

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the existing body of literature on gender perspectives on housing poverty in Zimbabwe. The first part highlights the conceptual and theoretical framework. The chapter also reviews how improved access to housing is a key variable in women's empowerment and in gender equality and is also a key variable in the success or failure of housing initiatives, the gender disparities in housing policy making to ensure good governance. The issues of gender balance and the participation of women in the distribution of housing and in the making of decisions about the type of house that should be acquired are pertinent questions as are questions about who benefits the most and how women cope with housing problems.

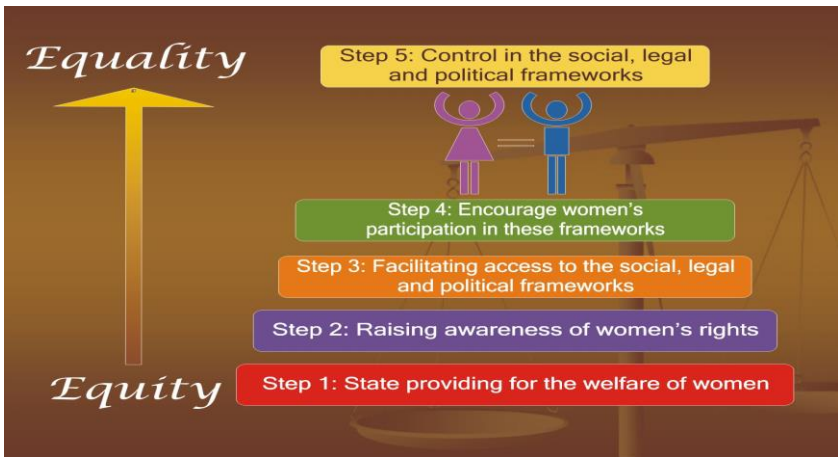


Fig 2.1 The Longwe/ Women Empowerment Gender Analysis Framework (Longwe and Clarke, 1994)

The Longwe framework helps think through what women's empowerment and equality between women and men means in practice. It also helps determine the extent to which an intervention is supporting women's empowerment. Longwe (1994) characterises

development as being concerned with enabling people to take charge of their own lives. This framework is explicit that gender equality is not about lack of productivity or resources but about oppression and exploitation.

The Longwe framework focuses on identifying, *Women's special needs* due to their different sexual and reproductive roles (what Moser calls women's practical gender needs). *Gender issues/Women's gender concerns* arise when gender roles (arising from the customs and traditions of societies, not due to biological difference) involve unequal burdens of work and unequal distribution of resources and this is recognised as undesirable or unjust (what Moser calls women's strategic gender needs). *Gender gaps* arise where the division into gender roles brings with it inequalities in the amount of work input, or the benefit received. *Gender discrimination*, gender gaps originate and are maintained in any given society by systems of gender discrimination. Such discrimination against women is pervasive at the level of tradition and social practice. It is also supported by discrimination against women in official and government administrative practice, sometimes arising from discriminatory legislation. Gender discrimination means to give differential treatment to individuals on the grounds of their gender. In a patriarchal society this involves systematic and structural discrimination against women in the distribution of income, access to resources, and participation in decision-making. *Gender subordination*: gender discrimination is part of a patriarchal system of oppression, where males retain more power, and use this power to ensure women get most of the work and less of the benefits.

Development interventions need to address all five levels of gender inequality according to which women's gender concerns can be categorised as in the following levels:

Welfare is used in the Women's Empowerment Framework to refer to the gender gap between women and men in their material well-being. If a project were confined entirely to this welfare level, this would mean that women would be passive recipients of project benefits, since they would not be involved in the "higher" levels of empowerment which denote more active roles in the development process. Narrowing the gender gap in welfare is the ultimate objective in women's development, to which the process of empowerment must lead.

Access is the means or right to obtain services, products or commodities. Gender gaps in access to resources and services are one type of obstacle to women's development. Women's achievement of equality of access to resources and services is seen as an objective for women's equality; by the same token, women's mobilisation to achieve equality of access is an element in the process of empowerment.

Conscientisation means the process of becoming aware of the extent to which problems arise not so much from an individuals' inadequacies, but rather from the systematic discrimination against a social group which puts all members of the group at a disadvantage. In women's development, conscientisation, therefore, involves the process by which women collectively analyse and understand the gender discrimination they are up against. This is the basis for action to overcome and dismantle the obstacles which have been holding them back. Through conscientisation, men and women come to understand the nature of the obstacles they face, and the need to mobilise for collective action. The process of discussion and understanding of common problems is a critical phase, for it enables and motivates men and women to move from being mere beneficiaries to being actors and active participants in their own development. Conscientisation involves the identification of disparities and the analysis of their underlying causes.

Participation is used by the Women's Empowerment Framework to denote having a share and taking part in decision-making. The Framework sees gender equality in decision-making as one of the essential aspects of women's empowerment - and defines participation as being concerned with collective participation in decision making, a process integrated with conscientisation:

Control means the ability to direct, or to influence events so that one's own interests are protected. The Women's Empowerment Framework recognises this as the "highest" aspect of women's development - where women ensure that resources and benefits are distributed so that men and women get equal shares. Whereas conscientisation and participation are essential to the process of women's empowerment, it is only gender equality in control which provides the outcome.

The UN Habitat's Agenda III states that the goal of gender equality in human settlements development is:

- Integrating gender perspectives in human settlements related legislation, policies, programmes and projects through the application of gender-sensitive analysis;
- Developing conceptual and practical methodologies for incorporating gender perspectives in human settlements planning, development and evaluation, including the development of indicators;
- Collecting, analysing and disseminating gender-disaggregated data and information on human settlements issues, including statistical means that recognize and make visible the unremunerated work of women, for use in policy and programme planning and implementation;
- Integrating a gender perspective in the design and implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable resource management mechanisms, production techniques and infrastructure development in rural and urban areas;

Formulating and strengthening policies and practices to promote the full and equal participation of women in human settlements planning and decision-making.

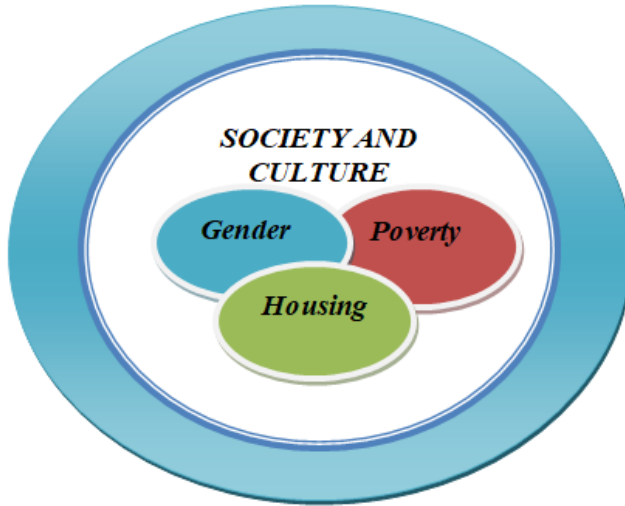


Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework on the gender perspective of housing poverty

The figure 2.2 above illustrates the nexus between gender, poverty and housing and urges the need for an effective policy framework. The process of economic development has three phases which can be distinguished (but not separated) thus 'Optimization- improvement-renewal'. In each of these phases specific interactions between gender, poverty and housing can be recognized. However, innovations can accelerate or decelerate the process of sustainable development as it can have positive and negative impacts to the socio-economic status of people. Sustainable housing requires a strong supporting institutional (policy) framework to accelerate and integrate the process of development.

The purpose of this study was to clearly illustrate that the efficient supply of housing is closely associated with policies, delivery systems on land, infrastructure services, finance, the construction industry and building material supply. The existence of inappropriate regulations and inefficient planning systems can also cause havoc with housing supply for the poor majority, thus the housing policy for people living in poverty has a multi-objective and multi- institutional relevance (UNCHS- GSS 2000). Housing, being a location specific activity, the Government especially local government is considered as a key and the most important factor in the process of housing delivery or rather in facilitating the people to house themselves (Ebsen, C and Ramboll, B 2000). An integrated policy and gender sensitive framework is essential to co-ordinate the activities of all the actors to create a 'pull' from the side of beneficiaries rather than a 'push' from the authorities. At strategic level, sustainable development principles and approaches should be integrated into policy strategies and the planning process. This is inevitable for an efficient working of the implementation systems, optimizing limited resources and integrating the various actors to achieve sustainable- affordable housing.

Gender identities and gender relations are critical aspects of culture because they shape the way daily life is lived in the family, but also in the wider community and the workplace. Gender functions as an organizing principle for society because of the cultural meanings given to being male or female. This is evident in the roles that men and women do in both the household and in the wider community – and cultural explanations of why this should be so. The patterns and the explanations differ among societies and change over time. Poverty can be defined as the combination of uncertain or non-existent income and a lack of access to the resources needed to ensure sustainable living conditions. It often goes together with hunger, malnourishment, poor health, high mortality and morbidity rates, insufficient education and precarious and unhealthy housing. There is an increasing feminization of poverty. Compared with men, women living below the poverty line

have a greater percentage than that of men. Women have borne the brunt of housing poverty hence while trying to cope with the impact of the crisis of this disparity; women are also desperately trying to manage their meagre resources.

Everyone has a fundamental human right to housing and this principle applies across the gender divide. Men and women should both benefit from application of the principle. Accordingly, when the right to housing is guaranteed everyone has access to a safe, secure, habitable, and affordable home with freedom from forced eviction. The government has an obligation to guarantee that everyone can exercise this right to live in security, peace, and dignity. This right must be provided to all persons irrespective of gender, income or access to economic resources. Critically, there are principles that are fundamental to the right to housing and are of particular relevance to the right to housing and these principles are shown in the diagram below:



Fig. 2.3 Housing as a Basic Need (UNHABITAT, 2012)

Security of Tenure: Residents should possess a degree of security of tenure that guarantees protection against forced evictions, harassment, and other threats, including predatory redevelopment and displacement *UNHABITAT 2012. Availability of Services, Materials, Facilities, and Infrastructure*: Housing must provide certain facilities essential for health, security, comfort, and nutrition. For instance, residents must have access to safe drinking water, heating and lighting, washing facilities, means of food storage, and sanitation, (*UNHABITAT 2012.*). *Affordability*: Housing costs should be at such a level that the attainment and satisfaction of other basic needs are not threatened or compromised. For instance, one should not must choose between paying rent and buying food, (*UNHABITAT 2012*). *Habitability/Decent and Safe Home*: Housing must provide residents adequate space that protects them from cold, damp, heat, rain, wind, or other threats to health; structural hazards; and disease, (*UNHABITAT 2012*). *Accessibility*: Housing must be accessible to all, and disadvantaged and vulnerable groups must be accorded full access to housing resources, (*UNHABITAT 2012*). *Location*: Housing should not be built on polluted sites, or in immediate proximity to pollution sources that threaten the right to health of residents. The physical safety of residents must be guaranteed, as well. Additionally, housing must be in a location which allows access to employment options, health-care services, schools, child-care centres, and other social facilities, (*UNHABITAT 2012*). *Equality*: Housing and housing policies must guarantee equality despite the different roles of men and women in society, (*UNHABITAT 2012*).

According to Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 5 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and Article 14 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women housing is

a right for all. Hence, the need to ensure that both women and men have equal access to housing and that none is prejudiced due to their roles in society. This study, however, argues for the need to treat housing poverty as a state of emergency in Zimbabwe, particularly in Chitungwiza where there are disparities in access to housing. Zimbabwe's gender and housing disparities date back to the colonial era and the policies of the Rhodesia governments of the time. Prior to independence, indigenous Africans were regarded as temporary residents in urban areas. Permanent urban settlement was for the white settlers. Consequently, Africans who were destitute or had been made redundant in the formal sector was repatriated to their rural homes where it was conveniently believed they had a piece of land and relatives who could meet their social security needs. The mobility of African women was an unpredicted phenomenon (Barnes, 1999; Muchena, 1980) and how to deal with African women in urban areas became a problem for colonial policy because the Native Commissioners were at a loss as to how to apply their regulations and rules such as the 1889 Vagrancy Act and the Pass Consolidation Act of 1901 to women. The laws were applied to 'natives' who were defined as male and they also applied to urban areas only (Barnes 1999:97). Urban and rural men pleaded with the state to institute measures that would control female mobility into urban areas and in 1931, the Chief Native Commissioner took new initiatives to discourage women from entering the towns. Vagrancy laws were to be enforced strongly on women and lists of those 'Native Females Alleged to be Prostitutes' or those who earned a living by 'doubtful means' were compiled. The records were kept by the police.

The women were often rounded up and sent back to their rural areas. The state believed it was working in the best interests of native society as stated in one of its clauses in the 1936 Natives Registration Act: "To safeguard Native Society, especially its womankind". Barnes (1999a) argues that this clause was used to maintain the patriarchal nature of

African society and to limit the influx of African women into urban areas by pretending to protect their morality in urban zones that were dominated by African men. This moratorium meant housing could only be allocated to males but the passing of new legislation much later made it possible for females who were assisted by their white employers. This was frowned upon by the African community as traditionally, it was unacceptable for a woman to own a house on her own. Despite all the measures put in place by colonial authorities, the more controlling the system became, the more the women flooded the urban areas and resisted their deportation to rural areas by simply returning again (Barnes 1999a). Therefore, a house in town did not guarantee security, and this then eroded the little space that had been carved out for the urban Africans.

Legislative measures such as the Vagrancy Act (1960), the Pass Laws, the provision of single accommodation for workers and the controlled lodger system implemented in 1955 effectively slowed down the rate of urbanization. Municipalities also kept registers of all the new arrivals in town, and those looking for employment, in an attempt to weed out illegal immigrants. Urban poverty prior to independence was characterised by malnutrition, poor and unacceptable housing conditions, poor sanitation and low wages. However, because of the measures that were in place to contain the rate of urbanisation and the repatriation of Africans to their rural homes, poverty was to some extent shifted to the rural areas. When urban existence became a problem most Africans relocated to their rural homes where extended family support structures would shoulder the burden of providing for their welfare needs. Therefore, throughout the colonial era, it was conveniently believed that poverty had not reached unacceptable levels, for information on its extent was deliberately not documented. With the advent of independence, the floodgates were opened as most of the restrictions to the migration of indigenous people to urban areas were removed. Consequently, there was a massive movement of

people from rural areas to urban areas. This was in an attempt to escape from rural poverty as the successive colonial regimes neglected the development of rural areas. At the time of independence urban poverty had become institutionalized.

Urbanization occurred at a very fast pace, far exceeding the rate of industrialization. The population in Harare was estimated to be increasing by between 5-6% and that of Bulawayo by between 6-8% (population Census, 1992). This led to overstretched infrastructure, straining of social services, unemployment and an acute shortage of housing. Owing to inadequate resources to fund the expanded social services (free primary education and health for the poor) and an economy that was performing badly, Zimbabwe was forced to adopt the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme towards the end of 1990. According to the Government of Zimbabwe (1991) the aim of the adjustment programme was to stimulate investment, thereby enabling the economy to achieve higher levels of economic growth. Although the first phase of structural adjustment in some cases resulted in some qualitative improvements in the standards of living, in other ways it worsened urban poverty.

City life can present conditions of overcrowded living, congestion, unemployment, lack of social and community networks, stark inequalities, and crippling social problems such as crime and violence. Many of those who migrate benefit from the opportunities in urban areas, while others, often those with low skill levels, are generally left behind and find themselves struggling with the day-to-day challenges of city life. Many of the problems of urban poverty are rooted in a complexity of resource and capacity constraints, inadequate Government policies at both the central and local level, and a lack of planning for urban growth and management. Given the high growth projections for most cities in developing countries, the challenges of

urban poverty and more broadly of city management will only worsen in many places if not addressed more aggressively.

Urban society is economically heterogeneous and is also marked by social heterogeneity. Urban society comprises people whose social standings vary widely and who form different types of association based on factors such as neighbourhood, ethnicity, economic self-interest, mutual support or common beliefs or aspirations so that towns can be imagined as a complex patchwork of overlapping communities.

There are different survival strategies that are employed by urban dwellers to earn a living. The observation that has been made in the developing world is that most people in the cities are engaged in activities that appear to be busy work, but which are marginally productive activities. In the eyes of the Third World urbanite, making a living is a major problem. It is a daily struggle that provides little in return. The informal economy encompasses all economic activities pursued without the sanction of the authorities and whose activities are not recorded in the national accounts. The livelihood activities range from self-employment, casual labour, regular labour and working children. The link between globalisation and poverty which also has implications on urbanites has escalated the gender imbalance of housing poverty, with women being the casualties. Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were instituted in many countries because of severe economic crisis in the Third World and hit urban workers very hard. Large scale layoffs especially in the public sector and abrupt abolition of subsidies entailed large increases in the price of food, transport and housing. Globalisation which is part of neo-liberal philosophy brings about packages which see many governments removing subsidies from housing. People no longer anticipate any help from governments and there are no lower interest rates from the banks. The need for local adaptation and initiation is being neglected.

In many instances beneficiaries see little or no benefit from housing schemes. In Ghana in 2001 the IMF demanded certain conditions for their loans. The IMF emphasized full cost recovery in public utility. There was to be no subsidy provision.

In recent times and at present, urban poverty alleviation has become a major concern. Some of the main reasons for this include the declining living conditions of the urban poor. In addition, decreased employment opportunities, the decline in real wages, rising food and fuel prices and acute housing shortages all are manifestations of the falling socio-economic conditions of the urban poor, especially the women. Although there are numerous definitions of poverty, a common thread which runs through these conceptualizations is the view that poverty is evidently a multidimensional phenomenon with complex linkages. Muzaale (1986) describes poverty as more than just a physiological phenomenon denoting a lack of necessities like food, health, shelter and clothing. Poverty is also a state of deprivation and powerlessness, where the poor are exploited and denied participation in decision-making in matters that intimately affect them.

Muzaale's definition of poverty is consistent with that of the 1997 Human Development Report quoted in Kaliyati (1998) which articulates three perspectives of poverty. These are the *income* perspective which makes use of a poverty datum line, below which (income) one is poor. The second is the *basic needs* perspective which considers the inability to meet the necessities of life as poverty. In this respect, housing is one of the basic needs. Yet another definition is the *capability* perspective which regards powerlessness and the consequent inability to satisfy basic needs as poverty.

Poverty can also be conceptualized in physiological and sociological terms. In such a case we speak of *absolute* and *relative* poverty. Absolute poverty is an extreme form of human deprivation where

basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter are unmet. Situations where individuals or groups in society are unable to meet the standard of living taken for granted by others in that society are referred to as relative poverty. It is important to point out at this stage that absolute poverty aptly describes the socioeconomic status of most of the people in Zimbabwe's cities. Most women sell goods from makeshift stalls and are involved in urban agriculture. They also live in poor quality houses. The strategies used to avoid poverty include working longer hours and having children engaging in income-earning activities. Many urban dwellers in most cities at one time or another engage in urban farming, mostly using "idle" land and even do market gardening.

Today, gender is finally at the centre of development policies, after three decades of struggle. Since 1975, when the World Conference of the International Women's Year was held in Mexico City, the discourse on women's advancement and its relation to the development process has evolved. Essentially, it has shifted in focus from the intellectual and political approach of "women in development" (WID) to the new approach of "gender and development" (GAD). More recently "gender mainstreaming" has emerged as a strategy to promote gender equality and this, in most developing countries, mainly starts in the urban areas.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are critical dimensions of the United Nations Development Programme's efforts to help meet the overarching goal of halving world poverty by 2015 and housing poverty is a critical area which will accelerate the achievement of this goal. Despite substantial obstacles, women decision-makers in developing countries have already begun to put a distinctive stamp on governance mechanisms, institutions and broader political debates. Gender inequality exists in all societies and at all levels of society. Participation and civic engagement are critical

determinants of good governance, a concept which addresses issues of social equity and political legitimacy and not merely the efficient management of infrastructure such as housing and services. The different ways in which women and men participate in and benefit from urban governance are significantly shaped by prevailing constructions of gender, whose norms, expectations and institutional expressions constrain women's access to the social and economic, and thus political, resources of the city especially housing and its amenities.

However, most societies ascribe roles and responsibilities to women and men differentially but fail to value, or even account for, the crucial contributions women make to household and community maintenance. Ironically, such social reproduction allows little time or, in some cases, permission for women to participate in civic life in ways which help them to determine their own lives. Women and men experience city life differently due to their different roles and activities, and women's needs are seldom represented in policy or planning, it is essential that these interests are now actively advanced (Beall, 1996: 2).

Urban women, while generally sharing specific gender interests arising from a common set of responsibilities and roles, constitute a fairly diverse group. There are elderly women, working women and women whose major responsibility is in the domestic sphere. There are also women who balance multiple roles at the same time. Poor women living in slums and low resource areas face disadvantages, which are very different from those faced by women from middle class families. Slum dwellers also experience an unequal level of service; women are doubly disadvantaged from poor access. Cities, especially large urban areas also have more numbers of women headed households, single women living by themselves, professional women who need to travel, etc., and urban development planning must respond to the needs of these diverse groups (Beall, 1996).

Experience has shown that women not only bear the brunt of poverty, but their empowerment is a precondition for its reduction. Issues that affect women are not static, as the roles of women and men in different societies around the world are constantly shifting, especially recently because of economic globalization, hence their crucial participation in housing initiatives since they are the most affected by housing poverty. Although women's contribution in today's societies is essential and indisputable, nowhere is their status on a par with men's. Women are a vulnerable group in all areas. With respect to violence, the evidence is revealing and irrevocable. Not only are women particularly affected by many forms of violence, but most often these happen inside what should be the most secure of environments; their own homes. As the United Nations Development Programme's annual Human Development Report (1995) commented: "In no society are women secure or treated as equal to men. Personal insecurity shadows them from cradle to grave... From childhood through adulthood, they are abused because of their gender". Moreover, the social context would generally appear to encourage violence against women.

Cultural practices and the patriarchal system governing modern societies, define women's needs in accordance to men's. Consequently, and are subordinate to them. More than half the world's population will be living in cities by the year 2025. The increasing urbanization of populations in the South is triggering rapid changes in living conditions and social relations, especially between the genders. Disadvantaged urban women bear much of the brunt of the problems stemming from the current thrust of development: environmental degradation and feminization of poverty are parallel yet interrelated processes.

Given that they are already struggling with city management and governance, the question for developing countries is how they are going to cope with an urban population that is set to rise. Another

pertinent question concerns the efficacy of analysing present-day situations and whether or not they can serve as a source of the ideas and inspiration needed to restore cities to their role as catalysts of progress, prosperity and fulfilment. It is also instructive to determine the inputs that the analysis of urban grass-roots movements, most of whose active members are women, can offer urban policy-makers and managers. Urbanization weakens the importance of the family unit as it increases the number of working women. Family status represents the fact that most moves people make within metro areas depends on the stage of the life cycle the household is going through (Ngwerume 2014).

The Ministry of Local Government has housing policies that are being implemented in all urban councils in Zimbabwe such as the pay for your stand servicing scheme which stipulates that individuals pay for the intrinsic land value and pay for the servicing of that land. This was because the council no longer has the capital to service the land. As from 1980, the government has had an ambition for the low-income earners to have decent shelter as a basic human right hence the introduction of housing co-operatives in terms of the Co-operative Act chapter 24:5. However it fell far short on the delivery and implementation aspect. In 2000 the government approved a national housing policy where the vision was to ensure that every household would have access to permanent residential structures. The government states that 30% of building stands should be allocated to housing co-operatives who constitute the poor urban, 10% to civil servants 10%, to private developers and 50% to the local authority. This is in line with the government housing policy which provides for local authorities to be responsible for the provision of decent accommodation to their ratepayers (Director's forum, 2011). However, the fees and levies charged are quite high for any urban dweller who include both women and men, though most women bear the brunt of poverty much more than men.

The right to adequate housing is linked to the promulgation of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 2008a; Kothari, 2008). In 1966 the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) spelt out the need to pay particular attention and protection to the right to housing (Loewenstern & Moyo, 2003). The first United Nations Conference on Human Settlements of 1976 in Vancouver, Canada, recognised the role of 'self-help housing' in addressing housing rights. This was in accordance with the need to accommodate the growing urban population, especially the urban poor (UN Habitat-OHCHR, 2005). The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), stressed equality in the rights between men and women, by ensuring equality of both sexes in the enjoyment of housing rights among other entitlements, while obliging states to take appropriate measures to modify and eliminate prejudices and other practices based on the idea of the inferiority of women and the superiority of men (Loewenstern & Moyo, 2003).

In 1981, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights established a system of rights that function within the institutional framework of the then Organization of African Unity (Africa Union) to critically contextualize housing rights defined as the right to freedom of residence; property, though not limited to the right to access public services (Moyo, 2003). It recognizes the elimination of every form of discrimination against women and the protection of the rights of women and children as stipulated in the CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Furthermore, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) draws attention to the link between children's housing conditions to their emotional and social development (Kothari, 2008). In addition, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) of 1992 alternatively introduced the concept of Sustainable Development into planning through the Agenda 21 frameworks that promote liveable,

productive and inclusive cities, towns and villages (UN-Habitat, 2009). Its thrust is local level engagement between the local authority and its citizens, to promote the attainment of the right to participate in the governance of one's place of living (Mitchell, 2003; UN Millennium Project, 2005; United Nations, 2008b).

The outcomes of various international conferences, beginning with the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Istanbul, 1996) recognized housing as a basic human need (Kothari, 2008; Chaeruka 2009). While the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000) commit governments to addressing housing rights. The MDG corresponding to the housing being Goal number seven that addresses the environment. It manifests in the global norm of developing cities without slums.

International Law regards forced eviction as a human rights violation (Loewenstern and Moyo, 2003). Women in urban areas are prone to eviction in the event of a divorce or death of a spouse and in most instances failure to pay their rentals. However, authorities are urged first to consider feasible alternatives and second to adhere to good practice guidelines if eviction is necessary. According to UN Habitat (2009) this law recognizes people's rights to security of tenure and housing. It specifies that people affected should be: consulted before the decision to evict is taken; given adequate notice of when eviction will occur; provided information on the purpose for which land is required; provided with legal right to appeal and legal aid where appropriate; and provided with various rights if evicted, equitable compensation for lost assets, livelihoods and incomes. It is in the context of the outcomes of these international conventions that progress in translating globally defined ideals pertaining to housing rights from a gender perspective in Zimbabwe must be assessed. What follows is critique of the country's responsiveness to global norms and

its attempts towards institutionalizing housing rights in Zimbabwean legislative frameworks and practices.

The chapter reviewed literature on the conceptual framework, theoretical framework and the research questions in relation to the research topic. However, past research and its shortcomings was examined in relation to a gender perspective housing poverty. The next chapter presents the research methodology that the study utilised.