



**The Ruralization of Urban Spaces in the Context of Subsistence Farming:
The Case Study of Gwabalanda Township, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe**

By

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DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

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Abstract

The burgeoning of subsistence agriculture in the townships of Bulawayo, the second largest city in Zimbabwe symbolizes a change in the use of urban space in many cities of the global South. The activity of subsistence agriculture, which in both colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe has been highly regarded as a rural activity is now a common sight in most townships of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe (RAUF, 2007). Indeed the rise of subsistence agriculture in the residential areas of Bulawayo particularly in the township of Gwabalanda is leading to what I refer to as the ‘ruralization of urban space’, where through practises of subsistence agriculture, elements of rural life have slowly seeped into the everyday life of urbanites (cf. Rogerson, 1993:33; Zeleza, 1999:45).

The thesis uses Lefebvre’s (1974) theory of *Production of Space* to investigate some of the conditions and factors that have influenced the ruralization of urban space in the township of Gwabalanda, as seen in the intensification of a rural-oriented activity of subsistence farm. Using primary data from 17 semi-structured interviews with Gwabalanda residents involved in farming, the thesis intended to interrogate the perceptions and attitudes Gwabalanda residents hold towards the changes in the use of urban space and also examine the possible benefits of urban farming. The investigation of subsistence farming in Gwabalanda led me to identify three complementing and overarching themes or factors that drive urban farming and the ruralization of urban space. The first two themes are the political and economic factors which seem to operate on a macro-level, whereas the other theme of socio-cultural factors functions at an individual or household level.

Economic and political factors such unemployment, lack of income, high transport costs of moving food, political alienation and freedom were identified by Gwabalanda residents as important drivers of urban agriculture. On the other hand, socio-cultural aspects which included identity, traditional religion, socialization and changes in migration patterns appeared to be crucial motivators for cultivating urban spaces. The research study also found out that urban households that are engaged in subsistence farming are more food secure and generate extra income from selling some of the produced crops. The income generated is used to pay school fees, pay bills and buy farming inputs for the next planting season. Furthermore some households were sending excess farm produce to their rural homes.

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Dedication

In loving memory of Raphael Hikwa

List of Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
CCZ	Consumer Council of Zimbabwe
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
ILO	International Labour Organization
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
UN HABITANT:	United Nations Habitant
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

The Map of Zimbabwe and Location of Bulawayo



Source: toursa

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Background of Study and Statement of Problem

The burgeoning of subsistence agriculture in the townships of Bulawayo, the second largest city in Zimbabwe symbolizes a change in the use of urban space in many cities of the global South. Subsistence agriculture, which in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe has been highly regarded as a rural activity is now a common sight in the landscapes of most townships in Bulawayo (RAUF, 2007). Indeed the rise of subsistence agriculture in the residential areas of Bulawayo particularly in the township of Gwabalanda has led to what I refer to as the 'ruralization of urban space', where through practises of subsistence agriculture, elements of rural life have slowly seeped into the everyday life of urbanites (cf. Rogerson, 1993:33; Zeleza, 1999:45).

Agricultural activities within city terrains were never anticipated by conventional economic growth thinkers, who predicted that practises of subsistence farming in cities would be minimal, slowly disappear and be absorbed by industrializing and modernizing economies (cf. Rostow, 1960; Lewis, 1954; Castillo, 2008). Yet urban farms have flourished in many global cities. The expansion of agriculture in African cities, for instance thrived in the aftermath of the economic recession of the 1980s and 1990s triggered by the implementation of neo-liberal inspired structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). Urban residents fell back on farming as a method of coping with job losses, collapse of retail sector, social services cuts and increases in food prices which came with the implementation of SAPs (Drakakis-Smith *et al*, 1995, Rakodi, 1985; Zeleza, 1999).

Most African countries including Zimbabwe never fully recovered from SAPs, which effectively manufactured poverty at a grand scale in urban areas (Sachikonye, nd; Potts, 2010). The situation in Zimbabwe is however unique as its economy further tumbled and took a deep plunge in the period between 1997 and 2008 (Bond and Manyanya, 2002; Clemens and Moss, 2005; Stoneman, 1996b:9; Mills, 2012). There are a myriad of political processes that led to a decade long contraction of the Zimbabwean economy (Clemens and Moss, 2005). They range from an unbudgeted handsome compensation paying- out to war veterans in 1997, the implementation of an ill planned land redistribution programme (Moore, 2001; Mudimu, nd), and imposition of illegal sanction on Zimbabwe by Western nations (cf. Mukusha, 2011:3).

The political processes mainly driven by the Zimbabwe African National Union –Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) led government resulted into a deep-seated and a spiralling economic crisis which triggered inflation, destabilized food production and security (FAO, 2010:9). In addition, the hostile economic climate forced companies to shut down and scale down operations, due to lack of foreign currency leading to the skyrocketing of unemployment rates, reduction in household income and increase in poverty. All these factors have provided a fertile ground for urbanites to take up to farming, joining other 800 million urban farmers dotted across the world. These harsh economic and social hardships seem to occupy a leading role in pushing urban dweller to rely on agricultural activities previously seen as vestiges of rural economies (Lewis, 1954; Rostow, 1960). As mentioned earlier in this section agriculture represents a ruralization of urban space. In this thesis the expression “ruralization of urban space” is used interchangeably with terms such as urban agriculture, urban farming and urban subsistence cultivation or farming.

The simultaneous use of the expression ‘ruralization of the urban space’ with the terms of ‘subsistence farming’ and ‘urban agriculture’ is not meant to essentialize agriculture as a rural pursuit, but it is intended to elucidate on how the creation of urban and rural centres and zoning of economic activities in colonial times persists in dictating how people perceive space even to this day. Therefore it is crucial to delve into a deep understanding of ‘ruralization of space’ in the context of urban farm.

1.1 Understanding the ‘ruralization of urban space’ in the context of urban farming

The concept of ‘ruralization of urban space’ is used in this thesis to describe the presence of informal subsistence farming in the townships of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The same concept has been used to define a growing number of food growers in cities across Sub-Saharan African (cf. Rogerson, 1993:33; Zeleza, 1999:45; Zeiderman, 2006:212). In this thesis urban space is not limited to the physical form as in architecture, but is also encompasses identity, attitudes and perceptions people attach on city spaces. My understanding of urban space is largely influenced by the works of Lefebvre (1974) on the *Production of Space*. He argues that the study of space should not only focus on the physical and abstract content but should go beyond into the social aspect leading him to coin the concept of ‘social space’.

According to Zeiderman (2006:211) the ruralization of urban space is a process that occurs when the “...conventional relationship between the rural and the urban is reversed; the country imposes itself on the city”. On one hand, Tammam (2012:6) defines ‘ruralization of

the city' as a condition that exists when "...the city reproduces the rural traditional value system". The proliferation of subsistence farming in the city is generally perceived by the Zimbabwean urbanites as an encroachment of rural life and living practises into the urban society (Brazier, 2012).

These perceptions seem to be informed by Zimbabwe's long colonial history of spatial and racial territorialisation. At the peak of colonialism, subsistence agriculture was only to be practised in newly created reserves or rural areas largely populated by native Africans and it was kept off the urban terrains through harsh spatial gating methods. On the other extreme, colonialists-cum-capitalists developed townships where native Africans were expected to migrate from rural areas and stay temporarily in these centres so they can participate in wage employment generated by booming industrial complexes. The development of such spatial arrangement in the peak of colonialism is discussed in detail in chapter 3. It is worth noting that native African migrating to the cities maintained links with their rural homes, giving them an opportunity to transfer some of their rural living ways into the city townships.

1.1.1 *Rural-urban links, urban farming and the ruralization of cities*

The ruralization of urban space through farming appears to be driven by links urbanites have with rural areas. Gugler (1991) stresses that urban dwellers live in a dual system where there are fully committed to urban life and, at the same time, belonging to the rural community from which they originate. This view is also shared by Muzvidziwa (2010) who contends that the movement of people to cities does not necessarily lead to the abandonment of rural lifestyle and livelihoods. Most of the urban residents I interviewed who are fully engaged in subsistence farming as it shall be shown in chapter 5, have connections with rural areas. Some having had some considerable time residing in the rural areas and transferred the farming skills attained in rural areas into the city. Mbiba (1995:3) brings in a similar contention, he notes that in most African cities, "...urban agriculture is a transfer of rural subsistence agriculture to urban areas, particularly as whole families migrate and settle in urban areas".

In support of arguments emerging above, Zeleza (1999:53) states that urban farming represents the resuscitation and strengthening of rural-urban linkages. In situations of economic distress, increase in urban poverty, household reliance on rural based resources and economic activities for sustenance of livelihood increases (Diyamett et al. 2001). In his

study of the nature of rural-urban links in Tanzania, Owuor (2004) found that urban-rural linkages were important for urban households, as they played a crucial role in replenishing their livelihood. Owuor (2004) agrees with Diyamett, stating that many African urban households have always had rural components to their livelihood and retain strong links with rural areas (Owuor, 2004:3; Potts, 2010).

In his study of the importance of rural-urban linkages for urbanites in Gaborone, Botswana, Kruger (1998) established that rural livelihoods and strategies were crucial in helping people living in towns and cities to ameliorate incidences of poverty and vulnerability. He further argues that an increase in the cost of living and urban poverty forces people to 'fall back' on rural livelihood and rely on rural surviving strategies such as subsistence agriculture and also on rural foods. Mamdani (1996) cited in Cousins (2005:10) argues that the country and the city exists in a symbiotic relationship, exchanging identities and economic activities. He further contends that the close connections between the urban and rural sites allows a situation in which rural and urban households "...constitute and reconstitute themselves, meaning that their livelihoods and forms of production will have a hybrid character, combining the 'urban in rural' and the 'rural in urban'" (Mamdani, 1996).

In supporting Mamdani's view, in the epilogue of his well-acclaimed book *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*, Cronon (1991) notes:

"...urban and rural landscapes are not two places but one. They create each other; they transform each other's environment and economies and depend on each other for survival. To see them separately is to misunderstand where they came from and where they might go in the future" Worse, to ignore the nearly infinite ways they affect one another is to miss our moral responsibility for the ways they shape each other's landscapes and alter the lives of people and organisms within their bound".

Similarly, McMichael (2006:472) is of the view that rural-urban synergies have not only facilitated the growth of subsistence agriculture in the metropolis, but have led to what he refers to as a 're-peasantization' of urban livelihoods. McMichael (2006:472) contends that subsistence farming allows urban people to reinstate and reclaim the 'peasant way of life'. Additionally, he states that by engaging in subsistence farming urban folks "...revalorize the rural-cultural ecology", within an urban society. This contention is consistent with Lefebvre's (1996) position in which he argues that the urbanization of the rural space always leads to a subsidiary ruralization of the urban areas. I argue that if the process of urbanization imposed

upon itself on rural areas in the period economic boom and rapid modernization of Zimbabwe in the early 1980s¹, then we can expect the opposite to happen particularly after the contraction of the Zimbabwean economy resulting from the implementation of SAPs in the 1990s. Byerley (2010) reinforces the above argument, locating the existence of subsistence farming an activity typically associated with rural areas within a context of a failed modernization project particularly with the imposition of misguided SAPs on African economies.

1.1.2. *Economic Structural Adjustment Programme, economic decline and the ruralization of urban space*

The narrowing of the rural-urban gap in terms of income at the peak of Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) increased the necessity of urban dwellers to abandon their urban lifestyle and rely more on rural surviving strategies to cope with the effects of an economic crisis (Jamal and Weeks 1993; Kruger, 1998). The adoption of ESAP in 1991 set the Zimbabwean economy into a steady decline and an increase in urban poverty (Drakakis-Smith *et al*, 1995; Potts, 2010; Bond and Manyanya, 2001). Under the ESAP, real average annual national earnings per employee fell by 26.5% between 1991 and 1995; manufacturing jobs plummeted during the first years of the ESAP (cf. Stoneman, 1996b:9). In 1995 the national manufacturing employment stood at 186,800 which was low compared to the one recorded in 1988 (ibid). The rise in unemployment was also accompanied by the weakening of the purchasing power of most urban households who could barely afford the most basic commodities such as mealie- meal, bread, cooking oil, and meat. The outbreaks of ‘food riots’ in 1998 in Harare signalled the deepening of urban poverty and food insecurities among unemployed and newly retrenched urban dwellers forcing them to seek alternative livelihood strategies (Sachikonye, nd).

Moyo (2000: np) echoes the same views stressing that the ESAP “...led to increasing poverty, leading growing numbers of retrenches, low income urbanites to turn towards the land for their survival or economic enterprise”. Sachikonye (2003:62) cited in (Potts, 2010:89) adds Moyo’s observation, arguing that “...the gradual build- up of pressure from the poor and deprived for resources, especially land, when economies do not show signs of vigorous

¹ At the height of economic expansion of the mid 1980s, the government of Zimbabwe adopted a modernist-oriented ‘Growth Points’ policy which was to facilitate the urbanization and industrialization of rural centres, through improving social and physical infrastructure in rural areas (Wekwete, 1988:5).

growth [creating].... fertile soil for agitation for a 'final solution' to the land question". Alexander (2003:94) also raises an important point on how ESAP may have contributed to the rise of urban subsistence cultivation in the major cities of Harare and Bulawayo and also how under-utilized urban land is important to the livelihoods of people living in the city. She states that "...the implementation of a structural adjustment programme in 1991, and the ensuing decline in services and land redistribution, as well as economic decline and drought, placed a premium on gaining access to land and other resources".

1.1.3 Collapse of the retail industry 2000-2008

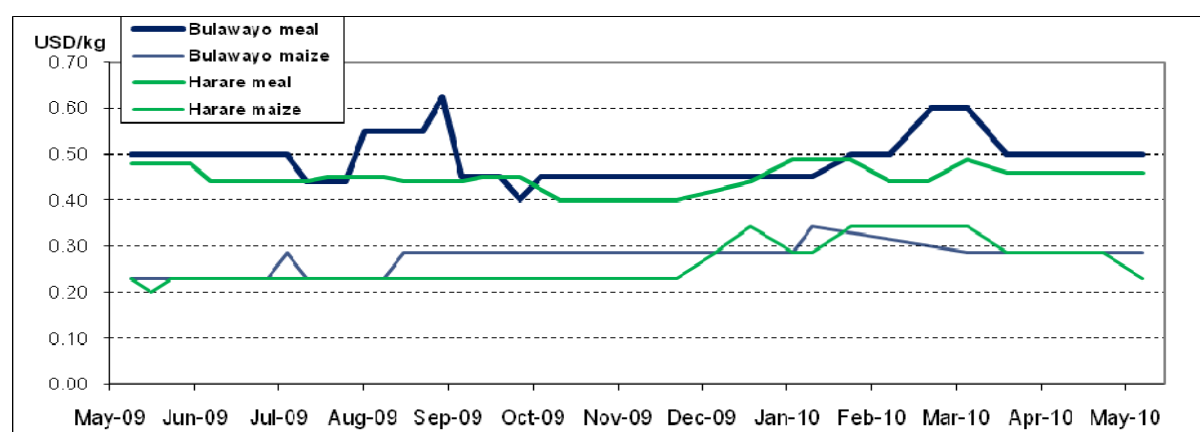
The dysfunction of the retail supply system in Zimbabwe also increased the difficulties in accessing food among urban residents. Supermarkets and wholesale stores ran out of basic food commodities as manufactures ceased production due to shortages in fuel, foreign currency to purchase machinery and spare parts and erratic power cuts were partly responsible for production decline. Food shortages in leading supermarkets were a major blow to many urbanites' livelihoods. Long queues in supermarkets became part of the urban everyday life, as Zimbabweans in urban areas queued for every basic household commodity (Gwatirisa and Manderson, 2009). Subsistence farming was therefore adopted by desperate and vulnerable urbanites as a means to survive and cope in these volatile economic situations. Drakakis-Smith *et al* (1995) argues that the expansion of urban agriculture in the cities of Zimbabwe is "...as much the result of inadequacies in the retail supply system as it is the consequences of increasing urban poverty within the programme of structural adjustments" (Drakakis-Smith *et al* 1995:184).

Food commodities only became readily available in supermarkets in early 2009 after the adoption of multi foreign currency cash system by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. Amidst, improvement of food supply in the supermarkets, majority urbanites still face huge challenges in accessing of food because of lack of income and high food prices (FAO, 2010:9). As shown in the chart below in September of 2009, urbanites living in Bulawayo for instance were paying high prices for mealie meal. An average family in Zimbabwe consumes more than 20 kilogram of mealie meal per month, meaning that families residing in Bulawayo spent a high price of US\$12 on mealie meal. According to the February 2012 food

security survey estimates provided by the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZVAC), about 1.4 million Zimbabweans are food insecure (ZVAC, 2012)².

The ZVAC (2012) further revealed that regions such as Mashonaland Central, Bulawayo and Matabeleland North were hard hit with food insecurities. Mashonaland Central contributed 23% of the food insecure in the country, while Bulawayo contributed 17% and Matabeleland North with 16%. The urban food insecure households were mostly confined in poor peri-urban areas and high density residential areas (ZVAC, 2012). Furthermore, the ZVAC found that food insecurity was confined in households with low levels of income and limited purchasing power, since food is now readily available on the market (ZVAC, 2012:2). According to the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe³ the poverty datum line for an average family of six is US\$510 per month and an averaged Zimbabwean earn around US\$150 per month falling way too below the poverty datum line.

Figure 1: The retail price of maize meal and maize in USD/kg in 2009: Harare and Bulawayo



Source FAO: 2010

² Zimbabwe food outlook February to June 2012,

http://www.fews.net/docs/Publications/Zimbabwe_OL_2012_02.pdf

³ CCZ (2012) Price hiking hurting the poor. http://www.ccz.org.zw/press/press_statement.php?statement_id=18.

1.2 Resistance of Urban Agriculture in Zimbabwe

Urban farming in Zimbabwe is recognized as an illegal activity and an environmental hazardous practice that threatens wetlands, causes soil and water pollution (Mbiba, 2000). In addition it is regarded as a crime breeding activity that is not backed up by any single statutory instrument (Marongwe, 2003). The practice of cultivation of crops in residential areas in Zimbabwe has never been catered for by both the colonial and post-colonial city planning departments.

In many cases agricultural developments in the major cities of Harare, Bulawayo and Gweru are ruthlessly suppressed and thwarted through by-laws such as the Environment Management Act of 2002 [Chapter 20:27] and the Urban Council Act of 2005 [Chapter 29:15]. For instance section 113 2(b) of the Environmental Management Act of 2002 stipulates that “... no person shall disturb any wetland by introducing any plants into the wetland and any contravening of this section shall lead to the contravener paying a liable fine”. Moreover, according to section 186 (1b) of the Urban Council Act of 2005 “...no person will excavate, open or remove ground above, next to, under or near a water main”.

The new draft of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2012⁴ joins the above-mentioned bylaws in restricting any form and signs of agricultural pursuance in high density suburbs. According to section 4.29 of the new draft constitution ‘agricultural land’ “...does not include land within the boundaries of a township, established according to law relating to town and country planning or as defined in a law relating to land surveying” (Constitution of Zimbabwe Draft, 2012:43). Despite being met with a high degree hostility and punishment coming from municipality authority, the city of Bulawayo is now a hub of informal urban farming. Most of this farming activity is taking place in townships and it has mushroomed along main roadsides, railways lines, wetlands, and open areas (RAUF, 2007). There is however a growing realisation among urbanites and city authorities alike on the possible benefits of owning farms in the city. The function of urban agriculture in securing food security and substituting food purchase has motivates urbanites and city authorities to rethink agriculture as not only a remnant of “rural life” but as an activity that can facilitate the achievement of a better life in harsh cities.

⁴ The draft constitution is downloadable from this website:

http://www.copac.org.zw/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=10&Itemid=325

Accessed 06 October 2012.

1.3 The Growing Significance of Urban Agriculture in the Cities of Zimbabwe

The hostility towards subsistence agriculture in the cities is slowly disappearing and rural livelihoods seem to have taken centre stage in the lives of many Zimbabwean who have always maintained some strong links with rural areas. Amidst the negativity attached to urban agriculture it has gained favourable recognition from urban residents. Brazier (2012) asserts that despite the harsh treatment of agricultural activities in the townships of Zimbabwe, planting of maize on underutilized land has become a common feature of urban land-use. She adds that harvests from the urban farms are better than in rural areas where the climate has now become too erratic and the soils too exhausted for feasible maize cultivation without irrigation and expensive fertiliser applications (Brazier, 2012). Urban farming has emerged as the best coping mechanism for poor urban households that lack cash for purchasing food as it supplies families with fresh, accessible and nutritious food stuff. The practice has also been crucial for women especially those residing in Mbare⁵ who constitute over 70% of the participants (Mbiba, 1995). The proportion of women cultivators in the off-plot farming ranges between 55% (Mudimu 1996:180) and 63% (Mbiba 1995a: 39).

Moreover urban farming complements the reproductive role women have of feeding their families as it assists in replenishing household's food reserves (Hovorka, 2004). Drakakis-Smith *et al* (1995) note that urban farming in the city of Harare presents the urban poor with an opportunity to create uses for open spaces, redesigning them as economic resources that need systematic exploitation for the overall well-being of the urban economy. According to International Labour Organization (ILO) statistics cited in Potts (2010), by 2004 the informal economic activities that include urban farming had effectively become the backbone of the Zimbabwean's household sustenance for income and food supply. In June 2005, the ILO reported that 3 to 4 million Zimbabweans earned a living through informal sector employment.

⁵ Mbare is the oldest township in Harare. It is infamous for its high poverty rates, crime rates and dilapidated infrastructure.

1.4 Significance and Rationale of Study

The significance of this research study centres on its potential to provide a platform to the notion of a ‘planned city’ that has pre-occupied the minds of most city planners and authorities in Africa. The escalating of subsistence agriculture in the township of Gwabalanda is an indication of a unanticipated shift from ‘planned cities’ to ‘practiced cities’, where the morphology of a city is not only being determined or symbolized by graphical presentations such as maps, plans or physical infrastructure but rather by people’s perception of everyday life (cf. Simone 2004:407). An investigation of the ruralization of urban space or changes in urban land-use against a backdrop of an increase in urban farming in Bulawayo feeds perfectly to the concept of ‘*people as infrastructure*’ which was coined by Simone (2004).

This notion of ‘*people as infrastructure*’ shifts the attention away from the city’s physical infrastructure and physical planning laws redirecting it to the people who are the everyday users of space (Simone, 2004: 407). Indeed, it can be argued that although section 4.29 of the Zimbabwean Constitution regards agriculture as a misplaced activity within urban residential areas, its presence in the township of Gwabalanda on one hand, suggests that the ordinary people not the law always have a final say on how urban spaces are to be used. Simone (2004: 407) brings in a similar argument, he observes that “African cities are characterized by incessantly flexible, mobile, and provisional intersections of residents that operate without clearly delineated notions of how the city is to be inhabited and used”. The importance of this thesis hinges around its potential to confront and explain the dissipation of planned and orderly African cities that were meant to discipline and tame its inhabitants into a Eurocentric culture of modernity and civilization.

By exploring the ruralization of urban residential areas through farming, this thesis intends to question the relevance of the rural-urban divides in post-modernist Zimbabwe. The sprouting of subsistence farming activities in the townships of Bulawayo is a trumpet call for academics, planners and policy makers to rethink about rural and divides particularly when these divides are slowly blurring. On contrary, this research undertaking is crucial in reflecting the importance of rural-urban connections and linkages not only on the livelihoods of urbanites but on their identity, cultural and social life. Unlike previous studies on urban agriculture in Zimbabwe (cf. Mbiba, 1995) that have only focused on urban agriculture as an economic activity for achieving food security, this research explores how bringing farming to the city can be viewed as a process of challenging the negative stereotypes, inferiority

complexes attached to rural areas, African bodies and livelihoods. These dynamics are discussed in detail in chapter 3.

This thesis seeks to challenge the dominant and conventional one-sided modernist view that sees rural areas as sites only waiting to be influenced or changed by urbanization and not the other way around. Following Lefebvre's footsteps, I argue that we can turn urbanization on its head, flipping the coin and refocusing on the reverse which is ruralization. If we can urbanize, we can also ruralize, where there is a *yin* there is a *yang* and there is always two sides to everything.

1.5 Lefebvre's Theory of Production of Space

The ruralization of urban space through farming in Gwabalanda Township is analysed through the lens of *The Production of Space* theory that was espoused by Lefebvre (1974). According to Lefebvre's (1974) theory of *The Production of Space*, cities are living organisms and are a resultant of everyday life circumstances of people that cannot be reduced to physical concrete or geometry. He further asserts that city spaces should be perceived as a "...continuum midway between small-scale individual practices and large-scale social processes and institutions" (Lefebvre, 1968:108). Put in simpler terms, Lefebvre is suggesting that individuals will always use space according to prevailing economic, political and social conditions they find themselves in. In his theorem of *The Production of Space*, he adds that urban spaces are elusive and "...may be qualified in various ways: [they] may be directional, situational or relational, because [they are] essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic (Lefebvre, 1974:42). Merrifield (2000:174) agrees with Lefebvre, arguing that lived spaces in cities "... [do] not obey rules of consistency or cohesiveness, neither [do they] involve too much 'head': [they] felt more than thought". Simone (2008:70) also captures the argument brought forward by Lefebvre, he notes that "...the art of survival in African cities is not necessarily based on adhering to specific rules on land use, but on the capacity of residents to improvise and negotiate ways to use land to their benefit".

I am attracted to theory of *The Production of Space*, because it can best explain the developments of subsistence agriculture in residential areas which according to the planning laws of Zimbabwe is considered illegal. The defiance of spatial laws by urban residents in the township of Gwabalanda, as seen in the practise of agriculture in residential land fits within the ambit of the theory and literature on *The Production of Space*. Additional, the rise of

subsistence agriculture in the urban landscape and the continuous remapping of urban cultural spaces in Bulawayo can be interpreted as an act of using space to mitigate the adverse effects of a failed of political and economic system in Zimbabwe.

The prevalence of high rates of inflation in 2008, soaring unemployment, food shortages, ailing social security system and a collapse of the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe might have given urbanites the impetus to transform, rework and shape urban spaces into coping spaces, where subsistence farming is but one form of a coping strategy. According to Zeleza (1999) the adoption of coping strategies such as farming on city spaces generates new patterns and processes of cultural creation, conception, and consumption that resemble that of a rural peasantry life. The practice of subsistence agriculture in an economically distressed city of Bulawayo has somehow given the city new social rhythms, sights, sounds that one normally finds in rural areas.

On one extreme, as it will be shown later in chapter 5, tilling land for subsistence farming by Gwabalanda township residents seems to offer them a platform to socially reproduce former white and capitalist spaces to suit their own 'cosmology', identity, and attitudes. Although within the context of African urbanism, townships are generally understood as black spaces, in essence ordinary black residents do not necessarily regard them as such. It is arguable that since Bulawayo townships are a product of white capitalist accumulation and were under the white minority's control till the end of colonial rule in 1980, in the black resident's psyche, they are still an extension of a white man's sphere of influence (cf. Seirlis, 2004). Indeed, Ndebele rural folks usually refer to Bulawayo townships as '*esikhiweni*' (white man's place), while the Shona people label them as '*kuchirungu*' (white man's area).

The identification of townships by black people with whiteness has to do with their lack of power and participation in the initial planning and creation of townships. If one is to adopt a Foucauldian approach in analysing space and power, it is agreeable that the one who creates and controls space, owns it (Foucault, 1994). This is equally true in the case of Bulawayo early urbanization, the white man took to the forefront of creating the townships which were to serve as sites of labour supply, while the black man was merely an occupant of that space. This imbalance of power that existed between the white and black man in making the township secludes the black man from owning the space in which he resides. It further leads to a feeling of discomfort and disconnect of Africans with their very being and interaction

with the environment. The mere fact that a black man resides in the township does not constitute to him owning the space nor does he feel comfortable in it. I engage Lefebvre's theorem of *Production of Space* in Chapter 5 and I argue that the practise of subsistence farming in the township is a process of socially reproducing and redefining capitalist spaces (townships) as residents began to feel the impacts of the culminating political and economic crisis that ensued in the Zimbabwe of 2008.

1.6 Research Objectives and Questions

The sole purpose of this thesis is:

1. To investigate the conditions and factors that has driven the ruralization of urban space and subsistence in the township of Gwabalanda.
2. To provide insights on the impacts of subsistence farming and changes in urban land use in the township of Gwabalanda
3. To begin to understand how rural-urban links function in a context of urban farming.
4. To explore political and economic factors condition the way people use space.

The research seeks to answer these following research questions:

1. What are the conditions and factors that facilitate the ruralization of urban space, which is seen by the rise of subsistence cultivation?
 - a) What are the economic, social and political factors that drive the ruralization of urban space and the proliferation of urban subsistence agriculture?
2. What have been the impacts of the ruralization of urban space on the livelihoods of urban dwellers?
3. What meanings and attitudes do people have towards the changes in the use of urban space and the spread of subsistence farming?

1.7 Research Methodology and Instruments

This research employs qualitative methodologies in achieving its ends. A total of 17 semi-structured interviews with urban farmers were conducted in August 2012 residing at Gwabalanda Township located 15km North-West of the city of Bulawayo. The maps that show the location of Gwabalanda in relation to the city of Bulawayo are represented in chapter 4. The objectives and the nature of the research problem of the study at hand compelled me to adopt a qualitative methodology. Qualitative research allows researchers to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture and to discover rather than test variable (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

In the exploring the changes of urban land- use in the context of subsistence farming, I adopted a case study research methodology in exploring the everyday life of urban farmers in the township of Gwabalanda.

According to Dooley (2002:336) “...a researcher who embarks on a case study research is usually interested in a specific phenomenon and wishes to understand it completely not by controlling variable, but rather by observing all the variables and their interacting relationship”. The reasons for choosing the case study research methodology are discussed in detail in chapter 4 of the thesis. The collected data was analysed through Nvivo enabled me to manipulate the texts generated from the transcribed interviews by colour-coding the responses into themes that the researcher will develop. According to Corbin & Strauss (2008), coding of data into various themes enables a researcher to extract concepts and meaning from raw data and establish complex relations between people and their lived environment.

1.8 Structure of dissertation

The thesis is partitioned into 6 chapters and they are as follows:

Chapter 1 provides the study background and statement of problem, and it introduces the research methodology, a brief description of the study areas. It also gives a brief insight on the theory that is used for the analysis of research study.

Chapter 2 presents the first part of the literature review which covers the factors that have contributed to the growth of urban farming, its benefits and challenges.

Chapter 3 follows with a second part of the literature review which engages the theory of *The Production of Space* by Lefebvre in explaining the concept of rural, urban, livelihoods, race and identity in both Colonial and Post- Colonial Zimbabwe.

Chapter 4 discusses the research methodology, data collection tools, data analysis instruments used and challenges met in collecting data

Chapter 5 uncovers the research findings, discussion and analysis of data finding is also done in this chapter

Chapter 6 offers a summation of the thesis, areas of further research and implication of findings are covered under this chapter.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on the burgeoning of urban agriculture in global cities symbolizes the transformation in the usage of urban space. Urban agriculture, a major component of the informal sector and normally classified as rural activity by local authorities in the global South has become a distinctive feature of the cities of today. The continued growth of informal agriculture in urban areas is also explored. The chapter therefore attempts to answer ‘why farm’ question, and to adequately tackle this seemingly obvious interrogation. I will profile those involved in urban farming, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. The chapter goes on to explore some dissent voices that have arisen in the discourse of urban agriculture.

2.1 Urbanization, Food security and Urban Agriculture: A Global Perspective

The growing significance of urban agriculture in global cities, particularly of those in the global South seems to be influenced by rapid urbanization and increase in urban population due to an increase of rural to urban migration. Urbanization of global cities has deepened food shortages and poverty, urban agriculture is one of many strategies adopted by urban dwellers to mitigate the effects of urbanization and food insecurities.

According to the United Nations-HABITANT (UN-HABITANT), by 2050, 66% of the world population will be living in cities (UN-HABITANT, 2006). Urban population expansion will be more pronounced in developing countries as a result of high rural to urban migration. On a continental level, it is expected that by 2020, 85% of the poor in Latin America will be found in urban areas and in Africa and Asia 40% to 45% of the poor will be concentrated in towns and cities (FAO, 2011). Scholars that subscribe to the Malthusian school of thought such as Peters (2010:208) argue that the rapid world’s population growth will increasingly burden’s planet food supply thereby increase in poverty incidences and intensifying competition over resources such as jobs and food. According to Peters (2010), the effects of population growth and urbanization are more likely to be felt in low income countries possibly worsening an already existing food crisis. The Southern African region, for instance it has the highest urbanization rate in the world (UNHABITANT, 2008).

For the past two decades in the entire Southern Africa region except for Mauritius and Zambia urban growth rates have been significantly higher than rural rates (UNHABITANT, 2008). Rapid urbanization is coupled by food price increases. The 2006-2008 global food crises that affected the livelihoods of many poor urbanites were necessitated by an increase in traded food commodities. For instance, from the period of 2005 to 2008 the price of wheat rose by 130% in 2008 and that of rice increased by 170% and maize which is a staple food in most countries in Southern Africa almost tripled (Bush, 2010; Mitchell, 2008). They further point out that the food crisis of 2008 left over 100 million people experiencing chronic food insecurities. Urban areas have suffered more from food securities compared to rural areas, this is because urban economies rely much on the formal market in accessing food as compared to rural economies which survive on home food production (Crush and Frayne, 2011). Additionally, urban residents tend to suffer more from escalating food prices than their rural counterparts (ibid).

Crush and Frayne (2011) argue that urban not rural food security should be given much attention in formulating future food policies. They also contend that the 'rural bias' has continued to sideline food security challenges faced by the urban poor. The modernization notion that urban food crises can only be solved by intensifying agricultural productions in rural zones has failed to alleviate malnutrition and hunger levels experienced in cities. It is misleading to assume that food security is only limited to rural populations, more especially in a continent that is undergoing rapid urbanization (Crush and Frayne, 2011). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2011) maintain that open discussions and political dialogues on integrating agriculture in the planning policies of cities are fundamental. The FAO further calls for a renewed and collaborated commitment between bilateral organizations, governments and the civil society in creating sustainable local food systems that are based on self-production. Urban agriculture is now used as a prism to re-define and re-imagine African urbanism and is identified in global caucuses as a cornerstone in achieving greener and resource saving cities (FAO, 2012).

2.2 Defining Urban Agriculture

The definition of urban agriculture is highly contested, with some scholars referring to the term as a contradiction, with no bearing and place in urban planning and design. Mougeot defines urban agriculture as “...an industry located within (intra-urban) or on the fringe (peri-urban) of a town, a city or a metropolis, which grows and raises, processes and distributes a diversity of food and non-food products, (re-)using largely human and material resources, products and services found in and around that urban area, and in turn supplying human and material resources, products and services largely to that urban area” (Mougeot, 2000:10).

He also states that the urban agriculture in the global south is practised for subsistence and survival. Subsistence farming which can also be classified under urban agriculture exists when “...a group (a household, a village, a society) secures food for its reproduction through its own effort, typically by exploitation of the environment (Carr, 1997:311). Moreover, subsistence farming is a form of “...cultural adaptation by which social groups adapt to and regulate the ecosystem of which they are part” (ibid). Although I concur with the definition given by Mougeot (2000), which provides a holistic picture of what urban agriculture ought to be, my thesis is guided by the definition provided by Carr (1997). I feel that Carr’s definition is more relevant to the type of agriculture that is prevailing in the township of Gwabalanda as it shall be shown as the thesis unfolds.

2.3 Urban Agriculture in the Global Scope

The city of Montreal in Canada became the first city among North American cities to actively and openly support the developments of urban farming (Broadway, 2010). In the mid 1970s, the city had established community gardens programs that have now grown to become the largest livelihood activity in Canada benefiting over 10,000 urbanites. Similarly, the city of Seattle in America by 2009 had produced 7-10 tons of vegetables increasing food security prospects for the city. Whereas cities such as New York are hailed as metropolises with the largest number of urban agriculture organizations and community gardening projects in the United States (Broadway, 2010). For instance, the city’s Parks and Recreational Department Green Thumb projects provides support to over 600 organic gardens and assist 20,000 New York citizens with access to fresh and cheap food (Broadway, 2010). The community gardens have received acclamation for generating civic engagement, solidarity and strengthening of social ties residents towards a common goal of eliminating poverty and nutritional diseases in the toughest neighbourhoods of New York.

Detroit is among the shining examples of successful green cities, after the collapse of the motor industry and shedding of a thousand jobs, Detroit citizens turned to agriculture as a means of coping with the effects of the decline of the automobile industry. With its vast stretches of vacant land for agriculture the city of Detroit has utilized this resource to supply a larger proportion of its residents with agricultural products (Broadway, 2010). The city of Havana in Cuba is among the celebrated cities that have made strides in greening urban (Novo and Murphy, 2000). Urban farming in Havana is commonly practised through the iconic popular gardens or *Organoponic* gardens easily identified with their long and raised beds. These gardens supply urban residents with over 25 000 tons of fresh vegetables every year, benefiting over 26, 000 households in the city of Havana (Altieri *et al*, 1999: 32).

These gardens which extend over 2, 438.7 hectares of land helped protect the livelihoods of urban residents from acute food shortages that were experienced in Cuba after the Soviet Union withdrew its economic support to Cuba in 1989 (Chaplowe, 1998; Novo and Murphy, 2000). The *Organoponic* gardens have generated jobs, the government of Cuba has estimated that 117, 000 Cubans residing in Havana are employed in the urban agricultural sector, while an additional 26, 426 workers are employed in jobs related to urban agriculture (Novo and Murphy, 2000). Agriculture is the backbone of most African countries, although it is intensively practised in rural areas, city dwellers are now introducing cultivation of staples such as maize, rice, and yam, in their backyards and in open spaces integrating farming in the ever growing informal sector

2.4 Urban Agriculture in Sub- Saharan Africa

There are two distinct types of farming practised in the cities of Sub- Saharan Africa. The first type, involves formal urban farming which is usually done at a larger scale and this consists of market gardens, poultry and dairy farming. Informal urban farming, on one hand is very common in most African cities and it is undertaken by low income farmers with most countries having over 70% women actively involved in this activity. Informal urban farming is practised on unused patches of land that are located within a walking distance from household units (Smit *et al*, 1996). Urbanites that practice informal urban cultivation normally lack land tenure security and when compared to formal practises, informal urban farming is relatively inexpensive and requires fewer resources (other than land) and requires less skill (Geyer *et al*, nd).

The motivation to engage in urban agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa countries is very different from that of the global North. Most urban residents in Africa were forced to convert unused patches of land in residential areas into farms due to the collapse of national economies that underwent structural changes during the era of the pernicious SAPs (see Zeleza, 1999, Drakakis-Smith, Mbiba, 1995). Byerley (1996) identifies the three major groups of urban farmers that are found in Sub-Saharan Africa, he states that residents in these groups are driven to practice agriculture by more or less similar conditions such as unemployment, lack of purchasing power, low income earnings, poverty and hunger. Byerley, however, argues that urban farmers in these groups have different socio-economic status, with women and the elderly belonging to the most desperate and vulnerable group. He identified the first group as urban residents that use urban space for agriculture for survival. The second group consists of those that use urban farming as a coping mechanism. Lastly, the third group that engage in the agriculture to create employment generate income and accumulate assets. I discuss these three categories in more detail below.

2.4.1 *Urban Agriculture as survival/coping mechanism*

The first group comprises households of the lowest socio-economic status who engage in food production out of absolute need. The motive for cultivation is solely guided by the logic of survival and not of profit maximizing (Sanyal, 1985; Maxwell, nd). This group rely on urban farming as a means to survive, it often includes individuals that have never been employed in the formal sector, low income female-headed households, widows, and immigrants, (Maxwell, nd). In the city of Harare, Zimbabwe Mbiba (1995) found that the majority of urban residents participating in urban farming were women. Similarly, in Botswana, Hovorka (2004) established that more than 70% of the residents that were engaged in various agricultural projects dotted across the city of Gaborone were women. In South Africa, the persistent existence of urban agriculture as a ‘survival act’ is well documented in Matlala’s (1990) study of the emergence urban cultivation in Mamelodi, a township outside Pretoria. Matlala (1990) observes that participants of urban farming were mainly the elderly and the unemployed women who lack monthly income earnings.

On one hand, activities of informal cultivation in the townships of South Africa has been motivated by a need to survive the daily realities faced by female headed households such as hunger, chronic poverty perpetuated by racial and income inequalities (Rogerson, 1993; May, 1998).

In addition, urban farming appears to be attractive to unemployed immigrants that are yet to find a stable footing in cities. In his research study conducted in the informal settlements of Atteridgeville near Pretoria, South Africa, Maswikaneng (2007) found that 88% of households that engaged in cultivation were recent migrants from the countryside. The logic behind urban cultivation for this group is also based on 'no-other means' where informal practice of agriculture on urban spaces is seen as an effective surviving strategy in harsh economic conditions. Urban farmers who belong to this group tend to suffer from extreme food insecurity because of lack of wage income (Sanyal, 1985; Nugent, 2000). Maxwell (1999:1950) contends that urban agriculture offers households that do not have a wage or income streaming in at the end of every month an opportunity to access food through home production.

He further writes that the significance of urban farming in supplying food to income strapped urban households is notable. The lower the household income the lower is the purchasing power of the household, and the more its survival is threatened. He further elaborates that "...under circumstances where low-income urban populations are spending up to three-quarters of their total income on food, the issue of income and livelihood are directly linked to food security...people are not passive victims within constraints they face, people do their best to cope, to make ends meet, to protect their livelihood and meet their basic requirement" (Maxwell, 1999:1950). Furthermore, urban residents with low- income tend to be more susceptible to the effects of food price increases than those with high income levels. This is the case with African countries with a record of high levels of income inequality such as South Africa.

In South Africa, for instance the growing significance of urban cultivation was initiated by a surge in food prices between the period of 1989 and 1992 (Rogerson, 1993). In 1992, South Africa experienced a surge in food prices emanating from disturbances of food supply due to drought and the replacement of sales tax with value- added tax which had minimal exemption on food stuff (Kelly, 1992a). The increase of food prices was a blow to the urban poor residing in townships and informal settlement, for example in the city of Cape Town, Eberhard (1989:1) established that after the introduction of value- added tax, residents found it difficult to purchase the required amount of food. Urban farming is therefore adopted to cope with these food hikes. Moreover, the growing of own food makes households in this category less dependent on purchases and this could have an impact on poverty levels by

freeing household resources that could be used for other expenditure (Mitchell and Leturgue, 2010).

Bryld (2003:82) agrees with Mitchell and Leturgue arguing that self-production of food in urban centres means that “...resources formerly bound to purchasing food can now be used on other pressing needs such as school fees, medical treatment or rent”. Additionally, urban agriculture allows households to have a direct access to food, thus enabling them to consume greater amounts of food and also achieve a more diversified diet, richer in valuable micronutrients (Zezza and Tascoiotti, 2008). Sanyal’s (1985) early studies on the developments of urban farming in Lusaka, Zambia shows that many urban households engaged in agriculture so as to protect themselves from imminent starvation.

Urban farmers who comprise the first two groups seem to have strong links with rural areas and most of the skills and knowledge they apply in urban farming are gained in rural areas. According to Zeleza (1999:53), urban farmers in this group represent the resuscitation and strengthening of rural-urban linkages. Rural-urban interconnections normally include the flow of labour, skills, assets and knowledge systems from rural areas to urban centres (Fraser *et.al*, 2008). Diyamett *et.al* (2001) have asserted that, in situations of economic distress, increase in urban poverty, urban household’s reliance on rural based resources for sustenance of livelihood becomes important. Owuor (2004) in his study of the nature of rural-urban links in Kenya, found that the transfer of skills, farming knowledge and the movement drought resistant seeds from rural to urban areas were important for urban farmers living in the town of *Nakuru*, as they played a crucial role in replenishing their livelihood. Owuor (2004) supports Diyamett’s *et al* (2001) argument, stating that many African urban households have always had rural components to their livelihood and retain strong links with rural areas (Owuor, 2004:3).

In his study on the importance of rural-urban linkages for urbanites in Gaborone, Botswana, Kruger (1998) establishes that subsistence farming which is highly regarded as a rural livelihoods and surviving strategy by the Gaborone city authorities is crucial in helping Botswana people living in towns and cities in ameliorating incidences of poverty and vulnerability. He further argues that an increase cost of living and urban poverty forces people to ‘fall back’ on rural livelihood and rely on rural surviving strategies such as subsistence agriculture and the growing of traditional crops. In some instances these urban farmers are accused of ‘ruralising’ the urban space and their agriculture based livelihood are

constantly vilified, trivialized and in worst scenario are threatened by institutions and individuals that are against the ploughing of cities (cf. Rogerson 1993; Zeleza, 1999).

The second group of urban farmers is made up of urban households that choose to cultivate in order to attempt to preserve their standards of living during inflationary times, failed labour markets and economic slowdown (Byerley, 1996). Households that belong to this group engage in urban cultivation to mitigate and reduce the vulnerability in economic turmoil. This group, unlike the first consists of individuals or households that once relied on wage labour or formal employment for income and sustenance. Cousins (2005:10) observes that “...when the functional articulation of wage income and rural production is reduced, people look to urban farming as a source of livelihood.”

Sanyal (1987:198) argues in a similar vein stating that “...the surge of urban farming in Africa is due to the decline of formal urban economies in the wake of SAPs”. He further argues that urban farming is a response that “...reduces their vulnerability to the fluctuations of fortune that beset the economies of developing countries’ cities” Sanyal 1987: 198). Zeleza (1999) also shares the same observations of the above authors arguing that UA emerged as a useful and important coping strategy to protect urban livelihood’s that were affected by the operations of SAPs. He also suggests that “...as structural adjustment began to pauperize segments of the middle class the later increasingly resorted to farming” (Zeleza, 1999:58).

The produce from urban farms can supplement household cash incomes in precarious labour market conditions that often prevail in large Third World cities (Nugent, 2000). Jamal and Weeks’ (1993) investigation study on the factors that contributed to the developments of food production in the city of Kampala in Uganda seem to be consistent with views of scholars that see urban agriculture as a product of failed economies. Jamal and Weeks (1993) observe that by the mid-1970s, *shambas*⁶ had becoming an important part of the Ugandan urban landscape. Moreover home food production in the residential areas of Kampala signalled a plummet in labour wages in the Ugandan labour market, the developments of urban cultivation were further facilitated by a reduction in the income gap between urban and rural areas. Bibangambah (1992) also traces the economic conditions that promoted the rise of urban farming in Uganda. He suggests that the widespread of agricultural ventures in urban areas in the mid-1970s were signs of the collapse of the Ugandan economy which had a hard

⁶ These are small informal farms that require minimal inputs. Crop production on these farms is normally for home consumption

knock from the oil crisis of the 1970s and largely because of Idi Amin's misguided policy of 'economic independence'.

Drakakis-Smith *et al* (1995) observe that the decline in employment rate, wages, and purchasing power under the lethal economic regime of ESAP in Zimbabwe can best explain the flourishing of farming in the townships of Harare, particularly during the period of 1991 and 1997. The interviews conducted by Mbiba (1995) revealed that urban farming in Harare was perceived as an ingenious and a heroic response by Harare township residents to the rigours of SAPs that led to the escalating of food prices and also its inaccessibility.

On the other hand, in Ghana urban farming was backed by the government as one of the formidable solutions that urbanites had for preserving their livelihoods in the wake of the economic slowdown of the 1970s. The government of Ghana through its nationwide project 'Operation Feed Yourself' encouraged urbanites in the city of Accra to practice any form of agriculture on land that was to be provided by the state (Klemesu and Maxwell, 2000). According to Klemesu and Maxwell (2000), Ghana was among the first African nation that had a government which had a keen interest in urban agriculture as a tool for fighting urban poverty and food shortages.

2.4.2 *Coping with food shortages and transport costs*

Drakakis- Smith *et al* (1995) argue that although increases in food prices and lack of household income appear to be the leading drivers of farming activities in major urban landscape, food shortages and unavailability of food in the formal market also play a significant role in fuelling urban agriculture (Ericksen, 2007). The study by Simatele and Binns (2008: 9) shows that households in the city of Lusaka, Zambia are driven into subsistence farming not only due to lack of money. Households belonging to this group farm in situations where there is a breakdown of the formal food supply chain and the disruption of the retail system (Drakakis-Smith *et al*, 1995; Kutiwa *et al*, 2011). According to Mbiba (1995) urban cultivation of crops reduces the vulnerability of women and children to food scarcity and inaccessibility of food in the market. Urban agriculture is more important to women, since in many cases they carry the duty of providing food in their homes (Mbiba, 1995). Urban farming provides female headed households with a varied range of nutritional foods which would be otherwise not accessible and expensive in the open market (Mbiba, 1995, Bryld, 2003, Crush & Frayne, 2011).

Tambwe (2006) revealed that distance was the most decisive factor compelling the Congolese people to farm in the city of Lubumbashi. Tambwe (2006) explains how the distance between rural areas and the city of Lubumbashi influenced the decisions of urban residents to farm in the city. The qualitative study by Tambwe (2006) found that Lubumbashi residents were more likely to engage in urban farming if the costs of transporting a crop produce from the rural areas to the city was higher than its real value (Tambwe, 2006:195).

Tambwe's findings seem to tally with the argument raised by Frayne (2005) in his study of urban farming as a survival strategy in Windhoek, Namibia. He asserted that there existed an intimate relationship between rural production, migration and urban cultivation among Windhoek urban farmers. According to Frayne (2005:45), urban residents in Windhoek were most likely to abandon rural food production in favour of urban cultivation, particularly if the costs of migrating to rural areas and engaging in rural food production were high. The residents of Katutura Township, Windhoek; for instance viewed urban farming as having little or no travelling costs as compared to rural production where one is expected to move inputs and harvested food crops over long distances.

Similarly, an exploratory study conducted by Bopda *et al* (2010:54) on the developments of urban farming systems in the city of Yaoundé, Cameroon, uncovered that high transport and food handling costs incurred by urban residents when moving food crops from rural areas to the cities were among the leading reasons urban residents gave for practising urban farming. In their study of burgeoning agricultural activities in the city of Harare, Zimbabwe, Leybourne and Grant (1999) also linked the rise of city farming to disruptions of rural-urban food supply caused by increases in transport costs which negatively impact rural-urban/urban-rural mobility.

Apart from reducing the transport costs people incur when outsourcing food in the rural areas, urban farming generates both extra income and employment for households living under the poverty datum line.

2.4.3 *Urban agriculture as an income and employment generator*

The third and final group comprises of commercial farmers and cooperatives that engage in urban farming solely for the purpose of generating cash income, assets and jobs in impoverished neighbourhoods. In this group agricultural production is for a wider market. Some high income inhabitants use agriculture as a strategy of further accumulation through

the production of high yield crops close to the market, while some middle class use urban cultivation as a means of consolidation, securing the family wellbeing (Bryld, 2002). May and Rogerson (1995) reported that urban farming contributed between 10% and 20% to the total household income of urban farmers in the township of Tembisa in Johannesburg and between 25% and 40% in Groutville also in Johannesburg. In a survey and evaluation study done by Mkwambisi *et al* (2010) on urban food production's contribution to household income among the Malawians, it was found that urban farming as a second most important contributor of income of all households surveyed after formal employment. Similarly, in Ghana, many urban households involved in urban animal husbandry another unique type of urban agriculture reported to be using livestock such as rabbits, goats, and chickens as liquidity assets that can be sold to generate income in cases of emergency.

For instance in the city of Accra, a goat can be sold at a price of US\$50 the money can then be used to meet daily household needs (Klemesu and Maxwell, 2000). Conversely, urban farming helps communities develop their own resilient local value chains that ensures that income generated from agricultural produce circulate within communities. Local value chains can also greatly reduce food prices since farming close to communities will reduce transport costs, this ties us back to the arguments raised by Tambwe (2009) of urban farming reducing the time and costs of outsourcing food from the rural areas.

In addition, urban farming is instrumental in creating employment, not only to urban farmers themselves but for hired labourers and workers in related micro-enterprise such as production of compost, collecting and selling of grass or organic manure, processing of agricultural produce (local hammer millers) and street vendors.

The formalization of urban farming on 900 hectares of city space in Kinshasa, Republic Democratic of the Congo by the local government has directly generated about 45,000 jobs that have indirectly improved the lives of 225,000 urban residents (FAO, 2008). In the city of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania an approximate of 4000 hectares of urban open space under cultivation has generated an estimate of 30,000 jobs, making the second largest employer in Tanzania, employing about 20% of the population and forming at least 60% of the informal sector (FAO, 2008). Kenya has also generated a considerable number of jobs of from urban agriculture, creating at least 150,000 jobs in the city of Nairobi meaning that urban farming employs 30% of the population in Nairobi (ibid). Amidst, the attractiveness of urban agriculture, particularly on its potential to generate employment, help poor people secure

livelihoods and improve access to cheaper food, it has come under a lot of criticism from various camps, notably the Structural and Neo-Marxists.

2.5 Critics of Urban Agriculture

2.5.1 Structural/Neo-Marxist Approaches to Urban Agriculture

There a number of scholars that dismisses the potential benefits of urban agriculture. They are sceptical about the claims made by its proponents of generating income, improvement in food accessibility and empowerment of women. Page (2002) for instance has criticized the outcomes of urban farming as unrealistic and grossly exaggerated, stating that in the real, the poor derive little benefit from this venture. The evidence of poor household deriving benefits from urban agriculture is very scant (Webb 1996; Tevera, 1999; Hampwaye, 2008). A study by Slater (1994) of the '*Imizamo Yethu*' (Our efforts) a vegetable production project based in Hout Bay, Cape Town, South Africa, found evidence of limited contribution of vegetable production to household income or expenditure substitution.

A study conducted in five informal settlements of Atteridgeville, Pretoria found that urban farming had an insignificant contribution to household food security (Averbeke, 2007). He further adds that due to lack of space in the informal settlements, land under cultivation is very small and is insufficient to produce a food bundle that is enough to feed a household over a longer period. On one hand, Bigsten and Kayizzi-Mugerwa (1992) note that although the rise of urban farming in Uganda was due to the decline of wages between 1971 and 1979, the income derived from the small urban farms was far less than that of declined wages. They also argue that while urban farming was indicative of Ugandans' survival instincts, it was marginal to the urban household economy.

Critics of urban agriculture claim that its benefits are difficult to realize because of some of the constraints faced by urban farmers on the ground (Smit *et al* 1996, Drakakis-Smith, 1996; Freeman, 1993; Crush *et al*, 2011). The length of stay is positively related to urban farming. For instance, the very poor and new arrivals have limited access to land and tend to shift residences too often for them to engage in urban agriculture (Bryld, 2009). In a study of the activities of urban farming in the city of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania it was found that the majority of urban farmers were residents that had lived in the city for 10-15 years, suggesting that access to resources can only be obtained if a resident is well embedded in the social system.

(Bryld, 2008; Sanyal, 1985). Bryld (2008: 83) asserts that “...those residents who have resided in the city for several decades have been the first to seize the land. Consequently, urban cultivators are not necessarily the poorest residents. Newcomers are excluded from access to plots due to the older residents’ gate keeping”.

The lack of land tenure constricts poor households from tapping into the benefits of cultivation of food either for consumption or selling. The most vulnerable poor sections of the society such as female-headed households, the youth, and immigrants tend to suffer more from lack of land tenure and this often seclude them from cultivating urban spaces (cf. Hovorka, 2004; Scott, 1993; Maxwell, nd). According to Bryld (2008:83) only 20% of the land cultivated in cities of the developing countries is owned by the cultivators, otherwise the majority of urban agriculture takes place on public land owned by municipalities or wealthy landlords. Moreover other barriers such as scarcity of water, inputs, theft and pests are some of the challenges that have reduced the potential of urban agriculture in alleviating hunger and food shortages in major African city centres.

2.5.2 *The lack of solid institutional and legal foundation for urban agriculture*

The absence of a solid institutional and legal framework for urban cultivation reduces its potential and chances to make a meaningful contribution to the lives of the urban poor. UA is still considered an illegal and informal activity whose significance is strongly undermined (Egziabher *et al*, 1994; Binns and Lynch, 1998; Nugent, 2000; Mbiba, 1995). In most African countries as already noted, there is a general lack of tolerance towards urban cultivation, for example countries such as Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe have no urban laws that accommodate urban farming (Drakakis-Smith, 1993, Armar-Klemesu & Maxwell, 2000; Simatelle & Binns, 2000).

Urban farming has usually been met with repressive actions from the city authorities such as slashing of crops and reclaiming of unused space, thus negatively impacting on the potential of urban agriculture in providing food produce to urban households. Scholars such as Moser (1978) argue that given the criminality that has been attached to urban farming and its constant suppression by authorities one should then not be tempted to exaggerate its contribution to the urban economy. He further trivializes the capabilities of informal activities such as urban agriculture in stimulating economic growth, dismissing it as merely ‘opportunistic’, ‘parasitic’ and a ‘transitory’ sector that quickly disappear as soon as

collapsed economies show signs of recovery. Urban farming came to be seen as backward, rural and traditional. Agriculture was seen as an activity that had no place in the city, was a constraint on urban development and a signal that the process of development was not operating as it should (Sanyal, 1987).

Sanyal (1987:198) who argues from a Neo- Marxist perspective notes that “...the promotion of urban agriculture as an innovative response from below may simply maintain the status quo that leads to the need for this survival strategy in the first place”. He further argues that urban agriculture can contribute to the double exploitation of labour by maintaining unequal and unjust capitalist social relations of production (Sanyal, 1987). Mbiba (1996) suggests that urban farming and other informal activities provide modern industrialist with an opportunity to shift the burden of labour to workers, as it reduces the pressure on capitalists to pay workers what they deserve.

Hovorka (2004) is also critical of urban agriculture, arguing that it relieves state policy makers and planners of the responsibility of improving people’s quality of life because individuals particularly the most vulnerable such as women end up taking responsibility for it into their own hands. Women are key players in food systems, in Sub-Saharan Africa women account for 70% of agricultural productivity and 80% of food processing (Mbiba, 1995, Mougeot, 2000, FAO, 2011). Hovorka (2004) warns us on how urban agriculture pose as a double-edged sword for women as it can facilitate women’s ability to achieve household food security and generate income on one hand but it can also reduce their aspirations and incentives to challenge the domination of males in the formal sector.

Neo- Marxists theorists reject urban agriculture and all other forms of informal sector activities as exploitative and threatening to the advancement of the most vulnerable members of the society (Mbiba, 1996). Rakodi (1985) is sceptical about the contribution of urban faming in the elevation of women within distressed communities. She contends that a call to formalize urban cultivation by governments and development agencies may reduce women’s ability to enter the sector of urban agriculture, potentially excluding those who could benefit most (Rakodi, 1985:59). The intensification and commercialization of informal urban farming introduces a potential of men dominating the sector. In development projects where women have asserted their autonomy over their economic activities, men tend to infiltrate such undertakings manipulating the development process in order to recapture female labour and income (cf. Cornwall, 2008; Hovorka, 2004).

2.6 Urban agriculture as an Ideology of Power

Scholars that subscribe to the Foucauldian discourse analysis such as Premat (2009) argue that projects on urban agriculture can be machineries used by the ruling power to maintain and exercise power. He argues that the promotion of urban agriculture in Cuba, for example was not used only a strategy to cope with food shortages that characterised the Special Period⁷ but was also used by the government to propagate and impose its socialist ideologies. Urban agriculture in Cuba is a “powerful discourse” and a “regime of representation” of the state that is used to control the ideologies of the masses.⁷

The projects of urban agriculture in Havana merely functioned as a political tool to avert an imminent revolution against the government by the masses under the stress of economic hardships of the early 1990s. The words uttered by the prominent Cuban politician Raul Castro, show how the government of Cuba was determined to divert the minds of desperate Cubans from a revolution through the barrel of a gun to a revolution through tilling the land, he uttered these catchy words “... yesterday, we said that beans were as important as guns; today we are affirming that beans are more valuable than guns” quoted in (Premat 2009:33). In the contemporary global South urban farming has a potential to be intentionally and unintentionally used as a tool to dampen imminent anger emanating from citizens in situations where the state fails to deliver. In his study of the rise of urban agriculture in Cameroon in the early 1990s, Page (2002) states that the government promoted a nationwide agricultural production in the cities of Cameroon to quell a potential upheaval from the civil servants when the state reduced the expenditure on the public service wage bill after the adoption of SAPs.

2.6.1 *Urban Agriculture and Power dynamics at a community level*

Premat (2003) argues that far from cementing social ties and promote social cohesion, the practice of urban agriculture can sever the unity of a community. The ubiquitous nature of power allows it to prevail in every human interaction; struggles over space can also exist at a community level. For instance, Premat (2003) argues that the Organoponic gardens in the city of Havana, Cuba though located and established in public spaces open to every member of

⁷ One can also refer to the works of Gramsci (1971) on ‘hegemony’ he argues that the masses are not ruled and controlled by force but also by ideology and propaganda.

the community remain a site only reserved for few individuals — the Organoponic gardeners. The Organoponic gardens which are located on public space became extensions of the producer's home and private property, the mere fact that they are fenced symbolizes privatization, thus alienating the rest of community from owning and using the public space. Only producers of parcels have access to the urban gardens and the decision of who can enter the space and how the space is utilized rests with the producers in charge (Premat, 2003). Such arrangements can lead to the bureaucratization of social relations and usurping of power by a few individuals.

Some scholars argue that the notion that urban agriculture leads to the empowerment of communities is misleading. In many cases there has been minimal involvement of the community at both the planning and execution stages (Eberhard, 1989a). Technocratic professionalism emanating from NGOs and relevant government departments have undermined the reliance and confidence of the community without credentials, degrees and university training in running projects meant for their empowerment. The genuine participation of the community is constrained by lack of consultation with the intended beneficiaries, in many instances the 'top-down' white-run projects on urban agriculture initiatives were rejected by black communities as 'patronising' (Eberhard, 1989a).

For example, in Cape Town community gardens initiatives that were run by the Dutch Reformed church failed to bear fruits mainly because of limited community involvement and its lack of legitimacy in the eyes of host communities (Eberhard, 1989a). Similarly, residents in Soweto in Johannesburg felt that the community gardens projects were imposed on them, as they did not take part in choosing of community garden sites. Moreover the residents criticized the projects' failure to recognize and cater for the unique social problems that hindered participation in agricultural activities. Social ills such as violent crime, vandalism and pilferage were among some of the identified barriers to full community engagement (Rogerson, 1993).

2.6.2 *Urban Agriculture and Power dynamics at an international level*

The continued existence of the development paradigm strives on urban agriculture and it tends to be presented in a particular and reductive way in contemporary development text. First, there is a tendency to exaggerate the 'newness' of farming in the city, urban farming has always been part of the urban landscape since the times of the mighty Roman empire and the great empire of Timbuktu . Secondly, it is decorated with beautiful words such as

‘empowerment’, emancipation, ‘environmental sustainability’, ‘food security’, ‘economic development’ *et cetera* so that it appear attractive and marketable. Thirdly, there is a tendency to ignore the political outcomes associated with the expansion of urban farming (Page, 2002).

Ellis & Sumberg (1998) are critical of development agencies such as IDRC, UNDP and FAO for glorifying and essentializing urban farming as an effective antidote to poverty. They argue that urban agriculture claims too much and offer too little in the policy context of urban poverty alleviation. They maintain that urban farming claims too much by equating all food production in towns with improved food security for poor people. On one hand, they criticize the advocates of urban agriculture for offering too little by failing to consider the role of rural-urban interactions in explaining the survival capabilities of the urban poor (Ellis & Sumberg, 1998).

Kapoor (2002) warns us that the global call by development agencies to promote projects involving urban agriculture in distressed cities runs the risk of being transformed into brands (institutional marketability). Urban agriculture has become one of the development paradigm’s latest trends following on the heels of ‘women in development’ (WID) that occupied the international community in the 1980s, the ‘sustainable development’ that dominated in the early 1990s and ‘human rights and governance’ rhetoric that prevailed in the mid to late 1990s (Kapoor, 2002). The ‘trendiness’ is not coincidental but deliberate; this new trend serves to safeguard development’s renewal, marketability and thus maintaining the status quo, where the global North is expected to meddle in the domestic affairs of the global South.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter examined the growing significance of agriculture in cities of the global North and South that are urbanizing rapidly. It discussed some of the conditions that lead to the acceptance of farming an activity that is still considered as rural and not catered for by urban planners. The chapter searches for the reasons why urbanites engage in farming, and in asking the question ‘why farm in cities’ the profiling of those engaged in farming is done. In this chapter it was found that different residents farm for different reasons, those that are found in the lowest income group, their motives are merely to survive, while others farm to cope with the effects of economic crises, other are motivated by the need to generate income, create employments and accumulate assets.

The possible benefits of urban farming are also discussed, increase food security, saving of income for female headed households, and the sustainable maintenance of the environment are some of the notable benefits. This chapter also discussed the political and economic processes that have led developments of urban agriculture in Zimbabwe attention is accorded to the ESAP, the land reform and food shortages between 1991 and 2008. The critical discussions of urban agriculture are also explored in this chapter. Critics of urban agriculture claim that the activity does less in boosting income, empowering communities especially women and it is abused by the powerful to exercise hegemony over the ruled.

Chapter Three: The Production of Space and Agriculture in Colonial and Postcolonial Zimbabwe

“To change life is to change space; to change space is to change life. Neither can be avoided” (Merrifield, 2000)

3.0 Introduction

This chapter engages the theory of production of space by Henri Lefebvre to provide a useful platform for a political ecological understanding of the use of urban space in relation to subsistence agricultural in colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe. The theory of production of space argues that changes in urban spaces and land use are directly linked to the transformations of political, economic and social structures and also societal relations. The first part of the chapter will explore how race, identity and the livelihood of subsistence agriculture interacted with spatiality (production of conceived spaces) during the period of colonialism-cum-capitalism in Zimbabwe. The second part of the chapter invokes the Lefebverian tradition to explore how African urbanites have restructured and reworked spaces in the postcolonial era, particularly in the era of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). In this chapter the thesis tests Lefebvre hypothesis which states that changes in the use of urban spaces by individuals is directly linked to prevailing political and economic conditions. This thesis seeks to find the applicability of this theory within the context of increasing subsistence farming in the township of Gwabalanda which can also be interpreted as the ‘ruralization’ of urban spaces.

3.1 The Production of Space, Identity and Subsistence Agriculture in Colonial Zimbabwe

Capitalist conquest and an establishment of a modernist society in Zimbabwe could not have been achieved without a careful and well thought out manipulation and production of conceived space by colonial administrators (Ranger, 2010; Seirlis 2004). Lefebvre (1974) sees conceived or representations of space as closely tied to capitalist production and accumulation. Since Lefebvre conceptualizes this space to be the space of capital, he sees conceived spaces as always finding ‘objectified presentation’ used for capital accumulation these might include “...factories, office blocks, and the bureaucratic and political authoritarianism immanent to a repressive space” (Lefebvre, 1974:49).

Moreover, Lefebvre (1974) asserts that conceived spaces are a depiction of the interests of capital and play an important role in the producing a space for capital (cf. Harvey, 2008). He (1974:38) notes that it is in the conceived space where “power and knowledge are embedded.” According to Martin and Miller (2003), conceived spaces are produced by dominant groups, which utilize such spaces to impose their ideological dominance and hegemony over subaltern groups. Moreover, it is in conceived spaces that attachment of identity to spatiality takes form. Simone (2008:70) expands further on Martin and Millers’ position, by pointing out that these “...spaces are linked to specific identities, functions, lifestyles and properties so that the spaces of the city become legible for specific people at given places and times”.

The production of colonial space for capitalist accumulation and pursuance of a modernized Zimbabwe evolved around the creation of two distinct conceived spaces – the city and the country (cf. Seirlis, 2004: 408). These two spaces were assigned separate socio-economic activities and racial identities (Mitchell, 1987; Seirlis, 2004). Cities, for instance were conceived as centres for production and manufacturing of capitalist goods (Marx, 1981). These spaces were later dominated by industries, office blocks, thermal and power stations.⁸ Colonial administrators reputed cities as spaces crucial for driving the Zimbabwean society towards civilization, progression and modernization. It is worth mentioning that since modernity, human progression and civilization in colonial Zimbabwe were closely aligned with ‘whiteness’, the cities too became to be familiarized with whiteness (Seirlis, 2008:408).

On one extreme the country was regarded as a space associated with the practice of what colonialists regarded as inferior economic and social activities. The activities included subsistence farming, herding of cattle, hunting and gathering. The countryside is commonly known in Zimbabwe as *kumaruzeva* (reserves) or ‘*kumusha*’ (rural areas) represented a site of backwardness, primitiveness and was regarded as a space identified with ‘Africaness’ and ‘blackness’ (Gray, 1960:276). An early negative perception of Africans’ way of living is well captured in Macmillan’s (1929) poem in which he recites, “... Bantu people are unchanging; they are as they used to be, farmers, herdsmen, elementary, of small brain capacity...All their buildings have been hutments, all their towns but kraals and camps” (quoted in Ranger, 2010:36).

⁸ For example, Bulawayo is affectionately known as ‘*Kontuthu ziyathunqa*’ a Ndebele expression meaning “city of billowing smoke”. The city is famous for its smoke emitting thermal stations.

The orchestration of biology and geography in Zimbabwe by the colonial project made it easier to prohibit subsistence farming in urban areas which might have posed a threat to the institutionalization of a wage-labour economy. Associating subsistence agriculture with blackness and rural identities laden with inferiority complexes of backwardness, primitiveness and uncivilization⁹ enabled the colonial government gain leverage in sanctioning the activities of subsistence agriculture in urban spaces. Tallying subsistence agriculture with blackness and rurality resulted in Africans shunning and trivialization agriculture as a livelihood and in worst case scenario it led to Africans to develop hate and disgust in the lifestyle they lead in rural areas.¹⁰ The development of self-hatred among blacks, particularly in the way their psyches responded to the racialization of livelihoods, made it easier for the colonizers to convince the colonized to discard their agricultural production in favour of wage employment.

In some instances the production of space for colonialism and capitalism interacted with the colonial production of cleanliness, health and racialization of dirt and bodies (Burke, 1996:17). The curiosity of European settlers in the bodies of Africans came with subjectivities and racial stereotypes. Early white settlers repeatedly “...characterized Africans as filthy, dirty and hygienically unsafe” (Burke, 1996: 19-20). At one point nineteenth-century missionaries working at the Ndebele capital described the Shona people as *chiSwina*, “dirty people” a derogatory term which is continually used to refer to Shona speakers (Burke, 1996:26). The racialization of dirt was not limited to African bodies, but also extended to their socio-economic activities such as agriculture. It is worth pointing out that the serialization of dirt to the black body and to the farming livelihood of black Africans coincided with the post-World War 2 toiletry and cosmetic boom. Companies such as Lever Brothers, Colgate-Palmolive, and Ambi gained a swelling African market, in the period between the mid-1940s and the late 1960s (Burke, 1996).

⁹ In his writings, Steve Biko discusses the power of association in shaping societal attitude towards race and identity. He argues that “the black man acquires an inferiority complex after his blackness is associated the with negative references such as the ‘black market’ and the ‘black magic’ which are inferior, unwanted things rejected by society” (Biko,1978:103).

¹⁰ In his novel *Waiting for the Rain*, Charles Mungoshi depicts the character Lucifer Mandengu, as a Western educated young black poet who suffers from alienation and self-hatred emanating from colonialism. He detests the reality that he is black, lives in a rural area and was born to rural parents. In one of his poems he writes “I am Lucifer Mandengu I have never liked it here and If I leave this place, I am not going to come back it is the failure’s junk heap...It is a biological and geographical error [that I have to live with]” (Mungoshi, 1975:162).

This period was known as the era of mass consumption of beauty commodities by the African population, a time of shoe shines, perms, shampoos, lightening creams, nail polish, soaps and perfumes. A craze for beauty and smartness during the age of commodification and consumption of toiletry in colonial Zimbabwe meant a slow drifting away of Africans from activities such as farming which they regarded as making a person dirty and filthy. The exposure to European consumer goods had a transformative effect on the identities of Africans. The embracing of 'Europeaness' which was usually associated with cleanliness, led to Africans abandoning their '*mwana wevhu*' (child of the soil) identity that had informed the existence of the Shona people. The *ivhu* (soil or land) soon replaced by the cash economy and consumerism lost its significance in the formation of identity among the Shona people.

The sprawling of maize fields in black residential areas was inextricably linked to dirt, and was perceived as disorderly and an environmental-health hazard. The pursuit of cultivating crops by black workers who wanted urban settlements to resemble their rural homes did not tally with the colonial technocratic-modernist mentality of urban aesthetics (cleanliness and beauty). The colonial regime was determined to retain the sanctity of cities or the so-called white spaces by arresting any signs of subsistence agricultural activities deemed to be an epitomization of 'ruralization'. Drinkwater (1991:50) adds that in some cases the colonial project used unfair environmental and health policies to justify their condemnation of "...Shona production methods as not only inefficient, but also damaging to the environment, and therefore entitled to be considered criminal".

Apart from employing biological methods in repressing farming practices to surface in colonial cities, city authorities utilized physical planning to meet their ends. Spatial planning of colonial cities was also crucial in disciplining the developments of agriculture in black residents. The spatial arrangements in colonial Bulawayo, for instance, made it difficult if not impossible for township dwellers to conduct agricultural activity. The first township of Bulawayo, the Old Location (now Makokoba Township) was planned as a transitory space (Ranger, 2010) or what Zhou (1995) refers to as a 'bed-room township', allowing a temporary stay and only single male occupants in the city. These living arrangements, where African male workers were not expected by law to be full urban citizens made it impractical for black Africans to invest in any form of livelihood activity in urban residential areas.

The suppression of agriculture was further achieved through the control of the dispossessed land by the colonial municipality. There were few spaces in Bulawayo that were allocated for agricultural purposes in colonial Zimbabwe. Apart from the Commonage plot that was allocated to white owned meat companies such as the Cold Storage Company, many black residents could only have access to small pieces of land in their yards to use for food production (Ranger, 2010:59). The participation of blacks in social and economic activities like farming was "...highly 'segmental', in the sense that the roles they could adopt were narrowly circumscribed by the Europeans who maintained political, economical and social control of the towns" (Mitchell, 1987:99). The control was exerted through the colonial Land Tenure Act of 1969, which granted full customary rights to black Africans to have access to land in newly created reserves such as Gwaai, Shangani and Chirumanzu (Drinkwater, 1991). Despite having infertile soils, inadequate rainfalls and the threat of Tsetse flies to their livestock, Europeans expected black Africans to pursue their agricultural activities in these reserves and not in cities.

Additionally, the early residential areas of Bulawayo were designed by architects who had a modernization and a dualist economy foresight. They assumed that African residents living in Bulawayo were to be absorbed in wage labour employment emanating from the booming railway industrial complex (Ranger, 2010; Castillo, 2003). Their assumptions were further guided by the principles of the market-based economy. These principles presupposed that there was no need for African workers residing under the Black Township Association (BTA)¹¹ to grow their own food, since they could use their earnings to purchase food commodities from the market (Castillo, 2003).

Conversely, the suppression of agriculture in black neighbourhoods guaranteed a smooth transition from peasant economy to wage labour and the cash economy. According to Van Binsbegen and Geschiere (1985) disallowing the practice of subsistence agriculture a mainstay of the Shona people's economy and livelihood since the advent of the Iron Age in urban areas, ensured a survival of the capitalist system. Its repression became necessary in driving Native Africans into wage labour and also in expanding capitalist agriculture (Freund, 1984:127; also see Van Binsbegen and Geschiere, 1985:4-5).

¹¹ Townships that were classified under BTA included the first black residential areas of Makokoba, Mzilikazi, Babourfields, and Sizinda. These residential areas are closely located to the city centre and industrial areas. These residential areas are sometimes referred to by locals as '*Emzini yezinsizwa*' (Male hostels), they contain single occupancy houses that were mainly designed for residential males working in the industries of Bulawayo.

Colonial residential areas, as described by Seirlis (2004:408) became identified with cash, work suits, blazers and ties. She further points out that in colonial times Salisbury (now Harare) was known as “... an oasis and island of civilized living, a place not fit for a ‘man of the soil’”.

3.2 Restructuring and Reworking of City Spaces in Post-colonial Africa

The conception of cities as spaces for wage employment, capitalist accumulation and also as space not to be permeated by any forms rural livelihood did not go unchallenged. With the demise of colonialism and the attainment of civil rights for every citizen, African residents began to restructure and redefine urban spaces in accordance to their daily experiences. They reworked city spaces to suit their immediate needs. Moreover, with the collapse of many African economies in the wake of SAPs between the late 1980s and early 1990s scores of people were left vulnerable to food insecurities. The disastrous SAPs compelled citizens to resort to utilizing urban spaces for food production. The farming of city landscapes is interpreted by Harvey (2008) as a move in which the political and economically oppressed city residents reproduce and restructures city spaces so as to reassert and reaffirm their rights to urban resources.

According to Lefebvre (1974) cities are living organisms and a process of everyday life circumstances of people that cannot be reduced to physical concrete or geometry. He sees cities as spaces of everyday experiences [lived spaces], and are experienced through “...symbols and images of its ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’ and overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects” (Lefebvre, 1974:39). He adds that urban spaces are elusive and “...may be qualified in various ways: [they] may be directional, situational or relational, because [they are] essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic (Lefebvre, 1974:42). Merrifield (2000:174) agrees with Lefebvre, arguing that lived spaces in cities “... [do] not obey rules of consistency or cohesiveness, neither [do they] involve too much ‘head’: [they] felt more than thought”.

The work of Lefebvre on the production of lived spaces provides a useful platform for a political ecological understanding of the use of urban space for food cultivation. As an urban land use activity, the cultivation of crops often presents itself as oddly out of place, and it seems wholly incompatible with the management of city space. Its presence on urban landscape shows how the organization of urban spatial forms is continually shifting in rhythm

with the cycles of political, economical and social changes experienced by communities in everyday life (Mares and Pena, 2010:241).

In his writing on the “rights to the city”, Lefebvre (1968: 108) argues that the city spaces should be perceived as a “...continuum midway between small-scale individual practices and large-scale social processes and institutions”. Put in simpler terms, Lefebvre is suggesting that individuals will use space in accordance with prevailing economic, political and social conditions they find themselves in. Moreover, he argues that their usage of space is not entirely governed by written urban laws, plans, and grids. Simone (2008:70) captures the argument brought forward by Lefebvre, he notes that “...the art of survival in African cities is not necessarily based on adhering to specific rules on land use, but on the capacity of residents to improvise and negotiate ways to use land to their benefit”. For instance, people who face challenges such as unemployment, food insecurities, lack of income or social security may be forced to turn to agriculture and farm on contested spaces, countering the laws that restrict them to practice agriculture in such spaces.

According to Purcell (2002), the production of lived space allows individuals to reframe, regulate and to some extent discipline prevailing large-scale social, economic and political processes that directly or indirectly impact on their everyday lived experiences of the city. Purcell (2002) argues that by reproducing urban spaces to fit into their everyday struggle, urban citizens are able to challenge state power, spatial planning and capitalism leaving room for radical restructuring of the social, political and economic relations between bureaucrats and citizens both in the city and beyond.

According to Soja (1996) urban farms or gardens are a representation of counter spaces where urban users resist the status quo and dominant ideologies of technocratic urban planners. He sees urban farming as an act in which the ordinary and repressed users of space appropriate and produce what he refers to as the ‘third space’ which exists outside the confines of conventional conceived spaces. Soja further suggests that it is in the flexibilities of city spaces that oppressed space users find spatial justice. Soja’s position is supported by Manase (2005:89), when he states that the malleability of city spaces offers the potential for the inhabitants to rework the city spaces they live in enabling them to “...reconstitute their identities and lives and redefine their alienating city spaces in accordance with their needs”.

The argument raised by Manase resonates with the concept of the 'soft city' expressed by Raban (1974). He suggests that, while there is alienation in cities, urban dwellers are still able to 'remake' the city and 'consolidate it into a shape they can live in' (Raban, 1974: 9-10). Simone (2008:68) echoes the same views suggesting that "African cities are characterized by incessantly flexible, mobile, and provisional intersections that operate without clearly delineated notions of how the city is to be inhabited and used". He further suggests that the flexibility of African cities helps residents to survive largely through a conjunction of heterogeneous activities brought to bear on and elaborated through flexibly configured landscapes" (Simone, 2008:70).

The expansion of subsistence agricultural activities in highly contested spaces such as in the residential area of Gwabalanda in Bulawayo, is one of many points one can use to explore how ordinary citizens are changing the cities they live in. In exploring the rise of agricultural activities in the residential area of Gwabalanda, perhaps the most interesting aspect is to uncover how social perceptions, identities and urban lifestyles change with shifts in spatial arrangements and political economies. I have constantly used the term 'ruralization' of urban space in my thesis to refer to a shift in urban land use particularly in cases where subsistence farming an activity classified as rural is seen to dominate in most of land use activity in the township of Gwabalanda. According to the Lefebvrian tradition the ruralization of urban space can be explained as a result of an interaction between individual daily experiences and the present or past economic, social and political conditions they find themselves in.

The main objective of this thesis is to uncover the political, economic and social conditions that drive the ruralization of urban space in the township of Gwabalanda or that drive the change of land use, therefore Lefebvre's theory on production of space offers a relevant prism in which one can explore and test his hypothesis that states that large- scale social, economic, political processes and institutions are influential in driving people to reconfigure and rework spaces. In testing his hypothesis difficult research questions have to be asked.

For instance in the case of Gwabalanda township, do residents perceive the practise of agriculture on surrounding open spaces as directly linked to the political and economic conditions prevailing in Zimbabwe? If so, how do they use farming to regulate and discipline the effects of these political and economic conditions in their everyday experiences?

Other difficult research questions to be asked are as follows: Does the socio-economic status of Gwabalanda Township residents have any influence on their participation in agricultural activities? Moreover, in the case of Gwabalanda, how applicable is Merrifield's declaration that "to change life is to change space; to change space is to change life, neither can be avoided? Additionally, is the ruralization of urban spaces or changes in urban land-use through subsistence agriculture bringing any changes in the lives of Gwabalanda residents? Lastly, how do urban farmers view urban farming in the context of urban planning laws? Do they see it as an activity that grossly violates the laws and bylaws of urban land use or do they see it as a justifiable act that enables them to lay claims to the right to access urban resources?

The Lefebverian school of thought also argues that ordinary people produce and reproduce spaces to challenge the status quo or dominant ideologies. According to Lefebvre, the production of lived spaces affords urban spaces users to remake city identities, images and expectations. In the context of Zimbabwe, a nation that underwent a long period of colonialism and racial segregation can farming on urban spaces that were once reserved for those considered modernized, civilized and superior be read as an act of challenging colonial ideologies and racial segregation? Furthermore do urban farmers in Gwabalanda see the practice of subsistence farming in Gwabalanda going beyond food provision and attempting to challenge the inferiority complexes attached to African livelihoods as backward, primitive and inefficient economic activity only to be confined to rural areas? Are Gwabalanda subsistence farmers reclaiming the *mwana wevhu* (child of the soil) identity and restoring the pride and dignity in their livelihood (subsistence agriculture) that was stripped off when they were forced into wage labour?

3.3 Conclusion

The chapter uses the theory of production of space by Lefebvre to provide a foundation for an understanding of the interaction between identities, subsistence agricultural livelihoods and spatiality with relations to societal political and economical processes. The first part of the chapter explored how manipulation of space promoted wage labour and ensured the survival of capitalism in colonial Zimbabwe by confining agricultural activities in rural areas or reserves and therefore undermining its developments in urban centres. The racialization of African bodies through the production of cleanliness and were among some of the tactics used to arrest the spread of agriculture in colonial cities of Zimbabwe. In this chapter the

thesis also utilized the Lefebverian approach to space in understanding the changing nature of urban land use in many African cities especially in the context of increases in subsistence farming in contested urban spaces.

Relevant literature is used to discuss some of the possible underlining political and economic factors driving these changes and the rise of farming in urban spaces. The chapter also sought to test the applicability of Lefebvre hypothesis in the context of urban farming in Gwabalanda Township. The hypothesis states that individuals will use or change space in accordance to prevailing economic, political and social conditions. The need to test the hypothesis requires one to revisit the research questions asked in the last section of this chapter. In finding answers to these difficult research questions a qualitative research methodology was employed. During the month of August 2012, I conducted 17 in-depth interviews with Gwabalanda farmers; I also observed and participated in their daily farming activities.

Chapter Four: The Research Methodology

4.0 Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter describes the research methodology and methods that were used for data collection. It further provides justifications for choice of methodology and the research activities that were undertaken. Furthermore, it discusses the factors that have influenced the researcher's selection of the areas under study. The chapter takes the reader through the stages of the research process, from research design, data collection and data analysis. Issues around research ethics are also discussed in this chapter. It concludes by stating some of the challenges met by the researcher during data collection.

4.1 Research Methodology

This research thesis is strictly qualitative in nature; it focuses on the experiences of participants, active participation of the researcher in the farming and any livelihood activities of the participants. I undertook a case study research informed by the interpretivism paradigm in exploring the everyday life of urban farmers in the township of Gwabalanda. According to Dooley (2002:336) "a researcher who embarks on a case study research is usually interested in a specific phenomenon and wishes to understand it completely not by controlling variable, but rather by observing all the variables and their interacting relationship". A case study requires detailed and in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of rich information such as participant observation, unstructured interviews and life histories (Kendall, 2011). In conducting case study research, researchers seek to develop a detailed description of the case, and to analyse the themes or issues that emerge and to interpret or create their own assertion about the case. Central to case study research is the goal of creating a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) of the setting to be studied, a description that provides a sense of what it is like to experience that setting from the standpoint of natural actors in that setting (Schutt, 2012).

The interpretivist paradigm on one hand seeks to understand people's lived experiences from the perspective of people themselves. Interpretivism involves studying the subjective meanings that people attach to their experiences and also the meaning of the social actions within the context in which people live (Hennick *et al.*, 2011). It also entails hanging out with the people and observing them in their natural settings, whereby researchers attempt to gain

empathic understanding of how people go about making sense of their everyday life (Biber and Leavy, 2011:16).

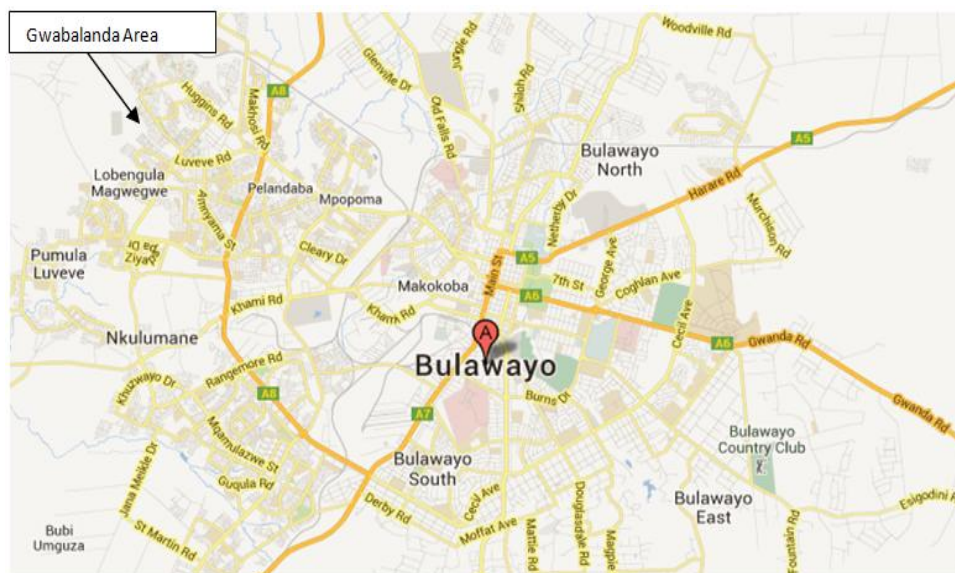
There are two underlying factors that led me to choose case study research methods to study the activity of agriculture and changes in use of space in the township of Gwabalanda. The first has to do with the theoretical approach I adopted. The production of space theory by Lefebvre posits that reworking of space, seen in the cultivation or farming of urban space in the township of Gwabalanda, is a direct result of the *Le quotidien* which he refers to “the mundane, the everyday and also the repetitive, what happens every day” (Lefebvre 1992:6). Lefebvre (1992) uses the concept of *Rhythmanalysis*¹² to show that the production of space in cities is a result of everyday life experiences. In this concept he argues that “...there is no rhythm without repetition in time and in space, without reprises, without returns, in short without measure” (Lefebvre, 1992:6). He adds that rhythm and repetition are necessary for a difference to occur. If according to the theory of production of space, the utilization of urban space mirrors the repeated everyday lived conditions and experiences of urban residents, then the use of case study research methodologies which seek to analyse the emergence of certain occurrence in relation to lived conditions is justifiable.

The second factor that compels me to adopt a case study research methodology is the nature of the research problem and research objectives at hand. The research problem as already stated in preceding chapters lies in the burgeoning of subsistence agriculture in urban areas, an activity that is always considered a rural activity more importantly within a context of land-use and zoning in Zimbabwe. Scholars such as Zeleza (1999) and Rogerson (1993) refer to this phenomenon as the ‘ruralization’ or ‘peasantization’ of urban space and its occupants. The main objective of this thesis rests in uncovering the conditions and factors that has facilitated the ruralization of urban space and possible change of urban lifestyles in Gwabalanda, which is seen through the rise of subsistence cultivation. Other objectives of the thesis include exploring the impacts of such changes on the livelihoods of Gwabalanda residents and what meanings and attitudes do urbanites attach to these changes.

¹² Rhythm analysis approach states that lived spaces in cities are reflections of everyday life experiences that are always new, unforeseen and repetitive (Lefebvre, 1992).

These objectives are only achievable when in-depth data collection tools are used. Case study research tools such as participant observation and semi-structured interviews are thus important. These research tools allowed me to partake in the daily experiences of the residents practising farming, affording me an opportunity to gain more understanding and knowledge of the unique cases and conditions that facilitates the change in lifestyles and livelihoods. Semi-structured interviews on the other hand enabled me to gain an insight in the personal views, perceptions, thoughts and attitudes of the interviewed farmers on the practises of farming. Moreover, through semi-structured interviews I was able to capture the narratives of the farmers' life histories, and also get first-hand information on what they thought are the conditions that drive the increase in the level of agricultural practice in the Gwabalanda.

Figure 4.1 The location of Gwabalanda Township in relation to the city of Bulawayo



Source: Googlemaps, 2013

The township in which I conducted my study, Gwabalanda is situated 15 kilometres North-West of the city of Bulawayo. The residential area of Gwabalanda built in the late 1970s was designed for the black middle class who comprised mainly of citizens in the nursing and teaching professions. In terms of infrastructural design Gwabalanda is different from most of the townships in Bulawayo. For instance it consists of five roomed houses, furnished with electric geysers and indoor toilets, most townships do not have electric geysers and toilets are located outside the house.

The township of Gwabalanda was selected as a case study of the rise of urban agriculture in the residential areas of Bulawayo for several reasons. Firstly, as shown in Figure 4.1, unlike other townships in Bulawayo, Gwabalanda is uniquely surrounded by vast stretches of unused land. The proximity of the township to an extensive swath of undeveloped land offers residents an opportunity to convert these under-utilized spaces into food producing farms.

Figure 4.2: The Satellite Map of Gwabalanda Township



Source: Google Maps, 2012

Key



Urban subsistence farming in Gwabalanda continues to progress at a tremendous pace, making it one of the townships which contribute the largest number of urban farmers in the city of Bulawayo. Moreover other unique natural features such as the river that flows through Gwabalanda has led to the proliferation of river bank farming (see, Figure 4.2). Secondly my personal connectedness with the area is an important factor that compelled me to choose the area; I have interacted with Gwabalanda residents and farmers alike for at least 24 years.

Having been partly involved in farming myself, I found it fitting to do research in a community that I can relate to. Another critical factor that compelled me to select Gwabalandu as a study area was my fluency in the languages spoken there and my familiarity with the culture. All the above-mentioned conditions were beneficial as they afforded me easy access, entry and a common ground from which to begin the research. Furthermore a personal connection with the residents gives the researcher certain amount of legitimacy, allowing a more rapid and a complete acceptance by research participants (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009).

4.2 Participant observation

Participant observation is a method in which “...a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and culture” (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002:1). A participant observer develops a sustained relationship with people while they go about their normal activities (Schutt, 2012). During data collection I involved myself in some of the farming activities Gwabalandu farmers engage in. The activities revolved around food processing and consumption. For example, when I interviewed Jonas Phiri,¹³ I assisted him to shell peanuts he had harvested in April and after the interview he showed me how to operate a machine that processes peanuts into butter. In one of the households, I helped the respondent Chipo Makwati to thresh maize. One of the other activities that I participated in and found tiresome but interesting was collection of cow dung. After interviewing Melusi Ndlovu, I accompanied him to a nearby forest to collect cow dung. We moved 4 loads of cow dung using a wheel-barrow to his two-hectare farm. Melusi was one of the farmers who had begun preparing his farm for the rainy and planting season.

I also observed how the research participants prepared the crops they harvested from their farms. Chido Khuphe invited me to her kitchen and she showed me how she prepares the brown rice from her field. I assisted her in sorting the rice, when it was almost cooked we mixed it with peanut butter and I was later served with tea and rice mixed with peanut butter.

¹³ All names were changed to protect the identity of participants in this study.

4.3 Selection of interview participants

My research participants are farmers practising crop cultivation in the township of Gwabalanda, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Being a Gwabalanda resident myself, I relied mostly on personal networks and background knowledge of the area in recruiting some of the participants. Because of some background information and knowledge of residents participating in farming, I was compelled to adopt a purposive sampling strategy to recruit research participants. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling used in situations where the researcher already knows something about the specific people or events and deliberately selects particular ones, because they are seen as instances that are likely to produce the most valuable data. Additionally, purposive sampling was suitable for this study as it allowed me to have control in the selection process of possible research participants. Not all residents of Gwabalanda Township engage in urban farming activities. Residents that are not actively involved in subsistence agriculture were therefore excluded from the study. My sample consisted of 17 farmers, of which 9 of the participants were females and 8 were males.

4.3.1 *Semi- structured Interviews*

The interview sessions were held from 8 to 26 August 2012 with urban farmers residing in Gwabalanda Township, Bulawayo. The interviews took place at the homes of the respondents. Interviews were semi- structured, this type of interview consists of “...predetermined questions related to the domain of interests, administered to a representative sample of respondents to confirm study domains , and identify factors, variables and items or attributes of variables for analysis or use in a survey” (Schensul *et al.*, 1999: 149). The questions on a semi-structured interview guide though predetermined, answers to those questions are open-ended and can be fully expanded at the discretion of the interviewer and the interviewee, and can be enhanced by probes. This type of interview enabled me to:

1. Further clarify the social, economic and political factors that motivate residents to engage in subsistence farming in Gwabalanda Township.
2. Operationalize the clarified factors into variables. Interviews assisted me to establish if there was a relationship between the political and economic conditions that have prevailed in Zimbabwe and the growth of urban farming in Gwabalanda Township.

3. Uncover the attitudes, thoughts and views of urban farmers on the change of urban land use and lifestyles or livelihoods.

I arranged the meetings with the farmers a day before the interviews were to be conducted. Most of the interviews ranged from 20 to 45 minutes in length, the duration of the interviews were determined by the content of the discussions and the number of respondents interviewed in a session. For a detailed time schedule and personal information of the respondents (see, Appendix 2, p. 106). For instance, one on one interviews were comparatively shorter than those that were administered to two or more respondents. In cases where a household comprised of more than one person actively engaged in agriculture, they were interviewed together in one session. I found it logistically sound and time-saving to interview two or three people of the same household simultaneously. Ideally by conducting interviews with more than one participant, I intended to gain more insights and in-depth information on issues pertaining to urban livelihoods and farming.

I relied on an interview guide that I prepared beforehand (see Appendix 1, p.105) in ensuring that all the research questions and objectives posed by my thesis are addressed. An interview guide is “a list of themes, topics or areas to be covered in an interview” (Lewis-Beck *et al.* 2004:518). Respondents were provided with the interview guide a day before the interviews. Some of the respondents requested me to translate the list of questions to IsiNdebele and Shona the other two official languages in Zimbabwe. Providing interviews schedules to participants before interviews, helped respondents to familiarize with the scope, topic, themes and issues to be discussed during the interviews. Familiarization with interview questions created an environment of relaxation, easiness and confidence among the respondents, which is critical for respondents to talk freely and openly about their lived experiences. I also found the interview guide useful in guiding me and the respondents in discussing issues relevant to the research focus. Moreover, the provision of the interview guide a day before interviews enabled me to establish rapport with the respondents.

Lewis-Beck *et al.* (2004) asserts that an interview schedule is an effective tool in developing a social interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. Proceedings of the interviews were voice recorded using an electronic recording gadget. The use of a voice recorder was done only after I had been granted permission by the interviewee to do so. Voice recordings were then converted into text through transcription which I did manually.

4.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative data can be defined as the interpretation of action or representation of meanings in the researcher's own words (Adler and Clark, 2010). The analysis of primary data is done in two important stages. Firstly I prepared the data for analysis by producing verbatim transcripts of the interviews, and then translated the transcripts from IsiNdebele and Shona to English, and I also removed identifiers from the data to preserve participant anonymity. The verbatim transcriptions are essential for analysis, as they captured information in participants' own words, phrases and expressions allowed me to gain a perspective on the lived conditions that compel urban residents of Gwabalanda to turn to farming. More importantly, the transcriptions allowed me to analyse some of the linguistic and conversational patterns of the dialogue. Hennick *et al.* (2011) argue that linguistic and conversational analysis is essential in the interpretation of data. In the transcriptions I was able to capture some important aspects in data analysis such as the lengths of pauses, elongated words, diction, accents, word emphasis and sounds.

Secondly, I performed a rigorous content analysis of each interview transcript and developed inductive codes. Developing inductive codes involved reading all the interview transcripts and identifying important issues and themes raised by participants, and attempting to understand the meanings attached to these issues. Inductive codes are extremely valuable as they reflect the issues of importance to the participants themselves, these codes enables me to extract meaning from participants' direct quotes, expressions and views. Searching for inductive codes allows the data to 'speak for itself', and to tell 'a story behind a certain case', this is central to qualitative data analysis and reflects the principles of case study research. I also used inductive codes as topical markers to index the entire data on the transcripts so that I could easily locate every place in the data where specific issues were discussed. The analysis of collected primary data was also complemented by developing deductive codes from the secondary data I had initially gathered before going to the field.

Deductive codes, unlike inductive codes are not developed from reading the data from the interview verbatim transcripts, but they essentially come from aspects of the research considered during the research design cycle. The developing of inductive and deductive codes is followed by coding of data. Coding of data is a process that involves labelling and indexing all the data using the identified codes. It involves continually identifying what is said, assessing the context of the discussion, following the line of argument and deciding

which code is appropriate (Hennick *et al.*, 2011:227). The process of coding gives more room for a rigorous analysis of research findings by permitting a researcher to check and confirm the validity of some of the issues raised by participants in the interviews (Schutt, 2012). For instance in analysing and discussing the research findings concerning conditions that have led to a growing importance of farming in the sustenance of urban livelihoods in Gwabalanda, I cross-checked for similarities, dissimilarities, consistencies and inconsistencies with literature I reviewed in chapter two. On one hand, I looked at the repetition of issues within and across the collected data, repetition of certain topics, and themes can be used to validate research findings, which is one of objectives of qualitative data analysis.

The coding of the transcribed interviews was done through the use of a computer-based data analysis software package NVIVO-9. This qualitative computer-based data analysis programme assists researchers to create to identify patterns, themes and categories within and across the collected data. The exercise of data collection and analysis can contribute to ethical challenges that require a researcher to take necessary steps to ensure that the research process does not harm participants.

4.5 Ethical consideration

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal's research ethics committee. Qualitative data collection, may present ethical challenges around issues of confidentiality, anonymity and human rights (Hennick. *et al*, 2011: 64; Patton, 2002). According to Hennick *et al.* (2011) ethical challenges are more pronounced in qualitative research methods. In interviews, a researcher delves into the personal and intimate experiences of an individual; therefore obtaining informed consent from the participants becomes necessary. I obtained informed consent through the use of an informed consent form (see Appendix 3, p.107) that was provided by the School of Built Environment and Development Studies (BEDS), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. The informed consent form was useful in informing the participants about the nature and the objectives of the study and it also guaranteed the autonomy and anonymity of participants throughout the research process.

In cases where participants did not understand English I translated the information on the informed consent form to Shona and isiNdebele, the other two official languages used in Zimbabwe. Participation in interviews was entirely voluntary and participants were advised that they were free to refuse to answer any questions that they deemed uncomfortable.

Moreover, the participants were free to withdraw from the interview without any negative and undesirable consequences to themselves. In the subsequent dissemination of my research findings either through publication or oral presentation, I ensured the anonymity and protection of participants' identity by using false names.

Participants only engaged in interviews after I had given them the time to read, understand and question the information given on informed consent form and the interview guide. Respondents affixed their signatures on the informed consent form as an indication that they had fully understood the nature and aims of the research study. All interviews were recorded only after I had obtained permission from the interviewees. The storage and disposal of interview recordings will maintain a high level of confidentiality. Voice recordings from the interviews will be stored in a password-secured personal computer and will be deleted from the computer system after 2 years of storage. Lastly the research did not at any stage harm the participants. It did not lead participant to commit any acts which might diminish self respect or cause them to experience shame, embarrassment or regret. Furthermore, the research did not expose participants to questions which may be experienced as stressful or upsetting.

4.6 Limitations of the Study

The challenges I encountered in using the case study research methods had to do with my status of being an insider researcher and the possibilities of bringing on my personal biases in the analysis and collection of data. Insider researchers conduct research with populations of which he or she is also a member, such that the researcher shares an identity, language and experimental base with the participants (Asselim, 2003; Dwyer and Buckle, 2009).

According to Dwyer and Buckle (2009) the role of an insider role heightens the level of subjectivity that might be detrimental to data analysis and even collection. They further argue that insider researchers are likely to be more prone to the conflicting dualistic role of being a researcher and a participant. Watson (1999) raises a point similar to that of Dwyer and Buckle (2009) he observes that although the shared status can be beneficial as it afford access, entry and a common ground from which to begin research, it has potential to impede the research process as it progresses.

Asselim (2003) points out that the dual role result in role confusion especially in interpreting the research findings, as a researcher may be unclear in whether he or she is interpreting the actual phenomenon or the researcher is projecting his or her own thoughts and views onto the participants (Watson, 1999). I experienced difficulties drawing the lines between being a researcher and being part of the observed or studied group. There were some instances where I did not pose some of the questions in the interview guide to participants, as I felt that I already knew the answers to the questions.

Moreover, through my personal experience of Gwabaland and partly being involved in subsistence agriculture there were some instance I made inferences of participants' experiences against my own, leaving me open to personal biases. Dwyer and Buckle (2009) assert that researcher's knowledge and lived experiences of the setting under study might affect the analysis of data due to an emphasis on shared factors between the researcher and the participants and a de- emphasis on factors that are discrepant, or vice versa. This clouded personal view of the researcher might result in an interview that is shaped and guarded by the core aspects of the researcher's experience and not of the participants'.

On the other hand, participants experience the same challenges. For instance, it is possible that the participant will make assumptions of similarities and therefore fail to explain their individual experience fully. In one of the interviews I asked the respondent to tell me about her experiences in farming, when and why she started cultivating the land, she responded with a laugh, asking me *"Why do you ask me, something you already know"*. However, she later opened up after I explained to her daily experiences are uniquely different from mine.

Avoiding personal biases as a researcher is difficult but achievable. It requires the researcher to bracket their assumptions of the area under study (Asselim, 2003). Asselim suggests that personal biases can be avoided if a researcher gathers data with not only his or her "eyes open" but with an assumption that he or she knows nothing about the phenomenon being studied. Another core ingredient of minimizing personal biases and perspectives is when a researcher undergoes through a detailed reflection on the subjective research process, with close awareness of potential sources of personal biases (Asselim, 2003). In addition to this reflective skill, a researcher should be able to be open, authentic, deeply interested in the experiences of one's research participants and committed to accurately and adequately represent and depict their experiences (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009).

In contrary, other academics have argued that the researchers' background, knowledge and experiences of the study areas and research subjects do not necessarily lead to personal biases but can enable researchers achieve what is called 'strong objectivity' (cf. Harding, 1991). Harding (1991) who is quoted by James (1997:3) describes strong objectivity "...as a way to "maximize objectivity" by bringing to the foreground certain background assumptions and beliefs (such as cultural and social influences) that more traditional notions of objectivity have claimed to be irrelevant". Put in layman's terms, Harding is of the view that being an 'insider researcher' or possessing previous background knowledge and experience of the study areas strengthens the researcher's evidence for 'scientific claim' or accuracy in research findings rather than weakening it with presupposed 'personal biases' (James, 1997).

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodologies adopted for the study, especially the benefits and pitfalls of a case study approach in uncovering the conditions and experiences of urban farmers. The chapter also provided a synopsis of how the collected data was processed and analyzed, ethical issues are also discussed in this section. Lastly, the chapter tackled some of the challenges faces by the researcher in conducting the field research; matters around researcher's biases and how they were dealt were covered.

Chapter Five: Research Findings, Discussion and Analysis

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses and analyses research findings of fieldwork which took place between the 6th and 26th of August 2012 at the residential area of Gwabalanda in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. It further aims to situate the findings within the objectives of the study. In addition, in this chapter I will explore the linkages of research findings with research questions, existing literature and Lefebvre's theory of the production of space.

It is crucial at this stage to revisit the purpose of this study. The major objective of this research study is to explore the conditions influencing the ruralization of urban space within the context of urban agriculture. The research questions are as follows:

1. What are the conditions and factors that have facilitated the ruralization of urban space, which is seen by the rise of subsistence cultivation?
2. What have been the impacts of the ruralization of urban space on the livelihoods of urban dwellers?
3. What meanings and attitudes do people have towards the changes in the use of urban space and the spread of subsistence farming?

The investigation of subsistence farming in Gwabalanda led me to identify three complementing and overarching themes or factors that drive urban farming and the ruralization of urban space. The first two themes are the political and economic factors which seem to operate on a macro-level, whereas the other theme of socio-cultural factors functions at an individual or household level. Discussions and analysis of findings in terms of respondents' attitudes towards urban farming and its possible impacts are done for each theme. This chapter is divided into three main headings: the economic factors, the political factors and socio-cultural factors.

5.1 Economic Conditions Giving Rise to Urban Agriculture

The hostile economic conditions that have ensued in the last two decades were identified as crucial motivators pushing residents to farming. The taking up of subsistence farming, an activity still perceived as a rural undertaking, emerged as a response by residents to high levels of unemployment, erratic food supplies during the global food crisis of 2008, lack of income and high costs of transporting food from rural centres to the city. Respondents were also attracted to urban farming by the possible benefits which include improved household food security, generation of income and substitution of spending.

5.1.1 *Unemployment as a Motivating Factor of Urban Agriculture*

Urban farming was widely considered by Gwabalanda residents as a viable strategy of coping with widespread unemployment in Bulawayo. The research participants, particularly males, claimed that they only resorted to intensive farming after they had lost their jobs or were forced into early retirement when industries and companies began to shut and scale down operations due to harsh economic conditions:

When I lost my job as driver at a commercial bank, I was devastated. The management decided that I had to be retrenched, because the bank was no longer making profit. Inflation and illegal foreign currency dealers had wormed their operations into the heart of money markets, crippling the banking sector. With no income, I did not have any plans on how I will provide for my family. My neighbour suggested that I join him in cultivating crops on the fallow patches of land surrounding the neighbourhood. At first I was reluctant, coming from a clean work environment such as a bank, I felt humiliated. My wife insisted that we start rearing some crops and soon we were deeply involved in farming. When the rains favour us we harvest maize, groundnuts, beans and sweet potatoes enough to feed my family for a year (Ben Mpofu¹⁴, Interview: 18/08/2012).

The response provided by Ben Mpofu demonstrates how the dwindling of employment and lack of income is pushing households in Gwabalanda to seek alternatives to manage the economic stress experienced by ordinary Zimbabweans. The shedding of jobs did not only affect the financial sector but it was extended to the industrial sector which employs a large number of Bulawayo residents. Melusi Ndlovu, the youngest of the participants I interviewed was retrenched in 2008; he worked as an assembly line supervisor at a blanket manufacturing

¹⁴ All names were changed to protect the identity of participants in this study.

company. He was mainly concerned with how job losses particularly in the manufacturing sector altered the iconic image of Bulawayo as the ‘industrial engine’ of not only Zimbabwe but the Southern African region. Melusi Ndlovu further maintained that unemployment was slowly changing the face of the city of Bulawayo giving it a ‘rural’ image in as far as the spreading informal farming is concerned:

When I was retrenched, I immediately started ploughing two hectares of land that I had cleared in the winter season. I simply borrowed a rural lifestyle of subsistence farming and introduced it here in the township. If you observe around, people are living a rural life, some may deny it but that is the truth. Although we have running water, electricity and tarred roads which rural people do not enjoy, our food, daily activities and conversations are very much similar to what is found in the rural areas (Melusi Ndlovu, Interview: 08/08/2012).

For Melusi Ndlovu, the failing of the urban economy and a consequent rise in the levels of unemployment has forced urban residents to rely more on the rural economy. However, it is worth noting that the Gwabalanda residents’ dependence on the rural economy is mainly concerned with the transferring of farming skills and expertise from rural areas to the township. According to Melusi Ndlovu, most residents who lost their employment and those who have never been employed have utilized rural links to revive the activity of farming in the city. Melusi argued that the traditional knowledge he attained in the rural areas particularly in breeding maize plants and fertilizing land using cow dung enables him to harvests enough to feed his family for at least a year. This observation given by Melusi Ndlovu fits neatly within the literature reviewed in chapter two.

Scholars like Zeleza (1999:53), Diyamett *et.al* (2001), Fraser *et.al* (2008) have asserted that rural-urban linkages have been crucial in assisting city residents cope with unemployment, low income and economic volatility. Diyamett *et.al* (2001) argued that African urban households always incorporate components of rural livelihoods especially when faced with food and income security; this seems to resonate with what is raised by Melusi Ndlovu. From the above discussion it can be deduced that urban farming in the township of Gwabalanda is strongly influenced by rural-urban links.

This is confirmed by Zeleza (1999:53) who has pointed to the same rural-urban links as necessary in the growth of farming and ruralization of urban space in the period of SAPs in Tanzania. The regime of SAPs was also identified by respondents as a possible factor influencing the decisions of farming in Gwabalanda. The research participants contended that

current urban farming endeavours should not only be traced from the period between 2000 and 2008 which left almost 80% of the population jobless, but to the ESAP implemented in 1992. The respondent maintained that present practises of informal farming have their roots in the ESAP of 1992:

ESAP destroyed homes. We were paying for everything from the clinics to schools which in the late 1980s were free. People lost jobs, my fat neighbour became thin. Under ESAP, factories were now hiring few people; we did not know what was taking place and only a few of us escaped the harshness of ESAP through farming. Some of us began practising farming in this township back in 1992 when poverty, unemployment, hunger and deprivation was the talk of the day. This also holds true for the year 2008. (Mary Sibanda, interview: 26/08/2012).

The narrative given by Mary Sibanda, an unemployed female farmer located the origins of urban agriculture in Gwabalanda within the ESAP implemented in the early 1990s. Although she admits that 2008 witnessed the culmination of agriculture and a drastic spatial turn in the way urban land in Gwabalanda was utilized, signs of cultivation were already visible in the early 1990s. Mary's observation is closely linked to discussions made in the second chapter of the thesis. There is vast literature that attributes the escalation of urban farming practises to the adoption of the SAPs by African states which left most citizens exposed to chronic poverty (cf. Sanyal, 1987:198; Zeleza, 1999). Smith and Tevera (1995), Mbiba (1995), Drakakis-Smith *et.al* (1995) have written extensively about how urban residents expressed the importance of urban farming in bolstering urban household food security at the height of SAPs in the capital city of Harare. Similarly, respondents from Gwabalanda like those interviewed in Mbiba's study on farming in the residential areas of Harare felt that urban farming was an effective method of coping with current effects of unemployment and a shrinking industrial sector on the household's purchasing power.

The soaring rate of unemployment in Bulawayo is notable; in 2000 about 350 manufacturing companies operated in Bulawayo employing around 100 000 workers (Mills, 2012). Within a decade the number of manufacturing companies plummeted to less than 250 companies employing below 50 000 workers in a city with close to a million of an economically active population (Mills, 2012:4). A once thriving textile industry and clothing industry of Bulawayo also suffered a major blow from two decades of economic and political malaise. This sector currently employs no more than 3000 workers about 10% of its peak (Mills, 2012:4).

The thermal towers and industrial chimney that morphed the identity of Bulawayo as a ‘manufacturing city’ offering jobs seem to be dysfunctional signifying an industrial slump and a stray towards the modernization path envisaged by the Rhodesians. In a city where industries shed over 50% of formal jobs, daily survival has largely depended on engaging in any form of informal economic or social activities that come along the way, urban agriculture being the most important surviving strategy.

For Mpofu (2010:203) the last two decades of deepening urban unemployment and poverty, witnessed almost everyone in Bulawayo getting involved and enmeshed in the *kukiya-kiya* economy. According to Jones (2010) *kukiya-kiya*, which is a Shona term, refers to multiple forms of ‘making do’. In the Zimbabwean context, the term is usually used to describe the informal economy, where everyone does whatever necessary activity to ‘get by’ or ‘survive the day’. The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Governor Gideon Gono referred to this type of Zimbabwean economy as the ‘casino economy’ (cf. Gono, 2008). In the past people involved in such activities were looked down upon as uneducated, uncivilized and were usually classified as residents who have failed to fully integrate into the working life of the city.

5.1.2 Perceptions on Urban Agriculture

The presence of farming in Gwabalanda can be said to be representative of *kukiya-kiya*, an activity that was once despised by locals as a remnant of rural life that ought to be abandoned as one starts living in the city. It is therefore not surprising that although the activity of farming has prevented many locals in Gwabalanda from experiencing starvation, some of the locals still held negative attitudes towards the activity. In the encounters I had with the residents, I gathered that some never wanted to engage in farming; they are only participating in agriculture out of desperation and if given a formal job they would abandon it. Such participants romanticised a Bulawayo characterized by the 5pm ‘*Shayela*’ (knock-off time) and the ‘*Woza Friday*’ routine.¹⁵

They reminisced of the industrial jobs they once enjoyed in the ‘heydays’ and the large amount of food which their weekly meagre wages could buy. These respondents shunned farming as an undertaking that cannot be classified as a form of employment, ‘a dirty man’s job’ that humiliates the one who pursues it. The respondent Caroline Ndlovu harboured these

¹⁵ Factory workers in Bulawayo were normally paid on Fridays of every week. Fridays were always welcomed with a lot of excitement.

negative perceptions of agriculture and the changes in urban lifestyle in the last decade. On the day of our interview this is what we discussed:

Researcher: Did you ever imagine yourself farming in the city?

Caroline Ndlovu: Honestly, I never imagined myself rearing crops in the city, partly because back then it was odd to have a farm in the township and there was no need to farm. We relied on my husband's pay to purchase food; though he was not paid much, the salary was sufficient to cover all our basic needs. Everything was perfect when white people were at the helm of the industries, then we had plenty of jobs... look at us now, people are jobless and our hands and feet are covered in mud this is not the city life we envisaged.

Researcher: You talk of the past, of how under white rule Bulawayo used to have plenty of jobs and I understand that at the height of the economic slump many people lost formal jobs. Would you not consider current farming activities as a form of employment?

Caroline Ndlovu: I can't refer to farming on small pieces of land as a type employment. It is not sustainable over a long period of time, it is only for survival. I and my husband cannot rely on urban farming to pay school fees for our three children and later on pay bills. An activity which does not offer any pension should not be considered as employment.

The negative attitudes towards and trivialization of farming activities in the city exhibited by Caroline Ndlovu reflect nothing but the long-term effects of colonialism. She typically displays a colonial mentality where she becomes a victim to the historical racialization of livelihoods, space and the body in colonial Zimbabwe. Caroline Ndlovu's perception of farming as an activity that is dislocated within the urban space and a mucky livelihood, feeds very well to some of the arguments raised by Burke (1996:17) in chapter three. Her resistance to accept the changing nature of urban lifestyle and a nostalgic fascination of 'white' Bulawayo with plenty of formal jobs shows the power of colonialism and capitalism in socially engineering black citizens towards a modernized society often associated with 'whiteness' and capitalistic labour (cf. Gray, 1960:276).

When Caroline Ndlovu says that urban farming is not a form of employment because it does not pay bills, she is probably unconscious of her biases which are informed by colonial constructs. In both colonial and postcolonial Zimbabwe it was generally expected and encouraged for urban people to pursue manufacturing jobs which were seen as 'real jobs'

enabling people to pay bills (Mpofu, 2010: 203). On one hand, informal economic activities such as urban farming were not regarded as jobs but criminal acts that were disorderly and harmful to the achievement of a modernized and civilized society. Informal urban farming maybe officially be recognized as a form of employment in other African countries such as South Africa (Matlala, 1990; Rogerson, 1993; May, 1998; Maswikaneng, 2007), but this was not the case with some of the respondents who argued otherwise.

For example, Tinashe Chimuti who is employed by the National Railways Company and only participates in the activity on a part-time basis held a perspective similar to that of Caroline Ndlovu. He argued that urban farming is an undertaking which is incomparable to wage employment. He further asserted that although to some extent farming is crucial for achieving household food security, it only sustains a household for a short period of time while one waits to gain formal employment. Moreover, he added that urban farming should not be considered as a form of employment especially if a household derives no wage from it.

Tinashe's argument resonates with that of Cousins (2005:10); he suggested that agricultural production alone cannot constitute a sustainable urban livelihood given that cities have limited space to support sustainable agriculture on a larger scale and depend on wages. As Cousins would put it, urban farming is usually the only source of urban livelihood but it can be constituted to multiple livelihood strategies adopted by the urban poor to combat the effects of poverty. This is also noted by Jones (2010:286) who suggests that urban cultivation of crops is in a way an instinctive response by urban dwellers to volatile economic and political conditions and most urban farmers do not define it as full employment.

On the contrary, other respondents, particularly women belonging to female-headed households, regarded urban farming as a decent form of employment. These respondents dismissed the negative attitudes towards urban agriculture as shown by other participants. Some of the interviewed women farmers have turned urban farming into a profitable business and are sending harvested produce to their extended families living in rural areas. At the time of the interviews only one respondent, Julia Chisoro was sending some of her harvested produce to her rural home in Nyamandlovu about 70 kilometres North-West of Bulawayo.

5.1.3 Gender Dynamics and Opportunities of Urban Farming at Household Level

The research established that respondents that had never been employed, especially women, dominated and placed a greater importance on farming activities as compared to males. Moreover, it was discovered that female farmers, mainly widows, considered farming as a full-time occupation demanding similar working hours put up by professional workers. In the township of Gwabalanda, women farmers seem to dedicate more hours on the field, have large tracts of land under cultivation, and planted more crops compared to their male counterparts.

In the case of Julia Chisora, she highlighted that she was driven into cultivating urban space by her lack of education and technical skills to secure formal employment. She reported that since she was never employed in the formal sector, urban agriculture provided her with an occupation that has offered her family protection against poverty and hunger. When her husband passed away, farming became more significant in boosting the nutrition and earning income for her household. She asserted that urban farming has provided her with large quantities of nutritious crops of which some are sold to community members. At the time of the interview, she was selling peanuts and maize harvested around April. A 500 grams packet of roasted peanuts was selling for US\$1, whereas 20 kilograms of maize was sold for US\$ 5. She claimed that she earns more than US\$ 200 per month from selling her farm produce; the money is used to cover school fees of her two grandchildren enrolled at a local primary school and paying of bills.

Julia's experiences with urban agriculture seem to contradict the account given by Caroline Ndlovu, who downplays the role of urban agriculture in securing income for covering expenses such as education and bills. Julia Chisora was the only resident farmer that was sending food to her rural home at the time the interviews were conducted. She stated that she sends at least 50 kilograms of maize to her mother who lives in Nyamandlovu, a rural area not far from the city of Bulawayo. Her reason for sending farm produce to her rural home was that unlike her farms in the township, their farms in the rural area were no longer productive mainly due to soil exhaustion and infertility. This finding is consistent with Brazier's (2012) observation that harvests from the urban farms are better than in rural areas where the soils too exhausted for feasible maize cultivation. Furthermore, the finding asks us

to rethink and challenge the conventional assumption championed by early growth theorists such as Lewis (1954) that only rural areas can feed cities.

For Betty Ncube, another widow who has never been formally employed and also lives with six grandchildren, engaging in intensive farming has meant putting 6 hours of work in the field. According to Betty, farming is a career path that she chose at the time she was based in her rural homestead in Nkayi, 140 kilometres North of Bulawayo and farming is the only available option she has for feeding her grandchildren:

Before our leader Joshua Nkomo¹⁶ passed on, he taught us that all of our earthly needs are in the soil. When my husband passed away, he left us nothing. I was a bitter old woman with no money, no pension and six orphans. As a woman, I knew I was responsible for the nourishment of my grandchildren and then I remembered the words of Nkomo; I immediately took to intensive farming. We work tirelessly in the 7 farms we have. The farms are 2 hectares each, my grandchildren provide with the labour and we work for 6 hours a day. Our yearly harvest is enough to feed us for a year; no one in this house has gone to bed hungry. We consume take our tea with sweet potatoes harvested from the farms, we no longer buy bread. (Betty Ncube, Interview: 16/08/2013).

For a single mother such as Portia Mpala, engaging in urban farming has helped her ‘bounce back’ from economic shocks caused by ‘Operation Murambatsvina’ (drive-out dirt). Portia Mpala was among the residents whose livelihood was negatively impacted by this government-led initiative carried out in 2005. The building which housed her thriving hair and beauty salon business was destroyed during the operation leaving her with no source of income. She reported that since she no longer received income from her business, purchasing of food became a challenge so she opted to home based food production which she argues is a cheap alternative of acquiring food. According to Portia, she had to adopt the farming skills her grandmother taught her while she was still living in the rural home:

Those were difficult times; they destroyed our businesses we built for years. When my salon was reduced into rubbles I found myself tilling the land and applying farming skills my maternal grandmother taught me. I began to relive a rural life, this time I was in the city. Murambatsvina reduced me from a businesswoman to a peasant. However, I have to survive

¹⁶ Joshua Nkomo popularly known as ‘Father Zimbabwe’ was the Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and a former freedom fighter. He died in 1999 after suffering from a long illness.

and farming has been helpful in providing food for my family helping me recover from the loss I incurred from Murambatsvina (Portia Mpala, Interview: 16/08/2012).

Plate 5.1: Women depend on such farms for food and income.



From the above findings it can be said that urban farming in Gwabalanda brings immense benefits to female headed households. These households commonly lack income to purchase food stuffs and are poorly represented in formal labour markets. Since access to food entitlements in urban economies are largely influenced by the household's income and purchasing power, accessing food commodities becomes problematic where households are not earning income due to high levels of unemployment (cf. Jamal and Weeks, 1993; Kutiwa *et. al*, 2010).

Urban farming in Gwabalanda has enabled female headed households to produce their own food, thereby affording them an opportunity to substitute expenditure on food. Growing of own food permits female headed household to depend less on food purchases and this has an impact on poverty levels. More importantly, the change of urban land-use through cultivation has provided female headed households with an opportunity to generate household income. Female farmers such as Julia Chisora have shown that farmers who grow for their family's own consumption can also sell excess and earn substantial income. These findings complement with what is discussed by Maxwell (1999) in the second chapter. He contends that urban farming acts as an income generator for households that do not have monthly income earnings. He also suggests that home production improves food supply and accessibility among poor household vulnerable to food insecurity due to lack of income. A

loss of a job also comes with a loss of household income since urban diets are dependent more on tradable commodities versus traditional diets commonly found in rural areas. Households with no or less income find it extremely difficult to acquire food on the market (cf. Crush and Frayne, 2011).

It is worth noting that in the township of Gwabalanda, women are at the forefront of activating changes in urban land-use via subsistence farming. The dominance of women in the appropriation of urban space otherwise reserved for future housing developments can be best understood against a background of the social reproductive role women assume. In most African communities, women are expected to attend to the family's nutritional requirements. This has also meant that a large burden of acquiring and searching for food is placed on women (Hovorka, 2001). It is not surprising that Betty Ncube was highly motivated to till the land for food production as she felt that it was her duty as a woman to provide food for her six grandchildren.

Gender roles and norms seem to influence in production of space in Gwabalanda, in as far as informal farming is concerned. This observation affirms Lefebvre's (1974) argument that the production of space always follows and corresponds to larger societal norms, values and living conditions in which users of space operates in. Some respondents have however attested that subsistence farming, an activity formerly prescribed for rural dwellers has flourished and fuelled by difficult urban living conditions such as food shortages and increases in the price of food commodities.

5.1.4 *Cultivation as a Response to Food Shortages and Scarcity*

The research found that the conquering and changing of urban spaces into farms signified a knee-jerk reaction by Gwabalanda residents to deepening food shortages. The respondents argued that transformation of under-utilized urban spaces into food producing units helped residents to deal with food shortages experienced across Zimbabwe. The nation of Zimbabwe once praised as the 'food basket' and the backbone of food security in the Southern African region, now relies on food aid to feed its populace (FAO, 2010, IMF, 2011). The dollarization of the economy has slightly improved the problems of food scarcity, particularly in cities such as Bulawayo and Mutare (ZVAC, 2012). Food shortages in Zimbabwe were further aggravated by the 2008 global food crisis which inevitably led to poor households in the global south failing to access food entitlements due to scarcity.

For instance, in an interview with Buhle Mpala, who worked as a shopkeeper at the time of food shortages, it was established that their shop would go for months without stocking any basic food stuffs such as bread, rice and mealie meal. She further indicated that if it happened that the shop did manage to secure a stock of basic food commodities, it was only enough to supply a small section of Gwabalanda, leaving other sections without access to food.

According to Buhle Mpala, residents located closer to local shops were more likely to secure mealie meal and bread as compared to those residing far from the shops. She went on to argue that this is probably the reason why many residents engaged in intensified farming are those located farthest from the shops. In her analysis of the growth of cultivation in the township, Buhle Mpala concluded that most of Gwabalanda residents engaged in the cultivation of crops have at one particular stage experienced food shortages. At the end of our conversation she posed the following difficult questions:

Tell me what is it that you do when the shops are empty? I worked in a shop during those times of food scarcity so I know what I am talking about. What becomes of you when your children are crying because they have not had a proper meal in days? How good is it that you spend half of the day queuing for food that you know that chances are next to none? What happens if you are buying expensive and unsafe food from the black market? You are forced to find alternatives and I see those small farms in the township as alternative spaces for fighting hunger and coping with erratic and unreliable supply of food in the formal market. (Buhle Mpala, Interview: 16/08/12).

The contextual analysis of the developments of agricultural activities in the residential area of Gwabalanda given by Buhle Mpala seems to speak to the experiences of other residents currently involved in farming. The experiences of Chido Khupe resonated with what was shared by Buhle Mpala; she explained that she started intensifying her farming activities in 2008 to avoid the mill residents went through in accessing food. She explained that queues for basic food commodities such as mealie meal, bread, meat and sugar became common sight at most local supermarkets. Chido Khupe stated that after frequenting food queues at a local supermarket which is far from her house, she decided to produce her own food and she claimed that farming has kept her off the queue. Chido shared her experiences of the food queues, a feature which she said became part of everyday township life. She described the year of 2008 as year of hunger worse than the drought of 1992, she narrated:

There was a period of food shortages, particularly of the mealie meal which is our staple food. I and my daughter would spend the whole day queuing for mealie meal and sometimes we returned home empty handed. On one of those queuing days my daughter collapsed while we were in the queue at a local shop (sighs), we had to get off the queue so we went home with no mealie meal. There was one instance I had to tell a lie to the shopkeepers that I am related to the owner of the shop so that I can skip the queue (laughs). I was in desperate need of mealie meal (Chido Khuphe, Interview: 15/08/12).

According to research participants, an erratic supply of food commodities to wholesale distributors and retail outlets led to the rise of black market food traders, where food was now sold in the streets. The respondents blamed black market traders for exacerbating the food shortages and a consequent price increase in the food commodities. Black market traders were also criticized for hoarding food commodities in bulk and repackaging them into small quantities which were later sold to residents at exorbitant prices. The account of parallel market food trading is captured in an extract from one of the interviewing sessions I had with urban farmers:

We could not get the food in supermarkets; it was now in the streets. In 2008, black market food trading was a lucrative business, people made huge profits out of citizens in desperate need for food. People could get anything from street traders; you name it from mealie meal to rice, meat, bread and eggs, street corners became our supermarkets (laughs). We still wonder where street traders were getting food commodities, because in 2008 most food manufacturers had shut down their operation. We suspect that food traders operating in the black market were linked to powerful politicians and business people (Tongai Ndlovu, interview: 24/08/2012).

According to Tongai Ndlovu and other respondents, farming in the township emerged after residents were pushed into producing their own food so as to escape unscrupulous food traders operating in the black market. Tongai Ndlovu purported that when food disappeared from the shelves, it resurfacing in the streets much expensive and unsafe for consumption. He went on to argue that residents saw it necessary to rely less on the black market for food and invest more of their energies and time in producing their own food which is safe, healthy and cheap. Oliver Masara, on one hand suggested that a gradual turning away from the cash economy in the acquisition of food has meant a re-adopting by urban residents of subsistence agriculture which is associated with a rural economy.

For most residents participating in the informal urban farming sector, there was as a consensus that linking urban and rural economies through farming was the one of the important ways of attaining food security. Moreover, respondents argued that subsistence farming was a clear indication that the gap between urban and rural areas created by colonialism was slowly disappearing. On the contrary, other respondent contended that the emergence of subsistence farming should not only be understood in the context of food shortages, but also of increasing costs in the transporting of food between rural and urban centres.

5.1.5 *Increases in Food Transportation Costs*

The lack of financial resources to sustain agricultural activities in rural areas combined with high costs of transporting food crops from rural areas to the city, were commonly cited reasons for cultivation. In the research findings, it was established that a large proportion of residents cultivating crops in Gwabalanda have strong links with rural areas and have at one stage practised subsistence farming in the rural areas while residing in the city. The interviewees further indicated that they have in the past years depended on rural food systems to satisfy their household food requirements and dietary.

The respondents pointed out that it has always been the norm for city dwellers in Zimbabwe to travel to their respective rural areas to collect food crops after the harvesting period. Respondents further stated that they have always utilized formal and informal transportation to move food crops from the rural areas to the city. However, they indicated that such a migration pattern changed in the last decade due to increases in travelling costs emanating from nationwide shortage in fuel and transport. For instance, Moses Khuphe stated that he frequently travelled to his rural homestead in Chivhu, situated in Mashonaland East to assist his rural based extended family with the cultivation of farms. He however maintained that although he travels to his village, he no longer practiced farming in his rural area due to high costs of transporting inputs to rural areas and harvested crops from his rural area to the city.

He explained that he lacks the capital to sustain rural agriculture. When Moses Khuphe received his retirement package in 2007, the economic crisis had already deepened, eroding the value of his life savings. He further argued that his retirement package was insufficient to support the frequent movements from urban to rural areas needed by an urban resident engaged in rural farming. Moreover he pointed out that the lack of financial resources to

transport food from rural to urban areas is among the push factors that influenced him to begin farming in the township, he narrated:

I decided to farm in an urban setting, mainly because when I received my retirement package in 2007 it was barely enough to transport me from the township to the city later on to my rural home. The inflation reduced my life savings to nothingness. Initially I had planned from the first day I arrived in Bulawayo to migrate back to my rural home and pursue agriculture after receiving my retirement package. However, I do not have money to cover the costs of transporting farming inputs to my rural home when the planting season commences. I also lack the money for transporting the harvested crops from my rural place to the city. I have decided to bring the practice of agriculture into the township because it is less costly and I do not have to travel long distances when accessing food. (Moses Khuphe, Interview: 15/08/2012).

The views of Moses Khuphe were supported by Chipso Makwati, an elderly woman who was identified by other community members as among the first residents to farm in Gwabalanda. She identified the high travelling costs to her rural area as conditions that necessitated her to venture into urban cultivation. She explained that she boards three buses when travelling to her rural homestead located in Chimanimani, which is approximately 600 kilometres to the east of Bulawayo. According to Chipso, a trip from Bulawayo to Chimanimani can cost her around US\$40 and if she is to transport at least 100 kilograms of maize from her rural home to Bulawayo it could cost her an extra US\$20. She argued that the logistics of collecting food crops from her rural area were costly and unsustainable. The high monetary costs associated with the movement of food crops were beyond her reach.

On the other hand, Chipso sees farming in the city as reducing the costs incurred through travelling to her rural area to collect food crops. Additionally, unlike Moses Khuphe; she factored in the issue of distance as an important driver for urban farming. She revealed that by farming close to her house she has greatly reduced the high financial costs incurred when one accesses food from rural food reserves. Her urban farms are 200 metres away from her house and she sometimes uses a wheel-barrow to move harvested crops from her farms to the house which she said attracts no transport costs at all. The interviewed farmers regarded urban farming as less expensive as compared to practising farming in one's place of origin. They indicated that since farms are closer to home, one is freed from transport costs and the money meant for transport can be diverted to the purchasing of more inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, hoes as there is more area arable land in the township.

Plate 5.2: Some of the land used for farming, note the proximity of houses to the farms



The above research findings are congenial with research results established in other African cities. For example, Tambwe (2006) found out that the urban residents in Lubumbashi, in the Democratic Republic of Congo were motivated to farm in the townships by the high costs of transporting food between rural and urban centres. Similar research findings were found in Windhoek in Namibia, where Frayne (2005) argued that urban residents of Windhoek were more likely to farm in the city when the costs of transporting farming implements and other inputs to the rural areas are higher than that of cultivating in the city.

The above arguments are consistent with what was found on the field. Participants such as Moses Khuphe and Melusi Ndlovu reported that they had since discontinued their participation in rural agriculture opting for urban farming because they lacked the income to purchase agricultural inputs and that of transporting the purchased inputs to their rural homes. Instead of travelling to the rural areas to farm, these urban farmers have borrowed some of the rural farming skills and knowledge and have applied it into urban agricultural practises. In contrary, other residents such as Julia Chisora were not faced with a challenge of transport costs since her rural homes close to the city of Bulawayo, so she pay a fairly low price for transporting some of the harvested crops to her rural homestead. While other residents were influenced to practice urban agriculture by external economic factors, some found their reasons of farming in prevailing political conditions characterizing Zimbabwe.

5.2 Mending Political Alienation through Farming

Labouring the land to sustain one's livelihood was considered by other respondents as the one of the pathways of dealing with a political quagmire currently faced by the nation of Zimbabwe. When I engaged with Oliver Masara, I realised that some respondents regarded farming in the township as a 'political act'. In the case of Oliver, he pointed out that his farms are his 'vote'. He expressed his disappointment on the failures of politicians in improving the lives of ordinary Zimbabweans, in these words:

The politicians have lied to us both in the party of ZANU-PF and Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), we vote for them but they bring no good change to our impoverished families. The unity government has brought a lot of confusion and uncertainties; it is taking long for real changes to come. The land is the only politician that does not lie, if you please him and vote for him, he will reward you (Oliver Masara, Interview: 10/08/2012).

This insightful and astute analysis provided by Oliver Masara reflects on how urban agriculture in Gwabalanda is a by-product of a continued deep seated political crisis. Feelings of impatience and frustrations over the politicians' inability to improve the lives of the poor, appears to be driving residents to farm unused urban land. On one hand, by likening a piece of farm to politicians, entrusted with a task of facilitating conditions leading to a better life, Oliver consciously or unconsciously politicizes the act of farming. In other words, by shifting his trust and confidence away from politicians to his farms in which he is certain if used productively he will improve his living standards, Oliver Masara resolves his political alienation and frustrations stemming from a failure post-independence political leaders improving opportunities that enhance people's livelihoods. Political alienation is a condition that exists when citizens feel detached, powerless or withdrawn from the political processes and find it difficult to identify with those that they have elected into political power (Nachmias, 1974:480; Finifter, 1970: 390). He concluded our conversation with these discerning words, *"I have turned my hopes away from the ballot box to the land, I will vote for neither ZANU-PF nor MDC, but I will certainly vote for the land"*.

The reproduction of township space through farming can be understood as helping residents undergo a process of political disalienation especially in a society suffering from 'political schizophrenia'. According to Mandaza (1986) a condition of 'political schizophrenia' occurs when a state in its pursuit of socio-economic transformation and developmental objectives and fulfilment of popular demand deliberately or indirectly suppresses the popular demands

or longings. The state backed actions in grabbing the land in 2000 and the implementation of *Operation Murambatsvina* (drive-out-trash) are good examples that typify a condition of ‘political schizophrenia’. These political processes were supposedly implemented to transform and improve the lives of ordinary Zimbabweans, but however ended up undermining the human and economic rights of the people it intended to benefit. The condition of ‘political schizophrenia’ is also evident in the Cuban and Cameroonian situations. The governments of both Cuba and Cameroon facilitated the implementation of urban agriculture projects in the cities of Havana and Yaoundé respectively, which were strategically utilized to improve food security in urban areas and the same time were expected to arrest any signs of civil protest stemming from the people reeling from economic pressures and political turmoil (cf. Premat, 2009; Page, 2002).

It is however crucial to highlight that while Gwabalanda residents use urban farming to ease their disappointments on the unfulfilled promises by political leaders, the Cuban and Cameroonian governments on the other hand utilized urban agriculture to consolidate power and eliminate any threats to it. The notion sustained by neo-Marxist scholars such as Page (2002) that urban agriculture projects degenerate into tools used by political bureaucrats and development agencies in consolidating power appears to be inapplicable to urban agricultural practices in Gwabalanda. There is no evidence suggesting that farming in Gwabalanda is used by political bureaucrats as a platform to advance their political agendas or as a strategy to maintain a grip on power. Contrary to arguments raised by neo-Marxists, it seems that urban agriculture has empowered and enabled Gwabalanda residents to establish control over livelihoods particularly in a precarious political and economic environment characterized with depreciation in the quality of life. In some instances, respondents conceptualized farms as spaces where they seek the opportunity to fully exercise economic and political freedom.

5.2.1 *Urban Farming as an Expression of Freedom*

‘I farm in the city because we are now free from white rule’ Chido Khuphe (Urban farmer)

Some respondents provided insights on how cultivation on township open spaces and change of urban land- use is a form of expressing political freedom and sovereignty over urban space. This is emblemized in the above quotation, where Chido associated the developments of urban farming with an end of colonial rule. According to Chido, the gaining of independence culminated in the realisation of the ‘right to the city’; especially among

black women who after independence were allowed to live in city spaces. The granting of full citizenship to the black majority has to a larger extent allowed township residents of Bulawayo to rework and use township spaces in accordance to their individual needs. Chido Khuphe was of the view that the cultivation of food crops in areas where farming was previously restricted is indicative of communities' efforts to re-arrange the colonial and capitalist spatial arrangements that have previously denied them to explore other viable livelihood options besides that of wage employment.

She articulated how living arrangements orchestrated by colonial town planners and authorities were germane in achieving social order in townships and regulating the livelihoods of Africans, particularly that of farming. The following extract from the interview illustrates how the production of space was crucial in thwarting agriculture in townships:

Researcher: People in this community have always maintained strong links with rural areas. They have two homes, one in the city and the other in the rural areas and they travel to rural areas during the rainy season to cultivate crops, they never cultivated in the towns. However, we see that migratory pattern has changed; we see that people are now farming on city spaces and you are one of these people who practice subsistence farming in the township of Gwabalanda. Could you tell me the reasons that compelled you to start practising farming in the township?

Chido Khuphe: The reasons why I practise farming in town?

Researcher: Yes

Chido Khuphe: Because Zimbabwe is now free! White people did not allow us to farm in the city. Today if you see a place that you think is suitable for farming in the city the law will allow you to farm that area back in the days of colonialism we were not allowed to farm?

Researcher: I agree with your view that colonialism suppressed the development of agricultural activities in the towns (Chido Khuphe Interrupts).

Chido Khuphe: The colonial laws of segregation classified us into urban and rural according to the skin colour; they did not like the idea of us living double lives. If you were in the city you were expected to do the activities of the city and if you from the rural areas they expected you to behave like a rural person. Before the independence of this country I would spend the rest of the day doing nothing and my husband used to work and he will send me to the rural areas to farm and maintain our homestead, because the colonial government never gave us

that opportunity to venture into agriculture. Even the chickens in the fowl run you see outside, were prohibited.

Researcher: That is true, the laws were meant to keep the black people in the factories, for instance if you farm in the city and you get a good harvest you no longer see the need to go to work for some money for food.

Chido Khuphe: Precisely, when I have a good harvest I rarely shop for anything because I grow sweet potatoes which substitute bread and I do not buy mealie, I just go to the grinding mill to process the harvested maize into mealie meal. The Rhodesians would tell us that rearing of crops and chickens generate dirt in the townships, breeds mosquitoes and attract flies which will contaminate your food and make our children die of diseases. We were sceptical about their concern, it was not genuine; they did not care about our well-being they just wanted to oppress us and leave us to die of hunger.

The contention put forward by Chido Khuphe on how the colonial city authorities trivialized township livelihoods is similar to arguments raised by Burke (1996) in the third chapter of the thesis. Burke (1996: 17) maintained that the production of space in colonial capitalist Zimbabwe and obliteration of signs of agricultural practises in the townships interacted with the production of cleanliness, hygiene, and the racialization of dirt and bodies. Chido Khuphe rightly interpret the health concern of colonial authorities in townships normally expressed in the elimination of township based agriculture as nothing more than a move to maintain a hawk's grip on space and power. Her in-depth introspection blends very well with an argument raised by Drinkwater (1991) in the third chapter, he argues that sometimes colonial projects employed unfair health and environmental policies to support their condemnation of informal activities conducted on municipal land.

On one hand, Chido Khuphe dismissed arguments that attribute the increase of urban agriculture in Gwabalanda to low wages and unemployment. She argued that if low wages are really the true motivators of expanding urban farming in her township, then farming undertakings should have persisted in the colonial period when blacks were receiving menial wages, but this was not the case. She added that under white rule farming activities in townships were minimalistic and in most instances non-existent as these informal occupations were heavily repressed by the Ian Smith government¹⁷, while a higher degree of

¹⁷ Ian Smith, the first Prime Minister of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) from 1965 to 1979. He unilaterally declared Rhodesia's independence from Britain in 1965. He maintained white minority power through repressive laws which were mostly directed towards the black majority.

‘social control’ was extended over the livelihoods of the powerless blacks. Chido’s analysis on the dynamics of power, urban livelihoods and the use of space under British rule is closely aligned to arguments raised by Mitchell (1987) and Ranger (2010) in the chapter three. These scholars aptly argue that the existence of white dominance and capitalism mainly centred on the need of colonial authority to manipulate the usage of space in thwarting the growth of township livelihood activities that might threaten the supply of labour to Bulawayo’s bulging industrial complex.

Other participants in study such as Tongai Ndlovu reported that they were motivated to engage in farming solely by a need to achieve a certain degree of independence from wage employment, more especially at period when it was undergoing a deep crisis. Tongai Ndlovu argued that urban farming permits him to be in command of his own labour, which in past has been subordinate and controlled by capitalism. Tongai Ndlovu also mentioned that although Zimbabwe fell into a deep economic crisis with a downturn in employment, he was glad that it gave the affected citizens an opportunity to freely engage their creative minds, becoming innovative and entrepreneurial in the process. He seemed to be attracted to the freedom and autonomy that one enjoys when practising urban farming, which he said is not normally enjoyed by those attending paid work at the industries. He argued that:

“...in my farm, no one orders me around, like what white bosses used to do in the industries. I work at my own time and speed. This is why I enjoy working in the farms I feel free and fully satisfied with what I do”.

From the above findings, it appears that the residents of Gwabalanda that are involved in urban farming are [un]consciously utilising space to dismantle the dominance of capitalism particularly that of wage labour over African’s livelihoods (cf. Premat, 2008). From the findings in can be deduced that when Zimbabwe entered into phases of economic malaise, urban residents took the opportunity to rejuvenate a livelihood of subsistence agriculture an activity once banished from urban spaces. The prevailing phenomenon of mushrooming farming ventures provides residents with a platform to reclaim their previously lost autonomy to capitalism. Subsistence farming tends relieve residents from relying more on the labour-wage market as shown in the case of Tongai Ndlovu.

The experiences of the respondents in the study are applicable to the theory on the production of space by Lefebvre (1974). The respondents re-negotiate the usage of space in accordance to existing large scale political processes and through their perception of the everyday life. As for Chido and Tongai, their perception of political freedom and enjoying city life have manifested in the physical form through the farms rapidly emerging in the townships. In the Lefebverian theorem of the production of space, the urban farms of Gwabalanda can be considered as 'lived spaces' where the residents are using this space and appropriating them to challenging dominant and persisting colonial ideologies informing current negative attitudes towards urban agriculture.

A pursuit of urban farming by Gwabalanda residents despite its condemnation and continued repression by city authorities represents the 'elusiveness', 'fluidity' and 'dynamism' of lived spaces that Lefebvre (1974) discusses when he criticizes the cartographical approach to space that characterized the 19th century era. Followers of the Lefebverian tradition such as Merrifield (2000) attest that the production of lived spaces does not follow the rules and regulations of land use or maps but it is guided by prevailing conditions or factors. For instance, Oliver Masara is fully aware that practising agriculture in the township is illegal, but still cultivates crops when the rain season comes. His use of urban land for agriculture is a reaction to the failure of the political system to create a better life for him and his family. In taking power away from politicians and placing it into his farm; Oliver demonstrates how reproduction of urban space liberates and empowers him to deal with political pressures (cf. Foucault, 1994:355).

The research findings also revealed that the residents' desire to re-connect with socio-cultural identity which is tied to ecological spaces particularly to the soil emerged as a strong determinant driving residents to farm in the township of Gwabalanda.

5.3 Identity, Belonging and Cultural Spaces

Most of the participants identified farming as an important component of their culture and identity as black people. Almost every respondent interviewed maintained that as black Africans their connection with the land begins immediately after one is born, through birthing rituals. It is a common and a frequent traditional practice among black Zimbabweans to bury newly born's umbilical cord in the land. The Shona people regard themselves as *Vana vevhu* (Children of the Soil); this Shona term attaches their sense of belonging, identity and existence to the land.

Similarly, the Ndebele people also hold cultural beliefs that tie the existence of a human being to the land. These cultural beliefs are reflected in this IsiNdebele proverbial expression “*inkaba yomuntu isemhlabathini*” (a person’s navel is in the soil); this expression places the importance of land in the survival of the Ndebele people.

One of the participants, Ben Mpofu located the proliferation of urban agriculture within the ‘everydayness’ of a life of a black African. He maintained that the livelihoods and way of life of Africans has and will always evolve around the land and subsistence agriculture. Ben Mpofu kept on saying that “we farm in the city, because the life of farming is the life we have known before we could even walk”. Furthermore, he argued that most of the residents involved in urban farming have spent half of their lives residing in the rural areas, where they have were socialized into a life of peasantry at an early age. In support of Ben’s argument, Jonas Phiri pointed out that the activity of farming is embodied and essentialized in the identity of native Africans as evident in their folklore, proverbs, traditional songs and totems. According to Jonas Phiri, it should not come as a surprise to see the farming surfacing in the townships especially if one has to appreciate that townships are inhabited by black Africans who at one particular stage of their lives religiously pursued farming before migrating to the city. From the conversations I had with the farmers who participated in the research, I also established that apart from the need to achieve food security and cope with economic hardships; residents were pushed into farming urban spaces by religious, cultural and traditional customs.

5.3.1 *Urban Agriculture, Tradition, Religion and Epistemology*

There were shared sentiments among participants on the importance of urban farming in the preservation of the cultural, religious and traditional customs of the local residents. The participants argued that city life has eroded the religious and cultural norms that have informed the African way of life. Some of the participants especially the elderly asserted that practising farming in the townships spaces has afforded them an opportunity to reconnect and be proud of their spiritual dimensions, traditional foods, knowledge systems and ecological spaces.

For instance, Moses Khuphe reflected that past Ndebele religious and traditional ceremonial activities such as *umbuyiso*¹⁸ centred on preparing and handling of traditional food, where certain food items were required to complete ceremonies. He gave an example of home-brewed sorghum beer, which remains crucial in every Ndebele traditional ceremony. He added:

...as a traditional Ndebele man, I have a space in my farm where I grow sorghum. I use the sorghum crops to brew beer which I sometimes use to conduct traditional practices. ...my ancestors will be upset if I use beer brewed from the industries, they want home-brewed beer prepared from sorghum that I have planted.

It is evident from what I gathered from the interview with Moses Khuphe, that other residents pursue urban farming so as to meet some of the obligations required to conduct certain religious traditional customs. In the case of Moses Khuphe, he argued that he could only appease his ancestors by pouring home-produced sorghum brew to the ground and the beer should be brewed using home-grown sorghum. On one extreme, participants of Shona origin argued that farming in the urban areas has bridged the gap between urban and rural lifestyle and cultures. They perceived urban farms as spaces where traditional customary practises are reincarnated and allow a reformation of the Shona identity and 'ethos' eroded in the wake of modernization. These were sentiments shared by one of the farmers Tinashe Chimuti, who opinionated that the flourishing of farming in the township can be understood in the context of the Shona traditional practice of '*Kupihwa bango*'.

According to the traditional practice of '*Kupihwa bango*', a young male adult who has come off age is allocated a piece of land by his father, he is then expected to build a house, start a family and more importantly produce food to sustain the new family. He further argues that among the Shona people, land occupies an important place not only in the completion of the rites of passage, but also in providing the newly married young male adult with a stable foundation to fend for his family. The self-allocation of urban land for farming purposes by Gwabalanda residents was identified by Tinashe Chimuti as a process that is rooted in the '*Kupihwa bango*' traditional practise, he stated that:

¹⁸ *Umbuyiso* ceremony forms the basis of Ndebele religion. It marks the return of the spirit of the departed, establishing a relationship of harmony and unbroken fellowship between the ancestors and the living (Bozongwana, 1983). The ceremony calls back the spirit, so that it may watch over the members of the homestead and protect them from harm.

...although the land that we are currently farming was not given to us by our fathers, we reached a point where one had to allocate himself a piece of land for the sake of feeding his family, the economic crisis forced us to re-enact the cultural custom of ‘Kupihwa bango’. We found it culturally sound to return to the land to provide food for our families in a time of economic pressure...your traditional practises will always help you in times of trouble.

The respondents strongly believed that the presence of subsistence farming is indicative that cultural and traditional practices will always be part of one’s existence. According to Gezekile Dube, an elderly farmer and one of the early residents of Gwabalanda, the economic and political troubles in Zimbabwe were a blessing in disguise. These troubles created an environment in which people were forced to experience the lifestyle that at least permits them a chance to re-live a life they left in the rural areas, to challenge and reverse colonial negativities and stereotypes cast upon African culture and way of life. Gezekile Dube welcomed farming activities in the township as opportunities and platforms for formerly oppressed blacks to restore pride and self -respect lost in colonialism. She asserted that the farming of traditional crops such as ‘*Mapodzi*’ (a type of squash) which are only not important to the urban dietary, but also useful in making traditional Shona instruments used in cultural gathering; merely shows how farming is crucial to the Shona culture.

The recodification and reframing of urban space in the township of Gwabalanda encourages a “...reproduction of the original as a hybrid identity formations and cultural practices through conscious place making” (cf. Mares and Pena, 2010: 252). The issues raised by the residents are consistent with Mares and Pena’s (2010) findings on the factors that have contributed to the developments of urban gardens in Atlanta, USA. Mares and Pena’s (2010) study showed that Mexican immigrant urban farmers living in Atlanta regarded urban gardens as “...spaces that provide traditional foods and are agro-ecological spaces that biophysically and symbolically connect migrants to their original community” (Mares and Pena, 2010:252).

Plate 5.3: Gourds of *Mapodzi*, a type of squash are used to make a traditional Shona instrument called a *Hosho* (rattle). The instrument is used to communicate with ancestors during cultural rituals.



The study also revealed that these urban gardens “...allowed for a transnationalization of a sense of place or belonging. The gardens were canvases of telling personal stories as well as a strategy to maintaining cultural identity through the preservation of cultivators which resonated with one’s food ways and knowledge systems” (Mares and Pena, 2010:252). The findings presented by Mares and Pens (2010) seem to match with the arguments that emerged in the research study of agricultural activities in Gwabalanda, in both communities urban farming was identified as a process of safeguarding the cultivator’s cultural practises and identities. Muhwati (2006) has argued in a similar vein, asserting that subsistence farming expresses the Shona people cultural and identity sentiments that commit them to the ecological spaces.

These research findings and the arguments coming from by Mare and Pens (2010) and Muhwati (2006) complements Lefebvre’s (1974) conceptualization of conceived and lived spaces. He argues that it is in conceived and lived spaces that identity functions, lifestyles, and attitudes are enacted and staged. This draws us back to Lefebvre (1974, 1992) recurring argument that of city spaces being ‘plastic’ in nature, they can never be abstract; he says. City spaces invite every occupier to morph them in a way that is most suitable to their personal backgrounds or living conditions.

Raban supports Lefebvre's position, arguing that "...the city goes soft; it awaits the imprint of an identity. For better or worse, it invites you to remake it, to consolidate it into a shape you can live in. You...decide who you are, and the city will again assume a fixed form round you. Decide what it is, and your identity will be revealed, like a position on a map fixed by triangulation" (Raban, 1974:1-2). Gruenewald also subscribes to Lefebvre's and Raban's line of thinking; he notes "space is alive, pulsing with beliefs, thoughts and actions that shape who we are as people" (Gruenewald, 2003: 628).

The above arguments are crucial in critically explaining the emergence of urban farms in Gwabalanda. As Ben Mpofu mentioned that when Zimbabwe plunged into a crisis, he resorted to farming mainly because it is an activity that formed part of his everyday life while growing up in the rural areas. Similarly Jonas Phiri stated that every resident currently engaged in farming had practised before and most of them were raised in a peasantry household. The observation made by two respondents tie us back to Lefebvre's (1992) two concepts of *Le quotidien* and *Rhythmanalysis* discussed in the third and fourth chapter. These concepts help us contextualize the current surge of urban farming in township of Gwabalanda to the past and present mundane, everyday life of residents. For Lefebvre (1974, 1992), the emergence of urban farming in Gwabalanda cannot only be attributed to one specific time frame of the political and economic free fall of Zimbabwe; but should also be understood as an activity that has always been practised repetitively by residents while still living in the rural areas and before migrating to the city.

5.3.2 Migration and Changes in Family Structures

"I farm where my stomach is" Chido Khuphe (Urban farmer)

The research study in Gwabalanda also showed a constitutive relationship between migration, changes in family structures and developments of subsistence farming in Gwabalanda:

I now farm in the city because I no longer stay in the rural areas. I joined my husband in the late 1980s after he bought a house here in Gwabalanda. Migrating to the city did not necessarily mean that I abandoned my rural farming practices; I re-adopted them here in the city after I realized that there was a lot of farming land. I will never farm in the rural areas because my home is now in the city, I farm where my stomach is (Chido Khuphe, interview: 15/08/2013).

The above extract from an interview with Chido Khuphe elucidate on how rural-urban migration in post-colonial Zimbabwe particularly among women formerly bound to live and farm in the rural, has slowly put an end to dual households or spatial duality. As discussed in chapter three, under the colonial migrant labour system black Africans families lived in separate households where males were expected to leave behind their wives and families in the rural areas and reside in single dormitory residences in the cities (cf. Ranger, 2010; Zhou, 1995). The end of colonialism in Zimbabwe also meant a relaxation of repressive colonial laws that restricted the free movement of black African women and children from rural areas to the city. The arrival of rural migrants coincided with growing urban poverty and immiseration emanating from a regressive growth in Zimbabwean economy around the late 1980s. Female immigrants such as Chido Khupe reacted to these hard living conditions by transferring and re-engaging rural livelihoods in city spaces, and farming appeared to be the most favourable and suitable surviving strategy. The above finding corresponds with what was found by Maswikaneng (2007) in the informal settlements of Atteridgeville in Pretoria, South Africa. He uncovered that a majority of Atteridgeville dwellers that engaged in urban farming were recent migrants from the rural areas.

On the other end, respondents argued that the gradual disappearance of dual homes which is responsible for massive migration and a subsequent increase of urban farming in Gwabalanda have to do with the AIDS pandemic. In an interview I had with Melusi Ndlovu, he stated that the government now encourages husbands to stay with their wives in the city so as to prevent the spread of the AIDS disease. He reported that dual homes provides a fertile ground for the spread of HIV, since they encourage married couples to engage in multi and concurrent partnerships which may exposes them to the risk of contracting HIV. Other respondents explored the AIDS, migration and urban farming dimension from another angle. They noted that AIDS has depopulated rural areas killing most of their family members, leaving them with no choice of returning to their rural homes. Jonas Phiri was one of the affected respondents; he argued that he farms in the city because he no longer travels to the rural areas because all family members in the rural areas have since died. His brother, sister, aunts and uncles all fell victim to the AIDS scourge; he had this to say “AIDS ravaged all of my family members who lived in the rural area, so I have no reason to travel and farm in the rural area because there is no one there”. The demographic transition characterized by high death rates due to the AIDS diseases is affecting the rural-urban migration patterns as in the case of

Jonas Phiri. This demographic situation has strongly influenced the decisions of urban residents to farm in the city.

5.4 Conclusion

Urban agriculture appeared to be an efficient strategy adopted by Gwabalanda residents to cope with unemployment, food shortages and high food prices. These findings are consistent with other previous research on urban agriculture which displays similar results. Moreover, urban cultivation was perceived by respondents as the only way of creating an alternative food and income supply apart from the market and wage employment. On the other hand, agriculture seemed useful to female headed households as it enables them to achieve food security and also save some income as they tend to purchase less food commodities.

The legacy of colonialism and racialization of space and livelihoods still persists as some respondents felt that subsistence agriculture is a murky occupation with no space in the city. In contrary, others welcomed farming in the township as an opportunity for locals to reconnect with their culture, tradition religious practices and exercise their political rights to live in the city. There were no signs of urban agriculture being manipulated by politicians to amass power, infact it reflected the residents' power over urban spaces, where they have remade them in ways suitable to their daily experiences. The Lefebverian theory of the production of space is applicable to the ruralization of urban space in Gwabalanda, as urban farms represent the 'everydayness' and responsiveness to large political, economic and social environments they live in. Changes in family structure due to migration and the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS pandemic also proved to be important determinants of the rise of farming in the city.

Chapter Six: Summary of findings and Implication of Study

6.0 Introduction

The main objective of this thesis was to investigate on the conditions and factors that have influenced the ruralization of urban space in Gwabalanda Township, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe as seen in the intensification of a rural-oriented activity of subsistence farm. The study also set to explore the impacts that subsistence farming is having on the lives of those who are practising it. Moreover, in examining the possible benefits of urban farming, the thesis intended to interrogate the perceptions and attitudes Gwabalanda residents hold towards the changes in the use of urban space and the spread of subsistence farming.

In chapter 1, I clarify on the use of the concept “ruralization of urban space” which I use interchangeably with terms such as urban farming, subsistence farming and urban agriculture does not intend to categorize agriculture as only a rural pursuit. The study was conducted using semi-structured interviews, a total of 17 urban farmers participated in this research study and it was guided by Lefebvre’s theory of *Production of Space*. A summary of the research findings and their implication on Lefebvre and the way urban space is perceived are discussed in this chapter. This chapter concludes with an exploration of future research areas that can be built from the research findings.

6.1 Summary of Findings

Urban farming and the ruralization of urban space in the residential area of Gwabalanda in the city of Bulawayo is driven by three complementing and overarching themes or factors. The first two themes are the economic and political factors which seem to operate on a macro-level, whereas the other theme of socio-cultural factors functions at an individual or household level.

6.1.1 *Economic conditions*

Most of the Gwabalanda residents I interviewed, described the process of reworking of idle open spaces into food producing farms is a direct result of escalating incidences of urban poverty, food shortages, unemployment and high food spikes. A majority of the respondents were of the view that urban farming activities increased at the peak of the 2008 economic crisis. This economic crisis which coincided with the meltdown of the global economy, forced many companies to close their operations leading to the retrenchments of workers and

heightening of unemployment rates (cf. Mills, 2012). Forced retrenchments and the soaring unemployed rates of 2008, left the majority of Bulawayo residents with less or no monthly income earnings to purchase food commodities which was mostly sold at the parallel market at much higher costs (FAO, 2011; ZVAC, 2012, Kutiwa *et al*, 2010). Furthermore, the interviewed residents argued that the resuscitation of a rural practice of subsistence agriculture in the city of Bulawayo is an effort by households to cope with the effects of food insecurities emanating from high food prices and lack of purchasing income in a hostile economic condition of Zimbabwe.

The findings also uncovered that female headed households were likely to suffer from food securities due to lack of monthly earning. According to FAO (2010), although Zimbabwean economy and retail food supply showed signs of recovery after the adoption of a multi-currency regime by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe in 2009, there was an insignificant improvement in household food security. The food insecurity surveillance conducted by the ZVAC in early 2012, confirmed that although the supermarkets are now stocked with all the necessary basic commodities, there were still high cases of food insecurity in households with low levels of income and limited purchasing power (ZVAC, 2012). In contrary, to my utter surprise other respondents particularly the elderly regarded farming in the city as a political act.

6.1.2 *Farming as a Political Act*

While there was consensus that urban agriculture is a by-product of an increasing immiseration in a depreciating urban economy, other respondents felt that bringing a rural activity such as farming in the city shows a degree of independence that black residents now enjoy after the culmination of independence. Indeed to some, farming in areas that were once reserved for white people and protected from rural influences epitomizes an attainment of freedom and realization of the so called 'rights to the city', '*We are now free, we can farm wherever we want*', one respondent lamented. Some respondents, urban farming have assisted them undergo a process of political disalienation in which urban residents vent- off their frustrations and impatience in the Zimbabwean political process through farming. For instance, one respondent argued that unlike politicians who fail to fulfil their promises of improving people's lives, the land always caters for people's needs but only if its utilised productively. Urban residents that participated in the research study viewed farming in the

city as affording them an opportunity to reconnect with their rural identity, socio-cultural background.

6.1.3 *Expressing identity, culture and religion through farming*

Apart from coping with prevailing economic and political pressures, respondents argued that the need to rejuvenate lost cultural, religious and traditional customs of local residents pushed them into farming. Most of the participants were of the consensus that black people are connected to land immediately after birth, since birthing ceremony such as burying of the umbilical cord into the soil symbolizes their eternal attachment to the land (cf. Seirlis, 2004). Few of the respondents identified themselves as *Vana vevhu* (children of the soil) meaning that their survival and existence is in the land. The participants asserted that farming forms part of their identity and cultivation of city spaces is merely practising what they are, they further alluded that farming is their way of life and is represented in the locals' folklore, totems and proverbs. The older participants welcomed the changes in urban land use and farming as an opening to reconnect with their spiritual dimensions, identity, traditional foods, and ecological spaces. These participants contended that as blacks came in contact with westernization, colonialism and the city life, their indigenous religious, cultural practices were undermined and in most cases shunned upon.

6.2 Perceptions and impacts of urban farming

There were generally mixed feelings about farming of vacant spaces in the township of Gwabalanda. While others perceived urban farming as giving them capabilities to break away from income poverty, others thought that the earnings from urban farming were marginal and insufficient to foot bills and other household expenses. For instance, one of the female respondents a widow praised urban farming for generating a monthly income of US\$200 per month after selling some of her excess farm produce. . In addition, she stated that the money is used to pay partial school fees, bills and other food commodities. Apart from generating income for the household, some participants reported that urban farming improved food security and access to fresh and nutritious foods. One female respondent highlighted that farming has allowed her grandchildren not to skip meals and it has supplied the households with foods such as sweet potatoes, pumpkins, gem squash, pumpkin leaves and groundnuts.

Moreover, participants reported that farming has eased them from travelling long distance to search for food, enabling them to avoid transport costs thereby allowing households to save income. Those who have rural homes that are closer to the city of Bulawayo indicated that they send some of their excess farm produces to their rural homes. This astounding finding challenges the conventional assumption that only rural areas can feed cities.

Other respondents argued that they only practise farming for survival and cannot be compared to wage income. These respondents reminisced of the jobs they lost in the culmination of a deep economic malaise, they appeared to favour wage labour over the self-sustaining activity of subsistence agriculture. Respondents that perceived farming in the city as insignificant in generating sustainable income, tended to see farming as a ‘dirty’ and ‘murky’ activity that they are forced to do because of unemployment and they thought that it was a rural activity. These respondents further contended that farming in the city have altered the image of Gwabalanda, a residential area that was once considered to nestle a middle class community of teachers and nurses transforming into a semi-rural area.

Although participants stated that practising subsistence farming did not necessarily make them peasants, they however admitted that the environment, particularly the sights and scenery of farms matched that of the rural areas which they argued demean the city lifestyle. In chapter 5, I argued that respondents who held negative perceptions on urban farming were exhibiting some of long- term effects of colonialism on how African livelihoods are construed I also discuss this in chapter 3 of the thesis. These findings have profound implications on how we understand the everyday utilisation of space in cities as Lefebvre (1974) has continually stated space mirrors the ‘everydayness’ of people’s lives.

6.3 Implication of findings

6.3.1 On Lefebvre’s theory of Production of Space

The research findings neatly fit within Lefebvre’s theory of *The Production of Space*, as well as his concepts of the ‘right to the city, lived spaces and ‘*Rhythmanalysis*’ which resonate with the farming experiences that have evolved in the township of Gwabalanda. In his writing on the ‘right to the city’, Lefebvre argues that the manner in which people produce and reproduce spaces is influenced by prevailing political, economic and social events or conditions that users of space operates in. Similarly, the farming of urban landscape and a continuous remapping of urban- cultural spaces by Gwabalanda residents is closely linked to

a failed of economic and political system in Zimbabwe. The practice of urban farming by therefore becomes a safety net shielding urban households from experiencing bouts of hunger of food shortages. In addition, farming has positioned residents to struggle for ‘the right to the city’ and to fight misplaced city laws that averts agricultural activities on city terrains and continues to threaten urbanites’ livelihoods.

Zeleza (1999:54) explains the intensification of subsistence farming in the heart of most African cities as an ultimate movement by African city dwellers most of whom were only allowed to fully reside in cities after independence from white rule to mark their territory and claim on city space. He echoes “...long regarded by the poor as a transit area, as a place that was not quite home, even for the middle class elites, the beleaguered structurally adjusted city came to be seen as ‘home’ a place that was worth struggling for. And so they sought to reinvent it to reshape its spaces, signs and symbols to make it work for them”. The prevalence of high rates of inflation, unemployment, food shortages and collapse of industries in the last 20 years did not lead to many Gwabalanda residents migrating back to the rural as argued by Potts (2010), it only forced them to adapt to these situations by transforming, reworking and re-shaping underutilized urban spaces into subsistence farms.

On one extreme, if we engage his concept of ‘lived spaces’ discussed in chapter 3, one finds out that urban farming does not only represent the power of the people to exercise their rights over spaces or a will to survive, but signifies the capacity of urbanites to influence space to suit one’s perception of the lived experience. Lefebvre’s concept of ‘lived spaces’ is used by Locatelli and Nugent (2009:4) to further understand urban farming as a surviving strategy they contend that “people’s ability to develop mechanisms of survival even in extreme economic situations should not be interpreted as naive ‘art of survival’ or strategies to relive international, national and local bodies from their responsibilities in implementing developmental policies, but as capacity built upon people’s perceptions of their own status and experiences of their daily life”. The developments of agriculture have had an impact on rural-urban/ urban-rural migration patterns. Its proliferation in residential area is a trumpet call for academics and city planners to rethink about the rural-urban dichotomy in Zimbabwe and post-colonial Africa.

6.3.2 *On migration patterns and household food supply*

The increase in farming activities the city not only represents a change in urban land use, but also of the reconfiguration of urban-rural/rural-urban migration patterns. According to Potts (2010) it is norm for city dwellers in Zimbabwe to travel to their respective rural areas and participate in subsistence farming in the planting and harvesting seasons. More importantly, their involvement in rural agriculture and frequent movement between rural and urban centres; has for many decades enabled urban households attain food security (Leybourne and Grant, 1999). However, with urban farming cropping up in the cities, urbanites no longer migrate seasonally to rural areas to pursue farming. In the case of the residents I interviewed they highlighted that they no longer frequent to rural areas to participate in agriculture since it can now be practised in the city. In addition as revealed in this research study urbanites no longer depend on rural areas for agricultural food supply and the research found out that one of the household was sending food to the rural areas the reverse of the conventional norm. Factors such as transport and economic costs of running spatial households in both urban and rural further influence the decisions of residents to migrate in between urban and rural areas.

6.4 Conclusion and further research

It can be stated that the activity of subsistence cultivation in the city of Bulawayo is not only driven by a need to survive in prevailing harsh economic and political conditions, but by an obligation to assert one's identity, culture and right to city spaces. In the township of Gwabalanda, subsistence farming had given residents an opportunity to release themselves from the shackles of poverty, and food insecurities. Moreover, it reconnects the urban-rural divide allowing an 'ebb and flow' between the two sites which is crucial for the survival of both. The urban farms in Gwabalanda appears to be canvasses or diary books in which people write their everyday struggles, they are an extension of their lives, as Lefebvre would put it, spaces are living organism that reacts to everyday societal developments. The ruralization of urban space in the climax of the economic hardships in Bulawayo confirm that people have the power and right change space, redefining it to suit their immediate needs, indeed Harvey (2008) argues that "the right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city".

Further research should interrogate the forms of urbanity that are emerging in post colonial African cities, more especially where cities are de-territorializing, adopting rural features such as informal subsistence farming. More exploration on the concept of “people as infrastructure” introduced by Simone (2008) is helpful in understanding how people are changing city spaces to improve their livelihoods especially at a time where urban poverty levels and the urban population are on the rise. Additionally, further research on how urban-rural ties can be utilized to create cities that are more inclusive and economies is crucial.

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Appendix 1: Semi- structured Interview guide for subsistence urban farmers

1. How long have you been a resident of Gwabalanda Township?
2. Are you formally employed?
3. When did you start farming?
4. What are some of the reasons or conditions that have compelled you to practice urban farming?
5. What are the benefits of farming?
6. What percentage of your livelihood comes from urban subsistence farming as a household (whether in food or cash earnings)?
7. What is the size of your farm and how many farms do you own?
8. What are your conceptions of urban subsistence farming?
9. Who owns the land that you farm on? How did you access the land?
10. What types of crops do you grow in your farm?
11. Where do you store your harvested crops?
12. Do you have any assets (human and physical)?
13. What types of tools do you use in cultivating the land?
14. How much time do you spend working in the fields?
15. How much money do you invest in buying inputs? (What inputs?)
16. What are the major difficulties you face with regards to farming?
17. Do you have a rural home? If so do you foresee moving back?
18. When was the last time you cultivated your crops in the rural areas?

Appendix 2: Demography of the interviewees and logistics of the interview

Date & Time of Interview	Duration of Interview	Name of Interviewee	Age and Sex
08/08/2012. 3:15pm	22mins	Melusi Ndlovu*	40, Male
08/08/2012. 4:25pm	19mins	Jonas Phiri	62, Male
10/08/2012. 1:37pm	24mins	Oliver Masara	71, Male
15/08/2012. 11:04am	42mins	Moses & Chido Khuphe	72, 63 Male, Female
15/08/2012. 1:52pm	21mins	Julia Chisora	58, Female
16/08/2012. 12:51pm	32mins	Buhle and Portia Mpala	32, 35, Female, Female
16/08/2012. 3:22pm	24mins	Betty Ncube	66, Female
18/08/2012. 4:44pm	21mins	Tinashe Chimuti	58, Male
18/08/2012. 6:25pm	18mins	Ben Mpofu	52, Male
19/08/2012. 4:37pm	23mins	Chipo Makwati	68, Female
24/08/2012. 11:04am	27mins	Tongai & Caroline Ndlovu	55, 43 Male, Female
25/08/2012. 11:26am	39mins	Sam & Gezekile Dube	72, 66, Male, Female
26/08/2012. 4:36 pm	24mins	Mary Sibanda	53, Female

Appendix 3: Informed Consent Form



Informed Consent Form

(To be read out by researcher before the beginning of the interview. One copy of the form to be left with the respondent; one copy to be signed by the respondent and kept by the researcher.)

My name is **Danford Tafadzwa Chibvongodze** (student number 211551117). I am doing research on a project entitled: **The Ruralization of Urban Spaces in the Context of Subsistence Farming: The Case Study of Gwabalanda Township, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe**. This project is supervised by **Dr Mvuselelo Ngcoya** at the School of Built Environment and Development Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am managing the project and should you have any questions my contact details are:

School of Built Environment and Development Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban. Tel: (+27) 31 260 2917. Email: Ngcoyam2@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the project. Before we start I would like to emphasize that:

- your participation is entirely voluntary;
- you are free to refuse to answer any question;
- you are free to withdraw at any time.

The interview will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to members of the research team. Excerpts from the interview may be made part of the final research report. Do you give your consent for: *(please tick one of the options below)*

Your name, position and organisation, or	
Your position and organisation, or	
Your organisation or type of organisation <i>(please specify)</i> , or	
None of the above	

Please sign this form to show that I have read the contents to you.

----- (signed) ----- (date)

----- (print name)