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① ZIMBABWE

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# CONSULTANCY REPORTS

21

ZIMBABWE INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

**Structural Adjustment  
In Zimbabwe: Its  
Impact on Women**

R.S. Maya

13



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STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT IN ZIMBABWE:  
ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN

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by  
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT

AFC	Agricultural Finance Corporation
COMMUN.	Communal Area Farmers
FEPD	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
FX	Foreign Exchange
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LSCF	Large-Scale Commercial Farmers
SSCF	Small-Scale Commercial Farmers
SEDCO	Small Enterprises Development Corporation
RESET	Resettlement Area Farmers
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions



## PREFACE

The Ministry of Co-operative and Community Development and Women's Affairs through the Canadian Agency for International Development have commissioned ZIDS to assess the impact of structural adjustment programmes of the Zimbabwe Government on women in Zimbabwe.

This task is unusually difficult because of four basic reasons: First, there is no clear definition in Zimbabwe of what programmes of Government constitute structural adjustment effort or are intended to effect structural adjustment in the economy.

Second, there is no definite pronouncement on the part of Government that Zimbabwe has embarked on a programme of structural adjustment. Rather, Government strongly denies implementing International Monetary Fund type of structural adjustment, let alone doing so at the behest of the IMF (see Parliamentary Debate, September 6, 1983)<sup>1</sup> There also exist rather incoherent claims or arguments by Government that Zimbabwe has begun to or is preparing to effect its own form of structural adjustment. In an economic policy statement in 1982 Senior Minister Chidzero indicated a move by Government to institute structural adjustment when he said, in explaining a decision to tighten foreign currency allocations, that:

We must take measures which will promote exports and will sustain production for export for our minerals, agricultural produce, and manufactures. To do these things we must take a number of policy measures for adjustment.

Speaking at a World Bank-sponsored seminar on Structural Adjustment in 1987 the Minister of Trade and Commerce rejected structural adjustment as seen by the IMF and World Bank as follows:

I am persuaded to believe that the Structural Adjustment that is expected of us is an adjustment to suit our masters rather than to suit us.<sup>2</sup>

He criticized mandatory exchange rate devaluation saying they do not result in increasing exports of manufactured goods. He also criticized trade liberalization for the same reasons. [Minister's Opening remarks at the World Bank seminar held at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, March 28, 1988]<sup>3</sup>. During discussions at the same conference, the Minister of Industry and Technology equally opposed Structural Adjustment.

Thirdly, the impact of any such activities on women is simply difficult to quantify. Fourthly, Government interventions are occurring in the midst of a general economic policy programme which seeks to re-orientate the economy under a concept not quite with the idea of structural adjustment i.e. transition to socialism.

For these reasons the paper begins with an attempt to define structural adjustment in the Zimbabwean context and to distinguish among activities of Government those interventions which could be defined as structural adjustment.

---

1 Parliamentary Debates: September 1983.

2 Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe *Quarterly Economic and Statistical Review*, September 1982, p.21.

3 This is an unpublished statement by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, Cde Oliver Munyaradzi. The Victoria Falls Conference on Structural Adjustment referred to here was sponsored by the World Bank and was attended by various countries from the region.

## SUMMARY OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for this study were, in general, to:

- evaluate the impact of the Zimbabwe Government's structural adjustment activities on women.
- review measures taken by Government to cushion women from the negative impacts of these structural adjustment activities.
- recommend approaches to structural adjustment which would be most beneficial to women.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Zimbabwe has neither fully implemented structural adjustment nor has it clearly stated its position regarding the use of structural adjustment in its management of the economy.

However, Government has, while strongly criticizing the IMF/World Bank approach to structural adjustment, sought to effect structural adjustment in the economy and to apply its own brand as well as conventional IMF instruments of structural adjustment. The Government's brand of structural adjustment seeks to satisfy the stated objective of strengthening the productive sectors of the economy. This is done in the contradictory context of a programme for transition to socialism and standing recognition of the need for meaningful social spending.

In applying structural adjustment, Government does not appear to consider in "package form" the impacts of structural adjustment on women nor does it consider any immediate compensatory cushioning. The removal of consumer, however, has been tied to minimum wage enactments.

The activities of Government in general do seek to guarantee the security of women under a national macro-economic programme which seeks to generally elevate women into a position of equality and self-reliance in the economy. This programme, if successful, would make it unnecessary to treat women as a special and disadvantaged group needing cushioning from the impacts of structural adjustment.

The programme has, so far, only made notable progress in expanding social, public, health and educational facilities for women. These facilities have a direct bearing on the economic advancement of women.

The one area where Government's approach has failed is in effecting a transition by women to meaningful management or ownership positions in the productive sectors.

Generally, the impact of structural adjustment on women is hard to determine. Only a few of the instruments analysed in this paper had a direct determinable bearing on women. These are, the removal of consumer subsidies, credit facilitation for agricultural production, tax adjustment and producer subsidies.

*PART I:*

**REVIEW OF STRUCTURAL  
ADJUSTMENT ACTIVITIES  
AND  
SOME CUSHIONING ARRANGEMENTS  
BY  
GOVERNMENT**

## DEFINITION OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Structural Adjustment can generally be defined as the re-orientation of the economy towards a specific system of relationships among local sectors of the economy or society on the one hand and between the national economy and the international economy on the other hand. The convention to date tends to identify structural adjustment with IMF and/or World Bank mandated measures which see primarily to:

- Reduce government involvement in determining the sectorial relationships in the economy – i.e. liberalize the local market;
- Liberalize trade mainly by opening up the local market to foreign products and lifting protection on the local industry.
- Evolve an export led-process of industrial development.
- Reduce government social spending mainly by cutting or reducing social support or subsidy programmes.
- Relinquish the activities of public sector statutory production or service organisations to private hands particularly for the purpose of improving on efficiency.
- Encourage private self-interested initiative as a path to economic development.

Generally, it has become a submission of critics of the IMF and World Bank that these structural adjustment guidelines are intended not to benefit the implementing country but to guarantee that these two institutions can recover their money from the Third World.

As stated earlier, the Zimbabwe Government has denied the influence, let alone instruction by the IMF or World Bank in its policy interventions; but has admitted considering its own form of structural adjustment whose objective is to shift the economy towards a position where it could be "self-financing", that is, a position whereby the productive sector can both finance itself and support the budgetary load of social and other non-productive elements of the national programme.

The Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development has two major papers coming up on this subject. One is on trade liberalization; two are on the subject of subsidies.

The basic instrument of the expenditure shifting programme - structural adjustment is, according to some of officials of Government, to shift resources initially to the productive sector of the economy or at least have the Budget deficit applied to the financing of the productive rather than the unproductive sector. This appears to be the position of Government since the announcement of the 1988/89 Budget.

The instruments used in the Zimbabwe type of structural adjustment so far have not been made very explicit. However, there have been a number of activities and instruments which fall within the purview of the Zimbabwean concept of structural adjustment as well as those which would appear in the IMF list of structural adjustment prescriptions. There are yet other instruments whose effects would negate both the Zimbabwean objectives and the IMF objectives at one point of the other.

We discuss below these instruments and how they have been used in the Zimbabwean economy on the one hand and how Government has sought to cushion women from the adverse effects of these instruments on the other hand.

## STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT INSTRUMENTS

As stated earlier, the working definition of structural adjustment for this paper is those activities of government which are intended to or would have the effect of shifting the economy towards a position whereby it becomes self-financing. These are activities which shift available resources to the productive sector and, as a corollary, those activities which reduce resource availability to the non-productive sector.

To date, the post-independence Government of Zimbabwe has used the following methods of intervention in this regard.

- Exchange Rate Devaluation
- Removal of Consumer Subsidies
- Use of Producer Subsidies
- Price Controls
- Income Controls
- Labour Relations Controls
- Educational Subsidies - tuition support
- Investment Controls
- Import Restrictions
- Import Liberalization
- Export Promotion
- Land Reform
- Rent Control
- Credit Support for Agriculture
- Credit Support to Small Enterprises
- Welfare Spending
- Expenditure Switching
- Transport Subsidies
- Health Care Subsidies

Of these instruments only a few can be described as belonging to the concept of structural adjustment. These are import liberalization, export promotion, credit support, removal of consumer subsidies, reduction in welfare spending, and exchange rate devaluation. The issue of free tuition is under discussion. Government may consider withdrawing this educational support.

As stated earlier, these instruments have been used in the absence of a clear policy on structural adjustment. We attempt below to "contextualize" such instruments and to examine any cushioning measures associated with each instrument.

## Exchange Rate Devaluation

This instrument was applied in 1983 when the Zimbabwe Dollar was devalued by 20%. This devaluation was done in the wake of unpublicized Government negotiations with the IMF on what became a standby agreement reached in March 1983 between Government and the IMF. Neither the devaluation nor the secret negotiations with the IMF were popular with the public, some Members of Parliament and the industrial establishment. Parliament, the academics, and the public feared that the actions of Government in this and prior regards were either at the behest of the IMF or voluntary submissions by Government in preparation for an agreement with the IMF<sup>4</sup>

The industrial establishment were concerned with the immediate effect of the devaluation on debt and on the import disadvantages of the devalued dollar.

It has never become clear whether the use of this instrument was local discretion or instructed by the IMF.

Exchange rate devaluation is intended to raise the "exportability" of Zimbabwe products but has the counter-balancing effect of reducing local capacity to import foreign inputs to industry. In the absence of adequate foreign exchange supplies, a guaranteed export market, and in the absence of a sufficient local supply of capital equipment and inputs to manufacturing, it is difficult to visualize how the devaluation could benefit economic expansion.

## Removal of Consumer Subsidies

Early after independence, 1981/82, Government adopted a policy which would allow the gradual reduction of consumer subsidies with the view finally to eliminate these subsidies them particularly in areas where subsidies were seen to benefit groups other than those they were intended to benefit, and in cases where they were considered economically inefficient. Table 1 shows the level and rate of removal for consumer subsidies for the period 1980-84.

Government argues that subsidies exert an undue burden on the fiscus and benefit the high-income urban people more than the low-income rural groups. Subsidies have thus been removed from consumer items. This is in line with the objective of shifting resources away from the non-productive sectors of the economy to the benefit of the productive sector.

Government, however, tied the removal of subsidies to

- the incomes policy, and
- the pricing policy

On pricing policy, it established in 1982 a Price Control Board and a Price Control Committee whose functions were:

- To advise the Minister of Trade and Commerce on matters relating to price control.

---

4 See *Zimbabwe in the Grip of the IMF*, Moto, April 1983.

- To check on profiteering and exploitation of the public by traders.
- To determine whether or not basic commodities are available to the Zimbabwean public at reasonable prices.

**Table I**  
**PHASING OUT OF CONSUMER SUBSIDIES**

	1980	1981	%	Change	1982	%	Change	1983	%	Change
Bakers flour	14.9	-	8.5	-75%	+	-100%	0	0		
Edible Oils	5.0	-	6.2	24%	+	-100%	0	0		
Maize Meal	12.5	-	64.8	418%	-	-	0			
Opaque beer	0.7	-	0.4	-43%	+	100%	+	0		
Total: Consumer	8.1	33.0	307%	79.9		142%	52.0*	35%	28.0*	-46%
Total: Producer and Consumer	37.7	68.7	82%	122.1		78%	126.5	4%	64.5	-49%

Source:

*Estimates of Expenditure* for 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1984.

\* Wheat and maize subsidy only

- Data not available

Under this arrangement Price Control was instituted on various products as shown in Table 2. These price controls followed a general freeze of prices for all commodities by Government in 1981 including the prices of cars. Price controls, however, are basically nominal as Government is unable to enforce these controls at retail stations.

Under the incomes policy Government enacted minimum wages on the one hand and imposed wage freezes and controlled income adjustments for both industry and the public sector on the other hand. Minimum wages have been instituted over the years as shown in Table 3.

Other instruments which affect incomes, particularly those of women, are in the *Labour Relations Act*. These prohibit discriminatory wage practices on the basis of sex and grant paid maternity leave under certain conditions to women. [See *The Labour Relations Act*]

Under this wage development, the average real income for a worker paid a minimum wage declined by about 5% from the 1980 level and by about 20% from the 1982 peak of \$83.90.

Real wages for agricultural and domestic workers on minimum wage, however, increased by about 43% during 1980 and 1988.



**Table 2**  
**SOME PRODUCTS WITH CONTROLLED PRICES : CHANGES IN THEIR PRICES BETWEEN**  
**1982 AND 1987**

<i>Controlled Product</i>		<i>% Change in Price</i>
Olivine bottles	375ml	83,6
	750ml	81,7
Panol bottles	375ml	83,3
	750ml	81,7
Helio bottles	750ml	82,5
Covo bottles	375ml	83,6
Solo bottles	738ml	82,5
Roil bottles	375ml	83,3
Holsum fat	125g	83,3
	250g	81,8
	500g	83,8
<i>Retail Beef Prices</i>		<i>% Change in Price</i>
Fillet (per kg)		88,7
Rump steak		101,2
Topside		98,3
Brisket		
<i>Soft Drinks</i>		<i>% Change in Price 83-87</i>
175ml nips		50
300ml kingsize		42.1
750ml		42.5
750ml screw top		40.5

**Table 3**  
**MINIMUM WAGE STIPULATIONS (1980-1988)**

Year	Nominal Minimum Wage (Average)	Real Minimum Wage (Average)	Real Minimum Wage (Agriculture)	Domestic
1980	70.00	70.00	30.00	30.00
1981	85.00	75.00	30.00	30.00
1982	105.00	83.00	30.00	30.00
1983	115.00	74.64	50.00	50.00
1984	125.00	67.50	65.00	65.00
1985	143.00	71.20	75.00	75.00
1986	158.00	68.79	-	-
1987	158.00	61.17	-	-
1988	182.00	66.84	115.50	120.50

**Source:** Column 1 – ZCTU  
Columns 3 and 4 – *Government Gazette*

The general income of people not on the minimum wage is periodically reviewed by Government and increased on a percent schedule. Some of these increases are shown in tables 4-1 to 4-3.

**Table 4-1**  
**MAXIMUM RATES OF INCREASES ON INCOME (1988)**

Annual Income on 1st March, 1988	Maximum rate of increase on income
1. Up to \$36 000	15%
2. over \$3 600 up to \$5 400	14%
3. Over \$5 400 up to \$7 200	13%
4. Over \$7 200 up to \$10 800	12%
5. Over \$10 800 up to \$14 400	11%
6. Over \$14 400 up to \$18 000	10%
7. Over \$18 000 up to \$21 600	9%
8. Over \$21 600 up to \$25 200	7%
9. Over \$25 200 up to \$28 800	5%
10. Over \$28 800 up to \$32 400	4%
11. Over \$32 400 up to \$36 000	3%
12. Over \$36 000 up to \$39 600	2.5%
13. Over \$39 600 up to \$45 000	2%
14. Over \$45 000	0%

Source: *Government Gazette Statutory Instrument 26A 1988.*

### Producer Subsidies

Producer subsidies are granted by Government for agricultural production. These include:

- Statutory producer prices which exceed the price at which the Grain Marketing Board can sell grain to its customers.
- Credit facilitation to farmers through the Agricultural Finance Corporation, AFC.
- Extension of grain marketing facilities to remote farming areas.
- Resettlement of communal farmers in areas of more productive agricultural land to redress the colonial deprivations owing to the relegation of communal land farmers to areas of poor soil. There are arguments, however, that the resettlement programme is not placing these farmers on prime crop production land. Rather communal farmers are being placed on poor quality ranch land to produce crops.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See Sam Moyo, "The Land Question", *The Political Economy of Transition Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa*, Ibbo Mandaza (ed.) 1986.

**Table 4-2**  
**MAXIMUM INCREMENT RATES: JANUARY 1982 INCOMES POLICY**

INCOME \$	MAXIMUM INCREASE PER CENT
Up to	
1 200	23,5
2 200	20,0
3 000	17,0
4 000	16,0
5 000	15,0
6 000	14,5
7 000	14,0
8 000	13,5
9 000	13,0
10 000	12,5
12 000	9,0
15 000	5,0
18 000	2,0
20 000	1,0

Source: *Government Gazette*

**Table 4-3**  
**MAXIMUM SALARY INCREMENTS: JANUARY 1985**

INCOME \$	MAXIMUM INCREASE PER CENT
Up to	
3 600	15,0
7 200	14,0
10 800	12,5
14 400	11,0
18 000	9,5
21 600	8,0
25 200	6,5
28 500	5,0
32 800	3,5
36 000	2,0

Source: *Government Gazette*

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8. Over \$21 600 up to \$25 200	7%
9. Over \$25 200 up to \$28 800	5%
10. Over \$28 800 up to \$32 400	4%
11. Over \$32 400 up to \$36 000	3%
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5 000	15,0
6 000	14,5
7 000	14,0
8 000	13,5
9 000	13,0
10 000	12,5
12 000	9,0
15 000	5,0
18 000	2,0
20 000	1,0

Source: *Government Gazette*

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7 200	14,0
10 800	12,5
14 400	11,0
18 000	9,5
21 600	8,0
25 200	6,5
28 500	5,0
32 800	3,5
36 000	2,0

Source: *Government Gazette*

### COMPARISON OF LOANS GRANTED BY AFC

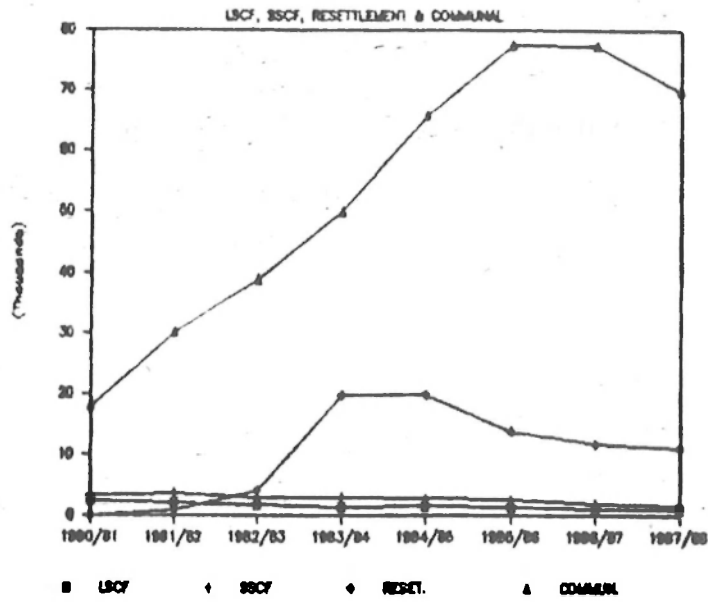


Fig. I

### COMPARISONS OF LOANS GRANTED BY AFC

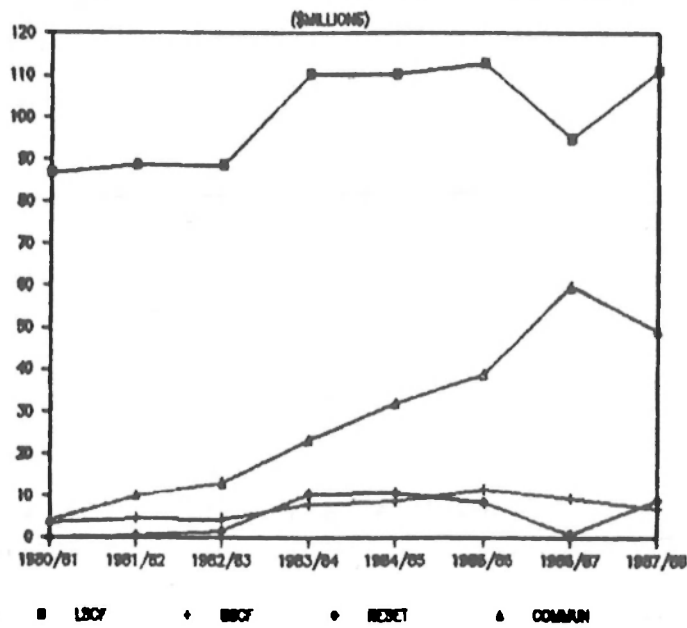


Fig. II

### COMPARISON OF LOANS GRANTED BY AFC AS A

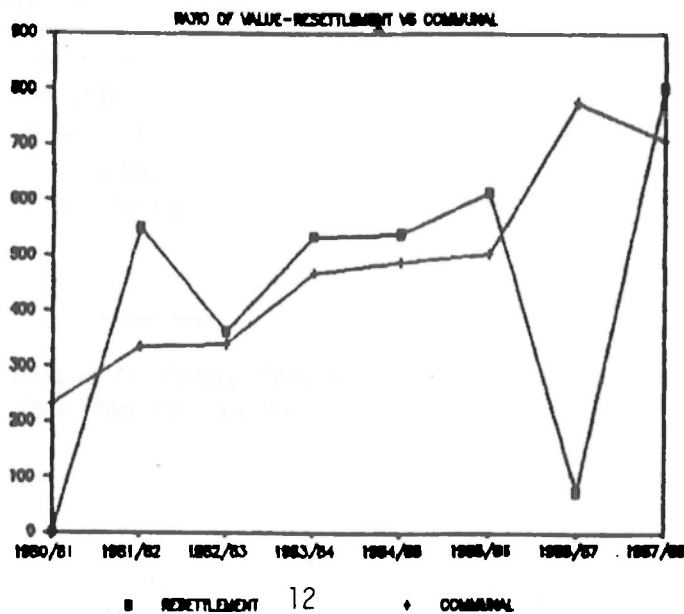
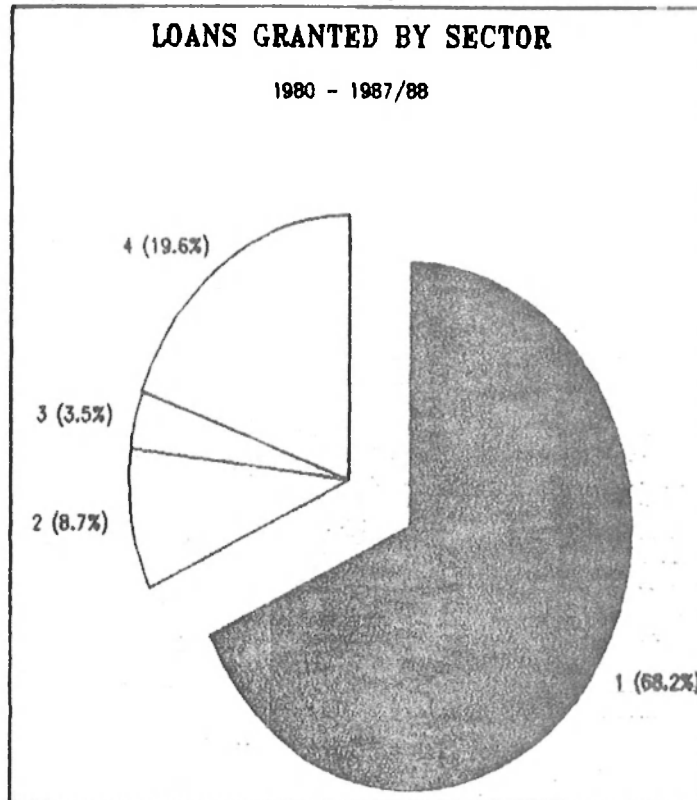


Fig. III

Fig. 4



1 = LSCF    3 = RESETTLEMENT  
2 = SSCF    4 = COMMUNAL

Producer prices above market prices are granted to enable communal land producers to compensate for high input costs and to enjoy a certain margin on sales.

The level of subsidies to producers can be estimated by the value of subsidy payments made by Government to the Grain Marketing Board. These payments are shown in Table 5 for the period 1985/86 - 1987/88.

The credit support is difficult to quantify nor could it safely be treated as a subsidy. The arrangement, however, is that Government acts as guarantor for AFC loans given to communal and resettlement area farmers. If AFC fails to recoup loans from farmers in this sector they have recourse to Government for the recovery of such loans.

The behaviour of AFC loan grants to the three subsectors is depicted in Figures 1, 2, and 3. Figure 1 shows trends in the number of loans given by subsector; Figure 2 shows trends in the value of loans; and Figure 3 compares the value of loans with the volume of loans; i.e. value to volume ratio, for communal farmers and resettlement farmers. Figure 4 shows a sectorial breakdown of the value of total loans given since 1980.

AFC lending conditions are mainly that the borrower be a registered farmer in his/her own name, and that he/she submits a viable farming programme. There is also consideration of previous farming records, collateral security, and the applicants' own contribution to the cost of the farming programme for which the loan is being sought. The AFC conditions are quite relaxed and have enabled the institution to lend to a growing number of farmers since 1980 as shown in Figure 1.

The extension of grain marketing facilities and resettlement cannot easily be defined as subsidies as they are essential elements of normal national development. Resettlement occurs as part of a land redressing system with its roots in the colonial era.

AFC loans, however, constitute a direct subsidy in that they carry a lower interest rate (13%) than the commercial banks lending rate which is 23% at present.

### Import Liberalization

This instrument was instituted in October 1987 and affected mainly consumer items imported by individual citizens for personal use.

Basically the liberalization enabled individuals or families to import personal items without duty up to \$500 per person and without licence. Restrictions on the composition of items were lifted. Sources at the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development say that, under this arrangement, families and individuals brought in an odd assortment of items from holiday and business at twice the rate of previous periods. A significant amount of this value was paid for motor vehicles, sewing machines, knitting machines, typewriters, cash registers, motor spares, VCRs, TVs and small household items from Botswana and South Africa.

**Table 5**  
**GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY PAYMENTS TO THE GRAIN MARKETING BOARD**  
**(AGRICULTURAL TRADING SUBSIDIES)**  
**\$ MILLION**

Agricultural Trading Subsidies	1985/86	1986/87	1987/88
Maize	47.99	44.07	88.78
Soya Beans	2.51	1.63	1.62
Wheat	10.73	6.06	17.50
Sorghum	.74	-	3.70
Groundnuts	.01	.23	.74
Mhunga	.40	5.26	8.27
Sunflower	-	.17	-
Rapoko	-	1.70	3.27
	62.38	59.12	123.88

Source: GMB

During this period there was a significant increase in holiday trips to Botswana and South Africa mainly by women who later applied their imported goods to income generation by selling these at much higher prices locally.

Within this short period of time holidays and holiday allowances had been transformed into what Government considered illegal misappropriation of funds into consumer imports. As Government argues, these funds could be used for the preferred investment imports to the industrial imports. Hence Government decided to curtail this practice by



imposing tougher conditions on imports. These included the imposition of limits on the amount allowable for the purchase of personal items and the condition that an import licence had to be produced for electrical and electronic goods. The major impact of this condition was to make it almost impossible for travellers to use their holiday allowances for the purchase of cars.

Import liberalization with respect to industry and other major sectors of the economy was not significant mainly due to foreign currency limitations.

Indicators of this constraint are shown in Table 5-1 below.

Table 5-1  
FOREIGN EXCHANGE INDICATORS

	Debt Service Ratio	Machinery Import/GDP	Total Imports/GDP	Total Exports/GDP	Total Value/GDP
1980	2.9	6.57	20.70	24.32	5.49E8
1981	4.4	6.82	25.11	24.43	8.09E8
1982	16.0	9.6	25.10	21.90	1.02E9
1983	26.0	7.01	23.42	17.47	1.08E9
1984	30.0	6.39	20.28	19.59	1.06E9
1985	-	5.79	20.17	21.36	1.20E9
1986	-	7.56	19.81	21.16	1.45E9
1987	-	-	19.93	20.65	1.64E9
1988	35	-	-	-	-

Source: Maya, R.S. "North-South Dialogue The Current State of Debate on Co-operation in the Area of Science and Technology", ZIDS Document 1988.

No import liberalization as such has taken place, although there have been sporadic increases in foreign currency allocations for industrial inputs.

Recently the Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development announced measures to assist manufacturers to import capital equipment for new projects. Zimbabwe Government Financial Statement, July 21, 1988. These would be in the form of import duty and sales tax refunds on capital goods for new industrial projects.

### Export Promotion

Export Promotion is instituted in the form of fiscal export incentives which include (a) a duty drawback scheme which provides manufacturing imports with duty-free status (b) a 9% export subsidy which is applicable to all manufacturing goods, (c) an export revolving fund to guarantee foreign exchange to export producers in manufacturing and, since 1987, in agriculture and mining.

TABLE 6-1  
STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
(all Secondary Schools)

FORM	I		II		III		IV		V		VI/VII		VIII		SPECIAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1979	9740	8612	8756	7275	7684	5930	6934	5237	1179	962	1433	960	692	375	253	163
1980	12402	9799	9609	7516	8945	6946	7310	5481	1081	849	1571	1070	1006	407	188	121
1981	49435	34055	14383	11630	9751	7135	8652	6671	1379	1072	1582	959	1175	498	193	119
1982	57281	40471	47822	32323	14924	11494	9253	6503	1359	932	1983	1141	1210	519	232	121
1983	64432	46293	56880	38659	46283	30289	14078	10431	1293	936	2487	1193	1954	936	186	148
1984	80002	58902	62218	42875	55006	36071	44085	28929	1738	1374	2791	1234	2142	789	134	143
1985	84493	63509	78591	54801	59714	39953	55697	33820	2075	1311	3934	1459	2390	891	137	155
1986	95525	70643	81515	56721	74952	48959	60767	37053	4483	1816	3983	1270	158	177	-	-
TOTAL	453310	332285	359774	251800	276659	185787	206886	132161	14587	9302	19799	9289	10727	4572	1323	970

TABLE 6-1  
STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

GRADE	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		SPECIAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1979	87044	83046	72503	67465	70744	59362	57771	51781	53132	45517	48981	39306	47031	35179	479	245
1980	190304	186688	107714	100185	88707	81713	75964	68782	67265	58712	62390	53800	55364	47335	353	218
1981	221426	212876	175945	165738	107355	93775	84533	74637	73958	63959	68187	53307	59753	56059	0	0
1982	205352	203418	212270	209227	181003	170762	149540	106874	98091	85921	89306	74777	84492	64394	1047	741
1983	185805	182524	188924	185926	201853	191181	171227	151805	118437	101380	99745	83753	94163	74606	300	158
1984	180700	177548	171458	167665	180222	177039	187686	183318	163391	148212	116617	96581	100723	80324	1099	718
1985	175184	171775	164317	159375	166688	162543	174477	170637	181911	173339	160184	141863	118544	93556	1175	740
1986	178894	175787	158912	154186	158917	154988	160296	157682	168754	163936	176045	164975	156615	132114	1733	1249
TOTAL	1424719	1393062	1252043	1210367	1155189	1093363	1031494	972516	924939	840916	821155	708362	716693	577987	6186	4069

## Free Education

Free education is a misnomer in Zimbabwe for what is in fact free tuition granted only for primary education.

Up to this level parents do not pay tuition but they bear other educational costs in the form of building funds, school uniforms, and, in some cases, supplementary teachers' levies. Generally, the tuition fee itself is a small portion of the educational budget a family must bear.

There is no free tuition at secondary school level. Parents bear the cost of tuition and all other levies. Fees and levies for secondary school vary widely depending on the school.

At tertiary school level, education is not free. University students get loans from Government. Polytechnic College students pay a standard Government stipulated fee.

We analysed some elements of the educational system in order to determine any salient features of the position of women in education, particularly in the formal educational system. This was done by analysing enrolment patterns for women at the three levels of formal education, i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary.

Enrolment figures for females and males are shown in Table 6-1 for secondary schools. Table 6-2 shows similar figures for primary schools for the period 1979-1986. These figures are disaggregated by sex, form or grade, and by year.

Enrolment at the University and Harare Polytechnic is shown in Table 6-3. An estimated 22% of the students at university are females. At the Harare Polytechnic female students enrolment has averaged 21% of total enrolment over the period 1980-1988.

Table 6-3  
ENROLMENT IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

YEAR	UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE			HARARE POLYTECHNIC		
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1980	1 746	494	2 240	965	16	981
1981	1 956	569	2 525	1 014	274	1 288
1982	2 371	680	3 051	916	298	1 214
1983	2 815	805	3 620	1 123	284	1407
1984	3 168	933	4 131	999	307	1 306
1985	3 632	1 110	4 742	1 257	366	1 623
1986	4 486	1 400	5 886	1 495	406	1 901
1987	5 197	1 676	6 873	1 922	476	2 398
1988	5 769	1 930	7 699	1 980	666	2 646

Source: University of Zimbabwe and Harare Polytechnic

The total enrolment of students in primary school increased rapidly (138% from 1979 to 1982, and levelled off gradually between 1982 and 1986). As shown in Figure 5-1 enrolment fell faster for male students than for females at primary school level. Secondary school enrolment at form 6's, however, shows different trends. [See Figure 5-2]. At this level

Fig. 5-1  
**COMPARATIVE ENROLMENT TRENDS**

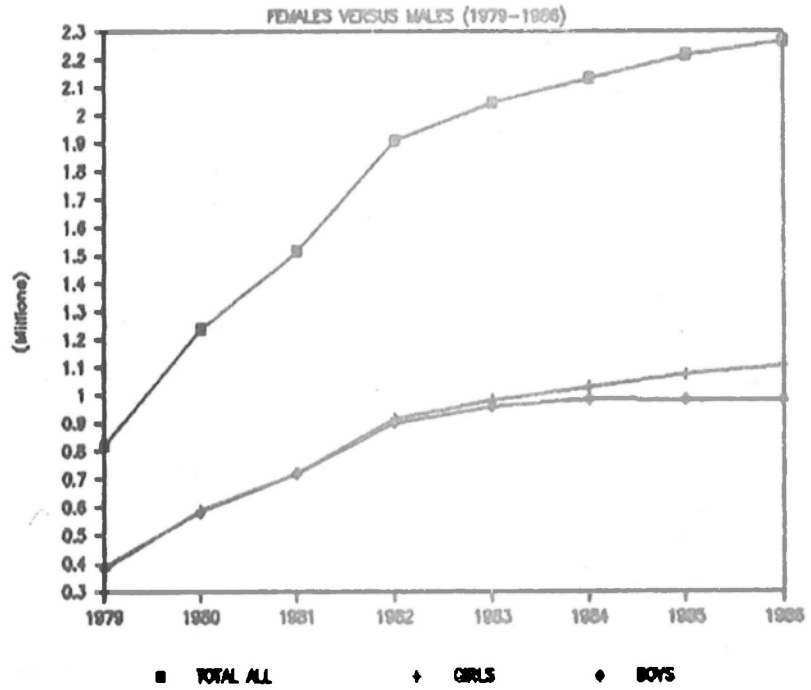
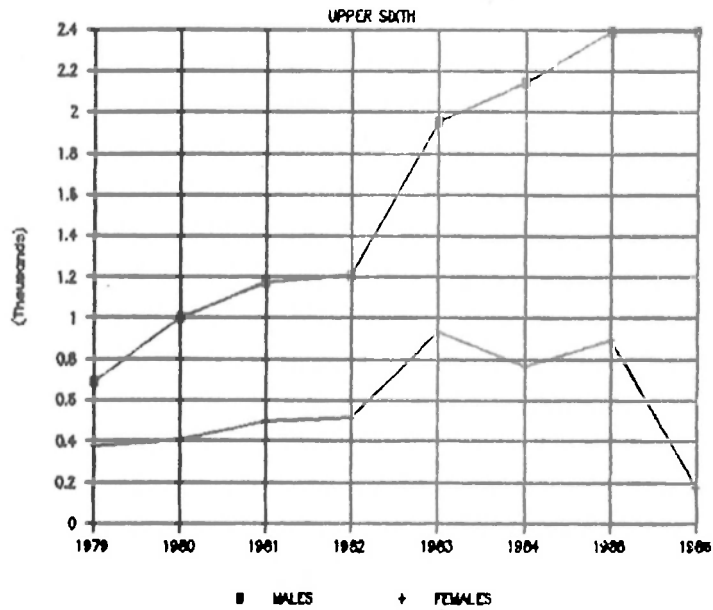


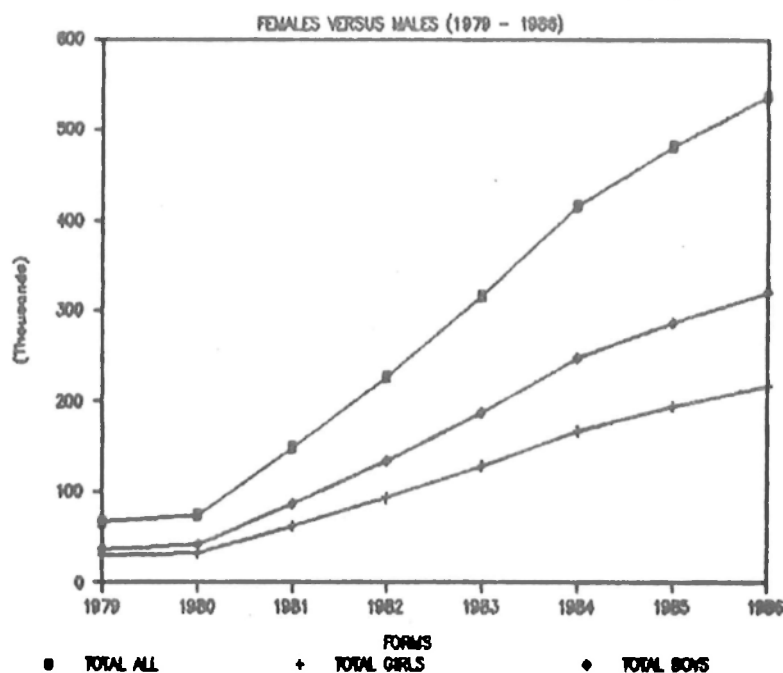
Fig. 5-2  
**ENROLMENT TRENDS**



enrolment is much lower for females relative to that of males. At all secondary school levels male enrolment continues to increase while female enrolment is basically evened out. At the University and Polytechnic, enrolment is growing for both sexes but women continue to be a small proportion of total enrolment relative to males.

Fig 5.3

### COMPARATIVE ENROLMENT TRENDS



The total picture for secondary school enrolment, Figure 5-3 shows that overall there are more males in secondary school than there are females and the gap in the enrolment of the two groups is increasing in favour of males at this level.

### Credit Facilitation

Government intervention in the agricultural credit facility is matched in the area of commercial credit by an intervention through SEDCO, the Small Enterprises Development Corporation. SEDCO offers loans to individuals or groups wishing to engage in a wide range of enterprises as sole proprietors, co-operatives companies, or partnerships. Generally, these forms of operation combine men and women. SEDCO does not, like the AFC, have any specific provision to support women under any special consideration beyond that available to any other social grouping applying for similar services. There may, however, be some practices, procedures, or policies which may favour or discriminate against women applicants.

SEDCO requires that an applicant or group of applicants put forward 15% equity share in order to qualify for funding as females are increasingly less able to raise this contribution. This may constitute some discrimination. Another form of possible discrimination would be in the event of SEDCO being designed to favour projects or areas of investment which are less patronized by women. We have not been able to detect any such bias.

The distribution of SEDCO loans is given in Table 7 for the years 1985, 1986 and 1987.

**TABLE 7**  
**SEDCO LOAN DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE OF OWNERSHIPS: % OF TOTAL**

	SOLE PROPRIETOR	PARTNERSHIP	CO-OPERATIVES	COMPANIES
1985	51.9	3.7	29.6	14.8
1986	64.1	8.3	9.0	18.6
1987	68.9	5.9	4.6	20.6

Source: *SEDCO Annual Reports 1985 - 1987*

**TABLE 8**  
**SEDCO LOAN DISTRIBUTION BY SECTOR**

YEAR	COMMERCE	INDUSTRY	CONSTRUCTION	SERVICE
1985	54.1	25.9	1.5	18.5
1986	61.4	24.4	3.1	12.1
1987	50.8	37.2	-	12.0

Source: *SEDCO Annual Reports 1985 - 1987*

SEDCO figures indicate that the percentages of women loan recipients were 6.4%, 13.9% and 11.0% of the total for the years 1985/86, 1986/87 and 1987/88 respectively. The figures are for women recipients in the sole proprietorship category only.

### Public Spending

We considered trends in public spending in the areas of productive investment, Women's Affairs, Agriculture and Education in order to determine the degree to which expenditure has been switched or is in a transition in favour of the productive sectors at the expense of areas which exclusively or otherwise concern women.

Trends in the national Budget allocation are summarized in Figures 6 and 6-1 for these sectors.

The graphs in Figure 6 and 6-1 do not show any radical switches in the pattern of Government spending between 1980 and 1986. There is, however, a number of specific tendencies in favour of certain Budget items and steady compensatory reduction in spending towards certain other items.

Defence spending has remained steady. Education has increased steadily and had doubled by 1984 and maintains a general upward tendency.

<sup>6</sup> According to FEDP, the major non-productive sectors in terms of the Budget are Education, Defence and the "large" Civil Service. Women's Affairs have not been mentioned as an immediate problem in this regard.

Fig. 6

**CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE**

(PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL)

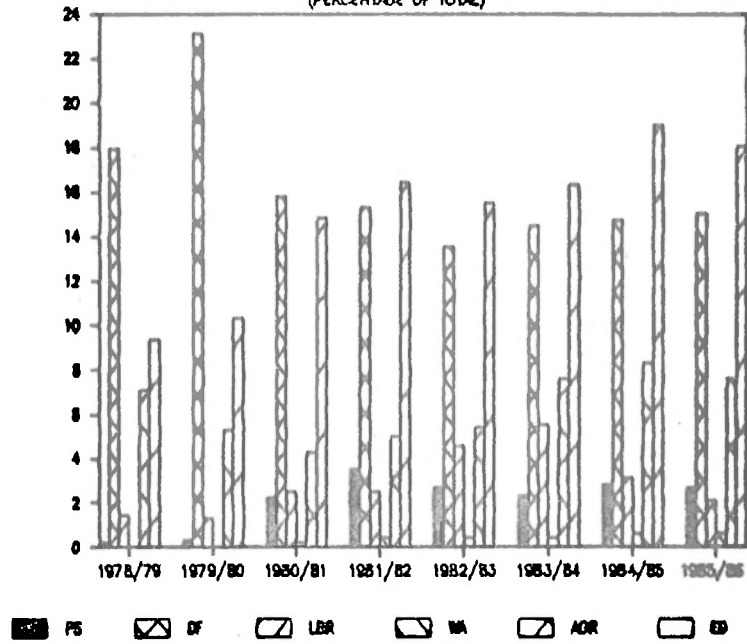
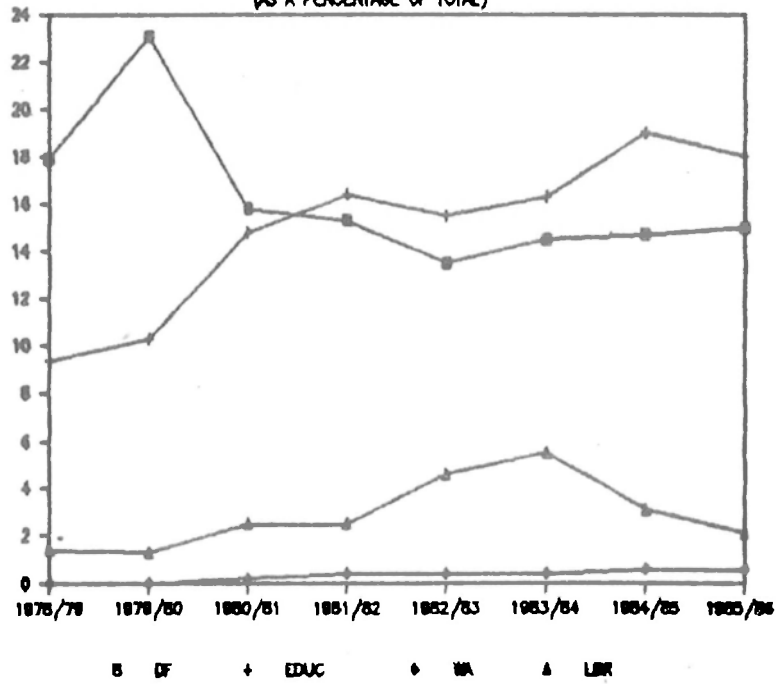


Fig. 6-1

**CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE**

(AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL)



PS = PUBLIC SERVICE

DF = DEFENCE

LBR = LABOUR

WA = WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

Labour and Social Welfare, Government's main conduit for social spending, rose steadily until 1983/84. Since then, allocations to this Ministry have declined sharply to about half the share granted to it in the 1983/84 Budget.

Figures for the Ministry of Co-operatives, Community Development and Women's Affairs in figures 6 and 6-1 are combined with figures for Youth, Sport and Culture. It has not been easy given the frequent changes in purposes and locations of Government ministries to keep a solid track of budgetary data for this Ministry.

Graphs shown on the previous page, however, indicate that allocations to these departments have remained a very small percentage of the national Budget but have risen steadily over the years.

The Public Service Ministry, a major concern of FEPD and an obvious target for the IMF, has taken up close to 4% of the total budget at its highest in 1981/82 after a significant rise from just over 2% in 1980/81. The Public Service share has remained rather steady since 1982/83.

It is not really easy to tell if Government has begun seriously to reduce social spending or to switch resources to productive sectors at the expense of the non-productive sector.

Signals from the allocations for Labour and Social Welfare could be misleading since changes in that section of the Budget reflect outlays for ad-hoc purposes such as drought relief and earlier on the demobilization programme.

Generally, however, Government has had the tendency to favour the productive sectors but in a rather cautious and superficial manner.



*PART II*

**ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF  
STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT  
ON WOMEN**

In this section we attempt the difficult task of linking specific structural adjustment activities to women and assessing the impact of these activities on the present and future socio-economic position of women.

We acknowledged earlier the inherent difficulty of this task for reasons given early in Section I. The review of structural adjustment activities in Section I also highlighted further constraints to this effort: First, data and other administrative information in the country are generally not disaggregated by sex and thus do not lend themselves to the type of assessment we seek to conduct. Second, the statutory mandates of the parastatals whose activities we reviewed do not have consideration for sex-specific or sex-biased resource management. Third, the planning thrust of the central planning Ministry Government is not reducible to the interests of the national population at the sex level of disaggregation. This is beyond the fact that the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs may safeguard the interests of women in central government.

These limitations reduce the assessment in this section to general inferences. However, these should be effective in indicating areas of possible policy improvement.

### IMPACT OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACTIVITIES

It is a well-acknowledged fact in Zimbabwe, as is the case in many Third World countries, that structural adjustment activities, while intended to benefit the generality of the economy, do negatively affect pockets of the population, particularly those in the under-privileged category: In this case women.

In undertaking structural adjustment Government is expected to recognize this negative effect and to seek to cushion anticipated victims of structural adjustment. Before assessing specific impacts of the instruments reviewed in Section I and the cushioning arrangements specifically associated with each one of them, we note that structural adjustment is being undertaken within the context of a general programme to elevate women in the economy and in society and thus to remove them from the position of an exclusive landing pad for negative effects of any economic activities of the country in the first place.

This programme includes the funding of women's programmes through the Ministry of Co-operatives, Community Development and Women's Affairs, the extension of credit to women through SEDCO and AFC as discussed in Part I of this document, free tuition albeit to a limited extent, entitlement of women farmers to land, separate taxation and the general effort to elevate the position of women in the traditional sectors of employment.

The Budget of the Ministry of Co-operatives, Community Development and Women's Affairs has been discussed in Part I. This budget is applied mainly to administrative costs. The Ministry, strictly speaking, has not implemented projects in a manner that significantly alters the position of women.

The majority of its projects are small-scale community-based enterprises generally inward-looking in terms of their markets.

Some of these projects are listed in Table 11-1. The table only shows the number of projects and indicates the level of women's participation. It does not specify the level of contribution by the Ministry. Generally, however, the projects are valued at around \$200 each with the bulk of this amount coming from the Ministry.

We have not had a chance to evaluate the success rate of these projects. But whatever the rate of success may be, the projects are not the type to effect a transition by women to a safe economic position in society.

The Ministry has, however, attempted to go into "national level" projects for women. This effort is represented by two small-scale projects at Seke.

Again we have not evaluated the success of these projects. The projects do, however, indicate some effort to place women in a meaningful position in the country's productive sector over and above their role in agriculture.

The Ministry has coupled its community-based projects programme with skills training programmes. About 520 such courses have been organized so far. These courses, coupled with the adult literacy programme, see Table 11-2, should provide an effective support system for the managerial aspects of the small-scale rural community-based income-generating projects.

Table 11-2  
ENROLMENT FIGURES FOR LITERACY LEARNERS  
1983-1987

YEAR	FEMALES	MALES	TOTAL
1983	26 277	13 375	90 052
1984	100 038	17 423	117 461
1985	89 527	15 676	105 203
1986	68 703	13 435	82 138
1987	-	-	107 000

Source: Bare, T. Draft Paper on "Structural Adjustment and Women". (Unpublished)

The Government sought as well to improve the position of women by removing sex-based wage tax differentials in 1987. The benefit of this enactment to women, however, has remained indeterminate in general. There are arguments that pockets of women, particularly single women, have been disadvantaged by the separate taxation formula. In general, however, the new formula has positive implications for married family women.

### **Impact of Specific Structural Adjustment Instruments**

This instrument has a general negative effect on the whole economy but hurts the imports-based segments of the economy more than it hurts those segments which depend less on foreign inputs in producing goods.

At the time of instituting exchange rate devaluation there were no women engaged in any notable form in import-based manufacturing or other economic activities. Women were not significant importers nor were there any notable projects intended for women's ownership in the import dependent category of the productive sectors of the economy.

In this regard, women as producers were not exclusively or directly hurt by exchange rate devaluation. This conclusion would also apply to women as private importers. The

cross-border trade phenomenon mentioned earlier had not fully materialized as an income option at the time the dollar was devalued. Besides, cross-border trade by private citizens of the type discussed in Part I was, in the bulk, illegal application of the holiday travel allowance granted by Government.

The erosion of such import capacity by women as private citizens would, thus, not constitute recognizable derangement of women's economic position in terms of economic planning. Indeed, if devaluation had been abruptly applied during the 1987-1988 cross-border trade relaxation period, the impact on women would have been sharp and immediate.

The incidence of devaluation would, however, affect women as workers in the import dependent manufacturing sector if devaluation resulted in:

- loss of jobs by women,
- inhibition of expansion in areas where women would have been employed.

There was no evidence in our study that the devaluation of the dollar in 1983 led to loss of employment. Nor were there submissions by the private sector to Government requesting staff retrenchments on the basis of the import constraints of devaluation immediately or with time dependence.

It is difficult to assess the impact of devaluation on expansion.

Employment figures (see Table 11-3) show that women employed in the manufacturing sector, the most import dependent sector, averaged 5% of total manufacturing sector employment for the years 1981 and 1985. This represents a small percentage of employable women the bulk of whom are employed in the service sectors. The latter have a low reliance on imported inputs. Women's participation as employees in the semi-skilled and unskilled categories is indicated in Figures 7-1 – 7-2

**Table 11-3**  
**WOMEN IN THE LABOUR FORCE 1981 AND 1985**

INDUSTRY	1981			1985		
	TOTAL	M%	F%	TOTAL	M%	F%
Agriculture, hunting forestry and fishing	57 660	95	5	134 180	89	11
Mining and quarrying	24 067	93	7	28 869	97	3
Manufacturing	74 067	92	8	103 205	94	6
Electricity, gas and water	3 010	93	7	5 678	96	4
Construction	8 747	97	3	22 869	98	2
Wholesale and retail, restaurants and hotels	40 578	77	23	44 587	86	14
Transport, storage and communication	27 006	91	9	10 431	93	7
Finance, Insurance, real estate and business services	16 297	58	42	27 038	76	24
Community and social services	8 747	72	28	59 327	74	26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>298 391</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>436 364</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>12</b>

Fig. 7.1

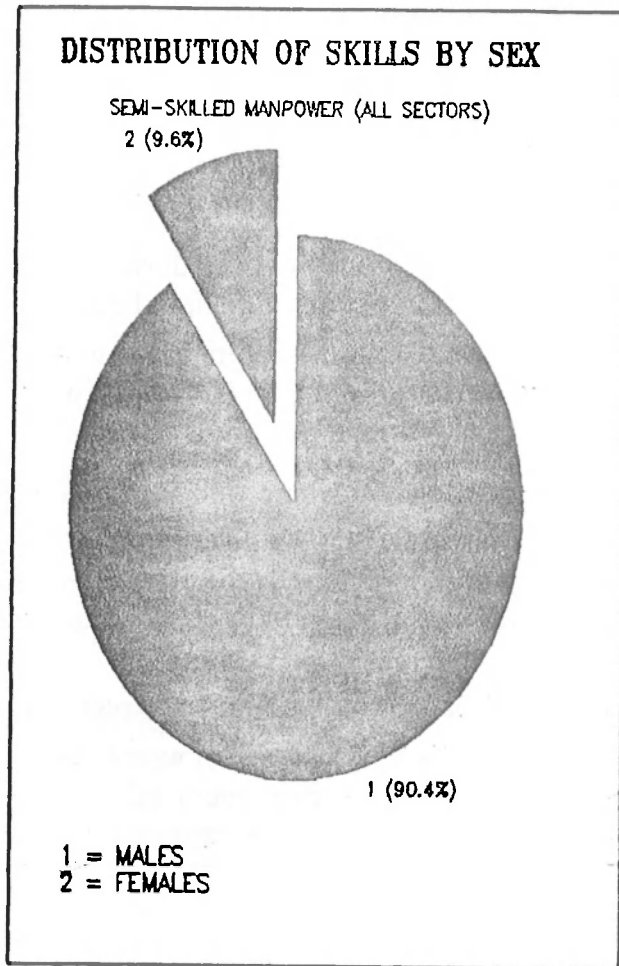
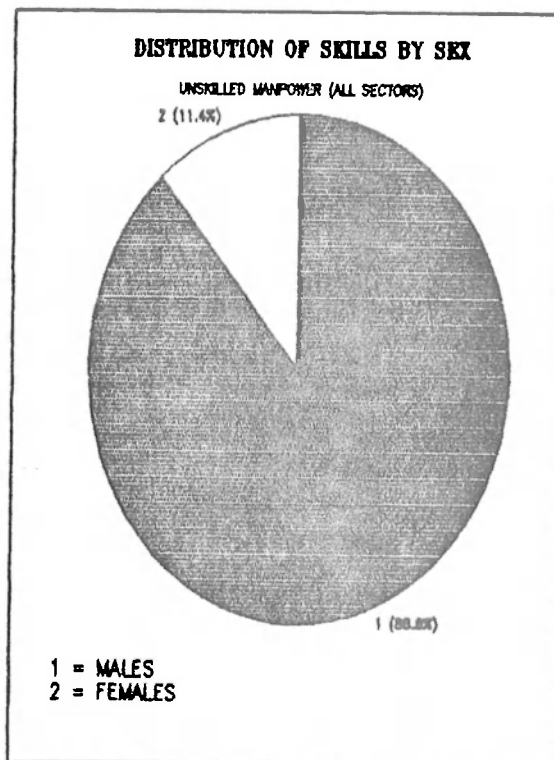


Fig. 7.2



## Further Discussion On Employment

### *The informal sector as a response by women to structural adjustment*

The Government sees itself as having a role to play in the informal sector. First, it recognizes the existence of this sector and that it existed as a matter of necessity for various reasons including "the need to supplement income from the formal sector". [See *Growth With Equity*<sup>7</sup> and Mkandawire T, *The Informal Sector in the Labour Reserve Economies of Southern Africa - With Special Reference to Zimbabwe*.<sup>8</sup> [Also the *National Transitional Development Plan 1982-85*].<sup>9</sup>

Here Government undertakes to provide the informal sector with the necessary infrastructure and assistance to promote productive employment, relieve it from past harassment, and assist it in organizing co-operatives.

It must be noted that these informal sector commitments by Government are not specific to women they can safely be treated as part of Government's macro economic programme which could bolster the effectiveness of the informal sector as an income-generating alternative for women.<sup>10</sup>

It must be further noted that this official recognition of the informal sector did not occur or come as a response to structural adjustment seeing as it appears early in the Government's policy formulation process well before any arguments for structural adjustment had surfaced.

Nor can the advent of the informal sector be attributed to structural adjustment. The sector existed before any structural adjustment activities were instituted and would exist with or without structural adjustment.

It is possible, however, to associate some of the entries of women into this sector with structural adjustment. This could be done (a) by statistically correlating the trends in entries into the informal sector with structural adjustment events, and (b) by surveying participants in the informal sector for reasons of entry into the sector to determine if the entry is directly associated with difficulties brought about by structural adjustment.

The first approach is rendered untenable by the lack of historical data or any data at all on the size or structure of the informal sector as it relates to women.

The second approach while tenable is very much unreliable as entries into the informal sector are random, untimely, and associated with very uniform perceptions of economic difficulty. Moreover, the sources or causes of such difficulty are numerous and random in occurrence. Under these conditions any attempts to associate adjustment with informal sector would yield unreliable results.

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7 Government of Zimbabwe, *Growth With Equity: An Economic Policy Statement*, 1981.

8 Mkandawire, T. *The Informal Sector in the Labour Reserve Economies of Southern Africa With Special Reference to Zimbabwe*, ZIDS Working Paper.

9 Government of Zimbabwe, *The Transitional National Development Plan - 1982/85*.

10 Government was motivated rather by the labour absorption capacity of the sector, not by the income-generating or income-supplementing interests of the participants.

A recent study by ZIDS researchers (E.M. Jassat and O. Jirira)<sup>11</sup>, however, showed various reasons for entry into the informal sector by women. These reasons are summarized in Table 11-4.

The argument that women entered the informal sector to supplement husband's income is not borne out by the findings of the Jassat/Jirira study. Further, to argue that entry into the informal sector was due to the effects of structural adjustment is not quite plausible.

To do so would be to suggest that women would have otherwise happily remained in non-income-generating activities.

Table 11-4  
REASONS FOR INDIVIDUALS TO ENTER THE INFORMAL SECTOR

<i>Reason</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Income	45.0
Could not find a job	33.5
Increase family income	3.0
Like to be independent	10.0
Need to supplement subsistence income	3.0
Skill acquisition	2.5
Too old for formal sector employment	0.5
Religious reasons	2.5

Source: E. M. Jassat & K. O. Jirira

It is more logical even as an uninformed guess to submit that women would prefer formal employment in the absence of which they, like their male counterparts, would resort to informal sector employment.

The table above shows that 45% of the interviewed women entered the sector for reasons of income. One would like to think that these women would have wanted or have a right to this income or employment with or without the effects of structural adjustment. Thirty-three percent of the respondents entered the sector for reasons of lack of alternative employment.

Indeed, the only women who could afford to be out of income-generating activities are the married family women with working husbands and even for these women the desire to engage in formal gainful employment would prevail but such engagement would be hampered by family restrictions, other social pressures, or failure to enter the formal sector.

Following this line of argument, it becomes apparent that entry into the informal sector is more a function of the general unemployment problem of the country than a response to the effects of structural adjustment although cases based on the latter do certainly exist. The formal sector employment situation of women has another dimension. This is in the

11 Jassat, E.M. and Jirira, K.O., *Industrial Development in Zimbabwe: The Case of Women in the Manufacturing Activities*, ZIDS Consultancy Report, December, 1987.

form of the role of women in the casual employment. Because of economic difficulty women have been forced to accept an increasing role in the exploitative casual labour practice mainly in agriculture. Indeed there is casual labour practice in the economy and this is not an exclusive practice for women. Figures for 1984 given in Table 11-5 show males and females both engaging in casual labour activities in agriculture and males being predominant in all the other sectors (Shopo & Moyo, 1986)<sup>12</sup>

Table 11-5  
CASUAL LABOUR BY INDUSTRY AND SEX: 1984

	March Quarter - 1984			June Quarter - 1984		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture	34 063	58 780	92 843	26 801	46 475	73 276
Mining	392	30	422	512	15	527
Manufacturing	2 899	493	3 392	3 081	389	3 470
Electricity	12	-	12	162	-	162
Construction	1 046	2	1 048	2 139	1	2 140
Finance	143	9	152	73	88	161
Distribution	3 524	184	3 708	2 607	149	2 756
Transport	259	25	284	859	6	865
Public Admin.	643	353	996	477	105	565
Education	23	3	26	61	17	78
Health	107	98	205	39	57	96
Domestics	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Services	2 141	282	2 422	3 054	944	3 998
TOTAL	45 252	60 258	105 510	39 865	48 865	88 111

The permanent and casual labour trends, however, contrary to general perception, indicate that the role of women as casual labourers has remained rather static or has actually decreased if we follow the CSO figures for 1977-1984, below.

Table 11-6  
PERMANENT AND CASUAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS, 1977 - 1984  
BASED ON AGRICULTURAL FIGURES

Year	PERMANENT			CASUAL		
	Male	Female	Total Permanent	Male	Female	Total Casual
1977	215 040	24 295	239 335	14 546	43 158	57 704
1978	210 170	23 765	233 935	11 908	29 686	51 594
1979	205 287	25 236	230 523	14 927	41 375	56 302
1980	181 251	17 017	198 268	20 349	52 674	73 023
1981	181 251	10 379	191 430	19 117	45 320	64 437
1982	158 564	5 480	164 044	18 327	37 857	56 184

12 Shopo, T. and Moyo, Sam, *Vulnerable Working Households in Zimbabwe's Segmented Labour Markets*: ZIDS Working Paper.



While the "casual labour" role of females has remained greater than that of males, the figures for males have almost doubled for this period.

A significant development, however, is the continuous reduction in the number of women in permanent employment from 24 000 to 4 000 between 1977 and 1984.

Put in this perspective, it can be argued that women have been used more as casual labour than as full-time labour. This transition from full-time to casual status, however, cannot easily be attributed to structural adjustment policies of the present Government. Rather it should be seen in the light of economic recessions, which have a negative effect on the labour absorption capacity of the formal sector.

This argument is supported by a 1982 study by Veronica Brand. The findings by Veronica Brand's study of the Magaba area [See V. Brand, *One Dollar Work Places*<sup>13</sup> in 1982 show that 33.3% of women entering the informal sector were married, 51% were widowed, 11.8% were divorced and 3.9% were single.

This indicates that 67% of these women entered the informal sector for purposes of gaining personal income not supplementary family income. This, they would have needed with or without structural adjustment, with or without cuts in social spending as argued earlier.

Even for the 33.3% of married women who participated in this sector, it can be said that they did so out of the desire to gain original personal income and to exercise their own right to engage in gainful employment. To deny women this line of argument would be to start on the wrong premise, i.e. that women do not need/want to work unless their husbands' incomes fail to satisfy the needs of the family.

Indeed an issue should be raised on why the informal sector and not the formal sector for these women? That, however, becomes an issue of the general unemployment problem in the country. This has already been discussed in previous sections of this paper.

### *Removal of Consumer Subsidies*

The removal of consumer subsidies would have a direct negative effect, more on urban women than on rural women. This bias is because rural women depend less on purchased foodstuffs than urban women.

For the urban woman the impact would be on the family income and family well-being such that the burden of the woman is worsened in her capacity as a provider and as a family organizer.

If we read Table 1, Part I in conjunction with Table 11-7 below we would notice that the removal of subsidies affects directly the most important items on the family budget, i.e. food stuffs.

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13 Brand, Veronica, *One Dollar Work Places: A Study of Informal Sector in Magaba*, School of Social Work, 1982.

Table 11-7  
BUDGET BREAKDOWN FOR A WORKER ON MINIMUM WAGE

ITEM	EXPENDITURE ALLOCATION % OF TOTAL
Foodstuffs	54.9
Rent, Fuel, Lights	18.4
Transport	4.7
Drink & Tobacco	5.4
Clothing & Footwear	6.6
Household stores	4.6
Miscellaneous	5.4

Source: ZCTU

Government argues that the removal of subsidies<sup>14</sup> was cushioned by minimum wage enactments and by price controls. ZCTU argues, correctly, that the incomes control activities of Government fall short of enabling wages which would allow workers to obtain basic needs. We have seen in Section I that in general real incomes in Zimbabwe are on the decline and that prices have not effectively been held down by control activities because Government is just not able to control inflation and because the Government cannot enforce its price controls.

The family budget is in the final analysis eroded by the concurrent removal of subsidies and inflation all in the face of a declining real income.

The combined effect of these forces on a non-working woman (housewife) would be to force her to resort more to informal sector activities: vending in most cases but also cross-border trade of late. The reaction of a working woman would be different. We were not able to survey women in this regard. The study by Jassat and Jirira, quoted earlier, indicates that about 84% of surveyed women who entered the informal sector did so mainly because they could not find alternative employment or did so for income-related considerations.<sup>11</sup> For the low-income urban groups it has become necessary for women to supplement their husbands' incomes.

However, this practice has been going on even during the period of food subsidies. It is, therefore, not possible to link entry into the informal sector to the removal of subsidies although this removal did make the problem even more acute.

### *Producer Subsidies*

Producer subsidies are not a structural adjustment instrument in the IMF sense. The IMF would in fact urge the removal of this instrument. But according to the Zimbabwean objective to shift resources to the productive sector the instrument would be defined in the context of structural adjustment.

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<sup>14</sup> This is more the removal of "direct" subsidies. Urban consumers still benefit from the producer subsidy mechanism given to farmers. See Part I.

This instrument supports agricultural production but, as stated earlier, also benefits consumers who would otherwise pay the subsidy payments made to the Grain Marketing Board by Government.

The assistance to women of this instrument is tremendous. Women make the bulk of food-grain and commercial crop producers in the communal areas. The subsidy enables them to obtain a sales margin after the high cost of agricultural inputs. This is a way of financing farmers who would otherwise run losses without the subsidy.

In another perspective this instrument can be seen in the light of Government's general programme to bring effective economic independence to women. It is thus a generalized cushion.

This benefit to women should, however, be assessed in the light of the rural family power structure. A recent ZIDS study surveyed women on questions relating to Government agricultural support to them in the form of agricultural extension. Among the findings of this study was the realization that women make very few farming decisions in a family situation. Very few of them hold growers' cards and therefore directly control the marketing of their produce. This survey was, however, limited to a small sample of 100 people in the Makonde area.[Mutuma, et al].

More global data from the AFC indicate greater independence of women judging from the fact that the AFC, which requires that each borrower hold a growers' (marketing) card, shows that 60% of its communal and resettlement area clients are women.

Producer subsidies therefore do benefit women in a notable way.

Credit support could also be described as a cushion or as structural adjustment. Whatever the definition, the instrument is part of the Government's economy re-orientation programme.

With regard to women, this instrument clearly is beneficial in the case of the AFC as stated above although the AFC has no specific mandate to give special consideration to women.

SEDCO provisions, also not specific to women, have not been used effectively to the benefit of women as the figures in Part I indicate. In fact some disparities may occur in its lending system. The only possible reason for this could be the 15% borrower contribution to the project budget (this provision also exists in kind under the AFC) required of SEDCO borrowers. The basic resource deprivation of women would under this provision basically eliminate them from consideration for SEDCO loans. Otherwise SEDCO loans are given in areas where both men and women have interest and competence and should work effectively to help more women into the productive sectors of the economy.

### *Import Liberalization*

Our conclusions on this item run the same as those we gave under exchange rate devaluation although the two instruments have opposite effects.

The argument is that for the main part of the mainstream economic activities women's involvement is in the form of a small number of employees in relative terms. Import liberalization which hurts industry and local employment would not affect women significantly as employees.

The benefits from cross border trade were, however, significant. It was not possible to make a more effective assessment of benefits from this activity since CSO or the Department of Customs and Excise were not able to provide detailed data of informal cross boarder trade.

The Ministry of Finance Economic Planning and Development, however, estimated that government lost some \$69,000,000 during the holiday allowance liberalization period. Indeed this benefit to illegal traders was shared between man and women. The proportions, are, however, not easy to determine nor are we able to provide the ratio of participation by numbers of traders.

It is valid to say, non-the-less, that women had developed crossborder trade as an important income option.

### *Free Tuition*

The significance to women of Government educational support is in its ability to reduce the incidence of decisions to curtail the educational careers of female children to the benefit of male children in cases where families do not have adequate resources to educate children of both sexes.

Traditionally the latter option led to very early drop-outs of female children from school particularly at the end of primary education and after the fourth form. These drop-out points became or may still be terminal points for many female children - see the behaviour of graphs on educational enrolment in Part I.

Free tuition, however, was only able to help up to Grade Seven (our graph shows the enrolment of females exceeding that of males at this level), but has not helped push females beyond this point as parents still have to pay the full cost of secondary education.

Even at primary level parents still have to pay significantly for education through various funds and levies as shown in Section I. For this reason the preferential decision between male and female children's education has in many cases still to be made and female children continue to be the victims.

### *Public Spending*

Cuts in public spending have not been very drastic but they have led to cuts or reductions in some programmes of interest to women or inhibited extension of hitherto non-existent programmes following cuts in the Budget allocations to the Ministry of Co-operative, Community Development and Women's Affairs.

According to this Ministry, Government has extended support in the form of various programmes including pre-schools, nutrition gardens, water and sanitation facilities, and primary health care. These are responsibilities otherwise borne by women in society.

A major item in this regard is health. In this area Government has, as part of a general programme not in response to structural adjustment, but in a manner that would have the effect of cushioning women from negative structural adjustment effects, embarked on a major national health programme.

This programme includes both the conventional curative health facilities and primary health care facilities. On conventional health facilities Government has sought to satisfy

the objective of "Health for all by the Year 2000". Toward this objective Government is following a policy which seeks to strengthen health services at central, provincial, district and village levels using the instruments of infrastructural development and primary health care systems. The primary health care programme (PHC) takes primary consideration of affordability, appropriateness, and acceptability of health care delivery systems and emphasizes effective linkage with community activities. [See First Five-Year National Development Plan - 1986 - 1990]. The PHC programme envisages the further construction of some 7 000 primary water supply points, 70 000 Blare latrines, and massive reduction in the incidence of malaria through the activities of the National Malaria Control Programme. This is over and above the past achievements in the PHC programme as indicated in the table below:

**Table 11-8**  
**PHC-RELATED INFRASTRUCTURAL AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS - DATA UP TO FIRST HALF OF 1984\***

Type of Project	Total Projects by 1st half of 1984
Protected Wells	666
Toilets	2 801
Dams	41
Pre-Schools	1 240
Boreholes	1 352
Water Tanks	1
Health Centres	66
Wells	174

*Notes:* \*This summary includes projects done under the Ministry of Co-operatives, Community Development and Women's Affairs only.

The 1986-1990 National Development Plan also envisages the construction of 93 rural health centres on a programme of 316 centres as well as the improvement of Family Health Programme facilities in eight districts and 80 associated clinics. The latter are to enhance nutrition and family planning services at clinics.

Judging from these programmes and the steady trend in the share of the national Budget allocated to the Ministry of Health [See Figure 6.1] one can conclude that a strong health care delivery system programme is in place and enjoys priority standing even in the face of structural adjustment.

As has been argued earlier, these programmes are part of the Government's national development programme which recognizes health both as a right and a necessary condition for meaningful economic development.

While not tagged specifically as a women's programme, the health care delivery system recognizes and seeks to rectify health care items of close concern to women and children who are a major part of women's default responsibility.

The health care programmes also cannot be directly linked to structural adjustment. But the argument can be made that the programmes provide a cushioning effect to women as a group particularly vulnerable to the effects of structural adjustment.

The support of Government in these areas is in any case direct support to women as the programmes have the effect of making the woman's burdens in the non-productive sectors lighter and fewer and thus enables her to make an effective transition into the productive sector. We are not able at the moment to determine the extent to which women have moved into the productive sectors or other alternative occupations as a result of these provisions.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Government of Zimbabwe has not decisively or publicly embarked on a structural adjustment programme. Rather it has followed a management practice which enables various, rather ad-hoc problem specific interventions in the economy within a programme of transition to socialism and in the context of a sub-programme to strengthen the productive sectors of the economy.

Within this policy context Government has intervened in the economy sometimes with IMF-type structural adjustment instruments and other times with instruments consistent with its own view of structural adjustment but not acceptable to the IMF concept of structural adjustment approaches.

In only very few cases, Government has sought immediately to cushion disadvantaged groups from the application of structural adjustment instruments. Otherwise, it has taken an indirect approach to cushioning mainly under a general economic programme which seeks to make women part of the mainstream economy. This programme, spearheaded by the Ministry of Co-operatives Community Development and Women's Affairs, has however, remained ineffective in that it has not as yet moved women into any notable positions in the productive sectors of the economy.

Women, however, have carved themselves a stronghold in the agricultural sector as workers and producers albeit without the accompanying benefits..

With regard to the structural adjustment instruments so far employed by Government only a few welfare spending cuts, free tuition, credit facilitation, and removal of subsidies have a direct impact on women in their various roles. The rest relate to women only through their impact on the economy as a whole.

### Policy Discussion

The Government of Zimbabwe would have to proceed even more vigorously with its muted programme to strengthen the productive sectors of the economy. This is indeed the only logical course to take if the country is to avoid dependence on borrowing and to avoid very harsh social policies in the future.

In a zero sum situation, which is the best theoretical position to begin at, and even in the context of Budgetary deficits and borrowings, the strengthening of the productive sectors would initially mean losses to women-oriented social programmes. Indeed government would seek to cushion women from the full impact of these losses.

Such cushioning, however, would involve resource channelling to non-productive considerations unless it is designed to be productive cushioning in the main in the form of structural changes in the role of women the economy.

As a policy position Government should view its "productive sector programme" as including women and should consider the movement (by government) of women into productive sector roles as a primary part of its programme to strengthen the productive sector. This approach would further strengthen productive capacity and, noticeably reduce the size of the non-productive sector and therefore, the obligations of the rest of the economy to women-specific social programmes.

The government's investment programme should include the cost of moving women into the productive sector. To do this, an elaborate and very creative system should be worked out and should include a major re-orientation in the focus of government programmes and projects for women.

To date, the Ministry of Co-operatives, Community Development and Women's Affairs has been able to concentrate mainly on (a) the mobilization of women to assume meaningful roles in the political and economic activities of the country, (b) seeking through appeals to other ministries of Government to influence Government's development programmes to include the interests of women, (c) small-scale community-based projects for women. As stated earlier, this programme has not been effective in placing women in positions of control and ownership of any significant sections of the economy. Nor can it be argued that the development ministries of Government have heeded the appeals and advocations of the Ministry of Co-operatives, Community Development and Women's Affairs in a manner which concretely enables women, like their male counterparts, to own and control production ventures in the economy.

Whereas the mobilization and advocacy role of the Ministry of Co-operatives, Community Development and Women's Affairs is commendable as some positive step towards the representation of women has it failed to master effective transfer of resources to projects and programmes which practically shifts the ownership of resources and benefits of economic activity towards women.

Unless the development ministries can treat seriously the need for women to move into effective productive roles, the ministry of Co-operatives, Community Development and Women's Affairs should cease to be content with its current mobilization and advocacy role and appeal to Government for the redefinition of its role to include the role of a development ministry.

This change would enable the Ministry to be funded for development projects as opposed to current funding which sees the Ministry as a technical support body.

Without such changes women are likely to remain at the bottom of the economic ladder and to continue to preoccupy themselves with seeking Government assistance which in fact may save to preclude serious consideration of the more important transition of women to commanding positions in the economy.