

## INTRODUCTION

The need for development has been the main contemporary discourse dominating the history of Zimbabwe. A radical introspection into the process of growth points and rural development is urgently required to allow Zimbabwe to define its future in terms of urbanisation and development. Growth points were adopted in Zimbabwe slightly before independence by the colonial government in order to provide for accommodation and decentralised government services for people living in the communal areas. However, after independence the post- 1980 government adopted the integrated rural development plan as part of the Growth with Equity policy to spur economic growth and development in the previously disadvantaged communal areas. This witnessed the designation of some communal areas as growth points in the hope that in the long run they would attract domestic and foreign investment and propel development of rural areas. Some communal areas were elevated to the de-facto growth point status through the use of political mileage despite their poor resource base leaving a lot to be desired. However, 35 years into post-independence and existence of the policy most growth points remain where they have been since inception therefore failing to catalyse the much needed development of the rural areas in Zimbabwe.

There needs to be a great emphasis placed on rural development policy formulation and implementation because the majority of the Zimbabwean population resides in the rural areas. In order to reduce poverty which is highly prevalent in rural areas there is a need to develop and provide employment opportunities so as to improve the quality of life and standard of living for rural inhabitants. There has been an ever growing trend of rural to urban migration which tends to lead to overpopulation in urban areas which creates further developmental challenges in the urban areas such as shortage of housing and an increase in informal traders. In order to best reduce this influx of migration it is better suited to develop rural areas so that the rural inhabitants must be able to obtain the same services which they will be seeking to acquire in the urban areas. This will help in maintaining the much needed human capital required to foster entrepreneurship development. The failure of the growth point theory needs to be revisited so as to bring about serious investment and improvement in rural areas.

The study seeks to understand why this decline and stagnation has been occurring in growth points. The research intends to unearth the challenges which growth points have faced in the promotion of rural development. The research intends to understand why growth points are characterised by very few off-farm activities and have very low levels of industrialisation which can trigger the growth of other economic sectors in rural areas. The importance of this research to development is because majority of the population in Zimbabwe resides in the rural areas, the country has low levels of urbanisation and poverty levels are higher in the rural areas when relatively compared to the urban areas. Thus, in order to tackle these problems it is imperative to revisit the growth point strategy and assess its impact on rural development bringing out its weaknesses and offering solutions for strengthening or re-modeling the policy. Zimbabwe needs to revisit the growth point policy in order to strengthen its weaknesses for the country to be able to redefine its future.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Growth points are centres of economic potential which were created to catalyse development in previously underdeveloped regions (Mushuku and Takuva, 2013). Manyanhaire (2001) is of the opinion that natural resources have the potential to initiate development by attracting foreign investors into that particular region. Growth and development were expected to start at the pole and then trickle down to the peripheral rural areas fostering the decentralisation of economic activities and commercial services. The Growth Point strategy has been used considerably in regional development planning to deal with the problem of unequal development or what is known as dualism, where one region is unfairly promoted to develop at the expense of another area. The growth centre strategy was mainly implemented to reduce inequalities between growth points and disadvantaged regions (Conyers, 2001).

Allen and Maclellan (1960) articulate that the policy was first used in Western Europe namely in countries such as France, Italy and Britain to address the problem of stagnated regions. In Italy, the growth centre strategy was first adopted in 1957 with the creation of new growth centres (Mapira, 1997; Allen and Maclellan (1979). The objectives of the strategy were to

catalyse economic development in the stagnating Mezzogiorno region (The South) and create employment opportunities thereby reducing migration to other parts of the country and abroad. Mushuku and Takuva (2013) point out that the Mezzogiorno's major challenge over the centuries was economic stagnation. The area suffered from high unemployment rates, high outward migration rates, low standard of living and low income per capita levels. In the 1980s it became clear that the growth centre strategy had not successfully achieved its objectives (Mapira, 1997). Growth centres failed to stimulate development in their hinterlands as this was due to the poor location and designation of some of the growth points. This led to the abandonment of the policy in favour of other more favourable development oriented policies. In more developed countries (MDCs) in Europe and North America the growth centre policy was used to deal with the problem of declining industrial regions (Conyers, 2001). However, the application of the policy in Asia, Latin America and Africa was slightly different. The policy was implemented to encourage industrial and urban growth in rural areas. The growth point theory played an imperative role in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s with the growth pole of Guadalupe, Guyana in Venezuela being mostly documented (Conyers, 2001; Rodwin, 1969). Growth points were later adopted by countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa as a means of curbing rural to urban migration and as a way of addressing the problem of regional economic imbalances.

In Africa, many countries adopted the policy after they gained independence such as Tanzania and Zimbabwe. However, most of these countries neglected or abolished the policy after it proved unsuccessful. In Zimbabwe growth points were introduced by the colonial administration as centres of inhabiting the African community. This led to the birth of growth points such as Gutu, Gokwe and Chisumbanje. However, in 1980, the then Zimbabwean government designated a new growth point in every district leading to the creation of about 55 growth points. The major goal of this policy was to reduce spatial inequalities in rural areas whilst on the other hand propel economic growth and development in those areas (Wekwete 2001). However, today growth points such as Magunje find themselves in a worse state than they were in 34 years ago in 1980. This research is focused on understanding why growth points have failed to catalyse any form of economic growth in rural areas. The study will bring to light the factors which are at

play in undermining the development of growth points in Zimbabwe. The major focus of this research will be engrossed on why growth points have become centres of declining economic growth and underdevelopment instead of what they were actually created for; propelling economic growth and fostering rural development. The impact of economic development in the rural areas has been disappointing and very dismal (Manyanhaire, 2009). This has led to the poor promotion of rural industrialisation and rural off-farm activities in Zimbabwe. Growth in the rural areas has been slow to say the least. To this end the research seeks to explore the challenges that growth points have faced in the promotion of rural development.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Growth points have become centres of underdevelopment which are characterised by economic stagnation and increasing levels of poverty. Wekwete (1994) posits that growth points have remained centres of growth in theory when analysed in actual reality. Growth points which were created with no resource and capital base have remained stagnant in growth and unattractive towards foreign investment. This research seeks to expose the challenges that have undermined the progress of growth points in Zimbabwe.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The Objectives of the study are to

- To explore the challenges faced by growth points in promoting rural development in Zimbabwe.
- To investigate the type of industries and economic services developed at the growth point since its foundation.
- To suggest solutions aimed at improving foreign investment and economic vibrancy at the growth point.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

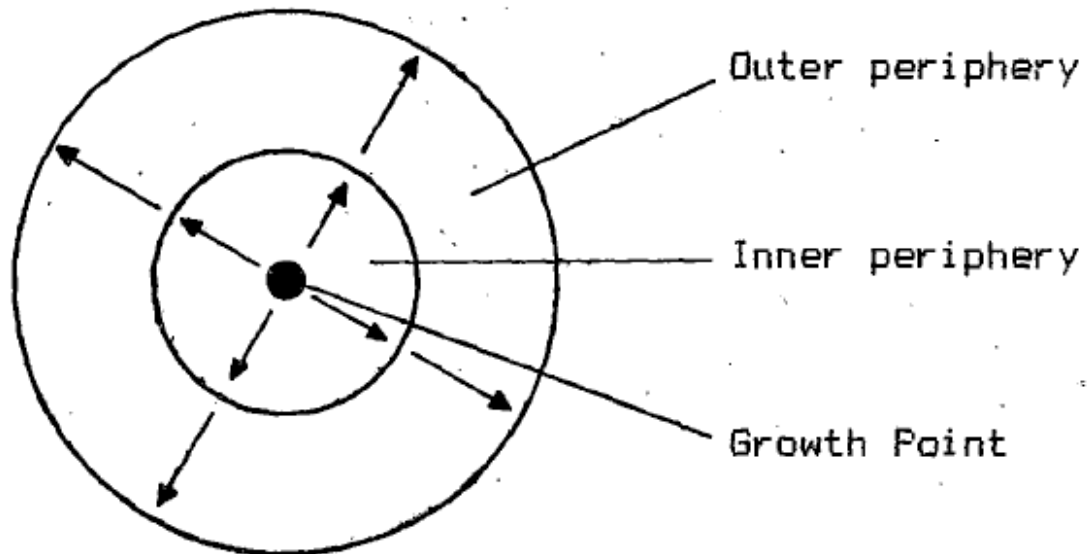
The study will answer the following questions in order to find out the impact of growth points on rural development specifically focusing on Magunje growth point.

- What are the challenges faced by growth points and its locals in promoting rural development?
- What are the industries and services which are currently present at the growth point?
- What solutions can be implemented to foster rural development?

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **GROWTH POLE THEORY**

The researcher used the Growth Pole theory in explaining the various issues emanating from this research. The theory is largely concerned with the formation, existence and the application of growth points. The growth pole theory as propounded by Francois Perroux in 1950 was very applicable to the study. This can be traced back to Perroux (1958) who recommended growth points as a way of catalyzing development in underdeveloped and stagnated areas. Perroux (1958) postulated that by declaring resource endowed areas as growth points, the economic value chain would kick start the process of economic development resulting in the effects being felt at the periphery in the form of improved quality of life and standard of living. Growth poles in this case were supposed to spur development to the rural areas in the form of trickle down effects (Chirisa, et al 2013). This is illustrated in the diagram below, figure 1 which shows the process of outward diffusion from the growth point to the peripheral rural areas. Growth points are centres of expanding industries which are supposed to catalyse the value chain of production and the provision of services (Manyanhaire et al, 2009), (Mapira, 1997). Growth points were supposed to have a force of attraction and repelling, where the formed industries would grow and expand and would be able to trigger other economic services such as agro-processing and textiles.



**Figure 1: Contagious Diffusion**

Source: Mutenga and Namasasu (1988:24)

Thus, growth point's formation in Zimbabwe was meant to artificially promote rural industrialisation and the development of off-farm activities which were meant to catalyse the economic and social development in those areas. The growth point was supposed to induce the formation of other sectors of industry which meant that employment was going to be created at the same time keeping the industrial hub flourishing by attracting foreign investment that would input their capital into several developmental projects and economic services. Once a growth point had been identified and designated there must be a gradual process of change in the spatial structure pattern (Manyanhaire et al, 2011). Potential investors were supposed to improve services being offered and buildings were meant also to expand quantitatively in nature.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

## **RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Rural development is a process aimed at addressing the regional inequalities which were created by the colonial government through the implementation of exclusionary and biased policies. The development discourse in Zimbabwe will not be complete if rural development fails to occur because majority of the country is still not urbanised and massive infrastructure, social and economic development initiatives need to be implemented for the country to experience growth and positive change. Rural communities in Zimbabwe have been bedeviled by the recurring cycle of poverty and underdevelopment which has retarded their growth when compared with urban areas (Matunhu 2012b). Chambers (1983) defines rural development as a strategy that seeks to enable the poor men and women to gain better standards in their lives. This involves helping the poorest amongst those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits of rural development and this group includes small scale farmers, tenants and the landless. Rural development refers to the process of improving the quality of life, standard of living and economic wellbeing of people living in sparsely populated and isolated areas. Rural development is a strategy that is aimed at eliminating poverty, reducing social disparity gaps and unequal access to public goods and services (Matunhu, 2012a). Rural development has centered on the exploitation of land intensive natural resources such as forestry and agriculture. The main aim of the rural development policy is to develop the underdeveloped villages into peri-urban areas or towns with economic viable and sustainable activities which are commonly found in towns and cities. Rural development can also lead to sustainable diversified livelihood portfolios and participation of the community in the decision making process of their community development which can lead to poverty reduction and an improvement in the standard of living. Lipton (2005) asserts that most communities in the world have reduced absolute poverty in the rural areas through agriculture; acting both as a means and an end to development. Rural development will assist in curbing rural to urban migration which negatively impacts rural areas because they lose the much needed productive human capital which is required to develop their areas.

Zimbabwe is characterised by a high degree of rurality and has low percentages of urbanisation. According to the CSO (2002) the population of Zimbabwe is mostly rural with 35 percent of the

total were found in urban areas. Most of the Zimbabwean population resides in the rural areas yet they are characterised by low levels of productivity, infertile soils, lack of proper access and control of natural resources for example; forests, wildlife and fisheries, lack of proper infrastructure, roads, schools, markets and telecommunications. IFAD (2003) points out that as of the 2010 Zimbabwe population census it was believed that the rural population stood at 7 756 587.1 out of a total population of 12 571 454.0. Thus, an urgent priority needs to be envisioned so as to develop the country because it is clear that lack of development of rural areas means that the country will fail to develop. Most developing countries are characterised by a condition called dualism in the early stages of development and this has serious implications for the future pattern and pace of development (Thirlwall, 1994). Dualism refers to the social and economic disparities which are present in an economy such as differences in the level spatial development of regions and economic sectors. (Thirlwall, 1994). Lipton (1977) asserts that urban bias plays an important part in furthering the dualism process. The underdevelopment of rural areas can be attributed to the classical viewpoint of development which prioritised urban development at the expense of rural areas (Matunhu, 2012a). Urban areas are unfairly prioritised in the development process at the expense of rural areas. This has resulted in huge inequality disparities and contrasting levels of economic growth and development between the two regions. Urban bias has to give rise to rural development for the country to progress and develop. This is because rural development is aimed at addressing the regional inequalities which were created by colonial policies and administration.

Agriculture is an important enabler in the Zimbabwean economy. The agriculture sector plays a pivotal role in the local economy and is a key driver in poverty reduction and contributor to economic growth (Government of Zimbabwe, United Nations; 2010). This is supported by Matunhu (2012a) who articulates that the revisionist theory shows the importance of agriculture as the engine for rural development. Zimbabwe is an agrarian country which mostly depends on agriculture for economic growth, poverty reduction, employment creation and sustainable development (Nyanga, 2013). Majority of the population in Zimbabwe is dependent on agriculture for subsistence consumption, employment and income. Agriculture directly supplies raw materials to the manufacturing sector and contributes towards export earnings and the Gross



Domestic Product of Zimbabwe. It is widely noted that rural livelihoods in most cases are totally dependent on agriculture, so a collapse of this sector may result in the decline in standards of living for rural inhabitants. From the year 2001 to 2014, Zimbabwe has become a net importer of maize from other regional countries such as Zambia and South Africa to meet its food security demands. This clearly highlights that there is an urgent need to improve agricultural production, extension services, support services to new farmers, and finance because it has been noted that this sector is of paramount importance to the country.

## **GROWTH POINTS**

Growth points are points of economic potential which were created in undeveloped areas with the main purpose that they would eventually become growth centres (Conyers, 2001; Helmsing, 1986; Carr, 1997; Perroux, 1958). During Rhodesia, growth points were introduced by the colonial administration as centres of controlling the African community. In Zimbabwe growth points were created in the hope of catalysing rural development which would lead to urbanisation and modernisation. Growth points are meant to spread urbanisation by turning existing rural areas into new urban areas and therefore decongest towns and cities. Growth points were supposed to be an effective way of reducing rural poverty through the development of small urban centres which were meant to provide economic benefit and services to surrounding communities. The creation of growth points was a method of catalysing social and economic development in underdeveloped rural areas. However, certain growth points have considerably improved from where they started from with growth points such as Gokwe and Murehwa experiencing considerable growth, modernisation and development. Whilst on the other hand, the majority of growth points in Zimbabwe such as Maphisa, Hauna, Sanyathi and Magunje are not developed and worse have not showing any positive signs of improvement. Instead these growth points can be viewed as underdeveloped and economically declining in nature. Manyanhaire et al (2009) asserts that some growth points if not most of them are declining points meaning that no development is occurring in these places at all, for example Magunje growth point in Mashonaland West Province. These growth points have low economic potential and are heavily dependent on government support and investment and are characterised by general dealer shops, grinding mills, liquor stores and low-order activities and services.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

The study has been motivated by the growing concern of underdevelopment and economic stagnation currently occurring in growth points in Zimbabwe. The rationale of this study is that growth points have become centres of declining growth thus not having any meaningful positive impact on rural development. This study will become a valuable addition to literature because the study seeks to highlight the challenges that growth points have been facing regarding economic expansion and development.

This study is a vital research to the nation because it will unearth the impediments regarding rural development because much of the country is characterised by very low levels of urbanisation and much of the population in Zimbabwe reside in rural areas. In the growth point under study the research aims at giving insight on why levels of economic development and foreign investment have been dismal for the past 35 years after independence. The study will greatly benefit policy makers, town planners and the majority of rural development communities because it will highlight the challenges which growth points have been facing and continue to face. Also, the study will prescribe solutions on how the poor application of the growth point strategy in Zimbabwe can be enhanced and improved so as to spur rural development and urbanisation.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Qualitative research involves the studying of issues in their natural social surroundings (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The study made use of the qualitative research methods. Qualitative research

was ideal to be used when conducting this study because by origin qualitative research main goal is to understand human and social problems and produce descriptive data. Qualitative research design was appropriate for the study because it involved a detailed examination of one location and it allowed for probing to get clearer explanations on the issues which were raised. In qualitative research, humans are the primary data collecting instrument. This meant that the researcher relied on humans rather than relying on measuring instruments and this made the researcher more engaged and involved in the research and enabled the researcher to understand the social issues surrounding the challenges faced by the growth point with regards to rural development. Qualitative research provided for a holistic approach to the research under study because all the elements that were present in that particular setup were all studied.

## **DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS**

### **TARGET POPULATION**

Population refers to the total group of people from which information is obtained. ZimStat (2012) points out that Hurungwe District has a population of 324 675 individuals whilst Magunje growth point has a population of 56 621 people. However, this study only focused on residents who were residing within Magunje growth point and only 40 people were sampled. The research design aimed to gather the opinions of farmers, traditional leadership, women entrepreneurs and the youth on the challenges faced by Magunje growth point and how best can these challenges be addressed.

### **INTERVIEWS**

This is a data gathering instrument which is in the form of a printed document that contains instructions and questions that were compiled to obtain answers from respondents. An interview is described as a form of conversation and is one of the main methods of data collection used in qualitative research (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). Interviews involve personal contact and interaction between the interviewer and the respondent. Interviews were done through face to

face and via the telephone. Semi- structured interviews were used in this research because of their advantage of flexibility to capture the required data. Semi- structured interviews also allowed the researcher to write down the personal challenges faced by women with respect to their economic activities and the challenges faced by farmers in Magunje growth point. Interviews allowed for non-verbal communication to be observed and noted. In this research, only individuals residing within Magunje growth point were consulted in particular residents from the high density and the low density of the growth point.

## **QUESTIONNAIRES**

This is a data gathering instrument which is in the form of a printed document that contains instructions and questions that were compiled to obtain answers from respondents. Questionnaires are anonymous and hence respondents were able to complete the form with ease. Structured and unstructured questions allowed for a careful balance between open ended and close-ended questions. The use of questionnaires allowed the researcher an opportunity to use sampling data gathering techniques.

## **PARTICIPANT FIELD OBSERVATION**

Participant observation is the process of learning through being exposed to or being involved in the daily activities of participants in the researcher setting (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002). An observation can be a record of an action or what occurred or a narration of what was said by respondents. It can also include behaviour, patterns and trends in a given environment. Participant Field Observation was appropriate because it was efficient at explaining what was going on in the particular social location. It also gave the researcher an opportunity to experience and view the emotions of those being studied. The researcher used the participant observation technique in order to experience the life, activities and challenges of the community concerned. This technique was used in order to get to the root cause of what is currently going on in Magunje growth point.

## **DESKTOP RESEARCH**

The researcher also used secondary literature which was available on the subject under study, both on the actual case study and on other growth points in general. The main advantage of using secondary data was that it had a huge benefit in saving resources, in particular, both money and time. Desktop research was useful because it was time efficient as it allowed the researcher to focus on other aspects of the research. Desktop research provided readily available existing data and statistical information which was useful to the study. Secondary data was also useful when comparing data that was collected by the researcher. This allowed the researcher an opportunity to place findings within a more general context and allowed for triangulation to be used. This strengthened the data validity and reliability of the research findings.

## **SAMPLING**

Taylor-Powell (1998) defines a sample as a portion of a larger group called a population. Given the large population of Magunje growth point, it is a time consuming process to interview every inhabitant of the growth point hence a sample size of the population was used to represent the entire population. The major intention of using sampling data gathering techniques was to produce as close as possible an approximation of the population as possible (Taylor-Powell, 1998). A sample refers to a subject of the population under study whose characteristics will be generalized to the entire population. Sampling was vital because it was less time consuming and cost effective considering the scarce resources which the researcher had at disposal.

## **PURPOSIVE SAMPLING**

Purposive sampling was used because it is commonly associated with qualitative research studies. Purposive sampling is ideal when dealing with very small sample sizes such as in this research. The researcher had the opportunity to select the participants that were considered relevant and informative enough for the research study, so that research questions could be answered and the desired research objectives would be met. The sample units were chosen

because they possessed particular characteristics that would facilitate for detailed explanation (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The mixed sample approach of purposive sampling was used, as there was an attempt to include participants who vary from each other. This was done so as to identify important themes which would cut across the diversity of the people (Robson, 2002).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **CHALLENGES FACED BY GROWTH POINTS**

Despite the realization and the support which some scholars have provided for the support of growth points as an enabling factor in catalysing development in rural areas, growth points have continued to face extreme challenges. A number of studies have carefully researched on the stagnation of growth points but very few studies, if any, in Zimbabwe, have been carried out to clearly articulate the root causes of underdevelopment in growth points. Chirisa et al (2013) concurs with this assertion and also found out that very few studies have been done to establish the possible future outcomes of urbanisation of small settlements. A number of researchers and scholars have written intensively on the lack of viable industries and the stagnation and declining nature of growth points. However, this research proposes to go beyond Manyanhaire (2009) and Wekwete (1988) work in the following manner, it shall show that a settlement which is resource endowed is not a guarantee towards economic growth and development. Many scholars have written about how the abundance of cotton led to the transformation and development of Gokwe growth point but very few scholars have done research on resource rich growth points which have failed to develop.

In fact and in reality, centralisation which is the opposite of the growth point decentralised development ideology has been the major drawback that has led to stagnation and decline of most growth points in Zimbabwe. The results of centralisation have been disappointing as most of the centres have remained small and dormant comprising of a few general dealer shops and

government offices. The lack of a strong economic base, low investment levels, and the lack of title deeds where land and other properties could be weighed in as bankable properties and as a means to access financial assistance have all crippled the growth centre strategy in Zimbabwe. According to Manyanhaire et al (2009) most scholars in the growth point literature have asserted that the key driver in rural development should be a proven economic base which can sustain growth for example, minerals such as gold, diamonds, timber, water, and land. This has been the worst case in Zimbabwe where environmental degradation has been the order of the day through uncontrolled artisanal mining activities nationwide and increased tobacco farming which is very damaging to forests.

### **INADEQUATE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

Many scholars identified inadequate central funding as one of the major factors that led to the failure of growth points to expand and develop. Growth points have been dealt a huge blow by inadequate central government funding. The government of Zimbabwe invested Z\$ 160 000 initially into every growth point for the construction of physical infrastructure facilities through the growth centre policy and public sector investment programme (Wekwete, 1988). However, this noble financial contribution was not further supplemented and continued. This left many growth points only with the initial infrastructure that the rural district councils had built and thus they failed to expand in size. The government has neglected the majority of the growth points over the past 30 years. Lack of investment in notable infrastructure such as roads and railways is also a major concern as to why growth points failed to attract much investment (The Standard September 29 2013). Due to under funding and the provision of insufficient funding from the central government this led to the rural district councils (RDCs) failing to adequately maintain the road networks in growth points (Nhede, 2013). The tarred roads are full of pot holes and have become a driving hazard for motorists. The lack of funding notably affected the provision of public services as most growth points lack access to clean potable water and electricity whilst activities such as refuse collection have been suspended in some growth points.

Empirical evidence suggests that some of the buildings that were under construction became dilapidated even before completion because of viability and financial constraints (Nhede, 2013). This led to both foreign and local investors and job seekers shunning the growth points because

of the lack of adequate public service delivery and the poor accessibility of growth points. The lack of important services such as banking and a constant electricity supply made it rather impossible for Magunje growth point to attract investors into the area. This meant that the initial investment in growth points went to a waste. Under such circumstances, rural to urban migration was not curbed but exacerbated. Many scholars placed much research emphasis on the failure of the growth points to propel the development of rural areas. Very few scholars have researched on the absence of finance institutions as one of the causes of the failure of growth points to sustain their economic activities. Banks and building societies provide access to microfinance, loans, and mortgages for startup funding for small to medium enterprises, farmers and home seekers. The absence of financial institutions means that the twin towers of development, savings and investment are absent from growth points playing a huge factor in undermining the ability of these areas to develop.

### **A BADLY PERFORMING ECONOMY**

The current economic meltdown has taken its toll on growth points in Mashonaland West province and in Zimbabwe as a whole. This has led to the closure of businesses, general dealer shops and a bank at Magunje growth point. This has led to a continuing trend of increasing rural to urban migration which has reduced the potential of human capital available within the growth points (The Herald 26 February 2015). Since the formation of growth points, they have failed to adequately attract investors into these areas (Nhede, 2013). Due to the absence of savings and investment which are considered two important twin towers of development; economic growth and expansion has proven to be very difficult. Despite the incentives which the government set out for private companies wishing to invest in growth points, this dismally failed as private companies were cautious of viability constraints and the fact that economic activities in mostly agro-based economies was seasonal. The poor macro-economic environment that was prevailing in Zimbabwe from the mid-1980s had an influence on the economy as a whole (Chirisa et al, 2013). The adoption of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) led to budget deficits, escalating debt and inflation and this made it impossible for the government to keep financing the development of growth points.



Even present day Zimbabwe is still hugely affected by a poor macro-economic environment making domestic investments by government even more difficult. The economic sanctions imposed on the country by the European Union (EU) and the United States of America (USA) had a negative impact on the overall performance of the Zimbabwe economy as a whole (Makaye and Munhande, 2008). This meant that foreign investors were not likely to invest in the country due to its poor international image and isolation from international markets and financial lending institutions. The declining economic environment which was characterised by high unemployment rates, a stagnating national economy and hyperinflation worsened the existence of growth points (Manyanhaire et al, 2009). The hyper-inflationary environment and the closure of businesses in nearby towns and cities hampered economic activity in growth points as they could no longer access the trickle down benefits which were supposed to emanate from the towns and cities. The delay in building infrastructure in growth points is another factor which led to the loss of interest and patience by investors in the policy. The actual implementation of the policy took much time hence stakeholders became disinterested in it. The poor economic environment also had negative impacts on the activities of the Magunje rural district council. Stand owners, shop owners and providers of various services struggled to pay levies and rates to the local council (Manyanhaire et al, 2009). High rates of unemployment meant that the Magunje council could not access much revenue from levies and rates because much of the inhabitants were unable to pay their dues.

## **POOR PLANNING**

Several scholars have pointed out that policy can be the foundation of economic growth and development but can also be a major hindrance for many development initiatives. Scholars such as (Chirisa et al, 2013) share the view that the planning concept of growth points was also a major contributory factor to the failure of this approach. The failure of the growth point policy was closely linked to the way the policy was implemented. The criteria set for identifying growth points was abandoned and was heavily influenced by political decisions which ultimately led to the failure of the strategy. Political conflicts and factors hindered the implementation of developmental plans (Conyers, 2001). The failure of growth points to fully industrialise hinges heavily on the actual planning and implementation of the policy framework. The policy planners

in Zimbabwe made a huge error of establishing growth points without checking whether they had a sufficient resource base capable of sustaining economic growth and development (Manyanhaire, 2009). Small-scale industrial projects which were established in growth points included oil processing, grinding mills, and butcheries which were industries which could not really catalyse economic growth and add value to the community. Such industries could be viewed as weak and lacked sustainability. For a growth point to become feasible there should be a combination of effective planning and policy (Wekwete, 2001). A successful growth point strategy should have captured the wide base of social economic dynamics and a clear plan to maximise the utilisation of the resource base available to propel growth. Therefore, viability and sustainability of growth points is premised on innovation and the identification of new resources in conjunction with favourable government policy support. The lack of growth oriented enterprises and manufacturing activity also affected the development of growth points (Manyanhaire, 2009). A lack of investment by value- chain industries such as processing plants and value addition centres facilitated the structural weakness of growth points. The centralised planning approach which the government adopted lacked sustainability hence after the government lacked the finance to invest in the growth centres, economic growth crippled and declined. The poor were not involved in the modernisation planning approach and this restricted their involvement and participation (Matunhu, 2012a). The growth point strategy became an imposed strategy on the rural inhabitants.

The policy also lacked participation by direct and indirect stakeholders hence it failed to attract support when it was being implemented. The initial planning of the policy was too centralised in the hands of government officials and saw important stakeholders such as local communities, entrepreneurs and industrialists being excluded out of the crafting of the economic blueprint (Chirisa et al, 2013). This resulted in too much involvement from political officials who negatively influenced the course of the policy's intended direction. The growth point strategy in Zimbabwe failed to work successfully because of the lack of political will from the Government of Zimbabwe which failed to attract the much needed foreign investment needed to fully catalyse development in rural areas. This failure and neglect by government officials resulted in the continued retarding and under-development of rural areas.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1 AN OVERVIEW OF SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND PARADIGMS IMPLEMENTED IN ZIMBABWE AFTER 1980**

#### **CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

The segment of this chapter seeks to discuss the major spatial planning policies which were implemented after 1980 in Zimbabwe. In particular, the Growth with Equity policy and the Economic Structural Adjustment Policy (ESAP) shall be highlighted and how they impacted on rural development whether positively or negatively. The transformation approach as a paradigm for rural development shall be unpacked and the limitations of this paradigm will be highlighted. This section shall also reveal the concept behind the growth point strategy and why they were established in Zimbabwe. An evaluation of the growth point policy in relation to rural industrialisation and rural off farm activities shall also be highlighted. Lastly, a historical background of Magunje Growth Point shall be given.

#### **1.1 GROWTH WITH EQUITY: AN ECONOMIC POLICY STATEMENT 1981**

After independence in 1980, the Government of Zimbabwe embarked on a major policy of rural development which had been neglected for quite a long time by the previous colonial government. This major policy shift was implemented because before independence, the rural development planning policy framework in Zimbabwe was weak and more resources were concentrated towards the development of urban centres. The colonial government deliberately succeeded in marginalising the African population by relocating them to communal areas which had poor soils and overcrowded conditions. The colonial rural development planning was highly centralised and exclusionary in nature which resulted in Africans having limited inclusion in the activities that affected them the most. The urgency for restructuring the economy to reduce the colonial imbalances was highlighted in the first major policy statement including the 'Growth with Equity' policy blueprint (GoZ, 1981).

(Zhdr, 1998) states that the main objectives of the Growth with Equity policy included rural development, infrastructure development, balanced development and the equal distribution of productive resources and income.

The Growth with Equity blueprint was crafted to redress colonial imbalances namely to address economic exploitation, income inequality and to address the unbalanced levels of development between the rural and urban areas (Zhdr, 1998) (GoZ, 1981). It is important to note that the Growth with Equity policy focused on addressing inherited colonial inequalities through land redistribution by the implementation of a land resettlement programme. The policy aimed to re-allocate resources to the previously marginalised Africans and to ensure that the benefits that accrued from the ownership of resources were equitably distributed (Mazingi and Kamidza)

The policy had limited success with regards to land redistribution due to the willing-buyer and willing-seller clause and the restrictive provisions of the Lancaster House Constitution. However families were resettled on previously unutilised land. By 1984 significant progress had been achieved in terms of infrastructure development, decongesting communal areas and redressing inherited colonial social inequalities. These improvements had a positive impact on the rural economy. Upon the implementation of the Second Five-Year National Development Plan

(SFYNDP) (1991-1995) the Government of Zimbabwe asserted that rural development, land redistribution, employment creation and economic expansion which were prioritised sectors in the development planning of the first decade, had not achieved the projected desired targets due to the low levels of economic growth ( Mazingi and Kamidza). Scholars such as (Conyers, 2001) point out that most of the policies which the government implemented post-1980 were concentrated on reducing racial inequalities rather than spatial inequalities. The inherited disparities between urban areas and rural areas have continued to exist to date.

### **1.1.1 THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMME 1991-1995**

The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) was implemented in 1991 to the year 1995 with the aim of restructuring the Zimbabwean economy. The government adopted a neoliberal approach to economic development (Conyers, 2001). This policy was implemented under the close supervision of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Some of the broad aims of the policy included the reduction in government expenditure, forced retrenchments and the removal of price controls and subsidies. However, this policy was retrogressive as it reversed some of the socio-economic achievements that had been made in the first decade after independence. The adoption of ESAP which was funded by the IMF and the World Bank led to a reduction of government expenditure which led to the reduction of incentives which could be offered by the government. Thus, it became difficult for the government to entice companies to relocate to the growth points because the government lacked the funds to support those business ventures (Manyanhaire et al, 2009). A reduction in government expenditure meant that the buying power of mostly civil servants who were stationed in decentralised government departments in growth points was reduced significantly. Ultimately, this led to the closure of some businesses and recreational facilities as they were deemed surplus to requirements. The removal of subsidies heavily impacted on rural farmers as they could no longer access the required support and protection from the central government. The removal of government control from the marketing of basic crops meant that small scale

farmers and communal farmers lost out as they could not access markets which could buy their produce at a high price. This promoted poverty amongst the rural farmers. Thus, the ESAP policy and the ZIMPREST policy had negative impact on regional development and further contributed to underdevelopment and economic stagnation of rural areas (Conyers, 2001). This exacerbated spatial inequalities in Zimbabwe.

## **1.2 THE TRANSFORMATION APPROACH AS A PARADIGM FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ITS LIMITATIONS**

One of the first imperative policies which the government adopted during the 1980s to tackle the problem of regional inequality, was that of land resettlement. The transformation approach gained momentum when Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980. The transformation approach has presented both positive and negative effects on the livelihoods of rural inhabitants. This section shall discuss the challenges faced by the transformation approach as a paradigm to rural development in Zimbabwe. The transformation approach brought about the radical changes in the socio-economic disparities that remained due to the colonial legacy which (Maphosa, 2010) described as an “ushered poverty”. The land resettlement policy was at first partially successful, by 1989, 61 000 households had been resettled on former white owned commercial farmland (Whiteside, 1998). This showed the political will of resettling landless Africans and addressing racial land inequalities and the congestion that dominated most communal areas. This produced a new category of rural farmers and enhanced some of the rural areas with improved services and living conditions. Despite the radicalism that the approach adopted, there were quite a number of economic challenges that have not been addressed as (Matunhu, 2012b) in his indigenisation analysis concurred that the policy did not take on board the immediate developmental needs.

Some scholars oppose that a number of African countries adopted land legislature redress which did not yield any meaningful dividends as the land reform which was done in capitalist states. The land reform programme in Zimbabwe has been dogged by the fact the state was the initiator and implementer of the programme (Bhatta, 2010). This produced a number of limitations such as the misunderstandings by the state of the local systems of property rights resulted in the

exclusion of some stakeholders such as secondary rights holders and women, (Bouquet, 2009). In the case of the 2000 Zimbabwe fast track land reform programme, a lot of irregularities were seen as local chiefs, village heads were neither consulted as this came at the height of political disagreement which was driven by the no vote referendum in 2000, this being the case, the state had to distribute land without the blessings and knowledge of the village heads. Though the transformation approach in Zimbabwe was once taken on board in 1979 during the Smith regime, it had very little impact as it was not welcomed by those in possession of the land. In 1981 efforts to redistribute land were tried but again, the exercise did not yield any meaningful results as it was a market based approach driven and the willing-buyer willing-seller policy of the Lancaster house agreement (Moyo, 2004). Even the Growth with Equity policy which the Robert Mugabe led government implemented suffocated along the way due to this impediment. Eventually the market driven land reform and the fast track land reform suffered from a lack of public consultancy and stakeholder exclusion.

This ushered in serious elements of corruption where land could only be allocated by the land officer who were demanding bribes for the allocation of pieces of land. In the same vein, this also opened room for political manipulation, as some big political elites grabbed several pieces of land and multiple farms at the expense of the poor peasants. Thus, the land reform did not address its intended objective per say but, it was a change of race, from white multiple owners to black multiple owners. Land reform is a deliberate change in the way agricultural land is held or owned, the methods of cultivation, or the relations of agriculture to the rest of the economy. (Bhatta, 2010) concurred to this point by indicating that land reform often takes the form of benefiting the poor and landless. Instead of ushering in equal opportunities with regards to equity and gender, the opposite became true, where those with political and financial muscles grabbed more pieces of land.

Against this background, the land allocations were not based on performance and there are still no benchmarks that measure the agricultural production levels as most of the people who were issued land are “week-end farmers” as well as the “cellphone farmers”. This has been one of the serious setbacks of the transformation approach. It is as if it is rather more retrogressive than progressive. As long as the transformative approach in Zimbabwe remains a partisan and a state project, then little change and rural development will be registered. Land reform can only be

termed successful if the desired goals are achieved, which are equity and productivity. The transformation approach which has relied much upon the state has failed total to take equity and production factors on board. In the past years, some forms of grants and farm implements which were bought and distributed by the Reserve bank of Zimbabwe in 2008 to 2009, were distributed on partisan and connection basis were an abuse of public funds at its worst. Some of these, tractors, scotch carts and cultivators are seen parked in some towns instead of giving a tractor to a rural community, they were given to individuals, therefore, on this basis it becomes reasonable and suitable to assert that fast track land reform program was in fact a land grab and not a social equity redistribution programme.

State centered development proved to be no different from the top-down approach of development. Scholars such as (Manji, 2006) argued for the central role of law where legal solutions which entail bringing what are described as the assets of the poor into the legal system through the process of registration and tilting. In Zimbabwe the ownership of land has remained defective because it is not tilted. The radical transformation approach lacked focus because it only resettled farmers with state intervention without a well-articulated system that was embedded upon growth and equity. Some scholars have gone to prove that the land reform was not implemented to address the needs of the landless and poor rural people in the communal lands but was more of a political move.

Also, the Transformation approach has been hampered by high levels of corruption which (Matunhu, 2012b) described that it breeds inefficiency and wastage, by aggravating the budget deficit problems which lead to economic contraction and collapse. In general, corruption or rent seeking has negative social and economic consequences, including impeding the capacity of the state to deliver services to the populace, especially the rural poor. Another contour of the transformative approach in Zimbabwe is the Indigenization and Economic Empowerment Act 14/2007 which also has serious lope holes both theoretical and empirically. According to (Matunhu, 2012b) the act does not “specifically mention the empowerment of the disadvantaged communities, rather it talks of empowerment of individuals”. Even from an empirical standpoint, it is only some few connected individuals on partisan grounds that are benefiting from the



empowerment drive. Just like the land reform, the act is more concerned about individual development than community development, which in fact has been a serious scare to the foreign investor community. The community share ownership schemes mostly exist in theory and the funds are not being deposited into the community bank accounts. This impedes the development of rural areas as their resources and minerals are being exploited with no compensation.

The transformative approach which is primarily embedded upon the basic needs approach lacks the capacity to avail social services to communities. Due to the fact that it is state led system, the government embarked on a massive scale resettlements without taking such issues like schools, health centers and roads networking into cognisance. Majority of the school age going children in rural areas have dropped out of school due to the non-availability of schools, as well as lack of clinics have seen diseases taking a toll in the resettlements, the case of Chingwizi 2014 (The Southern Eye, 2014). The government lacks the capacity to provide these basic facilities, owing to its exclusionary approach, the state excluded key stakeholders from the onset of the land reform creating the rather political driven lands office to allocate land. In this essence resettled rural farmers have been challenged with lack of cooperation from the general cooperate world, financial institutions and the donor community.

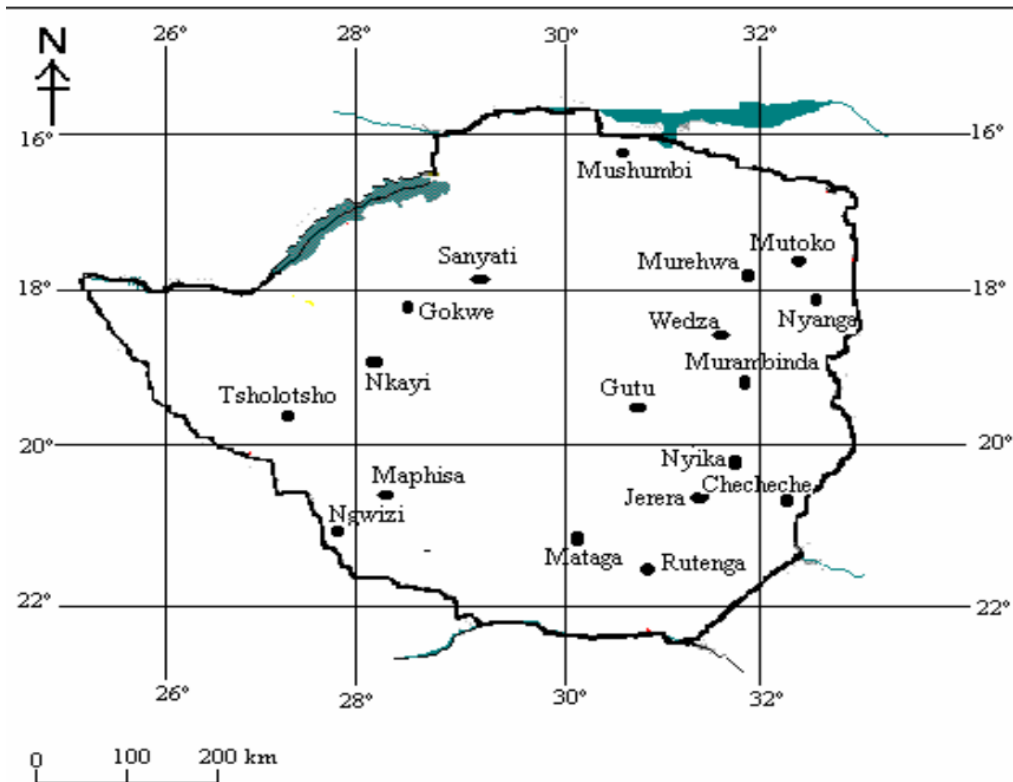
The transformation approach also included the provision of infrastructure and services in communal areas. This witnessed the creation of crop marketing depots being constructed in rural areas. It is against this background that the resettled farmers suffered from market centralization or manipulation by such players as Grain Marketing Board, (GMB) who bought maize produce at giveaway prizes and delayed payments to the farmers. State marketing boards ushered in monopoly. This has restrained the whole drive behind the transformative approach as it is no longer progressive based. It is in this approach that some critics have viewed this approach as rather individualistic and partisan driven rather than equity and production based. The government is not concerned at all on the production systems and scales but on land possession which is not the main objective of land reform.

### **1.3 THE RATIONALE AND CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING GROWTH POINTS IN ZIMBABWE**

Wekwete (1988) defines growth points as settlements whether rural or urban which central and local government consider to have potential for further development and thus need to be supported by further public and private sector investment. (Moyo, 1991) cited by Munzwa and Jongwa (2010) define a growth point as an identified centre which has economic potential and is resourcefully endowed. Manyanhaire et al (2009) articulate that the inception of growth points in Zimbabwe was introduced in 1978 as part of the policy called the “Integrated Rural Development Plan”. (Mawere et al, 2012) agree with this assertion. This witnessed communal areas such as Nkayi, Sanyathi, Murehwa, Jerera, Maphisa, Chisumbanje, Mushumbi, Mataga and Gutu being designated as the first ten growth points in the communal areas. Chirisa et al (2013) found out that the overall objective behind the formation of growth points was to try and bridge the gap that existed between the dual economies of the country, being the rural and urban areas. Growth points were meant to foster and promote equitable development in Zimbabwe (Nhede, 2013). The adoption of the growth point strategy was aimed at correcting colonial imbalances through the provision of improved services and the construction of infrastructure to service the previously marginalised communal sectors of the country. Nhede (2013) also points out that the growth point strategy aimed at decongesting urban areas due to the rapid rural to urban migration levels that were in existence at the time. Thus, the standard of living and quality of life of rural areas had to be improved in order to deal with outward migration to the cities. The then government saw it fit to decentralise products, services and employment opportunities which were found in urban areas to rural areas in order to curb the high rates of internal migration to the cities which resulted in overpopulation challenges and the overburdening of urban facilities. Figure 2 below shows some of the growth points which were designated in Zimbabwe after 1980.

The government adopted the growth point strategy as a way of dealing with overcrowding in urban centres (Nhede, 2013). Growth points were fostered by the post-independence government in 1981 when they were included as part of the country’s economic policy; which at the time was the Growth with Equity. The Growth with Equity policy after independence clearly spelled out

the importance of sustainable economic growth and development in order to improve the disposable income and the standards of living for Zimbabweans as a whole (Chirisa, 2013). The post-independence Zimbabwe government hoped that the creation of economic nodes in the form of growth points would foster development into the undeveloped rural areas. Mawere et al (2012) reveals that government of Zimbabwe aimed at providing growth points with facilities which were commonly found in urban areas such as banking, groceries and high order goods in order to decrease congestion and pressure on the urban public service delivery system. This was supposed to happen through the use of trickle down effects which were to emanate from the growth points and diffuse into the rural areas.



**Figure 2: Growth Points in Zimbabwe**

Adapted from (Conyers, 2001)

Manyanhaire et al (2009) asserts that the decentralisation of administrative and planning responsibilities by the central government to the local governments is another possible justification for the establishment of growth points in Zimbabwe. Nhede (2013) concurs with the assertion and points out that decentralisation of services and goods were meant to promote rural development by emphasizing growth with equity. The locational and settlement factors of establishing Magunje growth point, to a large extent can be attributed to the decentralisation policy of the central government. After Zimbabwe achieved political independence in 1980, the government saw it fit to elevate previously disadvantaged communal areas to de-facto growth point status. This saw the number of growth points rise to 55 with each district having its own growth point centre (Chirisa, 2013). Growth points were introduced in Zimbabwe with the objective of transforming rural service centres and business centres into vibrant economic hubs to spur rural development (Nhede, 2013). The government through the public sector investment programme made it possible to construct physical infrastructure at the growth points which were supposed to be economic hubs each district. However, it must be noted that out of these de-facto growth points not all of them had the much needed identifiable resource base required for them to catalyse economic production and marketing activities. This saw the creation of growth points which were always dependent on government support, intervention and investment and were not able to sustain their own economic growth.

#### **1.4 THE GROWTH POLE POLICY IN THE PROMOTION OF RURAL INDUSTRIALISATION AND RURAL OFF FARM ACTIVITIES IN ZIMBABWE**

Industrial activity has and continues to be very limited in most growth point in Zimbabwe. There has been an increase in business activity in district centres but this has been met with limited structural changes in terms of types of activity (Wekwete, 1988). Helmsing (1986) identified two types of rural industry, the first which is linked to household based activities which are mostly done on a part time basis in order to complement the disposable income available to a household. The second type of industry identified in growth points includes owner operated workshops which produce goods and offer services to the community for example grinding mills. Industrial activity that has over the years relocated to growth points has been restricted to repair and service oriented industries like brick moulding. There is a presence of minimal manufacturing in the

form of agro processing and the only few of such industries found are grinding mills. Metalworking activities are mixed and include activities such as welding. Textile and clothing industries are fairly limited except for tailoring and repair work (Helmsing, 1986).

In Zimbabwe, most growth points have been converted into residential areas without any capital investments and development. This has made it difficult to attract the growth industries which have numerous multiplier effects (Bradford and Kent, 1987). Furthermore, very few growth points can boast of having government funded enterprises and industries hence the lack of economic growth and the presence of economic decline and stagnation which is a major characteristic of most centres. Impressive growth only occurred in a few growth points such as Gokwe and Murehwa which are located in areas where agricultural output was expanding rapidly thus creating a market for secondary goods and services. Agro-based companies such as Cottco and Cargill have added value to development by establishing cotton centres around Gokwe where farmers walk village distances to sell their agricultural produce. Most growth points have remained small service centres being dominated by decentralised government departments and a few general dealer shops clearly showing the lack of a strong economic base and the absence of investment.

### **1.5 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MAGUNJE GROWTH POINT**

Magunje was designated as a growth point in 1982 with a predictable population of 130 during the colonial government's regime. Magunje growth point is located west of Karoi town off the main Harare to Chirundu Highway, in Mashonaland West Province of Zimbabwe (Manyanhaire et al, 2009). Magunje growth point is the administrative hub of Hurungwe district in Mashonaland West Province. Magunje growth point is located with Hurungwe district which is predominately rural and is populated by mostly Shona speaking people. Magunje growth points' major locational factor can be attributed to the decentralisation of administrative and planning functions by the central government. This has seen the decentralisation of offices of the ministries of education, defense, and environment and a Police station is also found there (Manyanhaire et al, 2009). Mashonaland West is one of the most underdeveloped provinces in the

country despite the abundance of natural resources and sources of opportunity which can be exploited.

The population of Magunje was projected at 13 000 people (CSO, 2002) whilst the 2012 census states that the population was counted at 56 621 people (ZimStat, 2013). The area was and still is predominately an agricultural based region with crops such as maize, tobacco, sugar beans, paprika, and cotton mostly grown there. The area is also well suited for horticultural crops due to the availability of dams and irrigation facilities to enable the production of these crops. Before the Fast track land reform programme, Magunje growth point was dominated by a large number of white commercial farmers who mostly farmed the area and grew the crops previously mentioned above. Thus, the area was not really densely populated because it was the domain of white commercial farmers and their farm workers.

Parliament Research Department (2011) points out that the people of Magunje mainly pursue large scale commercial farming activities as their main economic source of livelihood. The designation of Magunje as a growth point after independence and the re- allocation of land in the form of the fast track land reform programme is when population pressure was put on Magunje to develop and spur economic growth.

However, of particular interest is the unavailability of banking services in Magunje growth point. This lack of banking fosters underdevelopment because savings are invested in other nearby towns' banks such as in Chinhoyi, Karoi, Kariba and Harare. It has been noted that Magunje growth point has been used as an exploitation zone, whereby commercial farmers and new farmers exploit it from its vast agricultural produce but profits are banked elsewhere and are used to further investments in other towns and cities. With poor circulation of money and unavailability of employment this has led to a high poverty rate believed to be at 80 % and most people are living in abject poverty (PASS, 2003).

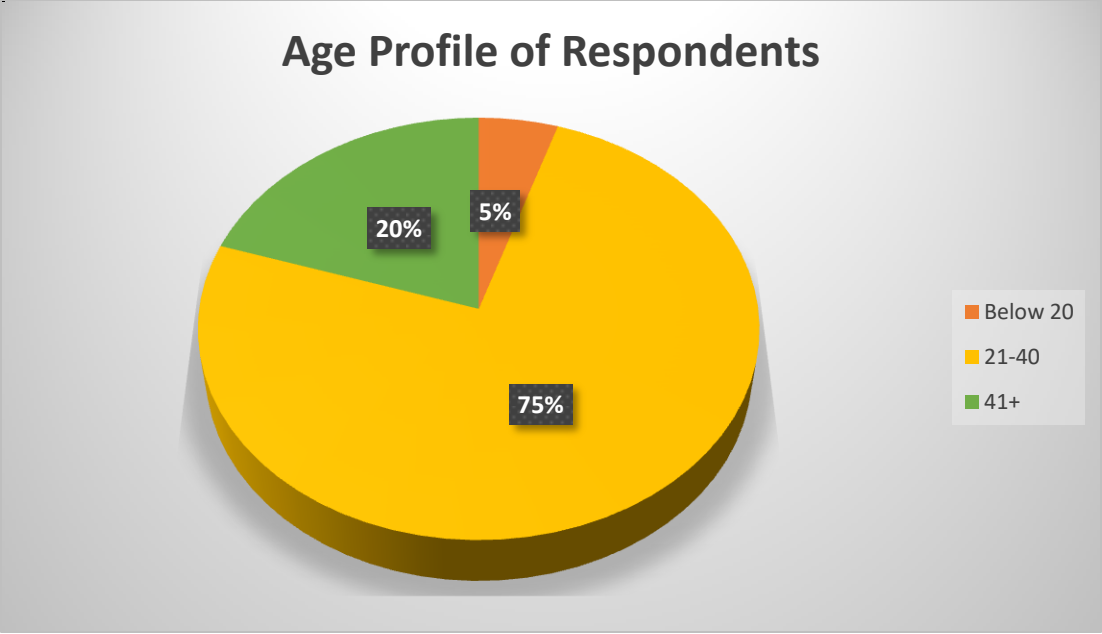
## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2 CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

This section seeks to give an in-depth analysis on the challenges faced by growth points in the promotion of rural development with special reference to Magunje growth point. Some of the challenges to be highlighted include the centralisation of tobacco auction floors in Harare, government neglect of growth points, national economic decline, financial constraints, and lack of title deeds, a low demand for goods and services, and RDC planning problems. This section shall also give attention as to how the people in Magunje currently live and the types of activities which they engage in on a daily basis, clearly highlighting the crops that are currently being grown there and the nature of industries and services that are currently in existence. The results are based on the ground research conducted in Magunje growth point.

#### **2.1 THE PROFILE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS**



**Figure 3 Age Profile of Respondents**

Figure 3 highlights the percentage profile of the sampled respondents. Most of the sampled and interviewed respondents were young men and women aged 21-40 years. This age range constituted the majority of the percentage 75% of the total interviewed respondents. This bulk represented the economically active population of Magunje growth point who have the most knowledge of the area and the challenges they have been facing. However, 20% constituted of people aged above 41 years, this was because the research wanted to trace the challenges faced by Magunje over time and the aged surely had an input from their life experiences. A poultry 5% represented those who were below 20 years of age, as this is the future potential of Magunje, their views were of importance as to what they thought the future had in store for their home area. However, it should be noted that only those who were considered relevant and were able to give more information were sampled. For gender parity purposes, half of the respondents sampled were women whilst the other half constituted men. This was done to give a clear picture from all angles of the growth point.

**2.1.1 HOW PEOPLE LIVE IN MAGUNJE GROWTH POINT**



Since the colonial era, Africans were marginalised and confined to the unproductive communal areas and the non-productive sectors of the economy. Since the attainment of independence, nothing much has changed as most Africans were resettled on what was perceived to be better land but was in areas which lacked development. This has given few rural inhabitants an option on livelihood portfolios as they are only able to practice agriculture as their main source of livelihood strategy. The table 1 below shows the crops which are currently being grown in Magunje growth point and shows the extent to which agriculture commands an important place in society. Magunje has been and still is an area largely dominated by large scale commercial farming. After the fast track land reform this saw the introduction of small scale commercial as well as the introduction of small holder farmers.

**Table 1: Crops Grown in Magunje Growth Point**

<b>Crops which are grown</b>	<b>Percentage Engaged</b>
Tobacco	<b>80%</b>
Maize	<b>65%</b>
Cotton	<b>35%</b>
Soya Beans	<b>40%</b>
Tomatoes	<b>45%</b>
Sweet Potatoes	<b>55%</b>
Onions	<b>30%</b>
Pepper	<b>36%</b>

Table 1 above shows the types of crops which are being currently grown in Magunje growth point by both the large scale farmers, the small scale commercial farmers and the communal farmers. The percentages show the level of popularity of the crop in that area. From the table above it is clear that the most widely grown crop grown in Magunje is tobacco as 80% of the respondents shared that they either grew the crop, or had someone in their family setup who grew the crop or were casually employed as labour or when the time for harvesting the green

leaves was due. The need to offset poverty is one of the most important aims of a rural farmer, hence the rationale behind most farmers being interested in growing tobacco as it is a cash crop. Respondents articulated that tobacco fetches a higher price when compared to the staple maize crop which is not well remunerated by the Grain Marketing Board. Food security is the most important aspect of human life, hence 65% of the respondents pointed out that they still grow the maize crop for subsistence purposes whilst a few of the commercial farmers still grow it alongside other crops. More so, 35% of the respondents specified that they grow cotton at a small scale level because the crop had lost its viability in the local marketing and buying sector. The cotton marketing board has since collapsed due to this as its storage towers are deserted and are empty in Magunje and in Sanyathi growth point.

Of the interviewed respondents, 40% grow soya beans and 45% grow tomatoes. The radical shift to horticultural crops was due to the creation of the Magunje Irrigation scheme Phase 1 which was an initiative aimed to provide water relief to new farmers and for small scale plot holders. This government sponsored project in partnership with the Chinese Metallurgy and Engineering Company made it possible for some single mothers, women's groups, youths, and the retired to be able to plant these crops with water being pumped from Magunje Dam and other water sources close by. Only 30% highlighted that they grow onion whilst 36% noted that they grow pepper. This low percentage of interest in these crops is because the respondents complained about lacking a reliable market where their produce could be sold. The lack of a reliable market has played as a disincentive to farmers as well as new farmers to venture fully into these crops. Due to the market for sweet potatoes, 55% pointed out that they grew the crop because they were able to sell it in the nearby markets in Karoi whilst some of the produce was consumed at household level.

### **2.1.2 THE NATURE OF INDUSTRIES AND SERVICES OBSERVED AT MAGUNJE GROWTH POINT**

The research revealed that there is a proliferation of a few light industries which have just begun sprouting in Magunje Growth Point. These are illustrated in Table 2 below. Through the use of

observation it was clear that general dealer shops dominate Magunje growth point together with clothing shops and stalls. An official from the local Rural District Council pointed out that general dealer shops and clothing shops and stalls are the main shops that provide services to the community due to the need to purchase basic commodities on a frequent basis whilst clothes may be purchased when money is available to locals. Some of the entrepreneurs are facilitated by the lease with an option to buy agreement with the Magunje Rural District Council.

**Table 2: The Nature of Industries Observed at Magunje Growth Point**

<b>SECTOR</b>	<b>NAME OF INDUSTRY</b>	<b>NUMBER OBSERVED</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	Grinding Mills	2
	Carpentry	1
	Brick Moulding	1
	Welding	1
	Sewing	1

**Table 3: The Nature of Observed Service Providers at Magunje Growth Point**

<b>SECTOR</b>	<b>NAME OF INDUSTRY</b>	<b>NUMBER OBSERVED</b>
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<b>Service Provider</b>	Financial Services(Mobile Money Operators) Ecocash and Telecash	2
	Hair saloon	2
	Barber outlets	2
	Schools (2 Primary and 3 Secondary)	5
	Health Hospital and a Clinic (Magunje) and a New Start Centre	3
	GMB Depot	1
	Banks	2 redundant (Closed)
<b>Retail Providers</b>	Shops	Several
<b>Retail Providers</b>	General Dealer shops	Several
	Fuel Station	1
	Bottle Stores	4
	Clothing Shops	Several
	Lodges: which are Magunje Inn and the RDC lodge	2
	Night Clubs	1 functional and 1 redundant
	Restaurant and Eating Houses	3

Of importance to note, is that the research revealed that beer halls, bottle stores and a night club are popular areas with the residents of Magunje. Due to the high levels of unemployment for both men and women and the presence of tobacco farmers, beer halls, bottle stores and the night

club at Magunje Inn are prioritised places by the locals who converge there on mostly a daily basis for leisure whilst women will be offering commercial sex services to the lodge clients and the patrons of the local bar and nightclub. During bumper yields tobacco farmers both communal and small scale commercial are an attraction at these places as they will be spending their money at will. This research yielded the same findings with a study carried out by Manyanhaire et al between September 2005 and April 2006, that Magunje growth point still does not have any banking facilities but has two redundant and closed down banking facilities. The research found out that a lack of raw materials is a major restriction in the setting up of industries as most individuals opt for finished goods to sell in their shops. The research also revealed that the closeness to Karoi town may be a possible explanation that restricts the growth and development of industries and supermarkets in Magunje. Magunje growth point is thirty-five kilometres away from Karoi and this forces people to migrate to Karoi to access services and opportunities which are not found in the growth centre. Karoi and Chinhoyi attract people from the growth point and this reduces the market size of the area and this forces the growth point to service less people. Labour migration acts as a trigger for underdevelopment by undermining the sending areas potential to benefit from its own labour force.

**Table 4: Informal Activities Observed at Magunje Growth Point**

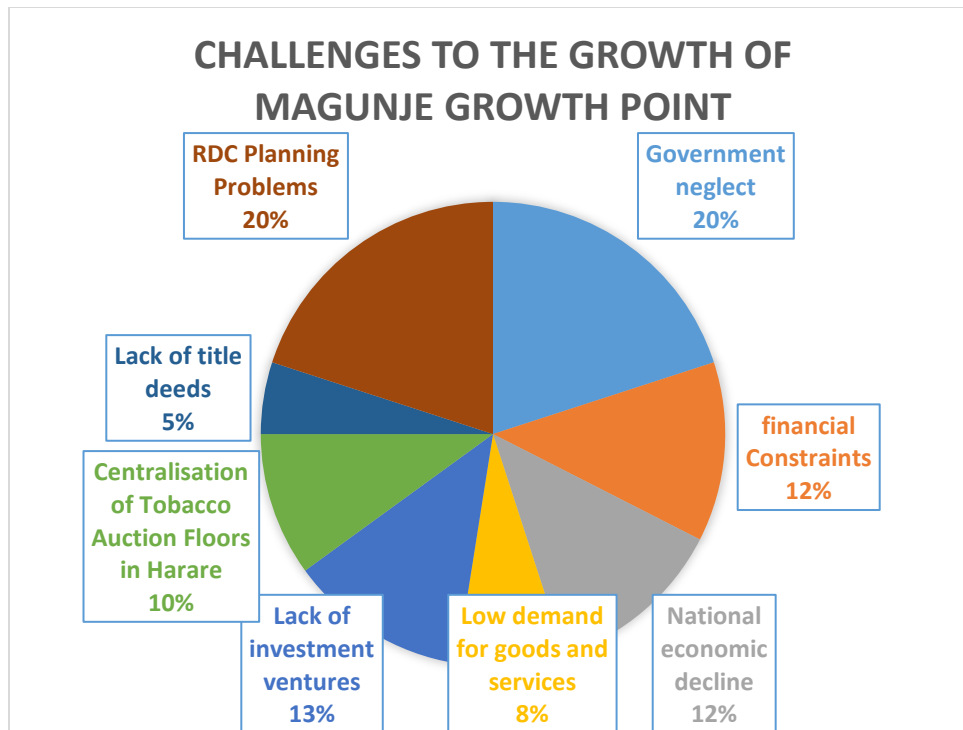
<b>Informal Activities Observed</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Sex Dominant</b>
	Commercial Sex Work	Women
	Selling of Airtime	Women/Men
	Vending	Women/Men
	Selling of Food Items	Women

From the table above it is clear that the informal sector in Magunje is dominated by women more than men. This is because women are more responsible heads of households whilst some have been rendered de-facto heads of households due to circumstances such as the death of a spouse death of parents or divorce. Most tobacco farming activities in Magunje are dominated by men although women farm alongside their husbands for those who are married and supplement their

earnings through informal trading. Most women pointed out that hardship was the main factor in joining the informal sector whilst for others it was a livelihood strategy and not a force matter. The harsh effects of the economic crisis have severely affected rural women in the hinterlands of Magunje and for those who are not able to sell wares, they render commercial sex activities to tobacco farmers who usually dominate Magunje Inn and the surrounding beer halls and bottle stores after they have received their payments. Women participate in a number of informal ventures such as selling airtime, fruits and vegetables, clothes (second hand and new) and offer food eating houses. Most of the clothes sold in Magunje are bought from Zambia which is fairly near to Magunje through the Kariba or the Chirundu border posts.

### **2.1.3 CONSTRAINTS TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF MAGUNJE**

Responses to the question of the challenges that restricted growth in Magunje were diverse and highlighted the views of the residents of the growth point. This is shown in figure 4 below. However, from the picture below it is clear that government neglect, rural district council planning problems, financial constraints are the main limitations to the growth of Magunje. The current national economic crisis has also impeded growth in the growth point as it has become hard for the area to attract any form of investment and it has been challenging for the central government to support the development of growth points owing to its huge debt crisis to the international financial institutions.



**Figure 4 Challenges to the growth of Magunje**

### **THE CENTRALISATION OF TOBACCO AUCTION FLOORS IN HARARE**

Residents of Magunje growth point shared a number of challenges which they have faced over the years since the designation of the growth point till present day. Farmers had a dominant problem that was concerned with the centralisation of tobacco auction floors in Harare. Many of the farmers alluded to the fact that this centralisation process was demanding on their part as they have to incur huge transport, accommodation costs in order to deliver their produce to the auction floors. One of the new farmers who resides at Dick’s farm shared that:

*“We lose a lot of money transporting our tobacco produce to Harare yet we are the major producer of tobacco in the country, we deserve to have our own auction floors right here in Magunje for Hurungwe District. When we reach the auction floors it takes time for our tobacco to be displayed so we incur major accommodation costs, all these costs affect my profit at the end of the day...”*

Another farmer from the same area of Dick's farm shared that:

*“This year my produce and effort was bought for peanuts. The officials at the auction floors told me that my tobacco was not smelling right and was smelling of petrol, I was given a low price for it per bale. All this could have been avoided had I not had to travel a shorter distance...”*

Thus, from the farmers who were interviewed it is clear that the centralisation of the tobacco auction floors in Harare has a negative impact on them. Transport costs are incurred to deliver the produce to the auction floors and the more one produces the more trips and transport costs one is going to incur. They also incur accommodation costs for they need to reside in Harare until their produce has been bought. Their nightmares do not end there as they are not paid cash but are given cheques which have to be cleared with the respective banks. They have to wait till the bank clears the cheques and then forwards them with ready cash. This takes its toll on the local farmers who have to incur hardship yet in the process lose valuable financial resources in the process.

## **GOVERNMENT NEGLECT**

Government neglect has been highlighted by the majority of the people who live in Magunje growth point. Many informants highlighted that the government did not live up to its expectation of providing modern facilities to growth points and improving the public service delivery systems. Many respondents stated that without government directive and support it has been very challenging to attract any foreign investment opportunities let alone any positive development in their area. One respondent shared that:

*“Magunje has not experienced any meaningful development, the government promised to lure investment to our area but nothing has materialised, majority of our youths are unemployed. The only viable source of livelihood is in the agricultural sector but that depends if you were allocated land. It's very different from the pre-fast track land reform era, where employment was permanent and opportunities for seasonal and casual labour were present...”*



Thus, despite the ability and capacity of growth points to foster rural development, progress is hampered by government neglect which has surpassed twenty five years. It can be noted that the failure of the central government to prioritise rural development is another major factor that has hindered the progress of growth points. The Public sector investment programme was a noble initiative for providing finance to fund capital development projects and rehabilitation of existing facilities in growth points but was not continued due to the economic policy blueprints which the government adopted after the 1990s, in particular the ESAP, and ZIMPREST policies. Government neglect makes it impossible for growth points to develop as they lack the political support that is required to buttress development initiatives. Without government intervention it has proven challenging to access lines of capital for infrastructure development.

## **NATIONAL ECONOMIC DECLINE**

Many of the respondents in Magunje growth point alluded to the fact that the economic decline which has been affecting Zimbabwe for the past two decades was taking its toll on most growth points. This is because of the reduced public expenditure by the central government which has resulted in low salaries for civil servants and a depressed job market. High unemployment rates have made it challenging for locals to afford to pay their rates and levies to the RDC and this has severely crippled the operations of it. Owners of general dealer stores have also struggled to pay their rents and rate arrears due to the unreliable economic environment in Magunje which relies on the boom from tobacco produce. The spending power is shown by farmers who are able to buy a lot after a good harvest. Unemployment has reduced the market size from which the council is able to collect taxes and levies from its residents. One respondent pointed out that:

*“There can be no progress in growth points when the national economy has been failing to grow for the past number of years. Most shops were closed down during the economic meltdown and never reopened. Beer outlets have remained the most lucrative businesses to operate though some have been affected and closed down...”*

Another respondent also said that:

*“Sometimes we fail to pay our rentals, when business is bad but in good times we pay our dues so that we are not evicted...”*

This shows that to a great extent the national economic crisis has resulted in negative effects in growth points. Respondents however, professed that the growth point had potential due to the vast amount of land that could be exploited for agricultural purposes which could kick start the development of local industries.

## **FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS**

Lack of capital has been highlighted by the majority of respondents in Magunje growth point. Most small-scale businesses in Magunje growth point were opened by victims of ESAP retrenchments, who after their finances dried up, failed to access any other lines of credit to keep their businesses afloat. Shops do not get assistance from the government hence they remain general dealer shops and fail to expand. Ultimately, this resulted in the closure of some shops whilst others were rented out to those who had the financial backing and business know how. Many respondents pointed out that without the availability of capital they were not able to set up their ideas but if they could access affordable lines of credit, they could start their local enterprises and community led initiatives.

Magunje growth point does not have a single bank let alone a microfinance institution. This has made it difficult for farmers who have to travel to towns and cities such as Chinhoyi, Kariba and Harare to apply for loans. For the majority of women and the unemployed, it is difficult to travel such long distances so they remain immobile.

## **LACK OF TITLE DEEDS**

Some of the business owners who were interviewed cited the lack of title deeds as a major hindrance to their small-scale operations. The RDC is currently using the Rent to buy agreements (Lease with an option to purchase) model of land ownership. However, the current scenario of land ownership where the RDCs are issuing out long term leases is not viable as it gives business operators the room to migrate to the nearby towns at any given moment. Respondents pointed

out that without title deeds it becomes difficult to access lines of credit as some of these documents are required by finance lending institutions because they fail to produce acceptable collateral security. This is because security of tenure is a major investment incentive for any business operator as it gives a sense of belonging to the community and ownership of the business.

## **LOW DEMAND FOR GOODS AND SERVICES**

Business operators in Magunje growth point shared a number of challenges which they have faced since they started trading in the informal sector. A major challenge cited was the low demand for goods and services due to the high levels of unemployment that are currently present in the area, as this is coupled by the reduced spending power by civil servants. This has resulted in a situation where capital expenditure exceeds income generated and this leads to a loss in business. Many of the respondents pointed out that the business boom in the informal sector in Magunje fluctuates according to the spending power of its occupants. When the soldiers at the Zimbabwe National Army, Magunje Barracks and the police are given out bonuses, there is an increase in business. one woman operating at the growth point centre shared that:

*“Business in Magunje varies, sometimes it’s good, and sometimes it’s bad. The heavy spenders the tobacco farmers who are able to buy our products and services when they are fully paid out...”*

The current economic crisis that is bedeviling the country has hugely impacted on the economic activity of growth points. As such people are cautious when spending money which they mostly do not have. This has made it difficult for those who are operating in the informal sector in Magunje growth point.

### **2.1.4 CONCLUSION**

Agriculture is the main activity which is carried out in Magunje though there is a proliferation of informal trading which are mostly dominated by women. The dominant crops grown in Magunje are tobacco, maize, cotton, soya beans, sweet potatoes, and tomatoes. There are very few

industries which are currently present in Magunje growth point and these mostly in the grinding mill, carpentry, welding, brick moulding and sewing sectors. Services offered include financial mobile money operators, schools, and a health clinic. This is whilst retail providers are the most dominant sector that is visible in the growth point with the presence of shops, clothing shops, general dealer shops, a fuel station, lodges, night clubs and bottle stores which are the most in number, restaurants and eating houses complete the list.

In conclusion, it can be noted that growth points face a number of challenges in the promotion of rural development. The challenges faced by growth points also end up affecting those who live within these centres. Most of the problems identified are external in nature and are more concentrated on the central government and how it has applied and pursued the growth point policy in Zimbabwe whilst some are due to the poor planning policies which are implemented by the Rural District Councils. Some of the challenges which were identified were government neglect for growth points, the national economic decline, low demand for goods and services, lack of investment ventures, financial constraints, the centralisation of tobacco auction floors in Harare the lack of title deeds issued by RDCs, and RDC planning problems. The challenges affect the ability of the growth points to attract investment opportunities and lines of credit which can be vital sources for the establishment of small scale businesses, light industries and support entrepreneurship ventures.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3 RESUSITATING GROWTH POINTS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter seeks to address the challenges that growth points have faced in the quest for rural development; solutions shall be proffered as to how they can contribute towards economic growth and social development of growth points. The study recommends that government should prioritise the development of growth points as they have been neglected for quite a long time. Strategies to be highlighted include the development of spatial policy to guide the process of

rural development, promote agricultural diversification, introduce income generating projects, decentralisation of tobacco auction floors, resuscitate agricultural depots, provision of investment incentives, promote agro-processing industries and encourage financial institutions to relocate to growth points. The strengthening of rural district councils shall also be highlighted in perspective. Corrective measures must be implemented to rekindle the long forgotten growth points.

### **3.1 MEASURES TO INCREASE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF GROWTH POINTS**

In a bid to improve the condition of growth points, locals highlighted their concerns which the Zimbabwean government and relevant rural district councils should take into consideration for the betterment of these areas. The following sections highlight strategies and appropriate plans which can be implemented to spearhead the revival of the neglected growth points both from a government point of view (top-down planning) and from a community based view (bottom-up planning).

### **3.2 CREATE A SPATIAL POLICY**

There is a need to craft a holistic spatial planning policy whose major aim must be to achieve balanced development. This is because the history of Zimbabwe development planning shows that there has and currently is a lack of a spatial development planning policy that can guide the development discourse of rural areas. There must be a radical shift from inherited colonial policies to homegrown Zimbabwean crafted policies. The government of Zimbabwe should face the national planning problems of regional disparities, stagnation of growth points and overpopulation of Harare. All existing growth points must be reevaluated case by case as to what can be done with them and the viability of the growth point with respect to the national economy. This will result in a clear rural development strategy and a clear framework on how to deal with rural unemployment. The government should use the existing RDC facility to seek advice on the challenges which are faced by rural areas continually and use the same platform to check whether the implemented policies have any positive impact on the community concerned. The

views and opinions of those located in rural areas as well as growth points must be included in the spatial policy blueprint.

### **3.2.1 STRENGTHEN THE ROLE OF RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILS (RDCs)**

The central government should through the Ministry of Local Governance make appropriate provisions of strengthening rural district councils so that they are able to sustain rural development initiatives and play a leading role in accessing investments, offering investment incentive packages to business entrepreneurs and industrialists, and marketing the growth points. RDCs must spearhead rural development through infrastructure development projects and providing tender facilities to promote public/private developmental partnerships. RDCs must work with the relevant institutions to provide for economic linkages from the growth point to the rest of the economy. For example, the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) must work in partnership with RDCs to advertise and promote the tourist attractions at these areas such as the Bumi Hills which are located in Magunje and overlook Kariba Dam. This could provide increased revenue generated through eco-tourism. RDCs must also work in alliance with Zimbabwe National Roads Authority (ZINARA) to access funds to rehabilitate the poor road network that currently dominates rural areas. The RDCs or the responsible Ministry of Local Government should seek to address the issue associated with business owners who complain about the lack of title deeds being issued and being issued with lease agreements. This acts as a disincentive to business operators to permanently stay in the growth point. Title deeds must be issued so as to promote ownership and sustainability of these operations. The Build, Operate and Transfer (B.O.T) policy needs to be revised as it has shown that it has been ineffective in attracting investment to growth points due to the terms and conditions it states.

### **3.3 REVITALIZE AGRICULTURAL DEPOTS**

Agriculture has always played a leading role in Zimbabwe's economy because it is not heavily industrialised and also due to the economic collapse, de-industrialisation has occurred therefore, agriculture has been seen as the only viable option of economic revival. Against this background it is wise that the central government recapitalize and prioritise agricultural marketing depots such as the Agriculture Marketing Board (AMA), Cotton marketing board (Cottco), Grain

marketing board (GMB) and the Cold Storage Commission (CSC). This will work in advantage for rural farmers who have lost motivation in growing staple crops such as maize as they are not paid well for it at the Grain Marketing Board and payment is heavily delayed. Agriculture which is inclusive of rearing of animals and the planting of crops is the backbone of most rural areas and thus any effort to revive growth points needs to take this sector into perspective as it provides linkages with other sectors of the economy. Recapitalizing agricultural marketing depots and providing subsidies and extensive training and irrigation equipment to farmers will greatly lead to positive results in the sector.

### **3.3.1 DECENTRALISATION OF TOBACCO AUCTION FLOORS**

Most of the farmers interviewed in Magunje growth point bemoaned about the centralisation of tobacco auction floors in Harare. This centralisation has seen farmers incurring unnecessary expenditures of transportation of their tobacco bales to the Harare auction floors, accommodation fees for the farmers upon arrival in Harare and because they are issued with cheques at the auction floors, this takes days for the cheques to be processed by the respective banks. Farmers also complained that their hard worked for produce is bought for a very cheap price due to irregularities and abnormalities that occur to the tobacco bales when they are being transported to the auction floors, for example tobacco loses its price value if it does not smell properly and worse if it comes into contact with petrol or a diesel leakage. Dark-air cured tobacco and flue-cured tobacco must be handled with extreme caution when being transported and some farmers lose out due to the poor handling of these products.

All these challenges can be curbed if the government allows for the decentralisation of tobacco auction floors and cotton ginneries from Harare to growth points such as Magunje. Auction floors such as the Tobacco Sales Floor Limited (TSF), Boka Tobacco Floor (BTF) and Premier Tobacco Floor (PTF) must be decentralised and relocated to Magunje as this would create an economic hub in the growth point. The major buyers of tobacco who come from countries such as China, Belgium, South Africa, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Russia, Indonesia and Germany will get to interact with local farmers and will be able to visit the actual place where the tobacco is being grown. This may give the growth point an opportunity to acquire foreign investment for other developmental projects.

### **3.4 ENCOURAGE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO DECENTRALISE TO GROWTH POINTS**

Financial institutions have an important role to play in supporting rural development in Zimbabwe. This is because currently due to their absence there is no mechanism for locals and farmers to save their earning and once savings are absent from an economy it becomes difficult for that area to prosper. The lack of financial institutions has seen farmers losing out their hard earned earnings from tobacco farming to entertainment facilities such as bars which are the most common attraction in growth points. Banks are vital for growth points because they can be able to provide a service to the entire growth point and its hinterland. This could see farmers accessing loans easily instead of the current situation where they have to travel to towns and cities such as Karoi, Chinhoyi and Harare and Kariba to apply for loans. Banks may also play a pivotal role in providing microfinance facilities to individuals and co-operatives and this may provide start-up capital for the setting up of local driven businesses. The government may also chip in to provide assistance to businesses set up in growth points through the Ministry of Small to Medium enterprises. This could provide self-employment opportunities for the unemployed and for women who are the major players in the informal sector of the economy.

Building societies may contribute towards property development and encourage locals to acquire long term houses on mortgage basis so as to permanently encourage locals to settle in that area instead of migrating and relocating to towns and cities. Funds from insurance companies and pension funds such as NicosDiamond and NSSA can be used to contribute towards housing and infrastructure rural development initiatives. This may see the construction of modern low-cost housing plans which may contribute towards the modernisation and beautification of growth points. Rural district councils (RDCs) must desist from charging ridiculous rates and land prices as this may act as a disincentive to potential investors.

### **3.5 ENCOURAGE AGRICULTURAL DIVERISFICATION**



Farmers must be encouraged to take advantage of the multiple number of dams that are in Magunje growth point as these provide irrigation options. Farmers should diversify their crops and not wholly rely on tobacco farming because it renders them vulnerable to commodity price declines, tobacco cartels and international bans on smoking which are slowly discouraging the buying of tobacco. Farmers should be encouraged to grow other crops during the off season period and during the winter period or they may partake in completely new facets of farming. This will diversify their earning options as well as improve their disposable income base.

### **3.6 INTRODUCE INCOME GENERATING PROJECTS**

Income generating projects should be introduced to provide a livelihood source for those who are unemployed and have no source of a livelihood strategy. This has the potential to reduce poverty which is highly prevalent in the rural areas. Income which is generated from these projects will increase the amount of household disposable income as households will be better able to deal with economic shocks such as the current economic decline which the country is facing.

#### **3.6.1 ENCOURAGE FISH FARMING INITIATIVES/ AQUAFARMING**

Fish farming is the main form of aquaculture, while other methods may fall under mariculture. Fish farming involves raising fish for commercial purposes in enclosures or tanks usually for domestic or commercial purposes. Aquafarming or aquaculture is an untapped market in Zimbabwe which locals in growth points may use to improve their livelihood portfolios. This is because there is a demand locally and globally for fish. This is because health consciousness and lifestyle is leading more people to white meat as opposed to red meat. Most of Zimbabwe's meat is red due to her being mostly a landlocked country and most of its meat is accessed from animal husbandry. Aquafarming has some advantages over the conventional format of fishing. This is because it provides immediate ownership of the stock and it provides a direct intervention to enhance and catalyse the stock yields. It can also be done indoors and outdoors which provides options to prospective fish farmers. Aquafarming is a growing opportunity in Zimbabwe because of the presence of a reliable market in regions such as Matabeleland South and Matabeleland North, Bulawayo and Gweru which have very few dams. Individuals in growth points and rural

areas may be taught how to effectively implement this initiative which is very sustainable over the long term. Tilapia fish are easy to raise, consume many types of foods and are highly disease resistant, reproduce easily and can tolerate poor water quality conditions.

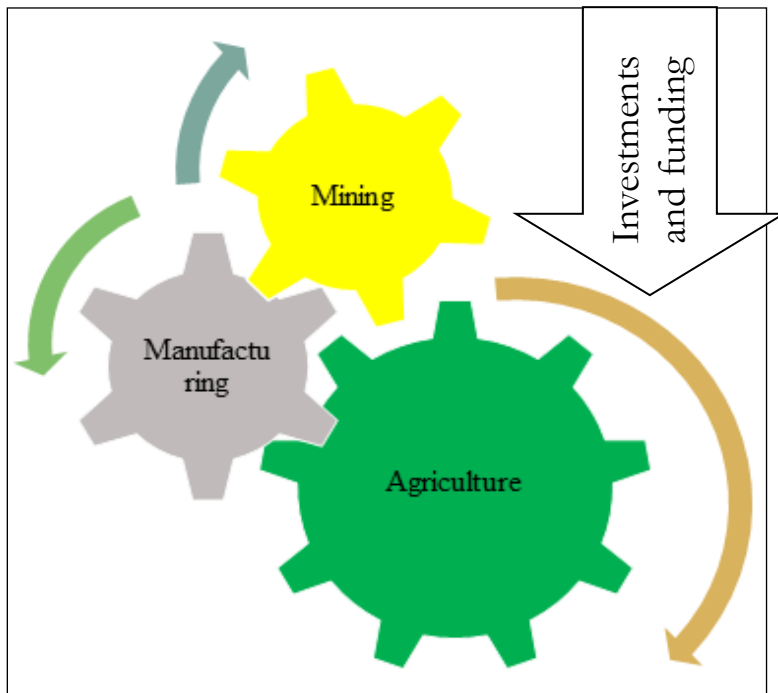
### **3.6.2 ENCOURAGE APICULTURE/BEEKEEPING**

Since many people are unemployed or looking for self-employment opportunities in the informal sector, it is important that the relevant rural district councils and the relevant government ministries support entrepreneurs who venture into apiculture or what is commonly known as bee keeping. It has serious advantages for those growth points which are facing deforestation challenges like Magunje because it promotes the growing of new trees. Women can also be accorded an opportunity to sell tree seedlings to tobacco farmers who must be encouraged to re plant the trees which they have cut down. Bee keeping helps conserve trees and over time increases the incomes of rural inhabitants. Bee keeping curtails deforestation which has been very high in Hurungwe district in Mashonaland West Province. As a result locals are deterred from chopping down trees because the hives survive on living trees. It can also be done on contract farming basis with rural households overseeing bee hives and being paid for doing that. This addresses poverty and provides another income source for the unemployed.

### **3.7 ESTABLISH AGRO-PROCESSING INDUSTRIES AND EMBRACE VALUE ADDITION**

Agriculture and mining can foster other sectors of the rural economy to kick start such as manufacturing. Agriculture is one of the most promising sectors for youth employment because it has opportunities right down from labour employment, employment in agro and food processing units and employment opportunities in marketing depots, and also in research, extension and development. Growth points which possess mineral deposits and resources can embrace the value addition concept and force mining companies to establish processing industries and refineries which can improve employment opportunities for locals. Thus, the government through the responsible ministries of Mining and Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment need to drive the rural development agenda from an indigenisation and economic

empowerment agenda. Rural communities must be supported to fully exploit and control the benefits that accrue from their natural resource endowments. Rural district councils should take full advantage of the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment policy which is currently being driven by the government of Zimbabwe.



**Figure 5: Three Sector Dependency Model**

**Source: (Chowa and Mbundinga, 2015)**

Growth points which are located in agricultural regions can take advantage of the presence of primary production to foster the creation of secondary processing industries. For example, agricultural produce can give rise to the creation of agro-processing and food-processing industries. Magunje growth point can prosper with small-oil processing industries which will rely on the availability of inputs from local growers. Magunje is suitable because crops such as cotton seed, groundnuts, soya, sunflower and others are grown there which can be processed into oil. Whilst growth points located in animal husbandry regions can thrive with associated meat industries and the construction of abattoirs. Growth points which are located in maize intensive regions can take advantage of milling industries which can produce chicken feed, animal feed,

and pig feed which can be sold on the domestic market as these are enterprises which are in high demand in Zimbabwe. Sanyathi growth point may be ideal for the processing of cotton by the creation of clothing and textiles related industries. Furniture, saw milling and timber production industries could prosper at growth points such as Lupane, Tsholotsho in Matabeleland North which are rich in timber resources. Figure 5 above, shows that agriculture and mining can turn the wheel of the manufacturing sector by providing raw materials for processing, what is required to start this process is investment and funding in the agricultural sector. Thus, the industrialisation process of rural areas can be driven by locals, what is only required is government support and encouragement through capital and positive policy formulation. Other industries which can be triggered by agriculture include tin canning, packing industries, seed grading industries and fruit and vegetable industries which can be located in growth points in the Eastern Highlands where there is a presence of commercial fruit farming. Gokwe and Murehwa are two former growth points that developed into viable business centres due to the positive impact of the agricultural sector, after which they were elevated to town status.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion it can be noted that growth points are currently faced with a number of challenges. However, there are viable policy options which the government of Zimbabwe can take into consideration. These include the crafting of a spatial policy and also re prioritizing the rural development agenda from a central government perspective. The central government should by all means possible support the rural district councils with financial contributions so that the latter may be able to spearhead the actual development on the ground. The government must also recapitalize the dwindled agricultural marketing depots which played a huge role in the purchase of agricultural produce from local farmers. When sufficient funds are available the government through the relevant Ministry of agriculture must provide subsidies, trainings and farm mechanisation to rural farmers so as to improve their operations. Rural industries may develop from the result of agricultural produce which will provide a constant supply of raw materials for the manufacturing industry. The policy of Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment must be fully utilised appropriately for the benefit of rural areas and their inhabitants. However, all these factors are mostly dependent on political will of the government to prioritise growth points and

rural development, without government backing growth points have a huge mountain to climb in their quest of promoting rural development.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

Growth points have been faced with a number of challenges in the promotion of rural development in Zimbabwe. As revealed by this study, the challenges were many ranging from the poor application of the growth pole policy by policy makers, political interference in promoting areas which were not suitable to be designated as growth points. The economic meltdown which the country has been through for the last twenty years has also meant that the

central government has lacked the necessary funds to sustain development in rural areas. This has seen growth points being left as stagnating points dotted around the country's 55 districts. The research also exposed that the established business and industries are faced with a number of challenges which include the lack of capital investments, unavailability of banks, the presence of poor infrastructure and the over reliance on agriculture which renders their economies vulnerable to shocks associated with climatic change and economic meltdowns. The study also revealed that there are a few industries have been developed at growth points due a number of reasons ranging to lack of capital to set up plants and the lack of incentives for investors to set up plants in them.

The research also highlighted that there is not much of a linkage between the resources in the hinterland and the current industries at Magunje growth point. The economic boom of tobacco has not led to any industries which are related to that sector being developed at the growth point and the growth point has failed to develop despite the high produce of tobacco which is Zimbabwe's major export earner. A huge factor in the industrialisation process has to do with economic vibrancy and most of the gains from doing business are currently being experienced in Harare, hence investors choose that as a viable destination to set up their business ventures. The failure of the growth point to develop means that the surrounding rural area will continue to remain underdeveloped.

The implementation of the policy left out most important stakeholders and thus it was not well received by the public. However, most importantly it must be taken into consideration that the spatial inequalities that exist today between urban and rural areas are a direct result of colonial planning which was very biased towards the communal areas. The post-independence government of Zimbabwe inherited this challenge but failed to dismantle some of the policies such as the urban bias policy which over the years has seen urban areas being the main priority and destination of development and investment. This has made it extremely difficult for growth points and rural areas to access any lines of credit and investment to catalyse rural development.

It is therefore important that the central government place the rural development and growth point stagnation challenges on the agenda. This is because majority of the population resides in rural areas and there is a presence of high poverty rates which are coupled with unemployment and moral decadence. The central government, local government and rural district councils must play a leading role in spearheading and reorienting the development of growth points. The government must provide the necessary political backing through the crafting of positive policy formulation and the implementation of it which will sustain and provide a baseline for rural development. The government must prioritise the revival of agricultural depots, issue subsidies and trainings to farmers and encourage crop diversification and the use of irrigation facilities which are present in certain rural farms. The decentralisation of tobacco auction floors will play a leading role in reducing costs that are incurred by local tobacco farmers whilst on the other hand create an economic hub in the growth points with prospects for foreign investment. Financial institutions must also be encouraged to relocate to growth points to provide banking services, offer loans and microfinance assistance which may kick start the creation of local enterprises in growth points. Rural communities must be supported in their initiatives and as such must be provided with appropriate support to enable them to process their agricultural produce through value addition, and where resources are mining related they should fully benefit through the community share ownership schemes. Lastly, the local communities know their developmental needs and must show the drive to accomplish them through community led development.

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## 4.1 APPENDICES

### **Questionnaire guide for the challenges faced by growth points in the promotion of rural development.**

I am a student at Midlands State University for Bachelor of Arts in Development Studies Honours Degree. As part of the programme requirement, I am carrying out a research on the challenges faced by growth points in the promotion of rural development. A case study of Magunje Growth Point.

#### **Guidelines**

1. Please tick the appropriate answer in the spaces provided.
2. Provide brief explanations where required.
3. If you feel that more than one of the suggested answers is correct, please tick them both.

N.B. Responses will be treated as confidential information and used solely for the purpose of the intended research study

1) Please indicate your age against the following groups.

Below 20 ( )

21-40 ( )

41 + ( )

2) For how long have you been residing in Magunje Growth Point?

Less than a year ( )

1-5 years ( )

5-10 years ( )

10-15 years ( )

Above 20 years ( )

3) Gender

Male  Female

4) Are you employed ( ) or Self-employed ( ) Unemployed ( )

5) What is your current occupation or livelihood strategy.....

6) If farming, what crops do you grow?

a. ....

b. ....

c. ....

d. ....

7) If you are employed in the informal sector what do you sell for a living?

a. ....

b. ....

c. ....

d. ....

8) Do you believe there is hope for development in the growth point?

Strongly agree ( ) Agree ( ) Disagree ( )

9) In the table below are the perceived challenges and problems faced by growth points in general. Do they apply to your growth point?

Please Tick appropriately

Key (1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree).

<b>Challenges faced by growth points residents</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Lack of Capital						
Unavailability of Banks						
Overreliance on agriculture						
Mismanagement of RDCs						
Lack of investment ventures						
Poor Infrastructure						
Lack of essential documents						

10) Besides these challenges, what other challenges and problems impede the development of your growth point?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

11) What recommendations can you give to the Government of Zimbabwe to improve the economic viability of growth points (Please fill in the space below)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**End of questionnaire thank you for your valuable time**

**4.2 INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. What are the challenges which locals in Magunje have been facing over the years?
2. Is there any opportunity to venture into off-farm activities?
3. Do you feel that agriculture has a role to play in the transformation of growth points?
4. Do you see any hope in growth points and rural development in the foreseeable future?
5. How do you think the government or rural district council can assist?