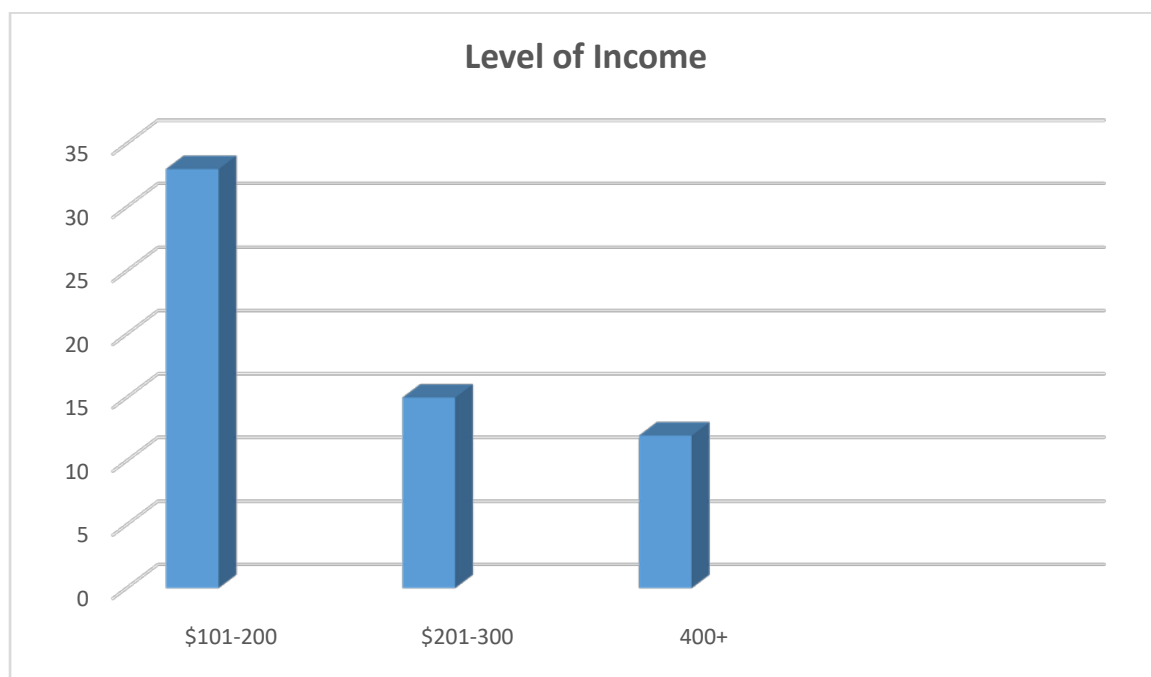


Female vendor's income per month

The highest number of respondents 33 (55%) highlighted that they earn between USD \$101 and \$200 per month, while 15 (25%) indicated that they earn between \$201-300. Only 12 (20%) earn \$400 and above per month from vending. Income is a very important yard stick which can measure the standard of living of a person that is the personal, social and economic status of an individual. In this case those who earn less than \$400 per month face a lot of challenges, since they need to pay for the school fees of their children as well as rentals and bills. Most of the women in Bindura urban survive on vending and mining.

Female vendor's income per month

Fig 1



Number of dependents per each house hold

The study found that about 30 (50%) of the respondents have dependents between 0-2. This is significant especially among the widowed and divorced vendors who look after their own children and they use vending as a strategy of earning income for their families. 22 (36.6%) indicated that, they also have dependence 3-5, followed by 7 (11.6%) respondents who highlighted that they look after dependence 6-8. Only 1 (1.6%) have more than 8 dependences. The high level of dependence ratio increase poverty among women because it exacerbates the number of responsibilities in each and every house hold. (Chirisa, 2007) pointed out that, those who live in rural areas rely on those family relatives in urban areas for financial support and traditionally in Zimbabwe it is the duty of those who are in urban areas to help and support their rural counter parts. This, has however, increased the number or the dependence ratio among female vendors in Zimbabwe.

Table 3 Number of dependence

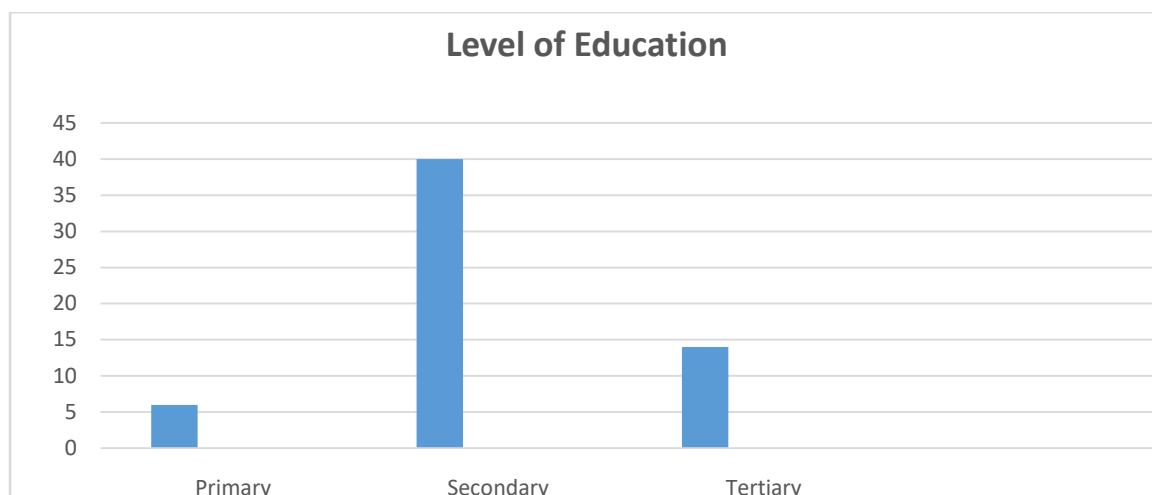
Category	Frequency	Percentage
0-2	30	50
3-5	22	36.6
6-8	7	11.6
8+	1	1.6
Total	60	100.0

level of education

A significant number of the women vendors never went through formal education. Although some of the women went through formal education, only 6 (10%) had primary school education. The other 30 (50%) left school after completing their “O” Levels and only 14 (%) indicated that, they have attained tertiary education. The main reason behind low educational levels was poor family background where parents could not afford the fees, a reason cited by most respondents of the sample. Another reason, given for the low level of education attained by most vendors, especially women, was related to societal discrimination based on traditional beliefs.

Moreover, the father would claim that he could no longer afford to send a girl child to school because they were not a valuable asset in the family since they would eventually marry and leave home. The patriarchal culture therefore, promoted gender bias and gave preferential treatment to sons. Others were forced into early marriages so as to provide for their poor families, while a few failed to proceed with their studies because of early pregnancies which affected their academic and social lives. Therefore, most of the respondents dropped out of school because their poor performance in school did not warrant further allocation of limited financial resources. This was the dominant reason for those female vendors who dropped out at primary level. The overall impression that emerged was that parents used this excuse to wriggle out of their responsibility and obligation.

Fig 2 Level of education of female vendors



Section B: Challenges being faced by female vendors

The majority of the respondents 27 (45%) indicated that, they are facing harassment from municipal police. While 13 (21.6%) pointed out that, there is lack of ablution facilities at their vending areas, 6 (10%) highlighted that, unfavourable weather conditions like wind and heavy rains often affect their day to day business negatively. 14 (23.3%) indicated that they do not have capital and technical know-how on how to manage and calculate their daily profits. Respondents highlighted that, they face a lot of harassment and exploitation from municipal police authorities who collect one dollar (\$1) on daily basis from vendors as a revenue. Vendors of airtime and second hand clothes noted that paying a dollar to the municipal authorities is a very big disadvantage to them because they have a very small profit margin.

They further pointed out that, municipal authorities often harass them especially when they carry out operations together with the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP). Since most of the vendors sell their products on undesignated areas. Female vendors are all over in busy roads which link the high density locations with Town in ward 3 and 4 they are not systematically coordinated which makes the Bindura municipality to regard such clusters of street vendors as impediments to urban planning and hazards to public health and prone to accidents. For example in ward 3 most vendors are congested at the rail line commonly known as *panjanji* (Rail way line) and this area is prone to accidents due to the activities of vendors because they operate at a busy road which link the light industrial site with the town as well as Chipindura Park with town. So in most cases vendors are often chased from this area by municipal authorities.

Moreover, these operations hinder their day to day sales so much so that their products end up being confiscated at the town house and to collect their products, vendors are supposed to pay a fine of \$20 to the municipality. (Njaya, 2014:27) notes that, the major problem is that the urban councils' master plan (designed during the colonial period) does not allocate space to vendors as town planners blindly replicate the western concept of marketing which ignores the Zimbabwean traditions. The modern development approach is oriented towards shopping malls which are not built on the concept of a public that cannot afford to live expensive lifestyles. Therefore, Njaya's argument shows that vendors will continue to face challenges in their operations until the local authorities plan urban areas in a way which is not western and which fully accommodate vendors and their activities in urban areas of Zimbabwe.

Most of the vending areas lacked potable water and proper facilities for waste disposal. In ward 3, 4 and 5 respondents indicated that, there are no facilities for taped water and vendors bring their own drinking water. Most of the public toilets are not in working order forcing vendors to use toilets in shops and bars and open spaces at night. Thus, lack of ablutions is a real challenge which is being faced by vendors in Bindura urban and there is a need for this challenge to be addressed by the municipality of Bindura so as to prevent health related diseases such as cholera, typhoid and diahorrea in the area. Moreover, most of the female vendors attributed lack of capital as a challenge which affect them on their daily vending activities. Those who are involved in clothing business highlighted that lack of capital has led to poor sales and increased hardships since they rely on vending to pay rents and bills and in catering for their families. These findings are different from previous studies by (Manyanhaire, Chibisa, Svtowa, Murenje and Munasirei, 2007). This study highlighted that 85% of vendors in Zimbabwe are women because vending does not require a lot of capital and most women are involved in vending so as to sustain the salaries of their husbands. This study's findings however highlighted that vending is being used as a source of full time employment by women in Bindura urban.

Period as vendors

Overall, 33 (55%) of the respondents pointed out that, they have been in vending for 0-5 years, followed by 16 (26.6) who indicated that they have been into vending for 6-10 years. More so, 7 (11.6%) highlighted that they have been into vending for 11-15 years. Only 4 (6.6%) indicated that, they have been into vending for more than 20 years. These findings from the study however, shows that vending is not a relatively new phenomenon among women in Bindura urban. Most of them turned to vending because employment prospects within the formal job market were and are still severely limited.

Most of the respondents were mainly the victims of 2008 hyperinflation and stiff economic challenges and retrenchments. In contrast only 6.6 % of the women have been involved in vending for more than a decade and they reiterated that vending has become their source of living since they are managing to pay rents and fees for their children through vending. The greater number of women who had spent more years in the vending business supports the notion that women's employment is concentrated in the informal sector as noted by (Mitullah, 2003; ILO, 2002). This trend emanates from the lack of opportunities by women to be employed in the formal sector, largely because they have little education which further marginalises them.

Table 4 Period as vendors

Period (Years)	Frequency	Percentage
0-5	33	55.0
6-10	16	26.6
11-15	7	11.6
20+	4	6.6
Total	60	100.0

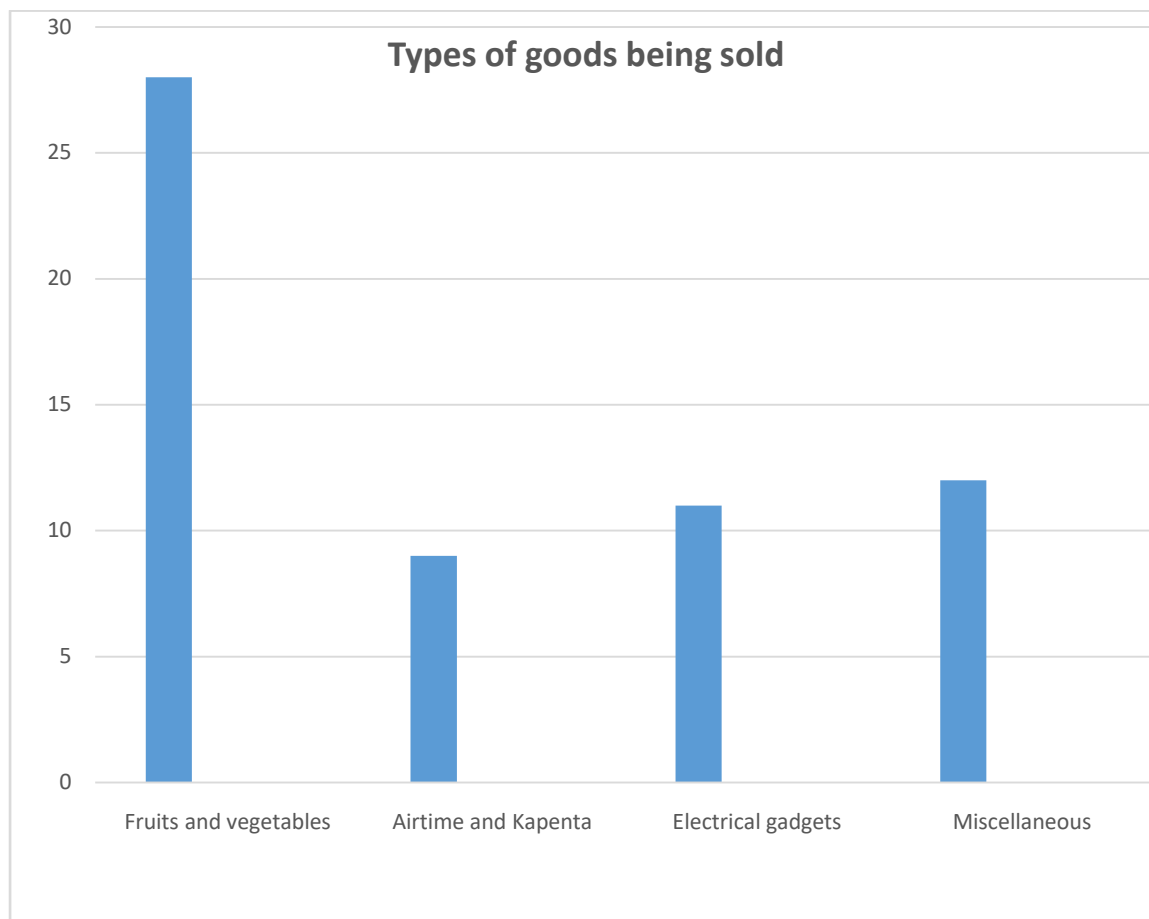
Types of goods being sold by female vendors

The majority of the respondents 28 (46.6%) of the respondents indicated that they were selling fruits and vegetables, followed by 11 (18.3%) highlighted that, they were selling cell phone accessories and electrical gadgets. Nine (15%) were in the business of selling airtime or recharge cards and food stuffs. The remaining 12 (20%) indicated that, they were selling any product on demand depending with the season and time. Vendors in the four wards of Bindura urban Markets sell different types of goods. These products range from tomatoes, mangoes, bananas, apples and plums, potatoes, spinach, cabbages, butternuts to corn. Most of these commodities are seasonal and thus are subject to availability and demand. Moreover, vendors complained facing challenges such as rotting of products during periods of low demand, when demand is low for perishables, prices will be reduced or they take the products and use them at home for family consumption. This leads to great losses. Other goods that are being sold by vendors include second hand clothes. These items are often found at flea markets. These ranged from shoes, belts, caps, T-shirts, shorts, skirts to jeans. Most of these are purchased from as far as Mozambique, Harare and South Africa. The reasons given for trading in these items was that demand is high and so were the profits.

Table 5 Types of goods being sold

Types of goods	Frequency	Total
Fruits and vegetables	28	46.6
Airtime and kapenta	9	15
Electrical gadgets	11	18.3
Miscellaneous	12	20
Total	60	100.0

Fig 3



Benefits derived from vending

Many respondents 31(51%) indicated that, they have managed to play rounds (society or mukando), fifteen (25%) highlighted that vending has and is alleviating poverty among them since they are managing to pay rents, rates and school fees for their families. More so, 8 (13.3%) reiterate that through vending they are managing to sustain and supplement their husbands' salaries and 6 (10%) pointed out that, vending have improved their standards of living since they can afford to cater for their households needs and support as well as help their extended families in both rural and urban areas.

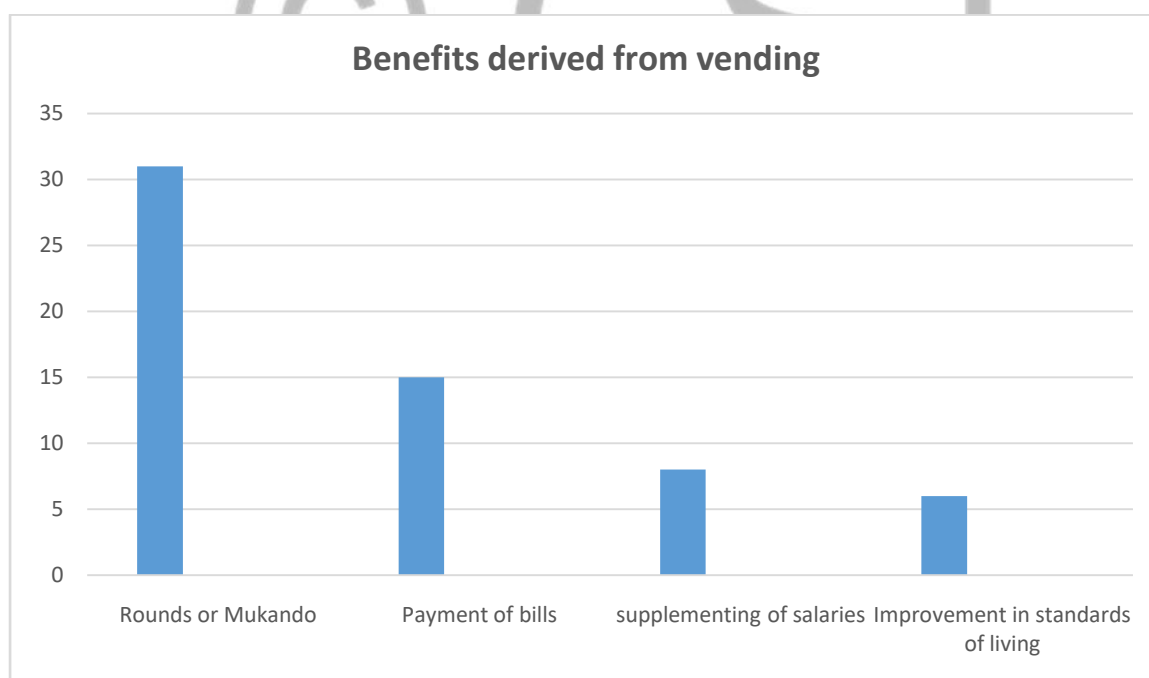
In light of the above findings, it can be deduced that vending has helped female vendors to emancipate themselves from poverty and it has improved their standards of living, since through vending they can afford to pay rentals and school fees for their children. These findings concur with the previous studies which highlighted that, the informal sector provides jobs, bolsters entrepreneurial activity and helps alleviate poverty. In Zimbabwe, the informal sector has become the largest employer due to economic downturn. Workers in the informal sector earn less income, have unstable income, and do not have access to basic protections and services (Beneria and Floro, 2006). In some instances, vendors however, pointed out that

they earn profits which are more than the salaries of those in the formal sector (civil servants). In light of the above findings, one can opine that vending has and is being used as a copying mechanism by women in order to curb unemployment and cater for family needs.

Table 6 Benefits derived from vending

Benefits	Frequency	Percentage
Rounds or mukando	31	55
Payment of bills	15	25
Supplementing of salaries	8	13.3
Better living standards	6	10
Total	60	100.0

Fig 4



Measures being taken to address the challenges of vendors

Most respondents highlighted that, the municipality is very adamant in addressing their day to day challenges regarding their area of operation as well as lack of ablution facilities and piped water in their vending areas. Female vendors of ward 3 for instance pointed out that, their vending sites are not legal and designated by the municipality. They have tried to raise

concerns to the local authority but the municipality is not reacting to their grievances. This lack of attention by the municipality is due to lack of funds to construct the desired facilities since most of the vendors are not capable to pay a dollar a day to the council. More so female vendors in ward 4 and the chairperson of Bindura vendor's association who operate at TM flea markets highlighted that, the municipality takes a lot of time to react and attend to the problems such as renovation of flea market shades and as a result affected vendors end up renovating the shades using their own hardly earned money.

However, contrary to the findings derived from female vendors, key informants such as ward councilors and housing director pointed out that, the municipality is making frantic efforts to ensure safe working environment for vendors in Bindura urban. This is through the payment of a dollar by each vendor so as to cater for their welfare and construction of public toilets at their market places. Moreover, there is a vending site which is being constructed near Chipadze bus terminus in ward 3 and this market place will provide a better operating environment for vendors and a place to store their products after work and during rainy seasons. In light of the above, one can deduce that the Municipality of Bindura is making some practical efforts to address the challenges which are being faced by female vendors in Bindura urban. Thus, addressing these challenges is a way of promoting vending as a sustainable way of alleviating poverty which can be juxtaposed with urban agriculture and women in mining in alleviating poverty.

Conclusion

The research findings indicated that female vendors face a number of challenges. These challenges are chiefly caused by the failure of the local authority to address and attend to the pleas of vendors in Bindura urban. These challenges include lack of storage facilities for their goods. There is also lack of ablution facilities and piped water in all of the vending sites, lack of capital and technical know-how, unfavourable weather conditions and harassment from municipal police. The challenges which are being faced by vendors in Bindura urban concurs with those which have been indicated by Dewa, Dziva and Mukwashi (2014) who pointed out that vendors in Gweru city council are facing challenges which ranges from harassment by municipal police, sporadic weather conditions, inadequate capital to lack of ablution facilities.

This research concludes that in order to ensure comprehensive poverty alleviation among women the local authority of Bindura urban should enhance an enabling environment for female vendors. Furthermore, the research findings highlighted that, there are many benefits which are being derived from vending. These benefits are very instrumental in poverty alleviation, since through vending females are in a position to pay their rates and rents as well

as supplementing salaries of their husbands who are in both formal and informal sector. They are also managing to pay school fees for their children which is a positive development in as far as poverty alleviation is concerned in Bindura urban. Systematic rounds or (mukando) is also helping vendors to create their own ways of saving their daily profits and as a result urban poverty among women has and is being reduced through vending. These findings contradict with (Njaya, 2014)'s findings which indicated that, vending is a disgrace in almost all of Zimbabwe's urban areas because vending increase the rate of diseases such as cholera and typhoid, it also reduces the aesthetic sight and value of urban areas and it complicates the process of waste management in urban areas. Nevertheless, the aforementioned opportunities concur with Chakaipa (2010) who postulated that vending has and is acting as a contingency plan against food insecurity and unemployment in urban areas of Zimbabwe. Therefore, as highlighted by this study vending is very instrumental and necessary in alleviating urban poverty in Bindura.

Moreover, from the research findings it was shown that vending can be used as an empowerment tool to a greater extent. This can be only feasible if the government and the local authority (Bindura municipality) complement each other in providing the necessary requirements which are needed by vendors to make ends meet. This can be done through the provision of capital to female vendors who are already into business as well as construction of ablution facilities in vending sites of all the four wards. Moreover, the respondents highlighted that for this empowerment to be more feasible and practical, there is a need to juxtapose it with other empowerment initiatives such as urban mining as well as housing facilities and service delivery by the local authority. These findings are of the same dimension with Beneria and Floro's(2006) which pointed out that vending is a fundamental mechanism of emancipating poverty among poor African women. This study therefore concludes that, the feasibility of vending as an empowerment tool for women can be determined by the inclusion of female vendors so that they participate in decisions which affect them.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the use of vending as a strategy of poverty alleviation and food security in Bindura urban should be enhanced in such a way that women who are into vending can be and will be emancipated from poverty. There is a need for policies that involve empowering of female vendors and communities to develop strategies that combine the empowerment of communities and female vendors. In order to be able to identify the needs of the female vendors and to best promote social and economic development, Bindura

municipality needs the input of their ward councillors to be able to best identify those areas that need to be addressed. The proposed recommendations below, if adopted along with governance will and determination, will help developing capacity of female vendors and poverty alleviation.

Capacity building and emancipation of poverty among women

Female vendors have high expectations and demands from the systems and institutions of government that is the Municipality of Bindura and their ward councilors. It is therefore prudent that any MB vendors' empowerment policy has an element of capacity building of all stakeholders to ensure that viable and sustainable links between the needs and perceived side of challenges from female vendors are effective. It is therefore recommended that all future initiatives should include a capacity-building program component as well as alleviating of poverty without gender discrimination.

Female Responsive budgets

The budget of Bindura Municipality sets priorities for service delivery and development. Unless the concerns of women and men are considered during the budgetary process, budgets will not be responsive to their concerns. Failure to provide adequate funding for essential services increases the challenges which are being faced by women vendors in Bindura, resulting in their failure to adequately emancipate themselves from poverty. The budgeting process should therefore seek to address the day to day challenges which are being faced by female vendors. Special budgetary allocations should be made to female vendors to implement income-generating projects and ensuring that they are not marginalized or bypassed. It is recommended that future BM policies establish rules and regulations that make female vendors to be considered in budgets and in participating in decisions which affect them.

Creating of synergies

Alliances must be established between actors in government, civil society, NGOs and the private sector to exchange information and discuss strategies on how poverty can be alleviated among women in Bindura urban. Therefore, networking should be undertaken with other groups working for poverty alleviation and social development. These networks could facilitate the exchange of experience and the development of strategies on how women can achieve greater poverty alleviation. In light of the above, one can opine that, creating synergies and building alliances will help in harnessing social support on key gender issues. Such alliances can also provide women with a common platform to organize themselves, share views and mobilize support as well as airing out their grievances to the concerned

institutions. These synergies will also go a long way in envisaging the empowerment of women through vending.

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