programs were adequately financed?
5. What challenges or possibilities were being addressed through the NGP's empowerment programs? How were they identified and who was consulted?
6. How was information disseminated by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender, Small to Medium Enterprise Development?
7. What criteria was used in selecting beneficiaries for the empowerment programs? How did women small scale gold miners in Bubi/Gwanda district get to know if they had qualified for the support?
8. What challenges were encountered by the Ministry in the implementation of empowerment programs in Bubi/Gwanda district?
9. What other sources of state support did women small scale gold miners in Bubi/Gwanda district benefit from?
10. How did these other sources of state support either compliment or hinder the NGP's empowerment programs?
11. Please describe the working relationship between men and women in the small scale gold mining sector in Bubi/Gwanda District.
12. How has the NGP changed or affected the working relationships between women who have received state support and men in the mining sector. How has this also affected the working relationships between women miners that

received support and other women that did not receive support? (Probe on the relations between women and the state, community and household?)

13. How have the empowerment programs run under the state changed people's perceptions of the state?

14. What more can be done by the state in improving women's access to and control of productive resources?

Thank you!

APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION - WOMEN MINERS

Icebreaker: Introduction interviews- the participants will be put into pairs so that they interview each other – to learn about one another’s background (family), marital status, how many children, work or passions. Then to introduce that person to the group. This exercise shall take about 5 - 10 minutes.

Activity 1: Deconstructing economic advancement

Before the exercise the facilitator could ask some of these questions that would prompt women to participate like;

1. How do you define economic advancement?
2. Do you feel that you are an economically empowered woman? What does this mean to you?
3. What are some of the factors that hinder women’s economic advancement in the small scale mining sector in Bubi/Gwanda District? What do you think can be done to overcome those barriers?

The purpose of this activity is to get see how well women small scale gold miners understand women’s economic empowerment.

Materials Required: Chart or chart sized pieces of paper, marker pens.

Conducting the activity: The participants are given blank charts and marker pens and asked to list all the things that they think make up women’s economic empowerment.

- The facilitator shall then put up the official definition from the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Small to Medium Enterprise Development and compare. This exercise will bring out the differences in understanding of the term and it will get the women small scale gold miners to think critically.
- If there are differences in the understanding of what economic advancement is, the facilitator shall ask the participants to elaborate more.

For instance the chart will be split into two columns

<p>What is economic advancement</p> <p><i>(This section is where participants will list down what they think makes up economic advancement)</i></p>	<p>Factors that limit economic advancement</p>
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Another chart will be added up on the wall with an official definition of economic advancement from the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Small to Medium Enterprise Development.

Activity 2: Women's Participation in small scale gold mining

This discussion is a story telling technique which requires women to open up about their experiences in the small scale gold mining sector in Bubi/Gwanda district. This is an oral activity hence, no materials are required.

The facilitator will start with a few prompt questions to get women to open up more in the discussion.

Prompt Questions

1. What motivated you to participate in small scale gold mining? How did you get capital to start your small scale mining activities (Include information about how you managed to register your mining titles (year of registration), gold processing mills)?
2. How do you manage your small scale gold mining activities, with other family/ household responsibilities? (*unpaid care work*)

Activity 3: The role of the NGP in supporting/impeding women's small scale gold miner's economic advancement and wellbeing.

Purpose: In this exercise we want to find out the extent to which the NGP has either reproduced or reversed gender and class inequalities in the small scale gold mining sector in Bubi district. The facilitator shall open the floor for discussions before getting into much more specific issues. The women small scale gold miners will be asked the following questions during this discussion session:

1. How did you come to know about the NGP and the empowerment programs implemented by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender, and Small to Medium Enterprise Development?
2. What has been your experience in working with the officials from the Ministry?

This open discussion shall assist in assessing whether the women small scale gold miners in Bubi district have experienced the NGP and to what extent. More so, it shall enable the researcher to assess whether the impact of the NGP has differed amongst the women miners according to their social status and class.

Materials required: Charts and Marker pens

Discussion Questions

3. What are the good and bad things about these empowerment programs provided by the State for women in ASM? What type of resources/support come with the empowerment programs run under the NGP?
4. What changes have occurred (if any) in your small scale gold mining activities and within your personal life due to the support you have received from the Ministry of Women's Affairs? What are the differences that you have seen from before you had access to state resources to now? Is this the same for all women?
5. What are difficulties do you face in trying to access productive resources provided by the State?
6. Do you feel that the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Small to Medium Enterprise Development is doing an adequate job in providing support to women small scale gold miners in Bubi/Gwanda District?
7. What other sources of assistance (from other Government Ministries/departments or NGOs) have you received for economic advancement? How has this impacted your life?

Participants are then required to write responses to these questions. At least 4 charts with marker pens will be handed over to the pairs so as to answer the questions. These charts will be displayed as follows.

- i. The first chart will detail the type of support the women small scale gold miners have received from the Ministry and the second column will detail the good things about the support received from the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

What type of support have you received from the Ministry of Women's Affairs?	What are the good things about the support you have received?	What are the bad things about the support/what has not worked about this type of support?

- ii. The second chart – participants will capture the changes (if any) that have occurred during and after the support they have received from the Ministry of Women's Affairs. These changes can be quantified in increased income from their mining activities, quality of life, and how it has affected their families.

What changes have you seen in your small scale mining activities after receiving support from the Ministry of Women's Affairs? (economic advancement)	What are the changes that have occurred personally, within your household and family (wellbeing) after the support you have received?

- iii. The third chart – The participants will be tasked to complete the chart by answering on what difficulties they have encountered in access to productive resources from the state, and how best these could be overcome.

What are the challenges faced in accessing resources from the State?	How best can these be overcome?

- iv. The fourth chart – Participants are tasked to answer the support other government departments, NGOs, or Private sector they have drawn on for their small scale mining activities, and in elaborating their role in supporting their economic advancement and wellbeing.

What other type of support have you drawn on for your economic advancement?	What changes have occurred due to the support you have received?

End of Activities! Thank You!

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW GUIDE MEN MINERS

DATE:

Introductory script:

- Thank you for agreeing and taking the time to meet me today.
- Are you happy for me to record this so interview? If so, the recording and any transcriptions will be kept on my personal password protected laptop and destroyed once my study is finished.
- The topic looks at Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy of 2013 – 2017 and women's economic empowerment through a study of small scale gold miners in Bubi and Gwanda Districts.
- The purpose of this study is to find ways in which the NGP has disrupted or reinforced gender and class inequalities in access to and control of productive resources in the small scale mining sector of Bubi/Gwanda District.
- All the data collected will be anonymous, so no one will know who you are, and your name will not be in any project outputs.
- This interview is going to last 45 minutes to an hour, and as the interviewer I am interested in your honest opinions and experience as a small scale gold miner. We are here to learn something from you not here to teach you.
- There are no right or wrong answers and all views are valid.
- Your participation in this interview is voluntary and should you want to end the interview or not answer any specific questions this is okay - just let me know.
- Before we get started please may you kindly fill in the participant survey and informed consent form.

We are now going to talk about the National Gender Policy

1. What made you choose small scale gold mining?
2. In your own understanding, what is women's economic empowerment? Do you consider this important?
3. How did you come to know about the NGP and its empowerment programs?
4. What type of support was being offered to women small scale gold miners from the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender, and Small to Medium Enterprise Development?
5. Please describe how the Bubi/Gwanda small scale mining sector has changed in regards to the NGP's empowerment programs for women? What was the small scale mining sector like before the implementation of the NGP's empowerment programs for women?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages about the type of support women small scale gold miners have received from the Ministry's empowerment programs?
7. Do you think the NGPs empowerment programs reached all women small scale gold miners in Bubi district? (*Please explain*).
8. How did you get the capital to start your small scale mining activities (include information about mining titles registration).
9. Can you describe the working relations between men and women in the Bubi/Gwanda small scale gold mining sector?
10. How are you finding your working relations with women small scale gold miners since they received state support? How has this also affected the working relationship between women that have received and those other women that have not?
11. Can you describe what has changed in the communities and family with the arrival of the NGP? (***Probe on women's position***)

12. What more can be done by the state to further support small scale gold miners by the State?

APPENDIX 6: INTERVIEW GUIDE - WOMEN MINERS

DATE:

Introductory script:

- Thank you for agreeing and taking the time to meet me today.
- Are you happy for me to record this so interview? If so, the recording and any transcriptions will be kept on my personal password protected laptop and destroyed once my study is finished.
- The topic looks at Zimbabwe's National Gender Policy of 2013 – 2017 and women's economic empowerment through a study of small scale gold miners in Bubi and Gwanda Districts.
- The purpose of this study is to find ways in which the NGP has disrupted or reinforced gender and class inequalities in access to and control of productive resources in the small scale mining sector of Bubi and Gwanda Districts.
- All the data collected will be anonymous, so no one will know who you are, and your name will not be in any project outputs.
- This interview is going to last 45 minutes to an hour, and as the interviewer I am interested in your honest opinions and experience as a small scale gold miner in Bubi District. We are here to learn something from you not here to teach you.
- There are no right or wrong answers and all views are valid.
- Your participation in this interview is voluntary and should you want to end the interview or not answer any specific questions this is okay - just let me know.
- Before we get started please may you kindly fill in the participant survey and informed consent form?

We are now going to talk about the National Gender Policy

1. What does women's economic empowerment mean to you?
2. How did you come to know about the NGP and its empowerment programs?
3. What type of support have you received from the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Community and Small to Medium Enterprise Development?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages about the type of support you have received from the Ministry's programs?
5. What are the changes that have occurred in your small scale gold mining activities after receiving support from the Ministry of Women's Affairs? (Economic advancement). *Describe how things were before you received and after you received support.*
6. What are the changes that have occurred in your personal and family life (wellbeing) after receiving support? Describe how things were in your household before the state support?
7. What challenges have you encountered in trying to access productive resources/support from the state?
8. How best could these constraints be overcome?
9. According to you, has state support been adequate? What do you consider to be adequate support and where should it come from?
10. What other sources of support have you received from other stakeholders e.g. NGOs, Churches, Business community and other Government departments?

We now talk about your small scale gold mining activities

11. How did you become involved in small scale gold mining?
12. How did you get the capital to start your small scale mining activities (include information about mining titles registration).

13. Please describe the working relationship between women and men in the Bubi small scale gold mining sector?
14. How has the state support you have received affected your working relationship with men in the Bubi/Gwanda small scale gold mining sector?
How has this also affected your working relationship with other women that did not receive state support?
15. Can you describe how the state support you received has changed your position within your community, the state and family?
16. How do you manage your small scale mining activities with other family/household responsibilities? (*unpaid care work*)
17. What other activities are you engaged in that generate income for you and your family?
18. What are the challenges that you face in your small scale mining activities and how have you overcome these challenges?
19. What more can be done by the state in supporting women small scale gold miners in Bubi/Gwanda District?

Thank you!

APPENDIX 7: PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Participant Code:
 Date of Interview: Age:.....
 Number of Children: minor children (under
 18years):

Background Information (*Please mark with an X where applicable*)

1. Gender:

Male	
Female	

2. Marital Status:

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Separated	
Living Together	

Are you the breadwinner in your household:

3. Occupation:

Employed	
Self- employed	
Business Owner	
Farmer	
Pensioner	

If you're a business owner specify what type of
 business.....

4. Mining Activities

**4.1 What are your average daily/monthly earnings from
 mining?.....**

Are your mining activities registered? Include year of registration	
Unregistered	

4.2 Are you a member of any Mining Association in Bubi District:

Yes	
No	

5. Have you been a beneficiary of any Government Assistance Programs:

Yes	
No	

APPENDIX 8: ETHICS CERTIFICATE

21/01/2021

Phoebe Moyo

Email: g19m0064@campus.ru.ac.za

Review Reference: 2020-1250-3469

Dear Dr Laura Alfens

Title: The Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (NGP) and Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE): A Study of Small Scale Gold Miners in Bubi District, Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe

Principal Investigator: Dr Laura Alfens

Collaborators: Miss Phoebe Moyo,

This letter confirms that the above research proposal has been reviewed and **APPROVED** by the Rhodes University Human Ethics Committee (RU-HEC). Your Approval number is: 2020-1250-3469

Approval has been granted for 1 year. An annual progress report will be required in order to renew approval for an additional period. You will receive an email notifying when the annual report is due.

Please ensure that the ethical standards committee is notified should any substantive change(s) be made, for whatever reason, during the research process. This includes changes in investigators. Please also ensure that a brief report is submitted to the ethics committee on the completion of the research. The purpose of this report is to indicate whether the research was conducted successfully, if any aspects could not be completed, or if any problems arose that the ethical standards committee should be aware of. If a thesis or dissertation arising from this research is submitted to the library's electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) repository, please notify the committee of the date of submission and/or any reference or cataloging number allocated.

Sincerely,



Prof Arthur Webb

Chair: Rhodes University Human Ethics Committee, RU-HEC

cc: Mr. Siyanda Manqele - Ethics Coordinator