An Analysis of Women's Agency in the Zambian Floriculture Industry using a Global Production Network Approach: Mechanisms and Pathways for Agency

Claudia Mvula Pollen

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

© 2017 The University of Leeds and Claudia Mvula Pollen

The right of Claudia Mvula Pollen to be identified as Author of this work has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Acknowledgments

This journey has both been long and trying but all the while captivating. My aspirations to pursue this PhD would not have been possible without the support of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission. I will forever be grateful to them for awarding me the scholarship to pursue this journey.

I am humbly and eternally grateful that God gave me the strength and courage to believe in myself and bring this PhD to completion.

The completion of this PhD would not have been possible without the invaluable advice of my supervisors, Drs. Anne Tallontire and Polly Wilding. They helped me to think critically and encouraged me to always put the literature and my findings into perspective and to always be reflective of the whole process. I am forever grateful for their reassurance throughout the process.

My gratitude also goes to my darling husband, Gabriel Pollen, who has sacrificed his time and resources to help me get through this process. I thank him for cheering me on even when I thought that the process of the PhD had gotten the best of me. To my children, Michelle, Jaden and Eliana, I thank them for understanding and allowing me to pursue this tough journey and I hope when they grow up, they will understand the sacrifices that we have had to make as a family.

To the women workers on the cutflower farms of Zambia, I thank them for giving me an opportunity to tell their accounts of their experiences and sharing a part of their private lives with me. Their valuable accounts have given me the opportunity to share their encouraging life stories which has also reinforced my aspiration to pursue further applied research and academic scholarship around labour rights. They have inspired me to think beyond the academic space to practical projects that can help the vulnerable of society.

I therefore dedicate this PhD to my family and the women workers.

Abstract

The study of women integrated in export markets in developing countries since the rise and spread of neo-liberalism over the past two and half decades attracted wide-ranging interest and scholarship, with findings identifying both the positive and negative effects of such integration for women. On the one hand, the gender literature identifies women as agents operating under complex traditional and institutional constraints, while on the other hand, development economists aiming at improving the wage gap have called for resources to be deployed to improve women's lives. Examining the ways and circumstances of women's working life in the Zambian floricultural industry has transformed into an inquiry into women's agency. While substantial scholarship has uncovered the strategies (e.g. bargaining) that women use to attain certain outcomes (voice in the home or organising at work), the literature on GPNs and on gender in particular has remained largely silent on the processes underlying, and leading to, the outcomes sought.

Therefore, the premise underlying this thesis was to establish that regardless of what women did, they did not operate in a vacuum, rather, their workplaces were part of a wider international community of global production processes integrated vertically and horizontally. Thus, uncovering the processes and strategies women used required framing the question within this broader framework. This thesis places the understanding of women's agency within the broader context of Global Production Networks (GPNs). I argue that women rationalise their actions and decisions to work by deploying a range of strategies such as negotiations and bargaining, while drawing upon an array of resources through networks in the community and the workplace in the course of their work cycle. This suggests women do not simply do, rather they assess, strategize and then proceed with a course of action to reposition themselves so that what is observed as women's actions is a product of the culmination of different processes i.e. Conception, gestation and delivery.

Key words: Women workers, Agency, GPNs, Cutflowers, Strategies, Resources

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

CC	Commodity Chains
CoC	Codes of Conduct
FG	Focus Group Discussion
GAD	Gender and Development
GCC	Global Commodity Chain
GH	Green House
GPN	Global Production Network
GVC	Global Value Chains
GW	General Worker
ILO	International Labour Organization
JIC	Joint Industrial Council
JCTR	Jesuits Centre for Theological Reflections
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NTZZ	Natural Resource Development College/Zambia
NUPAAW	National Union for the Plantation Agricultural and Allied Workers
PH	Pack House
WB	World Bank
WILSA	Women and Law in Southern Africa (NGO)
WST	World Systems Theory
WWW	Women Working World Wide
ZDA	Zambia Development Agency
ZEGA	Zambia Export Growers' Association
ZFEA	Zambia Farm Employers' Association
ZCTU	Zambia Congress of Trade Unions

Chapter 1.0. Introduction

Issues of gender relating to agency and empowerment in both supply chain and network studies have gained prominence stemming from the realisation that integration of women workers in global trade can both be negative and positive (Said-Allsopp and Tallontire 2014). Yet despite this realisation, studies that document women's own accounts of working in global industries are limited. With very few exceptions, in current research stemming from value chain studies and Global Production Network (GPN) production literature, the agency of workers is under theorised. While a handful of researchers like Riisgaard (2009) analyse agency from a formal perspective of organised labour, this misses the finer details of how the agency of women workers at a personal and non-organised level is affected (see Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010, Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010, Barrientos, Mayer et al. 2011, Wad 2013, Barrientos and Evers 2014).

Nevertheless, the finer nuances of agency have been analysed in the broader domains of socio-cultural and economic literature (see works of Kabeer 2001, Katz 2004) focusing on empowerment outcomes of women's participation in such chains, whilst the purely economic literature tends to have a neo-classical inclination by focusing on the relationship between the firm and suppliers, which tends to see workers as passive instruments, and therefore inputs, of production (Riisgaard 2009, Wad 2013). In order to enhance our understanding of agency in such a context, this study brought to the fore the experiences of women workers based in the floricultural industry of Zambia, utilised an analysis that privileges women workers' experience, the processes that influence their strategies and resources use and their observable choices that are referred to as agency.

The aim of this study therefore was to explore the nature of employment and the related experience derived from such employment integration for women workers. The overall objective of this study was to extend our understanding of how women workers exercise their agency in high value non-traditional agricultural exports like the floricultural industry in Zambia. By so doing, I

explored the extent to which the characteristics of employment within this industry constrain or enable the agency of women workers. The kind of horizontality aimed at in this study was intended to enhance the GPN framework by emphasizing the potential that workers have to make changes in order to live the 'lives they have reason to value' (Sen 1999) based on women's own narratives of the processes by which the strategies and resources they draw upon are called forth and the observed choices/actions. This study on women workers' agency on the cut flower farms in Zambia contributes to nascent analysis of agency of workers as the centre of inquiry, in the context of the GPN framework.

1.1 Background to the study

The past couple of years have seen an emergence of a plethora of terminologies and associated approaches that try to explain chain-like production processes across transnational borders and the value distribution and creation among participants, such as commodity chains, value chains, global value chains and global production networks. According to Henderson et al (2002:439) "[a]lthough the approaches often overlap with one another, they derive from different intellectual domains and, therefore, carry with them different kinds of intellectual baggage". Consequently, this can result in confusion as to the use and meaning of these terminologies (Sturgeon, 2001). The differences, though subtle, can be seen from the way different intellectual standpoints try to contextualise them.

A number of distinct factors are noteworthy – first, the distinctions can be found between those that are developed from the business managerial perspective and those stemming from the economic development stance (Gereffi and Lee 2012); second, a distinction can be seen between those that emphasise the 'chain' metaphor and those that employ the 'network' terminology (Henderson et al, 2002). Each approach has their own limitations and their use depends not only on the researcher's context of study but also discipline, epistemology, ontology and the specific research questions underlying the study.

Value chain studies have been critical in providing a lens through which specific global operations can be examined by researchers from diverse disciplines and have proved fruitful in delineating power relations at play for different actors involved and the prospects for growth (Dolan 2004). The analysis has been particularly useful for policy implications for national governments and international development agencies (Hale and Opondo 2005). Yet despite value chain approaches being able to pinpoint opportunities for inclusion and exclusion for different actors (Dolan 2004), the focus has been on the "firm level" (Barrientos 2013:44) whilst the link between gender and the economic activities have been insufficiently investigated (Dolan and Sorby 2003, Carswell and Neve 2013), and neither has the literature adequately investigated the ways in which the socio-economic environment affects the actions of producers and workers.

The GPN perspective, on the other hand, has focussed on embeddedness of production and labour processes as constituted within the socio-economic and institutional locations of production (Carswell and Neve 2013, Wad 2013), but its broad framework also been criticised particularly by labour geography scholars for a lack of focus on labour agency (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010). Although the Global Value Chain (GVC) and Global Production Network (GPN) literature (discussed in detail in chapter 2) provides important insights into production processes across transnational borders, they have largely developed in parallel and thus proved insufficient to bring out the finer nuances of effects of global production on the vulnerable actors of the chain particularly women workers in the Global South.

For this study, the GPN over the GVC framing was used to explore the experiences of women workers in the cutflower industry of Zambia. I use the former approach to demonstrate how cutflower production and its associated labour is embedded economically, socially, politically and culturally both within the local context of production and its global integration, which is discussed in detail in chapter 2.

As such, Zambia's cutflower industry and its labour implications present itself as an interesting and informative case worth analysing. To begin with, the agriculture sector of Zambia represents a crucial role in Zambia's economic development as it is a major employer accounting for 74% of total employment and a mainstay for rural dwellers. As recently as 2006, both vegetable and floriculture exports accounted for about 40% of total agricultural exports (Bell and Newitt 2010).

Hence, the floricultural industry has been chosen for its economic relevance to the country's foreign exchange earnings and, in particular, the labour related benefits for women (NUPAAW 2008, Bell and Newitt 2010), which has the potential to improve women's position. Aside from the vegetable industry, the floricultural industry was one of the fastest growing export industries in Zambia (Tallontire, Smith et al. 2004, ZDA 2011), growing from US $8 million in 1993/4 to over US $22.6 million in 2009 (Sutton and Langemead 2013). However, it has since faced a massive decline owing to the recent global financial crisis, which has had implications on labour demand (with employment reducing from well over 10,000 workers before 2012 to only about 6,000 within two years) (ZEGA interview, 2015). Despite this decline, it still remains an important employment opportunity and income earner especially for less skilled women workers (NUPAAW 2008) especially that there high levels of unemployment among the youth in Zambia (World Bank 2013).

Two main attributes can be associated with the initial growth of floriculture industry in Zambia. The adoption of liberal economic policies in the early 1990s encouraged entrepreneurs to engage in and set up small businesses as import and export restrictions were reduced (Sutton and Langemead 2013). The aim of such liberal policies was to encourage the diversification away from copper and mineral extraction to non-traditional export products like floriculture production, which had the potential for increasing the country's foreign exchange earnings (ZDA 2011). As such, the need to diversify coupled with deliberate policy initiatives by the government incentivising non-copper economic activity led to the increased presence of foreign players with an interest in the floriculture industry. However, the floriculture industry depends

on tight supply chains making timing and quality the most important categories for the guarantee of sale (Hale and Opondo 2005) and thus indirectly affecting the employment strategies adopted by producers (Dolan and Humphrey 2000, Dolan 2004).

In terms of employment, the growth of the floricultural industry qualified it as one of the key employers in the country (ZDA 2011). It employs about 6,000 workers, of whom 50% are women. This is a small number relative to larger cut flower producers like Kenya (with more than 500,000 people depending on the industry) and other producers like Tanzania and Zimbabwe that have higher absolute numbers of female workers in their cut flower industries. Nevertheless, the industry is significant as Zambia has a population estimated to be just over 15 million people in 2015, with each household having at least six dependents, implying that the industry supports about 10,000 livelihoods (ZDA 2011). Despite the inclusion of women workers at various levels of production and processing in the floricultural industry, women workers continue to face unequal terms of employment compared to their male counterparts (NUPAAW 2008, ZDA 2011).

In general, this is attributed to the terms of employment that women are engaged under, as mainly seasonal and informal workers performing labour intensive activities (Dolan, Opondo et al. 2002) who have very little opportunity for skill development (NUPAAW 2008). The nature of employment for women workers is largely constituted by the complexity and dynamism of floriculture's integration into value chains (Raworth 2004) such as that found in global production networks. The dynamism and complexity of the value chains is compounded by the power relationships at play between the different actors.

To inform the inquiry into women's working conditions in the floricultural industry in Zambia, I used secondary data material to understand and map out the nature and structure of the cut flower industry in Zambia, as well as a broader exploration of how industries with similar characteristics not in terms of production but operations were illustrated. Further, I analysed and scrutinised labour force patterns in the agricultural sector and specifically the

cut flower sector. I then reviewed the existing explanations of women's working conditions in the literature. In order to extend existing explanations that focus on the outcomes of women's agency, I collected primary data to explore the processes behind women's work/home experience as it relates to agency (through women's accounts of strategies and resources) in order to understand the current study context. Having looked at women workers this way, this study therefore challenged the vertical analysis of power that GPN/GVC studies are known for and instead brings horizontality that shows women workers as instrumental in the production process.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The majority of women are employed on an informal/seasonal basis in most high value agricultural value chains with the floricultural industry being no exception and in the process, may suffer from poor working conditions coupled with the difficult of having to manage their double burden of reproductive responsibilities and 'bread winner' roles (Pearson 2003, Selwyn 2009, Pearson 2014). Hence the priorities of women workers extend beyond the need for an increase in wage labour to include other issues of childcare, community involvement and their general wellbeing (Dolan and Sorby 2003). These issues are usually neglected in the GPN/GVC literature and the different ways in which women workers use their agency to materially improve their situation is underplayed. Issues of power within the GPN/GVC literature have focussed on relations between lead firms and their suppliers (Henderson, Dicken et al. 2002).

However, Cumbers, Helms et al. (2010:230), from labour geography, argue that "labour agency is largely written out of the script". Workers, particularly women workers at the bottom end of the production network have been missing in most of the analysis of GPN literature despite the huge numbers employed in export-oriented sectors in developing countries (Dolan and Sorby 2003, Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005). Yet, global sourcing companies continue to draw on women's socially embedded skills which are critical in the production of quality products further along the chain (Barrientos and Evers

2014). The need to employ women's labour in the GPN may be attributed to the ways in which GPNs constitute 'gendered labour markets' (Elson 1999) that reinforce a gendered division of labour with women playing subordinate positions (Dolan 2004, Barrientos 2013).

Furthermore, the way women workers use agency to strategically position themselves in non-traditional export sectors has been underplayed in the cut flower industry and the GPN context in general. Women organising informally within the GPN and forming important networks with NGOs and trade unions has often been attributed to efforts facilitated by other social actors (Barrientos and Evers 2014), rather than women themselves. Moreover, much of this organising is related to ethical trading relations as opposed to the social embeddedness of production. This downplays the processes behind women's observed actions/choices normally seen as agency outcomes that position women as active rather than passive agents. Some studies from labour geography that attempted to bring out organised agency have often concentrated on manufactured goods outside African countries and the links between global economic activities and gender relations have not been fully explored (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010, Cumbers, Helms et al. 2010, Carswell and Neve 2013)

Other parallel literature from GVC, labour geography and gender that have highlighted the gender aspect have not fully linked it to the commercial and social *embeddedness* of production beyond the wage gap and process issues within the workplace. Even when collective action studies on gender such as that done by Baden (2013) and Kabeer, Milward et al. (2013) show how women organise themselves informally, much of their ability to organise is assumed to be by external influence and says very little about women's capability to recognise their own alternatives (Riisgaard 2009) .

Despite some practitioner discussion about organised workers being more productive or efficient as well as more empowered based on economistic/productionist arguments (Pearson 2005, Selwyn 2009, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013), agency as a separate category of analysis has been

downplayed in global trade literature. Thus, taking what has been done so far on women's integration into global markets and extending the GPN framework to women workers' own accounts of work in the floricultural industry, this study places women workers' agency at the centre of analysis. This is with the intention to enhance our understanding of agency in such a context while at the same time exploring the different strategies that women rely on; in other words, which strategies serve them better and which of those are transformatory.

To bridge the gaps identified in the GPN on women's integration into global trade and more specifically to explore the experiences of women workers within the floricultural industry with the intention to enhance our understanding of how women exercise agency and contribute to broader discussions of how such employment opportunities can improve the wellbeing of women workers, this study explored the nature of employment in the floricultural industry of Zambia within the context of the GPN. In this study, I identified and examined the mechanisms and pathways (processes) that constrain and promote the enhancement of women's agency in the workplace and at home. By privileging the experiences of women workers based in the upstream node of the chain, this study enriches the GPN framework in depth and breadth, highlighting the processes that lead to different forms of agency rather than simply focussing on the outcomes of their actions and integration in such production networks.

1.3 Aim, Objectives and Research questions

1.3.1 Aim

The overarching aim of this study was to explore the nature of employment and its effects on women's agency in the floriculture industry of Zambia using a mixture of literature review, theoretical development and empirical fieldwork research. The main motivation for analysing women's agency was to investigate the different pathways and mechanisms of agency that women workers use. By so doing, I explored the extent to which the characteristics of employment within this industry constrains or enables the agency of women workers. I investigated the nature of relationships and processes of

negotiation/bargaining between women workers with commercial actors (employers) involved in commodity exchange as well as non-commercial actors (trade unions, community engagement and household relations) to determine how various interactions open up spaces for agency. I achieved this aim by conducting case studies in the floricultural industry of Zambia to highlight women's own accounts of working in this industry.

To further extend the GPN framework, this study used a gender lens and therefore captured the significance of gendered power relations in both a commercial and social sphere. This extends the GPN framework to include not only economic, social and environmental aspects, but demonstrates how key actors in the social arena affect production and labour dynamics. The research aims were addressed through a qualitative case study, through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.

1.3.2 Research Objective and questions

The overarching research question was to investigate the degree to which employment in the floricultural industry of Zambia enables women workers' exercise of their agency and the extent to which it can be enhanced focusing on the different strategies/resources that women use to exercise agency, individually, at home and in the workplace, including forms of organizing. The secondary questions that informed this study's inquiry are:

1. What are the processes that affect women's employment and experience of it?

2. What motivations, resources and strategies do women use to inform their decision to work?

3. What are the gendered power relations that shape and influence women's experience of employment in the GPN?

4. How does women's work affect household relations and how do women navigate between the two spaces (work and the household)?

5. What are the contours of women's agency and how can they be conceptualised?

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis is as follows: this first chapter has indicated the shortcomings and strengths of the global production network approach with regards to women's agency and pointed out gaps in the literature. The second chapter delves into the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the chain constructs (World Systems Theory, Global Commodity Chains and Global Value Chains) and alternatives to the chain studies by drawing on the literature from the GPN and other gender studies literature. It particularly focusses on agency and empowerment from a gender perspective, spotlighting how women's labour is integrated in export-oriented markets, ending with an analytical framework that is used as a bridge to methods of data collection and analysis.

The third chapter focusses on the methodology and research design and highlights the different methods and activities used by the study as well as the ethical implications of conducting fieldwork in the Zambian cut flower sector. The fourth chapter looks at the context and structure of the Zambian floricultural industry by drawing out the different actors involved and their relationships, including the power play between the unions/government instruments on one hand and management/retailers on the other hand with the women workers. It also sets out the company structure of operations, markets, regulatory standards and modes of employment with regards to the nature of employment created and demanded.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven are based on the women's own narratives about their work experience. Chapter Five sets out the motivations to work and addresses the research question aimed at exploring how women arrive at the decision to work. Chapter Six explores women's experiences within the work floor. It explores women's narratives relating to the work site, their relations and interactions within formal and informal groupings. Chapter Seven seeks to establish how women's work experience affects their home relations and community engagement. It does this by examining decisions around income and expenditure patterns, time-use, child bearing and rearing, as well as how

women use the processes and resources from these interactions to redefine the idea of womanhood. Finally, chapter eight sets as the discussion and conclusion chapter aimed at analysing agency based on how it has been located in women's own experience of work. Beyond locating agency, this chapter conceptualises agency based on the empirical data from the fieldwork data chapters while extending agency beyond what has been theorised in the literature. Based on the empirical chapters, the concept of agency is extended to demonstrate the processes (and outcomes) of women's actions. Finally, this chapter concludes and proposes the way forward for future research.

2.0. Concepts and Theories: Chain Constructs, GPN and Agency

Introduction

In this literature review chapter, I have provided a discussion of the GPN and agency as these bodies of literature have been dominant in various explanations about global trade and related labour on one hand and on another hand, have been prominent in investigating the room for manoeuvre especially for women leaving the reproductive space for more productive work in as far as making choices that embody their wellbeing. It is worth noting that these bodies of literature (GPN and agency) have developed in parallel to each other, thus, combining the two aided the explanations proposed in this thesis about how gendered labour is integrated in the floricultural industry of Zambia, and the processes that lead to the different strategies and resources that women in such production lines call upon. In discussing the two concepts, I sought to contextualise them in terms of their historical and cognate origins in as far as gendered labour integration in global trade is concerned.

To begin with, a discussion of the analysis of commodity chain research (World Systems Theory, Global Commodity Chains, and Global Value Chains) of global production and consumption is given by critically analysing the strengths and limitations of using such frameworks in understanding labour agency. After this I explored an alternative to the chain studies, Global Production Networks (GPN), which I advanced as the main framework of analysis for this study due to its recognition that global production systems are embedded. GPN analysis links commercial, political and social interaction of production to the different players in the network within which production is taking place. For this study, the integration and networking between the commercial, political and social elements/actors combined with its labour implications particularly for women workers makes it even more relevant in expounding on how labour exercises agency.

To augment the GPN framework, I use the upgrading concept a GVC term, to capture the economic (firm) and social (worker level) dimensions of production

combined with the ILO's (1999) Decent Work Agenda to analyse the benefits and limitations of such upgrading options on women worker's agency. I have highlighted the trends in the GPN to demonstrate how women workers are integrated in the chain. To further enhance the GPN framework with a gendered approach, the final sections of this chapter focus on the concepts of agency, which is the main concept of analysis for this study, and empowerment from a woman's perspective, extending it to identify the interplay between the more localized personal forms of individual agency and the globalized gendered market power relations influencing labour dynamics in the production end of the chain, and the overall effects on women's agency. This provides the basis for uncovering the processes that affect the form/type of resources and strategies women workers use resulting in varied personal and collective outcomes.

2.1.   Overview of Chain Analysis: Origins and Status

In this section of the study, I highlight the 'lineage' of chain analysis. Although I recognize that the world of chain analysis is embroiled in debates in terms of use, adoption and interchangeability of concepts and terminologies, I draw on the inspiration from Bair (2009) in highlighting the distinction between the chain studies and those inspired by chain constructs. The construction of commodity chain research is constituted by three research camps: World systems theory (WST), global commodity chains (GCC) and global value chain (GVC) (Fold 2011). The three research camps are argued to have a single intellectual lineage with a common political economy perspective with roots in WST (Bair 2009). It is this perspective that distinguishes them from other frameworks that use the chain inspired constructs like the agro food commodity systems, global production network and the supply chain management. It is noteworthy that while these formulations may seem fundamentally similar, they are, however, technically and conceptually distinct in their research focus, methodology and ambitions of political valences (Bair 2009, Fold 2011). This thesis is mainly inspired by the chain like constructs and primarily uses the concept of GPN (initially developed at the Manchester

school) and aspects of GVC to underscore the network extensions and power interplay between players within this study.

2.1.1. Commodity chains: from commodity chains to value chains

The concept of commodity chains can be traced back to the 1977 and 1986 articles by Hopkins and Wallerstein coming from the political economy perspective that was rooted in WST, in particular, the dependency tradition (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1977). This attempted to give an account of production by tracing the production of commodities back to the initial production site across time and space (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1977, Bair 2009). Subsequently, they used the term 'commodity chains' as a tracking method to show the movements of goods between states and the consequent division of labour taking place. Hopkins and Wallerstein (1986:159) ultimately use the term commodity chains to refer to a "network of labour and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity". However, the gendered division of labour and the production network is undermined in this construct thus making it difficult to locate the type and form of labour.

The use of CC lies in their ability to show how the production of commodities is linked to Global North-South division of labour and indicates the resource distribution taking place between various actors. For this study, this analysis framed around the commodity formulation has been downplayed in order for this thesis to seek alternative concepts that may give a better view of the contribution/role and integration of labour in the production process like the GPN. In response to some of the critiques of CC, the global commodity chains framework became a necessary alternative to some of the weaknesses that the world systems theory and commodity chains presented to researchers attempting to locate labour within this system of production. More importantly, issues of gendered labour agency and particular strategies and resources that women workers draw on have been insufficiently studied within this system of production.

2.1.2. Global Commodity Chains

The second notion of Value Chains comes from Porter (1990) which is described as a tool for analysing the relationships between different actors and activities within an organization (Bair 2009). The concept of value chain feeds into the GCC framework coined by Gereffi (a sociologist) in his landmark book entitled Commodity Chains and Global Capitalism (1994) developed as a "blend of organizational sociology and development studies" (Bair 2009:1).

"The GCC consists of sets of organizational networks clustered around one commodity or product, linking households, enterprises, and states to another within the world economy" (Gereffi and Korzeniewicz 1994:2). Within it, Gereffi (1994) identified four dimensions of chain: The input-output structure, the geographical location, governance structure and the institutional framework. They can be thought of as connecting structures that link people across time and space to the world markets. This relatively new approach was thought to capture development issues of global production processes that other earlier formulations and paradigms like commodity chain framework had failed to address (Gereffi, 1994; Gibbon and Ponte 2005, Bair 2009). It did not focus on the temporal dynamics of commodity chains but on the contemporary manufacturing industries of inter firm relations that linked developing country exporters to global markets (Bair 2009). As such, the focus was on the upgrading of firms which entailed a firm's ability to acquire sophisticated production functions allowing it to improve its position in the supply chain (Gereffi and Lee 2012).Yet, it did not capture the gendered division of labour to determine the labour implications of such production chains.

A further distinction was made between "producer-driven" and "buyer-driven" forms of governance (Gereffi 1994). Producer-Driven Chains (PDC) involved large multinational corporations playing the central role of coordination in the production process and found in capital and technologically intensive industries (Gereffi 1995). Buyer-driven chains (BDC) were characterized by large firms entering the market as brand-named retailers and international traders that control the design, branding and marketing functions without

necessarily owning any productions facilities in the site of production (Gereffi 1994). The BDC are mostly found in labour intensive industries of developing countries like the garment and footwear industries and largely in the horticultural industry and floricultural industry, which this thesis focusses on.

2.1.3. Emergence of Global Value Chain (GVC)

Bair (2009) advances the argument that GVC was mainly grounded in economist and managerial inclinations but mostly building on the GCC approach, but in some ways moving away from GCC and drawing in more disciplines (Sturgeon 2009). The object of inquiry in the GVC approach is the entirety of a product with emphasis on value creation and capture (Neilson and Pritchard 2009; Gereffi and Lee, 2012). According to Gereffi and Lee (2012) the analysis of global value chains involves the full range of activities that firms and workers undertake to bring a product from conception through to different production processes to distribution, marketing and to final end use and eventual disposal after use. The GVC approach thus helps to shed light on the institutions and processes that underlie the exchange of goods taking place between developing and developed countries rather than merely looking at the industrial outputs and export statistics that are more visible elements of economic development.

The central element of analysis of Global Value Chain is the governance of the chain which reflects how power is exerted and distributed by lead firms (through buyer-driven or producer-driven channels) and how this shapes global production (Gereffi and Lee 2012). This has been developed by analysts such as Sturgeon and Kawakami (2011) drawing on neoclassical economics and network analysis, but this is less relevant for my study.

Recently the GVC research has been criticized for not capturing the embeddedness of the different production processes and related labour involved in the production process particularly from scholars from a political economy perspective like (Neilson and Pritchard 2009, Carswell and Neve 2013). It was also criticized for not recognizing the gender aspect of labour

and in most instances viewing labour as a productive asset to be exploited to the benefit of capital (Ponte and Gibbon; Bair 2009 (Riisgaard 2009). However, there have been some studies by different scholars reflecting the need to describe labour as a constitutive factor in the global production process, see for instance (Barrientos, Dolan et al. 2003, Riisgaard 2009, Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010, Barrientos, Mayer et al. 2011, Selwyn 2013) yet agency as deployed by the labour (specifically women workers) remains understudied through such production lines. The preoccupation of the GVC on governance forms of production and the lack of recognition of network production embeddedness is what makes the GPN (which emphasizes how production is embedded beyond the commercial sphere- see 2.1.4 below) the preferred framework of analysis for this thesis.

2.1.4. Alternative to the chain constructs: Global Production Networks

The changing dynamics and complex relations in global markets calls for a framework that is integrative of all the social, political, economic and cultural embeddedness of production and distribution and nature of relationships between the various actors (Dicken 2011). The burgeoning literature on GPN, initially formulated by researchers from the University of Manchester and their collaborators (Coe 2009), was developed primarily to deal with the limitations of the GCC framework. The GPN advocates criticized the GCC construct for its linearity suggesting that that its conceptualization of production and distribution do not adequately convey the complex nature of the social and institutional embeddedness of production, the different networks that transform and condition production and how actors relate with the different institutions in the process (Henderson et al., 2002; Barrientos et al 2003; Coe and Lier, 2010; Selwyn 2013; Rossi, 2013).

The notion of embeddedness commonly referred to in the GPN literature was developed by Polanyi (1971) a firm critic of the neo-classical economics who believed that "all economic activities and institutions are enmeshed in social relations and institutions" (Lie 1991:219). As such Polanyi (1971) concept of embeddedness provides a basis for conceptualising commodity exchange in

global markets. In addition to notion of embeddedness, GPN's line of inquiry considers how global systems of production are constitutive of diverse socio-cultural and institutional contexts of the places they inhabit. Labour geographers and other scholars argue that because of the embeddedness of production in global exchange, the analysis of production needs a broader framework to capture how goods are transformed by wider institutional, social and political structures but at the same time an analysis that shows how areas of production are transformed in the process by focusing on what type of labour is engaged (Coe et al 2004, Cumbers et al 2008, Selwyn 2013, Rossi 2013). However, it is important to mention that Neilson and Pritchard (2009) (from political economy), whilst criticizing the neglect of labour in the GVC/GPN approach, prefer the chain metaphor in analysing how production processes are embedded in a complex social, political and economic maze. Yet, their analysis falls short for unpacking gendered labour agency in the upstream nodes of production. Thus, this study aims to unpack how gendered labour agency can be understood and re-engaged in the debate on embeddedness with the GPN.

According to Coe (2009: 556) "GPN analysis seeks to reveal the multi-actor and multi-scalar characteristics of transnational production systems – and their developmental implications through exploring the intersecting notions of power, value, and embeddedness." This essentially means that the GPN directs its focus to understand how the network of firms operate and their involvement in production and marketing related to their organization at the global and regional level. It also seeks to explore the consequent distribution of power within and across the networks, the related significance of labour and the processes of value creation and capture, as well as the institutions involved (particularly, government agencies, trade unions, non-governmental (NGOs) and international organizations) that influence firm strategies in specific locations. The GPN has a huge framework with dynamic elements that have different implications for upgrading (see discussion below on upgrading) of the different firms and actors involved (Henderson, 2002).

The operationalization of GPN is contingent on the analysis of three interrelated variables, according to (Coe 2009). First is the consideration of value creation, enhancement and capture and, second, issues of power operations in its diversity and its consequent distribution are analysed. Third, the embeddedness of GPN is revealed by showing how it is shaped by different landscapes of social, economic and political spheres.

Within the GPN, there are three related forms of embeddedness: (1) Societal embeddedness relates to the cultural, institutional and historical origins of the actors in question. This can be in form of managerial and labour organizational skills that suppliers come with. While (2) network embeddedness involves the broader institutional networks (including non-business organizations like government and NGOs as well as trade unions), inter firm relationships and actors in the network (individuals and organizations) shape production systems (Coe 2009), (3) Territorial embeddedness looks at how firms and institutions are anchored in different places and how they are constrained/enabled by the social, economic and political of places inhabited. The different forms of embeddedness thus clearly affect the upgrading prospects of firms and workers involved in GPNs. For this thesis, I argue that the forms of embeddedness captured here are relevant in assessing how labour (the workers) and production are affected by factors beyond the production site as will be demonstrated in chapter four, five and seven.

Power within the GPN is interpreted as "relational and varies according to the different actors involved in the network, the structural and informational resources at their disposal and the skills they use to mobilize them" (Coe 2009:559). Further, although power relations in the GPN are not symmetrical, power within the GPN is extended beyond inter firm power relations (corporate) to include the power of the state (institutional), and trade unions, trade associations and NGO involvement (collective) that may also shape the structure of the GPN, which some authors like (Tallontire, Opondo et al. 2011) have called horizontal governance.

It is useful to note a parallel literature from labour geographers whose research initially concentrated on the capitalist economy perspective but has undertaken a shift towards labour agency. Carswell and Neve (2013) presents a useful understanding to labour agency currently under theorized in the GPN literature. Labour geographers criticize the GPN research for its lack of recognition of agency of workers in its analysis and argues that in practice, the labour question has been silent even when the GPN claims to include all actors in the chain in a much more holistic way (Coe 2009, Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010, Cumbers, Helms et al. 2010). The current debate in labour geography relates to a/the longstanding empirical and conceptual role of labour agency in influencing capital regimes for better working conditions. Labour geographers thus argue that GPN analysts need to think about the link between labour agency and the capital regimes (Carswell and Neve 2013).

According to Coe and Jordhus-Lier (2010) the role of labour agency has only started to receive attention not on an individual level, rather, from a more organized perspective. Cumbers et al (2008) further adds that the significance of labour is rarely acknowledged within the GPN literature except in cases where labour affects production through labour actions that affect capital utilization and accumulation. Coe and Jordhus-Lier (2010:8) contend that "a more refined analysis that recognizes the agency of workers and the strategies they employ in an attempt to shift capitalist status quo in favour of workers is needed in the GPN literature." Yet despite the many efforts by labour geographers to include labour agency in their analysis, there has been criticism among other labour geographers about labour agency being under theorized and concentration on successful labour agency stemming from more organized forms of workers and that it lacks a gender focus (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010, Cumbers, Helms et al. 2010, Carswell and Neve 2013, Wad 2013). Issues of agency and empowerment developed from the gender literature have remained unrecognized and therefore not included in the conceptualization of labour agency by labour geographers and GPN researchers alike.

Despite some of challenges presented by labour geographers of the GPN perspective, for this thesis, the GPN over the GCC/GVC remains an important analytical framework for analysing agency of women workers on the cut flower farms. The GPN framework presents a unique opportunity to enhance the approach with a gender perspective and therefore deepen its insights into how global production and trade has gender embeddedness.

Barrientos and Evers (2014) add that an insight into gendered embeddedness of GPN has the potential to capture the significance of gendered power relations in a commercial sphere. Because this study is looking at women's experience of work and their consequent forms of agency, the GVC's vertical preoccupation at the firm level is limited in identifying the diverse social interactions (Henderson, Dicken et al. 2002, Cumbers, Helms et al. 2010) that affect women workers. While labour geography has not sufficiently integrated gender into its analysis, as such, the GPN is useful for this study to explore the multiple lines of social interactions and different spaces of power affecting women worker's agency.

Before delving into the intricacies of agency and power, the next section highlighted the different trajectories of upgrading (a term borrowed from the GVC) but particularly important for this study in as far as labour is concerned within a gendered context regarding how workers' (especially women workers) position within the chain can be improved. The notion of upgrading (economic and social-see 2.2 below) is worth noting here because it indicates the distribution of value and competitive advantage occurring in the firms that are horizontally and vertically integrated in the GPN, whilst at the same time highlights the tension between the need to improve women's position and maintaining a comparative advantage.

A study that comes close to highlighting the gendered division of labour though with an empirical focus on the gender impacts of ethical codes of practice is Barrientos, Dolan et al. (2003). However, more relevant for this study is to analyse how women workers exercise agency within the framework of GPNs and what forms of strategies and resources drawn upon to enhance their

agency. Before delving into those details, in the following section, I analyse the concept of upgrading at firm level and its effect on labour.

2.2. Upgrading and Labour

Here I discuss the concept of upgrading (a GVC term) as it pertains to the firm (economic) and the workers (social) who are connected to global markets. This discussion is relevant for this study as it reveals how conditions of employment are affected by the tenets of the two forms of upgrading. More importantly, it forms the basis of uncovering how gendered labour (social notions of the type and form of labour to be integrated into production and the returns to it) as a constitutive force in the production process can be improved and thus paves the way for the integration of labour agency within the GPN.

Upgrading simply refers to a better or more efficient way of doing things. Upgrading is often associated with enhancement of products at the firm level that results in higher profits and increase in the firm's competitiveness. Possibilities for upgrading are closely linked to the way the chain is coordinated and the manner in which lead firms exercise control over what and how goods and services are produced (Humphrey and Schmitz 2001, Knorringa and Pegler 2006). The assessment of the relationships between lead firms (global buyers and retailers) and producers (local suppliers usually from the developing countries) is central to discussions of upgrading (Knorringa and Pegler 2006).

However, the interaction between global buyers and producers takes place on an uneven playing field due to the nature of the coordination based on asymmetrical power relationships relating to exchange of goods and services (Gereffi and Lee 2012). The conceptualization of economic and social upgrading as a linear process of upgrading led to the separation of two forms: economic and social upgrading which apply to the firm and workers, respectively. The former refers to the increased competitiveness of the firm and the latter referring to the improved worker's conditions with regards to remuneration and welfare enhancement (Rossi 2013, Selwyn 2013).

To this end, the term economic upgrading was adopted for its inclusiveness of many sectors (Humphrey and Schmitz 2001, Bair 2009, Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010). Nonetheless, the term economic upgrading has a firm-focus and is blind regarding the labour dynamics within the chain. Thus, social upgrading was developed to primarily assess the advantages of upgrading to labour and its welfare. While economic upgrading discussions have nothing to do with the specificities of the impact of upgrading on labour, regardless of the form of economic upgrading, it tends to be assumed that upgrading that advantages the firm will also advantage the labour of the firm, which, of course, (Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010) may not necessarily be the case.

2.1.5. Social upgrading

The concept of social upgrading within the GVCs was developed to demonstrate how the position of labour within the chain is affected by changing dynamics inherent in the chain, while at the same time, advocating a favourable environment for better terms of employment (Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010, Barrientos, Mayer et al. 2011, Milberg and Winkler 2011, Selwyn 2013). The suggested firm level focus within economic upgrading was viewed as downplaying the role of labour by ignoring workers' role in enhancing firm competitiveness (Bair 2009, Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010, Rossi 2013).

In an attempt to emphasize the role of labour within the GVC/GPN, the concept of social upgrading has gained currency in labour related studies so much so that International Labour Organization's (ILO) Decent Work Agenda also refers to social upgrading (ILO,1999). Its appeal to development scholars is also largely due to its emphasis on the consideration of rights and decent work conditions that essentially goes beyond conceptualizing labour as a productive factor for capital (Sen 2000, Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010, Rossi 2013, Selwyn 2013). Nevertheless, the concept is fraught with problems with regards to the outcomes for workers and relating to the type of workers upgraded/downgraded in the process. In particular, workers upstream do not necessary benefit from skills upgrade rather, the upgrade often relates to

product upgrade to meet quality demand set by buyers which may be at odds with the social upgrading objectives.

Social upgrading is the process of improving the rights and entitlements of workers as social actors by enhancing the quality of their employment (Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010). The concept of social upgrading was framed within ILO's Decent Work Agenda in terms of four pillars which first appeared in the 1999 87th conference on international labour constituted around: employment, standards and rights at work, social protection and social dialogue. The framework is constituted on the basis of work taking place under conditions of freedom, security and human dignity where rights are protected and adequate remuneration and social coverage is provided (Barrientos et al, 2011, ILO 1999. The ILO sees the achievement of decent work as a necessary ingredient for achievement of gender equality and poverty eradication. The Decent Work Agenda has also highlighted the importance of the inclusion of women's paid and unpaid work as a necessary ingredient for development.

The social upgrading concept has parallels with the capability framework developed by Amartya Sen in his 1999 book entitled 'Development as freedom.' The capability framework stipulates that people's potential functioning are divided into 'doings' and 'beings' (Sen 1999). This translates to people leaving the lives that they value (Robeyns 2003). 'Being' and 'doings' include such aspects of living healthy, being well-fed, being part of community and relating with others. I argue that the capability approach thus focuses on the lives that people live both within and outside the labour market (see Chapter Seven, for example, on women redefining the idea of womanhood, thus reflecting the aspects of doing and being). This approach is particularly important for this thesis in understanding women's labour position as it stresses the role of women beyond the household/community and provides insights into how this role can affect women's capacity to function both in the labour market, household and community work. Further, Sen's capability approach is useful in understanding how gendered institutions can affect the ability of women and men to exercise their agency in labour markets (Robeyns 2003).

For this thesis, relating the capability approach to the Decent Work framework can be seen in the way that the decent work framework is conceptualized. The decent work framework lists a specific set of capabilities that are necessary for workers to live the lives they value. Although the capability approach recognizes the human diversity in determining people's ability to function and can be used more generally to make normative assumptions, it does not list a specific set of capabilities that individuals need to have to live the lives they value (Robeyns 2003). In expounding how gendered labour is affected by the application of ILO decent work agenda (see farm set-up and general conditions in chapter 4 and 6 about workers experience of work within specific farm contexts of the cutflower sector), I argue that the decent work framework having been constituted to provide a specific list of capabilities that are essential for workers to live a decent life such as rights at work, freedom from discrimination and freedom of association, serves to illuminate how agency of workers in the workplace can be actualized. The set of capabilities stipulated within the decent work agenda thus significantly affects the social upgrading/downgrading of workers especially relating to the terms and form of employment that women undertake in different production lines (Hale and Opondo 2005, Barrientos, Mayer et al. 2011).

Within social upgrading, there are two categories – these are (a) measurable standards (which are easier to quantify and measure due to their visibility) and (b) enabling rights (which are processes that are dependent on social relations and power). Measurable standards have to do with incomes, employment contracts, working hours and things to do with physical health and environmental protection. Enabling rights include such aspects as freedom of expression, elimination of discrimination in the work place, freedom to organize/collective bargaining. Enabling rights are therefore the full expression of rights and entitlements of workers as social actors (Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010, Barrientos, Mayer et al. 2011).

Selwyn (2013) adds that the decent work framework's dependency on other regulating bodies to ensure that policies of decent work are adopted makes the ILO formulation of decent work simply a framework to explain the

existence of indecent work. This thesis contends that the Decent Work Agenda is weak on explicitly challenging power structures and its implementation is highly constrained by global outsourcing patterns. To shed more light, global outsourcing patterns invariably affect how local firms choose to employ labour (as shown in chapter four and six). For instance, when global demand is high, local firms may be compelled to hire additional labour, albeit on short-term highly flexible basis, to meet this escalated demand. This additional labour is however redundant in times of low global demand. To circumvent this redundancy and its associated cost concerns, firms strategically allow for flexibility in the tenure of employment (Barrientos, Mayer et al. 2011, Rossi 2013). Therefore, this shows that there are tensions between the need for firms to be have comparative advantage and at the same time meet the social upgrading objectives (see chapter 6 where workers explain that overtime is compulsory and unpaid).

Despite its weaknesses, I observed that the Decent Work Agenda/social upgrading is regarded as a starting point for workers, trade unions, community organizations and international labour activists all over the world to claim the rights of workers and access to better terms of employment and entitlements within and beyond the workplace. The trade union view is that "workers are protected only by the application of good labour laws and through their self-organization and collective bargaining" (Justice 2002:92). However, for countries with weak labour laws and enforcement mechanisms, the challenge for trade unions is their limited capacity to claim rights for the workers based on informal and flexible terms (Bell and Newitt 2010). Many of the workers employed on a short-term basis tend to be non-organized and hence are not covered by the full range of rights as those workers on permanent contracts.

As more companies are pressurized to adopt labour codes of practice (see chapter 4), trade unions could potentially use this as leverage to access better working conditions for their members beyond the employment relationship (Justice 2002). What remains to be seen, is the extent to which decent working conditions can be accrued to all workers irrespective of the tenure and conditions of employment (see more detailed analysis in section 2.3 on

flexibilization and casualization of employment and the implication of the decent work agenda).

In the next section (2.2.2), I develop the framing of how social upgrading relates to the different attributes of the labour market particularly on gendered labour markets. This is in line with the argument posited by Barrientos, Dolan et al. (2003) stressing that labour markets are highly gendered consequently affecting the type of labour used at different levels of production (see also (Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005). This further foregrounds this thesis's argument about how women exercise agency in such production lines.

2.1.6. Social upgrading, the gendered labour market

The notion of gendered labour market appeared as a prominent feature in some literature e.g. Barrientos, Dolan et al. (2003) and Elson (1999) who saw labour markets as gendered institutions that operate at the intersection of productive and reproductive economies, constituted by structures that are considered to be 'bearers of gender'. Elson (1999:611) contends that "the structures of a gendered labour market are informed by perceptions, norms and networks of gender relations seen as dynamic elements that contain both aspects of continuity and transformation." This feminist perspective poses a direct critique to the mainstream economists' view that labour markets are 'gender neutral' (Elson 1999, Barrientos, Dolan et al. 2003). The resulting subordination of women's work is characterized by constant reconstruction of gender social relations, in which subordination of women's labour is ever present in the labour markets (Pearson 1998). The reproductive work of women conditions how they provide their labour compared to men and is also an important element for social reproduction of labour.

The association of women's labour with such notions as 'nimble fingers' have justified the feminization of labour in certain sectors particularly the garment, horticultural and floricultural industry (Pearson 1998, Dolan Opondo et al. 2003) According to Selwyn (2009:189) "the term feminization of labour is used to refer to an absolute increase in women's participation in the agricultural

wage labour and an increase in the percentage of women workers relative to men in the sector". Pearson (1998) adds that feminization of labour has not only replaced men's labour force, but has been taking place in a highly flexible and deregulated market. Men largely take up more permanent positions of work usually with higher skills while women tend to be located in flexible working conditions moving between reproductive and productive work which require fewer formally taught skills (Elson 1999, Barrientos, Dolan et al. 2003, Dolan 2004).

This thesis thus contends that the reason for the increase and therefore implied preference for women's labour is partly due to the socio-economic vulnerability they face as a cheaper and lower skilled labour force. Some conventions see women as dependent on their male counterpart's earnings thereby exposing the perception that their contribution is merely a safety net against financial inadequacies (Barrientos, Dolan et al. 2003). Pearson (1998) argues that women were often the preferred labour force in export-led industrialization due to their perceived nature of docility, manual dexterity and their ability to easily perform monotonous production tasks which has further facilitated demand for higher quality goods at the expense of lowering the cost of women's labour (Barrientos 2013).

The consideration of a gendered economy that separates reproductive (usually unpaid) and productive work (sometimes paid work) is essential in identifying the social upgrading options for women. The recognition that these labour market structures inherently impose inequalities on women's labour participation calls for an analysis that looks into women's own accounts that reveal the spaces available for agency and how agency is acted out. Thus, I argue that the construction of the market as a socially embedded institution implies that its system of operation cannot be isolated from its gendered nature (assigning tasks according to socially accepted gender roles). To establish its impact on labour calls for an examination of how such gendered spaces are affected (by retailer and producer strategies) and indeed how women worker's choices/motivations/strategies are affected in the process (see Chapters Five, Six and Seven).

As earlier discussed, labour markets within the GPN (particularly those in garment and floricultural sectors) have been described as highly flexible and depend on the employment of informal labour to function. The following is a discussion of how such strategies by producers play out for labour, particularly women workers.

2.2. Trends in the GPN: Flexibilisation and Casualization of labour

The rising flexibilisation of women's labour can be traced back to the economic policies implemented by most countries in the Global South in response to the debt challenges they were facing (Selwyn 2009). International financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) encouraged countries from the Global South to venture into export diversification away from primary commodities. In other words, the existing demand in the Developed Country markets stimulated the development of new export industries as the Global South countries diversified away from the traditional exports. According to Selwyn (2009), the donors (IMF and WB) emphasized the high prices and employment implications that would be accrued for South Countries venturing in export led industries (Dolan and Sorby 2003). Consequently, many South Countries began to increase their cultivation in the export led products but with women constituting the majority of the labour force.

Consequently, casualization and flexibilisation of labour in GPNs is on the rise as the formal sector becomes increasingly informalized, with increased participation of groups such as 'women and rural migrants' Barrientos et al (2011: 304). This has meant that it has opened up spaces for women to be engaged in wage labour and for women to leave unpaid family work.

The reality for countries producing goods for global market is that the growth of flexibilisation of labour is seen as way of maintaining global firm's competitiveness whilst reducing their labour costs (Milberg and Winkler 2011, Barrientos 2013) thereby affecting the social upgrading objectives. The norm for women in the Global South countries is that they provide their labour power

in sectors that are unregulated or offer very little protection for their work (Pearson, 2007, Barrientos, 2008). Other authors have supported this view by arguing that workers get 'leaned on' (Kidder and Raworth 2004, see for instance Raworth and Kidder 2009) as a way for firms to offset the cost of production. Furthering this argument is a study by Patel-Campillo (2012:273) examining the "production-consumption relation of export oriented cutflowers" adds that "central to the restructuring drive by retailers are the cost cutting strategies often achieved through flexibilization of employment practices in which women constitute the bulk of the workforce". This thesis thus contends that such acts of maintaining competitiveness (retailers and supplier strategies) and the general race to the bottom leaves very little space for social upgrading and the effective implementation of the tenets of the decent work agenda less appealing.

Compounding this argument of the race to the bottom is that the informal sector that the majority of women increasingly find themselves in is the norm rather than the exception in the Global South countries (Milberg and Winkler 2011) so that feminization and flexibilisation of labour go side by side (Patel-Campillo 2012). Households in South Countries are believed to accept flexible employment terms to cushion their demand for cash to meet daily needs and to perform their productive and reproductive tasks more easily (Pearson 2007, Barrientos 2013). However, there have been many contestations in the feminist literature about women's income and decision making in the household.

As evidence to some of the assertions made above although in the context of the floricultural industry, I demonstrate that the receipt of income may have led to some level of personal financial independence and empowerment for some women (as shown in chapter 6 and 7), other women have limited control over expenditures and in worst cases reports of conflict and gender violence have been recorded in some households supporting similar contestations about working women advanced by some feminist authors see (Pearson 1998, Elson 1999, Pearson 2003, Kabeer 2005, Wilson 2008).

However, feminist scholars like Kabeer, (2005); Parpart, 2010; Pearson, 2005) have cautioned against sweeping assumptions of income significantly changing the choice set of women. Advancing this argument is Pearson (2007) who warns that women's paid income should not be mistaken to mean increased autonomy and empowerment for women. Rather, considerations of who has the power to make decisions about women's paid income at household level can reveal the extent to which paid employment for women is empowering/disempowering (Kabeer 2001).

Moreover, as women enter the gendered labour market, they face challenges that constrain their ability to move to higher earning activities (Pearson 2007). Even when there have been increases in paid work for women, community and domestic labour duties are still predominantly performed by women (Kabeer 2000, Friedmann 2006). This results in a double burden in the workload performed by women to that of men (as shown in women's time use in chapter 6). The choices that women make regarding entering the market for paid work or micro enterprises are often informed by their need to balance reproductive and productive work (as shown in chapter 6 and 7) though the defining lines of duty are blurry for the women involved. Additionally, the socially ascribed roles women perform in the workspace tend to be labour intensive with very little opportunity to upgrade to more skilled work (Barrientos, Dolan et al. 2003).

 I further demonstrate in the empirical chapters (5,6 and 7) that this gendered categorization of employment combined with exploitation of women in the workplace constitutes women's labour as a low cost source of value creation and value capture (Barrientos and Evers 2014:45) consequently, downplays the potential of social upgrading and the achievement of decent work. This further characterizes women's work as an extension of their reproductive work considered to have no exchange value (Moser 1989). As Cornwall (2013:viii) adds, "women's lack of sources of security, recognition coupled with poor working conditions and rights undermine the more positive, empowering role of paid employment." Yet this thesis advances that despite the challenges the women face in the workplace, women continue to value

work as can be noticed in their motivation and experience of work (see chapter 5 and 6) and see work as an opportunity to reposition themselves in the workplace and the home (see chapter 7).

For this reason, in this thesis, similar to Kabeer's (2000) work on the garment industry in Bangladesh, I acknowledge that an analysis of women's participation in the labour market needs to go beyond the workplace because women's ability to use their earnings is shaped not only by the patriarchal power relations embedded in deep cultural norms, but their own conviction about the importance of earning an income. These relations about the use of income inadvertently affects, explicitly or implicitly, the strategies and opportunities for women's agency. As it has been earlier noted, aspects of gender, in particular worker perspectives focusing on such aspects as agency and potential power changes have insignificantly received attention in the GPN literature.

For this thesis, in as far as unravelling women's experience of employment, an examination of the spaces of agency and potential power changes through the strategies and resources that women depend upon foreground the purpose of this study. In order to outline the spaces of agency as experienced by women workers, the following section engaged in an in-depth discussion of the notions of agency and power from the perspective of gender and development literature. This fits into the broader inquiry of this study in establishing the extent to which women worker's agency within such GPNs is enhanced.

2.3. Agency and Power: Positioning women in GPNs

2.3.1. Agency

The following section provided an overview of major debates of agency as perceived and used by different scholars from different fields (development, gender, feminist and economic literature). In this section, I will show how the use of agency is informed by different contexts and theoretical standpoints. More important for this study is to enhance our understanding of agency through an examination of women workers' own accounts of agency on the cut flower farms in Zambia. As indicated by Riisgard (2007), labour development in global trade becomes the focus of analysis when labour agency is incorporated in GVC analysis and its contribution to capital is acknowledged. Going beyond GVC inter-firm analysis and its preoccupation with upgrading for firms, and extending the GPN analysis beyond an interrogation of the interplay between the commercial spheres of production and social embeddedness of production, requires a gender lens to ascertain the different manifestations of agency available for vulnerable workers (Barrientos 2013, Barrientos and Evers 2014).

Here, I argue that the consideration of women workers' agency allows "a shift in focus from social structures to the capacity of different groups and individuals to exercise choice and pursue their goals as well as important insights into the perspectives of vulnerable groups/individuals and their struggles to challenge gender structures and negotiate change" (Kabeer 2005:107). This will feed into the broader inquiry of how agency can be enhanced from the integration of women in the global trade from a GPN context.

In a neoliberal world where competition and profit maximization are the pinnacle of policy recommendations and deliberations, it may be taken for granted that remuneration is the virtuous rationale as to why women choose to work, yet other equally important factors and features may well be at play. The economic and agricultural studies literature foregrounding such neoliberal narratives has shifted focus and moved towards inquiring about

wage gaps between women and men, in the guise of propagating gender equality (Duflo 2011, FAO 2011), However, proceeding this way narrows inquiry and analysis without adequately questioning the more structural and mostly dynamic conditions that lead women workers to choose employment (in agriculture). Although FAO (2011:3) identifies the "gender gap" in its broader conceptualization, as capturing gender structures that inherently restrict women from accessing "resources and opportunities", their vantage point falls short as it sees "women" as "farmers" as opposed to workers and entrepreneurs. Policy advice and recommendation thus aim at minimizing this observed "gender gap", denying itself from more rewarding questions pertaining to *how* women, as part of this complex social fabric, make decisions, quite apart from *what* decisions they make and the system they confront. Agency considers the processes and interactions involved in making decisions (Kabeer 2010). The economic development and women's empowerment connection (Duflo, 2011) thus fails to recognize these processes and interactions that reflect women's agency.

Earlier literature on development and welfare of women from women's movements such as Women in Development (WID) indicates a focus on ensuring rights and the wellbeing of women as an important indication of achieving better treatment for women (Cornwall, Harrison et al. 2007). However, the objectives of the women's movements slowly evolved from a welfare focus to the active role of women's agency (Sen 1999) by allowing for a more responsive gender analysis particularly from the Gender and Development Approach (GAD).

In fact, several studies within the literature have focused more on issues of the role of active agency by oppressed women workers themselves as a motor for change and possibility for empowerment outcomes by women themselves (Sen 1999, Kabeer 2005, Kabeer 2010, Parpart and Kabeer 2010, Jones, Smith et al. 2012, Alkire, Meinzen-Dick et al. 2013, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013, Parpart 2013). For example, (Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013) give empirical evidence from writing about 'weapons of the weak' in which they narrate how women waste pickers and migrant workers have used their agency to

collectively organize and pressure the councils for recognition of their roles and status as workers. This demonstrates in part, that women's wellbeing can only be achieved by women exercising their agency through their recognition of their inequality (a recognition stemming from the women's own understanding of their situation or the power that women can potentially have when they organize themselves). The recognition stated here will be elaborated on by the three stages of agency that I have advanced in Chapter Eight (gestation, manifestation and delivery) in showing how women access and strategize using the resources at their disposal before the agency outcome is observed).

According to (Sen 1999), agency is the responsibility that people have to make changes so that they can live the lives they have reason to value. The responsibilities that people have is bound by their capabilities and their substantive freedoms which are embedded in the institutional domains of society. Well renowned feminist and development scholar (Kabeer 1999) makes a useful contribution to the notion of agency by bringing the element of choice, meaning the "possibility for alternatives" the ability to have chosen otherwise" (:437). In so doing, she goes on to argue that not all choices are equal in significance and consequence and thus distinguishes between 'first order' choices and 'second order' choices with the former having critical significance to the lives of people and the latter as less consequential but important to one's quality of life (Kabeer 1999).

Consequently, I argue that understanding agency requires the navigation of choices, because the ability to make choices is enmeshed in the use of resources embedded in institutional relations of society contained in the market, community and family. Kabeer (1999) also adds that agency should not only be understood as decision making, but other less measurable manifestations of agency such as negotiation, manipulation and deception are equally important in understanding the choices that people make (Kabeer 1999). However, to understand the choices that women make, we have to bear in mind that women have three roles in society which are socially constructed: productive, reproductive and community work (Moser 1989) (see

empowerment section below). These triple roles determine how women see themselves in society and the ability to exercise agency. As such, she makes a distinction between passive agency and active agency. This is made to underscore the point that women who choose to exercise active agency do so to achieve valued goals beyond the household chores and to some extent represents the expansion of choice. Passive agency reflects absence of other imagined alternatives and are usually made as a survival strategy in the absence of the loss of a breadwinner (Parpart and Kabeer 2010). For this thesis, these variations of women's agency have been downplayed as demonstrated throughout the empirical chapters that women's exercise of agency is made from an active position rather passive as earlier suggested by Kabeer (1999). That in actuality, no agency is passive agency, rather, circumstances surrounding a decision are made from either an adaptive or pro-active response (discussed in Chapter 5).

Hence, two variations of agency have been derived from the analysis (proactive and adaptive agency) that are indicative of how women exercise their active agency within the given dynamics/circumstances. Thus, this allows us to understand more clearly how people negotiate the different spaces of power and the decision making process.

For Cleaver (2007), agency is shaped by the capabilities and institutional environment within which individuals are based. She defines agency as the ability of individuals to be originators of acts but those acts being informed by broader institutional relations. Earlier writings on agency from social theorists like Giddens (1987) and Long (1992) point to social structures as the basis for understanding room for manoeuvre for individual agency. Giddens (1987) and Long (1992) argued that individuals have the capacity to develop unique mechanisms to deploy resources in a way that allows them to cope with the most difficult circumstances presented by structure. The choices of individuals can thus be said to be bound in institutional arrangements that inform people's choices and determine the outcomes of people's choices (Sen 2000, Robeyns 2003, Cleaver 2007). More importantly, Kabeer (2010) and other scholars agree (Sen 1999, Pearson 2005, Cleaver 2007, Riisgard 2007, Selwyn 2009),

that analysing agency points away from social structures by highlighting the ability of individuals and groups, individually or collectively, to make decisions based on their own objectives. Thus, I recognise that social (and economic) structures are necessary because they set the context within which agency is exercised.

In extending the concept of agency developed by Kabeer (1999), I suggest that Katz (2004) formulation of agency may offer a complementary alternative to Kabeer (1999) work on 'first order' and 'second order' choices and different manifestations of agency, in her work on labour geography and socio-cultural anthropology. Katz (2004) in her book '*growing up global'* argued that local people's agency was manifested in different modalities when they were confronted with changes in global dynamics. The choices the local poor made reflected the struggle for negotiation and manipulation and their need to sustain a level of participation in a highly powered globalized world. For this thesis, Katz' (2004) modalities of agency may offer a somewhat different but complementary perspective to understanding how women workers negotiate change in globalized commercial spheres that are dominated by purchasing power practices of large firms (Barrientos, 2011; Milner and Winkler, 2011).

Katz (2004) contends that modalities of agency should be looked through Resilience (coping mechanisms), Reworking (attempt to recalibrate power relations) and Resistance (taking back some labour time). These modalities more or less complement the passive and active agency outcomes forwarded by Kabeer (2005; 2010) but still do not explain the processes or circumstances that facilitate or contribute to agency. Thus, this thesis attempts to fill this gap by looking through the different forms and processes (resource, strategic and everyday agency[1]) of agency (see chapter 8 on conception, gestation and delivery). The analysis of agency through Katz' formulations has its challenges with respect to labour agency, especially as it is still unclear "whether the categorizations made by Katz refers to intentions or consequences of labour

---

[1] The use of everyday agency as a concept should not be confused with Scott's idealisation of 'everyday resistance'. Everyday agency is not restricted to resistance, it also includes conformity and coping strategies in daily tasks and relations.

agency" (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010:216). The dividing line between these forms of agency is quite blurry – what may constitute resilience and/or reworking, may, to another formulator, be regarded as resistance. In Katz formulations (see for instance Katz 2004, Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010, Cumbers, Helms et al. 2010), no attempt was made to link these forms of agency with potential power changes happening at an individual or collective level. This makes the formulation unclear as to whether these formulations of agency can have empowering effects for the actors. Yet, this does not make Katz analysis any less relevant for this study, because the different modalities of agency can be useful in categorizing how women exercise agency through their experience of work and the reasons they give for doing so.

Feminist scholars have thus pointed to accounts of workers involved in paid employment as a vehicle for understanding the different spaces of agency (Pearson 2003, Kabeer 2005). Because this study is focused on analysing women's agency in the cutflower industry of Zambia, their agency has to be contextualized within the context of their workspace and the actors that influence that space (productive) and home life (reproductive and community). The acts of resilience, reworking and resistance are overlapping and mutually sustaining (Katz 2004). Furthermore, these modalities, combined with Kabeer's passive and active connotations of agency have been downplayed/extended in this current framework of study to adaptive and proactive agency (see Chapter Five and Eight for a more detailed analysis of these).

The fact that the cut flower industry constitutes many actors that have different roles to play regarding production, distribution and marketing and code setting, women's strategic choices are constrained by the demands of many other actors in the chain (Dolan and Sorby 2003). Hence, lead firms, employers and labour contractors create jobs that are specific to the 'cheapness' embodied in women's labour. The 'cheapness' considered here in this study can be seen in the way women are incorporated into the production network and the returns that women workers are able to glean from their participation as informal and flexible workers (Dolan and Sorby 2003, Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005,

Barrientos and Evers 2014, Pearson 2014). This thesis centres on an understanding that goes beyond the wage that women workers glean from their labour participation to considerations of alternatives that become available or unavailable when women actively use their agency through different resources and strategies.

Workers' identities in high value export products are informed by different resources that they employ that are based on uneven and culturally differentiated spaces and scales which they occupy (Kabeer 2005, Wilson 2008). I argue that individuality may not alter unequal power relations in the social structures because agency depends on a unique deployment of resources through strategic interactions. However, organizing and the collective action of women workers may be viewed as an alternative to enhancing their capabilities to make claims and expectations (Baden 2013, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013, Barrientos and Evers 2014) that may potentially bring about change. There is a general agreement, although often said with caution from some feminist scholars that organizing of workers can be a platform for collective strengthening of women's agency to challenge their subordinate position in the labour market (Pearson 2005, Kabeer 2010, Baden 2013, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013).

However, constrained working environments that are power laden can have catastrophic results for the vulnerable workers (as shown in chapter 4 and 6), reducing the very agency of workers who are thought to be need of empowering (Pearson 2005, Baden 2013, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013). The issue of workers having different identities and interests sometimes pops up as a constraint to collective organizing among other constraints (Selwyn 2009, Baden 2013, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013) yet this challenge seems to be averted once women creatively come up with their own interests and problems rather than those driven by external facilitators (Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013) as has been shown in chapter 6 how women workers informally organize for extended financial planning in *chilimba*.

Collectivity, as argued by Kabeer (2010) and Wilson (2008), presents an opportunity for women to challenge the oppressive patriarchal structures that inhibit their potential for transformative change. However, exercising agency is not in itself necessarily empowering rather, exercising agency to challenge rather than reproduce inequality is one way in which they can be empowered and this is only likely to happen once women are able to recognize their conditions of inequality (Barrientos and Evers 2014, Pearson 2014). Women's capacity to make strategic choices that challenge their insubordinate positions is what makes the notion of agency empowering (Kabeer, 2010). However, as this thesis shows, some agency acts can serve to satisfy short-term interests at an individual level and negatively affect the potential for collective organizing (see chapter 6), in fact, it is very rare that women's actions directly challenge the patriarchal structures other than to reshape them as shown in chapter 7. The following section delves into assessing what constitutes as empowering acts according to feminist development literature.

2.3.2. Empowerment

The feminist literature has contributed considerably to women's empowerment and wellbeing by recognizing women's capacity to bring about significant changes through strategic choices (Rowlands 1995, Kabeer 2005, Alkire, Meinzen-Dick et al. 2013, Pearson 2014). Feminist interpretations of power are particularly useful as they go beyond institutional forms of power and instead focus on the personal effects of empowerment (Rowlands 1995). It is this personal effect of power that this study is interested in exploring for women workers on cut flower farms of Zambia. Women's empowerment must be accompanied by changes at a personal level (*Conscious* awareness of the need to change) and through collective action to bring about a desired community level change. Personal and collective power are mutually reinforcing and are both needed if women's empowerment is to be sustained (Rowlands 1997).

An understanding of empowerment requires an initial analysis of power. Power is associated with people's ability to make strategic choices and their

capacity to exercise influence (Kabeer 2010). Accordingly, Kabeer (2005:13) suggests that "Empowerment therefore refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability". Empowerment embodies within it options, choice, control and power (Dolan and Sorby 2003). The terms embodied in empowerment represent women's ability to make decisions and create outcomes of significance to themselves, their families and communities (Dolan and Sorby 2003:43).

To get a more comprehensive analysis of what empowerment of women embodies, four closely related forms of power but distinctively different are analysed that constitutes both negative and positive aspects of agency in relation to power (Kabeer 1999) – 'power over', 'power from within', 'power with' and 'power to' (Rowlands 1995, Kabeer 2010, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013). Power in the mainstream sense has often been attached to negative connotations to the extent that it reflects 'power over'(Kabeer 2010). By this, it is meant that dominant groups impose their decisions on weaker groups in which power of one reflects absence of power for the other group a 'zero sum' situation as depicted by Rowlands (1995). In development practice, if women are seen to make strategic choices and show a level of autonomy due to access to paid work, it may be seen as a threat to men's power position, both in the home and outside it

Here, I argue that women workers should both be viewed as fulfilling social and economic roles within a broader societal context. The decision to work represents the decision to earn, and not so much what earnings can do for them, but how earnings enable them to access what they hold dear, including what earnings represent in perhaps transforming how a working woman is viewed, or views herself (see chapter 6 and 7). The transformative potential of incomes is seen both in the tangible (material) sense and in the intangible (emotional/spiritual) sense. It should however be noted that the decision by the woman to work outside the home is transformative in as far as it reconstructs how a woman is perceived in the home and the community (Hansen 1997, Kabeer 2000) yet it concurrently confronts notions of gender ideologies and conflicts in redefining men's roles in the process, and how men

respond to them (Kabeer 2000, Evans 2014). The extent to which men recognize, accept or confront this redefinition has a bearing on what kind of agency and choice women exercise or institute. For example, what does a woman's decision to seek (and find) employment, whatever the motivation, say about a man's traditional role? (see chapter 5 and 7 for this).

Delving into other forms of power (extending the dynamism of power to enrich the analysis of women's strategic use of resources), in recent times, particularly from the feminist perspective, has been viewed as encompassing positive aspects. Such positive power changes can be categorized as either 'power from within', which entails undoing the internalized oppression that disables individuals to exercise their agency, or 'power to', important "for the capacity to act, to exercise agency and to realize the potential of rights and voice" (Gaventa 2006:24). These forms of power are mainly from a personal level but are a precondition for action to power with.

The fourth category, 'power with', reflects the collectivity with which women choose to engage in to make strategic choices that go beyond their individual needs (Rowlands 1995, Kabeer 2010). This suggests that women are likely to make transformative changes in their subordinate condition when they act together (Kabeer 2010). Both feminists and development practitioners emphasize the importance of collective action and solidarity to overcome gender inequalities through 'power with' to overcome 'power over' by dominant players (Rowlands 1995, Kabeer 2010, Sweetman 2013). Sweetman (2013) notes that through collective actions, women can share their experiences of gender injustice and oppressions that affects their ability to function more effectively in the labour market. As earlier mentioned, personal and collective power is important for women workers as it increases the chances of bringing out significant changes in their positions of inequality in the long run (see how gender committees and Chilimba in Chapter Six helped women to overcome some obstacles in the workspace and financial constraints respectively).

Another complementary literature worth considering to extend the work on empowerment is Caroline Moser's work (1989) on gender planning, which

recognizes the importance of recognizing women's triple roles as productive, reproductive and community work. She argues that women's reproductive and community work is often unrecognized by society as whole since it is seen as 'natural' work performed on the basis of women's gender and on the basis of its exchange value which is considered to be non-productive unlike productive work that is valued through a wage (Moser 1989). She further argues that this lack of recognition of women's 'triple roles' means that women are heavily burdened and their work is made invisible by policy makers (Moser 1989). For women's work to be recognized more effectively by planners, it needs to be based on gender interests distinguished as practical gender needs and strategic gender needs and not necessarily on women interests (Moser 1989).

Moser (1989) bases her work on Molyneux (1985:232) who argues that gender interests are those that women or men develop by virtue of their social positioning through gender attributes and that gender interests can either be strategic or practical each derived in different ways. Molyneux (1985) contribution about the distinction between practical and strategic gender interests offers a complementary explanation to the understanding of agency and the different forms of power from personal to collective action. She argues that practical interests when bound in a group that is informed around women's practical gender interests can be a pathway to women's empowerment. Practical gender needs are contained in the struggle for women to fulfil their roles as wives and mothers and these are inductively derived by women themselves, but by themselves rarely alter subordinate power relations. She further adds that practical gender needs can influence and determine strategic gender needs which are deductively derived (Molyneux 1985). In so doing, strategic gender needs have the potential to alter the predominate power relations under which women are subjected to (Moser 1989).

The advanced differences between strategic and practical gender needs therefore complement the different modalities of agency earlier discussed by (Kabeer 1999), (Katz 2004). In accepting their roles and responsibilities, women make first order and second order choices to manage their triple roles

(acts of getting by and reworking may be prominent in their strategic actions for change). But as women workers consciously become aware of their subordination and need for change (changing subordinate position), they begin to develop some resistance through using their voice and activism (through collective action and social networking) in ways that may challenge power struggles but not alter them and therefore meet strategic gender needs. However, I further argue that acts of resistance and strategic choices for poor women working in constrained environments are rare due to the way institutions are gendered (Parpart 2013) and thus perpetuate women's subordination. Therefore, the ability for women to make strategic and practical needs have to be examined in the broader context of norms and traditions and spaces for power.

I also argue that not all forms of choice are empowering, so too there is nothing inherently empowering about the exercise of agency. Agency is relevant to empowerment in so far as it represents the "operationalization of strategic choices[2]" (Kabeer, 2010: 17), focusing solely on the *what* and not on the *how* of choices and decisions cannot fully inform inquiry. This study therefore does not claim that the positive effects of work empowered women, rather, it shows the extent to which these changes (earning an income, decision making and involvement in informal financial groups (Chilimba)) potentially opens up some space for women to reposition themselves and in some instances may have resolved women into acts of getting by/survival strategies/coping mechanisms (see every day strategies/agency and resource agency in chapter 5 and 6) and in some instances bound women to their more traditional roles (see chapter 7) than their role as income earners.

2.4. Conceptual framework

For this thesis, I interrogated the forms and processes of agency as exercised by women workers within the workspaces of the cutflower industry. I augmented this investigation with additional lines of inquiry pertaining to what

---

[2] Strategic choices are those that are life-altering, in the dramatic sense or in piecemeal incremental fashion (Kabeer, 2010: 17)

resources/strategies women utilize at a personal and collective level and how these forms of agency reinforce each other. This investigation is aimed at examining how agency can be enhanced from the GPN context and more importantly helps to inform the main research objective of this study in as far uncovering how the work space and home relations are affected and influence women's agency outcomes.

To do this, the conceptual framework draws insights from a consideration of women's agency within the work space; that is, the contribution of women's labour within the GPN/GVC and resulting income (Barrientos, Dolan et al. 2003, Pearson 2003) to other forms of agency that are called upon in the process of working particularly in their home or community spaces. Thus, it includes Moser's (1989) triple roles but goes beyond these roles by incorporating the traditional beliefs as these affect women's perception of their roles. Further, a consideration is made to investigate the circumstances (adaptive and proactive agency) that resolve women to make certain choices and the processes that lead to the use of different resources and strategies (Kabeer 1999) which serve as the enablers and constraints to agency (see details on this analysis in Chapter Five and Eight).

A recent study demonstrated the interaction between women's' triple roles and empowerment outcomes from the GVC perspective (Said-Allsopp 2013). In contrast, my analysis of agency starts from analysing the processes that constitute different forms of/ aspects of agency. I situate the experiences of women workers within the broader context of production: how global players, industry players, farm practices and the community and home life affect the way in which women experience employment and the whole process between the utilization of different resources/strategies and the observed actions that are deemed as agency.

Although I sometimes use some concepts from the GVC such as upgrading, the GPN framework is preferred for this thesis because of its social, political and economic embeddedness in analysing the interplay between players upstream and downstream as well as all the socio-cultural dimensions that

affects women's actions within the spaces of the home and community. The power interplay between players in the GPN has made it possible for me to situate workers within their production sites and their related roles. At the same time, other aspects of worker's lives are revealed as workers recounted how their experiences of work affected their home and community life. Thus, I show how motivation for work is driven by personal circumstances, but each woman has different agency outcomes due to marital status, age and number of children. Further I demonstrate that strategies to enter the labour market and the experience of employment thereof is affected and conditioned by individuals themselves as well as family and community circumstances

Further, I observe that veering away from domesticity to labour market represents heterogeneity of community views - homemakers versus income earners. However, it does not fundamentally change society's views about women's roles as homemakers since women continue to experience the double burden. Hence, analysing women's accounts of work this way allows for an exploration into how women navigate through the spaces of disadvantage and create opportunities either in the home or the workplace and further legitimate employment for a second wave of women (Evans 2014).

In conclusion, this chapter has outlined the historical and cognate origins of the GPNs and Agency as it pertains to women's labour integration and room for manoeuvre in such production networks. To foreground the position of labour within the GPN, I have explored the concepts of upgrading with the intention to demonstrate how labour is treated in such production lines. Social upgrading coupled with the decent work agenda and Sen's capability framework was analysed to reveal the labour implications on women integrated in global trade.

I argued that growing flexibilisation and informalization of labour in the Global South makes the prospects of implementing the decent work framework/ social upgrading on the cutflower farms less appealing. To foreground the argument of how women's integration into the GPN affects their experience of work, the concept of agency and empowerment were integrated in the GPN.

By adding agency within the GPN, I uncovered the processes that influence the strategies and resources that women draw on whilst pointing to the potential agency outcomes derived from participating in such networks of global production.

The next chapter will look at the methods and the ethical considerations that informed the fieldwork research and analysis that follows on women's experience of work in the cutflower industry of Zambia.

3.   Methodological issues

Introduction

The floricultural industry has been depicted as presenting unequal opportunities for women's employment to that of men in the GVC/GPN literature (Barrientos, Dolan et al. 2003, Tallontire, Smith et al. 2004, Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005, Barrientos and Evers 2014). This depiction provided a rationale for my research to focus on women's employment conditions, but particularly their experiences of employment within it. The cutflower industry in Zambia presented an opportunity for increased female participation due to its labour intensive nature in which women workers are "concentrated in the segments of the production process that holds significance for the quality of the final products" (NUPAAW 2008).

Yet despite the rise in women's concentration in the significant process of production, women's unequal employment conditions are reflected in the types of jobs they perform and related benefits that accrue to them. The majority of women are found at the bottom of the chain in low skilled jobs on flexible and casual terms compared to men (Dolan and Sorby 2003, Kabeer 2004, Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005, Twin 2013). The inequality that it presents for women workers needs further inquiry as to how this inequality affects women's lives and status and how women are responding to it.

In this study, I examined women workers' experience of work with the primary purpose of enriching the understanding of how agency works in the context of cut flower farms of Zambia. In exploring women's work experience, the methods and ethical considerations that were taken in the process of unravelling the interplay between women's experience of work and other stakeholders in the cutflower industry have been highlighted. I start by outlining the choice of feminist methodology and the reason for using this methodology and followed by the research design, the data collection methods and then a discussion of how I dealt with ethical issues.

3.1. Feminist Methodology

Feminist methodology is known for privileging women's issues, voices and experiences *(Bell 2013).* Since the notion of agency and the way it is exercised is socially constructed (Cleaver 2007, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013), I believe that understanding women's agency requires a methodology that acknowledges and incorporates how women construct and interpret the different choices they make regarding their rights and entitlements in both the work place and outside it and how it changes over time. Feminist analysis takes the 'lived realities' of women's lives as a starting point – hence this legitimizes the need to take women's view of their agency as central (i.e. not starting from theory, but starting from women's narratives (Harding 1987). Bryman (2012) adds that finding the appropriate philosophical position depends on the researcher's view about the relationship between theory and research. As such, the use of feminist methodology captured the diversity of experiences in the way women workers exercise choices and how this affects their lives. This is because the feminist methodology is useful in analysing issues through a critical gender lens that not only looks at women's inclusion but goes further to examine the specific obstacles and opportunities that arise from women's inclusion in development strategies.

"Feminist Research positions gender as the categorical centre of inquiry and uses gender as a lens through which to focus on social issues" (Hesse-Biber 2013:3). This means that any researcher doing research surrounding women's and men's issues has to be aware of how an institution is gendered and the implications for both men and women working in such institutions (Barrientos, Dolan et al. 2003). The research questions I set out in this thesis are aimed at addressing women's issues with regards to their ability to exercise agency and the outcomes of agency. As a woman from Zambia, using a case study of the floricultural industry, I am interested in the position of women workers within the cutflower chain and how this position affects the way they exercise agency specifically within the spaces of work, the household and, more broadly, the community. At a broader level, I am interested in the emancipation of women from their oppressed position through uncovering and revealing their often-

hidden voices in development interventions. By understanding their positionality and related unequal employment terms with the aid of the feminist methodology, I hoped to bring to the forefront the main concerns that women workers are grappling with. Thus, in order to understand which pathways and mechanisms lead to better positionality of women in floricultural industry of Zambia and contribute to advancement of policies, the conditions and relations of women have been investigated in detail.

During the periods of 1960s through to the 1980s, feminist research began to take centre stage when feminists reacted against the 'male bias' characteristic of the publications that were being produced (Harding 1987). Feminist researchers consequently sought to challenge the so-called gender blind research by other researchers from different disciplines by undertaking research that included women's experiences across academic disciplines (Hesse-Biber 2013). Initially, there was a tendency for feminist research to be considered to be more sensitive to women's issues when qualitative methods were used (Harding 1987, Lykke 2010, Hesse-Biber 2013). This notion was supported by feminists who believed that supposedly value free preoccupation of quantitative research silenced the voices of women by submerging them in 'torrents of fact and statistics' (Bryman 2012).

As a result of disagreement on which research strategy better represents women's social reality, there has been a softening of attitudes towards conducting only one form of method (qualitative) against the other (quantitative) in feminist studies (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, Bryman 2012, Hesse-Biber 2013). In fact, Bryman (2012) demonstrates that more and more feminist researchers are using quantitative statistical methods to provide factual evidence to some research involving discrimination of women with an intention to bring about new legislative laws that protect women. Further, some well-known feminist researchers such as Kabeer (2000), Pearson (1998), Elson (1999), have used statistics to demonstrate the importance and prevalence of women's issues. Additionally, the statistics derived from the works of these authors have been used to depict the number of women that are found at the margins of society due to their positionality in society.

The disagreement on the appropriateness of different research strategies means that there is no single politically correct feminist methodology for conducting research, rather, different epistemological and ontological methodologies are used by feminists to uncover different experiences of women's lives. As Cornwall, Harrison et al. (2007:1) argue, "there are feminisms not feminism".

The choice to use a feminist methodology in this thesis stems from the need to uncover what Hesse-Biber (2013:184) calls "subjugated knowledge of the diversity of women's realities that often lies hidden and unarticulated." Baxter and Jack (2008) suggest that there is need for a close collaboration between the researcher and the people being studied, as this means that the researcher will get a better understanding of the reality of those being studied. With this in mind, feminist methodology appealed to me as a researcher as it helped me to get an understanding of women workers agency from the lived experiences of women workers working in the cut flower farms of Zambia. The very recognition of power and difference is what makes it more relevant when analysing women's agency from a GPN perspective. Given that the GPN is laden with different power dynamics that affect women workers' agency (Barrientos and Evers 2014), I envisaged that in order to better understand and enhance the notion of agency from the GPN perspective, the feminist approach would be fundamental to understanding the complexities, differences and intersections of oppressions as women struggle to make decisions that affect their lives.

My aspiration to apply the feminist methodology to explore issues in the floriculture industry further arises from the necessity to be responsive to gender issues from a Gender and Development perspective in the global trade literature. This is because GAD is reactive and responsive in advancing women's lives and status by confronting power and difference inherent in global trade. It does so by using gender analysis of social relations as a gateway to understanding women's issues because it is not only women that should be problematized per se, but the gender relations that resolve women into positions of subordination (Pearson and Jackson 1998). More importantly,

the GAD approach to feminist research allows for a more 'reflective engagement of women's issues by bringing together diversely located researchers and activists'(Cornwall, Harrison et al. 2007) . Pearson and Jackson (1998:5) further add that gender relations become critical in analysing women's concerns because "issues of representation, positionality and of practice transform old questions of integration, interests and struggles for resources and well-being (which were a major agenda of the Women in Development (WID) approach), but do not replace them."

Additionally, recent feminist literature has brought to the fore the need to look into how women workers' involvement in global production networks is affecting social reproduction particularly how employment conditions are affecting women's care responsibilities at home and how it is affecting household dynamics (Cornwall 2013, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013, Barrientos and Evers 2014, Kabeer 2014, Pearson 2014). Pearson (2014) argues that although paid labour brings some degree of autonomy for women workers, it does very little to cover the cost of reproductive work. However, there has been no agreement among feminist scholars as to how the inequality that women workers face in global trade can be remedied. Some feminists and development scholars writing on gender and empowerment have suggested organizing among women workers and forming strategic alliances with NGOs and trade unions (Dolan and Sorby 2003, Jones, Smith et al. 2012, Baden 2013, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013, Selwyn 2013).

The idea that women's organizing can challenge some of the threats that women grapple with in dealing with responsibilities in and beyond the workplace in export markets remains an area that that is ripe for further investigation. Even Kabeer, Milward et al. (2013) work on collective agency 'as a weapon of the weak' shows that organizing does not necessarily improve women's experiences of work. Rather, in some instances, organizing has disadvantaged some women employed in companies (Dolan, Opondo et al. 2002, WWW 2008) that are not in favour of women organising.

Thus, the aim of this thesis strengthened by the application of the feminist methodology was directed at finding explanations of how agency can be enhanced from the accounts of women workers themselves. The integration of women worker's agency into GPN analysis by using a feminist (gender relations lens) is an important factor in determining more effective policies that target vulnerable workers in such industries as the floricultural sector. This is because the GPN acts as tool for understanding how different actors are positioned both in the actual area of production to the final consumption of the product as well as all the processes and network interactions in between (Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010).

Such a tool of analysis provides a good starting point in analysing women's experiences of work in the export market, because women's experiences of work are not only shaped by the local forces but are also influenced by forces beyond the workplace. Thus, the integration of gender issues into GPN analysis deepens it to include the internal and external dynamics that affect women's positionality in the export industries while at the same time affords for a deeper analysis to explore the mechanisms and pathways available to improve women's agency. In the next section, I explore the case study method used in this chapter.

3.2. Case study method

Because a case study is an in-depth look into a complex social phenomenon in its real life context (Yin 2009), I used this tool to elicit data from women workers about their experiences at work and their lives in general. Yin (2003) argues that when a researcher is interested in answering the 'why 'and 'how' questions, a case study design should be considered. A case needs to have a clear unit of analysis and avoid being too broad and unreasonable in scope (Baxter and Jack 2008). A case is defined as "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in bounded context and is in effect a researcher's unit of analysis" (Miles and Huberman 1994:25).

Yin (2003) argues that the choice of a case study is generalizable to theoretical propositions rather than to populations and the universe. In this sense, a case study is not a sample, but the choice of the case study is to enhance theory. "Increasingly, the use of a case study as (Stake 1995:7) argues, leads to a more refined generalization and not a new generalization but a modified generalization." As such, it is about the refinement of understanding a phenomenon within its broader context rather than having a complete new understanding of a phenomenon. Yin (2003:18) however, cautions that "a researcher could use a case study method because he/she wanted to understand a real life phenomenon in depth, but such understandings encompass important contextual conditions and these contextual conditions are highly pertinent to a researcher's phenomenon of study". This is because contextual conditions tend to shape behaviour of the case in question (Stake 1995). Nevertheless, Baxter and Jack (2008:546) suggest that a case needs to be bound in order to prevent the pitfalls of having objectives that are too broad and one way of doing this is "by definition and context."

There are different types of case studies mainly proposed by (Stake 1995) and Yin (2003,2009) which range from single holistic and embedded case designs to multiple holistic and embedded case designs, intrinsic, instrumental and collective case study designs. Each case study design has a different rationale for conducting research. Five individual cut flower companies were selected making this study a multiple case study design, which will "allow the researcher to analyse within each setting and across settings"(Baxter and Jack 2008:550). Pertinent to this study is Stakes' (1995) distinction between intrinsic and instrumental study designs. Intrinsic cases are taken primarily when the researcher has a genuine interest in the case and the intent is to understand the case. Of interest to this study was enhancing our understanding of agency among women workers employed in the cut flower companies.

The individual cut flower companies that were visited were instrumental cases as they provided a basis for understanding how women workers exercise agency in the different companies. Further, instrumental cases also allows for

detailed scrutiny of the context to show how the case is affected by its ordinary activities and contextual conditions (Stake 1995). Thus, I purport that experience of women's work in the individual farms is affected by the ordinary activities of the firm but at the same time it is affected by the context within which the firms operate.

Further, to extend the refinement of the case to generate theory, the explanatory category of the case study design is argued by Yin (2003) as the most important category as it allows the researcher to explain the presumed causal links in real life interventions that are too complex for survey and experimental strategies. As such, the explanatory category aided in bringing out women's experiences of work and the agency employed directed at giving a deeper explanation of the working experience that is suited to qualitative analysis and not necessarily to survey analysis.

Zambia's floriculture industry is a useful example as it is less studied than other flower producing countries and is situated in a less favourable trade position than most of the African market leaders (Kenya and Ethiopia) and therefore provides a good example of understanding women workers' experiences of employment in this sector. So far, studies done in Zambia on the floricultural industry have focused on rights and entitlements whilst the finer nuances of women's worker's agency in relation to their experiences of work have not been investigated. It is for this reason that this study used a multiple case study of five cut flower farms to explore how the notion of agency can be extended.

The strategic importance of the case to the general problem/phenomenon under inquiry should be a major consideration if a researcher's objective is to get as much information about a general case. In order to get as much information about women's experiences of work and agency, I visited five cutflower farms that ranged from very large to medium sized and these were mostly atypical. However, this is not to claim that these cases were representative cases but each farm was instrumental/critical in bringing out the different aspects of agency that were previously silent.

I chose to combine a feminist methodology with a case study design as the most appropriate methods to meet this study's objectives to uncover and contextualise the different narratives of agency advanced by women workers. This approach seen through a gender lens aided further elaboration of the lives of women working on the farms visited.

3.2.1. The Case Studies from the Fieldwork

Farm choice was conditioned by the willingness and responsiveness of farms visited but also indicative of the broader issues that define the context of the floriculture industry of Zambia. The selection of the five farms[3] visited was borne out of the discussion with the Zambia Export Growers Association (ZEGA) (an influential actor in the cutflower industry of Zambia see chapter 4 for more details) and the two unions, NUPAAW and GRAMUZ. During the meetings with ZEGA director, it was established that some farms were completely Zambian owned whilst others were foreign owned but were competing favourably on the export market. A list of 13 farms were given and all were contacted through email and phone, out of which only five agreed to be interviewed. During visits to these five farms, it was established that they had three forms of ownership, foreign owned only, dual ownership (Zambian and foreign) and complete Zambian owned. It thus became important in the process of my interviews to observe and examine how women's experience of employment based on ownership affected how women experienced employment on the farms.

The analysis (see chapter 4) of the farms based on this criterion proved to be useful in examining differences in the conditions of work experienced by the workers (through wage payments and contractual obligations). Further, the

---

[3] Although 6 farms were visited, only 5 have been sufficiently documented for the analysis of agency in this thesis. This is because the 6th farm I visited (upon recommendation from ZEGA right at the end of the research period) was to find out why a previously cutflower growing farm had moved to producing vegetables for domestic consumption only. The idea was to get an overview of what this change meant for farm strategies outside the export market requirements and the implications of women's labour time. Given the limited time and funds, I could not explore further how the agency of the women working in such a farm had been transformed.

investigation was extended to explore how women organise based on their different union representation. This criterion also became important in establishing the effectiveness of the unions in representing the needs of workers. Finally, it was also cardinal to focus on the export destination of final products in assessing how such dynamics may affect work experiences for the different workers.

For purposes of confidentiality, farms have simply been named as 1,2,3,4 and 5, while farm 4 and 5 have been combined as farm 4 since they export and are managed under one name though production is done on two different farm sites under different names. It should be noted that the 5 farms visited also represented the largest and were at the time of fieldwork, the main exporters of cutflowers from Zambia. Women working on the five cut flower companies were the main unit of analysis to explore the relationship between their experience of work and the different forms of agency and consequent changes women encountered in the process of working (see chapter 4 for more detail on the cases).

To extend the notion of agency from the experiences of women workers, an in-depth understanding of women workers with different work statuses including from permanent, casual and seasonal (from different work sites e.g. greenhouse, pack house) were selected. This is because, looking at different statuses of women's work highlighted on the different forms of agency available to them.

3.3. Qualitative approach

For this study, a qualitative inquiry was adopted in order to give a detailed analysis of women worker's lived experiences on the cut flower farms. Qualitative research is not about setting a fixed definition but rather, it is about exploring the interactive nature of a given definition in a context (Hesse-Biber 2013). The choice to use the qualitative strategy rather than the quantitative strategy was connected with the research questions that needed to be addressed and the data to be collected, which strongly leans towards gaining

a rich explanatory data regarding women's lived experiences. The choice to use a multiple case study within a qualitative design strengthens the internal validity of the case, i.e. the soundness of the findings that explain a causal relationship in social research (Yin 2009). This study is largely an inductive study because empirical data informed the analysis of how agency should be understood within the context that women workers are based in the floricultural industry of Zambia. The deductive process was used as a triangulating process to explore how issues were raised in the literature on GPN and agency and to inform the current gaps in women's integration in global trade. It was also useful in framing interview questions used during the fieldwork process, this study is thus an inductive study.

3.4. Ethical considerations

3.4.1. Negotiating access

To understand how women workers experience work using a GPN approach, it is necessary to appreciate the general industry context: who are the different agents and agencies (Barrientos and Bobie 2016), and how do their actions affect women's experiences of work. As earlier mentioned, cutflower work/production is labour-intensive, and requires workers to spend long hours at the farms (Kidder and Raworth 2004). Farm workers are usually poor, with little or no education, and generally rely on the low wages for a livelihood (Wonani 2010). Farms are increasingly viewed as exploitative given the vulnerability of their workers (Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005). The idea that fresh produce farms in many Global South Countries (especially flower producing countries like Colombia, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia) have been reported to exhibit exploitative working conditions by media houses and international non-profit organizations (women working worldwide) has affected the reputation of producers.

There has been proliferation of codes of conduct (Hughes 2001) (see chapter 4 on specific codes in the cut flower industry) in an attempt to secure the confidence of consumers by demonstrating improvement in labour conditions of workers especially in the cutflower industry (Hale and Opondo 2005).

International organizations like Women Working Worldwide (WWW) and Women at Work (WW) have undertaken publicity campaigns aimed at bringing these exploitative conditions to the international public through campaigns such as 'war on want' (WWW 2008).

Consequently, farm owners have taken issue with this perception of them, and are 'guarded', and generally sceptical of visiting researchers (Freidberg 2001). According to Freidberg (2001:357) " The fear on the part of horticultural companies reflects the British press' greater propensity for 'name and shame' stories," which discourages company officials from granting access to researchers. Consequently, researchers negotiating access to the farms requires masterfulness, understanding and networking (Barrientos 2002), as this is underpinned by complex power dynamics under the subordination of gatekeepers.

Anticipating different circumstances based on variability of interview subjects, their knowledge of the industry, work, and what they expected of me required changing my positionality. This helped me to reflect upon my own strategy on how to engage research participants, and in the process effectively manage their expectations. I understood how the cut flower industry was perceived, and how that might affect how farm managers receive visitors. I anticipated a situation where farm 'gatekeepers' would guard their work territory, but still, a number of questions remained unanswered, such as the extent of hospitality they would be willing to extend to visitors, especially those claiming to be researchers.

As earlier suspected, farm owners/management were not very hospitable for a number of reasons: first being that the negative publicity of the industry in terms of its relation to workers. Secondly, the threat from competitors, viewing visitors as competitors' informants and thirdly, the status quo thrives on an ignorance of the workforce, and this makes farm management anxious about visitors talking to their workers, seeing this as an opportunity for workers' enlightenment.

3.4.2. Gaining access

Given the 'guarded' nature of the cut flower work space, accessing the farms required ample preparation with the help of agents from the unions and ZEGA. I anticipated gaining access to farms through unions, as contacts with the largest union (NUPAAW) in the horticultural sector was already established while I was in England. NUPAAW then introduced me to another union (Grain & Meat, GRAMUZ) although smaller than NUPAAW in terms of overall numbers of members, represented workers in the largest rose farm in the country. This whole process gave me an awareness of different gatekeepers, their roles and associated power dynamics, and thus became necessary to establish how to approach each gatekeeper.

I planned to start my interviews the week after my arrival in Zambia, but I could not get access through the union as earlier anticipated because they proved to be elusive and often reported that they were busy. I had to renegotiate with their general secretary by phone before meeting him (showing how important hierarchy is in this organization and also being aware that access has to be negotiated from above before introduction to the farms can be done). I had to explain to the union leader that I posed no threat to them because I was a PhD student and all information I was to get was to be used for academic purposes with no names mentioned if they so wished. He was worried that the union would be misrepresented, as happened the previous year following interviews with researchers who produced a statement that the union thought did not best represent their views.

Permission was then granted to speak to other union members and no restriction was given to withhold names. However, I did not use NUPAAW to gain access to the farms as I had earlier anticipated, but rather relied on access facilitated by the CEO/ director of ZEGA who gave me a list of thirteen farms. I contacted all farms on the list and only five agreed to be visited. NUPAAW also gave me a list of NGOs they had worked with. I was able to establish from some of the meetings I had with the NGOs about the stakeholders they were working with that had not previously been mentioned

by NUPAAW. Much of the work done by the NGOs was HIV/AIDS related or Gender Based Violence and family planning. Other stakeholders accessed included government officials from the labour office and gender department (a list of stakeholders is provided in the next section).

3.4.3. Managing expectations and changing positionality

I had anticipated that I would be exposed to different circumstances based on variability of interview subjects, their knowledge of the industry, work, and what they expected of me. This helped me to reflect upon my own strategy of how to engage research participants. For farm management interviews, use of flattery to appease farm management was the main method used to be allowed access. At ZEGA, I wanted to learn more about the industry in general, and therefore approached the interview there with some level of blank headedness, or indeed a façade of ignorance. The Government Ministries, NGO interviews - I approached these as an industry expert, informing them of dynamics at farms whilst at the same time trying to establish how they worked with the farms.

For the women workers, I had initially intended to access the industry through the 'insider' approach (Freidberg 2001), where I would access the workers through their various employers with the view to get a better understanding of the women's issues and consequent roles as an insider rather than outsider to the case (Yin 2003). I was well aware that accessing workers through employers may lead to fear and distrust on part of workers because it would appear as if I were part of the management. Woodhouse (1998:140) adds that information collected in this way, "legitimizes the gate keeper's approval and sponsors the inquiry" but does very little to assure confidence with the participants. As such, careful attention to the way I accessed the industry was based on being transparent.

I was also cautious that this may not change women's views of my positionality but I tried to mitigate this by continually being aware of who was introducing

me to the workers as well as continuously negotiating access by being vigilant to the different areas that the interviews were conducted in.

Chambers (2005:163) adds that non- extractive ways of gaining information involve the researcher "taking time to gain rapport, being interested and behaving in many small ways that make for a good relationship." I was aware that the line of questionings in this research may potentially be damaging to participants by raising uncomfortable or upsetting issues that may be sensitive (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011) and in the worst case scenario, bringing out stressful ideas and alarms in the minds of the women workers but then not being able to help them deal with the issues raised (Bell 2013).

Thus, great sensitivity was exercised during the interviews, by paying close attention to what questions were asked, voice tone, timing of questions, and knowing when to back off and provide space for the participant when questions appeared to be raising participant's emotions. I was also cautious of my relationship to the interviewee, the power and authority interplay and how particular personal and research standpoints affects my relationship to the women workers. As such, I tried as much as possible to ensure that I did not distort the meanings that women used in their explanation of their experiences of work by remaining true to the words that the women used. Taking time to gain rapport and the trust of participants to allow the participants to offer their experiences without feeling coerced means that "the 'upper' (researcher) has to go to great lengths to achieve an equal and mutual relationship with the 'lower' (participants) particularly when power imbalances and status are sharp" (Chambers 2005). The body language of the participants can be an important indication as to whether rapport has been gained and power imbalances abridged.

Thus, for the women worker interviews, I approached these as a student, a mother, an industry expert, and was generally sympathetic with their circumstances, family, and work conditions, yet was clear not to overestimate what I could do for them (see section on data collection below on how I dealt with power issues). This way, they opened up more, and were freer to share

their experiences and concerns, but also became more expectant of me in terms of what I could do for them.

However, I assured them of my role, potential of my research findings to inform policy and dialogue. Although limited time was given by management, I asked for permission from some of the workers to meet me outside but informing them that I was not to disclose this information to management. I was aware that this would potentially affect them in a negative way should management find out, I therefore took all the necessary precautions that interviews were conducted at places that management could not access. The women were also adequately warned and where asked to willingly meet me. Other power related power issues are covered in the methods section in both the semi-structured interviews with women and focus group discussions.

In terms of language, I was aware that most of the women workers that I would be interviewing may not be able to speak English (NUPAAW 2008). Thus, I used 'Nyanja' a local Zambian language commonly spoken in Lusaka and the unofficial mode of communication in most parts of Zambia. The use of Nyanja ensured that women who could not speak English did not feel isolated from those women workers who could communicate in English.

3.4.4. Confidentiality

Because of the nature of information from farm interviews, I felt it was important to simply not mention the names of the farms or give features that might be revealing of the different farms visited. Managers of the farms were also informed that I would not mention their names when reporting the issues uncovered. Considering that the main informants within the selected case studies (women workers) were in a vulnerable position due to the way power is manifested between management and those workers upstream (Hale and Opondo 2005, Barrientos, Mayer et al. 2011), careful attention was paid to ensure that issues of confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent where thought through in a way that did not bring harm to research participants.

To ensure that the women workers were protected and that no harm was brought to them due to their participation in the study, I anonymized the data collected from the women by using pseudo names- by naming the women by Amake, Amai followed by their children's and husband's surname or just by first name basis for the single participants (Amake is the Zambian Nyanja term for mother of, while Amai refers to an elderly mother often called by her husband's surname), naming them this way maintains the Zambian traditional way of referring to women of different marital status, acknowledging also that they are mothers and some are senior in the community while protecting their identity within the farm setting (for instance Amai Zulu (elderly married women), Amake (mother of) Dailess and Mulenga (single participants). "Anonymizing thus involves removing any identifiers from the transcript to preserve the participant's anonymity" (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011:215). I also assured the workers that they did not need to give me their names and information from them would not directly be attributed to them as individuals but as the Cutflower industry as a whole.

For informed consent, before starting to ask the participant the interview questions, I verbally read out the confidentiality forms and asked them to give me their verbal consent. This form of consent was chosen because of the level of education of the majority of workers interviewed who could not read or write. The participants were informed that they were free to leave at any time of the interview. The form upon explanation to the workers and the surety that their names were anonymized was an indication that I would not tell their employers and their employers would not be able to identify women who brought out more sensitive/negative issues should I be asked to give their employers feedback to the issues that workers grapple with.

The confidentiality form was to say to them what my PhD was all about and that they would allow me to use materials from the interviews for PhD purposes and publications later and for me to say that I would use their information in a way that would not bring harm to them. All data was later encrypted for safe keeping. I needed to get the women workers' full consent to assure the workers that disclosing sensitive issues would not lead to the

loss of their jobs. I took time to gain rapport and their trust by showing interest in their lives and by presenting different aspects of my identities particularly my role as a Zambian mother and wife as well as my position at the University of Zambia. By listening carefully and not being too directive and insensitive to the issues they brought out, I potentially reduced the power position that may have affected the way women responded to me.

My intention was to inform the women that I was there to not only learn about their experiences of work but to help them in any way possible. When interviewing the women, some had expectations about some of the questions I was asking them especially those questions relating to their investment and sources of money, they thought I could connect them to someone who could help them access loans. I was clear to state that my position was to investigate what women were doing to manage their lives and that it was not tied to any financial interest.

Some women from Farms 1 and 2 asked me what I would do for them after hearing their problems, again, I was careful to say that as a researcher, my job was to find out from them the issues they were grappling with and somehow give feedback to the government ministries and the union as well as other stakeholders about some of the issues arising and that it was up to those actors to take on the issues I was raising further. I did not want them to feel that it was hopeless to talk to me about their issues but I also wanted to leave some room for the possibility that some policy makers may be able to use some of the issues raised to make some changes in the industry. A mother at farm 2 asked me for advice about what courses her daughter could apply for at the University of Zambia by first showing me the GCE results her child obtained, I offered her advice accordingly.

This felt to be one of the ways my relationship with the women did not end up as one of just taking from them but giving to them in as little as possible by way of offering advice about education options for those that needed it. Women in a focus group at farm 4b asked me about how to go about claiming their pension money from the National Pension Fund and I advised them to

seek the authorities at the pension's office. Additionally, NUPAAW asked me to give them feedback on the issues arising from the worker interviews, I did inform them about workers losing confidence in them and the some of the general issues women were grappling with. I was also able to share with the women workers particularly in focus group discussions how other women were working together in credit rotating groups (Chilimba). Chambers (2005) suggests that researchers can share their power in knowledge of particular areas of interest to the participants, should a participant ask for the information.

This creates rapport and trust in sharing information as participants get a chance to utilize the researcher's knowledge to their advantage. This creates spaces for give and take between the researcher and the participant and avoids the extractive way of research undertaken by most research. In her research on empowerment outcomes for women working in the cutflower industry of Kenya, Said-Allsopp (2013) found that women were eager to utilize the knowledge she had on higher education for their children showing that the process of research interaction can have mutual benefits for the respondent and the researcher.

3.4.5. Safety issues

Safety issues were considered to ensure that in the process of collecting data, I conducted interviews at appropriate times of day and in areas that make women workers free to participate. Although certain locations particularly on-farm locations may have had the potential of affecting the women, they were able to respond to interview questions with supervisors looming. I took care to constantly assure women that the information being provided would not be directly related to them. certain locations can have an influence on participants contribution to the discussion (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011).

As such, care was taken to use more neutral locations (away from the Pack house/greenhouse, in shade) for the interviews to take a more natural flow and to enable workers feel freer to answer questions. This was particularly

important for the on-farm interviews, it was always away from their job site and away from their supervisors and managers usually outside in the open and for off-farm interviews, given the timings due to late knock off, the interviews took place in cafes over a snack and were strategically selected not too far from the worker's home. This was to ensure that the women being interviewed felt safe to return home.

3.5. Methods

The purpose of this section is to highlight the different methods that were used to collect data from the various sources during fieldwork

3.5.1. Interview location

The fieldwork took place in the metropolitan area of Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia. All the farms that were selected where based within the vicinity of Kenneth Kaunda International Airport (within a 50km radius), the main national airport to strategically transport their goods for export and to the capital's city supermarkets. The field work was carried out over a period of three months. In total, five farms were visited, and these produced 108 individual interviews – 80-woman worker interviews and 12 management interviews, and 12 focus groups discussions comprising women only and men only groups. Since a GPN approach was utilized, (see chapters 1 and 2), it was equally important to solicit information from different stakeholders, directly or indirectly in contact with farms and workers.

It should be re-emphasized that information of stakeholder activities vis-à-vis farms and the workers are important as it helps to determine how players outside the cutflower industry may affect women's experience of employment and their exercise of agency, but even more important is that it is a basis for establishing the context that frames the flower industry, and how this shapes women's lives both at work and outside. To this end, 12 stakeholders were visited, and these comprised of relevant government ministries, international organizations, civil society, private sector and non-governmental organizations (a table with dates and names is listed in table 2)

3.5.2. Methods for data collection

To begin with, this study used secondary data in form of document reviews to inform the research about the pertinent theories and empirical work that has been done thus far on women workers agency and their insertion in GPNs chains. Further an analysis of labour force patterns in the agricultural sector and specifically the cut flower sector was scrutinized. Furthermore, the existing explanations of women's working conditions as it relates to agency were reviewed to understand the current study context. Documentary analysis was necessary to understand the different players in the cut flower industry and their related roles. It was from secondary literature that I was able to draw up initial contacts for the various stakeholders that were followed up for the fieldwork research.

Table 1 documentary review by source

Type of secondary literature: Topic / information sought	Source
Understanding the theoretical debates and explanations for women's agency, decision to work	Development, gender and labour literature on different agricultural and garment Value chains (Gereffi 1994, Barrientos 2001, Dolan and Sorby 2003, Raworth 2004, Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005)
The structure and operations of Zambia's cut flower industry	document analysis of industry organization in Zambia from (ZDA 2011, NUPAAW 2008, Government documents (and different articles on the agriculture and labour system of Zambia
Zambia's employment trends and patterns,	NUPAAW documentation, Labour regulations (The Minimum Wages and Conditions of Employment and context documents, various academic articles of the cutflower industry of Zambia)

The interviews on the five farms brought to light the challenges and opportunities the cutflower industry was facing and how these different farms were responding to their buyer demands. But even more important was to establish how these farms affected women's conditions of work due to different farm practices adopted. In order to get a better understanding and further enhance the concept of agency within GPN, this study relied on empirical data collected in the five selected case studies through semi-

structured interviews (one-one-interviews), focus groups discussions and key informant interviews.

The fieldwork interviews with management were determined from the initial contacts made through ZEGA and the two main unions representing workers in the agricultural sector. At the farm level, interviews were divided between on-farm and off- farm interviews for the purposes of interviewing workers in different contexts (work and outside) to ensure that interviewees had the opportunity to fully express themselves without the fear of management. Whilst the Key informant interviews were established through discussions with NUPAAW and the farm management after which snow-ball sampling was used to establish other actors. The interviewing time took between an hour and ninety minutes.

Table 2 List of organizations/farms accessed by source

Actor/ organization responsible for gaining access	Farm/organization accessed
ZEGA, GRAMUTZ	Farm 1, 2,4,5 and NAC2000 from ZEGA interviews
NUPAAW, Farm Management from farms 1 and 2	WILSA, ILO, SHARe II, and Education Fund
Analysis of NUPAAW and the cutflower industry documentation and snowball sampling	ZCTU, JCTR, Ministry of Labour & Social Security and The Ministry of Gender and Child Development (MGCD)

3.5.3. Sampling strategy

The data collected for this study was based on three categories of participants, namely company management, women workers and Key informant interviews with horizontal actors. My understanding of the context was informed by management, workers and other key informants.

3.5.3.1. Key stakeholder interviews

Key informant interviews were selected based on the level of knowledge that informants had in the sector. I was interested in talking to Trade Union members of NUPAAW, associated NGOs currently working with trade unions and workers and Government officials. Barrientos (2002) clearly indicates the challenge involved in piecing together information from diverse sources of informants that may not be too obvious in the literature. To navigate the

floricultural industry of Zambia involved an iterative process of investigating, "requiring skills of a detective as much as a researcher" (Barrientos 2002:61). Therefore, initial contacts with ZEGA opened up my access to the farms that were visited. The actual interview location with key informant interviews took place formally in the various offices of the interviewees with relevant topic guides following more natural semi-structured flow of interviewing between myself and the participants. Whilst other key informants like those with NGOs (such as JCTR, WILSA, ILO, SHARe ii) were derived from my discussions and document analysis with/from NUPAAW, farm management and snow-ball sampling. Key informant interviews were based on semi structured interviews with topic guides but at the same time allowing a free flow conversation. Key informant interviews expanded on the industries challenges and opportunities, but also provided a basis for triangulating data collected from workers (See Table 3 for key informants interviewed).

Table 3 Key informant interviews by date and name

Date on first encounter	Stakeholder name	Position	number of interview rounds
06/04/2015	Zambia Export Growers Association (ZEGA)	Executive Director	4
12/04/2015	The National Union of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers (NUPAAW)	Secretary General	2
16/04/2015	Grain and Meat	Secretary General + Director Training	2
07/05/2015	NUPAAW	Director, training and education	4

03/06/2015	Ministry of Labour & Social Security	Assistant Labour Commissioner	1
04/06/2015	The Ministry of Gender and Child Development (MGCD)	Gender Consultant/Advisor	1
09/06/2015	Jesuits Centre for Theological Reflections (JCTR)	Research Officer	2
10/06/2015	Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU)	Director of Training	2
11/06/2015	Women and Law in Southern Africa – in Zambia	Director, Research	2
16/06/2015	Child Fund	project manager	1

18/06/2015	Share II	Project manager – HIV/AIDS	1
19/06/2015	NAC2000	Human Resource Director	2
26/06/2015	International Labour Organization (ILO) – Zambia	GBV Expert	1
27/06/2015	Ministry of Labour & Social Security	Labour Inspector	2

3.5.3.2 Company management

Interviews with farm management occurred both formally in their offices and informally as I was taken for a tour around the PH and GH and were semi structured. The interviews with various farm managers allowed for a deeper understanding of how the floricultural industry of Zambia operates: Farm management as producers and exporters influenced by the market organization within which they operate, and domestic and international forces affecting them, their relations with other industry actors such as the global retailers, as producers and exporters influenced by the market organization within which they operate, and domestic and international forces affecting them; as employers, their relations with other industry actors such as workers, the labour unions, labour office, NGOs etc. Farm management was critical in highlighting the conditions under which workers in a different farms experience employment and exercise agency. Different forms of resources were highlighted as being responsible for the outcome of women's experiences of work from the perspective of farm management. Table 4 provides a list of farm management interviews.

Table 4 management interviews by farm name and date

Farm name	Job Position	Number of interviews
Farm 1	Managing Director	1
	Human resource director, co-owner	1
	Office Assistant	1
Farm 4a	Manager - Production	1
Farm 4b	Managing Director	1
	Manager - Production	1
Farm 3	Manager - Production	1
	GH supervisor	1
Farm 2	Managing Director	1
	Rose Farm Manager	1
	Export supervisor	1

3.5.3.3. Women workers

The main unit of analysis involved mainly women only semi-structured interviews for the one-on-one interviews with the exception of the focus group discussions that had men-only groups and women-only groups. Gender analysis remains to be an important approach for this study, my particular interest also lies in overt and covert power relations that are within and beyond the workplace relating to decision making, that is why it was necessary for me to interview men to get their perspective on these relations. Allowing women to articulate issues beyond the workplace, allows for a consideration of other covert power issues at the household level that affect women's lives. This is because "households are sites of conflict as well as cooperation and hence women have to negotiate between their double burden of productive and reproductive work" (Cornwall, Harrison et al. 2007:5).

Further, instead of just recounting women's experience of work, and the income earned (which has been analysed by feminist authors such as Pearson (2007) against over estimating what it can do for women, I was more interested in women's wider lives beyond the workplace and how they use their voice while trying to navigate through different actions that may lead to progressive social change. "voices are raised for the purpose of bringing about social change and social justice and therefore must be heard in that way" (Breton 1994:8). Given the stratified nature of employment in the case studies that were selected, the participants were strategically selected in a targeted manner (to have a good mix between different positions both from the PH and GH). The women worker interviews were divided between on-farm and off farm interviews.

3.5.3.3.1. Women worker selection

In terms of accessing the workers on the farms, I initially planned to have at least 20 women workers on the on-farm site and about 15 women worker interviews off the farm. What I had not realized is that these women work long hours and leave very late. This meant that I could not go to their homes late at night, so I endeavoured to meet some in locations closer to their homes, e.g. filling stations/cafes, which was successful for four farms. In the field,

initially, some farm managers were reluctant to give me more time because they were worried that I would waste the women's time away from work, this had the effect of me rushing through the interview schedules. For the off-farm interviews, an additional advantage of meetings at filling stations/cafes was that they were out of sight of management and I could buy snacks for the women who came from work very hungry. Although it was important that I met the women this way, the range of issues raised at both interview sites indicated women were happy to share their experiences with me.

3.5.3.3.1.1. On farm interviews

The workers on-farm were selected based on my discussion with the site manager about the employment set up within the pack house and greenhouse. Once I had the management interviews and I had established how the pack house and greenhouse were organized by job position, I was able to use that information to randomly pick workers from all the job types. I was given the discretion to call the workers I wanted to interview. I randomly selected workers on the knowledge of their position ensuring that I had picked at least one or two people from every position the farm had related to rose production. After selecting the women, I would read out the form and ask them to leave if they chose not to be interviewed, none of the women refused to continue with the interviews. Different employment categories of workers (permanent (one year contracts), casual and seasonal workers) from different work sites e.g. greenhouse, pack house) were therefore selected.

3.5.3.3.1.2. Off-farm interviews

Due to the time constraints on the farm, I asked some of the workers (a total of 5 each from farms 2,3 and 4) that I had an opportunity to interview but whose interviews were incomplete on-farm to meet me outside the farm. I also asked some workers that I had not interviewed to meet me outside the farm over a meal. Given the time women left work, I was cautious to not extend my interviews outside the farm since we met after dark. I also cautioned the women that I had not informed management of this arrangement. The off-farm interviews were both a follow up to some of the questions I had already asked the women on the farms (related to the different power relations that were

arising in the process of women working) as well as an opportunity to increase the number of women I had not interviewed on-farm to get a broader perspective on women's work experience on the different farms.

For those workers who were interviewed off-farm, the conversation was often more relaxed and the women were more willing to stay on and voice out more about their experiences of work and the related changed they faced at home and in the community. For example, women were eager to share more about their marital relations, how neighbours viewed their working lives and struggles of raising children while working in this industry. Table 5 (below) provides a list of workers interviewed by farm.

Table 5 Farm workers by worksite/jobsite

Names of Farms	Number by Pack house	Number by Green house	Number by General worker
Farm 1	5	5	2
Farm 2	27		
Farm 3	4	6	
Farm 4 a	5	6	2
Farm 4 b	13	5	
Non cutflower farm	2		
Total	55	21	4
Grand total			80

The men's focus group (written as FGM1 or 2) discussions were one way of incorporating and getting an understanding of how men experienced work and how this affected their home life. I also wanted to find out how men viewed their women colleagues and what particular challenges they thought women were experiencing. The discussion involved questions about how men related to the women at work and what men felt about women having to leave the home space for work and how they perceived the effects of such actions by women on the family. It was also important to establish how men viewed women who were working with them and the jobs their performed against the wages received.

The men-only focus group discussions were conducted on three farms. Because of time constraints imposed by management on one farm (farm 2), the focus groups were split between me and my research assistant. I conducted the women only and my research assistant conducted the men-only. However, I was confident of my research assistant's ability (being a PhD student himself and having conducted his interviews in a similar manner for his study) that the issues raised by my research assistant were sufficient to give a broader view about men's relations with women at work and their perceptions of women's working life. The conversation naturally flowed and a variety of issues particularly concerning how women were being perceived by their male colleagues were discussed.

The men in the group were divided between those that had working wives and those whose wives were homemakers, my intention in separating them this way was to establish the differences in their views about the roles of women and in the process ascertain which roles they valued (it followed that the man in the latter naturally felt women belonged in the home space while the former countered that women ought to help men out financially given the difficulty financial times). However, all groups of men were in agreement that women ought to perform the home roles even when women work and that it was a necessary part of fulfilment of the Zambian culture. This part of the interview was only used generally to understand how men viewed women's work and

relations at work and in the home but did not constitute the main analysis and focus of the study.

Table 6 List of FGs type by Farm

Type of FG	Name of Farm	Total number of FGs	Number of people in each FG
Men-only	Farm 2	1	10
Women-only	Farm 2	1	10
Women's Committee	Farm 2	1	10
Women only	Farm 1	2	10
Men-Only	Farm 1	1	10
Women-only	Farm 3	1	7
Gender committee	Farm 3	1	8
Women-only	Farm 4a	2	11
Men-only	Farm 4a	1	8
Women-only	Farm 4b	1	8
	Total	12	92
Men-Only		3	28
Women-only		9	64

Within the categories of women-only focus groups' worker selection were based on pack house and Greenhouse. The reason for combining the two sites into one group was due to their job status (while bearing in mind that their roles are different from earlier interviews), they both faced similar challenges regarding their work environment. The women-only groups were conducted in order to bring out issues sensitive that may not have been sufficiently brought out due to the presence of men (see Appendix 1 and 2). For example, specific issues that women deal with regarding resolving disputes of a sexually oriented nature may be too sensitive for women to bring out in the presence of male workers (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011). The second and third category for the women's committee and gender committee on Farm 1 and Farm 3 (which were unique to these farms) was aimed at establishing what forming such organizations meant for women workers (particularly identify which worker interests and needs are being served in the process of organizing) (Cleaver 2001). The fourth category was based on a mixture of men in both the pack house and green house both from permanent and general worker statuses.

3.5.4. Data collection

The methods that this study relied on were based on three categories namely, one-on-one (individual) semi structured interviews with women workers who were the main unit of analysis, key informant interviews and focus group discussions with women-only and men-only groups.

3.5.4.1. Semi-structured Interviews

The choice to use semi-structured interviews over survey type or structured interviews is that these forms of data methods are relatively less methodical about the logic and tone of questions making them impersonal and direct (Hesse-Biber 2013). However, Cleaver (2001:53) cautions that " there are oversimplified ideas about the beneficial nature to individuals of participation,

overlooking the potential links between inclusion and possible subordination." Important considerations of effects of social norms and structures within the context of the study thus present an important arena for understanding participant's views in the discussion.

To elicit data about how women experience agency, semi- structured interviews were drawn upon. The use of such an interview process gives room to elicit data from questions that could be emotionally charged and value laden (Bell 2013). The issues discussed with the women workers were sensitive, because they were about personal experiences of women workers, hence the questions had to be asked in a way that was not too direct and offensive to the women (particularly questions relations to dealing with sexual harassment issues in the workplace and decision making in the home). I was interested in finding out from the women workers what their experiences of work had been and how it had changed overtime. Some of the questions I asked included 'what was your motivation of joining this industry? How does working on this farm affect your responsibilities at home?' In so doing, I was able to get a better understanding of the many issues that women grapple with on the farm and how these issues affect their experience of work. This form of questioning was necessary for participants to articulate their own issues. "Clarity about the dynamics that push poor and marginalized people to stay within what is safe and familiar is vital in order to ensure that the empowerment process is kept in focus" (Rowlands 1995:106).

Semi-structured interviews were only conducted with women workers to get to the deeper underlying causes of employment experiences. These interviews were conducted with the women workers engaged in doing the physical work based in either the pack house or greenhouse rather than office administration. This is because I was more interested in examining how working in a particular sites affects the options and strategies women have to enhance their agency. Greenhouse activities follow predictable lines of production and may have different implications for women's agency. The pack house activities are less predictable because buyer tendencies regarding quantity and product type (Kidder and Raworth 2004) (that is not to say that

the pack house is more challenging than the greenhouse but that the women in this worksite are faced with challenges that are particular to this workspace). The unpredictability in pack house thus demands a different level of pressure on the workers to meet buyer demands (Dolan, Opondo et al. 2002). It thus becomes important to separate jobs according to different worksites although not in the women-only focus groups.

With the consideration of feminist methodology that tasks the researcher to be aware of power relations at play and the need to minimize these imbalances where possible, I believe taking this approach to interviewing "allows for voices that are often hidden particularly from marginalized groups to be heard and in the process, there is a "co-creation of meaning" which leads to better understanding of the issue at hand (Hesse-Biber 2013:191). A meaning that is just not dominated by my understanding, rather a meaning informed by the voices of women workers themselves based on their lived work experience. Aside from the negative attributes of interviewing, semi-structured interviews allow for sensitivity and offers a line of questioning that has a potential to have a give and take between the researcher and the participant when conducted in non-extractive manner. Often overlooked in research are the potential benefits participants can have in sharing their story. "People like to talk and be listened to, so an actual interview experience can be enjoyable to some participants" (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011:123).

3.5.4.2. Focus group discussions

Focus groups are good for broad discussion and opening up a topic and generating consensus; they are less good for fine detail. Thus the researcher has an opportunity to uncover issues that may be inaccessible in a one-on-one interviews (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011). According to Munday (2013:239) "focus groups provides a means of accessing the negotiations and processes through which participants produce their collective identity." Hence, the collective nature of focus groups makes them less suitable for discussing sensitive issues.

The focus group discussions were divided into men only and women only groups based in the PH and GH. At farm 4a, they were in the process of forming a Fairtrade committee that was to be run by the women workers only. A group was since established by the workers but the actual operations of the group were yet to be finalized. Interview questions explored women's work experiences at the farm and the implication of this for women's lives, in particular the importance of their work relationships on the farm, in relation to their reproductive work and community work (in attempt to understand the broader life changes that workers have encountered as a result of their work experiences). Women were asked to list the different things they consider important and rank them according to importance. In one of the focus group discussions at farm 4a where I was given enough time to interview the workers, I offered the workers in that group plain pieces of paper to write/or draw 5 things they considered important in their lives, after which I collected all the papers and began to say out what was on the list of every women's paper. After listing them, I asked them to vote which ones of the issues they thought were important. From this list, we further derived 5 items that were mentioned as important for the women themselves. Other discussions in the focus group discussions involved the types of jobs that men and women could do on the farms and the related wage payments for the mentioned tasks.

These discussions with various women-only focus group discussions were used to gain a deeper understanding of women's experience of work on farm and how this affects their lives off-farm (see the list derived in Appendix 1 and 2). The focus groups were conducted both during lunch time (farm 3), the weekends (farm 2), normal working hours (Farm 4a, b, and Farm 1). They were often relaxed and we shared a snack through the discussions.

The activities in the table below shows the range of activities that were used in the women-only focus group discussions. These activities allowed me to understand how employment shapes women's lives, it also gave the participants an opportunity to reflect about alternatives to change their lives rather waiting on employers to make changes which may not or may not happen (Said-Allsopp and Tallontire 2014). "People need to be involved in the identification of the appropriate indicators of change, and in the setting of

criteria for evaluating impact" (Rowlands 1995:106). Table 8 below provides the list of activities conducted in the focus group discussions. The interviews took between ninety minutes to two hours. The group activities were mainly used as a discussion opener to issues of how women relate in the work place and at home.

Table 8 List of Focus Group activities

Type of Activity	Tasks involved in the activity
Brain storming/ Mapping	List of things constructed by the group members considered to be important to the lives of women workers
Priority exercises	Identifying which of the things constructed by the participants are important to them
Ranking (Woodhouse 1998)	Listing the issues constructed in the priority list in order of importance to the participants.

Initially the women would not open up, but as soon as we started eating and chatting about the roles of men and women at the farm, the women begun to open up and speak about their relationships at work with fellow workers and the work burden at home, their reproductive and community life.

Very rarely do people get a chance to reflect on their lives, I feel that this opportunity has the potential of allowing participants to reflect on the changes they would like to see and have in their lives. It was my intention to provide space for different workers to articulate different issues and potential problem

solving by women's own articulation of how they have dealt with different issues. Thus my role was to bring to the fore the conditions that oppress women but at the same time, the interest of the researcher should be to facilitate the process of emancipation of the oppressed towards a progressive social change (Harding 1987, Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002). Blaikie (2007:12) adds that "in such cases, the researcher is a reflective partner or a conscientizer." In so doing, I also wished to avoid the development work challenge of "exclusively focusing on the economic activities that do not automatically create space for women to look at their own role as women or other problematic aspects of their lives"(Rowlands 1995:106).

Given the power dynamics involved in group discussions, issues of silence, powerful group members were considered during the whole process of conducting interviews. Silence of/from certain members was treated with caution, as silence may mean passiveness on the part of participants or may mean participants feel represented by other participant's views. "Some women for example may consider other women to be more eloquent and feel that their voices and priorities will be put forward more effectively by others" (Cleaver 2001:43). While in some instances, a dominant participant may emerge in the discussion and discourages others from taking part (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011). In either situation, it calls for different levels of moderation of the interview to reduce the dominance of certain group members and to be more inclusive to those participants who remain silent for long periods of time. Different activities, probing techniques were applied to allow all participants an opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

Other issues discussed with the focus group discussions of women's experience of employment related to their aspirations about their working, home and community life. In addition to their work burden, the issues that women raised in the focus group discussions where reflective of the economic disadvantages that women were faced with- they could not access loans to engage in small businesses right at home, and finding jobs elsewhere was presented as one of the difficulties of working on rose farms. Further, women had to work very long days and because of the long hours, they were not able

to take up other ventures (like going to night school or engaging in small businesses, selling groceries in kantembas (make-shift stall) as well vegetable stands just outside their homesteads).[4]

3.6. Data analysis

The data collected was initially entered into Nvivo because it has been argued that data entered this way in this grounded format privileges the voices of participants to enhance and hence extend our understanding of cases to be examined (Bell 2013). I initially used NVivo to analyse and determine the common themes from all the interviews with women workers and to facilitate triangulation with management and stakeholder interviews. However, after a few months of using the software, I felt it did not adequately help me understand my data very well and so used excel and began drawing themes based on the research questions and interview questions from the fieldwork. I found that using excel allowed me to examine the data closely using the questions as guidelines for drawing themes. I then used the questions to narrow down the themes that I felt expressed the views of workers. Hence, the themes were raised from words of participants (inductive) and some emerged from interviewer topic guides which were partly informed by the literature. Inductively drawing out themes was important for this research because they were a reflection of research participants' voices and therefore allowed the data to "speak for itself" (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011:218).

In terms of write up to the data analysis, I used the coding technique which required a close reading and re-reading of what the women workers had advanced. The whole process of analysis was unnerving in that I did not want to hear only the voices that confirmed what I had wanted to hear, that workers felt exploited and forced to stay at places of employment. My views about women's decisions in such an industry had been influenced by the various feminist and development scholarship on women's work and roles in GVCs on one hand, and on the other, by my own observed experience in the fieldwork. These perceptions about the industry were built as I conducted the literature

---

[4] For key interview guide (guiding questions during interviews), see Appendix 5

review. However, the interviews with women workers told a different story to that proposed in the feminist literature and development literature about women's earnings and its related impact on women's decision-making. This therefore called for my awareness in analysing the explanations that women advanced about their work experience and broader life changes thereafter. I had gone into the research curious and unsure about the different factors that affected women's experience of work and impact on their lives.

As earlier mentioned, coding followed through two processes, inductive process while the research questions followed a deductive process. The process of coding was helpful in as far as "conducting a focused analysis of specific issues to be discussed (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011:217). Verbatim transcripts were used throughout the analysis, this is to capture information in participants own meanings (Hennick, Hutter et al. 2011). Once the data was transcribed, translated and anonymized, the data was coded. Coding helped me to manage the issues brought out in the interviews into manageable proportions.

Thus, interviewing the workers positioned me closer to teasing out how earning an income was impacting individually on the women workers and how other forms of informal organizing were changing women's options. It was therefore important to not only treat the explanations of women workers as individual and attribute their explanations based on their unique circumstances as these circumstances advanced by the women reflected their different life cycles and various influences. I was able to classify the responses according to the different research questions and this made it possible for me to distinguish their perceptions based on those held by a minority of women workers and those that were held by the majority of women with the consideration of how their location, life etc. affected their views. Both these views were considered within a broader context of farm management type and location.

The a priori codes that came from the interviews and focus group discussion were relevant in looking at the general life questions about women's marital

status, where they lived and number of children they had and where they had previously worked and how long they had worked for at the farm in question. I also asked about their contract status and how they got to working on the current farms. From then on, broader lines of questioning were followed about their workplace and the relations with co-workers and supervisors. Questions about the employment practices of the farms were asked in both male and female FGD to determine the division of labour between men and women and the demands that are made on women each day (see Appendix 1 and 2 for a breakdown).

In the women only focus groups discussions, the line of questioning was intended to bring out aspects of women's lives that they considered important and the things they were able to do after they started working (inductive). Women were asked to list the things that they were able to do that they were not able to do previously before starting work. These lists served to illuminate on the factors that serve to limit and constrain women's agency and in the process the different processes that affect their spaces for agency. For example, taking children to school and finding money for uniforms was put as educating children. These lists will be illuminated upon in chapter 5.

Recognizing that women's explanations were themselves not enough while working on the presumption that "people generally operate with less than perfect information about the wider decision-making environment in which they live" (Kabeer, 2000: 411), it was necessary to seek other sources to help understand labour market behaviour as exhibited by the women. To this end, information from other actors, given the GPN approach taken as a holistic framework of analysis, was filtered, tagged and compared with the picture women painted, which served to triangulate their narratives.

The finer nuances of agency questions were followed on in the one- to-one semi-structured interviews to provide a deeper narrative of how working had affected the women's work experience and their lives outside work. The line of questioning and responses were placed within the broader themes to be discussed below.

The first category **– experience of work** – includes history of women workers on the farms, with questions going beyond the demographic information to include an investigation into women's employment history, motivation to work and experience of employment. The first category **work experience** provided not only the necessary demographics to the 4th chapter but constituted as the basis for drawing out issues relating to motivation to work and resources that women relied on in chapter 5. Within work experience in chapter 6, work relations were explored pointing to the different conditions and relations that women engage in at the workplace and further showed how farm practices and strategies adopted by farm management affect women's work experience and how women respond to them. All issues that women raised about the workplace and relations thereof were added to the 'work experience' broad theme. These included work incentives and promotion, conflict resolutions, competition in the workplace, mobility to work challenges and overtime issues.

The second category '**broader life changes' (chapter 7)** was aimed at determining the different outcomes of women working on their various aspects of their lives extending to their home and community life. Issues that women raised and their effects on their children ('children take care of themselves') and marital relations ('my husband respects me more') as well as decision making processes, 'my husband can't stop me from working' household relations 'he respects me more', doing small businesses, secret accounts were added to this category.

The 3rd category **organization and representation** (chapter 4 and 6) was aimed at investigating and examining how women organizing formally and informally was extending their agency in decision making both at the workplace and their home and community life. The issues added to this category included all issues that women raised concerning committees and organizing informally through Chilimba (i.e. rotating savings). Other issues raised were union perspectives of their work on-farm and consequent perspectives of women over the union.

The fourth category, **future aspirations (chapter 7)** was aimed at establishing women's changing aspirations as a result of working. All the issues added here included women's responses relating to their life goals and aspirations including all the challenges and opportunities that were mentioned. The last line of questioning was to establish the aspirations that women had having worked in such industries and what opportunities and constraints they faced in meeting some of the aspirations. This was done to establish the options and strategies that women perceived to be available to them in the course of their work life. In all these questions, I was able to establish the changing roles of women in their various roles both as homemakers and income earners with regards to income earning decisions. Further, women's perceptions about the changes effected through various intra-household relations as a result of earning an income as well as the perceptions of their partners and community members about their roles as working women were broadened.

They are some themes that had emerged from the women worker interviews that were not earlier envisioned like women's time use and allocation. This was put as a separate category because it detailed women's work burden and how time was allocated to different activities at work, in the home and in the community. It also foregrounded how time allocation affected women's different aspects of agency. These broad categories are important indicators of examining the experience of work and agency outcomes of the women workers in this study particularly by looking at the resources that catalyses women's agency. Agency is exercised through different resources that women are exposed to. For example, motivation to work is informed by different sources of information that women come across in their various communities, the resources women are able to access through earnings also constitute an important arena for different forms of agency either materially or emotionally. Further, women's agency is developed through group interactions either through formal representation in the union or informal organizing like Chilimba (informal credit rotating groups). Each of these resources thus constitute different aspects of agency that exposed women to different work experiences and even more important helps to extend the analysis of agency in this study.

An overriding objective was to encourage women to tell their own story; this helped to locate their experiences of work as they subjectively individually interpreted it, for instance, women gave information as what motivated them to work, and what work means for them, including what work has done for them. Proceeding this way provided rich information about characteristics of women, their backgrounds but was also important in putting in context to how labour market decisions were made (particularly how recruitment decisions were made), and the impact of these actions. Further, this background information was necessary to locate/situate women in a broader societal context. Inspired by Kabeer's (2000:408) study on garment workers in Dhaka and London and their related agency outcomes working home or outside it, I have organized the main data chapters as follows:

i. **Motivation to work** (what factors and conditions existed before the woman took on employment; e.g. how decision to work was arrived at, household history, including preceding job history, household labour strategies and the resources used by marital status)

ii. **Work experience** (e.g. work relations, conditions, overtime and challenges (in their mobility to work, food, meeting targets) and related changes within the workspace by site

iii. **Beyond the workplace** (what factors and conditions have been altered as a result of a woman taking on work; e.g. changed role of woman within the household; income pooling, management and allocation of household resources; community's view about a woman's decision to take on work; woman's own interpretation of her changed role as a result of taking up employment).

3.7. Conclusion

This chapter set out to elaborate on the choice of methods and ethical implications for using Feminist methodology and case study design within the GPN for analysing women workers experiences of work. Using the feminist methodology with a case study design within the GPN context served to

foreground this study's objectives by positioning women within the GPN. The analysis of women's agency has been inductively drawn from women's own narration of their experience. Methods selected; semi-structured interviews against the survey method were aimed at bringing out women's narration of their experience of work and stakeholder activities given that the GPN is power laden. I have managed and coded data through the use of Nvivo and Excel. Throughout this chapter I have highlighted the importance of a reflective approach that considers both ethics and my own positionality.

In the next chapter, I will elaborate on the cutflower industry context of Zambia by analysing the different players within the domestic context and their related roles as well the global market forces and purchasing practices from the GPN context. The next chapter therefore provides a context within which women's experience of work takes place and highlights the type of labour demanded. Further, by analysing the strategies used by farm management, the next chapter potentially gives the context to women's agency (demonstrated in chapters 5, 6,7 and 8) within such spaces.

4. Zambian cutflower Industry: Overview and Context

Introduction

The thrust of this strand of the study is to highlight and foreground the findings of the case study empirical/contextual context of this thesis, within the GPN framework. The examination of the workings of GPNs not only involve unravelling the governance, networks (locally and globally) and relations between buyers and suppliers and other external actors, but are an important channel for reviewing how such production lines may affect women's experience of employment and in turn how agency of workers is being exercised or at best promoted/enhanced.

The analysis of the cut flower industry within the GPN is crucial for this thesis in order to provide insights into how the conditions and dynamics of employment are affected by the power dynamics within the GPN. The GPN analysis is used to shed more details on how global retailer practices and expectations affect suppliers and the labour demanded. As the goal of this thesis is to learn about agency and its corresponding mechanisms and pathways, underpinning women's agency is their attitude and impression of their work situation. I argue that understanding women's experience of work as it relates to agency requires unpacking of the context within which women workers experience work. The broader framework of agency in this case involves exploring the strategies and resources that women employ (see chapter 5,6 and 7 on this). The section below endeavours to show how the cutflower industry is integrated within the GPN.

In an attempt to expose the workings of the case study farms within the GPN context, I first discuss the general trends in the floriculture sector and characteristics of the industry. Before looking at the general context, I introduce the case study farms and their related labour activities more generally, after which an in-depth overview of the industry is given which unveils the different governance structures (especially by focusing on standards and purchasing practices of retailers), I will then set out the

institutional setup of the industry by analysing the different actors (ZEGA, labour office, trade unions etc.). The detailed case study analysis will then follow by showing how farms operate and the employment demographics of the case studies, ending with highlighting the assumptions and ideology of the sociocultural context within Zambia's society.

To begin with, the case study farms proved instrumental in unravelling the different governance structures of cutflower supply chain, especially where labour codes of practice and ethical trading standards are used to tightly control and influence company strategies on employment and production see (Dolan and Sorby 2003, Kidder and Raworth 2004, Tallontire, Smith et al. 2004, Women Working World-wide 2011). Of particular importance to this research was to examine closely how company strategies affect the experience and wellbeing of the women workers from the GPN context. The Zambian floricultural industry makes an intriguing investigation into the analysis of local labour utilization on the part of employers and agency implications for workers. Figure 1 is a general illustration of Zambia's target markets for cutflowers

Figure 1 Zambian cut flowers' target markets
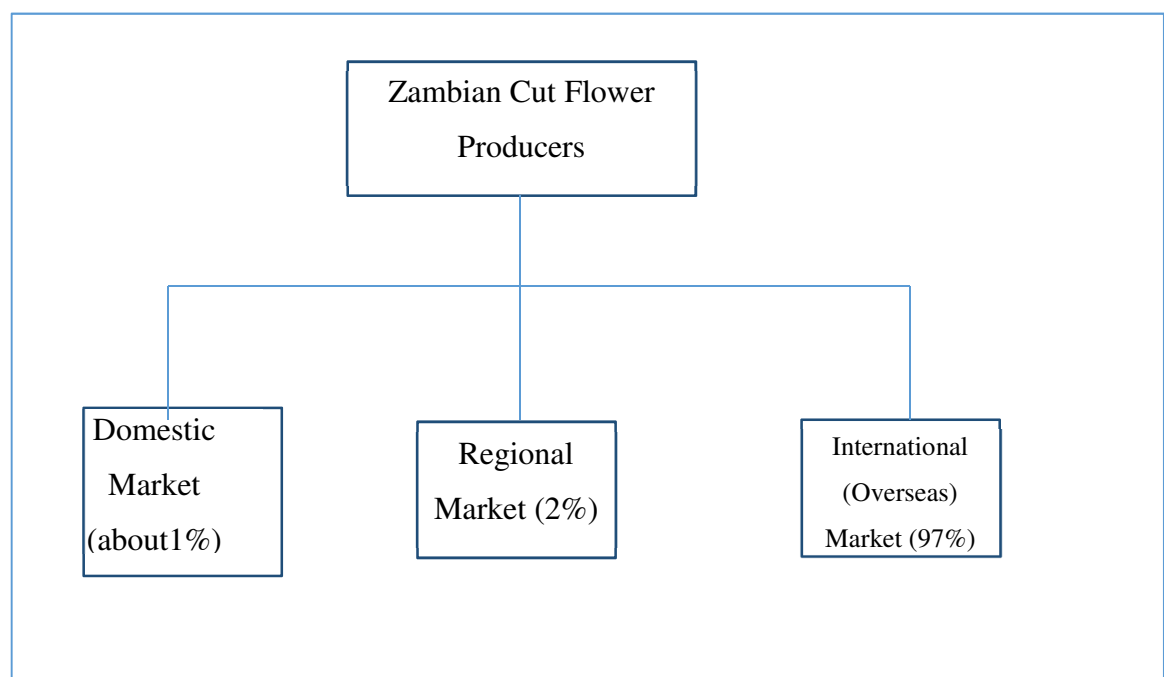
As has been illustrated in the diagram, the Zambian cutflowers are as a whole sold to the international (Overseas) market, regional markets (mainly South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) only takes up about 2% of the total flowers exported and the very few (less than 1%), almost negligible, are sold to the domestic market. Each of the export destinations have different quality and standard expectation of the type of cutflowers demanded but the European destination having the strictest compliance purchasing standards followed by the relatively less strict regional market that uses the local ZEGA code and South African (multiflora code).

Hence, the initial assumption of this investigation is that strict compliance to codes of conduct (see section 4.2.1 below on codes of conduct) especially in international markets is positively associated with a certain type of labour supplied by the Global South that leans towards flexible and exploitative tendencies (Kidder and Raworth 2004), although producers exporting to the regional market or selling to the domestic market are no different from those producers who export to the European market in terms of how labour is treated . The type of labour demanded inevitably affects the options for agency of women workers and, in most cases, increases their work burden (affecting not only their productive capacity but their reproductive and community engagement - see chapter 6 and 7).

In scrutinizing how farms operate in relations to their export activities, I found that production at the farm level involves three distinct activities: greenhouse activities, pack house activities and cold room activities. The greenhouse activities include actual plant growing, nurturing and harvesting. Once harvested, the cut flowers are taken to the cold room for temporal storage before grading begins in the pack house. The 'human touch' is indispensable in pack house processes, hence its labour-intensive nature. What I observed during the fieldwork visits corresponds with the USITC (2003:12) report which notes that "planting, harvesting, grading, and packaging traditionally require

hand labour, making labour inputs a significant component of production costs in the cut flower industry." Once grading is completed in the pack house, the plants are packaged and stored in the cold room in readiness for transportation, either to the airport or final destination – domestic or regional markets – via road haulage.

Figure 2 Simplified supply chain by farm-level activities

Greenhouse	Making land ready - Plant and nurture plants -Fertilizer application, spraying, weeding and harvesting
Cold room	Temporal storage in readiness for grading -preliminary inspection (quality control)
Pack house	cleaning -sorting -Grading -Packaging
Cold room	Temporal storage in readiness for transportation to airport or domestic/regional destination

Freight and

Road Haulage

International Markets (Dutch Auction System or directly to retailers in Europe)

Domestic and Regional Markets

Source: Author's own construction

Figure 2 is a simplified illustration of farm-level supply chain activities. It illustrates a range of specific farm level activities by site, from, for example, planting and nurturing plants taking place in the greenhouse to dispatch of flowers from the farm by type of market served and, consequently, transport used. In general, the farm-level activities correspond directly to the job positions workers take. For example, a grader for the grading activity in the pack house. However, some farms prefer having workers perform all the activities rather than specialization of work. To fully grasp how women's agency is affected by the operations of farms integrated in the GPN, it was necessary to reveal how codes of practice/ retailer purchasing practices levied by destination markets impact upon labour-use/demand. But as illustrated, farm-level activities are somewhat similar if not the same, so that workers' time requirement is also the same.

The following section will examine the implication of purchasing practices and codes of conduct on farm level practices/producer options especially for labour.

4.1. From the global to the local

The production of high value commodities, integration of global markets and production networks has opened up space for sub Saharan African countries (like Zambia, Kenya or Ethiopia) to export to high end markets in the North (Tallontire, Smith et al. 2004). However, supplying such markets comes with its own costs for Sub-Saharan African producers, particularly the 'risk and harsh reality of supplying this highly demanding sector with regards to the associated increased costs and the managerial burden associated with purchasing practices" (Legge, Orchard et al. 2006:12). Through the purchasing practices of the buyers, producers tend to push the risks associated with production on the workers, to meet the demands of volumes and just in time delivery (Kidder and Raworth 2004, Said-Allsopp 2013).

In an attempt to secure the confidence of consumers regarding safe production processes and worker welfare, "the mainstream corporate

response to this pressure has been the widespread uptake of ethical trading initiatives" (Hughes 2001:1). Ethical trading refers to the development of minimum standards towards environmental and social responsibility on large scale producers and these are established through codes of conduct monitored through auditing processes (Hughes 2001). In keeping with codes of conduct, market access and so on, workers' experience of employment is ultimately affected by buyer practices and patterns of demand (Barrientos 2008). Hughes (2001) notes that seasonal demand movements cause farms to alter their targets throughout the year and is responsible for the employment of temporary workers at peak demand. She adds that "This pressure on growers is further intensified by the seasonality of cut flower consumption, linked to different festivals like Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Easter and Christmas" (Hughes 2001:394). Accordingly, such seasonality of demand has, in part, translated into flexibility of employment (Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005). During peak seasons – high demand – workers suffer from long hours of work and are pacified by (an illusion) of incentives to encourage them to meet targets (Barrientos 2008).

Unfortunately, these incentives are illusory because farms strategically release labour during periods of low demand. Farm practices particularly in terms of employment terms (e.g. setting targets and general farm setup) are thus tailored to meet buyer demands (Barrientos and Evers 2014). The section 4.2.1 below looks at how ethical considerations in the production process of the GPN affects suppliers within the chain and the resulting labour implications

4.1.1 Codification, certification and standards

In order to access international markets, farms must obtain some certification and subsequently adhere to codes of practice. Indeed, all farms targeting the European market have to be EurepGAP certified, British Retail Consortium or MPS certified, depending on the supermarket they are targeting or the Dutch auction system (Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005). Each of these standards carries different issues covering environmental and social dynamics of production (Hughes 2001). For this chapter, I am particularly interested in the social

dynamics of incorporating different codes of conduct for worker's welfare. Farmers therefore need to implement different standards to access multiple export markets.

Given the buyer driven nature of the cut flower industry (as captured in chapter 2), the sale of cutflowers is dependent on tightly controlled export chains (Hughes 2001, Riisgard 2007). There are basically two types of supply chains for international markets: one involves the direct sale of products to supermarkets in Europe, which are far stricter than the other chain which involves the sale of exports to the Dutch Auction system which are later sold for re-export (Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005). The other chain serving the regional market is even less stringent on code implementation. This supply chain targets supermarkets in the Republic of South Africa and Congo DRC. ZEGA codes of conduct are normally used as the baseline in both international and regional markets.

Codes of conduct, themselves a function of product destination, are defined, in significant part, by the target market and they primarily serve two interrelated functions: first, product quality assurance functions, to standardize products and meet specific demand requirements. Second, input-ethics, as an assurance that labour and environmental conditions in producing countries are satisfactory (Hughes 2001, Raworth 2004). See Figure 3 below on functions of codes of conduct."

Figure 3 Functions of codes of conduct
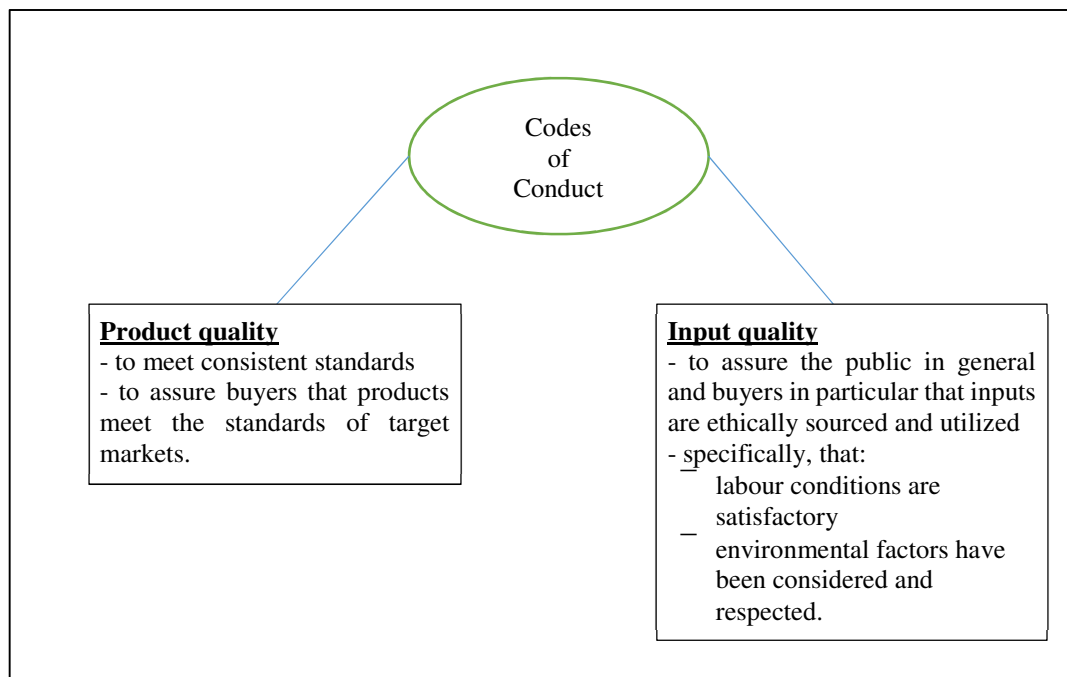
Source: Author's own construction

An example of how codes of conduct translating into actual farm practices, particularly to access specific retailers, was that Farm 4 had to replant two greenhouses with a different plant variety altogether, requiring a different blend of more environmentally friendly yet more expensive chemicals.

In as far as implementation of codes by suppliers is concerned, by the 1990s, a number of company codes were introduced with the intention of protecting the supermarkets and large retailers against consumer complaints relating to food safety, harmful nature of products, the environmental effect of producing such products and the exploitation of workers especially from producers in developing countries (Hughes 2001, Tallontire, Smith et al. 2004). The company specific codes had strict procedures on the monitoring and compliance mechanisms to be used (Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005). In turn, importers supplying these retailers also developed their own codes to maintain their trust with retailers. Some of these codes included the Tesco Nature's Choice Standard, Responsible Sourcing by Waitrose and Sound Sourcing from the Co-operative group). Furthermore, the Northern codes were

developed to cover the environmental and food safety issues such as Dutch Organization Milieu Project Sierteelt (MPS) which in 2005 certified "between 70 and 80 per cent of flowers in the Dutch Auctions" (Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005:561). MPS certification can also include an optional 'social qualification' (SQ) on worker welfare.   Others include Fairtrade, the Flower Label Programme, Rainforest Alliance and Organic Certification (Riisgaard, Bolwig et al. 2010, Riisgaard and Gibbon 2014). Codes that were mentioned during the interviews with different flower companies during my field work visits in 2015 are listed in Table 9 below.

Table 9 Different codes and Standards applied in the cut flower chain in Zambia

Sectoral codes	Company codes	Independent codes
Tesco's 'Nature's Choice'	Euro-Retailers' protocol on Good Agricultural Practice (EUREP GAP), developed by a network of European retailers to ensure best practice in the production and sourcing of fresh produce, flowers	Ethical trading initiative (ETI)
Waitrose's 'Responsible Sourcing	Zambia Export Growers Association code of practice	Max Havelaar Switzerland's Fair Trade flower program
The Co-ops 'sound sourcing'	Dutch Organization Milieu Project Sierteelt (MPS)	
	Multiflora Auction	

Source: Author's own construction of codes followed by the farms interviewed

According to Braun and Gearhart (2005:206) "codes of conduct have almost become required currency among international buyers and export producers."

Strict adherence to the supply chain demands guarantees producers access to markets (Kidder and Raworth 2004, Raworth 2004). The forms of auditing represent different challenges on managers tasked with ensuring that all recommendations given by auditors are adhered to the latter. In fact, several management interviews highlighted that the recommendations made to management based on the changes suggested by auditors were changed by higher management within the same company just to ensure that they passed the auditing process (2015 fieldwork farm interviews).

In practice, however, codes of conduct, as implemented by farms, privilege product quality over input and environmental conditions (Hughes 2001). A further index speaking of the unfair privileging of product quality is the way in which buyer practices cripple the labour conditions that they purport to improve (Raworth 2004, Barrientos 2008). Rather than protecting workers, say in "the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour (Raworth, 2004: 38), farms are influenced to 'force' their workers to supply labour beyond normal working hours when demand rapidly spikes. Many of the interviewed women workers cited overtime as a requirement rather than an option. Middle management corroborated this observation, arguing that meeting export targets took precedence over consideration of labour overtime (2015, fieldwork farm interviews).

In as far as working conditions are concerned, management further uses rolling contracts to reduce its cost of labour (Raworth 2004). Overtime worked during peak seasons or holidays like Mother's day, Christmas day and Valentine's day is often either underpaid (Hughes 2001) or workers are asked to sit it out in less busy months (NUPAAW 2008fieldwork farm interviews, 2015). Buyer practices and demands undermine/influence how workers experience work. For instance, due to buyer demands, farms have targets, want to meet delivery schedules, but producers pass this on to workers by demanding flexibility from workers (insufficient notice to meet demands)(Selwyn 2013). Farms also set targets for workers and add incentives, but even when targets are met, the promised remuneration is not forthcoming (women workers interviews, 2015).

Hence, by imposing targets for workers to meet, this pressure forces workers to view each other as competitors thereby undermining any efforts to help them see each other as allies. To counter these challenges, it has often been argued that associational power can release some of the labour problems workers encounter (Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013, Selwyn 2013). Yet this associational power as I found out is limited due to the nature of work requirements for workers, as I discuss in chapter 6.

Nevertheless, the challenges that producers and exporters of cutflowers grapple with are not only limited by their value chain position in the global market for flowers. Rather, producers have to significantly alter their production strategies to respond to the changing domestic policy environment in which they operate (See section 4.3 below on the institutional challenges of the cutflower industry).

Undoubtedly, domestic policy also plays a crucial role in influencing farm policies and practices. National policies earmarked for certain sectors are best understood and accepted if predictable. However, policy inconsistencies and reversals can adversely impact farm operations. Take the sector-specific incentives for example: cutflower farms can legally claim Value-Added Tax (VAT) refunds (ZEGA, 2014), however during my interviews with farm management and stakeholders in the industry, it was reported that the process of claiming the VAT is both frustrating and a cumbersome process that causes growers to give up. Farmers can claim VAT refunds only if they can show proof from the destination of their exports. This starves the farms of funds for recapitalization or purchase of inputs (Farm Management interview, 2015).

Further, cutflower farms, under a previous era of diversification intensification, had been selected to receive incentives on inputs: they paid no customs duty on greenhouse plastic sheeting, but policy changes have reinstated this tax (Farm Management interview, 2015). Consequently, an exodus of farmers from the floriculture subsector (from over 20 to 13 producers as of 2015) (ZEGA, interview) in addition to other problems facing the economy have witnessed a shrinkage of export value from around US$60 million at its peak

to about US$20 million by 2012. Below Table 10 shows how the industry has faced a shrinkage in export volumes resulting from changes in domestic policy and global financial instability, while the increase in exports observed in 2014 is associated with producers gaining secured contracts at guaranteed prices. (ZEGA and Farm management interviews,2014). The section below attempts to highlight how the different institutions operate within the context of the cutflower industry.

Table 10 Export volumes by year

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Flowers by export volumes in tonnes	4,733	4,260	3,479	3,921	3,712	3,237	3,983	4,409

4.2. Institutional, organizational setup and processes in the cutflower industry of Zambia

In this section I unpack the institutional and organizational trends and processes that shape the cutflower industry of Zambia in the context of the GPN. The nature and operations of the cutflower industry required a strong institutional basis that can self-regulate in order to meet the challenge of growing quality products that could compete favourably with other producers on the world market.

Zambia's export sector, dominated by copper, suffered a crisis from the mid-1970s and hit rock-bottom by the early 1980s (Jaffee, Kopicki et al. 2003). During this period, it was incumbent upon the interventionist state to resuscitate the export sector, (ZDA 2011, Sutton and Langemead 2013). This meant efforts to move away from copper export dependence to Non-Traditional Exports (NTEs) with the greatest potential for foreign exchange maximization. Accordingly, the state put in place an array of incentive

packages for export promotion, and for the agricultural sector, the horticultural sector emerged as a candidate. The 1980s thus saw the growth of Zambia's horticultural exports which coincided with the time when the country was also experiencing austere foreign exchange shortages. Farmers of European heritage moved into the market initially supplying off-season vegetables and strawberries to the European market with the intention to access foreign exchange and expand their product base beyond livestock and cereals (Jaffee, Henson et al. 2011).

Following expansive investment and policy support in the agricultural sector, the floricultural subsector recorded one of the fastest growths, expanding almost threefold in about 15 years from $US8 million in 1993/4 to over $US22.6 million in 2009 (Tallontire, Smith et al. 2004, ZDA 2011). Two main factors spurred this growth. The adoption of liberal economic policies in the early 1990s encouraged entrepreneurs to engage in and set up small businesses as import and export restrictions were reduced. According to Jaffee, Kopicki et al. (2003) diversification policies included initiatives to inject foreign capital, predominantly European capital, into the floriculture industry. Secondly, the cheap labour and the conducive climate for floriculture production was another attraction to investors, which also contributed to increased foreign exchange and employment in the cut flower industry in other sub-Saharan African countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya (However, inclusion of Global South producers in such chains required adherence to the terms and demands of Northern retailers in order to access their markets (see section 4.2.1 above) which necessitated investment in and development of the industry, including private and government institutions (Jaffee, Kopicki et al. 2003) (see chapter 2).

Broader economic difficulties have afflicted the Zambian economy, and as such, what appears as an unfair treatment of the cut flower sector could be seen as the government making a pragmatic policy stance that takes into account the broader economy. This is not to deny that the cut flower industry has been bedevilled in the process, but to rather see policy changes from a broader vantage point. Because delving into the political economy of Zambia's

cut flower industry is beyond the scope of this study, the context set out here is to offer descriptive rather than causal explanations. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning what industry participants and observers perceive as dynamics that must be addressed/confronted if a flourishing cut flower industry is to be placed on the agenda of the government and other stakeholders.

The following section 4.3.1 looks into how institutions like ZEGA (which is instrumental to the cutflower industry) was established and its operations with the case study farms. Other stakeholders include the labour officers from Ministry of Labour, trade union engagement, and associated NGOs. A list of important actors is provided in Table 11 below, but note that this is not exhaustive. I will focus my discussion in this chapter on ZEGA, Ministry of Labour and trade unions as these constitute the relevant institutions that potentially affects worker's welfare.

Table 11 Summary of Actors/ Stakeholders in the Floricultural Industry

Name of Actor/Stakeholder	Tasks/Activities
Zambia export Growers Association (ZEGA) and ZEGA Airfreight	promote standards (ZEGA Base Code), facilitation of airfreight services, lobby government, organizing and training workshops, supplying market, providing technical support and advice on sources of finance to farmers
NAC 2000	facilitation of airfreight services
Natural Resource Development College/Zambia Export Growers Association (NTZZ)	Training on pesticide use, crop scouting, farm safety, and overall supervision skills, auditing services for ZEGA codes/standards at farms
Zambia farm Employers Association (ZFEA)	It is accountable for the negotiation of the agricultural sector's collective bargaining agreement at the Joint Industrial council (JIC) with the worker's union

National Union for the Plantation Agricultural and Allied Workers (NUPAAW) Grain and Meat (GRAMUTZ)	representing workers in the floricultural industry and overall horticultural industry
The Zambian Ministry of Labour and Social Security (hereafter Labour Office)	Responsible for ensuring that labour laws are adhered to through inspections at various production sites and country as a whole
NGOs	Work with the union and workers by raising awareness of workers' rights and the codes/Standards to reduce abuses that may arise from workers' ignorance of their rights
Zambia Development Agency (ZDA)	Promote innovations that promote high skills, productive investment and increased trade

4.2.1. Institutional and organizational setup

To gain competitive advantage and subsequently access foreign markets, local producers were drawn into an international supply chain order. But local productive institutions themselves needed to be strengthened before they could function effectively in promoting production (Jaffee, Kopicki et al. 2003). Hence, ZEGA was established in 1984 as a private sector entity with the help of donor (EU) and government funds, but largely remained in infancy until mid-to-late-1990s, driven by liberalization policies. ZEGA was charged with handling airfreight and bulk buying of inputs in addition to providing the necessary training for the horticulture industry (ZDA 2011).

ZEGA has historically been made up of different functionary wings, but these have not been fixed. The ZEGA cluster involved ZEGA limited, ZEGA training trust which was separate through NTTZ (which trained people to become skilled manpower), ZEGA airfreight (which was particularly concerned with handling of goods for export) and finally ZEGA air (which would transport the produce via a national carrier). All these organizations were set up to ease the export of fresh produce and to help farmers meet the standards of the export markets. However, ZEGA ran into some financial difficulties as their main carrier was liquidated (Sutton and Langemead 2013).

Further, and structurally related to countrywide economic difficulties, ZEGA failed to retain the manpower it had trained; this manpower instead opted for employment in other non-agricultural sectors, which eventually imposed a huge cost to the organization. Foreign investors were discouraged by manpower deficits, and because the ZEGA training unit survived primarily on contributions from its members, when they withdrew their funding, the result was catastrophic so much so that the training institute was almost closed in the-1990s. ZEGA air also met the same fate, but this was more related to the closure of the national airline (ZEGA, management interviews, 2015). ZEGA enjoyed a monopoly for a time, but the creation of NAC2000, an airfreight ground handler, in the early part of the millennium brought competition into the

industry. NAC2000 has found its place within this market, and been successful in persuading some clients to leave its competitor, ZEGA, for NAC2000.

The Zambian floriculture industry is made up of other players, some not directly involved in productive activities yet all playing significant roles in determining, in complex ways, how women experience employment (see chapter 3 for the list of all stakeholders interviewed). At the meso-level, on the one hand, there are government functionaries, non-governmental associations and/or organizations representing workers in general and sometimes women in particular. Key agencies that fit this profile include: The National Union of Plantation, Agriculture and Allied Workers (NUPAAW) which represents and protects workers' interests; The Zambian Ministry of Labour and Social Security (hereafter Labour Office) mediates worker and employer relations, primarily formulates and implements labour laws and regulations including the statutory minimum wage.

On the other hand, there are associations, institutions or organizations more connected to the production units and therefore employers. These include: The Natural Resources Development College (NRDC) tasked with training manpower and hence providing skilled labour inputs; Zambia Farm Employers' Association (ZFEA) which serves the interests of farmers as employers. These organizations form part of the environment under which farms operate and constitute the 'rules of the game'. In relation to the GPN, ZEGA ensures that the freight conditions of the products are met to meet the destination markets, while its affiliate training institution is instrumental in providing the expertise in flower production that meets global demand, the trade unions essentially act as the 'watch dog' of labour employment conditions in support of the regulatory role of the Labour Ministry. Ultimately, each of these stakeholder's feeds into the GPN approach in pointing out where the actors are positioned and the complexity of exchange relationships that constitute the GPN.

In addition to the 'rules of the game' at the level of domestic policy, there are external factors associated with export markets that influence the pattern of

domestic policy. Chief to this testimony are the internationally recognized or approved (quality and production) standards under which farms are expected to operate in order to gain access to the international export markets (Kidder and Raworth 2004). Domestic handlers enforce codes of conduct that are internationally recognized although do not necessarily guarantee acceptance (Kidder and Raworth 2004). Further inspections are carried out at the point of entry into international markets, which can disqualify certain products.

The ZEGA code of conduct relates to responsible production of fresh produce as well social responsibility to the needs of the workers employed on the exporting farms (NUPAAW 2008). The codes developed by ZEGA (ZEGA base code) were audited against some of the export market standard requirements for the European markets as shown in the Table 11 below. Companies that were audited for other relevant market labels such as MPS, MPS GAP, EUREP GAP, ETI were not to be re-audited for the aspects of the ZEGA code of practice, GAP and Social (ZEGA, 2005).

Table 12 ZEGA code of practice

ZEGA Code	Benchmarked against associated market labels
Base code of practice	
Code of Practice GAP	EUREP GAP, MPS GAP
Code of Practice Social	ETI

The ZEGA base code covers employment conditions, worker's freedom, health and safety, pesticide management, market requirements and environmental protection. Nevertheless, a commentary on the worker aspect

is necessary. ZEGA does not directly engage with workers (its connection with workers is purely through its code of practice within its social implementation through its auditing process). Many of the issues relating to worker welfare in the ZEGA code of conduct are only as effective as the farmers are compliant; in practice. Moreover, ZEGA lacks adequate resources to monitor compliance (ZEGA Interview, 2015), particularly related to worker issues. Although audited, its actual effect of worker's employment conditions is neglected (for example, on wages, one of the requirements under ZEGA Social is that 'wages must be paid in full and on time'), in my fieldwork interviews, it was discovered that two farms under ZEGA were not paying workers in full and on time. This adds to the broader industrial challenges currently facing the floricultural industry of both weak public (government) and private (standards and certification) regulatory structures in enhancing labour agency.

4.3.1.1 Regulatory framework: labour aspect

Farms operate within the legal framework set out by the government through the Ministry of Labour. Not only does this condition how workers are treated, it also serves an enabling function for workers more broadly. General agricultural sector policies affect farm policies, which in turn, amongst other things, influence how women's labour supply is viewed (Jaffee, Henson et al. 2011). The Employment Act (CAP 268) is the basic employment law in Zambia within which the basic employment terms and the specifics about all casualization and provisional employment terms in the country are foregrounded (Klaveren, Tijdens et al. 2009, 2011).

The industrial and labour relations act (CAP 269) responsible for conducting the collective bargaining and establishment of workers and employer's organizations has undergone several changes in the past few decades with one major change affecting the operations of the joint industrial council (national level) that was initially established. This weakened the power of the union and instead gave more power to companies to convince workers to seek alternative unions supported by farm management (as will be seen in the next section 4.3.1.2). It is also limited subject to the revisions made to the Joint Industrial Council removing the mandatory nature of JIC (Klaveren, Tijdens et

al. 2009). The revised changes to the JIC gave employers the freedom to hold collective bargaining at industry level or at company level. This has significant consequences for the unions to recruit the membership of workers on the farms. Although Zambia has ratified the core ILO labour conventions, by for example implementing in theory a change in the statutory minimum wage cap (2.5.1), the majority of the workforce in the agricultural sector are not paid the minimum wage (Klaveren, Tijdens et al. 2009) with the exception of the cutflower industry.

The Labour force survey (2012) acknowledges that "the national average monthly income was estimated at K1,724,106". On average, males received an average monthly income of K1, 981, 661 compared to that of K1,245,157 for females. Urban areas recorded a higher average monthly income of K1,969,503 compared to a lower average monthly income of K1,486,703 for rural areas.

Moreover, the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Gender operate separately in their mandate and strategies making it difficult for both government agencies to effectively protect worker rights particularly vulnerable poor working women in the agricultural sector (Wonani 2010). The Ministry of Labour is itself resource constrained, inspection mechanisms are both weak and sparsely done. In addition, the Ministry of Labour is mandated to play an advisory role rather than an enforcement one (Ministry of Gender and Child Development 2014). This dilutes their findings to the labour industrial court but also weakens their position to effectively influence employers to take up their recommendations. My observations and interviews at the national regulatory level suggest that workers are neglected such that reported cases of injustices by informal workers are not taken seriously. Instead, workers remain highly vulnerable to the systems of production and management strategies on employment terms.

4.3.1.2 Employment Creation and the conundrum of labour legislation in the Agricultural sector

Although the Zambian government has a policy to create employment (see Vision 2030; Fifth and Sixth National Development Plan (2006-2010 and 2013-2016), weak regulatory and supervisory arrangements undermine policy uptake by employers or indeed micro-aspects of employment such as working conditions and gender sensitivity (Wonani 2010). During my fieldwork interviews, I observed from the interviews with farm management and the labour office the refusal of the agriculture sector (especially middle income farmers) to accept government's announcement regarding the upward revision of the statutory minimum wage. Farmers had submitted a complaint in 2014 through their representatives such as the Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE), citing the potential of this policy to raise costs of production and consequently stifle growth.

Based on my interviews with the labour office in 2015, the government appeared resolute in its policy stance to abolish casualization of employment. Although this policy change sounds noble, I observed that farm management interviewed from all farms argued that the policy ignored two important things: first, making permanent employment in a sector that is seasonal raises the average cost of production, but since employers claim they cannot afford such work and wage arrangements, they would need to downsize their workforce and intensify production with the remaining labourers. It is such work downsizing and work intensification that maybe detrimental to the very workforce the policy is intended to benefit. Outside these institutions and stakeholders, women workers have support from the unions and other forms of organizing, as I explore in the next section.

4.3.1.3 Worker Organization and Representation

Kabeer (2000; 2010) and Kabeer et al. (2013) argue that, collectivity rather than individuality in political participation have the potential to alter the choice set available to workers. In as far as organizing and representation, workers coming together may help to confront the disadvantages workers face in the

workplace and consequently alter their experiences of work and their broader lives.

In the GPNs, workers remain in a continuous struggle to strategically organize themselves to voice their grievances. Consequently, forms of organizations, both informal and formal, remain important arenas to communicate and consequently overcome the labour challenges that workers continue to face. The exercise of agency (see chapter 2 for the conceptualization of agency) has been argued to have more tranformatory power when exercised collectively (Pearson, 2005; Kabeer, 2010; Coe and Lier, 2010; Cumbers et al., 2011). Labour intensive industries have been known to employ proportionately more women than men, however, in such industries, due to the nature of employment terms, forms of unionism and their representation especially for women workers tend to be limited (Hale and Opondo, 2005; Barrientos et al., 2003).

The following subsections reviews the forms of organizations and practices that have been prominent in highlighting labour rights and improving workers' welfare in general and the extent to which they have been effective in collectively helping women to strategically position themselves in this sector. Activities of trade unions facilitate how some of the laws play out for the workers. However, trade unions have to operate within different farm strategies and may sometimes compromise their ability to deliver the strategic needs of workers (Evans 2017). This section therefore attempts to foreground the research question on worker organizing and its potential for agency

4.3.1.3.1 Trade Unions
Issues relating to labour entitlements have historically and traditionally been grounded in, and protected by, some form of representative organization such as the modern-day labour unions (Prieto and Quinteros, 2005). However, to be represented by the union, a formal membership is required which can normally only be obtained if an employee is employed on a formal basis. Thus, this nature of union representation reflects its own weakness since a large body of employees in the agriculture sector of developing countries are

employed on casual/flexible basis and hence excluded from trade union membership (Meer, 2013) with the floricultural industry not being an exception.

The core of union interests reflects power struggles within the unions themselves. Because women are mainly employed on informal or flexible terms, their representation within the trade union is subordinated to the interests of the men (Evans 2017); consequently, what is seen as union pressure on employers normally reflects triumph of men's interests over women. Kabeer et al. (2013: 250) put neatly the terms and forms under which most women are normally employed: "The women are mostly to be found in casual, geographical dispersed, isolated, part-time, irregular and often home-based activities, and located on the margins of urban informal economies or in remote areas." Such terms and forms of employment are placed outside the influence and protection of labour unions, thereby exposing women to a downward spiral of indecent work (Selwyn, 2013).

Trade unions have consequently been criticized for not recognizing the double role that women play, as productive and reproductive actors (Prieto and Quinteros 2005; Selwyn 2009). Despite some limited progress in women's involvement in trade unions, men dominate influential positions such as managerial roles in trade unions. Such positions are considered to be concentrations of power and influence, necessary to tilt the employee-employer balance in favour of the (men's) interests of the trade unions (Evans 2017). Subsequently, women have been relegated to seek solace elsewhere, in other forms of organizing such as community organizations. These have increasing importance in women's lives as they provide an alternative, sometimes only, avenue through which the plight and wellbeing of women can be both represented and protected.

Nevertheless, some progress has been made through labour unions to improve workers' conditions of employment. The effectiveness of labour unions must not be solely understood in terms of the cohesion of its membership, rather, context matters: labour unions operate in a socio-political environment that impacts upon how labour unions perform their duties and

what results get produced (Prieto and Quinteros, 2005, (Finlayson and Palmvang 2016)).

Trade union influence in Zambia diminished with the advent and spread of liberalization (Finlayson and Palmvang 2016). The Zambian economy, since the implementation of liberalization policies, experienced a structural shift in employment mirrored by rapid and deep-seated informalisation of work. Consequently, trade union members (and influence) diminished. Yet the shift from public to foreign owned enterprises and businesses came with a new set of challenges: increased "short-term and casual contracts" across sectors required a new breed of complex and resolute negotiations to be set on the agenda of trade unions (Finlayson and Palmvang, 2016: 974).

This agenda has forced the union to re-look into how forms of informal work can be integrated within union representation. Such observations point to the nuances and changing patterns of relations under which unions operate. Unions only previously considered workers with long term contracts, but as the industry demand for labour has evolved, so has the union strategies for increased union membership (NUPAAW interviews, 2015).

An analysis of trade unions representing the surveyed workers is set out in the next subsection. A brief account of their operations are highlighted while some important distinctions between them made. This is to foreground the issues surrounding representation and related agency in the context of the GPN. More specifically, this chapter focused on representation from two unions (NUPAAW and GRAMUZ) that constitute the main unions in this sector.

4.3.1.3.2 Organizing Workers at the Cut Flower Farms:

As earlier mentioned, two main unions represent workers in the cutflower industry; NUPAAW and, GRAMUZ. NUPAAW was the larger and more established union both in history and current operations, although GRAMUZ represented the workers of the largest rose farm in Zambia.

NUPAAW was established in 1961, before independence and "covers around 22,000 workers on farms and plantations which produce sugarcane, soya, wheat, and flowers" (Finlayson and Palmvang, 2016: 975). Besides representing workers' interests, NUPAAW also seeks to empower its members by making available information regarding working conditions, sexual and reproductive health and fair work policy inscribed in, and guided by, the Zambian labour policy. The extent to which such information can be used by workers to resist work injustice and fight for better work conditions remains to be seen. First, such information is communicated through a top-to-bottom pyramidal structure. At the work site level, workers select a branch member as their representative who then has direct contact with the NUPAAW secretariat if called upon, rarely the other way. The tendency of ordinary workers to not regard themselves as members of the union while viewing branch members as the only members of the union calls into question whether effective communication had been made to ensure workers understood their right to organization. This is supported by Palmvang, (2016) who regard this as a weakness as it concentrates power at the top of the pyramid, but it must also be added that it discourages workers seeking union representation.

GRAMUZ, a relatively new player, surprisingly represented workers at the largest cutflower farm at which workers had until recently been members of NUPAAW. GRAMUZ followed a similar representing and communication structure as NUPAAW. When the farm ownership, management and operations changed, GRAMUZ was handpicked by the new management to represent worker interests.

While NUPAAW has a long history of working with workers connected to plantation in the agriculture sector, GRAMUZ was formed to represent workers in the livestock and grain subsectors. NUPAAW has institutionalized its operations, and in the process formed valuable networks beyond domestic boundaries; it works closely with international NGOs supporting trade unions and forged affiliations with global unions such as International Union of Food Workers (IUF). Such international networks have supported NUPAAW in various areas such as training on bargaining and negotiation strategies while

also drawing from experiences of unions from other countries. The IUF, a global trade union federation with affiliate organizations from 119 countries, runs projects to support local trade unions in organizing workers. For instance, between 2009 and 2011, it ran a project to support the organizing of cut flower workers in East and Southern Africa as well as provide training to its affiliates on health and safety for agriculture/plantation unions in Africa (Women Working World-wide 2011:24). By making use of such synergies, NUPAAW, despite facing difficulties, has made tremendous progress; recently negotiated for improvement of worker conditions in the Sugar plantation subsector (NUPAAW interview 2015).

However, from my observations during fieldwork interviews with the two unions, such progress has been attributed to a lack of competition in union representation, thus worker's interests are represented by 'one voice'. The importance of drawing these synergies is to highlight worker representation as a complex web of structures, networks and tensions that extends the local initiatives to include complex exchange relationships within the context of the GPN. In general, one would need to look into how unions themselves operate in order to say something about their effectiveness in advancing workers' interests.

Industry observers (from ZEGA and ZCTU interviews, 2015) add that the effectiveness of unions working in a particular subsector lies in their cohesiveness and ability to work as a unified force on the same agenda – to advance workers' interests. The division and competition in union representation has weakened such cohesiveness and consequently limited the effectiveness of trade unions, particularly in the cut flower subsector (Finlayson and Palmvang 2016). Workers represented by GRAMUZ complained about the union's disinterest in their plight. In fact, the workers were clear in mentioning that the union did nothing for them. The workers said they felt discouraged and lost hope in the union's ability to help them push for better work conditions. Union membership even at this one farm was declining, with the majority of workers choosing to be non-unionized (Farm Worker interviews, 2015).

The primary source of funding is union membership, and as member numbers have been declining, unions' resource basket has too (ZCTU interview, 2015). Unions have in fact been preoccupied by attempts to recruit more members rather than pursue workers' interests. The problem with this approach is that unions are not seen as collective ownership, rather members are regarded as clients. Finlayson and Palmvang (2016: 976) make a similar observation arguing that "members are now being identified as clients and customers, and not as part of a collective" given the power structures of unions representation. An official from one trade unions remarked that they would be abandoning their members at one of the farms because the fees they obtained from this membership were not worth their time and resources (name of informant and union kept anonymous).

The pyramidal structure adopted by unions has been criticized for being gender-insensitive (Evans 2017). I found that because men take up branch membership positions, it is argued that men's interests are communicated through this representative structure. Evans (2017), advances this argument by adding that many women tend to shy away from such (dominant) positions and even when there are some who show interest. Further, their commitment to family life cannot permit them to take on any more work beyond farm work (Women Working World-wide 2011).

From the observations in my fieldwork experience, it can be concluded that as trade unions have increasingly lost their political clout, their influence on the government and employers has diminished. Additionally, union resources are waning since fewer workers see the benefits of being unionized. What hope in unions that exists is being choked off by management strategies that have workers working tight shifts to meet tight schedules and hardly having time to take part in union matters. In such situations, little or no room is left for workers to organize properly. Fieldwork interviews with union officials and workers from different farms reveal that outspoken branch members are easily let go by management, given the contract system of employment (NUPAAW and Worker interviews). When contracts come to an end, management is not obligated to renew them. Such practices have discouraged branch members

from speaking out for fear of losing their jobs. Unions have failed to protect workers for unfair dismissal and workers have picked up on this message as one worker remarked:

"…*the company has more power than the union and can just decide to cancel or not renew your contract if the boss decides to terminate it*" (Worker Interview, Branch Member, 2015).

Examining the factors influencing and pushing for the improvement of workers' conditions of service requires looking beyond the boundaries of the farm. Although this has been discussed generally, it has not been seen in terms of strengthening or promoting workers' organizing (Evans 2017). My fieldwork interviews sought to capture this interplay - see chapter 6 about women's experiences through different forms of organizing. Through codes of conduct, for instance, buyer organizations are required to visit farms for supervision and monitoring to ensure that farm practices correspond to what was agreed upon (Hughes 2001). During field work it was reported that farm 3 was visited in 2011 by a buyer organization/representative who, found that conditions of work were below the standard, partly because workers were not properly organized.

Consequently, farm management was advised to encourage workers to organize so that they could submit their concerns to management as one voice. Thus, a workers' forum and gender committee was created, although with a limited agenda and scope. This forum was restricted to on-farm purely general task-related issues such as protective wear, gender issues (regarding women's reproductive issues and other behavioural issues at work) and thus had no mandate to discuss issues concerning the salaries.

I also observed that that farm-based forms of organizing have no influence outside the boundaries of the farm such as the policy space upon which laws and legislation in favour of labour are made. Indeed, such forms of organizing appear to be nothing more than a fulfilment of codes of conduct, rather than platforms to discuss conditions of work (Eade and Leather 2005). However,

this is not to argue that union representation or farm based organizing is useless, rather, their ability to transform the conditions of service within the cutflower industry appears limited in part due to the multiplicity of actors and interests.

Nevertheless, farms are encouraged, either through codes of conduct, best practices or trade unions, to take into account other aspects such as hygiene practices, relevant to both workers and the farms. Such practices are relevant for labour productivity in so far as workers are kept healthy and continue supplying their labour. Health related programs promoted on-farm include hygiene, HIV/AIDS training and information dissemination, counselling and family planning training and advice are all offered. NUPAAW, working closely with some NGOs (SHARe WILDAF, YMCA interviews, 2015), spearheaded programs aimed at harnessing and increasing women's leadership skills and reproductive rights as well as helping women deal with gender-based violence.

However, YMCA reported that women were not given adequate time to take part in training activities outside the farm (YMCA interview 2015). Additionally, the training was only conducted with the union branch representatives (who were expected to train others within their respective farms) whilst the actual ordinary workers did not necessarily get access to the materials that would help them grapple with the issues the training was intended to address (SHARe interview, 2015).

Taking stock of these complex dynamics contextualizes the work environment. But since an inquiry into women workers' agency is central to this study, it is noted that workers' experiences of employment transcend the employee-employer relations. In general, the workspace is a confluence of several players' interests across the GPN. Yet the amalgamation of these interests serves to constrain or expand the scope of the agency that women rely upon in their experience of work. Molyneux (1998) points out in general terms that women's movements are driven by the agenda of higher powers they associate with.

Yet what the fieldwork data reveals (in chapter 6) is that the workers were generally unaware of the membership to the union, or indeed any meaningful outcomes resulting from trade union pressure upon management. I established from the fieldwork interviews with women workers that by workers operating under poor conditions of work, they were growing increasingly sceptical of trade unions' effectiveness. Workers expressed a sense of awareness of the power play between the union and farm management, and from the workers' vantage point, the poor conditions of employment reflected the triumph of employers over the union. This is supported by Finlayson and Palmvang (2016) argument that a vicious circle emerges: as more workers opt out of union membership, unions increasingly lose their strength which in turn causes more workers to leave. This further supported what I found during my fieldwork visit on the farms that if understood properly, unions, as they draw on many resources and networks, maybe well placed to represent workers.

However, unions operate in socio-political environment with competing interests (Finlayson and Palmvang 2016). Ultimately, union operations must be supported adequately by state functionaries, although with a balanced view to promote rather than constrain agri-business. Representation within the union or some form of engagement in other groups formal or informal is likely to have a bearing on the resource agency available for women worker's agency. As has been already stated in chapter 2, women in the cutflower industry are often employed on informal and flexible basis and the involvement of actors like the union (directly) and NGOs (indirectly) potentially minimizes the negative effects of being employed in that way (through media campaigns and pressure on suppliers).

More important however, is that having union representation creates a platform for workers to voice their grievances about working conditions. This broadens the GPN beyond the institutional and organizational aspects of production to include aspects of labour representation and its effect on capital. Unions have networks which tend to be autonomous observers of the cutflower industry, these autonomous observers influence policy through

media campaigns about working conditions and in some way affect the way labour is utilized. Ultimately representation has the potential to re-engage women's agency and may potentially affect how women view themselves and their labour power (see chapter 6 on how women are affected by representation and in turn strategies they draw on in the process).

The following section discusses the case studies used in this study, beginning with an overview of the farms before exploring the descriptive demographic statistics of women workers. However, to foreground the case studies, the next sections attempts to highlight the challenges that the industry faces and how this is potentially affecting how labour is utilized.

4.3. Current context, challenges and dynamics of the floricultural industry

From around the 1980s, the Zambian government, since showing interest in, and working on, diversification, has received notable international support. Key international partners included the European Development Fund (EDF) which supported the Zambian government through direct funding – input support: fertilizer, greenhouse plastic sheets – and indirect support, through policy at the European Union level, eliminating tariff barriers, hence allowing Zambian agricultural products to access the European Union market duty free. Incentives provided by EDF encouraged the government to prioritize the horticultural sector by offering its own domestic policy incentives.

Further, broader economic difficulties have afflicted the Zambian economy, and as such, what appears as an unfair treatment of the cut flower sector could be seen as the government making a pragmatic policy stance that takes into account the broader economy (ZDA 2011). The absence of a national carrier and Zambia's geographical location are additional complications for both the sector and the Zambian economy more generally (Jaffee, Kopicki et al. 2003). These factors are interrelated: Zambia is geographically located further away from its main markets compared to its main competitors – Ethiopia and Kenya – which both have national airlines offering exclusive air freight services for cut flowers. Both Ethiopia and Kenya also enjoy a higher altitude and better

climate to grow roses throughout the year (Coles and Mitchell 2011). This sheds light on the geographical context under which farms operate as businesses and employers.

Further, high costs of air freight and fuel, partially attributed to Zambia's tax system, are normally highlighted as a failure on the part of policy makers to support the cut flower industry and other sectors making use of these services (Jaffee, Kopicki et al. 2003). As one industry expert observed, "the cost of fuel in Zambia is 30 to 35 percent higher than the regional average" (ZEGA official, 2015). As at the time of the fieldwork, fuel cost a Zambian flower exporter US$2.5/kilogram between Lusaka and Nairobi and an additional US$1.4/kilogram between Nairobi and Amsterdam, (farm management interviews, 2015).

External influences also play a major role in influencing the trajectory of cut flower farm businesses (Barrientos and Bobie 2016). Although partially influenced by domestic policy, exchange rate movements in Zambia have been linked to world copper price movements (Jaffee, Kopicki et al. 2003). Rapidly rising copper prices, particularly around 2005, after decades of stagnation came with a sharp appreciation of the exchange rate which adversely affected Zambian exporters, including the cut flower farms (ZDA 2011). Also external to the Zambian economy was the 2008/2009 global financial crisis which witnessed a recession in commodity prices, including flowers, which dropped from 18 euro cents to 4 euro cents per stem.

The effects on employment have been equally both devastating and substantial, dropping by two thirds (from 10000 to 4000). These internal and external factors limit the growth of the cutflower industry and the way labour is utilized, ultimately, these challenges can have an effect on how workers exercise their agency within the workplace (see chapter 6 on women's work experience and the spaces for agency). Below is a discussion on the farm structures and process that shape cutflower production and its employment outcomes. A detailed case study analysis of farms follows after this.

4.4. The Case Studies

4.4.1 Farm structures and processes

The floricultural industry depends on tight supply chains making timing and quality the most important category for the guarantee of sale (Barrientos, Kritzinger et al. 2005). The tasks and production segments (worksites by green house and pack house) are designated into different groups requiring that each stage of harvesting is undertaken by a specific group mimicking assembly lines that involve high technological industry (Jaffee, Henson et al. 2011). In the green house, where the production starts, activities include harvesting, de-leafing, weeding, removing the suckers, bending and cutting (performed by both women and men), spraying, scouting and technical maintenance (performed exclusively by men). The pack house activities mainly performed by women include sorting, de-leafing, bunching, cutting, treating plants to delay wilting, sorting, while men working in the pack house are employed as trolley-men or packers ensuring that flowers a neatly packaged in readiness for transportation (Farm level interviews, 2015).

The management of one of the farms (farm 3) argued that men are more suited to perform the jobs in the greenhouse since chemicals in the greenhouse during spraying are harmful and may be particularly detrimental to the (reproductive) wellbeing of women. Yet in some of the greenhouses visited during my fieldwork, workers, mostly women, pick the flowers at least twice daily which are then transported for temporary storage in the cold rooms located within the pack house.

Furthermore, flexibility and informalisation of the employment in the cut flower and horticulture industry relates to casualization, seasonal, temporary and contract work. However, it must be noted here that informalisation also enhances flexibility of labour. The two mutually reinforce each other. The global expansion in informal work partly explains the dominance of women in the cut flower and horticulture industry, but the employment strategies that are adopted by lead firms are not just a product of flexible employment conditions inherent in informalization of labour but has to do with how restrictive the

labour market is when it comes gender. This is supported by the argument that the labour market itself embodies within it gender inequalities in terms of the tasks associated with particular job designations (Barrientos, Dolan et al. 2003, Dolan and Sorby 2003)

As already highlighted, this study, for its analysis, relies on the 5 farm case studies, with the main subjects of the research being women workers within these farms. The methodological details of how the farms were selected have already been discussed in chapter 3, but it is worth mentioning that farm practices are heterogeneous in nature. However, locating the farms within the broader institutional framework and examining their characteristics does bear upon, and help to understand, women's position and experiences of employment.

4.4.2 Case Study Farms: Characteristics and Features

As earlier noted in the methodology, I have anonymized the farms for fear of any sensitive information that may affect the respondents. As earlier mentioned, 5 farms were selected, however, the ownership, management style and target market are used as a basis for differentiating between different farms. Farms had to establish themselves within these global supply spaces, crafting strategies that would sustain their existence in a competitive environment.

A. Product destination and codes of conduct

Farms were assessed on the basis of the final destination of their products. Hence, farm practices – employment strategies, resource use in general and production practices – integrate the codes of conduct (Barrientos 2008). For example, I found (from fieldwork interviews) that the specific grading tasks taken on by an individual employed as grader are directly associated with the standards set by the target market.

Table 13 below highlights the sampled farms by their product destination.

Table 13 Farms by product destination

	Export Market		Domestic Market
	Regional Markets	International Markets	
Farm 1	✓	-	✓
Farm 2	-	✓	✓
Farm 3	-	✓	-
Farm 4	-	✓	✓

Source: Author's own construction

The farms visited/sampled tailored their farm strategies for the domestic, regional and/or international markets. Of the 3 farms serving domestic markets (mainly supermarkets), only one farm, Farm 1, does so as one of its primary markets. The other two farms – Farm 2 and Farm 4 – supply the domestic markets with products that fail to meet the standards – e.g. stem length, flower head size – of the international markets they serve. Rather than destroy these flowers as Farm 3 does, Farm 2 and Farm 4 exploit the domestic market option. Farm 4 has also forward integrated by being its own retailer for part of its domestic market products since opening a flower shop.

Farm 1, gradually emerging from a debt-plagued past, has found its competitiveness primarily in domestic (domestic supermarkets) and regional markets (mainly Republic South Africa and sometimes Congo DRC), but these markets also follow a less strict code of conduct in terms of product quality. Farm 1's management clarified that international markets (particularly through either the Dutch Auction System or directly to retailers in Europe), although appearing lucrative, were a domain of high-level competition, with hidden costs dressed as quality standards. Because this particular farm had debt difficulties, such compliance costs would initially be detrimental to its survival;

thus, alternative, less stringent markets would have to suffice for its initial establishment. By contrast, Farm 3 was the most established farm, with the international market as its only market. In terms of transportation/freight, four out of five Farms that export to the international markets make use of ground handling and freight services because their flowers are transported by air. Farm 1 supplies the domestic and regional markets, although without the requirements of handling and freight since its sole means of delivery is road haulage.

B. Other features and characteristics of farms

Workers' experiences of employment have been discussed in terms of product destination. But other factors may perhaps be just as important, and these, although partially influenced by codes of conduct, may be unique to particular farm strategies and distinctive farm characteristics. Distinctive features include whether a farm is owner-managed so that no further reporting and supervision is required, or whether a farm provides on-site accommodation, so that women do not need to travel. Other differences are shown in Table [13] below.

Table 13 Features and characteristics of farms

	Farm 1	Farm 2	Farm 3	Farm 4
Ownership	Self	Shareholders	Shareholders	Self
Management structure	Managing Director is also owner of farm	Board of Directors, with Managing Directing as the apex of the production hierarchy	Board of Directors, with Managing Directing as the apex of the production hierarchy	Managing Director is also owner of farm
Regularity of payment	Irregular payments, several months' delays, hires couples, pays one and another the following payment cycle. Pays in cash.	Regular monthly payments. Pays into a bank account.	Regular monthly payments. Pays into a bank account.	Irregular payments, one-month delay at the time of interviews, but pays workers into their bank accounts.

Accommodation	On-farm accommodation provided for most workers	No accommodation provided for cut flower workers	Accommodation provided for a small proportion of flower workers	Accommodation provided for a very few workers but most workers live away from the farm
Transport	N/A	N/A	Transport provided	Transport provided at a subsidized fee
Food and lunch	Does not provide food.	Provides traditional energy drink occasionally.	Does not provide lunch, yet provides a space were workers can cook and serve themselves.	Provides very basic

At the two farms owned by shareholders, workers got timely and regular payments. In my cases, ownership structure influenced farm practices in profound ways. For instance, self-owned and managed farms appeared to use delayed salaries as a mechanism to settle their debt. Such farms could manipulate payment schedules without further consultation or fear that management could lose their jobs for unethical practice.

Geographical location of farms in relation to where workers lived was an important attribute in terms of how workers experienced employment. Workers who live further away from the farm must wake up early to prepare for work, and most of this is done at awkward and dangerous hours. Yet farms provide no security or insurance for their workers. This is supported by Pearson (2007:735) in her paper on gendering CSR in which she argues that although buyers task their suppliers to adhere to their codes of work practices in production such codes can be characterised as both enclave and contingent, i.e. they affect only those workers who happen to be employed in a particular supply chain at a particular moment in time; and they only affect the working conditions and well-being of the particular workers. In line with this, I found that farm owners did not feel responsible for workers outside the workplace.

By providing most of its workers on-farm accommodation, Farm 1, for instance, did not have to worry about private or company travel arrangements. Since providing transport is considered a cost that companies generally have to bear within the context of the cut flower industry, I observed that farms may potentially recover this cost by overusing workers through overtime hours. Chapters 6 and 7 demonstrate how this plays out for workers. Below are the characteristics of the sampled workers.

4.4.3. Characteristics of sampled women workers

Given the labour intensive feminised nature of the industry, gender-specific matters – such as options for maternity leave – are not simply of concern as an academic exercise but form part of work experience itself. Women's characteristics – by marital status, whether and how many children they have,

in addition to work experience, age profile including prospects and so forth – bear upon experiences of employment. Hence, in addition to broader industry dynamics and institutions, how women experienced employment has to do with the features and characteristics of the women themselves. In this study, such features and characteristics are condensed and represented by general demographic characteristics of the women workers, and these are presented below.

A. Age profile

All sampled women were aged between 19 years and 55 years. The average age was 33 years, although more than two thirds of the total sample were aged below 40 years.

Figure 4 Age profile
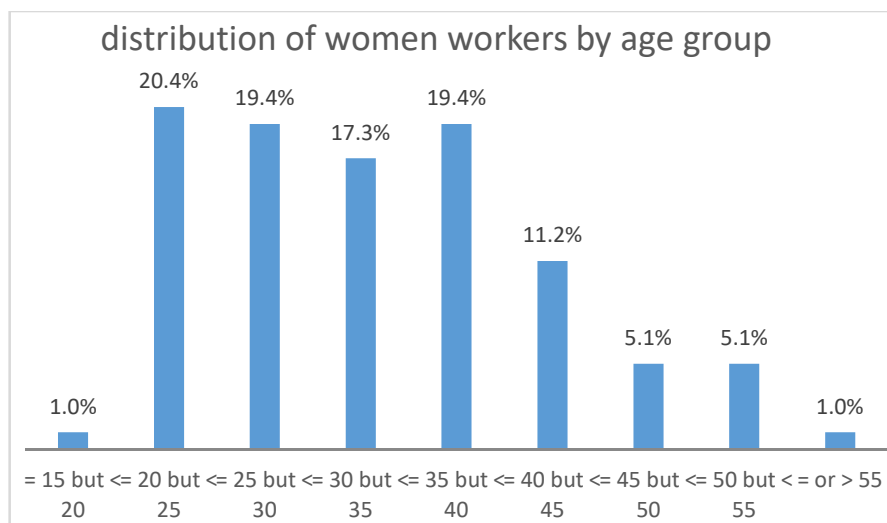
A comparison with national statistics (Labour force survey, 2012) reveals a roughly similar distribution pattern, with over half of the female labour force aged below 35 years.

Figure 5 Distribution of women workers (Fieldwork) vs 2012 LFS Females in the Labour Force
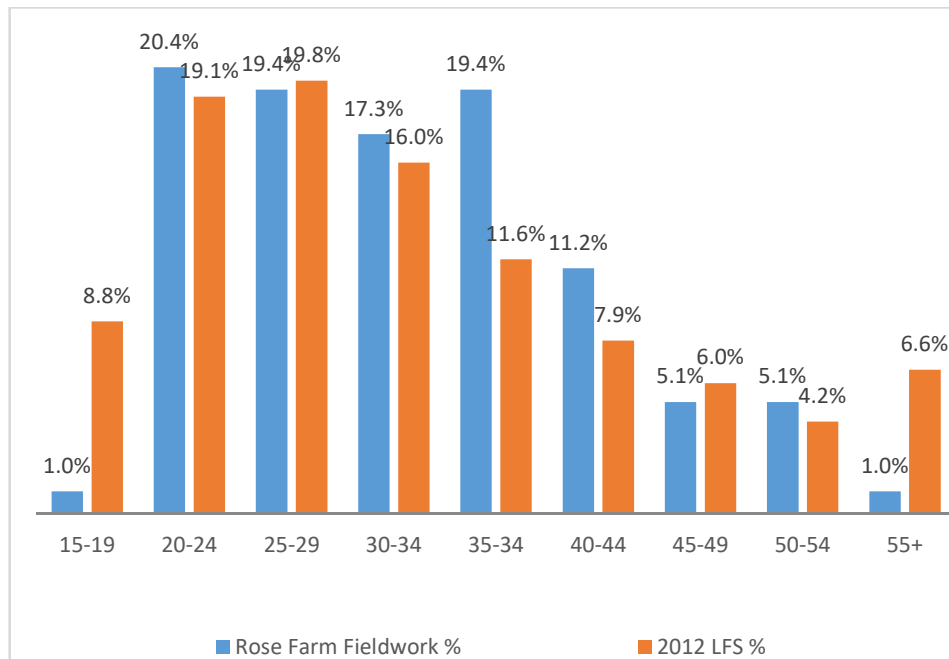
Source: Author's own construction using field work and LFS data.

B. Education profile

Low levels of education are a reported fact associated with developing countries. Zambia is no exception. The cut flower farm work is labour-intensive, and generally very little skilled labour is required. In addition to climatic conditions, cheap, unskilled and poorly educated labour favour the nature of the work and business of the cut flower farms. However, education plays an important role in determining the type of jobs (women) workers perform.

Fieldwork data reveals that the sampled women had attained very low levels of education. Two thirds of the interviewed women had reached, at most, Grade 8 (see Figure below), that is, completed elementary education, barely conferring its recipients the basic skills to read and write, leaving them with limited options for employment and indeed relegating them to menial tasks.

Figure 6 Education profile of the women interviewed

Education profile of women workers, non-management

Category	Percentage
No Education	4.1%
Grade 1 - 2	4.1%
Grade 3 - 4	11.2%
Grade 5 - 6	14.3%
Grade 7 - 8	32.7%
Grade 9 - 10	20.4%
Grade 11 - 12	13.3%
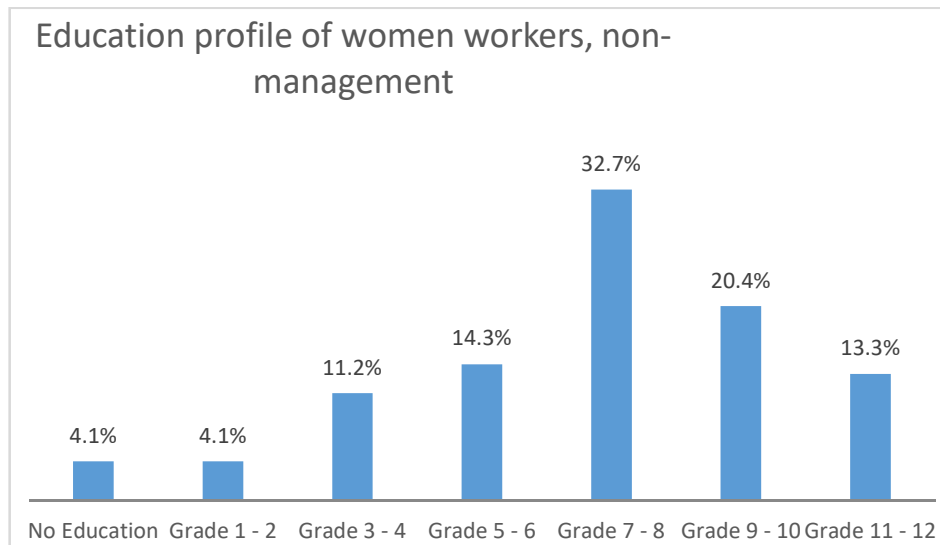
Source: Author's own construction from fieldwork data

C. Tenure of Employment and years of experience

Cut flower farms offer flexible and informal employment, with a small proportion of workers employed on permanent and pensionable basis. Generally, employment in African horticulture is "female and temporal" with "fixed-term contracts … between one and six months, and casual day work" (Barrientos, Kritzinger et al. 2005:76). The seasonal nature of both production and demand in agriculture, particularly in cut flower farms, places a certain labour requirement: labour must be both seasonal and flexible. In terms of agency, tenure of employment does play a crucial role because, as I argue in this thesis, women learn to use and/or confront the employment system to their favour, despite the hardships it imposes, as they anticipate employment demands and work trajectories (see chapters 5, 6 and 7).

Almost three quarters of the sampled women were at most serving 6-months (repeated) contracts. Even the 28 percent serving a one-year fixed contract are not employed under permanent and pensionable basis. In short, the terms of employment for most cut flower workers are not secure. It is the absence of such security (and its associated employment benefits) that contextualizes how women experience employment (see chapter 6).

Figure 7 Employment Contract
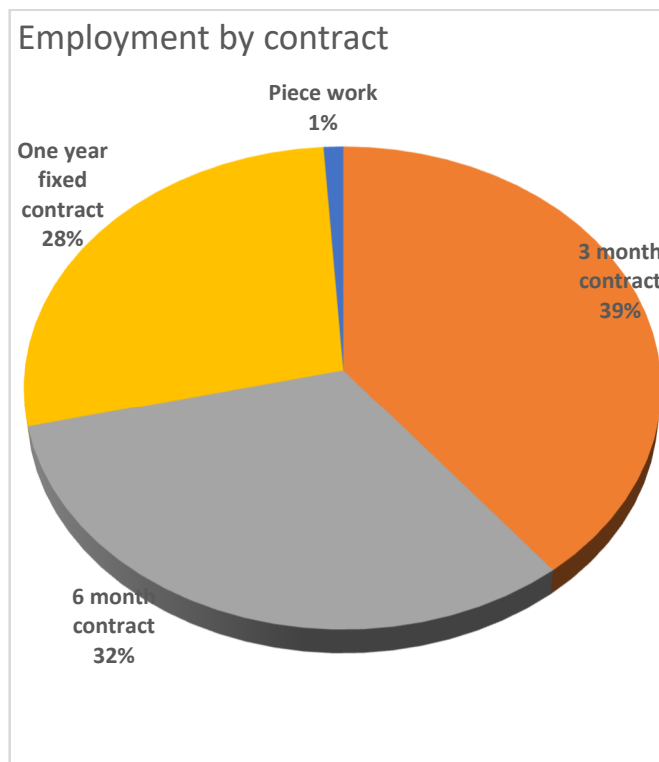
Source: Author's own construction

I also sought to establish how long the women had been working in the cut flower industry. However, given the labour-contracting employment system, it proved difficult to account for the periods of stoppages and re-entry that women reported. There are periods of interruption when workers leave work in order to give birth and raise small children up to a crudely determined 'self-reliant' age. In such cases, women were asked to simply aggregate actual years served, whether broken or continuous, rather than view it as a continuous time-series backwards from the time of interviews.

The data from sampled workers shows that close to two thirds had less than five years of industry experience which constitutes about 65 out of 80 women interviewed (see diagram below). In part, that most workers had less than five years of experience reflects a relatively high employee turnover.

Figure 8 Workers years of experience

Women workers by years of experience
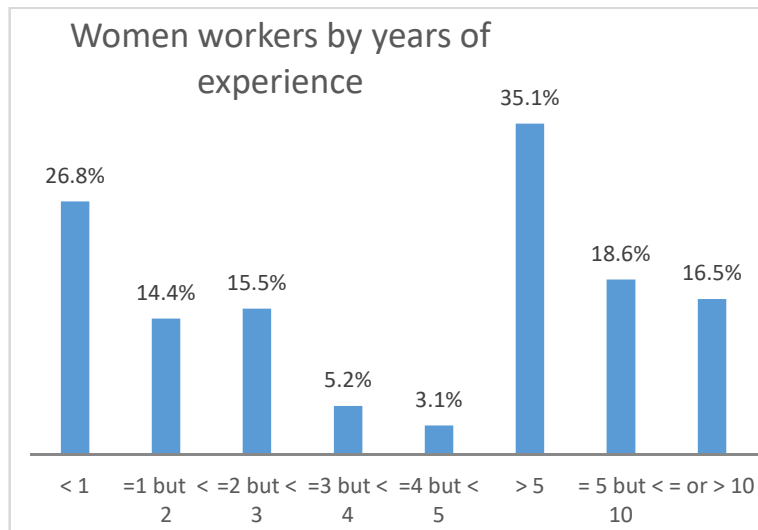
Source: Author's own construction from fieldwork data

D. Marital status and number of children

How women experience work cannot be separated from the social roles they fulfil and implicitly promote (see Chapter 7). These social roles are connected to notions of complete womanhood, one that fulfils wifehood and motherhood roles.

By marital status grouping, over two-fifths of the women worker interviews reported they were married, just over one-fifth reported they were single (never been married), with Divorced and Widowed categories taking equal shares at about 17.3 percent each. The importance of distinguishing responses by marital status was to establish differences and similarities across marital status, and how much space for agency each category provided.

Figure 9 Percentage of Women by Marital status

Percentage of women workers by marital status
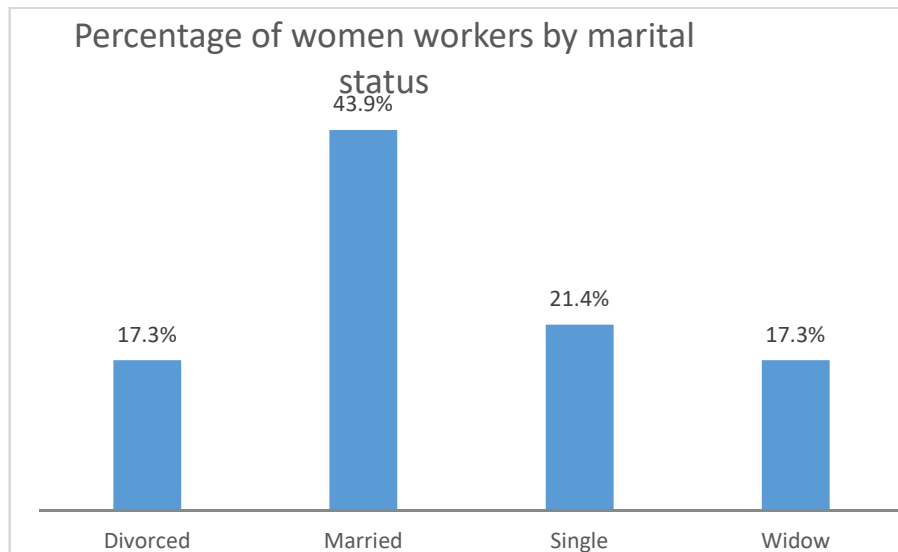
Eighty-six percent of sampled women reported they had children. Children were clearly not an attribute of marital status, although married women had, on average, more children than the other groups, with single women, on average, having the least number of children. This was also to show how time spent at work competes with other attributes of one's life such as childcare, but importantly, how women juggle their duties, and how these duties affect each other.

Table 14 Marital by number of children

Marital status	Number of women who reported they had children, by marital status	Average number of children	Max.	Min.
Divorced	17	3.1	6	1
Married	42	3.3	8	1
Single	8	2	5	1
Widowed	17	3.3	6	1
Total	84	11.7	24	4

Source: Author's own construction from fieldwork data

Lusaka province alone has an average household size of 4.8. However, "[t]he total fertility rate … is 5.3 births per woman, with rural women having about three children more than urban women. Fertility has decreased from 6.5 births per woman in 1992 to 5.3 births per woman in 2013-14, a more than one-child decline in about two decades" (ZDHS 2013-14). Clearly, the data from sampled women of this study shows that the average number of children they had was below the national average. Yet, as chapter 7 will demonstrate, women in my sample were burdened by their triple roles and had to rely on resources and strategies to get by. It is from these resources and strategies that different agency outcomes were derived.

4.4.4. Zambian sociocultural context

The above discussion has situated the cutflower work place within the wider domestic and international institutional arrangements. However, as the theme of the analysis also seeks to unravel the processes of women's agency at the household micro-level, it is imperative to view the sociocultural context as part of the broader institutional environment that affects women's agency options. The analysis in chapters five, six and seven proceed on the assumption that women's decision to work, their experiences of work and relations within the household are influenced, and underpinned, by Zambia's sociocultural values that work to promote patriarchy.

Therefore, recognition and respect of the significance and role of culture/tradition in Zambian society, particularly across social relations and organised (traditional) institutions such as marriages and families, has to be emphasized within the GPN context because such structures and ideologies affect women's relations in the home, the community and the workplace. In general, the cultural/traditional institutions are woven within the Zambian way of life. Local courts and traditional courts administer customary law in Zambia's dual legal system, wherein "statutory, constitutional, and common law coexist with a parallel yet sometimes contradictory customary law system" (Richardson 2004:21). Although local courts are officially recognized, the traditional courts are not, together, they function as part of the wider sanctioning system that seeks to uphold and promote socio-cultural values. From a human rights basis embedded in the formal legal system, men and women are recognised as equal "in all respects, differentiated only by their physical traits and biological functions" (MGCD 2014).

Yet, the traditional/cultural values promoted within Zambia, and often mediated under traditional courts, are underpinned by a patriarchal system that subordinates women to men (Longwe 1985). Hence, gender expected roles promoted in such (informal institutional) structures affect women's ability to confront the inequalities in the home, community and within the workplace.

The analysis in the chapters that follow demonstrates that these gendered traditional hierarchies can be powerful factors acting as inhibitors of women's agency. That is not to say that women simply are powerless to them, rather, women do find space to navigate these structures although not necessarily with the intention to confront them.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a setting of the operations of the cut flower industry in Zambia within the GPN. By setting the context within which cutflower production takes within the GPN context, women's position is determined and spaces for agency can now be explored. What this chapter has demonstrated is that even though existence of the structures and institutions were established to ensure the smooth running of the floricultural sector, the labour question (how labour is integrated and treated) has been undeniably neglected while other aspects of economic upgrading are taking place within the sector. What remains to be illuminated is how women reposition themselves in such a context.

The following chapters 5,6 and 7 will specifically draw on fieldwork to present an analysis based on women's own voices about their work experience on and off-farm and the consequent agency outcomes employed.

Chapter 5.0. Exploring the Contours of Women Workers' Agency in the Decision to Work: Pre-entry Motivations, Resources and Strategies

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse women's motivation to work from their pre-entry decision to work. Motivations in this chapter refers to the reasons behind women's decision to work, the resources (in form of networks) they drew upon and the strategies (negotiation and changing circumstances in the household) called on in veering away from exclusive domesticity. Motivations can be viewed from different perspectives in a woman's work cycle. It can be viewed from pre-entry decision to work by looking at the factors and circumstances that led a woman to decide to work. These also include the resources and networks women used to make the decision to work. Motivation can also be seen from the perspective of current working life decision and how these enable or contract women's perspectives of their work experience related to their goals in life. Motivations can also be viewed from effects of work life on the women and how it serves to inhibit or enhance their expectations and aspirations for the future. The second part of the motivation will be explored in chapter 6 when analysing women's experience of work and the context within which women exercise agency. The post-entry effects of work on the household relations and future aspirations will be explored in chapter 7.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how motivation to work (bearing in mind working women's marital status) is embedded in the social processes and interactions. I show this through networks that women engage in as well the strategies drawn upon to take the decisions to work into action. To begin with, an employment context of the cutflower industry is given building on the analysis given in chapter four. Below, I briefly highlight the conditions of employment in this industry before going into women's motivation to work. Elaborating on the employment conditions foregrounds how motivations to work are derived and under what (economic) context they make such decisions. In their decision to work, women draw upon different forms of agency, these being

strategic, resource or everyday agency (everyday agency entails everyday decisions that women make to get by, although not necessarily transforming, it has the potential to be strategic and account for changes to women's self-awareness about their productive capacity and contribution to the household).

5.1 Assessment of women's integration into work

The appalling working conditions and worker exploitation on the cut flower farms in the global south countries have been criticised by both the international media and NGOs (such as women working worldwide) concerned with gender and related labour rights ((Hughes 2001, Blowfield and Dolan 2008, Riisgaard 2009). As a result, these concerns and critiques have been both deep and wide (from moral production to ethical consumption), covering a range of compromises and negotiations between governments, businesses, worker representatives and other relevant organisations (Dolan and Humphrey 2000, Dolan, Opondo et al. 2002, Dolan 2004, Tallontire, Dolan et al. 2005, Barrientos 2013) (see chapters 2 and 4).

While providing employment to thousands, the industry has learned to safeguard itself against bad publicity by closing its doors to the outside, and growing increasingly suspicious when outsiders seek entry (Freidberg 2001). I argue that despite this bad publicity, thousands of potential workers, during the year, especially women, flock to the gates of the flower farms across Lusaka, attempting to gain entry and become insiders as workers. This suggests other variables/factors at play in determining why workers in general provide their labour, and why employers/farms themselves treat labour as they do.

The understanding on women's disadvantaged position follows from inquiries pertaining to conditions of work and workers' rights, and generally assumes that access to such information will lead to improvements across a spectrum of work-related issues including pay and working conditions (Kabeer 2003). Nevertheless, I argue that such views minimise the role of power relations in the work place and households of women workers. Broadly, the assumption

is that such knowledge will be used to confront the status quo (women's supposed inferior position), fails to take into account what the status quo means and how it is interpreted and by whom. Consequently, I argue that it does not examine the confrontation between women workers and employers or between families and communities and more broadly the confrontation with the wider society, and why confrontation may not lead to desirable outcomes as perceived by women themselves.

Furthermore, I contend that assigning inferiority (inherent in policy and the literature in general) to women as an outcome of traditional gender structures extends beyond work-related considerations, it permeates other aspects of society and living, including reproductive health and family size choices. Borrowing from analyses of this type, the Zambian gender policy generally suggests that women's participation, at different levels of society, in important decisions such as "resource planning and use, and family planning", will only be possible once women are granted access to services such as health and education (Ministry of Gender and Child Development, 2014: 4).

This sums my argument that such analysis tends to focus on gender structures that situate women as a disadvantaged group, neglecting the patterns, forms and kinds of strategies and resources women draw on within such a social-political-cultural framework.

Fine (2010) highlights that patriarchy is embedded in traditional gender structures which privileges outcomes over process, by for instance examining things like the wage gap and how to minimise it, without necessarily understanding the processes that led to such an outcome. This relates to my argument that patriarchy itself offers no insight into what women themselves feel about it, how they approach it, with what tactics and resources. But it forms a powerful commentary, and is drawn upon in policy making and recommendation, irrespective of its failings. For example, the Ministry of Gender and Child Development (2014: 4) observes that "women have continued to lag behind their male counterparts in all spheres of national development. Various research documents including the Sixth National

Development Plan acknowledges that discrimination against women in the country is embodied in traditional rules and practices resulting into lasting constraints on women's socio-economic and political empowerment and progress."

However, "patriarchy is a descriptive term which explains nothing about the *causes* of male domination" (Komarovsky, 1987: 391, emphasis in original). To this, it can be added that the traditional and cultural assumptions that appear to disadvantage women can be reproduced and reshaped by women, who are themselves members of such societies. In other words, it would be incorrect to minimise women's actions and activities by assuming they simply operate within the confines of such social structures. Women position themselves in ways that evidences their agency as they draw upon resources within these socioeconomic structures.

The focus of this chapter is to analyse how women workers in the Zambian cutflower industry choose to work, drawing on my interviews (from semi-structured interviews in one-one interviews based on and off-farm and focus group discussions). In this chapter, I explore decision making as a process that begins with individual awareness of prevailing and anticipated circumstances, and this proceeds to individual assessment of courses of action, as an adaptive or proactive response. Although the individual woman rationalises her decisions, this judgement is made and conditioned by wider household and societal pressure.

For this chapter, decision making is discussed around women's resolve to seek and find paid work, and thus seeks to understand what circumstances/events triggered the drive towards work, including what strategies and resources were used to meet this end. As earlier stated, the analysis relies on women's own accounts of their experiences, but where the data allows, these are triangulated with broader views of farm/company management, worker representatives, men workers (from FGDs), government representatives and NGOs.

In this chapter, I seek a deeper understanding of the decision to work: questioning the conditions under which this course of action was conceived as an option, promoted as a possibility, and then taken on either as an end or the means to some other end. Essentially, I will be teasing out how the decision to work was made and under what conditions. I do this by exploring women's marital status and the implication for the decision to work. A different categorization of agency is used to show how different resources and strategies that women employ affect the form and type of agency.

The latter part of the chapter, while benefiting from discussions of actual exercise of agency as experienced by women workers in Zambian cut flower farms, draws on the research questions set out in chapter 2 about what motivates women to seek employment and the consequent agency implication. It asks: how might agency be perceived and operationalised from the point of view of the woman's decision to work? This forms the foundation for Chapter 6 which then discusses agency within the context of an insider – i.e. once a woman has begun working, what forms and types of agency does she uses. In this next section, I examine how women confront the decision to work through their perceived circumstances.

5.2 Motivation to work: confrontation or reinterpretation of value?

I argue that the motivation for taking on work derives from a series of complex considerations, and has to be understood within a particular context, and this makes it difficult to arrive at generalisations.

Within the Zambian context, little analysis to date has assessed why a woman would want to take on paid work beyond what is taken for granted: that is, employment as a tool to earn an income in order to survive, at least, and improve one's life, at best. In fact, the pre-occupation of women's entry into the labour market particularly in the export processing zones has been linked to assumptions about women taking on higher paid employment previously reserved for men with implications for their (women's) empowerment. However, Pearson (1998) dispels this argument by bringing to light that the

inclusion of women in the labour market has not necessarily increased their autonomy separate from their roles in the household, rather, I advance this argument by adding that paid employment is valuable, on the one hand, in as far as extending women's options but, on the other hand, it may increase their workload, or even dampen their well-being by multiplying what they do, leaving them with limited time for leisure and rest. Yet, it allows women to reposition themselves within the workplace and the home and helps them evaluate their productive contribution.

In the overall analysis of agency in this thesis, this represents the first level of analysing how women confront the social structures that are taken in the literature as exogenous. Women are part and parcel of these social structures, and to some degree, at least at the individual level, or as members of social networks, hold the means that can tilt the power balance in their favour. By acknowledging the possibility and consequences of such power, women's decision to seek employment potentially 'endogenizes' gender structures. Interviews with women revealed a wide range of reasons (alone or together) that affected a woman's desire to take on employment (see Table 15 below).

The choice of paid work was profoundly activated by expected earnings, but how women exercised agency had to be informed by processes involved in how women opted for work, and how work in turn impacted upon the breadth and depth of these processes, whether anticipated or not. What the incomes could do for them therefore represented their own judgement of what they valued, including how they might materialise their aspirations. Incomes themselves were only one aspect of accessing what they valued, since capability to earn and capability to spend have to be discriminated and analysed separately. Capability to spend rubs against a series of other related but mutually exclusive factors such as negotiations within the home, extended family and so on.

In this analysis, I make no assumptions about ordering and ranking of motivating factors; this allows the data to speak for itself, rather than permitting researcher's biases to inform the analysis. Examining the individuality of these

processes and changes reflects both the variability of contexts and individual circumstances and responses. Further, no expectations are made about conditioning factors influencing women's decision to work, and this leaves the analysis open, with interpretation being informed by respondents' own views, rather than circumscribed by (researcher's) biases. The only input to the categorization of this analysis into broad themes is adapted from Kabeer (2000) (see chapter 3), the actual content within these categories is women's own voices.

Table 15 Women's Reasons for working

Reasons for working	Number of informants (80) giving reason*
To meet basic needs as household head	25
To meet basic needs as supplemental household income	58
To improve living standards (over and above basic needs) as household head	25
To improve living standards (over and above basic needs) as supplemental household income	36
To fill in the gap, because of landmark event (divorce/separation, death of breadwinner, abandonment, lifestyle etc)	17
Children's educational needs	17
To acquire property (e.g. land or other assets)	2
To pay for other income generating activities (e.g. business)	3
To pay for own education	10
To help parents and extended family	25
To meet own specific consumption (e.g. clothing, cosmetics and lotions)	68

* some women gave more than one reason. This was drawn from 80 women worker semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions when women were asked what motivated them to seek employment.

The structure and order of this section is inspired by, and proceeds by, adapting Kabeer's (2000: 408) approach of first phase consideration of the resolve to seek employment – "pre-entry information" – and is complemented by drawing on the approach of Kathleen Gerson's (1985: 69; 92) seminal work 'Hard Choices: How Women Decide About Work, Career and Motherhood'[5], which, in part, studied the "events, experiences, and processes that led some respondents to veer away from" the home, and its traditional roles, or to steer towards domesticity, or to seek a balance between employment and parenting. In different chapters, Gerson gives contrasting views, in each of the situations highlighting tensions between work and family, between the individual and society and broader societal pressures, that women were forced to circumnavigate or traverse, yet a "subtle revolution" took place, and this uncovered the complex strategies women employed (Gerson, 1985: 1; 70). It is the methodological process/approach of unmasking these strategies that informs this thesis.

Thus, this chapter proceeds by analysing women by their marital status (since this is what rationalizes women's decision to work in part and profoundly affects how women experience employment), tracing the key events and processes within and outside the household that served as a stimulant for women's motivation for taking on work. Because the initial decision to work has to be analysed by how it was made, household level dynamics are paramount analysis attributes, and these are best explored through the prism of marital status. The cumulative effects of these household level dynamics form the aggregate community views and perceptions, and these in turn act to either legitimate or penalise women's actions and decisions. In the sections

---

[5] Gerson's work at the time had been provoked by her own interest in the subject, but more importantly, her discontent with the scholarship on gender theories that "tended to focus almost exclusively on forces beyond women's ultimate control". Her work made powerful strides in gender analysis, and her analytical approach, not so much the contents, is of relevance to this thesis. She studied working-class and middle-class young women in the 1970s in an affluent society (USA), a wildly different context compared to poor women in low income Zambia, yet her style of interrogation has inspired this writing. Her "book proceeds from the belief that, in the context of structural constraint, women actively build their lives out of the materials provided by larger social forces. In so doing, they in turn shape and under propitious circumstances reshape the world that has shaped them" (Gerson, 1985: xiii-xiv).

that follow, I analyse the decision to work by looking at the category of married women by bringing to light the agency called upon.

5.2.1 Standing in the gap or seeking independence? Why married women work- strategic agency

The motivation for seeking employment has been previously identified as conditioned by a multitude of factors, and what these represent is telling of the difficulties/challenges (complexities of circumstances) women workers face, and sometimes reproduce. Although the identified "gender gap" in the literature frames, to a considerable degree, the opportunity and resource set available to women, actions and strategies of women can expand or constrict it, in ways that are both complex and dynamic. Women's responses both overlap and diverge, but overall, they confront broadly similar predicaments, hazards and options.

This sub-section explores how married women manoeuvred through the complex maze of confrontation, negotiations and compromise in choosing to work. Considering these manoeuvres as strategies deserves attention as it both informs decision making as a process and the endogenous nature of gender pillars (see section 2.2.1) and structures (see sections 4.2 and 4.3) that are so often taken as given in the literature. In turn, an analysis of these processes uncovers the often hidden intimate details that define, refine and reframe the gender structures. Below are the accounts of the married women interviewed on and off-farm addressing the question of how they convinced their spouse about their decision to seek employment (which was a typical response for women with similar characteristics though finer details of final decision to work was informed by women's unique circumstances).

Amake Chungu, 35 years old, with 6 children and married for 16 years, had no previous work experience, farm-related or not, but had always wanted to work, yet her husband preferred her to stay at home:

> "I always wanted to work but my husband used to refuse but because one of the children was not going to school, I asked my husband if I could start working to get the child back in school. He reluctantly agreed and says that he will stop me soon" (Amake Chungu)

Another similar view given by another worker who used changing circumstances in the home is that posited by Amake Mailess, 35 years old with 6 children married for 10 years

> "he allowed me to work because he saw that the money was not enough for us to   eat. Although he was not happy to do so at first, it became so hard for us to manage. Besides the children needed to be in school and the money he was getting was just not enough"

Amake Chungu and Amake Mailess's experience casts light on traditional narratives about patriarchal relations, in which a woman is subjected to male dominion, but also on why taking this as an exogenous force can be misleading. Amake Chungu further explained that she had been married for 5 years, although herself wishing to work, was not allowed, nor could she find an adequate reason that would 'convince' her husband that her working was integral to the household. However, at first glance, one can be seduced easily by these accounts as testament of the traditional narrative, but careful reading and interpretation could point to a possible explanation of her decision to work as affected by the changed situation within the home which may have presented an opportunity for her to revisit the essence of her contribution to the household through work. Also, this is not just about the woman, but the man (husband) too; his view of where a woman belongs within the home appears to have been softened by his inability to adequately meet the family's needs – failure to pay for the child's school in this case – eventually loosening his strong ties to his view of traditionalism and the woman's place within it.

Dynamic circumstances within and outside the home have the power to confront and potentially redefine gender structures (Evans 2014). In other

words, gender structures that are so often referred to cannot be viewed as fixed exogenous factors. Economic distress at the household level has profound effects on labour supply, as expressed by one woman (though this was typical for most of the married women who had to work despite some opposition from their spouses), who had to re-enter the labour market when she realised that her husband's salary was insufficient to meet the growing family needs. Amake Doreen aged 40 years, also married, but with eight children adds that "things become so harder in the home since my husband has been changing jobs. I just had to make him understand that I needed to work". I argue that such circumstances, challenges the traditional perceptions of the meaning of headship enmeshed in gender stereotypes and structures. For Evans (2014), increased women's labour force participation, especially in heretofore male dominated tasks, is seen as, in part, as effects of economic hardships.

These narratives advanced by the women workers show that economic squeeze acting on the household works in ways that has challenged notions of gender structures, with increased women's labour supply changing perceptions about what women can, could and should do. Evans (2014) adds that it is these societal perceptions about women's abilities that have served to undermine traditionally prescribed roles that disadvantage women. However, Evans' (2014) description of changed perceptions and beliefs concerning gender appropriate tasks does not take into account complexities at the household level that working women have to initially engage: that is, how the decision about work is made, which this chapter demonstrates. Although she points out how society has witnessed the phenomenon of working women, and how this has changed views about women's work and roles, especially in advancing notions of equality as communities increasingly become receptive to working women, she barely considers how women acted strategically in seeking employment, negotiating and confronting family/household-level politics (as will be done in this thesis).

Amake Chungu and Amake Mailess interviewed on-farm highlight the intricate and complex nature of negotiation and cooperation; they both accept the

dominant position of men, but use their wit to get what they want, in this instance, something seen as a strategic decision for the family. Their actions do not represent an abrupt revolution of some sort, nor a conscious effort to challenge the structures of gender equality, but a mere chance (reproducing success in this instance) at the structure of opportunities, in consultation with their spouse. This I argue, provides a good example of strategic agency. An experience of this sort prompted the women to take the opportunity as it presented itself: an opportunity to revisit the subject of gender work divisions, by first confronting their husband to make them see things differently, suggesting a conscious tactical manoeuvre. The two women's manoeuvre required awareness and discernment of current circumstances, and is telling of the women's capacity to utilise agency to discreetly tilt the power balance in her favour.

In extending the two women's narration of re-entry into the labour market, Amake Doreen adds that she saw an opportunity to re-enter the labour market after a long period of absence. Her husband's refusal to sponsor their son to college was enough to rethink her decision to continue being confined within the walls of the home. She gave up employment in order to have and raise children. Her motivation to work, forming part of her story, was captured by her comment as follows:

> My son needs to go college, my daughter has done a
> short course and since my husband has decided that
> he will not sponsor my son, I have taken it upon myself
> to raise money for his college fees (Amake Doreen)

Amake Doreen had started working when she was only 19 years old, but when she started having children, she, in consultation with the husband, took the tactful option of staying at home to raise children as the best for the family. Like Amake Chungu, her motivation to work (re-enter the labour market), was based on careful assessment of family needs and resources, and later saw an opportunity that would justify her working. Each of these accounts do point to women's earnings as supplemental income, indicative of husbands as the

breadwinners. However, I argue that, it is not so much only about *what* they joined the labour market for that matters in teasing out agency, but *how* women themselves steered towards employment.

Clearly, the women here appear to have some power in how they utilise their incomes; they have entered employment in response to a specific resource gap, something they discern their incomes could meet (issues on how decisions to allocate household resources is made is discussed in detail in Chapter 7). Importantly, although seeking employment was a proactive action on their part – in terms of their own initiation – the decision was in response to changed household circumstances; the children whose college/school fees had to be paid for had been previously covered by the husbands' earnings.

Whereas as Amake Chungu and Amake Mailess's entry into the cut flower farm as an employee may have been born out of partial subservience and their own tactics to earn an income, there are other possibilities which, although taking place in different relational contexts, underscore existence of different within-household and spousal dynamics women have to confront. For instance, Amake Jairos, a married 20-year-old woman with one child, explained that she had already been working elsewhere before joining the cut flower farm; she recollects her motivation to join the cut flower farm as:

> "I used to work as a waitress in a Lodge but mainly doing night shifts. My husband was not happy and asked me to stop because the men who used to visit this Lodge at the time I was working would always make passes at me. This made my husband very uncomfortable. At least here I don't get abused from drunk customers." (Amake Jairos)

Amake Jairos's account points to different family dynamics from those of Amake Chungu' and Amake Mailess: for the former, her husband seems to have no problem with her working, although he disapproves of certain types of jobs, as evidenced by her recollection of why she left the previous job.

170

Amake Jairos's narration on the motivation to work is not restricted so much as to a general initial decision to work, but calls attention to what is acceptable employment to her husband for a woman already 'allowed' to work. Again, this is supported by this argument by Evans (2015) who draws attention to patriarchal relations in terms of what the spouse judges as acceptable employment.

Thus, I contend that the reasons that women use to first enter the labour market, and to remain in employment has to be rationalised at the household-level in order to avoid (future) conflict once entry has been permitted. But how this is done discloses the discreetness of their exercise of agency. Amake Petrina, aged 37 years, married with one child, now serving in a supervisory position, although complaining about the inadequacy of her earnings, carefully assessed her situation and resolved that employment was crucial for the family. She explains that:

> I wanted money. Initially I used to work as a maid, but my employer was not very good, so I stopped, that's when my friend told me about Agriflora. It was ok until they told us we were closing; employers were better there … my daughter is about to write her GCSE exams and after that she will need to go to college. That is what motivated me to find a job. It was what was available at the time not that I chose this job over others (Amake Petrina)

By perceiving current and future financial needs, she sees her employment as a vital contribution to the family income. She had also explained her previous employment as a maid, her dissatisfaction with it, and decision to seek employment elsewhere. She also indicated that her spouse did not oppose her decision to stop nor re-enter the labour market in a different industry, she felt justified, although she had to reassure him what her contribution meant for the family. This narrative suggests women's ability to discern their circumstances accurately and act in strategic ways that not only affect them,

but the wider community whence they hail. In fact, Showden (2011: 4) in qualifying autonomy and freedom to choose as integral to agency points out that:

> "[i]f the only options available to a person are "bad" ones, choosing under such conditions does not negate the autonomy of the actor. If one has the capacity to reflect critically on one's situation but few means by which to change it, one has some autonomy and limited agency but not an open horizon for fulfilling life goals … preferences, desires, and endorsed values are compatible with agency, taking into account the role of socialization and material opportunity."

In the Zambian context, I found that persistent traditional values and perceptions about wifehood and motherhood, widespread poverty, high unemployment and poor educational backgrounds for the majority of agricultural workers (and beyond) all work together to constrain women's options and choices, but within this framework/range of operation, women have different strategies as outlined that they use.

The majority of women (more than 50% of the women interviewed) stated that their employment was important in as far as a supplemental income to meet family needs. That their spouses had previously been the main bread winners. Supporting this argument, Kabeer (2000) suggests that women tend to downplay their income as supplementary even when the major expenses in the home are covered by their wages. Once more, these narratives appear to anoint the glorified position of men as breadwinners since women's contributions are merely perceived as top-ups. However, unique farm/employer practices may also profoundly influence a woman's decision to enter the labour market or the man's view about a working woman.

I found that at farm 1, the majority of the accommodation for employees was provided within the farm premises, and the farm manager explained that he promoted a policy of encouraging couples' employment so that both husband and wife could take on employment on-farm. This way, he felt, household

resources could be pooled more readily, thereby easing the household financial burden. However, he was clear to explain that he did not impose this employment policy on the household (head) he initially hired, it merely served as an incentive.

Nevertheless, it is a cost saving incentive for the farm owner as he cuts down the cost of accommodation-two workers for the price of one house. For the married women who had been employed on these terms, most suggested to have consulted their spouses, and although they earned more or less equal amounts to their husbands, they still perceived their wages as supplemental: to advance this argument. Despite having 15 years of experience Amake Lovemore, aged 40 years, married with 3 children still saw her wages as supplemental: "We needed the money because my husband did not make enough for us to survive." She had over 15 years of experience doing farm work. Similar perceptions are illustrated by:

Amake Davi, aged 33 years, married with 5 children: "my
husband was not making enough money for us to run the home,
so we agreed that I start working."

Amake Chungu, aged 36 years, married with 3 children: "it was
not easy for us to manage our needs on my husband's salary."
Lives with husband on-farm.

Farm employment practices not only reduced potential friction within the home (since husband and wife were within each other's proximity and incomes could easily be anticipated), but also created space that was more readily identifiable and acceptable to the household head. Although some women started off as homemakers, the spaces and opportunities farm employment practices opened up withered such traditional arrangements. Women were then seen as a productive asset for the home as explained by one woman who had previously worked in the pack house at farm 1, Amake Derrick, aged 30 says that "my husband now respects me and asks me for money because he

knows that I earn my own money", (This was when I asked how her paid work affected her relationship with her husband).

Thus, I argue that regardless of whether or not women saw their earnings as auxiliary contributions to the household budget, the economic hardships forced on the household provoked change, challenging prescriptive roles and attitudes based on customs and traditions. Survival for the household becomes a paramount objective, with domesticity and its sometimes rigid traditions cast aside or deferred when a woman has to assume and embrace her productive potential/capacity.

Amake Bona, aged 40 years, married with 4 children, questioned and disrupted dominant narratives by acknowledging her own potential and worked towards fulfilling a more productive role:

> I needed money for household needs. It was not
> enough to have only one salary coming in … he can't
> stop me from working. Things are hard these days;
> women also have to work

The latter part of Amake Bona's narrative points to salient aspects of gender structures. Difficulties inflicted by economic adversity could no longer permit her to remain absent from paid work. This is consistent with Evans' (2014) observation of economic privations acting as stimulants not only for women's labour force participation, but also in tolerating and facilitating wider social change. However, this cannot be taken to mean that absence of economic problems would reorder social and gender structures to their former nature (women as home makers); rather, social change should itself be seen as a complex phenomenon both in cause and effect. Women in developed country contexts face dissimilar economic conditions compared to their counterparts in poorer countries (as those experienced by Zambian women for instance), yet social change itself manifested, in part, as an expansion of opportunities and choices for women, far removed from domesticity (Gerson, 1985).

Women's employment, and therefore their incomes, was integral to household survival, not just in supplemental terms, but as either the only income in some cases, or lead income in others. When this happened, it acted as a powerful instrument rubbing against traditional norms of female servitude within the home confines.

Amake Sibo, aged 30 years, married for about a decade but with only one child, working for about three years mentioned that:

> I really need a job especially after my husband lost his
> … but he is my husband, I still have to respect him
> when it comes to decisions in the home (Amake Sibo)

What the woman meant is that despite acknowledging that her husband is the head of the house (breadwinner), the loss of his job forced to re-think her decision to re-enter the labour market. What this shows is that the experience of job loss for the household breadwinner exposed the family to additional economic misfortunes, and one way of averting further duress was for the household to reorient itself towards acceptance of gender flexibility and greater receptiveness of a woman's productive capacity. When the husband lost his job, Amake Sibo's experience sees her as becoming even more integral to the home as a source of income. It is not far-fetched to propose that such an experience has transformative potential, possibly even challenging the husband's own view about his wife.

For some working women interviewed (atypical responses), their value to the household beyond reproductive roles is not met by opposition. In fact, their spouses had been instrumental both as pillars of encouragement to pursue employment and as channels of information relating to job availability. Women from such households were well aware of their necessitous contributions to the family, sometimes emerging as sole stable incomes when their spouses were out of employment. Amake Nonde recollection provides an example of this:

> My husband used to work for Agriflora … I first learned
> of the job when my husband used to work for Agriflora
> as a supervisor in quality control. He told me about the
> job … I like physical work, my work is real, I like
> growing plants … but now my husband is not working,
> so we depend on my work to survive (Amake Nonde)

Amake Nonde, aged 36 years, married with 2 children, had been in employment in farming for well over a decade, with occasional breaks to care for her children. Her face lit up when she explained how hard the work she did was, reflecting her sense of pride and accomplishment. Her work experience within the farming circles had exposed her to a wide range of tasks and plants, and over time developed recognisable skills that saw her being promoted, fulfilling a supervisory role in the greenhouse at the time of the interview. As far as household level politics were concerned, her labour supply posed no opposition to roles in the home. That her employment had been sanctioned by her spouse, her productive capacity and the benefits of employment to the household were not in question.

On a different note but in navigating women's motivation to work, men only focus group discussions were enlightening in several ways including how men viewed working wives, and what that meant for their own masculinity. One of the participants working in the greenhouse aged 35 years, who only reached grade 11 (one more year before completion of Zambian high school) remarked that:

> "My wife is a grade 12 graduate. She has a grade 12
> certificate and got lucky when she got a job in one of
> the Government Ministries … she earns about five
> times my salary. Maybe I should also consider going
> back to school because there is no future in my job."
> (FGD4, Men only)

As this participant in male FGD4 explained further, his perception about a working woman is probably not shared by many, but this quote suggests he had no problem with his wife earning more than him. He however would be much more comfortable if he too earned a substantially higher income, possibly even more than the wife, and this contrasted with his earlier sentiment. What is revealing in his narration is not only how he views education as his way towards greater financial security, he still felt that it would have been better for him to have a higher paying job. Indeed, most participants in this focus group discussion saw FGDRGH-M1's experience as peculiar and some ridiculed him as exemplified by FGD4-M2's comment:

> "Me my wife stays at home … a woman belongs to the
> home. Now, how can a woman respect you if she
> earns more than you!? I can't allow my wife to work,
> no matter how hard things are." (FGD4-M2 Men only)

These two narratives largely illustrate two extreme ends on the perceptions and experiences scale, but they are illuminating, particularly when most men in the focus discussion appeared to be more in favour of male headship. Such accounts give credit to the proposition that traditional views and perceptions persist even in times of economic hardships. Nevertheless, this calls attention to variations in experiences and views, suggesting a more careful approach when attempting to make more generalizable conclusions. The contrasting accounts of these men about working women also point to variations in household-level dynamics, different marital situations and interpretations of existing gender structures. Such are examples of the household terrain that (married) women are expected to traverse once they resolve to take on employment. This is not say FGD4-M2's perception and ridicule of working women cannot be changed. As Amake Chungu's explained, her husband's opposition was revisited once the family situation had changed, and her husband, who, for more than a decade, did not entertain the idea of her working, was softened by broader family (and societal) dynamics. This shows how women can strategically use changed circumstances within the home to influence or gain acceptance to enter the labour market. This is supported by

Hansen (1997: 98) who makes a similar point when she argues that "[o]ver the stages of the household development cycle, women and men in Mtendere hold different and changing views about who should engage in work and how to spend earnings." Although Hansen (1997) interprets the household development cycle in a literal chronological sense, intra- and inter-household development cannot be seen solely as a function of time, since household development is influenced by individual change, household change as well as exposure to wider societal changes. Heterogeneity of households, in part, bear upon the speed and rhythm of such progression.

Whether it was changed family circumstances acting alone, or together with other factors, say community's acceptance of working women, notions of gender structures and hierarchy are endogenized within a complex social system and are therefore not fixed external factors everywhere that always disadvantaging women. I therefore argue that within these social systems, women can strategize and position themselves by drawing upon their (limited) freedom and autonomy to advance their aspirations. Viewing gender structures through the lens of terms like patriarchy distorts vision because analysis minimises and pillages what women can do and are already doing. In extending this argument, Verma (2001: 27) sees women as capable of grappling with complex socio-political and economic factors, and is thus scornful of patriarchy, arguing that ("[w]omen are not 'powerless' within the structures and ideology of patriarchy. They are actors who resist and manipulate patriarchy to access resources vital to the sustenance of their livelihoods…)". They 'resist and manipulate' actions and activities which constitute the essential strategies that women draw on.

Amake Faith aged 36 years with three children had been working around the same farm – both with vegetables and flowers – since she was 13 years old. Employment for her had never been a continuous commitment, as many other women also relate. She had experienced long periods of absence during child bearing and rearing, although she never had a problem getting back to work, especially given that her husband already knew she was a long time labourer. Her own history with work has its roots with her parental home's inability to

provide sufficiently for its members – children, including herself, were encouraged to seek employment. She had long been socialised to view herself as an asset and to not rely on others for provision (she narrated that she has always been taught by her parents that a woman needs to work and earn her own income in order to be independent). Sociologists have been keen to point out the enduring repercussions of experiences encountered in growing up. Komarovsky (1987: 393) notes that "[c]hildhood experiences cannot be ruled out as important independent variables…" affecting women's choices and courses of action. Thus, I argue that the type and form of agency Amake Faith employs cannot be divorced from her childhood encounters. She further explained that her husband met her when she was already working and did not in any way act as an obstacle to her work ambitions. The pack house manager, her immediate supervisor and fellow workers all praised her as a hard working employee always going above and beyond daily targets. In fact, she was a participant of one of the women only focus group discussions and her fellow workers all pointed fingers at her as an exemplary employee.

Amake Faith's account provides a different angle through which the work-family dynamics may be assessed. Indeed, it records an extension of the variability of contexts, circumstances and experiences, including processes that women encountered by the time the decision to work was taken on. Her prior exposure to working life, her husband's knowledge of it, all worked to facilitate and ease her re-entry into the labour market each time she thought it was safe to do so having raised each child to a 'sufficiently-independent' age. Women's views about work versus family-life can be traced in the following argument "a negotiated process whereby they confront and respond to constraints and opportunities, often unanticipated" (Gerson, 1985: 213) hence foregrounding the idea that women are not, as actors faced with choices and options, "necessarily rational, or aware of the social roots of seemingly random events confronting them, or indeed of all the consequences of their choices" (Komarovsky, 1987: 393). Therefore, Amake Faith's attitude towards work cannot be interpreted in individual terms, it has consequences that may be unbeknownst to her, acting as a source of either inspiration or simply envy for colleagues and the wider community.

Furthermore, women sometimes are motivated to work by modest intentions or strategies that have far reaching consequences within and outside the home. Such strategies I argue represent a good vantage point in framing the more nuanced motivations that fuel women's work aspirations. Where a woman is seen as seeking employment to meet her own personal needs, the ripple effects of such pursuits reverberate across the home and the community.

Amake Pius, 22 years old, married with 2 children, who had only been working a year, with no previous work experience, whose husband worked at the same farm and informed her of a vacancy, mentions that:

> I wanted work because I just wanted to be able to buy
> my own things rather than depending on my husband
> all the time

Amake Pius's testimony highlights a different motivation altogether, not so much to help out around the home in a directly recognisable way, but more to meet her own personal needs. However, further discussions with her also revealed that work would enable her to get items she valued but had consequences in terms of how both her husband and her community viewed her. She was keen to mention that she wanted to be more presentable to the husband, as this would 'strengthen' the marriage. Within the Zambian context, it is not culturally unusual as Hansen (1997: 77) observes that some women "were not used to depending on husbands for cash handouts to cover all household needs." At first glance, employment for Amake Pius may be seen as fulfilling somewhat selfish motivates, but probing her uncovered a much deeper narrative as to what other factors triggered her decision to work. To the standards of her peers, her husband had excelled, his job ensured they were accommodated (since a dwelling place was provided by the farm) and had enough to meet the bare minimum, but the community had considered her merely as a housewife, something that sat uncomfortably with her.

As Evans (2014) adds, women's position as home-makers is often seen by the community at large as important over a woman who leaves the house for work. Thus for Amake Pius, employment then became a way to gain the working community's respect (to show that she too can earn income independent of her husband).

Even when men meet the gendered structured norms and assumptions of headship as breadwinners and providers, women are still attracted to the labour market by disparate circumstances and factors. Amake Nachi, aged 37 years, married with four children, had been working for slightly over two decades, lived with her husband who also worked at the farm. For her, employment, like many other women, has been an on-and-off commitment, often staying away for long periods to raise her children. Her latest re-entry into the labour market had been a result of negotiation and persuasion, acknowledging the bigger role of her husband in professing that:

> he allowed me to start working, and I was happy that
> he did so … working has made me more independent
> … he takes care of us (Amake Nachi)

Amake Nachi's remark raises additional issues reinforcing the recognition of men's traditional roles. First, also covered by others' similar accounts, she had to gain her husband's permission, and this is despite having worked previously. For her household, it was not simply a matter of returning to the labour market as she pleased, she had to recognise and fit her role as wife and mother. Timing was important, as this both signalled and facilitated successful intra-household bargains. She had learnt this from her own experience of repeated episodes of 'exit and entry'. She had remarked that "these things you have to know … when you assess and see that your children have grown a bit, that they are more independent, then you can begin your discussions about getting back to work". Sheldon (1992: 290) analysed how working women (in her study to understand child care options for working women as they performed agricultural labour/work in Mozambique) dealt with child care issues, and argued that "[o]ne of the most important variables

affecting women's ability to work for a wage is their access to child care…. Sheldon's view corroborates the present finding of how Amake Nachi, and other women workers, returned to work after spending extended periods of absence from work due to child rearing. This provides evidence of strategy and ability to accurately interpret circumstances so as to execute a successful intra-household bargain. It is indicative of women's increasing sense and exercise of agency in the things they value.

Second, despite her husband meeting basic family needs, himself providing accommodation whilst earning more than double her wage, she was not content with being just a housewife. Working made her happy, but that gratification resulted from what work meant to her – it fed her self-esteem and provided the means towards semi-independence. Working provided her comfort as did her marriage. Her interpretation of independence should not be seen in its literal sense; she simply meant being able to earn money to buy the things she wanted such as clothing, lotions and so on, although occasionally chipping in when family essentials ran out.

In conclusion, this section on motivations behind women's decision to work has demonstrated that women's contribution to the family basket can be strategic, to fill the family income gap for specific purposes such as covering school fees for the children, or covering essential family needs that otherwise would not have been met altogether. Furthermore, women's income can be used to fill their desire to acquire things they value. That married women opt for employment does not imply a complete divorce from homemaking. As Evans (2014) noted, although men valued their breadwinner role and were unwilling for their wives to seek paid employment, difficult economic insecurity appeared to have softened their traditional beliefs towards women's domesticity but did not ultimately alter gender divisions of labour in the home as women themselves were not willing to push for a redistribution of unpaid care roles in the fear that they would chase the men from the home due to competition from other unmarried women ready to undertake the unpaid care roles (see chapter 7 on child rearing). The varying range of motivations, mechanisms, rationalisations and strategies employed by women, partially

see employment not so much as an end in itself but as a means to fulfilling homemaking. The following section examines the narratives of divorced women in their decision to work. This is to demonstrate the extent that the decision to work is affected by women's marital status and results in different agency outcomes.

5.2.3 Lost income or broken relationship? The decision to work and divorced women: resources and strategies

In this section, the chapter examines what triggered 'divorced'[6] women's entry into the labour market and how this decision was made. This section like the previous one draws on interviews conducted on and off-farm and focus group discussions with women workers to examine the strategies and resources draw and agency. In analysing how gendered structured roles affected women's decision to work, I examined the arguments advanced by Hansen (1992; 1997) who purports that women are often confined to the home, but notions of married life and financial security are compromised by a break-up of conjugal relationships This says little about their agency as they seek employment within their constrained circumstances or indeed their agency in the decision to divorce. Yet we are interested in understanding how women's agency is actualised when such relationships crumble. However, as Evans (2014) shows, beyond their loss of women's financial security from their spouse, the wider socioeconomic squeeze acting upon them constrains the means for their survival.

Thus, I argue that it is not simply a matter of loss of financial security that dislodged them from their traditional roles, and this is shown by considering divorced women's own accounts concerning the resolve to work.

Amake Sam, aged 29 years, divorced with 2 children, left her marital home and sought refuge at her sister's residence. Her sister's husband worked for the same farm, and was accommodated within the premises. Once she joined her sister's household upon leaving her former husband, she explained that

---

[6] Divorced here means separation from conjugal relationship, either for good, or for a time.

she found, through her brother-in-law, an employment opportunity within the farm. It has been an easy decision in the sense that she faced no opposition. She asserts that:

> I used to help my husband … I had a small garden around our house where I grew some items for consumption and sell … But since my husband and I are not together any more, I decided to look for a job (Amake Sam)

Here, Amake Sam appears to add evidence to the persistent view of male dominance. Her productive capacity whilst married only manifested itself in a small-scale income-generating activity of growing produce for the household and surplus for sell. Hansen, (1997) and Evans (2014) add that the marital home can mean more than just a place of residence, it also provides space to exercise women's skills and a channel to express their productive capacity. For Amake Sam, the break-up of the marriage stripped her of many things, including shelter and an opportunity to engage in income-generating activities while maintaining a conjugal relationship, it opened up her horizons in a different way, in ways that acted to both enhance and broaden her agency.

On the one hand, it fuelled her need for employment, to seek opportunities far beyond the confines of the home, while on the other hand, it allowed her to question her own self, and for the very first time in her life, she sought and found paid work, something that would potentially be an asset in her life experience. In each of the situations – married, at home and unmarried, working –a careful scrutiny of Amake Sam's recollection does point to her evolving agency, expressed differently in particular settings, something that can be easily obscured, if not dismissed, when her decision to work is taken as, or reduced to, a response to changed economic circumstances, in this case due to loss of income and shelter when the marriage collapsed.

Amake Sam further explained that work gave her an opportunity to re-revaluate the importance of women working. In each of the situations, it

appeared that the breakup of her marriage put in motion her agency to work, although this was dictated by different circumstances. From such a vantage point, it might be suggestive /comprehensible that agency type and form derives both from the individual and how she construes and exploits the prevailing circumstances, opportunities and resources.

Indeed, dissolution of many marriages dislodged several women from their traditional marital homes, forcing them to start afresh as mainly single mothers, and seeing paid work as a way to sustain their lives. A number of these women were young (less than 30 years old), with the new single status allowing them to reflect upon the fruits and outcomes of their productive capacities. Like many others, marriage had provided them shelter (in the sense that the men they were married to took care of monthly rent) and a livelihood, allowed them to fit in in their home-making roles so that the eventual breakup, mostly, sparked ambition to seek employment out of necessity. For instance,

> Amake Levy, aged 25 years, divorced with 1 child, had only been working for one year: I started working because of problems … I have nobody to help me to take care of children.

> Amake Lucy, aged 25 years, divorced with 2 children, had been working for one and a half years: the divorce from my husband forced me to look for work … I had to keep myself busy to look after my children.

> Amake Misozi, aged 25 years, divorced with three children, had only been working for a month: "this was the first job I found when I started looking for employment. I needed a job to help me look after my kids after my husband and I split up.

Importantly, I argue that What Amake Levy, Amake Lucy, and Amake Misozi share was not simply their age and marital status, but importantly that employment had been a response to changed circumstances, a consequence of a collapse of the spousal relationship. These women explained that they had lived within the confines of accepted social roles in the home. These women were thus confined within such structures of such relationships for some time, obedient to customs and norms, seeing themselves as homemakers and their partners as providers. But their accounts also show how they now had to monetarily provide for their children as well as themselves once they became single, owing to the absence of a male partner.

At this point, these women did not question what a married woman can and cannot do, and whether a married woman could or should confront the gender structures of male dominion. Evans (2014) advances this argument by adding that women simply embraced their new found productive roles as a way to do things they thought women could not do.

Further, I show that for others, although divorce had forced them to look for work, they still saw marriage as the first best option. Amake John, aged 38 years, divorced with 3 children, working for slightly over a year, had sat comfortably as a married woman. Divorce did not provoke her to question domesticity, she plainly narrated that she recognised the breakup as a misfortune and still hoped to find a spouse so that she could return to her traditional role. She further asserted that "after parting ways with my husband, I needed to find ways to look after my children … looking for a job was the next best thing. This was the first job I found but I still prefer being a homemaker.

For some women (especially the older women as I show below), conversely to the aforementioned homemaker, divorce had ignited an unusual attitude, it caused them to question, not necessarily to dismiss, women's reliance on men. These were older divorced women, who not so much were drawn into employment by loss of breadwinner income due to divorce, but had been working whilst married. Working, in a sense, had allowed them to appreciate

their productive roles, and to increasingly rely upon it generally in times of economic duress. Indeed, it had proved to be an integral aspect of who they were particularly in the face of the breakdown of the spousal relationship. Wiegratz and Cesnulyte (2016), further add that in studying the consequences of political-economic ideological change on traders in Uganda and sex workers in Kenya, found that, particularly for the latter, morality was subordinate to an inordinate desire for financial security, but importantly, women's actions and activities in their profession reflected heightened agency. The economic pressure imposed on these poor women had forced them to depend upon their productive capacities, and whether or not the kinds of trades they chose were acceptable to the wider community and society was generally inconsequential insofar as agency is concerned (Wiegratz and Cesnulyte, 2016). This aptly shown by the next women at farm 2.

Amake Chalesi, aged 36 years, divorced with 4 children, had started working when she was 19 years old. She recalls as having gotten married when she had already started working. For her, employment was an essential ingredient to her wellbeing, in reminiscing how she deflected her ex-husband's opposition to her working. She intimated that "I started working in order to buy the things that I wanted … working is better than just begging for money from the husband, but still, I met my former husband when I was already working. He tried to force me to stop but I refused. I have been working at this farm because this is where work was found."

Similarly, Amai Zulu at another farm (that provides housing-farm 4), aged 48 years, with 6 children, had been working while married. To her advantage, her employer, a farm, provided shelter in form of a two-roomed house. She had been working on other farms, growing vegetables and later joined her current employer to also tend to vegetables before moving on to the cut flower section. Overall, she had over 17 years of farm-type experience, while growing up around farming estates. She declared that "my husband used to spend all his money on himself … my work was important so that my children do not go hungry." A selfish husband failing to honour his assumed role as provider, gave this woman an opportunity to reposition herself within the home, to

commit more to her productive potential, although this was limited by choice of residence.

Similarly, Amake Joze, aged 40 years, with 4 children recollects that "I need to continue working. My husband left me for another woman … I have to look after my children." She had over 15 years of experience doing farm work, and was presently employed as a quality controller. She saw her employment as necessary to provide a livelihood for herself and her children. Being deserted by her husband, she valued employment even more, as a source of security. This situation also left her with mixed feelings about trust and relationships, seeking more to work, and not to look to marriage as a way out.

Gathering these narratives, I argue that the collapse of marriages triggered the urge towards greater commitment to work in general, but working itself cultivated a reassessment of individual worth and effort. This is not to say that divorced women generally disdained a spousal relationship, rather, their experiences gave them a sense of appreciation of their efforts, a renewed perception of what they could accomplish. In other words, quite apart from viewing themselves as equals to men in task, when they had to monetarily provide for the children for instance, they interpreted their productive capabilities solely in terms of what they performed and fulfilled, in most cases neatly fitting in, and not conflicting, gender structures and stereotypes (see chapter 7 for more).

What these narratives have shown is that although women still valued their home-making roles, their new found employment helped them to re-evaluate their productive capacity. By drawing on their agency to seek employment, these women show that in the absence of the financial security provided by the spouse, leaving the home-space for work has the potential for women to strategically use the work space as a means to re-evaluate their self-worth (see chapter 7 on self-worth). The next section draws on single women's narration of their decision to work and the spaces for agency.

5.3.4 Personal advancement or no choice? Single and working

So far, my analysis has delved into constellations of agency reflected in processes, occasions and circumstances that led women currently or previously in a spousal relationship to seek work. Friedmann (2006) adds to this argument in a study on women working in the assembly line of the Colombian cutflower sector that the form of negotiations and confrontations about women's employment within defined and broadly accepted gender stereotypes and structures can be easy to discern when a woman is in a spousal relationship, or has been in one.

Thus, I argue that women who have never been married are likely to face little or no opposition (especially the opposition that married women are likely to face compared to family opposition that can easily be negotiated) in their decision/motivation to work, what they do and how they do it stands in opposition to, or conformity with, societal norms and assumptions about a woman's place. It also says something about how a woman perceives herself and the wider ideals of a society she wishes to reconstruct. This subsection seeks to understand how single women make decisions about work – i.e. what triggered the resolve to work, and how this was approached. The questions asked to these women revolved around the need to explore how women arrived at the decision to work.

In this study, I found that almost all single women were young, with an average age of about 24 years old. They had overall significantly fewer years of work experience, specifically in horticultural manual-type work. But this group was on average the most educated. These 'educated' women, like most cut flower farm workers, came from very poor backgrounds, but what remained unique to their circumstances was a sense they had reached a plateau in their lives in terms of absence of financial support to further their studies. They were optimistic about career options and work opportunities if they were to advance beyond their present educational levels. Whether the reality of life in a poor African country would derail their plans or deaden their optimism remains an empirical question that time and/or further inquiry would unpack. In general,

for now, they had come to see work as a means towards educational and career advancement, an expansion of the opportunity and resource set.

Brenda, aged 23 years, single with no children, had completed grade 12 (last grade of Zambian high school) but could not find a job for many months and thus took on cut flower farm work as a sorter as the only opportunity available. She asserts that:

> I am trying to raise money for college … I do not have
> anyone to help me pay for college, so I decided to look
> for work. I want to become a physiotherapist … I want
> to study at Evelyn Hone College[7] (Brenda)

Brenda had no previous work experience and only been working for the cut flower farm for nine months at the time of the interview. A home was provided by her cousin who lived and worked in a distant farm. She had remained resilient and optimistic about her career prospects. Thus, she thought of work as a way to raise funds to pay for college fees and eventually enable her to pursue the career she truly wanted. For her, working was the natural thing to do, it was an expression of strategic agency. She had carefully assessed her present situation and concluded that rather than remaining content with the status quo, improving her life choices was the best course of action to pursue. This vision in turn uncovers her perception of a woman's role in society (and marriage); she had considered herself a potential asset to the Zambian society, and she remained adamant as she rejected the societal notions and assumptions about a woman's position.

Motivated to work along these lines, another woman, Kessina, aged 22 years and single with no children, complained about lack of financial support to enable her to complete her high school. She started working when she was only 17 years old; employment was as a way to financially sponsor herself, but family economic pressure had slowed her rate of saving. She was forced

---

[7] Evelyn Hone College is a vocational college outside of university education.

to apportion her meagre wages between her personal needs, savings for education and contribution to her parents' upkeep. Such are the realities of working women in poor countries, and this is in line with Jules-Rosette (1982) who adds that women from poor families (especially factory workers) are usually faced with huge financial family responsibilities that makes it hard for them to pursue further studies. Another observation by Mehra and Rojas' (2008: 1) that "[w]omen also are more likely than men to spend their income on the well-being of their families, including more nutritious foods, school fees for children and health care."

Whether young women are using their income to look after their parents or to spend it to support their nutritional level demonstrates the challenges that young working women face in trying to save and use their money to strategically change their circumstance either through further education or taking the risk to look for alternative employment. Although Kessina's work experience had ranged over half a decade, she remained optimistic that it was the only way she could raise money for furtherance of her education. She remarked that:

> I failed to finish my grade 12 because my parents did
> not have money for me to write my final grade 12
> examinations. I am raising money so that I can go
> back to school to write my grade 12 examinations
> (Kessina)

Kessina clearly came from an impoverished family, but her zeal towards a better life had activated a desire to seek work as a means to meet her final goal of completing her high school. Work also enabled her to contribute to her parents' welfare. In this, she highly regarded her productive capacity, and sought to enhance it through education. Although her rate of savings had been bogged down by her financial commitments, she did not budge from her ambition. This speaks of her agency, something cultivated from how she construes herself and her place within the family and wider community.

Brenda and Kessina typify women using the outcomes and consequences of their productive capacities to stand up against social identification, confinement and role-playing. They represent a rejection of aspects of social norms and gender stereotyping. Although they stated that their families are prime beneficiaries of the remuneration of these women's labour and do not oppose their decision to pursue employment, by no means does it imply it was easy to make this call. Given the realities of Zambia's economic situation, finding work is a daunting task, it consumes resources, and can emotionally afflict an individual, especially when one remains unemployed after numerous attempts (Klaveren, Tijdens et al. 2009). But their actions and activities have far reaching implications: what these women are doing, how their families feel about what they are doing sends sound waves across the community that in a sense legitimises (Evans 2015), rather than demonizes, their pursuits.

In being legitimised, there is nevertheless a potential for such acts of agency to activate pursuits of other younger girls in similar situations to feed off from, while at the same time may serve to insulate them from social seclusion should they choose career over family life, at least in the short-term. Kessina and Brenda also stated that living in the home space is encouraging other girls to seek some form of employment, hence, I argue that there are potentially legitimizing the idea for younger women in the community to seek employment to the goal of contributing to the family resource basket.

Other single women with children viewed employment as a way to provide a livelihood for themselves and their children, but saw it this way because of absence of men in the lives. By no means did their marital status indicate a rejection of a traditional home, it mainly reflected impermanence of, disappointment in, an intimate relationship. Sounding rather frustrated with her circumstances, and perhaps irritated with the inquiry on motivation to work and marital status, Jessy, 33 years old, single with one child, with over four years of experience on the cut flower farm, stated that "I do not have a husband … I needed to work to look after my child." She had complained about failed intimate relationships, and placed blame on her single status as the main contributing factor to her financial distress, yet she had come to also learn to

rely on herself for provision and strength. Before moving into the cut flower farm, she had worked for a community non-governmental youth organisation that eventually closed down; the experience furnished her with interpersonal communication skills and cultivated drive towards work. Her experiences were valuable to her sense of agency, and growing more to depend upon her productive capacity although disappointed that the NGO closed, she learnt the valuable lesson of drawing on her productive capacity to earn an income.

In a similar manner, Amake Fidess, 23 years old with two children, each from a failed relationship, had previous work experience before joining the cut flower farm. She had been a house maid but her employer relocated to another town, and refusing to follow although requested, she remained unemployed for over three months. Despite cut flower farm work failing to be on top of her options list, she had grown desperate for employment. When her friends in the community told her about a job vacancy, she seized the opportunity with no hesitation. By the time of the interview, she had been into the job for well over four months. She asserted that:

> I could not find a job elsewhere, there are just not that
> many jobs out there. Jobs are hard to find. I previously
> worked as a house maid but my employer moved to
> another town. She asked me to follow her but I did not
> want to go. I stayed behind. I remained unemployed
> for over three months. I heard about this job from a
> friend and I was desperate for some work to I decided
> to come and work here (Amake Fidess)

Amake Fidess's account elevates her agency despite the constraints she faced. She could have chosen to go with her employer but she chose otherwise. She could have ignored the information about the job availability but she did not. These actions and processes are indicative of Amake Fidess's leverage in determining her fate, not so much as accepting what comes to her. She draws on resource agency around her, and doing so promotes her agency.

Whereas as a single woman confronts less complex household level dynamics in her decision to take on a job, still, it cannot be concluded that *how* she does so is trivial. There are series of personal reflections and personal negotiations that have to be assessed, and a woman's own construction of circumstances determines what course of action she will take. Not only does this represent her agency, it also reflects the complexity of decision-making, conditioned by external (particularly by household perceptions about roles of women in the home- see chapter 7) and external community forces. The next section looks at how widowed women arrived at the decision to work and considers the different forms and types of agency that arise from this group of women.

5.4.5 Business as usual or no choice? Widows' resolute character

In this section, I explore how widowed women made decisions about work, particularly in relation to entry into the labour market-as this says something about their own views on this deduction and the spaces for agency. Like the sections discussed previously, these narratives are based on on/off-farm interviews and the focus groups discussions I conducted. The women's responses are based on the broad question of what motivated them to work and the finer details of their responses stem from the probing that I did after their revealed that they were widowed.

Some women who lost their husbands (by death), although already entering the labour market while their husbands were alive, were (the women) appreciative of having two incomes, and appeared comfortable with their spouse's contribution to the household basket. These women generally were ambivalent about being breadwinners themselves, and expressed a level of discontent with the present situation, perhaps because the gendered traditional notion of marriage sat comfortably within their social values or perhaps because of the drop in their household income, their comfort was affected. For instance, Amake Chansa, 35 years, widowed, with four children, with over 15 years of working experience; unambiguously became the breadwinner at the passing of her husband, but bemoaned his absence:

> "Life is hard without a man. I have to do everything for the children by myself. Working is important for me … working makes it possible for me to look after the children." (Amake Chansa, 2015; One-on-one Woman worker interview)

Amake Chansa had been clear to point out that working had always been important to her even when her husband was around, but his absence imposed huge direct and indirect costs on her. However, her strategic decision to enter the labour market had proved to have been worthwhile. It is something that developed long before his departure, but remained increasingly enshrined within her socio-economic values.

Amake Chansa's statement about her motivation to work casts light on the traditional structural composition of a home in terms of a man being integral to the overall well-being of the household. She sees her marriage as a partnership to the end of producing acceptable welfare for the family, which degrades once her partner is removed from the relationship. It adds voice to women's own agency, and in a way causes one to rethink the notion that "most African societies are gendered in ways that are detrimental to women's quests for well-being and self-realization" (Kevane, 2004: 33). I argue that although it is plausible to propose that traditional African sex-roles act in ways that disadvantage women, they are not fixed in themselves, as women have over the years learnt to manoeuvre within them, transform or push boundaries, and reproduce outcomes that may be regarded as far superior to a marriage-less lifestyle. A marriage offered Amake Chansa more than just a partnership in reproduction, it also enabled her enjoy a higher welfare lifestyle, something her testimony attests, with her contribution being integral within it.

A wide range of women's capabilities and agency is reflected in their entrepreneurial activities, long before their spouses died. However, once their spouses died, these women sought security and stability of income, something employment in the flower farms offered. Consider the assertions below:

I used to do a small business selling cooked food at the market, but ran out of money to buy more food for sale … My husband died, my daughter needs to go to college so I decided to look for a job." (Amake Dailess), 39 years old, widowed, has 3 children but less than one year of on-farm work experience).

I used to sell traditional brew/beer, but when I got sick, the business went under. When I got better I decided to sell vegetables instead but that failed. Eventually, I decided to look for work, especially after my husband died (Amai Tembo), 50 years old, widowed, has 6 children with just over a year of on-farm work experience.

Amake Dailess and Amai Tembo's remarks elevate women's agency which, in this case, manifested as their entrepreneurship. Their productive roles within the home were unquestionable, but death of their spouses denied them stability and security according to their own assessments and experiences.

Within the traditional gendered communities, women had found physical and social space to earn an income (being a typical occurrence for many women living in the slums), but whether or not these income-generating activities were lucrative ventures is inconsequential insofar as calling forth women's agency is concerned. Their entrepreneurship, their husbands' and communities' acceptance of it, acted to justify their productive capacities, much like those women currently in conjugal relationships discussed above. Death of their spouses did not necessarily reduce their productive capacities, it simply caused them to seek productive sources of stable and predictable earnings. Jules-Rosette (1982) analysed Zambian women's work in the informal economy, and a few years post-independence, she found that women were confined to their ghetto status (were not the preferred option for employers seeking to fill up positions in their firms) in the formal economy, a remnant of the colonial legacy and traditional norms. Nevertheless, by

engaging in trading, women could not only earn an income, but also develop strategies, including formation of social networks, that would support their well-being. In her words:

"For women, petty trading is the major source of informal sector income. Such trading ranges from small-scale vegetable vending and fishing to more lucrative home brewing and sale of beer and other illicitly produced alcoholic beverages. The female migrant with little formal education has a peculiar form of autonomy. In many ways, the woman who enters petty trading is unprepared for the complexities of urban life. Yet, she is not the incumbent of a rigidly fixed social status or a position in enterprise. Because she is freed from some of the familial and kinship expectations of village life, she can experiment with innovative survival strategies in a restricted economic niche. Moreover, she has an opportunity to creatively forge new social networks in order to maintain her economic situation." (Jules-Rosette, 1982: 6)

The women interviewed in the current study are descendants of the women Jules-Rosette (1982) refers. They have lived through, and witnessed, such survival strategies that Zambian women have long employed. Contrasting while showing continuity and change of such strategies for the current women under this study, I argue that although the migrants Jules-Rosette talks about were initially restricted to the home, however, the women under inquiry are more autonomous especially that they have chosen to live the reproductive space for work. The women under inquiry have also enlisted an arsenal of strategies that have been perfected and accepted within such settlements and communities. These strategies as Evans (2015) adds, have catapulted the next wave of women to seek work outside the home so that not working is a luxury many women cannot afford. Women's agency, seen through the

strategies they utilise, can be perceived as stemming from kinds of instrumentalities carried on over time.

But there were women who had been confined to domesticity given their husband's disproval of working women. Amake Talia, aged 33 years old, widowed, has three children, with only over three months of work experience, was an example of this group. She had been prevented from working by her husband, but his death left a vacuum which could be partially filled if she utilised her productive potential. She recollects her motivation to work as:

> When my husband died, I needed to work because my
> children need food. My husband never used to allow
> me to work even when I wanted. I used to admire my
> friends who worked. Now that I work, I would not want
> to stop. Besides, I have no choice but to work, there is
> nobody helping me (Amake Talia)

Clearly, Amake Talia is one of the typical examples (according to Zambia traditional expectations of their role-see Evans 2015) that had submitted to the traditional notion of marriage and a woman's place within it. Although she had shown interest in working while her husband was alive, she explains that she 'chose to avoid conflict' in order to sustain her relationship. She mentioned that she was envious of her working friends, hence, there appears to be a form of contradiction and tension within her community.

First, women within this community could work, as exemplified by her working friends. Second, whether a woman could/should work outside the home appears to depend upon household circumstances and dynamics, as evidenced by her own testimony of domesticity. But Amake Talia was not necessarily docile since she was a homemaker. She stated that she was diligent in her traditional tasks within the marriage, bearing and rearing three children in the process. However, when her husband died, she could no longer afford to provide the basics for her family. Her decision to work was

unopposed. Absence of her husband enabled her to pursue what she envied in her working friends, this is a clear example of strategic agency.

In contrast to those who had been working or showed interest in working when their husbands were alive, other women transitioned from exclusive domesticity to a balance between single parenting and work because there simply was no other option after their husbands died, having themselves being comfortable with their previous lives as housewives. Amai Nyirenda's account also adds voice to women's submission to customs and norms about marriage. At the time of the interview, she was aged 43 years old with six children, and had been working at the cut flower farm for five years. The passing of her husband meant that she did not need to consult or bump into potential resistance within the household in her decision to work. Whilst in marriage, she had previously worked as a domestic servant, a job she says she would choose over her present employment. At the behest of her husband, however, she quit her previous employment, but she was content with being just a homemaker since her husband sufficiently provided for the family. She recalls her resolve to work as:

> My husband died … I was forced to work so that I can
> look after my children. This is the job I found during
> my job search. I used to work as a domestic servant;
> that job is better than this one. My husband used to
> provide for us. He asked to me stop working so I
> obliged." (Amai Nyirenda, 2015; One-on-one Woman
> worker interview)

What Amai Nyirenda's commentary reveals are her submission to her spouse, and the traditional idea of male headship and its baggage. When probed further, she prioritised homemaking over working, and explained her decision to stop working had developed out of her desire for exclusive domesticity.

This examination of the different responses of widowed women's decision to work provided a range of narratives that have shown the heterogeneous

nature of household dynamics and women's interpretation of their positions within the family. Gender structures are also shown not to be impregnable: women can position themselves within these structures, or even act in ways that transform/weaken them.

5.3 Choosing work in the cut flower farms: Resource and strategic forms of agency

It has already been noted that the cut flower industry in Zambia (and across the globe) sits uncomfortably in worker rights discourse, being accused of fostering exploitative work strategies, yet numerous prospective workers seek and find work within the cut flower farms. This component of the thesis investigates why workers choose to work in such a guarded industry and forms of employment for individuals of similar skills. First, an exploration of how they got hold of information relating to job availability is presented. Second, what this means for wider gender discourses and analyses. Delving into questions pertaining to how women captured information about employment opportunities in the cut flower farms is revealing on aspects of networking and legitimation (resources agency), and how these confront the commonly held notions of the contours of gender hierarchies.

In general, Table 16 below highlights the main reasons for choosing current employment in the cut flower farms. It shows that varied factors/reasons were responsible for women's choice of this type of employment. But importantly, women sought paid employment, and cut flower farm jobs simply met this end.

Why work in the cut flower industry?

Table 16 Reasons women chose current cut flower farms

Reasons for choosing current cut flower farms	Number of informants giving reason*

Previous cut flower farm experience	16
Previous farm work experience	20
Farm policy on spousal employment	10
Only available job found	20
Does not require references or formal papers (apart from possessing a National Registration Card)	4
No previous cut flower farm experience required	30
Proximity	30
Social ties (e.g. friends/neighbours already working there)	40

*any given woman could potentially give more than one reason

Employment in the cut flower farms was mostly the only available option when women were looking for work. Zambia's high unemployment statistics and a general truncated labour market in terms of range of employment options for workers of a similar calibre (in skill, education and experience) all work together to make job searching a painful process (see (Klaveren, Tijdens et al. 2009). Because most women looking for work are usually doing so to meet a financial gap or have not found other opportunities elsewhere, the first opportunity that presents itself is almost always taken up.

Nonetheless, employment in the cut flower farms, given its time-demanding nature (see (Kidder and Raworth 2004, Barrientos, Kritzinger et al. 2005), locks in women, as they have to spend long periods of time away from their homes and communities, and by implication robs them of time to physically look for more favourable employment elsewhere. Instead, they increasingly rely upon the social networks they form within their communities.

Prospective workers in Zambia deal with the challenge of unemployment and information asymmetry about job availability by forming and becoming part of informal social networks (which serves as an example for resources agency). By serving as platforms for sharing information, these informal networks also act as information channels that may be legitimising mechanisms (see Evans 2014, 2015) for what type of work is available, and to whom. What seems to be simply an opportunity for labour market entry for a woman seeking work is in fact a pathway that transmits information through complex and dynamic social interactions.

The network resources that prospective workers draw upon are thus both enabling, by being suggestive of what suitable work is available, and constraining, in constricting acceptable forms of employment and what the network is itself exposed to. From this vantage point, it becomes clear that the form and type of agency (whether resource or strategic agency/ or just everyday agency to get by) a woman calls upon is conditioned not only by her own ambition and zeal towards work, including how she positions herself within the household/family, but by the wider social networks that she is enmeshed in.

Epstein (1971) analysed social networks in the urban setting in the geographical territory occupied by Zambia between 1950 and 1970 and remarked that:

> *"The neighbourhood is socially a more important unit*
> *for women than it is for men. Men go off to work during*
> *the day and do not have the opportunities to form the*
> *same attachments within the immediate*
> *neighbourhood as the women, who spend more of*
> *their time around the house. Many African women still*
> *spend most of their time outside the house itself: they*
> *prepare the vegetables, cook their meals, and do their*
> *washing up in the open. In this way they see their*
> *neighbours doing exactly the same sort of thing and*

> *they carry on conversations together"* (Epstein, 1971:
> 96).

Although Epstein's study goes as far back as five decades ago, the dwellings of the poor urban people have remained more a less unaltered in terms of social and infrastructural settings. Here, Epstein (1971) foregrounds some of the assertions raised in this thesis regarding the traditional notion of gender structures in which men are seen as providers through earnings from work and women as homemakers. Compared to their non-working counterparts, working women are known to perform exactly the same domestic tasks, and more.

That men do not form the same social networks and concomitant attachments should not be seen as stemming from their absence from the home due to work commitments, rather, in general, men simply do not do what women do at the home and the community[8]; indeed, this points to culturally apportioned gender segregated roles. But it remains true that working does curtail the amount of time women spend in their communities, thereby limiting or weakening the social bonds and networks they reproduce. Nonetheless, these dwellings host powerful complex dimensions of social interaction, acting as sanctioning mechanisms as news and waves of information move from one household/node to another, back and forth.

Many, if not all, of the women living off-farm categorically pointed to similar sources of information – friends, acquaintances, neighbours – about job availability, and these were developed from social interaction and intercourse. For instance, Amake Mulenga, a single mum of two, who had been 7 years in employment on the farm, remembers first hearing about the job from her neighbourhood friend who used to work for the farm but had since left for another job elsewhere. She noted that:

---

[8] See Foster et al. (2012) for arguments on gendered division of labour in Zambia and Tanzania, spotlighting tasks like sweeping as women's work. Mehra and Rojas (2008: 8) also note that "[w]omen … work longer total hours on productive and household work and paid and unpaid work, due to gender-based division of labor in child care and household responsibilities."

> my friend from my neighbourhood used to work here
> … She told me about the job, but she works in town
> now." (Amake Mulenga)

Amake Mulenga's recollection elevates the positive side and role of social networks that women rely upon in two ways: first, it supports the view that neighbours depend upon each other for useful information (constituting the very nature of resource agency that women draw on), but second, and perhaps more important, is that by finding work elsewhere, Amake Mulenga's friend sends a signal that employment opportunities exist outside the farm. Such networks extend beyond a bi-directional friendship: Amake Mulenga has other 'friends' and so does her friend, and these are all potential information channels. Should Amake Mulenga's aspiration to leave farm employment coincide with a more appropriate job being available elsewhere, and as long as this webbed relationship is willing to divulge such information, she stands to benefit. In the same manner, it is plausible to contend that these webbed relationships can reproduce an opposite effect should a type of job rub against the network's acceptable standard.

Information pertaining to job vacancy can seep into the home, and husbands can transmit such information to their wives. By sharing information about jobs with their wives, husbands are seen as permitting their wives to take on such work. Potential conflict within the home is minimised when such information reaches a woman this way, since husbands' approval is a crucial factor to a whether a married woman takes on paid work. Amake Gwen, married with seven children had been working for the cut flower farm for close to a decade, reminisces that:

> My husband used to work here … he told me about
> the job, but I only came here when he stopped (Amake
> Gwen)

Amake Gwen's husband is agreeable with her working, but the fact that he left the farm also communicates availability of opportunities elsewhere. To the

extent that his openness to her working is seen as enhancing welfare for their household, it remains true that he may not object to divulging job vacancy information should a more favourable opportunity arise at another place he is aware of. It should be emphasised that his stopping of work and her entry to work at the farm were merely coincidental as she laughed about, and was pleased with, the idea of working with her husband. Indeed, other women reported to have been told about the jobs by their spouses who remained employed at the same place as their wives.

However, husbands' openness to their wives' work can develop through farm hiring practices and recruitment policies. For instance, Amake John's employer remarked that he encouraged couples to work for him, biasing his recruitment policy in favour of the husband-and-wife type of household. But Amake John pointed out this was merely an inducement mechanism, since they were not coerced to both work. In fact, she had remained home when her husband started working, joining at a later point when it was impressed upon her that her children would be taken care of by a child-minder (usually a member of the extended family- see chapter 7) if she went to work. However, in such settings, women's desire to work and job vacancy do not always coincide. Amake John waited upon her husband to let her know if a job was available. Her husband, already working on the farm as a sprayer in the greenhouse, availed the job vacancy opportunity when it arose. Her decision to work was consensual. The farm itself, by encouraging such hiring practices and by providing information, created space that allowed views about working women to converge with husband's approval.

Contrasting the residences of workers highlights the complex nature of informal social networks, and how they are both enabling and constraining resources of agency. While farm practices that offer accommodation to workers on-farm appear to minimise problems of commute for workers, they are also, working through social networks, limiting in terms of what type of information about jobs is available to workers. Conversely, workers residing off-farm, although facing immense commute challenges (see chapter 6), can potentially draw upon wider and broader social networks in relation to what

types and forms of employment are both available and acceptable. Therefore, as communities are organised in ways that determine and condition how developed informal social networks become, they impact upon the form and type of resource agency women both draw on, acting as sanctioning or repression mechanisms.

5.4 Conclusion: forms and types of agency in seeking and finding employment: Resource and strategic agency

The views expressed by women have been wide-ranging, but how they responded to diverse conditioning factors frames the type and form of resource/ strategic agency they called upon. Here, the idea is to seek a conceptual explanation and framework, introducing agency as exercised by women seeking and finding employment in Zambia's cut flower farms.

In bringing together all the narratives expressed by the women workers interviewed in this chapter on different motivations to work, I argue that the juxtaposed accounts of women from different marital backgrounds, within and across them, form a powerful commentary on the sometimes obscured agency expressed in the resolve to seek employment. The variations in responses reflected the heterogeneity of households embodied in diversity of backgrounds, assortment of personalities, varieties of spousal relationships and so on. When self-reflection or external stimulation activated their resolve to seek paid employment, women acted in strategic ways (strategic agency) that rationalised their motivation to work, often stemming from their imagination and awareness of their productive potential.

Agency as exercised by women seeking employment is seen as a complex response function constituted of how women interpret prevailing or anticipated circumstances. Hence, from the narratives drawn from women in both the one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions, it can argued that whether a woman took on employment as a response to *changed* circumstances in the home or *in order to change* circumstances of the home, can be viewed either as an *adaptive response*, because *change of circumstances* requires her to

adapt to new conditions, or *proactive response*, anticipating changing circumstances or proactively and productively engaged in changing circumstances of the home. Ultimately, that aspects of agency as experienced by women workers in Zambia's cut flower industry were pulled out of these response actions and explained contextually. Women were aware of the social costs that came with taking on paid employment, but how they dealt with these costs largely explained agency as an individual exercise, although various 'objects' or 'situations' presented themselves as a source of inspiration for women to draw on as their perception of what agency to exercise changed or was changed. The burden imposed on women workers by these social costs had varying intensities, reflecting the different strategies, circumstances, attributes and personalities exhibited by the networks and array of conditions that women workers confronted. For instance, married women were more likely to face a greater level of friction in taking on the decision to work compared to their unmarried colleagues, but still, even within the married set, intensities of friction were highly assorted

These aspects (resource, strategic and everyday acts of agency) thus extend Kabeer's (1999) initial passive and active agency (as shown in chapter 2) and Katz (2004) formulation of agency (resilience, reworking and resistance). I argue that through strategic use of resources, agency is manifested as well as through women's tactical decision making (reflected in negotiation, subtle confrontation of gender structures and compromise).

Hence, rather than focussing on the outcomes of their actions as previously done in the gender literature on women integrated in global trade, the processes behind women's observed actions have been demonstrated. Women's acts of getting by and reworking of their circumstances have been shown throughout this chapter to be prominent in their strategic actions for change. Hence, I argue that women's decision to work regardless of whether it is proactive or adaptive still constitutes as active agency rather than passive agency, as Kabeer (1999) notes. The fact the women strategically weigh the options for employment demonstrates that their agency is active rather than passive.

In conclusion, I argue that when one elevates women's voice in their decision to work, conventional views in the development discourse about women and work begin to disintegrate when they assume that the outcome for women is to challenge the status quo, but as we have seen, earnings are means to access what they value, which most times diverge from what society thinks they value, should value or have reason to value. What the analysis so far shows is that women's decision to take on work in the cut flower farms was borne out of varying circumstances, but ultimately, paid work can be seen as a means to an end they value.

It must be emphasised again that what they value cannot only necessarily be captured by policy drives that seek gender equality or worker rights. Specific contexts, especially in relation to power dynamics must be well understood. Step-wise changes (both pointing to retrogression and progression) are likely to take place within the power balance that may still be regarded as gender unequal, but these changes reflect success for those seeking them. Reframing the inquiry of why seek paid work and taking stock of power dynamics opens up avenues that establish how women exercise agency, and how decision making is itself a process that is conditioned by the choice of agency.

Women's decision to seek, find and endure paid work reflects an extension of their domain, from the periphery of the home to productive activities outside of it, but at the same time encapsulates an expanded set of choices, and options for agency which require correct identification, interpretation and explanation. By getting out of the home and community environment to go for work, women extend the territory through which agency can be exercised, in turn impacting upon and altering experiences at home and the community.

Once women are in employment at the farms, what and how does their work constitute their experience of work within the farm setting? In the next chapter (6), I will focus on women's experience in the workplace by exploring the issues raised in the industry about employment practices and strategies and in turn explore the spaces for women's agency.

6.0.   Women's work experience on the cut flower farms

Introduction

In developing countries, women's experiences in the work place have been approached differently largely due to differences in methodological inclinations, with conditions of work emerging in expansive global trade literature as a reflection of how women experience work. Policy analyses and recommendations follow this reductionism, and in the process fail to account for broader strategies and resources identified and exploited by women. Therefore, the impact of women's work has by and large focussed only on the conditions of work themselves and downplayed the strategies, coping mechanisms and resources that women use. Women should be seen as active participants, and not passive entities that are simply adversely affected by poor working conditions. They judge, act and survive within these broader work constraints simply because they position themselves in a manner that reflects their desires in life. By locating women's positions within these interactions, women's ways of doing things at the work floor are revealed.

Pearson and Seyfang (2002: 43-44) asked women workers what they wanted from their jobs in order to ascertain ways in which women workers' experiences of work could be improved. I argue that such inquiries pertaining to desired/ideal aspects of work against the actual conditions of work are limited in identifying the strategies and processes that women draw on for their survival within and beyond the confines of the workplace. Indeed, because the central focus of such pursuits asks women what they want in relation to their current experiences of work, inquiry narrows itself into identifying negative aspects of work as reflected in women's working conditions, so that improving such conditions of work is seen as a way to serve women's desires.

While proceeding this way has its advantages, such as pinpointing aspects of work and the work environment that require improvement, it diminishes what women themselves do to confront and/or navigate these (real rather than ideal) features and circumstances of work. The deplorable and exploitative

working conditions (women) workers generally face in the Global South are well documented (Barrientos 2002, Dolan, Opondo et al. 2002, Catherine and John 2003, Kabeer, Milward et al. 2013), yet, comparatively, I argue that women's voices in these settings are not given sufficient attention.

This chapter starts from the premise that understanding the realities of women's work environments in Global South countries should be furnished by the practicality of what can be achieved, and under what circumstances, rather than honing in on what might be perceived as idealism. For Marchand and Parpart (1995), criticising postmodernist literature of women in development in the South enabled them to highlight some of the choices and forms of agency women draw on when they decide and carry on working.

In advancing the narratives forwarded by authors above, I set out to explore women's experience of work seen through what women think about their jobs. Women both pinpoint what aspects of work they (like and) dislike and what they do in these circumstances. By following this line of thought, women's coping mechanisms are uncovered. As I sought to understand processes and forms of agency from women's experience of work, finding out what they thought about their jobs enabled women to provide information on working conditions through aspects of work and then their own interactions (with management and colleagues) within these spaces. But these conditions and interactions must be contextualised and located within broader organisational structures and constraints of the GPN (see chapter 8).

One-on-one interviews and focus group discussions with women workers and management interviews in the selected cut flower farms in Zambia were the primary sources of this data. The interviewed women worked either in the Pack House or Greenhouse, so that women's views about work were formed based on these spaces/spheres of work.

6.1.   How do feel about your job? Impressions and Misgivings of Work Conditions

By choosing to supply her labour in the flower industry, a woman implicitly accepts to yield to the dynamics of being a participant of the industry. What she does at work, and how she does it, is a function of not only her employer's business strategies, but also the broader environment in which that the industry is located in. Women remained resolute in providing their labour despite the challenges the work place imposed on them. Hence, in the next section, in keeping in line with the central theme of this chapter, I explore women's narratives on their experiences of work.

6.2.1 Earnings

Generally, the meagreness of wages and income in developing countries is well known, and women have a higher likelihood of earning less than men doing the same, or similar, jobs (Dunaway, 2014: 14; Selwyn, 2013: 57; Pearson and Seyfang, 2002; 45-46;). Yet, undoubtedly, the shared aspiration (or need) to earn an income had brought these women together (see Chapter five), and this had far reaching consequences within and beyond the workplace in terms of experiences of life in general, and work, in particular. In unravelling women's experiences of work, women were initially asked to comment on their earnings and, unequivocally and expectedly, all the interviewed women referred to their wages as below what would be required for basic survival (women interviewed in both one-on-one interviews and focus groups discussions).

In general, comments connected to wages were formed around aspects of income adequacy and overtime pay, consistency of wage payments, and fairness of wage structures in relation to hierarchy. Kung (1994) studying women in factory work in Taiwan makes a similar observation that what women regarded as a benefit from current employment typically identified with a range of unique circumstances or shared perceptions that they encountered. For this chapter, I argue that women's views about their experience of work is demonstrated in terms of their expectations against the realities of work;

position in the chain of command and company hierarchy; previous work experience, farm-related, or otherwise; personal motivation; job security, and so on. Importantly, however, the levels of ambivalence in their expressions were remarkable, such that each identifiable benefit was mentioned in the same line as the reservations women held. In examining the experiences of work in the Zambian cutflower industry, below is the string of narratives from women worker interviews drawn from one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions. This is in response to the question of what women thought about their cutflower work.

Amai Sakala, a 50-year-old widow with 2 children, (like many of the responses given by the women interviewed) did not think much about her job, save for the fact that it enabled her to earn an income: "The good thing about working here is that I am able to earn an income, and this helps towards meeting basic needs". When probed further, she appeared embittered and simply shook her head from side to side, as though to signal there was nothing else to add, but eventually said something in lines of no additional benefits such as a rewards system based upon performance and output (which was typical of most women's views). Yet, other women easily seized the opportunity to say a little more. For example, Amake Sibo notes that:

> Besides the low salaries that are not even paid on time, my other main complaints are overtime pay and the work culture in general. When we work overtime, the company asks us to stay at home for the same hours, usually when production is low. We work on holiday, but they are treated like normal days. It would be better to give us double wages when we work on holidays (Amake Sibo)

Amake Sibo stated that she had carefully assessed her payslip, asked management questions, until she came to the knowledge that the extra hours are required when needed, but rather than pay the hours, they have to take time off when demand is less high. This way, management (on all farms) would

keep their wage costs low, particularly when production was low, but the workers generally complained of this business practice as unfair. First, the workers agreed that such a practice was ethically wrong since they were tied to the company and therefore the company should be obliged to provide them work during normal working hours. More generally, and resoundingly, staying out of work for that duration meant foregone income for the workers because the time worked is not replaced by the period they are asked to stay away from work in wage terms so that staying away from work meant a missed payday. Second, during high production or export days, be it normal work days, weekends or holidays, workers complained they were overused, as they had to work for very long gruelling hours, yet the hours were treated as ordinary work days, with no special payments accruing to workers when they had to forego a holiday for instance.

Overtime work days were also especially unwelcome for women workers since they were kept away from home for longer durations, with far reaching consequences within the household and community (see below). Yet employers appeared resolute in their employment setup and expected workers to adjust. Kabeer (2000, 2012) adds that for some jobs, particularly in highly competitive labour intensive export sectors, the preference was for female labour because they made less trouble, or because they could be paid less on the grounds that they were secondary earners or merely earning pin money.

This shows that poor working conditions (poor remuneration, overtime, casual work are commonly practiced among employers in high value exports) are a common occurrence in labour intensive export industries. Below is an account of the differences in circumstances in the worksite of the workers drawn from the one-on-one interviews. This was a response to what women thought about work in general and their particular worksite tasks.

6.2.2 Heterogeneity of circumstances and individuals

For Amake Petrina, a married 37-year-old woman with one child, working was essential to the family's basic needs basket, but she also refers to her current work site in the Pack House as preferential to other production sites within the cut flower farm:

> "It helps to meet minimum home requirements. People in the Greenhouse take longer lunchtime breaks between 12:30pm and 14:30. We only get 15 minutes' break during breakfast and 15 minutes' break for lunch. But we get overtime pay whenever we work for longer hours on busy days while those in the Greenhouse are not given overtime pay. Otherwise, both jobs are hard. My choice is still in the pack house, although I would rather it was at the vegetable section, flowers are too demanding and the work is hard and not much money (Amake Petrina)

The ambivalence in Amake Petrina's statement is blunt, but her expressions are feelings of nostalgia when she talks about her work experience. She struggles to pinpoint a solid positive attribute of working besides earning a (meagre) salary, and despite her being in a supervisory role. In terms of ownership, her employers had changed hands, in the process changing business strategies and orientation. When she joined the farm, she worked in the vegetable section, which she clearly preferred, but over time, the new owners had moved away from vegetables and made the farm an exclusively rose producing company. Between new owners of the farm, including her own absence from farm work, she had a stint working as a maid.

While remembering her previous employment in the vegetable section of the farm as a better than her work as a maid. By the time she was being interviewed, her judgements and perceptions about work had clearly been shaped by her experience on- and off-farm. More generally, such an exposure

215

enabled her to be more receptive to her work circumstances, such that although dissatisfied with certain aspects of her job or working conditions, she imagines that things could have been worse whether within the same company (e.g. Greenhouse) or outside (e.g. as a maid) (this is an example of a typical case in analysing employment experience within such farm settings). The World Bank (2013:13), in their study on employment challenges in Zambia among the youth, adds that people care about jobs because earnings from work are generally the biggest share of their incomes and that not having an income is a luxury most cannot afford. This supports Amake Petrina's decision to continue working as she values her earnings.

Amake Petrina's account also points to wider considerations when discerning women's agency through the prism of work experience. Indeed, as Raworth and Kidder (2009) show, farm business strategies, themselves influenced by dynamic internal and external processes and circumstance, have a bearing on how women experience employment, so that ignoring these wider considerations would be unenlightening, or more appropriately, misleading. Clearly, I argue that her perception of (the benefits and preferences of) employment had been partially shaped by the dynamic of the company. Ultimately, her views about her job in terms of preferences and benefits from it is not only explained in terms of employment alternatives, options and possibilities that her current employer may offer, but also by her encounters outside farm-related work (previous non-farm experience).

Therefore, while previous work experience is important to situate and define current job circumstances and experience, present employment placement and positionality governs how competing future preferences and aspirations are formed, particularly when the vision is limited to the existing employer.

In contrast to Amake Petrina's employer, Amai Banda and Amake Lonti's employer, moved in the opposite direction, away from rose farming for the export (European) market, to become exclusively vegetable producing for the domestic market. The change in business strategy was influenced by the 2008/2009 global financial crisis which saw this farm make enormous losses,

consequently, among other cost-cutting measures, forcing management to trim the workforce by 75 percent. The farm director reported that he saw an opportunity to serve the domestic vegetable market given the emergence of a middle class in Zambia that saw the springing up of several supermarkets and shopping malls. Additionally, the government of Zambia had instructed supermarkets (and other businesses) to give preferential treatment to local producers. He noted that this change in production was paying dividends and was against rose farming given the difficulties of serving a demanding European market.

> Farming in Africa while following very high European
> standards was not easy. (Director Interview -farm 6-
> non cutflower farm)

His remarks must be contextualised to the Zambian circumstances (see discussion in chapter 4 on challenges of rose farming in Zambia, particularly related to freight and competition from Kenya, also partly related to transportation and logistics, distance, competitive advantage, airline). Such dynamics in farm practices and business orientation as additional factors influencing women's agency have been captured because the framework and environment of analysis has profited from a GPN lens. Importantly, however, this background gives context to Amai Banda and Amake Lonti's following remarks when asked to comment on their current jobs in relation to their previous rose-farming-related employment:

> when we used to grow flowers, we used to work longer
> hours and bunching was very tiring but now we just
> work as graders here. It is easier and we do not stand
> for long hours. Our pay is consistent; we get it on time
> (Amai Banda)

> I had not worked anywhere else. We have stopped
> producing flowers. We can see the difference in the
> work we do. We do not stand for long hours and the

> vegetables do not prick us like the flowers did (Amake
> Lonti)

Evidently, these women felt better placed in their current jobs grading vegetables in the Pack House department of the farm. As the goal of this chapter is to draw information about agency and its corresponding mechanisms and pathways, underpinning these women's agency is their attitude and impression of their work situation. They perceive their current engagement as superior to their previous employment when roses were being produced. As a result of change in the company's business strategy, these women's agency (reflected in their attitudes towards work) appears to be enhanced, seeing their new roles as superior to their old ones, particularly that they now have more time to spare to tend to their personal commitments because they now leave work earlier.

Such testimonies (although not typical to most of the views presented by women interviewed on the cutflower farms) are important because they capture women's attitudes towards work, since, as we will see below, agency manifests itself through different channels that must be contextualised and expanded upon as circumstances change. Attitude then is seen as an active factor influencing such things as job-motivation, -satisfaction and -commitment. The following section highlights on women's experience of work regarding job security and related survival strategies.

6.2.3 Job security and survival strategies

At farm 2 (offering relatively stable and consistent incomes), Amake Chansa, aged 35 years, widowed with 4 children, working for another farm, previously had worked in the vegetable section of the farm points to job security and employment stability of working in the cut flower section of the farm against the vegetable section. She reports that:

> Jobs here at the flower section are more secure than
> jobs at the vegetable section when there is less work

here, we are sent to the vegetable section. When there is less work at the vegetable section, workers that side are laid off (Amake Chansa, 2015)

The value women like Amake Chansa placed on security and stability of employment in the rose flower section of this farm was overwhelming. The mere fact that employment in the rose flower section was stable and incomes were consistent (unlike the other two farms (farm 1 and 4) where women reported issues of inconsistent payment of incomes), was sufficient reason to regard it as something worth mentioning in terms of how the felt about their jobs. Similarly, Amake Joze's testimony captures this:

I think the vegetable section is better than here; I used to get bonuses there, we do not get bonuses here. But the problem with the vegetable section was that there was no job security. Here there is employment security (Amake Joze)

Amake Joze, suggests that she valued earnings over job security. In addition to reflecting expectations and misgivings, this comment also illustrates how women can interpret and position themselves within restricted options and circumstances. As an expression of agency, she now perceives her position as something to hold on to; she remarks thus: "I work hard to keep my job. I do not like talking, so I do what I am told to do." By pursuing work with an obedient attitude, she hopes to avoid confrontation, but also relies on her hard-working performance as a signal of her devotion to, and appreciation of, the job.

Aspects of worker attitudes being governed by their own desire for self-preservation are well documented in Selwyn's (2013: 57) study of rural women in Brazil, who found that, while examining seasonal employment fluctuations, women would deliberately choose to "maintain a reputation as 'good' workers'" as a way to secure current employment, or increase likelihood of being re-hired in the future should they be laid off during low production cycles. The

World Bank (2013) in their report on youth perceptions of unemployment in Zambia adds that jobs are important for young people for their psychological wellbeing and social cohesion; most people would prefer to have a job that gives them a steady income. Thus, I argue that women workers (having accessed the options for employment) exercise agency by first accurately recognising the criteria employers identify as important job attributes, and then positioning themselves to fulfil these attributes.

Women workers' exhibition of conspicuous diligence can be interpreted in two ways: first, as a survivalist posture, based on their assumptions of what worker attributes impress on the employers; second, as motivation-sustaining and motivation-enhancing which women consider important for them to see work as they do. Indeed, further probing, and careful inquiry permit recognising women's agency as an outcome of thought (women's interpretation of their circumstances) and action (attitude towards, and positionality at, work, for instance). Through the thought process, women bring a sense of awareness to their circumstances, not just as something happening to them, but also as something they can respond to, or act upon, and through judgement of such circumstances, they can choose their next steps (so that they become active participants of their situations rather than passive-see chapter 2 for this discussion)).

Kandiyoti (1998: 139) advances this argument by stating that women can be "viewed as rational actors deploying a range of strategies intelligible within their normative universe and thus pointing to the circumscribed nature of the same strategies." Similarly, Wolf (1992) links these individual strategies with the broad structures and institutions. She adds that seeing these strategies this way, allows them to be seen as agency outcomes. But I argue that such considerations are not a claim that women's thought-to-action processes are static, independent and individualistic, because, as chapter 5 has partially highlighted, views change over time and space, and are influenced by a multitude of other factors. Should more favourable economic opportunities for employment open up elsewhere, say as a country experiences a boom, women's attitudes towards existing work cannot be said to be unshaken.

Hence, wider considerations of changing socio-political and economic circumstances have an important imposing presence on women's perceptions of existing and potential work. The next section explores the experiences of women workers through their expectations versus the reality of their workplace. The following narratives demonstrate how women use their agency to adjust their expectations against the realities of work they encounter.

6.2.4 Expectations versus reality

Indeed, women form views about the work experience based on the expectations versus reality assessment. That work and associated tasks remains the same makes it predictable for the women to know what they are up against on a regular basis, but also allows them to perfect their skills around the work itself. But there is an added aspect of predictability and consistency of wage payments which forms a desirable feature of the work experience. A consistent and predictable flow of income is important in easily discernible ways (discussed below), but that a woman is assured of getting her salary even when production is low is comforting. Women correctly form such views based on previous encounters. For instance, Amake Mulenga (stability of income was a typical response given by workers on this farm but this does not apply to all farms under inquiry) contends that:

> "Bunching is a repetitive job, so it's not difficult. You tend to get used to it. Besides, it's a way of earning an income for me and my children. Income payments are consistent and on time. Even when flower orders do not go well due to damage, or when roses are rejected, we still get our pay unlike other jobs like housekeeping where your boss may decide not to pay you because they don't have money or because you have made a mistake." (Amake Mulenga, 2015; Woman Worker one-on-one interview)

Although also expressing ambivalence over their work circumstances, other women utilise available alternatives and opportunities to form views about prevailing conditions and work experience more generally. Amai Zulu notes that "…it is not so much of a choice that I work here, but it is better than working in the vegetable department which has much harder manual work such as using a hoe all the time. So, I am thankful for what I have, I work hard so that I can continue working here." Clearly, the alternative to her current placement was working in the vegetable section, doing tasks she perceives as being more strenuous, and consequently seeing her present situation as superior to what she perceives as her other choices. Another view by Amake Mulenga reveals that she had been realistic in discerning what the alternatives were; she did not imagine what kind of ideal job she would prefer; her views were shaped by realistic expectations of what other available opportunities existed within the organisational structures.

This demonstrates the inherent tensions in women's accounts, not all women value the same job, rather, some are appreciative of the jobs that have been reported to be difficult or hard. For Amake Mulenga she interpreted her job predicament as superior to available choices, this seems to have activated a sense of appreciation for her existing employment, so that she approached it with gratitude and commitment.

Appraising their positionality within the company structure, some women (those in farms that have stable incomes unlike the ones with fluctuating incomes (see chapter 4) were much more optimistic about their jobs, despite their monotonous and laborious nature. Women however formed these views from the point of view of their expectations against the reality of their work experiences, other accounts advanced by Amake Petrina and Amake Chansa for instance, amplify these voices:

> "The income from this job helps me to buy some stuff
> … once you get used to bunching, the job becomes
> easy. I like it here in the Pack House because people

in the Greenhouse do not get breaks. The temperature in the Greenhouse is too high.

Also, Pack House is better than Greenhouse because we get overtime pay. But sometimes, we do not get overtime pay even if we work up to 20:00hrs."

The above views are shaped/constrained by company hiring and employment policies, whereby gender division of labour is conspicuous since all women working the rose section of the farm 2 are restricted to the Pack House, so that the Greenhouse is filled with male workers only. This reflects tensions even in the jobs that women claim to be better, so that the experiences of women in either worksite reflect specific aspects embodied in the position that women take up as both positive and negative.

Other women from a different farm (farm 1 to be specific), that has a different set up from other farms, had women examining their work preferences based on their encounters with management on that farm (through employment practices of this farm where workers are expected to work both in the greenhouse and pack house), fellow workers (especially doing work perceived to be men's work in the greenhouse) and including the wider work environment (tending to different tasks on the farm sometimes considered men's work). The women formed expectations about the job based on experience. They had work experience in both the Pack House and the Greenhouse since their employer does not discriminate work sites by gender of employee.

I prefer working in the Greenhouse tending to flowers. Working in the Pack House requires me to stand all day; at least I get to sit down in the Greenhouse." (Amake Lovemore)

Greenhouse is fine. I do my tasks very well because I am hard working. I find my job relatively easy and usually want to meet my targets. Sometimes it's challenging but I try my best (Amake Nelly)

It is easy to sort out. If you work hard, I think you can be promoted. However, when rose production is low, our wages are not necessarily affected because we are moved to work in the vegetable Garden (Brenda)

In fact, although greenhouse work is largely considered a man's job since it is generally perceived to be more strenuous (requiring bending, digging with traditional farm implements, and pushing wheelbarrows), some women showed pride in being able to accomplish tasks associated with this kind of work. Sibo beamed as she cheerfully explained how she can do what men can do: "…we work very hard, and we do men's work here. I move the wheelbarrow around, dig out and remove compost, and carry a lot of these kinds of things. I am hard working, even the men know very well." Evidently, she prided herself in her delivery of work, being able to accomplish tasks that are predominantly associated with masculinity. From this vantage point, what she felt about her work reflected the pride she had in doing it, and less what the job meant to her in monetary terms: "I carry on with my duties, I have no problem, it is just that we do not get paid enough".

For Evans (2014) looking at how women in the mining region are reconstructing gender structures and stereotypes, adds that growing numbers of women in Zambia were generally seen as doing work that was previously dominated by men as a sign of diminution of gender stereotypes, so that while women re-evaluated their self-worth, society's perceptions about women's roles also changed. Indeed, in part, I argue that Sibo's mention of men as approving of her hard work and effort in doing the same tasks as they do is revealing of women's desire to seek recognition from their male counterparts. The next section analyzes how conditions of work affect the experiences of women workers. This because conditions of work form the basis on which

women workers have to call on draw on their agency to remain relevant in the workplace despite the challenges they encounter previously mentioned above.

6.2.5 Conditions, and results of, working in the cutflower farms

In examining if market destination potentially affects the options for agency within the worksite, I looked at whether time spent working, either in the pack house or green house, affected how women exercised agency. I found that there was no variation in work burden with respect to product destination. The key to understanding why little or no variation exists in work intensity by product destination may potentially lie in farm-level activities, that are organized in such a way to maximize women's labour to the benefit of farms

However, women's experiences of work were also shaped by their perceptions of the downsides of their jobs. Operationalising such concepts as 'job-satisfaction' must be seen, not just from what women value about their jobs, but also what they perceive as its shortcomings.

> "The salary is too little and the job is very involving. Working here as a Supervisor is not different from the position I was in. The salary difference between the position I was in and the position I am in is not much. Besides, as a Buncher, I only had one job, but now as a Supervisor, I have several jobs within the Pack Shed; I can bunch, I supervise quality, I can work as a Cutter, but generally have to do a lot more to help the women and also ensure that we meet export targets. Other men who are Supervisors get more than me, I think about double my salary, yet I have been a Supervisor for two years now." (Amai Sakala)

Amai Sakala, a fifty-year-old widow had almost two decades working on this farm, with occasional periods of absence due to being laid off as the farm

changed owners and consequently business strategies, from mixed produce, including vegetables and roses, to exclusive rose production. She narrated that had previously worked as a receptionist before exclusively becoming a Buncher at the same farm. Her testimony does point to a divide between expectations and reality on the ground. As a Supervisor, she expected higher pay, not just because the position is hierarchically higher than a Buncher, but because she feels it is more taxing, requiring her to fill multiple roles. She also bemoans a lack of fairness across gender in terms of pay. What she sees men in similar roles get is what she sees as closer to her expectations.

However, her position in the company structures also enables her to form wider networks with more women as she has to directly work with each one of them. As Kung (1994) adds, work relations also form a larger part of a women's desire to stay in a job for a number of years. From this vantage point, I argue that it can be discerned that the forms of social interactions and networks made within company structures have partially to do with what position a woman fills as well as the desire to work for a company longer, as this will determine how much on-the-job interaction takes place. Therefore, in part, what women think about the job have to be seen and explained through the positions they occupy within the company structures.

That reality given by Amai Sakala of the job falling short of expectations reflects / echoes the expression of discontent for the majority of women interviewed on the farms (more so those workers faced with income instability but even those with consistent pay who felt that their work was underpaid compared to their male colleagues). Expectations were drawn not just based on wages as in Amai Sakala's case above, but also in terms of other conditions of employment. Conditions of work can be seen as a web of factors that facilitate or hinder the delivery of the services of labour. Women's experiences of work are therefore governed by the environment in which they provide their labour service.

This latter aspect is aptly captured in the following remark (which was a typical outcry for all the workers):

The salary is not enough; it does not meet most of my needs. We stand for long hours. We have export days on which we leave work very late on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but still get very little overtime pay. We are expected to buy our own protective shoes; only few women received protective shoes. We are not even given lunch; we are expected to bring our own packed lunch (Amake Mulenga)

Amake Mulenga lamented the poor working conditions. It was not unreasonable that she had expected the company to provide appropriate clothing, and perhaps feed her while at work given the strenuous nature of the work women performed. She was also expected to self-provide lunch from a paltry wage. Indeed, during the day at the farm, some women would just resort to 'sleeping-it-out' during lunch, to preserve energy, and not so much to replenish as they had no food with them. When asked what impact this had on them, one woman responded by saying they simply had no choice at times, especially towards the end of the month when their resources and options had been exhausted:

"I am resting so that I can have some strength to continue working … I do not have any packed lunch … there is nothing I can do, even my colleagues do not have anything to spare … but I will still be feeling tired in the afternoon."

What a company fails to provide when in fact expected to do so (on legal or moral grounds[9]) does affect women's experience of work, and how agency manifests (this constitutes as everyday survivalist agency, although not transforming, has the potential to keep workers motivated and meet daily production targets). That some of these women appeared as apathetic

---

[9] Given the strenuous nature of cut flower production, the majority of farms had previously provided lunch to help workers to cope with the intensive tasks, however, in the past few years, workers explained that employers have since stopped providing any form of lunch as well as snacks in the morning in form of a Zambian traditional drink that is well known for improving energy levels of workers or people in general.

workers during the latter part of the work day can be explained, in part, by a failure of the company to meet certain labour-focused (ethical) standards. Indeed, because women's agency can also be decoded from their (women's) attitude and approach towards work, it would appear as though as poor working conditions (and other negative aspects of work) constrain how women form and develop thoughts into action.

Such poor working conditions, I argue may deny women from developing bonds during lunch breaks which may be formed as they sit and chat away around a meal. Indeed, this may be seen as inhibiting the extension of agency emerging from such interactions (thereby reducing the power with potential of such interactions), but leaving the matter here would actually obstruct the wider view of women's exercise of survivalist agency. What women choose to do during lunch breaks, with or without food, is itself a matter of exercising survivalist agency. If a woman with no food for lunch retreats in order to conserve strength, this can be interpreted as an act of everyday survivalist agency. It is survivalist agency, one relied upon to protect women's value as capable labourers.

This is not to say survival agency is confined and manifested this way, but rather to explain that survivalist agency is one that women fall back on when there appears to be limited options. Should an opportunity emerge when lunch is made available through whatever means, such survival agency is cast aside, and strategic agency is adopted because interactions during lunch breaks become the norm. What employers see at the end of the work day is whether production targets have been met; therefore, a woman who involuntarily foregoes lunch, and subsequently any voluntary interaction with colleagues, may be seen as choosing to be productive given the constraints placed on her. Outcomes of this type of survivalist agency manifest themselves as uninterrupted production, which is crucial for her survival on the job. Therefore, the difficulties (and consequences) of abysmal working conditions imposed on women should not be seen as constricting agency, rather, they simply reshape the type and form of agency women employ.

Contrasting this company's practices, is another farm (farm 4) that provided lunch for its workers.

Given the complaints workers expressed when a company failed to provide a meal at work, it would seem plausible to conclude that the work experience would improve if a meal were provided, but this would leave much unsaid, particularly if further details about the actual meal programme are unknown. Amake Sibo comments were scathing, she condemned the meal programme for its failure to accomplish what it set out to do. She expresses her discontentment by mentioning that "the feeding programme here is terrible. They use rotten Maize for Mealie Meal; No salt or cooking oil in food most times. You would even be surprised that the food is meant for humans. The purpose of giving us this food is not even known because it hardly satisfies its purpose. Even a pig would not eat some of the food we eat here".

Amake Sibo's comments demonstrate the need to carefully assess the situation on the ground. During the interviews at the farm premises, I observed that the conditions of the cooking space and cooking utensils were not simply unhygienic, they were unconducive for the wellbeing of workers. Additionally, the food itself appeared to have been of substandard quality, with minimal ingredients, flavours and other taste-enhancing additives. As utensils were themselves limited, some workers' food was served on large bucket covers. In fact, interviews with management helped shed light on these conditions, with further information revealing that the cash budget for the feeding and nutrition programme stood at about £2 per person per month. Although management tried to justify this budget on grounds of non-cash budget items in form of maize and vegetables being provided from the farm produce, the reported and observed conditions do provide evidence of a rather shameful and miserable situation. Such additional poor working conditions only dampened further the workers' morale and general attitude towards work.

Nevertheless, some women at the same farm remained resolute in their commitment to work and appreciation of company efforts, despite these constraints. One woman cheerfully talked about the feeding and nutrition

programme as something worthwhile: "it is better than no food. Most times the food is not enough, and is tasteless but it gives us some energy to keep working." She had looked beyond enjoying the meal, and instead focused on what it could help her accomplish. This appears to have been a question of tolerance; acknowledging and accepting the present situation but focusing on the positives in order to accomplish a greater endeavour. Her sentiments overlapped with many other interviewed workers at the same farm who generally felt the feeding programme was superior to no food being provided at all. Besides, women had used these opportunities to form bonds, as they sat around a meal with colleagues (see below). Importantly, how these women came to experience work in these terms was conditioned by company practices.

Other farms (like farm 2) did not go all out providing an entire meal for their workers; instead, they occasionally offered *tobwa*[10], a traditional energy drink, during lunch as a way to sustain and/or replenish workers' energies. But workers knew this was not enough. As Amake Nonde reports:

> …in terms of food, sometimes we are only given one sachet of *tobwa* over lunch. We still have to bring our own packed lunches, but we each bring something and then prepare lunch from here. For example, today, I brought some mealie meal, while one of my friends brought some tomatoes, and another some *kapenta*[11]. So, just like that, by each one bringing something, we can come up with a proper meal."
> (Amake Nonde)

When the *tobwa* did come, it was not the main element of their lunch packs, it was however a welcome add-on to what they had already planned to eat. Allowed by management, women on this farm formed some lunch groups,

---

[10] A well-known Zambian energy drink especially used for workers engaged in high intensity manual work/labour
[11] Also known as the Tanganyika sardine. Usually bought sun-dried.

whereby each member would contribute some ingredients towards a meal that was prepared within the farm. Management allocated cooking grounds where most workers would sit during breaks. Farm practices permitted workers to be innovative, who then chose to form groups so that they would lower the average costs of meals in addition to meeting their desires to socialise in an informal setting on the company grounds. The company's role in such circumstances should not be diminished, for they held the key that opened up the doors for workers to see grouping and cooking within the company space as an eventuality. Yet, such accounts also see workers' own agency (everyday agency) reflect in the tactics they employ in navigating difficult situations.

Appalling working conditions do not potentially hinder women from forming bonds with colleagues, they can also affect a woman's self-worth, and how that in turn impacts upon how she behaves at work and beyond. Amake Rudo, who bewails her transfer from the vegetable to the rose department of the farm, expressed her discontent in this way: "I find the job very hard. I do not even have protective gloves to help me with handling and bunching flowers. My hands are pricked every day; my hands look terrible; I have sores which do not seem to be healing properly. I do not like how my hands look. Now, how can someone even look at me twice with such hands. Besides, most times they do not even pay us for working overtime." The consequences on the women of the failure of the company to provide gloves affected women's confidence in their physicality.

Recorded accounts of working conditions surrounding occupational health and safety at the workplace in poor countries have been quick to point out the failure by companies to uphold reasonable standards (Pearson and Seyfang, 2002) yet what women do in such circumstances has not been interpreted as an act of choice by women. How women become triumphant by way of resolving to keep working under such difficulties can be usefully interpreted as women, by their own accord, making a choice. Women do not simply perceive such conditions as a hindrance to their labour service, rather, such conditions encourage women to act differently, hence calling on different types and kinds of agency in the process – whether survivalist, strategic or everyday agency.

231

Further, Wolf (1992:9-10) in her study on "factory daughters" in Java argues that "in peasant societies where self-exploitation is considered normal, the long hours of unpaid labour under the eyes of the parents or older male relatives can be subordinating especially for young women, such that finding paid work in the factories (even though exploitative with long hours) is seen as emancipation for the women workers."

Kung (1994) gives a contrasting account based on women's acceptance of their position within the factory chain, she purports that a belief by the workers that things cannot easily change and justified by downplaying their position in the company as being too low to affect the company management towards a change in worker conditions of work, resolves them to accept the conditions of work. Yet an account by Amake Jairos's replies when asked to speak freely about her working conditions accurately captures how women's attitudes towards work in the cutflower industry work may in fact be made more resolute in the face of adversity.

> …the pay is little. We generally work well, but we do not have gloves to protect ourselves as we handle flowers. We get pricked all the time. But gloves slow us down; we are used not wearing gloves because we have to do things quickly so that we can meet our targets. We have resolved to just keep our hands like this, without protective gloves and continue working (Amake Jairos)

Amake Jairos had decided to focus more on her work milestones, rather than unduly paying attention to the difficulties she faced as she performed her duties. The very accessory that would enable her to perform her tasks without hurting herself is now been seen as a hindrance to achieving the work set out before her. Accepting that absence of gloves was in fact a good thing, it meant choosing greater speed of doing work. Her agency here manifests as strategic/survivalist both in what she outputs and, in her zeal and attitude towards accomplishing her tasks. This further demonstrates that not all

aspects of agency are positive, because women choosing to act in a certain way may in fact have negative consequences in the long run especially if actions of women fulfil short term goals but are detrimental in the long term (the physical scaring that may happen as women meet targets may in fact affect their self-esteem in the long run due to damage to their hands).

Other women could not easily brush aside aspects of work that led them to harm. Health risks of working in the greenhouse and subsequent health problems generally associated with exposure to pesticide and other chemical sprays/applications are familiar (Illing, 1997; Okin, 1998; Lu 2005; Hale and Opondo, 2005). During the interviews, some women complained about developing respiratory problems since starting work in the greenhouse, and this illustrates the risks women face when they choose to work. For instance, Amake Fidess laments her situation as she mentions that "…the chemicals in the greenhouse cause me to have nasal and chest congestions; I even had to go and see a doctor for this." Unfortunately, the company takes no responsibility in such situations and hence does not assume any costs associated with such treatment and healthcare.

In their defence, the farms claim to follow international guidelines and standards; after the greenhouses have been sprayed, workers are only allowed re-entry presumably when the fumes have settled. This practice is known by workers as Sibo reports: "we are not given suitable clothing for this type of work; no gloves, no boots. Once the greenhouses have been sprayed, we are only allowed to re-enter when the spray has settled." But as Amake Nonde noted, in spite of being asked to leave the greenhouses during sprays, workers would still inhale the fumes when they returned: "we are instructed to go outside in the open when they start spraying the greenhouses, but we still get to smell the chemicals when we come back". An act to perform diligently the tasks required of them despite the known risks of doing certain kinds of work speaks volumes. It is this resolve and resilience in the face of adversity that says much about these women's agency.

The poor working conditions constituted part of the work experience, hence the continued supply of labour by the women must be seen as acts of both strategic and survivalist agency. The next section looks at the cost of mobility (from worker's residences to farm place of work for workers housed outside the farm) as a way to demonstrate further women's willingness of work and the agency that is manifested in the process.

6.2.5.1 The cost of mobility

All but one farm (farm 1) had its workforce residing off the premises. At farm 3 (being the furthest from workers' residences) transport was provided for workers at particular pick-up points; Farm 4 provides transport occasionally, but it is not very far from worker's residences); whilst farm 2 being the closest to workers' residences does not provide transport. For workers on farm 3, the movement and timing to get to work were reported to have been a major challenge for workers opting to keep up with that kind of work or finding alternative employment. One woman from farm 3 (though it was a typical complaint advanced by all the women living outside the farm-that they faced threat to their mobility to work by men) narrated how she was attacked several times on her way to work. However, when she reported to the farm manager, she was given the option to leave employment.

When farm management at this farm were asked to comment on the threat to mobility of their female workforce, they were of the view that they were not responsible for worker's safety outside the area of production. This is not surprising since, other managers or companies in similar production lines in other countries have denied responsibility for workers outside the farm premises (Barrientos 2008).

Kidder and Raworth (2004) advance that despite corporate rights becoming ever stronger, poor people's rights and protections at work are being weakened, and women are paying the social costs. Most farms therefore do not provide the insurance nor security for worker's movements. Although workers can re-group (very difficult due to the nature of the setup of residences) in certain communities, the threat to women's mobility may affect

women's agency in as far their earning capacity and their options to choose where to be employed (should an opportunity present itself that offers more lucrative incomes). Unfortunately, for women facing these challenges, it was reported in the FGD with women workers on Farm 4 that they had to bear the cost of gender-based violence (in instances where they were mistaken for sex workers in the early hours of the morning by male folk- though not a typical report). Despite the threat to their mobility, women narrated that they saw not having a job a luxury they could not afford (see World Bank 2013 on the challenges of unemployment in Zambia).

Kabeer (2004) underscores this point very well in her study on Bangladesh women workers based in the export sectors by adding that "clearly, these women would wish to better their working conditions; yet having no social safety net, and knowing that other jobs in the informal economy, their only alternative, offer far worse prospects, women cannot fight for better conditions". This adds light to the argument advanced by women in my study that despite the challenges and exploitation they encounter both in the workplace and on their way to it, they were resolute to remain in employment and earn an income. They were willing to forego some of the dangers of travel to ensure that their need for an income (safety net) was met.

While some situations were easier to navigate (experiences within the production sites), others opened up no other option except confrontation (women had to confront the threat of danger to mobilizing when traveling to work however minimal to continue earning). In navigating difficulties placed upon them by the nature of their work, women are seen to employ a range of strategies, but when confronting a situation is the only course of action (having of course decided to work), the strategy is to see the same situation in a different light, thereby activating a sense of (renewed) commitment to work as a conduit for their supply of the labour service. Overall, women's position within company structures and work sites influenced how women perceived work experience, this being manifested in their testimonies regarding working conditions as well as their attitudes and actions in the face of these circumstances. The next section interrogates women's views about their

interactions within the workplace and the spaces for agency. This was a response to the question of how women interact and organise whether formally (through the union) and informally (through interactions with fellow colleagues such as Chilimba) discussed below.

6.3 How do feel about your job? Merits and Demerits of Interactions

Having addressed some major issues women face during their work endeavours, women still value the interactions with their co-workers, either formally as required by the interdependent nature of their work, or informally within the company premises, both as aspects of human nature as social beings. Through these interactions, women are then seen to form strategic alliances that help to ameliorate the consequences of abysmal conditions of work.

6.3.1 Worker interactions

The data suggests, women strategized on whether and how to communicate difficulties they encountered associated with working conditions, although organisational structures and procedures provided the first level sanctuary for women's complaints. But of course, whether a woman reported a complaint at all depended on the nature of the difficulty she ran into, and how she herself evaluated how likely the problem would be resolved within the company structures. In the end, however, if a decision to report were to be pursued, who a woman reported to depended on her position within the hierarchical structure of the company's chain of command.

Delving into issues related to complaints reporting procedure underscores the fact that complaints held by workers can either be work-related or personal. When complaints were work-related, they involved such things as conditions of service (hours of work, work attire, compensation of overtime work etc.), conflict and behaviour at work. Resolving these usually followed a company advisory chain of command, whereby the aggrieved individual would report to the immediate supervisor, and if that supervisor could not resolve the issue, it would then be passed on the supervisor's senior and so on.. If, however, it

was the last supervisor who was the problem, the matters would be passed on to the line manager (it is worth mentioning that the majority of supervisors and managers were men in all the farms visited and this could have affected the ability for women to report certain complaints).

Nonetheless, if complaints were personal, then the aggrieved workers themselves would determine, in their own right, who they thought would be the best person to deal with the matter. Sometimes, because workers could not trust anyone with their issues, they kept them to themselves. Appropriately identifying a course of action, whether to report or not, and to whom, all formed ways in which workers became aware of their work environments. This way, workers are seen as navigating a rather complex terrain, but doing so diligently.

At this juncture, it would be beneficial to explore conflicts as outcomes of worker interactions. Some workers had pointed out that they avoid conflict when they focus on work, in support of this, Kung (1994) shows that women value stability rather than disturbing work environment with difficult colleagues, whilst Amake Joze's accounts points to the importance of workers being level headed in the workplace by adding that centring her energies on work and pursuing work dutifully helped her circumvent potential conflict. In the same vein, some women workers (from two farms - not a typical occurrence) had expressed their preference for the Greenhouse over the Pack House as a way to avoid getting into confrontations since, naturally, more women were to be found in the latter production site.

> I would rather work in the Greenhouse than the Pack
> House because there is peace in the Greenhouse …
> the Pack House had more women and hence more
> opportunities for talking and consequently conflicts …
> I also avoid getting in involved in groups, and that way
> I avoid getting in other people's businesses (Amake
> John)

Amake John attributes her conflict-free experience as an outcome of two factors: first, she sees work site as a harbour of conflict, varying in degree depending upon the intensity of interaction. And second, it is her resolve to keep work her centre of attention that she sees as limiting the amount of unnecessary interaction. Women were quick to point out that conflict was more common among employees of the same sex, and that is why Amake John sees the Pack House as having a higher likelihood of conflict given that more women than men work there. Viewing her resolve to avoid conflict could be interpreted as strategic agency, since the woman employing it sees it as a viable strategy that keeps her focused on her work. For her, and many other women, being able to accomplish work-related tasks was more important than social aspects of work that are in fact interpreted as disruptive to work itself.

This contrasts, but does not necessarily dispute, Kung's (1981; 1994: 104-105) study of factory women in Taiwan who argues that as factory work became more routine, it also became increasingly uninteresting; work was no longer delightful, and women instead looked to its social side for "gratification … the opportunity to meet new people, to make friends and to enjoy the interaction such ties make possible". Kung (1981; 1994: 104) appears to overstate this sense of gratification from such social interactions, as she downplays, although acknowledging, that "getting along with people" was not an easy affair. Women in the present study, in Zambia's cut flower farms, quite understood the complexity of such interactions and the potentially disruptive momentum if driven by conflicts and misunderstanding. Women valued accomplishing work tasks uninterrupted, such that any factor that would obstruct this achievement would appear undesirable, even at the expense of foregoing formation of (new) bonds.

As will be discussed below, this is not entirely true, as women sometimes express ambivalence on these matters, choosing at times, to complain about the nature of the job as obstructive to their social endeavours. Indeed, women valued the social bonds, particularly when these provided them a platform to learn from each other on a range of issues such as social living, marriage and future prospects. Within the constraints of the nature of the job and company

structures, women are seen to act in ways that they feel would enhance their positions.

During the interviews, a number of causes of conflict were noted, and these ranged from competition and coordination failure to inevitable human misunderstandings. Be that as it may, it was the nature and severity of the conflict that determined the next course of action. As division of labour and specialisation of tasks characterised cut flower farm work in both the Greenhouse and Pack House, the nature of the job was one that was based on interdependence of activities, such that one's speed and quality of work had a bearing on the outcomes, and whether targets were met, for another. Amake Chungu's account testifies of this aspect as she explains how conflict might arise when tasks are interdependent:

> There may be some quarrels going on but they are usually easily resolved amongst colleagues. For example, say 'raking' depends on 'weeding', the person raking may be faster than the person weeding. This way, the person 'raking' may become frustrated with the one 'weeding', causing her to start shouting at his friend (Amake Chungu)

Amake Chungu pinpoints the dependent nature of one type of work on another. However, the discord that results is not simply because one task depends on another, rather, it is the interplay of this, and the speed by which the tasks are pursued by different individuals weighed against allocated targets. Frustration results when slow speed is seen as constraining effective delivery of work. Again, this is not only a matter of a misunderstanding, or failure to keep pace with others, it reflects how company targets can function as a third element in what appears to be a workers-only-interaction.

How women workers respond within these spaces of interaction, governed by company productivity practices, adds voice to their agency. When women choose to resolve confrontations, it is because they recognise they are

capable of doing so, and this helps perceive them as problem-solvers, quite apart from being simply seen as problem-causers. Women may adopt strategic agency in their formation of strategic alliances as they co-opt each other in their tasks and simultaneously meet individual and group targets.

Views about work interdependence resulting in conflict are not uncommon, and certainly not unique to work site. While Amake Chungu's remarks above refer to interdependence in the Greenhouse, the Pack House also hosts interdependent tasks, and by implication, confrontations that may arise during the course of such work. For Amake Clement, it was not simply that tasks were interdependent that tensions arose, it was also the workers' attitudes and the manner in which such tensions were reinforced. Her observations are captured below:

> …we have targets that vary depending on whether it is an export day. For example, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays are export days. Each Grader has two Bunchers to work with, while each Buncher's target is six thousand stems. Quick Bunchers finish their work earlier than the slower Bunchers, but everyone leaves work late, together with the slow Buncher." (Amake Clement)

Amake Clement's remarks are best explained by reference to the diagram below (Figure 10), illustrating how conflict within the work space may originate from work interdependence:

Figure 10 An example of interdependence of work
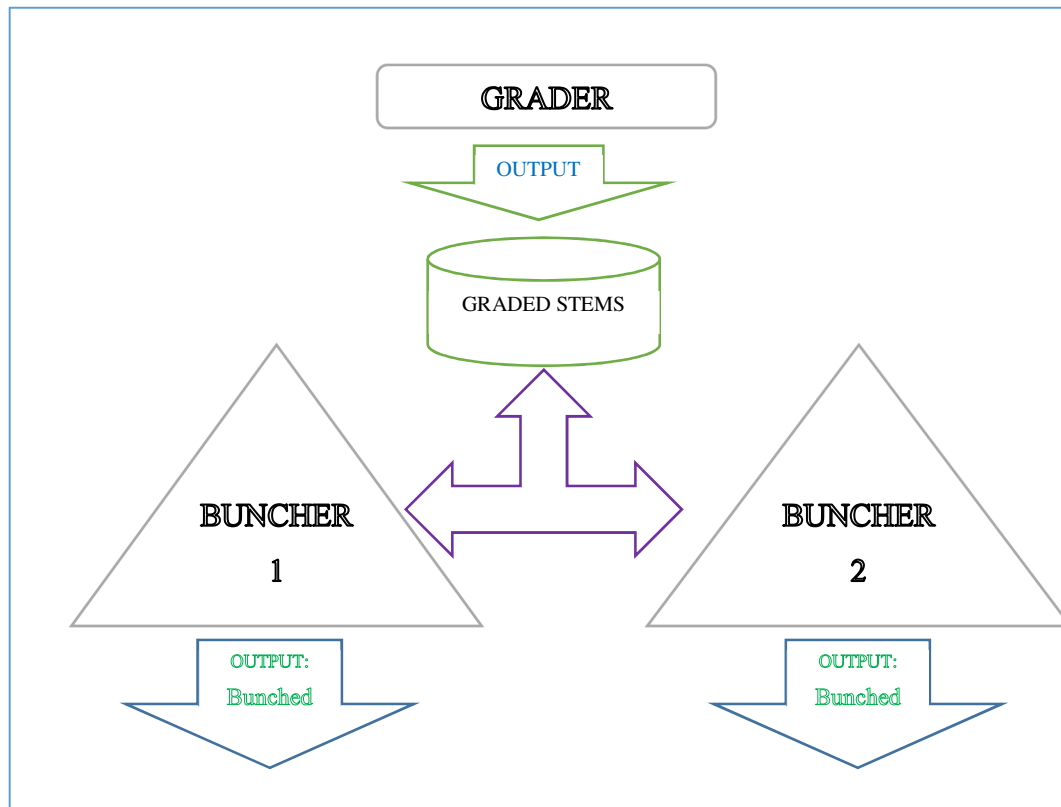
As shown in Figure 6.1 above, the Grader works with two Bunchers. The Bunchers are each given targets, say six thousand stems, so that by association, the Grader's target is the sum total of the Bunchers, twelve thousand in this case. On the one hand, the Grader's inputs are cut flowers from the Greenhouse which pass through the cold room, either for storage for later use or for immediate use, while the output consists of all graded stems placed in properly arranged buckets. On the other hand, the Bunchers simply walk to the buckets space and carry away buckets containing graded stems, and these are their inputs.

The Buncher's speed of outputting bunched stems determines the number of times she walks to the buckets space. Two outcomes are possible: first, Buncher 1 is quicker than Buncher 2, so that Buncher 1 meets her targets earlier than Buncher 2. If the speed of the Grader is faster than Buncher 2's outputting speed, then Buncher 2 drags the other two. Both the Grader and Buncher 1 may complain of Buncher 2's speed. And second, irrespective of which Buncher is quicker, if generally the speed of Grading is slower than the

speed of aggregate Bunching, then both Bunchers would have some idle time, and most likely leave work late, and this would consequently cause them to complain of the Grader's speed.

In either situation, work interdependence cultivates fertile ground for tensions to arise, but how women responded in these circumstances escalated or shrunk such tensions. If workers became more self-interested, seeking to self-preserve, then dishonourable traditions such as resorting to reporting to supervisors would plague these interactions. However, workers would sometimes choose to help slower colleagues, for the good of the entire team (This latter aspect is an action of strategic agency).

Although some women eschew interactions at the work floor or outside, those who are more receptive and contributors to these social dynamics are still seen as having something to add when questioned about the sources of conflict. For example, Amai Sakala contends that "women talk a lot; a lot of gossiping among women workers. In fact, some are quick to report to the boss when you make a mistake so that they can be liked." While she said no such thing as avoiding the work floor in order to circumvent problems associated with interaction within it, it appears there exists a level of distrust. Indeed, she was quick to point out that she

> …used to complain to elderly workers here whenever
> she had problems, be it work-related or personal, but
> my colleagues told me that after talking to the elderly
> women, they would talk behind my back. I have since
> stopped going there with my problems; I do not even
> trust these same colleagues anymore (Amai Sakala)

Amai Sakala's accusation of widespread gossip as a source of conflict and disputes is formed around her own interactions and experiences, including what she observed. She sees conflict as a consequence of careless talk, but ultimately, it also changes her perception about who she can trust in the process. From her interpretation of her experiences, she concludes that being

secretive would be a better prospect, yet doing so denies her of the enjoyment she derived during such interactions. But it is a conscious decision, a careful assessment of her surroundings. In actual fact, as some women seek to gain favour from the supervisors, she sees them as employing underhand tactics. Hence, the distrust of her colleagues is formed from how she interprets the complexities that result from interactions. Work interactions are therefore seen to reproduce powerful commentaries and projections about wider social interactions.

Through the experience of work, women's attitudes towards one another change, and this creates a different atmosphere for a new wave of employees who come with their own set of preconceptions and attitudes, which, as well, get altered or strengthened in complex ways. For Kung (1994: 90) this has a lot to do with the fact that "the orientations women bring with them are reinforced or transformed into new attitudes, and" that "these new attitudes constitute the social context in which women work".

What is observed thus far is that concentrations of women within work create space for interaction and potentially catalyse formation of new bonds of friendship, yet some women chose to avoid such concentrations of colleagues in order to avoid confrontations. It must be clarified that such concentrations are not equivalent to informal groups. By concentrations of women, it is meant a number of women sitting closer together conversing during official breaks. Informal groups are routine and have an agenda, although not recognised within company structures (more on this below). However, there is another group of women, who both recognise and acknowledge conflicts and benefits from such concentrations and subsequent interactions, deciding instead to 'participate' in 'gatherings'. Nevertheless, recognition and acknowledgement of these dynamics does not insulate these women's orientations and attitudes from being seized.

Amake Mable, a supervisor, perceives women's failure to accomplish work-related tasks as sabotaging, deliberately erring in their duties so that they could pass on the blame to her, the supervisor.

The biggest problem for me is that women do not like to listen to instructions from other women; they make mistakes or simply do the wrong things so that I can be blamed as a supervisor. I find that working with women is harder than working with men; women also tend to naturally be jealous of each other, especially of another woman is progressing (Amake Mable)

A sense of frustration gripped Amake Mable as she explained how her manager yelled at her in front of her subordinates for the mistakes they made. This form of treatments have also been reported in factory work were women constitute the major workforce Wolf (1992:127) gives an example of this, "worker diaries report frequent incidents of managers' subjecting workers to angry, impolite treatment, sometimes causing female workers to cry." This can have devastating effects on women's self confidence in both their work and general self-esteem. Amake Mable explained how they fail, most times, to do the right thing even when shown how multiple times. Also, she sees women's concentrations as detrimental to productivity since attributes such as petty jealousy emerge in ways that distracts the women from focusing on work.

Women then begin to compete to be noticed, rather than work together as a team to co-accomplish daily targets. From such dynamics, conflicts spring up, and these can disrupt the smooth flow of work. As women seek to protect their self-interest, competitive tendencies arise, and these cause women to focus on individual rather than group productivity. Amake Mable's sentiments on obstacles to grouping and organising (which was a view shared by women in FG from two other farms especially for women based in the Packhouse) captures this trait when she mentions that "the difficult thing about coming together is that everyone is looking out for themselves; people are quick to report others and there is too much competition. That is why we cannot support each other." The growing distrust and increasingly complex dynamics within these social spaces confront and challenge women's views about relations at work, but women are seen to discern, filter and navigate these complex social webs as they pursue survival or development.

Yet outperforming others does not attract monetary rewards (this was reported on all farms) as Amake Mulenga retorts: "I have become good at bunching; I usually surpass my targets. However, when we meet our targets, the money is still very little and still does not reflect the hours and effort put in. The biggest challenge is that there is no difference in money terms between those who meet their targets and those who do not. The union tried to encourage management to pay us for going beyond our targets but that has not been forthcoming. Women are discontented with the union."

While workers' productivity improved over time due, in part, to increased specialisation of work, the only discernible reward women identified had to do with how they felt accomplished they could meet or outpace the set targets. It is surprising that workers, for whatever reason, engaged in competitive tendencies knowing that no monetary rewards would accrue to them (perhaps the need to impress upon the employer may be viewed as strategic for consideration of future employment once women's contracts come to an end). But this highlights the complexities of human interactions.

The next section expands the notion of interaction to formal and informal organising to advance the spaces for agency within such interactions.

6.3.2 Organising; formal and informal

Women also valued associating with others in ways that helped them to overcome some of the constraints the nature of their work placed upon them. Such associations are viewed through the prisms of formal and informal organising. Women drew upon these associations to alter and/or enhance their agency, within the work space and beyond.

Formal organising pertains to worker groups that are recognised within company structures; these include trade unions and worker committees such as gender committees. Informal organising involves such things as a group of

workers coming together with a specific agenda, say to engage in Chilimba[12] (a traditional revolving fund although this is not recognised within the company structures.

6.3.2.1 Formal organising

The following accounts were derived from women workers' accounts and management about whether workers were aware of their union membership and whether management had explained to workers that union membership would entail a deductible membership fee. The majority of workers interviewed on the farms visited that had not directly interacted with the trade union representatives were oblivious to their membership to the institution. However, Elson and Pearson (1981) add that we should not ask why women do not join the union or why women have not turned to unions in large numbers, rather, we need to question the shortcomings of official unions regarding what makes them less viable and a useful option for women.

The workers under inquiry generally were of the view that only the worker representatives were unionised since these were seen as being in direct contact with the union leadership/executive. This could perhaps be explained by poor orientation once the workers had joined the farm. All unionised workers pointed out that their pay slips did show a portion of their income as being taken out as a contribution to the union, but they wondered why given that they had not come to the knowledge of their membership. It was later explained (by workers corroborated by management interviews) that the deductions on the pay slip for the union meant that they were members of the union.

The sheer disinterest in the union and its activities is best explained by what women workers generally thought about the union; views were largely biased against what union membership meant for them, with others openly scathing

---

[12] Chilimba may formally be identified as a Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs) (Musona and Coetzee, 2001; O'Reilly, 1996).

the union as impotent, and instead arguing they would have better use for the money they contribute.

There were some optimistic voices, arguing that:

> …because I have seen that the union helps us by speaking to our bosses whenever there are delays in payments." (Amake Lovemore)

Clearly, as Amake Lovemore (from farm 2 where some workers presented some positive attributes of the union) points out, there is some benefit to having a union, just the thought that when workers felt unfairly treated, the union would stand up for them, would be a good enough reason to be a member of the union. Although those who were more positive about the union had not seen any measurable changes from the union's actions; when asked to comment whether her experience of work had changed since joining the union, the reply was in the negative.

Some were not entirely negative, yet they were aware of the union's limitations in meeting their demands, both by design and by operation. At farm 1, where the union had made several visits, one worker had this to say (a typical response even by those that felt the union had several limitations)

> …as we cannot approach the Director directly as workers to discuss our issues, the union can speak on our behalf. Sometimes when someone gets dismissed, the union cannot do much to help solve the case. The union is not very active. Where is the union? We still do not have adequate protective clothes." (Amake Nelly)

Amake Nelly touches upon a number of important aspects concerning the failure of the union to influence favourable outcomes for workers. Although workers may have faith in the union's potential to challenge management

when workers were genuinely aggrieved, they were also not blinded by the union's actions; they were aware of the power balance tilting in favour of the company management, choosing instead to minimise their struggles for fear of dismissal. The union itself was not seen as an assertive and strong pressure group, in terms of capacity and frequency of times it engaged management. There were many instances of workers expressing the belief that the company was much more powerful than the union and that actively organizing may lead to termination of their employment contract.

In another setting (garment industry), Wolf (1992:128) shows the cost of representatives of the union actively organizing and bearing the cost, "in the garment factory, the scene of some important labour disputes, the workers representative was fired because of her labour organizing, leaving the position unfilled". As attested below the downright negative voices were more audible, they did not hold back their resentment of the trade unions: These sentiments were mostly derived from women/men from farm 3 where the union had not visited its membership for almost two years. One women aptly stated that:

> Since we joined the union, we do not see any benefits
> of being in the union. We deal with our own issues
> (Amake Lonti)

> The union is useless; it has no purpose (Amake John)

As far as union representation for farm 3, one smaller union had been invited by management to take over worker representation from a more powerful and politically forceful union. This new small union had not been to visit its members at this farm from the time it took over almost two years before the interview. The workers were disappointed in this union, and had complained of being abandoned. The workers felt robbed by the union, remembering the day the union solicited for members two years back, and the promises they made. In fact, one supervisor claimed that this new union has been captured by the interests of management. Interviewing the union officials revealed very disturbing information, supporting the view that the union had not been

genuine in their endeavour to fight for workers and restore their plight. Union membership had been dwindling, and those whose pay slips showed deductions pointed out their desire to leave the union in the future. In general, however, workers had increasingly grown to trust in their own resolve, rather than place their hopes on what they perceived as an external impotent institution.

This shows that, although the union can be a potentially powerful tool for change, it may actually be a tool that challenges the confidence of workers in its approach to management. As one worker stated at farm 2 that "they come here all dressed up in their suits and they sit in the manager's office smiling, they don't care about what is really happening to us, besides, they have no power to protect us" (Amake Donna).

Additional concerns levelled against the union by workers are evident in workers' testimonies regarding what they (workers) thought about their membership. Although virtually all of the workers' pay slips at farm 2 has an amount paid to the union, few of them were aware they were in fact members of the union (this was a typical find in all the farms). Farm management could be blamed for failing to provide the necessary information regarding the employees' rights on organization. But this scenario speaks of unions' failure to engage more purposefully with their own members. For one observer (ZCTU interview, 2015), such information asymmetry uncovers the nature of the relationship between the unions and their members: on the one hand, unions' primary interests are contributions from the members, while on the other hand, the members are unaware of their membership. This calls into question the arrangements made between the unions and the members insofar as representation and organization is concerned, whether the current union model fails by its own design or by factors outside of its influence.

Two immediate problems are observable based on the fieldwork: first, members aware of their union membership were sceptical about the unions' influence. Second, members unaware of the own membership to the union, did not care as they had concluded that nothing could be done through the

unions to improve their circumstances at work. Whether unionized or not, workers faced the same poor working conditions, with irregular pay at times. As one ordinary union member remarked, echoing the sentiments of many other workers, the benefits of the union are limited to those in direct contact with the union, but these have little to do with the improving the conditions of work:

> "I have not had a problem that requires NUPAAW's intervention. Besides, NUPAAW only benefits those that are chosen to represent at branch level. The rest of the members do not benefit from the workshops that NUPAAW usually holds. Only the person who represents the workers in the pack shed directly benefits being a member because she is invited for NUPAAW's workshops. therefore, there are no benefits in belonging to the union.' (Amake Faith)

What this shows that, training done by union representatives is not cascaded to the rest of the membership. This is partly the union's lack of foresight as much as the management's expectation of time use during working hours. For new members joining the farm, if an option to join the union was laid out during the early days of work, many workers reported they would rather be non-unionized. About 70% of the workers interviewed claimed that, an 'opt out' strategy would be more desirable than remaining unionized. In fact, although union fees were set at a rate of 2 percent of the salary, most workers felt they would maximize the benefits of being employed if union fees were not deducted. Put differently, they (workers) viewed being non-unionized as a more desirable option.

What I observed from the accounts of women workers about union membership is that it was more beneficial or strategic for workers at these particular farms to commit their energy and resources towards individual group interactions that served the strategic needs of these workers in as far as planning for future income. The various conversations with the workers at the different farms also pointed to the fact that union involvement for the majority of workers was directed towards dealing with their day to day practical needs

affecting their conditions of service. With regards to changes that would benefit workers in their lives, it did not provide any material benefits other than the notion of protection against early dismissal (membership of the union or the presence of union representatives did not prevent dismissal in their opinion).

6.3.2.2 Committees as other forms of organising

In investigating different forms of organizing outside the union, I established that union membership competes with other options for organizing within the farm. Farms, in meeting the codes of conduct they subscribe to (see chapter 4), are required to permit workers to form farm-based platforms for organizing. Hence, for farm 3 for example, two platforms were created: the workers' forum and the gender committee. These forms of organizing do not require any monetary subscriptions, and from the worker's vantage point, they serve the same, if not better, functions than the unions. Workers feel better represented on these platforms because they feel they are part of the inquiry and feedback process. Women were particularly pleased to have a platform discussing exclusively women's issues. But the extent to which these platforms have addressed the issues discussed within them did not concern workers as much as how they felt they were part of the process airing their affairs.

Accordingly, the gender committee (on farm 3) emerged as an off-shoot of the workers' forum based on the recommendation of a visiting auditor (from a standards body) that may have had similar experiences of the benefits of gender committees from established cutflower exporters like Kenya. This setup being similar to the gender committees set up un Kenya " as part of the requirements of the KFC standard" (Said-Allsopp and Tallontire 2014:3) proved instrumental in tackling gender-specific matters that had previously been ignored or relegated. Some of the more positive outcomes of the gender committee included informing women of the importance and benefits of breastfeeding.

Additionally, a crèche was set up to help women workers with small children, counselling services were provided to respond to marital disputes, issues of sexual harassment were placed on the agenda to protect, anonymize and represent women workers. A resounding wave of approval among the women workers at this farm (3) was reassuring in the sense that they felt they were addressed as humans and not simply as tools. In spite of these successes, I observed that such on-farm based organizing were competing with rather than complementing trade union representation.

On the other farm visited (farm 2), other than the union, some of the workers were involved in a women's committee. This committee was made up of workers from both the vegetable and rose section of the farm. However, most of the women interviewed at this farm did not belong to this committee and were unaware of its existence. I also found out that the women interviewed from this women's committee reported that the majority membership came from the vegetable section of the farm (where workers reported to have more flexible work schedules than those based in the rose section). They argued that the rose section had a busy schedule which discouraged women from joining the group.

Although the women's committee had the potential to discuss issues (family planning, issues surrounding gender-based violence and taking part in various marches organized around women's rights) that most women at the farm would benefit from, women in the rose section were pre-occupied with meeting targets and stated that even if they were given an opportunity to join, they would still opt not to. What I observe from these narratives is that, women felt such groups distract from their concentration to focus on work and therefore forego such interactions.

To underscore the role of buyer demands on farm practices especially towards organising for workers (see (Hughes 2001, Barrientos 2008, Hughes, McEwan et al. 2014). The workers at farm 1 had no other organisation like the ones seen on farms that were exporting to European markets. At this particular farm, all its exports went to South Africa and Congo DRC where standards are

not as strict as those required by the European retailers. Other than within the region, this particular farm sold part of the roses in the local supermarkets in Zambia (see chapter 4). Therefore, my observations are that the lack of interconnectedness to European standards of hired labour has not facilitated the promotion of such committees on farm 1. Further, this farms' interactions with it's the regional buyers has not pre-conditioned the purchasing of cutflowers on such demands as workers forming committees. This underscores the role that buyer demands can play regarding worker welfare on the farm sites.

It is worth mentioning that the experience of organizing on farm 3 for example — in relation to formation of workers' platforms as an attribute of buyer pressure — was specific to this farm. More specifically, this is a requirement for certification of large plantations under the Fair trade international hired labour model (Said-Allsopp and Tallontire 2014). This shows that buyers' and suppliers' complex exchange relationship set within the broader context of the GPN can influence aspects of organizing. This is strengthened by Hughes (2001:397) who argues that the "production of cut flowers for export is being *re*-regulated through notions and practices of business responsibility". Management at another farm (farm 4) seeking to obtain fair trade certification asked its workers to form a Fairtrade committee in order to gain Fairtrade certification (as a requirement to gain certification in the Fairtrade hired labour model). However, the workers (at this farm) at the time of the interview did not know the exact reasons why they needed to form such a committee, while others were unaware of its existence on the farm.

For some women, other forms of informal organizing appeared to be more attractive because the returns to such organizing were deemed financially lucrative. An example of such initiatives involves the informal rotating group locally known as 'Chilimba' in the Zambian context discussed below.

6.3.2.3. *Chilimba*: organising for purpose

Within broader constraints of the cutflower industry, women workers increasingly rely on traditional forms of organising such as Chilimba. Chilimba is a local Zambian name for a credit revolving group in which groups of workers contribute a portion of their incomes to a 'basket' which one worker appropriates at a time, until all members of the group have all been covered before it starts again. It is an informal type of saving for the people who wish to invest their money informally. The rules of each chilimba are set by the group members themselves and the formation of such groups is usually based on familiarity of the group members with each other and trust that each member will put in their share each month.

Similar credit rotating group arrangements though set up with different goals were advanced by Silvey and Elmhirst (2003) known as the 'arisan' imitating a credit rotating group set up to facilitate the remittances of daughter's earnings from the city to their families in the village in Indonesia. Unlike the women in my study, this was not derived from women's' own agency but was a strategy for the head of village to ensure that working daughters looked after their families. For the women in that study, the need to remit to their families lost them some control of financial independence. The women under inquiry in my study willingly engaged in Chilimba because they had set out their own goals and aspirations of what they would achieve with the money. This demonstrates that the women in my study actively engaged in Chilimba as a strategy to meet their needs rather something forced on them by circumstances.

The reason for doing chilimba are different, for example, the women on the different farms interviewed did Chilimba as a way to help them purchase bigger items that they would not otherwise purchase with their monthly wages. Women were able to use Chilimba (thus constitutes as both a resource agency and a strategic agency) to buy larger household items, start up small businesses, meet their daily needs, and give it to their husbands as a way to show appreciation for husband's permission to work and in most instances

paying for school going children especially at higher levels of education like college.

As aforementioned, women complained of sub-survival wages, but the women were aware of Chilimba as an informal traditional form of mobilising funds to help relieve them of the financial pressure. For O'Reilly (1996: 166), "[t]he mere existence and persistence of so many *chilimba* groups in the harsh economic conditions of present-day Zambia demonstrate the strength of this institution and its adaptability to the needs of its members. Chilimba shows that there is a capacity and desire to save, even among very poor people, and that financial commitments are taken seriously when entered into with full understanding of the 'contract' (and the social consequences of default)." However, viewing Chilimba as an institution that has rules minimises women's exercise of agency. Chilimba by definition is simply a grouping of women with a common purpose to mobilise funds; it is merely a means through which women workers pursue their ends. Therefore, its strength and persistence depends on the women's commitment to their goals. In terms of agency, this can be interpreted as women identifying a common purpose and organising around it.

Chilimba itself thrives on trust of its members and the commitment they have for the broader goals that drove them to seeing Chilimba as the best way to pursue them. Chilimba also flourishes when salary payments are consistent; hence, company practices, in particular, payment frequency determine whether workers can predict when the salary will come and make more realistic plans in the process. During the interviews, farms that tended to be consistent in their salary payments also had the highest number of Chilimba arrangements. Conversely, workers, whose salaries were not paid on time, had severe difficulty engaging in financial planning and programming, so that Chilimba was a distant dream.

> Amai Mwale from farm 2 remarks: "I am involved in a
> Chilimba arrangement with three friends that I trust. We get

money on time because of the level of trust we have for each other".

Amai Sakala from farm 3: "I am doing Chilimba because I really wanted to raise money for college for my son. That is why I am enduring doing this work so that I can have some money to put aside."

Amai Mwanza from farm 1: "…we do Chilimba but some of the problems we face is when some people fail to meet their obligations to Chilimba."

Chilimba cannot therefore be viewed as an institution that women can join or leave; it must be seen as reflecting women's interactions, a strategic alliance to the end of women's goals. Women can use chilimba to meet future aspirations for starting a business venture or take children to college. Chilimba also had the potential to reduce conflict in the home as an income buffer. At the workplace, engaging in chilimba helps women to interact and share and therefore view their work more positively. It is also one platform that women use to share their issues both in the workplace and at home. This is because women only choose to do chilimba with a certain group of women they trust. Women do not usually have time to meet and share various issues that affect them at home and at work because of the nature of their tasks and the time allocation whilst at work which is meant to prevent any kind of interacting, thus, through Chilimba, women use this platform for learning from each other whilst at the same time meeting their end goals.

6.4 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, conditions of work on the cutflower farms like in most Global South Countries which are integrated in global trade are unanimously reported as poor whilst a large number of people are faced with unemployment (World Bank 2013). As Kabeer (2004) adds, "exploitative as these jobs appear to Western reformers, for many women workers in the South they represent

genuine opportunities". Thus, instead of just looking at poor conditions of work and their implication on women workers, I argue that there is need to carefully understand how women are repositioning themselves to take advantage of the opportunity of employment. Understanding such positions within these broader interactions and constraints, helps to shed more light on what resources and strategies women rely on as they see survival and progress as the only option.

Hence, women's agency is reflected in the survival strategies they employed. Drawing on institutional structures, their own interactions with their colleagues, women expressed their agency in ingenious ways. First, discerning their environment, and second, positioning themselves within it. Ultimately, women had resolved to continue working, so the onus was on them to form strategic alliances with colleagues, or forego interactions when they were disruptive, but doing so allowed them to navigate the complex maze of social interaction whilst demonstrating both the positive and the less positive aspects of agency. The actions of women therefore should not only be viewed as conformity due to survival in the workplace, but should be viewed as strategic actions within broader social and institutional setups that have potential to open up other spaces of agency (that constitute women's self-awareness of their productive capacities). Women in this sense, must be viewed as active rather than passive agents consciously pursuing goals they have reason to value.

Having explored women's experiences of work on the cutflower farms and the agency they draw on, the next chapter will examine the effect of working on household relations through women's marital status. Such an examination will highlight the forms and spaces for agency.

257

Chapter 7.0. Beyond the workspace: Work and household dynamics

Introduction

Chapter six was premised on the analysis of women's working experiences on the cutflower farms. An assessment of the work floor dynamics that women workers encountered were explored and the strategies and resources drawn upon were revealed. Chapter 7 builds and extends on women's work experiences in the farms to their lives outside the workplace into the private spaces of the household. Chapter 7 thus intends to explore the various effects work has on women's private lives particularly with regards to the resulting household relations as well as the changes the women themselves undergo in the process.

The experiences within the household are limited to women's testimonies, I did not triangulate their testimonies with views of their household members. However, this was part of the research design to focus on women as workers (and not necessarily their home roles) and therefore most of my field work took place in the workplace with the exception of off-farm interviews (see chapter 3 on research design). Nevertheless, the findings in this chapter are focused on women's narrations of their experience of work and effect of such experiences on their home life.

The analysis of this chapter is based on the focus group discussions and one-one interviews with the women workers on the different cutflower farms visited. The general inquiry revolved around asking women to comment on how working has/had affected their marital status, household relations, child bearing/rearing, community perceptions/interactions and their general well-being relating to their aspirations and future goals. This was aimed at exploring the different forms and spaces of agency that were manifested in the process of women navigating between the workplace and the home space. As it has been documented in chapter 5, not all aspects of agency are positive, however, different strategies and use of resources may potentially affect long

term positive effects of agency in different cycles of women's life (see section on women choosing not to interact with other women during break times).

Hence, in this chapter, I explore agency more broadly, through women's own narratives about the resources and strategies and their effect outside the workplace. This form of analysis, I advance, can bring to light and therefore extend the framework of agency to include not only the positive effects of agency often discussed in the feminist agency literature but the less positive and less conscious forms of strategies that may negate women's ability to improve their status.

A number of studies have long examined and established how women in developing countries balance working life with home responsibilities (Pearson 1998, Kabeer 2000, Kabeer 2014, Pearson 2014). Other studies have challenged conventional narratives on the basis that they worked with the assumption of the universality of fixed traditional norms (Sen, 1985; 1990; Stichter and Parpart, 1990). These studies show that conventional narratives held the view that in general, households were the building blocks of gender stereotypes, holding the view that women were subordinate to their spouses/partners, and therefore had little to contribute to the family, whether in monetary or decision terms.

From this vantage point, women are seen to be mute on family decisions and unduly overburdened – outside of the fixed paid work schedule, women exist as homemakers, tending to the needs of their partners and their children before their own. The problem with this conventional narrative, I argue, is that it promotes the idea that the male as the head of the household is the final judge in all family matters, in a position to unilaterally command and sail the family ship, while the woman, accepting of her subordinate position within the home, simply retreats to a position of obedience. At best, the woman's voice is received, reshaped before being integrated within the general direction of the family, while at worst, she is silenced or simply ignored. In this vein, she has little to say about several family decisions including what kinds of expenditures the family incurs, and accepts the status quo as such. And

because she accepts the situation as such, the home, from an outsider's perspective, appears to be a harmonious unit with a single decision-maker[13]. But this cannot be furthest from reality: the home is a domain of conflict, and subsequently compromise, negotiations and bargain (Sen 1990) .

Challenging this one-dimensional view of male-female power, Evans (2014) in a study on women in the mining district of Zambia based in the informal sector argues that women were seen as actively engaged in economic activity and seeking to better their lives through decisive expressions. In this chapter, I demonstrate how women sought paid work outside the home, contributed to the family purse, and negotiated and bought things they wanted. For instance, Bhatty (1980: 41) showed that by working for a salary, women can exert their influence within rigid cultural structures embedding patriarchy. Thus, I perceive that women's improved status in the family may be seen in terms of observing and experiencing being treated better by their families, in addition to their actual contribution to the family treasury and, their ability to influence how such resources are distributed and allocated. That women were aware of the contributions they made at home and at work was taken as evidence of their awareness of their own importance and role to the well-being of themselves, their families, and wider society.

Indeed, such critical analysis calling out the faults of universals and generalisation in women's experiences have gone a long way in uncovering the dynamics within patriarchal societies and what changes working women experience. But such investigations privilege outcomes over processes. In fact, I argue that such outcomes are not always observed or reported. Consequently, reporting that women influence family expenditure decisions and experience better treatment simply because they now earn an income underplays the discontent that comes when working women have to juggle work and household responsibilities while traversing the sociocultural dynamics that disadvantage them.

---

[13] Earlier economics models of the household viewed a household as a unit of analysis, devoid of conflict.

Women utilise different strategies to pursue such outcomes, and success depends upon a host of factors including the efficacy of their strategies and unique circumstances/setup of their homes. Women, through their employment of agency, confront obstacles, including the gendered division of labour, and consequently the inequality foisted upon them. By drawing upon an array of strategies and resources, Evans (2014, 2015) shows how women can amplify their voices and influence important household decisions such as child bearing and rearing, how to earn and spend an income. As Kabeer (2000) and Wolf (1992) show, women's contribution to the household income purse potentially opens up space for women to be integrated in other relevant decisions like expenditure management/control and childbearing in the home.

This chapter assesses the home as an arena that allows women to exercise agency. Quite apart from, for instance, viewing time allotment as determined by external factors a woman has no control over, I have demonstrated that women employ various strategies so that their roles are seen as active rather than passive both at the workplace (as shown in chapter 6) and the home. Gender structures and cultural ideologies I argue, are not taken as dogmatic pillars that support and explain social interaction everywhere and always. Rather, "personal relationships can be manipulated and negotiated to produce change even within the predominant mode of production and under the prevailing system of patriarchy" (Obbo, 1990; 217).

As more women leave the home space for the more productive paid space, gender structures and stereotypes are refined and reframed as shown in chapter 5 in women's motivation to work. Hence, this chapter brings context to women's personal relationships, it interrogates the intervening factors responsible for the outcomes observed, pinpointing the strategies employed by women.

This chapter explores the dynamics of the household once a woman is working; I advance the narratives surrounding working women forwarded by feminist scholars such as (Wolf 1992, Kabeer 2000, Pearson 2007, Kabeer 2014, Barrientos and Bobie 2016) by demonstrating how women relate to their

spouses in terms of decision making and family priorities, including issues such as child bearing and rearing, household-level economics related to monetary resource management (what women spend their income on, and how this is decided), and the use of their time, seen within what can be expressly regarded as a patriarchal system. Put simply, this chapter examines how paid work affects women within the home.

Exploring the deeper, and arguably more rewarding, questions of how women, through their exercise of agency, influence and navigate household-level power balances, I argue that one can begin to understand more fully these dynamics of social relations. If what goes on within the household, particularly of married women, emerges from conflict, negotiation and compromise, then what people outside of the home observe, such as working women, household expenditure allocation, use of time of household members, family size decisions and so forth, reflect the degree to which strategies of individual household members are integrated to reproduce such outcomes. Hence, understanding household outcomes (such as expenditure allocation, family size) requires delving into strategies women use, whether consciously or not, to confront, and participate in, household dynamics.

For Evans (2014; 2015), that (Zambian) women saw other women do what were traditionally male jobs, was sufficient for them to go out and confront the gender stereotypes. Hence, the fragility of gender stereotypes is explained by the aspect of 'exposure' and 'association' – women observing other women, in addition to sharing experiences and perceptions. By exposure and association, Evans (2014; 2015) refers to interactions taking place in the public rather than private spaces. Subsequently, women's actions represent a public challenge thrown at gendered relations. From this vantage point, the persistence of gender stereotypes within the home can be captured and explained by absence of exposure and sharing. Because home-based gender relations take place in private spaces, culturally and socially formed structures more generally remain intact (Evans, 2015: 19). Unfortunately, one observation that can be drawn from looking at women's entry to employment due to exposure is that if it were simply so, then more women in different

societies would take on a wide range of roles and responsibilities, however, the division of labour is still stubborn because it is enshrined in gender stereotypes and structures that disadvantage and block women. However, the intensity of these stereotypes vary by context.

At best, I argue that Evans' view is a partial explanation of both the fragility and weakening of the social structures women must traverse. At worst, it represents tension in its own construction. By accepting that households are the building blocks of gender stereotypes, it can be argued that exposure and association alone cannot explain the weakening of gender structures in public spaces. Before women can go out and 'do what men can do', they must first negotiate the power dynamics within their households (hence chapter 5). Stichter (1990: 60) also came to a similar observation, showing that "household-level decisions" have "the ability … to affect the female labour supply and thus wages." Partial explanation of working women as an attribute of exposure and association ignores the private space within the household as an arena of conflict and negotiation, not least as the building blocks of more complex societal relations and perceptions.

Accordingly, as the household undergoes different phases in its development cycle, rearranging its social, productive and reproductive activities is of necessity. Hence, the challenges the household is forced to confront, and the corresponding reorganisation of social and productive roles that result, depend upon the phase of the household development cycle. Therefore, the strategies members of the household use to influence household outcomes (as below; time use, expenditure etc.) must be placed within the context of the development phase of a given household. I begin by looking at how households view allocation of expenditure, here, I draw on literature on working women to foreground my discussion below about how working women make decisions about expenditure and reproduction.

7.1. Assets, Allocation of Expenditure from Work Income

During my interviews and focus groups, a number of women reported to be motivated to work by their pursuance of, and contribution to, household survival. However, without further inquiry, one would end here and assume that women subsequently have control over utilisation of their incomes. Once they have judged why they want to work – in essence, what they want from work – do women simply transition into pursuing those ends, supported by the resources transferred to them via their labour? This question assumes a household as an arena of harmony, devoid of conflict and change, particularly once a woman's motivation towards work has been established. In other words, can expenditure distribution and allocation be explained by the main thrusts of seeking work? This line of inquiry is explored further in this subsection of the chapter.

For Dwyer and Bruce (1988), in a study examining women and income in the third countries, add that women were motivated to pursue work to provide adequately for their children. Viewed this way, women's work is interpreted as fulfilling their culturally determined roles as carers and providers for the children. Yet, this explanation and interpretation cannot fully capture the essence of women's work when they are driven to the labour market by factors other than the need to care for their children.

Does household expenditure reflect gender-based responsibilities? For instance, (i) women, as homemakers, are seen to spend their income on household food/nutritional requirements (ii) women, as carers of children, are seen to expend on children's educational needs, children's clothing and so forth. Hence, one can deduce that this is simply "an extension of domestic work" (Obbo, 1990: 216; Bryson, 1980). Henceforth, I ask the question of whether gender ideologies promote (impact upon) household spending patterns and in what ways (strategies/resources) are women confronting these ideologies.

Thus, if household income allocation is an outcome of processes involving power dynamics and relations, one must first understand the factors that frame such relations. Based upon generality of cultural views, Obbo (1990: 216), for example, explains why women may be not be paid for the same tasks men receive as monetary compensation: since culturally/socially constructed roles see women as providers of subsistence, their "work is perceived as labour for subsistence." Hence, by demanding remuneration, women are seen to diverge from their social roles. When women seek and find paid work, Munachonga (1988) in her study in Zambia on how women make decisions within the household, explains how women's roles, underpinned by the dynamic of social relations, are subordinated within the precepts of cultural/traditional interpretations. She first advances the idea that the system of marriage defines power relations. For example, under a customary type of marriage, a husband's claims to a wife's earnings, including whether he should allow her to work in the first place, is explained by the idea that he made *lobola*[14] payments. In a way, *lobola* is seen as a right to a woman's productive and reproductive outcomes.

Although Munachonga (1988: 185) underscores the idea that "sociocultural factors undermine the wife's influence, such as the requirement that the wife defer to her husband in major family decisions, including those relating to the use of family economic resources", it says nothing about what women do within these structures, either to submit or confront the disadvantages bequeathed upon them. Women who are seen as diverging from culturally defined roles and responsibilities, through the exercise of agency, are doing so, as it is argued, in order to reconstruct what it means to be a woman, whether consciously or not. Being a woman is contextual[15], because it is the

---

[14] *Lobola*, loosely speaking, is a variant of dowry, a payment, in-kind or otherwise, a man makes in order to be permitted to marry a woman, but in most instances, may reflect an expression of appreciation extended to the woman's family by the man.

[15] A number of authors have warned about universals and generalisations (Munachonga, 1988; Fine, 1992; Keesing, 1981; Sen, 1990). In feminist discourse, regional aggregations are more acceptable than global ones. One can talk about African women, Western women, South-Asian women and so forth, but it would be an analytical disaster to bundle African and Western women, for instance, in one group in order to make inferences about women's experiences. This suggests that experiences of women are contextual, hence being a woman is itself contextual.

roles that are performed that define an individual as such: when these roles change, so too does the definition of being a woman. Drawing upon figurative poetic literature, I argue that one can perceive a difference between being a mum/mom and mother: with the latter reduced solely to a biological contribution, while the former seen as fulfilling a whole range of social (and sometimes biological) roles in the parenting process. Following through this line of thought, the strategies women use in fulfilling the social expectations of parenting define motherhood.

In this vein, the social expectations a female fulfils defines her womanhood, but these are dynamic, and can thus be reconstructed. It must however be emphasised that not all acts of agency are reconstructive; it is essentially the radical ones that are. As argued in chapter 6, some acts of agency are simply to survive within the power balance and not to redefine the power relations, hence the conceptual distinctions between survivalist agency, everyday agency and strategic agency

Hence, I add that a woman may think she contributes less to the family pool simply because she earns less and expends less than the husband, but she does all the house work (including childcare). The sanctioning and reward system that separates paid and unpaid work defines the cleavage between perceived and actual contributions (Sen 1990), and by doing so, it perpetuates the inequality prevalent within the home in particular, and society in general. As Pearson (2007) observes, productive activity worthy of compensation is limited to the sphere of paid work, it can be unclear to women (and men) in terms of who and what efforts are expended, and who gains from rewards from them.

Thus the next section attempts to uncover the intricacies of decision making regarding income allocation by marital relations. Like chapter 5, such distinctions in marital relations serves to illuminate the strategies that women draw upon in as far as expending their income and therefore reveals how women navigate, compromise and bargain to affect the decision making process within the home space. The line of questioning for this section was

revolving around issues of decision making about expenditure (who decides on what) and reproduction (childbearing and care) of women interviewed. The narratives drawn here are based on fieldwork on one-on-one interviews and focus groups discussions. This line of inquiry demonstrated how such decisions affect the spaces for agency. The next section begins by looking at divorced and widowed women in exploring expenditure patterns. This is to see how decisions about income are made by marital status.

7.2. Decisions about how women's income is spent, and how working affects household expenditure; what is income spent on?

A. Divorced and Widowed women

In general, the widowed and/or divorced women interviewed stated that there was no bargaining required, since there existed no conflict in decisions, regarding how income would be apportioned. Women had full control of the money they earned, as they decided what it would be spent on. More generally, however, the increased financial burden placed upon women due to absence of a male breadwinner was acknowledged.

Expounding this view was Amake Chansa, a widowed 35-year-old woman with 4 children, who regretted her personal circumstances, as she pointed out: "Before my husband died, he helped a lot: he paid for rent and food. Now I have to do all this by myself." Similarly, Amake Rudo, a divorced 30-year-old woman with 4 children, complained that:

> When I was married, things were easier because my husband used to pay for rent and buy some household items. I could use my money on the things I wanted because I did not have to worry about rent. But now, I have to do all the things by myself: paying for household rental, household groceries and food, and other household items. Life is so much tougher!"
> (Amake Rudo)

Amake Rudo also explained that she and her ex-husband never disclosed their salaries to each other. She never asked, and never felt the need to; it was assumed that the man would take care of the bigger things in the house, including children's school fees, but the arrangement they had meant that the husband would give these sums to her as and when required. Hence, as she explained further, her income would cover her personal needs, although she did not tell her husband of her exact earnings as this would cause him to cease giving her the sums necessary to cover the items assumed under his prerogative. She remarked that: "I never used to tell my husband how much I got because when you tell a man how much you get; he stops giving you money for the house."

Thus, I propose that failure or, more appropriately, refusal, to disclose earnings can be seen as a strategy women use as means to accomplish two things. First, it permits women's spouses to assume their roles as breadwinners. This way, it appears men feel important, and their supposed superiority is justified. Consequently, marital tensions, which may result if men felt threatened by women's earnings, are likely to be diminished. This view corroborates Safilios-Rothschild and Constantina (1990:222-223) who, relying on the evidence of low-income households in Greece, Honduras, and Kenya, found that: "the wife's earned income does not necessarily become valuable and powerful resource that wins her decision-making power and equality in the division of labour. It is only when the husbands feel quite secure in their superior male position because they successfully fulfil their breadwinning role that they are willing to allow women who work and earn a substantial income, more family power and equality in the family home".

Second, although dependent on the first, I argue that it allows women to see their incomes as their own, the fruits of their own hard work, a legitimate way in which they can see returns to their productive work, especially covering consumption and subsistence costs whenever resources from their spouses are insufficient to meet the needs of the household. Hence, women see paid work, and subsequently separate accounting, as a way in which they can access things they want, but would not ordinarily access with as much ease.

It should however be emphasised that these outcomes are dependent upon specific household arrangements and circumstances, and these outcomes must be interpreted with caution. During my fieldwork interviews, one married woman (though a typical response most women gave when probed about disclosing income) stated that when husbands were deviant, by disregarding what it meant for them to be breadwinners, as in the case of a drunkard husband who spends all his income on himself, women's separate accounting techniques were all the more justified. Thus, for most women (when faced with a drunkard husband/irresponsible husband), it appeared that the importance of separate accounting could no longer be explained as a way in which men's masculinity can be secured; rather, it potentially allows women to expand their domain of operations, assuming roles traditionally assigned to men. Supporting the above argument, another narration by Amake Sam, 29-year-old divorced woman with 2 children, keeping finances from the husband was important because it enabled her to decide unilaterally what to spend on, which included having to take on expenditures her husband failed to meet. She complained thus: "I never told my husband what I earned. He was a drunkard. Whatever he got, he used to drink it all and not even care for the children."

Kabeer (2000) adds, based on evidence provided by working women in garment factories in Bangladesh, that control over income is conditioned by women's expectation of men living up to their responsibility in the home. Thus, women can withhold information as a mechanism/ strategy to have control over their income.

But even when divorced or married women were under somebody else's roof, say their father's, they decided, with no requirement for negotiation, what to spend their incomes on. For some women, they stated that this meant doling-out a portion of their earnings on a fixed regular basis, once a month. As an example, Amake Chanda, a divorced 30-year-old woman with 2 children, while living with her father, explains that: "I spend the money on my children; I buy them clothes. Sometimes I buy household items like plates. But always give my father 300 Kwacha to help with groceries." Hence, I argue that in satisfying

these demands and securing her place in the household, she decided to help at home, which caused her to give more than a third of her income to her father.

This strategy served as a symbol of her importance to this household, demonstrating that while financially meeting her children's needs, she is capable of locating, and utilising, her capabilities. This explication also shows that patriarchal ideologies regarding women's incomes and expectations of them are less stringent in non-marital relations. Her father does not oppose her working, and neither does he impose himself on her decisions on how to spend her income. The next section explores income expenditure decisions by single women.

B. Single women

It was not uncommon for single women to give a portion of their earnings to the heads of houses they lived under. Amake Mulenga, a 27-year-old single woman with 2 children, living with her *mother*, also mentions that part of income was allocated to her *mother* for the purposes of augmenting household resources. She asserts that: "I get 650 Kwacha; I give my mother 350 Kwacha to buy whatever is needed in the house. I use the remainder to meet personal expenses." Being able to earn and spend, as she explained, serves some important purposes: it appeared that it allows her to see how her hard work can translate into real resources. Hence, paid work enables her to see value in her capabilities. Work was also important, as it accorded her an opportunity to escape neighbourhood boredom and gossip.

For single women who wished to advance academically, despite being looked after by their parents while working, an example is Sibo's view, a single woman 21-year-old who stated that earnings from farm work were the means through which she could pay for further education. Yet contributing to the family resources remained crucial. Whether or not under their control and management, women's contributions (especially those women who stated they lived with their parents) to family resources ranged from a third to just

over half of their incomes. This is supported by Kung (1994) that single factory women in Taiwan, who had to relinquish most of their income to their parents and often complained that they did not have enough of the income saved to undergo further training. The next section explores married women's expenditure decisions as narrated by the women workers.

C. Married women

The literature examining intra-household dynamics with respect to how working affects women's statuses within the home have focused upon marital relations, see (Wolf 1992, Kung 1994, Kabeer 2000, Kabeer 2014). Understandably, in patriarchal societies, it is more interesting to discern whether working does impact upon how married women function within the home.

In my study, I observed many variations in terms of how decisions about expenditure were made, and this reflected the heterogeneity of relationships for married women. There were some overlapping themes, particularly with respect to what women spent their money on: women typically met recurrent expenditure on food and groceries, and clothes for the children. For feminist literature, such expenditure reflected an extension of gender division of labour (Wolf 1992, Kabeer 2014). Women, whether exclusively domesticated or otherwise, typically tend to the households' and children's requirement. But it is unclear how to locate women's agency within this framework. If it is expected of a woman to assume responsibility over the running of the household that she traditionally identifies with, then it becomes difficult to see her actions as autonomous. But I add that, unveiling the reasons women assume such responsibilities provides insights into why women's actions can be seen as strategies of agency, pursued consciously or otherwise.

Some of the women (when asked how they related with their husbands) reported they had good relations with their husbands (not a typical view but for the few that were married and had good relations); hence, when it came to finances, these families opted for full disclosure. For the women that held this

view, they reported that they made their spouses aware of how much they earned, and together, as a couple, they would decide what the earnings would be spent on. Women spent their money on recurrent household requirements. An example of this, is Amake Dina, a 37-year-old married woman with 1 child who reported that:

> "When I get paid, I show my husband the payslip and we then decide how to spend it. I spend it on whatever household needs arise. I can make decisions with my husband on the things we need. Otherwise, it would be difficult if I was not working."

Financial disclosure is not a given attribute in most relationships, as will be shown below, but for this woman, as she explained further, it enabled her to win her husband's trust. Earning an income was the main reason she left the home; therefore, being open about how much she leaves the home for was an important way in which she could justify herself. Also, being able to sit down with her husband to talk about what to spend on played a crucial role in the relationship – in addition to buying the husband's trust, it may have permitted the woman to minimise the potential of her work and earnings to challenge the husband's masculinity.

Disclosure of earnings does not necessarily imply passing on control of expenditure to the spouses. As Amake Faith, a 36-year-old married woman with 3 children, points out, letting the husband know of her actual earnings did not imply surrendering control of the money to him, whether in planning terms or in the actual sense of handing over the money. She argued that she best understood what was required within the home, and therefore could draw a budget on her own terms, with no input from the husband. She reported that:

> "I show my husband the payslip but I do not give him the money since I have to budget and decide what to buy. My husband, from his piecework earnings, pays house rent, but

272

> sometimes I pay for house rent when he has not done any piecework. I borrow money from work or friends."

But her relationship, as she claimed, embodied mutual respect, so that her husband did not contest her decisions, or exert any ideological definition of masculinity. Several other women gave testimonies of how earnings disclosure was an essential aspect of married life (not a typical response that women gave when asked if they disclose their income to their spouses). A few of the women interviewed individually explained that this attribute was emphasised in church meetings teaching women how to live with their spouses. Women generally thought it was good practice as it promoted harmony in the home. But as below, some women interpreted such teachings contextually, given the heterogeneity in relationships; arguing that what works depends upon one's personal circumstances. Women's earnings were so little yet so crucial for the household's survival. Women interpreted their circumstances carefully, and managed their earnings to support the family while ensuring that such earnings did not threaten their idea of womanhood, or supplant their husbands in any radical way.

Disclosing income did not also imply that the husband had to be consulted every time the wife wanted to spend. It simply reflected a recognition that the wife's absence from the home was rewarded. I also found out especially from the focus groups with women workers that women would buy certain things as they went along, and hence did not have to consult their husbands every time money had to be spent. Yet for bigger household appliances, husbands' approval was required to avoid mistrust. By communicating the earnings to their husbands, some women felt they expressed respect rather than seek approval on how to spend it. It is partly through such symbolic gestures that women's actions can be interpreted as strategies of agency (specifically strategic agency). Having power to spend as they wished did not imply that women could demean or confront their spouses. They, out of subservience to male headship, opted to disclose their earnings.

Kabeer (2000) adds to this argument by explaining that control of income does not give a full picture of the incomes tranformatory potential, rather, it is more illuminating to look at the choices that were made as a result of the income, thus, she adds that wages can be viewed as an expansion of choices and earns women respect rather entitlement. As Amake Nelly, a 28-year-old married woman with 3 children explained:

> I can spend the money as I please. But I inform my husband just to tell him and give him respect instead of just going ahead and spending without letting him know. Communication is very important for us.

Demonstrating respect for male headship, one woman interviewed (whose husband was unemployed) did not even want her children to feel that she was the main breadwinner. She arranged the home in such a way that it appeared the husband brought in most of the household resources. This way, she encouraged a harmonious marital relationship, potentially avoiding any circumstances that may diminish masculinity as accepted by the family. When analysed further, this can be viewed as strategic agency on the part of the woman to keep a harmonious relationship with her husband that does not threaten her need to work, or may further indicate an imbalance of power. However, if women observe the latter, then it may be plausible that disclosure is used to sustain communication and harmony in favour of her need to work.

Indeed, for some women, failure to divulge information on earnings would be taken by their husbands as a sign of dissent. Hence, disclosing income is maintained as an essential strategy to diminish or avoid household conflict. Amake Doreen, a 40-year-old married woman with eight children (whose husband works at the same farm), explains that her husband's drunkenness, selfishness and violence were the main reasons she sought work. He failed to meet monetarily the family's needs, while she claims that he 'teased' her and never gave her money; as she recalls:

I usually tell him my salary; otherwise we are going to have problems if I do not tell. I explain to my husband that I had put the money in the chilimba to pay for the school fees. My husband drinks a lot and he is violent. He is very difficult. He spends all his income on beer. I do not see his money and he sometimes beats me, when I was not working, he used to tell me not to ask him for money since I did not work for it

For Amake Doreen, given her difficult husband, working meant several things: she could preserve the family's honour, access household necessities, reduce or altogether circumvent household conflict, plan for the future for her children's education by depositing into a revolving fund and using the proceeds to pay for the children's school fees; Earning helped her to reflect on her self-worth by acknowledging that, by working, she can earn an income assuming responsibilities she otherwise would not. Put simply, earning an income and managing how it would be spent enabled her to be of value to herself and to her family, and acknowledge it as such.

But there were other women who explained that disclosure of their earnings would pose a threat to their relationships. As Amake Tatenda, a 34-year-old married woman with four children, argued: "My husband does not know how much money I get. My salary is a secret. I cannot tell my husband how much I get because he can take advantage of me. I spend my money on clothes, food and chilimba, while my husband pays house rent and buys mealie meal." Hence, her income is spent on daily necessities, while her husband expends on 'big things' – house rent and the staple food. From an outsider's perspective, if seeing the wife spend on household necessities as an extension of domesticity, it would be difficult to discern how such expenditures are a function of a set of strategies. This corroborates Munachonga (1988) who found that, generally, women's earnings were spent on household essentials such as food.

Hence, by not pooling their incomes with their spouses, women assert ownership and control in other areas of the home space. The latter has been

shown here: women desire to control how they spend their earnings, but they also wish to see their earnings as the fruits of their own efforts. But such wishes and desires are to be framed with reference to specific contexts and household relations. Husbands do not always challenge this ownership and control of women's earnings. Importantly, within marital relations, such ownership and control must not necessarily displace subservience to patriarchal authority. If women's earnings are spent on what is expected of them, say on food and other household essentials, then such control may be illusory. However, the idea of being able to manage the micro-allocations within broad themes as household essentials enables women to plan: women decide whether to buy fish or chicken, beans or cabbage, and so forth, and it is such management that gives her an element of control. These narrations being based on women's testimonies about their relations with their spouses in income expenditures and disclosure were very much line with this chapter's inquiry into how working affected their relationships at home.

However, based on women's narrations, I cannot fully extrapolate whether women's income disclosure says enough about their relationship since I did not interact/observe their spouses. Consequently, I argue that income disclosure is not telling of what type of men (progressive/oppressive) affect women's need to disclose or if women just merely disclose or not due to cultural expectations. It is worth mentioning that these testimonies that I drew on helped to foreground my argument about women's conscious strategies (strategic agency) in their home life.

Thus I argue that, income is seen as a means through which Amake Tatenda could access what she wanted; therefore, communicating her actual income would threaten this pursuance. She argues that her husband would place upon her additional responsibilities and hence make it more difficult for her to purchase things she wanted. While it is important to see what she buys, but for the purposes here, it is more rewarding to uncover what strategies she uses to buy those things. Therefore, for others, disclosing their incomes earned them their husbands' trust, but as seen here, such trust can come at a huge cost, reproducing even unfavourable outcomes for women.

Nevertheless, the true benefit of this inquiry is not to see the exact strategy per se – whether disclosing income or not – but to understand that women can discern their circumstances, and organise themselves in order to draw on resources and strategies to pursue things they value (proactive) or may just be a reaction to the circumstances they cannot change.

The variations in women's testimonies, again, reflect the differing circumstances and relationships, although all framed within the general pattern of a patriarchal society. Importantly too, women were able to position themselves in a way that showed they were active rather than passive participants in household decisions. Whether married women's activities or realm of responsibilities mirrored what would be culturally expected of them, this was a function of the complexity and struggles women experience as subordinate to their husbands in the cultural sense of male headship. Married women did not necessarily act in a way that was meant to supplant the role of male headship, they recognised their husbands, and positioned themselves in a way that was meant to enhance the welfare of the entire family, rather than their own only.

To what ends do women desire to have complete control of their earnings? In the next section, I explore the narratives of women revolving around the importance of keeping a secret account. These accounts were drawn from one-one interviews and focus group discussions. The general question was whether women had a secret account, the second inquiry was aimed at establishing why a secret account was important for women.

D. Bank account, Secret Bank Account, Importance of Secret Bank Account

This section delves into the various narratives regarding how women's desire to have total control over their earnings affected the strategies they employed. Women commenting on whether or not having a secret account would be a good idea generally formed their views in relation to what they thought about

their husbands. For example, two of the women interviewed had this to say about secret accounts:

> it is important to have a secret bank account, especially if your husband misuses money. Some men are irresponsible and drink all their money. So in this case it would be necessary for women to have a secret account (Amake John)

> if the wife is not getting along with the husband, it would be important for the wife to get a secret bank account (Amake Lovemore)

These women from this farm (though this was also expressed by women from other farms that thought a secret bank account would be important to secure their own interests. Such views were of course made based on how women interpreted men's success in fulfilling manhood. If women felt their needs would be threatened by a selfish spouse, they were more willing to entertain the idea of separate finances and possibility of a secret bank account. Kabeer (2000) adds that women in her study took defiance to the idea of giving their earning to their spouses for fear of misuse

In contrast, a secret bank account, according to some women (asked in both one-on-one interviews and focus groups about how a secret account may affect their relationships negatively), would invite problems in the marriage as men would come to distrust their wives should they find out: "it is possible to have a secret bank account although I would not advise it because it can bring problems in a marriage, especially when the husband learns about it" (Amake Nelly). Some women (during the focus group discussions when asked about how far they would be willing to keep the secret account secret from their spouses) talked about the importance of transparency within a marriage setting, pointing to how good relations between husband and wife can be improved based on various church teachings women underwent. But in general, upon reflection, they agreed that a secret bank account would

have its purpose in the event of an unfulfilling marriage where a man exhibits selfishness.

This is in line with Kabeer (2000) who adds that women exercise covert control of their income by lying about the actual amounts they earned as well as the overtime pay they got. This was considered to be a measure of security in the instance that a man fails to provide or leaves his spouse. Hence, I argue that women may have been more willing to be open about their finances, but women's experience of men's behaviour (bearing in mind this data is from the perspective of women rather than my observations of the men's behaviour in my study) had a bearing on how women responded; whether or not to disclose.

For some women who could not maintain a secret account but desired to expand their income, another channel for personal earnings control was to delve into other income generating activities where women would unsuspiciously use their earnings to meet the end of expending their income on the things they valued (e.g. helping out extended family) without being questioned by their spouses. However, the very notion of other income generating activities was imbued with the challenge of time management and resource allocation given the demands placed on the women. In the next section, having disclosed that some women were using their secret accounts to venture into other income generating activities, I inquired what sorts of activities these were. The following discussion brings to light the narratives women advanced based on the one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions.

E. Other Income Generating Activities

For some women, working took up all their time, so that engaging in other income generating activities seemed impossible. For, a 30-year-old married woman with 2 children, working denied her time to even think about anything outside of it and housework: "I do not have any other ways of earning an

income. I just work. I work all the time, so I do not have time to do anything else" (Amake John).

Being able to think about the possibilities for pursuing other income generating activities were dependent upon women's circumstances. Some women were engaged in other income generating activities, and work provided the initial financial investment to make this possible. However, as they were virtually absent throughout the week, these women had to depend on some form of help from family and friends, without whom taking on other income generating activities would be difficult. Amake Fanny, a 28-year-old married woman, depended on her mother to help:

> I have a small business, but my mother helps me to
> run it while I am at work. It really helps me especially
> when we do not get paid on time." (Amake Fanny)

Amake Fanny did not have an abusive marriage, although she consulted her husband, she generally decided what to spend her income on.

Two women for example (when asked if they had any income generating activity outside work-atypical cases), disclosed that they depended on some form of rent income from a property that their deceased parents left behind. I argue that, women's abilities to seek an income outside their paid work was dependent upon a set of unique circumstances and resources, working as inhibitors or facilitators. Where resources and a network of help was absent, women found it difficult to think about engaging in other income generating activities. However, for those women who managed to run such activities, it remained an important channel for women to expand their influence and potentially improve their decision-making position in the home. As noted earlier, finding time for such activities served an important limitation to women delving in such activities. Thus, in the next section, I inquire further into how women spent their time given their competing demands at work and outside it. I therefore inquired from the women in the one-one-one interviews to give me a timeline of their daily activities.

How was women's time expended given their competing demands? Thus the next section reviews the different strategies regarding working women's time use and how this maintained or challenged their position in the home.

7.3. Working women and time use

Although, the world over, women's labour force participation rate has gone up profoundly over the past five decades, sexual division of labour (occupational segregation) exists (Dwyer and Bruce, 1988; Evans, 2014; 2015). However, it is being challenged, even within Zambian circles of daily labour and politics as women increasingly perform tasks traditionally seen as outside their gender roles (Evans, 2014; 2015; 2016). Within the cut flower farms, most women perform specific tasks considered as women's work – for instance, flower sorting, cutting and bunching. Nevertheless, drawing on the reported narratives of women interviewed both in the individual and focus group discussions, some women also perform work which is regarded as hard labour. Pack house work, predominantly seen as women's work, takes long hours especially on export days, requiring women to stay on working for longer periods of time. The persistence of occupational segregation affects time use in fundamental ways that in turn impact upon intra-household dynamics.

In general, proximity of women's residence to the farm was an important attribute in time-use (see chapter 6 on mobility issues to work). Women who lived off-farm factored in the journey time to work, and this affected their quantity of sleep, including what household tasks were to be performed or postponed. Distance between residence and work, especially for those living furthest away, was associated with a security threat for women who had to move in the dark hours that are associated with times when certain crimes are reported dangerous hours (see chapter 6). The associated risk of mobility led one woman at farm 3 to seek her husband's company to the pick-up points. Supporting this account, a number of women at the same farm reported that it may be possible that some women asked their families to escort them to avoid being attacked. The latter aspect reflected the husband's approval of his working wife.

Thus, in determining women's allocation of their time use, below is an examination of varied experiences and accounts of different categories of women by marital and parental status. Such distinctions and categorisations were important to discern whether there would be significant variations in use of time based upon whether a woman had to submit to her husband if married, or if she headed her own home, how differently she would use her time outside of work. Limited variation exists in terms of available time to attend to domestic duties, but the marital and parental statuses do point to sometimes different reasons for performing seemingly similar tasks and spaces of agency that can be drawn.

A. 'We are slaves': How married women use their time

All women reported to have had early mornings, but their schedules before work and how they got to work depended on how far they lived from work, and what sort of transport they used, and, not least, the household development life cycle.

Married women who lived on-farm did not have to deal with the problem of how long it took to get to work. They had a relatively 'easy' morning, with some tending to household tasks before setting off for work.

> I wake up at 5am, prepare the children for school, clean the house and then set off for work before 6:30am (Amake Lovemore, with 3 children)

> I wake up at 4AM to cook and clean, leave the house at 5:30AM and by 6AM at work. We start by getting to the pack shed and then collect buckets, draw water and then harvest the roses … (Amake Dominic, with 3 children)

For married women who lived off-farm, time to get to work was longer, and this generally required them to start their day relatively slightly earlier.

> I wake up at about 3:50AM, perform house chores first and by 4:50AM, I leave the house to go to the pick-up point. The work bus picks us up from the road side, and we get to the farm by 6:40AM. We start work by 7AM. I leave the children at home by themselves (Amake Nonde, 36 with 2 children)

> I wake up 4AM to clean the house and prepare my son and husband. I get to the bus station by 5:20AM to wait for a bus to take me to work. Then I start work at 7AM. I break off for 15 minutes at 10:15AM, and for 45 minutes at 1:15PM. We leave work at 5PM. I get home by 7PM. Once I get home, I must clean the house and prepare dinner. I sleep by 10PM (Amake Jairos, 20 with 1 child)

Women, during focus group discussions, shared the same sentiments regarding having to perform domestic tasks before and after non-domestic work. Symbolic of this characteristic was the notion that one woman used that, they were 'slaves' both to their non-domestic work and household responsibilities, effectively to the social sanctioning system that penalises them for deviating from socially constructed roles of motherhood, wives and, in general, homemakers. Hence, they have an overwhelming obligation to meet these social standards. Once a woman leaves work, at home, she is expected to be a mother (and wife) and to perform duties to fit this identity.

B. Time use and absence of a male head: How divorced or widowed women use their time

For older women with older children (though not specific to a home without a male headship in the house), the pressure of micro-managing children's needs diminishes as their children are old enough to 'care' for themselves. For instance, Amai Sakala, a 50-year-old widow with 2 children, clarified that she did not have to bother about preparing children in the morning before setting

off for work, and this freed her time to either sleep a little longer or allocate more time to household tasks. Hence, that she has more time to attend to herself is partially an outcome of having older children rather than absence of a male head. She contends that:

> I wake up at 5AM to clean the house. My children are already big so I do not have to worry about them. I get to work by 6AM and immediately start preparations for the day. I work all the way to 4PM on a slow day, with tea and lunch breaks in-between. But sometimes, I work up to 8PM on a busy day when have orders to meet. My daily schedule for work is usually dependent on the number of orders we must meet. Our busiest days are Tuesday and Thursday (Amai Sakala,)

For Amai Zulu, a divorced woman who lived on-farm, the proximity to work meant a little more time to sleep for her. Although she was older, 48 years old, she also had small children. This fact in addition to household tasks required her to the start her day early before setting off for work. However, the closeness of her residence to her workplace cancelled out the need for her to sacrifice her sleep time. She remarked that:

> I wake up at 5:30AM clean the house and draw some water from nearby then start off for work. Work starts somewhere 6AM to 7AM. I sleep after 10PM. Sometimes we leave work at 5PM but on export days we can stay there even up to 8PM (Amai Zulu, with 6 children)

For those women who did not reside within farm premises or have older 'self-reliant' children, giving up part of their sleep time was an uncontested outcome. Despite having no pressure to 'attend' to a male head, having smaller children and distance away from their workplace meant that women had to allow more preparation time between waking and starting off for work.

By way of example, consider Amake Rudo, a 30-year-old divorcee with 4 children, who mentions that:

> I wake up at 4AM, clean up the house and prepare the children before setting off for work. I leave work at 5PM when less busy and after 6:30PM when busy (export days). When I get home, I cook and then head to bed by around 10PM. If time allows, sometimes I read a book (Amake Rudo)

C. Single, never married

Again, having children influenced how early in the morning single women arose. Single women with children were found to have relatively early mornings compared to their counterparts with no children. But proximity to the farm was an equally important factor. Single women with no children who had to use the same transport to get to work as the other groups of women generally woke up early, but did not have to contend with child-related tasks, yet, if living with their parents or guardians, as per tradition, they had to attend to some house chores such as cleaning. For those single women residing within farm premises, a little extra sleep time was welcome, as preparation time towards work did not have to compete with other family responsibilities.

Amake Mulenga, a 27-year-old single mother of two, woke up as early as 4AM to attend to household tasks while simultaneously tending to her children. She had two hours in the morning to perform these duties before setting off for work and allocated an hour to travel to work. For her, as many of her colleagues at her workplace, leaving work on busy days as late as 8PM was not uncommon. Based upon the work schedule, this was to be expected at least twice a week, although on less busy days, she would still be expected to be at work for 10 hours, of which tea and lunch breaks lasted only an hour and a half. She normally went to bed after 10PM just after 'completing' housework for the day.

By contrast, Brenda, a 23-year-old single woman with no children only had an hour between waking up and getting to work. She lived within the farm premises, and thus did not have to worry much about commuting to work. Her preparation time was also shortened because she did not have child caring responsibilities affecting her time use in the morning.

These two accounts show some crucial variations in how work affects single women's use of time. But one must make a distinction between work imposed constraints and household duties. Whereas the former depends significantly on production cycle and proximity of residence to place of work, the latter is influenced by what socially constructed family role a woman fulfils, such as being a mother and/or carer of the home and as will be shown below, the work burden for the former is heightened by their social roles.

D. Time use, identity and agency

Juxtaposing time use of women with different marital and parental statuses appears to fit neatly into traditional narratives of poor women's double burden of work – the idea that women's work is represented both by paid non-domestic and unpaid domestic work (Merk 2014). Without disputing this narrative, if working, women surely have no control over the amount of time they spend at work. Because of work, they must arise early in the morning before work, and get back home in the evening after work.

As the main thrust of this chapter is to establish how working affects women's agency within the spaces of the household specifically on household relations and culturally assigned roles (particularly on household expenditure, decision making and childrearing), it may appear difficult to do so given the time and physical burden of paid work. Indeed, it may seem women have little time to 'do' anything else within the home, but one must remember that women have varied identities, and their associated roles. What outsiders see as the double burden of work can also be seen as agency in action, albeit when faced with highly restricted options. As agency is the 'tool' people draw upon to pursue

some end, and although women are seen to do similar tasks, the reasons for doing them are quite different, depending on their circumstances.

A single woman, under the roof of a parent of some other guardian, may seem unduly burdened by domestic work before and after a long work day, but she performs these tasks primarily to meet social expectations of her role. But even for single women living by themselves with children, such domestic tasks represent fulfilment of socially ascribed roles. The woman, as the head of her household, must look after the affairs of the home, and this includes ensuring that her dependents are well taken care of.

For married women, their double burden of work, just like other categories of women, represents the fulfilment of social roles as women. The identity of a woman comes with its own baggage, and this includes fitting into socially ascribed roles of homemakers. Culturally, women as caretakers of the home, must attend to the affairs of the household. But with marriage comes the extra baggage of the husband. A woman, as she fulfils her homemaking duties, must also attend to the husband. Although this may be seen as a sacrifice of women's own welfare, it does secure firmly their position within the structures of the home; both as mothers and as wives (Kandiyoti 1998). Women generally ridiculed other women who failed to satisfy this profile particularly in the Farm 3 focus group discussion with women workers when a question was raised about women's role in the home. In that group, someone mentioned that "a woman is incomplete if she does not perform household chores" and this view was supported by 7/10 other women in the group (Farm 3W FG). Indeed, they contributed to strong social sanctions against deviating women, but also reported that such women ran into the danger of being deserted by their spouses or completely socially excluded.

In essence, time use outside of work is shaped by the perceived identities that women hold, and the strategies they employ to fulfil them. Although not central to this study, attempts towards gender equality, to more equally shared time within the spaces of the home, must address how societal identities are formed, and how they come to persist. More generally, these define and frame

the spaces of interaction and gender relations, as they assign tasks and responsibilities to different genders. That said, what aspects of women's activities assume much of their time and how do they negotiate and compromise their time in the fulfilment of such roles? The next section examines childbearing and rearing activities and how they potentially affect women's position in the home and the community at large.

7.4. Child bearing and Rearing: Do women have a say?

Why should working women be concerned with fulfilling reproductive roles? The ideas of childbearing and childrearing are in no small part socially formed, yet they create a sense of belonging and fulfilment for people who value them, not just in themselves but also to identify socially. Within African culture, it is not uncommon to receive reports of non-child bearing women being seen as "social misfits" (Fonchingong, 2006: 135; Kimani and Olenja, 2001).

It cannot be enough to state simply that women's recognition of childlessness as a socially inferior posture since it robs them of expanding their identity as women who are wives, sisters and mothers is the main thrust of having children. What other aspects of their being is affected by having children? Do they have children for other reasons?

Family size discussions are important because they influence the household development life cycle, and, subsequently, time use, resource allocation earlier discussed. Notice also that with limited options for childcare, having an extra child may lead to temporary labour withdrawal, leaving an income gap with consequences for resource allocation, time use, childcare etc. Do women consider these factors in their decision to have children? Why is it so important for women and men to have children? And how does achieving this reproductive role affect women and men?

Quite apart from seeing how women influence choice about number of children, it is about the ends women wish to accomplish when they are faced with this decision. Women, in addition to fulfilling reproductive needs of the

family, may use as an opportunity to negotiate for something they desire. Women in my study generally stated their desire to have more children up to a certain point, partially because this conforms with the social values they are part of, but they also acknowledge that they carry a greater burden of both the reproductive roles and productive responsibilities of child-caring. Yet, as Hansen (1992) shows in her study revolving around women in Mtendere compound of Zambia, childbearing and childrearing may both be used as tools at the disposal of women, not necessarily as an end in themselves in fulfilling cultural expectations, but to pursue other goals they may hold dear. The majority of women interviewed submitted to childbearing in order to conform to their husbands' and societies' views that they are mature and respectable and this in turn secures their social roles, but it also allows them to more successfully negotiate other decisions within the marital space such as income earning and planning.

Dwyer and Bruce (1988) argue that although women and men may sometimes reach a consensus in terms of family size, the reasons they each give may reveal a sharp distinction in their motivations. For instance, whereas women may see children as a form of securing their own place within the gendered and culturally influenced social structures that penalise non-conforming women, men may view more children as supporting and asserting their perception of their own supremacy over women. For the latter, as women become absorbed by the responsibilities of child rearing, they are left with little time to 'challenge' gender hierarchies. Hence, especially for women, the decision on the number of children is subordinated to safeguarding their interests so that having more children, although itself desirable, becomes a means through which their security is enhanced. In line with this text, understanding women's motivations regarding different pursuits is illuminating; indeed, having more or fewer children should be seen as an act of agency.

Nevertheless, these motivations regarding the preferred family size, irrespective of gender, reflect perceptions and actualities of culturally-formed responsibilities. The next section provides some examples of fieldwork

narratives given by the women interviewed in both one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions. The question revolved around who made the decision to have more children.

A. Women and Childbearing

Some women's views in terms of who drove decisions regarding family size appear to confirm the narrative that sees women as subordinate to their husbands/spouses. For example, Amake John, a 30-year-old married woman with 2 children, contends that:

> Both me and my husband decide how many children we can have, but my husband has a bigger say. Marriage without having children can cause problems (Amake John)

The latter part of Amake John sentiments shows that she values children not just because it is good in itself to have them, but as a means to pursue another end – diminish marital problems. Having children fulfils a social role, but it also places more firmly her position within the household. However, there still exists a tension between fulfilling this social role of motherhood and the need for women to work. How does work affect this role?

Indeed, several other women reported that men's views on number of children are usually more or less binding. In some instances, (especially during the focus groups) women would argue that they would first try to reason with their spouses, to talk them out of having more children, but eventually, their husband's insistence on having more children would be final, with women reluctantly obliging. These women also shared the view that placing considerable store and confidence in behaviour that appears submissive, especially in critical matters such as childbearing, would have the benefit of anchoring their husband's trust in them. By this token, women would then face less friction in other matters such as being allowed to work (see chapter 5) or permitted to budget and spend (a very specific form of strategic agency).

There is an important way in which women's actions on these matters can be interpreted as agency. From women's narrations about their strategy to submit to their spouse's demands on child bearing, I argue that this allows them to confront gender ideologies only gradually, taking down smaller boulders but approaching sociocultural mountains with caution. Judging what can be accomplished, and scheming how to do so, women, through their exercise of agency, approach social hurdles with realism, acknowledging that some pillars of gender ideologies are best left uncontested if their (women's) positions are to be secured.

Even when husbands insist on having more children, women in another focus group discussion stated (Farm 2 WFG) that they can still rely on some form of tactic to delay pregnancies, such as discussing the family's financial capacity. Having an extra child would imply withdrawal of labour for a period of time and, therefore, loss of income for the now larger family during this time. By assuring their husbands that they were on board in terms of having more children, they could successfully negotiate, and subsequently, postpone, when to have more children. Hence, they oblige but postpone, and in-between and beyond they pursue goals that demonstrate that they are active participants in these relations.

Unsurprisingly, most women generally thought their husbands had the final say on the numbers of children up to a certain point, and these views were based on interpretations of gender hierarchies. Although they reported to have been participants in family discussions about numbers of children, women's influence on the matter was limited, especially if their spouses felt that more children were required. In line with the foregoing discussion, consider some women's remarks on these issues:

> Both me and my husband decide. We sit down and talk
> but if he decides to have child, he is the head of the
> house, I have to listen to him. I can reason with him if I
> am not ready like right now (Amake Chuma, with 1 child)

> If my husband, being the head of the house decided that
> we should have more children, I would have to accept,
> but I would also bring the family's ability to look after
> more children up for discussion (Amake Dina, with 4
> children)

Indeed, the idea of surrendering to the husband's insistence on having more children has its roots in how gender ideologies are interpreted within a given cultural context. I conclude that rather than risk being deserted by refusing to have more children, women may have judged that having more children would reproduce a better outcome for them. The notion of being a woman for some women is associated not only with motherhood but also with having a spouse; these pillars support the hallmark of womanhood. To the rest of the community, this sends signals of a respectable woman, one who can not only have children but can hold a marriage/family together. Hence, from this vantage point, it can be seen that women have reason to suppress actions of resistance, as they make fragile what it means to be accepted as a woman. Amai Nyirenda, a 43-year-old widowed woman with 6 children, neatly exemplifies this view, generally shared by many others. She commented that:

> My husband is the one who wanted more children. If you
> want to keep your marriage, you have to do what he says
> to make him happy. Otherwise, you will lose him to
> another woman willing to give him more children. In fact,
> people will laugh at you if your husband left you (Amai
> Nyirenda)

I argue that fear of being deserted cannot be downplayed, it was a powerful social sanction that threatened how women interpreted their own being. Hence, social conformity in no small part explains why women would necessarily submit to their spouses regarding having more children. Additionally, the idea of being abandoned by their spouses forced some women to believe that they would take on the entire burden of looking after children. Thus, beyond social reasons, there were economic reasons for

agreeing to have more children. However, men sometimes spearhead family planning decisions, allowing women a childbearing respite. Several authors have long dispelled the notion that men within the African context generally have negative attitudes regarding family planning see (Mbizvo and Adamchak 1991, Charlotte 1992, Djamba 1995)

This way, the idea of womanhood is fulfilled as the woman positions herself more securely, to both advance her personal interests and to also personify exemplary behaviour and attitude towards ideas and ideals of family and living. Amake Mailess, a 35-year-old married woman with 6 children, remarked clearly on this:

> My husband decided when he wanted a child. I just had
> to concede, he beats me a lot. I would try to repel his
> demands; we have enough children (Amake Mailess)

But even when in a difficult relationship, with husband exhibiting tendencies of violence and aggression, women still resorted to having more children, especially if fuelled by husbands' demands, as a strategy to diminish such problems. Amake Doreen, a 40-year-old woman with 8 children, solemnly recalled how complicated her childbearing situation was being married to a drunkard and fierce husband:

> I just had to submit to his demands to have more
> children. He is a violent man. It is difficult to reason with
> my husband. He drinks too much. He feels that since he
> is the head of the house, only he can make family
> planning decisions (Amake Doreen)

Because of social pressure, Amake Doreen values more a married life than otherwise, she is compelled to forego her own view on childbearing and family size. But this, as would be expected, does not imply that all women will necessarily behave this way. Conversely, although rarely, by abandoning abusive relationships, some women demonstrate that they value more their

own personal interests. They discern, with profound adeptness, that such personal interests may not be directly nourished within the prevailing gender relations. But in general, women would submit even in difficult marriages if they felt some economic needs were somehow met by their husbands. Consider first a rather unusual case in which a woman claimed to decide on how many children to have. Amake Faith, a 36-year-old married woman with 3 children, claims that:

> I decide how many children I want. Right now, I want to
> have more children but my husband relies on piecework
> to earn a wage, so I am waiting for him to find a stable
> job. Then I can have more children (Amake Faith)

What Amake Faith account reveals is that she could influence the trajectory of family size based upon her relative economic status within the home. Hence, women's financial contributions to the family basket had profound positive effects on their status within the family with respect to sociocultural pillars such as family size and income allocation, including whether to supply their labour in the first place. But this must be seen in relative terms: her earnings in relation to her spouse. Yet this explication does not claim to offer evidence of a woman, in a stronger financial position than her husband, dismantling or transforming all aspects of gender ideologies.

The varied narratives on decisions about number of children, in general, demonstrate that cultural roles and expectations are powerful explanatory factors. But women can locate themselves within these spaces, and through the exercise of agency, they can craft and launch strategies aimed at some goal they desire. In other words, although generally submissive with respect to family size decisions, women are however active participants, capable of judging the battlefield and arming themselves appropriately, to confront, resist or negotiate their positions. The next section focusses on childrearing issues raised by the women when asked who takes of their children when they at work and the potential conflict it presents. These narratives are drawn based on one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions.

B. Childrearing: Who looks after the kids while at work; Conflict due to work

As women generally wish to fulfil the cultural expectations of womanhood – as homemakers – while working for a wage outside the home, the strategies and resources they rely upon with respect to childcare help shed light on their agency to remain in the labour market. Neoclassical economic theory analysing women's labour market participation from the 1960s and 1970s assumed a negative relationship between childbearing and women's paid employment. However, following the United Nations' 1975-1985 Decade for Women, several studies provided evidence that countered this view. Stichter (1990: 42) argued that "whether productive and reproductive work are incompatible depends directly on a number of factors, mainly type of employment, type of child rearing, and structure of the household." Against this background, I now proceed by examining what childrearing strategies and resources women draw on, which allows them to continue working. The cases drawn upon below illustrate a wider pattern in my study of working women's childrearing strategies.

For Amai Sakala, a 50-year-old widow with 2 children, childrearing was not an issue, her children were old enough to look after themselves. This testimony brings attention to family structure and the household development lifecycle. Mothers of children who can look after themselves do not have to worry about childcare. Such dynamics are to be expected in more mature (in the sense of years of experience) households.

Amake Davi, a 33-year-old married woman with 5 children, explains how her child caring strategies depend on family composition. She relies on her older children to look after the younger ones, in a sort of rotating fashion.

> Siblings look after each other. I devised a programme to
> make sure that there is always someone to look after the
> younger siblings. One older child goes to school in the

morning while the older one goes in the afternoon
(Amake Davi)

Amake Davi relies on the flexibility of children's school time-table (see above) and others on the family composition. Yet, it appears that she values her children's education, and thus ensures that, in addition to looking after their siblings, they can also have time to go to school. Her agency in this matter of child caring is shown aptly, and by drawing on her older children and flexibility of school programmes, she can minimise conflict within the home and with wider society; she can also demonstrate that the idea of womanhood can be imagined beyond domesticity.

Many other women reported that they rely upon their extended families (especially when asked within the focus group discussions about their child caring options) – fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters etc. – to look after the children during working women's absence from the home. However, in one Focus group discussion (Farm 4), the women reported that drawing on older children to look after their siblings affected their ability to keep up with school activities, dropping out of school as they spent too much time away from school. Although not the focus of this study, this situation potentially makes the household more vulnerable since those children dropping out due to childcare responsibilities are not able to build up suitable skills to enable them to seek better remunerated work so that the cycle of vulnerability for the household continues. Two other women in the one-on-one interviews reported that they left their children in the care of neighbours even when they felt unsure of that decision, yet they disclose that work earnings were crucial for them to survive.

Outside of these resources, women in poor countries have little else to draw on; their counterparts in developed countries can solicit paid for childcare services crèches and other formal nursery school establishments. Further, in the developed world, loosely speaking, the state may provide a buffer to support families with small children. An example of this is shown in a study done in Nordic countries by Datta Gupta, Smith et al. (2008) highlighting the

strengths and weaknesses of providing such facilities (crèche) for the working women in the developed world (however, as this is not the premise of my study, I will not go into the weaknesses and strengths of such facilities, rather, the idea is to show that working women have an option to leave their children at these facilities whilst poor women from the Global South may not have that option).

As these wider socioeconomic forces are absent in poor countries, women's resources and agency is expressed differently. In all the farms visited, I observed that there were no crèche facilities. This is unlike other cutflower producing countries like Kenya (Said-Allsopp and Tallontire 2014) that have strategically set up crèches in response to women's reproductive care demands. Thus the women under my study had to rely on other networks within the family and the community.

In sum, what is important to derive from this analysis of childrearing is that women can minimise tension within the home, as they continue providing their labour outside the home, by utilising wider social networks (Hansen 1992, Evans 2014). Additionally, the household development cycle features prominently as a further explanatory factor. Given the issues discussed above concerning women's allocation of income, their time use and child bearing and rearing activities, how is their perception of self and future aspirations reimagined, and in the process, what spaces do they create to express themselves differently or do they simply assume and hold their subordinate positions by conforming to society's expectations of womanhood? The narratives drawn below are based on exploring women's views about their anticipated future aspirations and changes they would like to see. The views presented below reflect the issues discussed in the one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions with women workers.

7.5. Self-reflection and perceptions from, and about, others; future aspirations

Women's own self-reflection and the perceptions they form cannot be analysed in isolation, as independent attributes: women, based upon their experiences are shaped by how they use their time, form expectations and anticipations of themselves, and others. Although Jain (1985: xiii) argues that because women perform different tasks from men, their subsequent experiences are fragmented and separated by duties and space, so that "perceptions are limited to personal experience", women's perceptions of themselves and others are also influenced by wider societal dynamics. As argued by Evans (2014; and 2015) and Stichter (1990: 61), by seeing more women leaving the home for work over a sustained period of time, gender stereotypes framing domesticity transform gradually.

As shown before, after exposure to other working women, women carefully navigate their social spaces through negotiation, conformity, bargaining and even disclosure etc. to create the spaces for agency. Through strategically using resources and income to reduce conflict in the home for example, women can thus be said to be active participants.

Gender ideologies exist at different levels of society – from community levels to household levels – and in patriarchal cultures, these may work to sanction and potentially prohibit women from working, but as the spectacle of working women becomes commonplace, such barriers may gradually crumble (as has been shown in women's decision to work, childbearing and rearing and financial decisions).

From this vantage point, I argue that women's perceptions are not only shaped by their own experiences of exclusive domesticity, but also by what others within the community are saying or doing. Women also have the opportunity to share experiences in gatherings such as church/community meetings, and these domains further open up space for women to question their own perceptions and judgements, and consequently to either be more receptive to

298

change or to cling on to their way of doing and viewing things (women's narratives through this and in chapters 5 and 6 have shown how such networks influence and affect the way women view themselves and those around them).

Drawing upon Sen's (1985) cooperative conflict paradigm, Dwyer and Bruce (1988) contend that women's perceptions can feature prominently and condition what outcomes a woman reproduces and expects in the home. They contend that "[i]f a woman undervalues herself, her bargaining position will be weaker, and she will be likely to accept inferior conditions." I argue that, while this is reasonable, if acceptable, this view is silent on why a woman should necessarily undervalue herself, and what factors might influence a woman's revaluation of her worth.

For the latter, what a woman experiences and observes outside the home, be it at work or the community in general, have profound influences on self-reflection and self-valuation (although this study was not primarily premised on examining women's self-evaluation/reflection, their views on various issues about their productive capacity and their income, child bearing/rearing, financial decisions and their visions about the future demonstrated in part how they felt about themselves and ultimately their self-evaluation- for example, a woman choosing not to disclose her income may show the extent to which she values her earnings as her hard work and therefore ought to be spent by her) , and because a woman is exposed to these dynamics continuously, perceptions should not be seen as static: they evolve and reshape, so that household relations are dynamic.

Sen (1990), in reflecting upon his "cooperative conflict" paradigm, proposes the idea that perception of self, and of others, is a matter of which identity subsumes an individual. Relying upon the notion that each person possesses several identities, he proposes how perception is formed and shaped by these sometimes conflicting identities. As an individual can be a woman or man, a member of a family or class, an employee and so forth, such identities constitute a person's being. What a person values, how they understand their

own welfare, obligations to themselves and others, all are variables that depend upon the several identities that an individual hold. Hence, for Sen (1990: 125-126),

> "In some contexts the family identity may exert such strong influence on our perceptions that we may not find it easy to formulate any clear notion of our own individual welfare … insofar as intra-family divisions involve significant inequalities in the allotment of food, medical attention, health care, and the like (often unfavourable to the well-being – even survival – of women), the lack of perception of personal interest combined with a great concern for family welfare is, of course, just the kind of attitude that helps to sustain the traditional inequalities …

Against such reflections, and of importance to this chapter, is to highlight how powerful perceptions can be in determining what outcomes the rest of the world sees. After observing the narratives of the women interviewed, I argue that women's agency may not be frictional, it is lubricative, it diminishes discord as it oils the cogs that engineer gender hierarchies, consequently sustaining rather than confronting inequality. Viewed this way, women's agency should not only be seen as the means through which women improve their well-being within such inequalities; perceptions can confound – or even obscure – women's understanding of their own well-being.

But how are these perceptions of self-interest, well-being and so forth, formed and shaped? What influences how powerful one identity can be over others? Perceptions are themselves not static, there's a continuous stream of complex social dynamics and interactions that shapes and rearranges the influences and effects of different identities throughout the development cycle of a family, an individual and her/his many other identities. The following sections addresses these issues of well-being connected to women's visions about what their future aspirations are. This allowed me to demonstrate how working women in my study through their earning envision a better life for themselves

and their families. This further points to women's appreciation of their productive capacity to earn an income.

A. importance of the working status

The perception of the importance of work women formed were made in relation to how they thought their men performed as providers as shown above in disclosure of incomes. In the event that men's incomes were insufficient, women were all the more resolute about what their work could achieve in their homes. What this points out is that women perceive work as important because it is crucial for their survival. Hence, defying men's threats was a manifestation of the value women placed upon their efforts towards survival. Women were more assertive of what they could accomplish from work. "If my husband asked to stop work, I would not listen to him. Both men and women are supposed to work. A man has to give you a good reason for stopping you. Even if he beat me but he does not provide, I will continue working because I still need to meet my needs." (Amake Mangani, with 6 children)

There is no doubt that earnings provided an important channel for women to re-evaluate their self-worth and in process enjoy the benefits of such statuses through better treatment and respect from their spouses. This in a sense can be argued to be a great source of self-confidence for most of the woman interviewed especially from the narratives forwarded by women in the focus group discussions (see examples below on strategies to pursue future aspirations). Kabeer (2000) demonstrates how some women in her study claimed that they felt more valued (better treatment and relations with their husbands and communities respectively) due to their working status. Self-evaluation of self-worth (was derived from my observations of women's responses especially in the individual interviews to issues of decision-making about earning, relations in the home and the community etc.).

Working and earning an income, I advance, gave the women an opportunity to re-imagine themselves and to aspire to have better lives in the future. The next section attempts to show how women's work opened up avenues for

them to envision different ways of being and doing through strategies to pursue future aspirations. This was when women were asked to state what their goals were in the period between 1-5 years and their strategies for exit out of this employment.

B. strategies to pursue future aspirations

The future aspirations women formed were shaped by the possibilities that working made available. For some women, life outside work was unfathomable; they asserted that working was all they knew, and if they could save a little, then that would help them do some big things like build a house. An example of this argument is the narration by Amake John, a 30-year-old married woman with 2 children, asserts that: "I want to continue working, even here at the farm. Hopefully I can also save something. I do not intend to stop working, I will work until my body fails me. I want to build a house one day." Women see the importance of work in securing a life for themselves and their children, while remaining optimistic about what can be accomplished.

Work enabled women to meet daily needs, but it also allowed those with different circumstances (women that had wider social networks and those with some form of property) to invest some money in some small business activity. Such businesses were a way women could both save and finance future needs (the entrepreneurial activities have been touched upon in the section above on other income generating activities in this chapter. The next explores women's exit options from their current work given their views about their current status in the workplace and the home. The views presented below were a response to the question, how long do you see yourself working here?

C. Staying on or Exiting; options and strategies

Women's decision to leave employment or stay in it was in part determined by the initial conflict or cooperation they encountered when getting into employment from family (see chapter 5). For married women whose husbands had faced a loss in income, their ability to work was conditioned in most cases by their spouse's inability to provide financially for the family or changed

circumstances within the home. For the women who were not yet married, their option to stay or exit employment was conditioned by the dynamics of their initial decision to work influenced by how well they had financially changed the income contribution to the household and further, how far off they were from meeting their saving goal that initially motivated them to seek employment.

The majority of women interviewed (at least 70%), reported that work gave them a renewed confidence to look after themselves. Although a number of women reported that some men were uncomfortable with this new confidence and saw this as a challenge to the view of their masculinity and as providers, the women were aware that overstating their confidence to their husband had the potential to destabilise their marriages. Unfortunately, for some homes, the renewed sense of self that women experienced was soon diminished by physical abuse by some men to remind their wives of their headship. In the process, other women chose silence to reduce conflict when they felt that their husbands wanted them to stop work. The silence exhibited by women was used to potentially reduce confrontations regarding stopping work. This shows that women consciously devise strategies of coping thereby circumventing some difficult circumstances arising from their working status. However, it must be noted that such strategies serve to lubricate rather confront gender ideologies of expectations of womanhood. However, I have shown how women's ability to leave the private space of the home to meet some productive ends (workplace) provides an avenue for women to attain some positive agency outcomes that potentially affects their self-worth. So far, this chapter has outlined the effects of women's work on household relations and women's evaluation of self-worth. In so doing, the strategies and resources that women draw on have been demonstrated throughout this chapter. In the process, I argue that, the women in my study have redefined what it means to be a woman within their given context. In the conclusion, such a redefinition is explored before summarising what this means for women's agency.

7.6. Conclusion

7.6.1 Redefining womanhood

To understand power dynamics within the home, and women's roles within this space, one must first understand what it means to be a woman. The idea of being a woman can be seen as a social construct based upon the role assigned to a female, and this must be explained contextually, across time and space. Hence, the roles females assume, and the resources they rely upon, including social networks, all point to what being a woman is interpreted as. What appears and is defined as a subordinate or disadvantaged position casts light on what it means be a woman within a given social context. The way a woman constructs her role is not only influenced by her own interpretation of what it means to be a woman, but also by how her social network (community, workmates, relatives etc.) perceives it.

Thus, when a woman uses her agency (that is, employs a strategy) to deliver an outcome, consciously or otherwise, she redefines what it means to be a woman. Once what it means to be a woman undergoes revision, so too will the resources and strategies change in order to accommodate this new definition. For instance, when females confront domesticity, and other gender ideologies defining and allocating roles to men and women, they can be seen as reconstructing the idea of being a woman: no longer defined solely by homemaking roles, a woman can work, trade and generally contribute to the family purse.

Quite apart from biological relations, Obbo (1990: 215), in her grand claim that "Women Are What They Do", argues that the title assigned to women in Africa as daughters, sisters, wives or mothers, depends upon the roles they assume. Central to constructing the idea of a woman, is the idea of role-fitting: recognising one's role to, and within, society (family, community etc.) then taking a positon to fulfil it. However, the roles females assume as women have negative connotations attached to them, specifically in terms of power relations between females and males. If a female situates herself, for instance,

as a wife within the context of patriarchal relations prevalent in Africa, she must contend with this new meaning and extension of her being, and this includes how she relates within the power imbalance reflected in her the subservience to her spouse.

By exploring the ways in which women are subordinated, one can unravel and explain the negative connotation referenced here. Through cultural and gender ideologies that define and assign roles to the sexes, women are made aware of their varied roles (as daughters, sisters, wives and mothers) and what is expected of them, both by themselves and by wider society. A complex array of social sanctions exists to elicit behavioural change, hence ensuring that nonconforming women are penalised. But social sanctions are not static, they evolve as ways of living and interactions change, as the set of what is permissible gets altered during the course of social interactions (the workplace, home and community), in time and space, so that non-conforming women who persevere in their ways may/not get rewarded (at a later point in time) when their deeds become socially acceptable/unacceptable. In part, it is such perseverance that ignites and fuels social change.

Stemming from her inquiry of how incomes of working women in urban Zambia affect their roles and statuses within the home, Munachonga (1988) references two contrasting accounts: first, that married women's paid work is welcomed by the husband because it frees him financially, hence permitting him to spend more on himself. Second, that working women's marriages and families are more volatile due to the discord that emerges when women work and earn. Whether Munachonga's (1988) remarks are right or wrong is secondary; primarily, she is unable to give an explanation of how women's statuses and roles are affected by the decision to work and the process by which these processes produce various outcomes including the ones she refers to. It is also not clear if Munachonga interviewed/observed men in the research design to assume the first preposition she forwarded.

Put differently, Munachonga's (1988) is an exercise of discerning outcomes, but in this chapter, of utmost interest, is understanding the processes by which

this happens and, particularly, the actions of women that lead to such outcomes. Do women become more, or less, conscious about decisions/choices when they begin to work and earn? what is the process by which this happens, when and where? is it to improve their positions within the structures that disadvantage them? Do they draw inspiration from the community or workplace, for instance? Does this consciousness lead to more conflict? Such questions have been addressed, and it is partially through women's strategies that one can begin to uncover the dynamics/ processes that lead to the outcomes observed. Figure 10 below attempts to illustrate the factors and processes that affects the form and type of agency, although the list provided is not exhaustive, the idea is to demonstrate that before an outcome can be observed, there are processes and factors that affect what we later observe as agency.

Figure 11 Factors and processes underpinning (well-being and) agency

Intermediating *Processes* and *Strategies*: bargaining, compromise, negotiation, resources etc.

- Work
- Family
- Community
- Education
-Religious Beliefs
-Religious & Social Gatherings
- Cultural and Traditional Values
- Other socioeconomic and political factors

Influences

Individual's Perception & Identity

Agency

Agency

Personal Well-being

Other personal goals and objectives

Source: Author's own conceptualisation

Based upon an identity that a working woman takes on and how she interprets it, she can position herself to pursue, through the exercise of agency, her own personal well-being or other personal goals. Yet, what identity she assumes and how she interprets it is determined by wider set of influences as depicted. Women's experiences of work, and how work affects them at home depends on how those influences impact upon the idea of womanhood. The influences are themselves contextual, and must be interpreted as such. Yet, before any outcomes can be observed, there are processes that affect these outcomes. These processes having been demonstrated throughout this chapter (involving negotiation (in strategies), resources drawn upon and compromises, negotiation etc) all serve to show the process between the influences and the outcomes. Therefore, the notion of womanhood is also contextual. From such an illustration, it appears that the agency that a working

woman draws upon is also contextual, because the influences affecting an individual are context-specific. By understanding their own circumstances, women can discern what sort of agency to employ (acts of negotiation, bargaining and compromise through use of strategies and resources) and these strategies and resources are crucial for them to navigate and reshape the gender ideological structures but does not necessarily confront them.

7.6.2 Conclusion

In summary, household experiences are affected by factors that extend the dynamics of the work floor women are found in (see chapter 6). This chapter looked further than the GPN framework/context to the personal spheres of women's lives. This was achieved by assessing and highlighting the strategies that surround women's income allocation, time use, child bearing and rearing and finally the perceptions that they form about themselves and the community around them. It was demonstrated that women are active participants consciously and unconsciously devising strategies to deal with situations that arise in their private lives and that their everyday relations are not static but dynamic since they are actively negotiating and compromising to reshape the gender ideological structures that form the basis of their perceived social identities, expectations, rewards and sanctions.

The statement by Friedmann (2006:172) exemplifies the potential work has on women's position in the house which has been demonstrated throughout this chapter "By looking at gender and at households, not as units, but as composed of individuals with different preferences and leverage, one finds that the flower industry facilitates the breakdown of the male dominated structure of decision making, providing women with the tools to build more equitable homes." Throughout this chapter, I have outlined women's strategies to show the extent to which these male dominated structures are being

reshaped and the ways in which women workers in my study have created space within them.

In chapter 8, in setting the conclusion to this thesis, I bring together the narratives advanced about agency in the empirical chapters. Conceptualizing agency this way thus potentially fills the gap in women's global trade agency literature and GPN context that often focusses on the outcomes of women's actions rather than the processes that lead to the actions observed. This chapter ends with this thesis's contribution and the way forward for future research.

Chapter 8.0. Conceptualisation of agency, contribution and conclusion

This chapter is a dialogue between how women's agency has been understood in the literature, as discussed in Chapter 2, and what this thesis has uncovered about the meaning of agency based upon the experiences of women working in the cut flower industry in Zambia in the three preceding data chapters. In the final section, I thread together the key findings of this thesis, highlighting the conceptual and empirical limitation of both the GPN as a framework of analysis and agency as a conceptual tool to understand women's experience within the context of the cutflower industry, ending with setting out the potential for future research in areas that may extend the understanding of women's experiences of work in the cutflower industry.

To change or improve women's circumstances at work (and possibly at the home and community levels as well), an analysis of agency through the resources and strategies has been unravelled. Beyond its contribution to academic scholarship, I argue that a more nuanced understanding of agency can be of use to policy and development strategies aiming to improve women's well-being in the workplace.

8.1. Conceptualising agency of women workers in Zambia's cut flower farms

Throughout the empirical chapters, I have demonstrated that agency is contextual. Therefore, agency as a term should not be carelessly applied, particularly as a general or broad concept covering any situation at any given time whenever women pursue a course of action; doing so waters down its capability as an analytical tool while diminishing its role as an instrument for social and economic change via policy. Rather, agency requires context (Keesing 1981). Its form and application is shaped by a multitude of context specific circumstances, and is observed or expressed in many ways, this reflecting its malleability and diversity.

Throughout this thesis, I have attempted to analyse women's exercise of agency within a GPN framework. What the GPN framework of analysis does is to extend the way in which context is understood, as discussed in chapter 4. For Zambia's cut flower industry, the main source of demand is located in the global North. Hence, final consumers (buyers) of cut flowers and the labourers (women workers) in the cut flower farms are separated not only geographically, but also by what they both want out of this productive/commercial activity mediated by cut flower farms as businesses. At the downstream node, final consumers demand a reasonably priced quality product, capable of adjusting to demand conditions (and/or seasonality). Thus, a number of demand criteria have to be met such as product grading and codes of conduct. At the intermediate level, cut flower farms wish to maximise profits against such demand conditions, which requires flexible low cost labour (Hale and Opondo 2005). At the upstream node, workers desire decent and stable work. Although convergence of interests across this productive activity explain its existence—that is, that labourers wish to earn an income and therefore supply their labour which firms require to make a profit from a product satisfying the demand of final consumers— there are areas of conflict, which reflect the relative strength and power of actors across this productive network. Buyers determine in a significant way what kind of labour is demanded and how it is applied (Barrientos 2002), because business (cut flower farm) strategies (include labour strategy and policy) integrate demand dynamics.

I have shown in chapter 4, for example, that the productive roles are fulfilled in a business environment that is part of a wider international community. My aim has been to demonstrate the context under which women's agency is exercised, in so doing, the role of institutional factors and constraints shaping how women workers perform their tasks at work, as well as how they behave at home, have been uncovered.

This thesis has shown that institutional factors or constraints are not limited to formal relations of employment and the wider formal institutions of the labour market such as the trade unions and the ministry of labour, although these

remain central to policy strategies. Other variables are no less important, and these include (culturally-perceived) informal networks and social contacts which have a significant bearing upon whether, and how, women will supply their labour (Kabeer 2000) as well as the broader public and private regulatory context and the strategies of firms. These processes and interactions exert pressure on what kind of agency women draw on.

Therefore, I have shown in the preceding empirical chapters that the agency that women rely on is framed within a given socioeconomic and cultural context. Furthermore, I have highlighted that there exists a two-way relationship between social and productive roles ascribed to women. For example, the gendered role of women as homemakers permeates the sphere of work, meanwhile women's productive role in the world of work appeals to women as a means to fulfil their social role. Put simply, the social role can rationalise the productive role and vice versa. Thus, the ways in which women form their expectations of, and from, employment are partially conditioned by the social roles they are expected to fulfil, but, fundamentally, women must be viewed as active rather than passive players in these interactions.

Below, is a theoretical construction of the idea of agency as furnished by the women workers of the cut flower farms in Zambia interviewed for this thesis. In bringing out the theoretical analysis of agency, my aim is to address the research questions that were set out in this study. In this next section, I address the broader research question based on the empirical chapters.

8.2 Developing the notion of Agency: What are the contours of agency and how can it be conceptualised?

While women operate within a different social context, I argue that locating their agency implicitly requires identifying them as active participants in social relations, be it at the home or the workplace. As has been argued, such participation does not require a radical shift of power balance by overturning the patriarchal terms of relations, rather women can create and select choices that enable them to approach carefully some desirable ends within these

social spaces/boundaries. Drawing on the analysis in the preceding chapters, I will explain how agency is rooted in three interrelated stages of action here categorised as *conception*, *gestation* and *delivery*. There is a broader context—socioeconomic and political context—that governs how these stages of action are perceived and pursued. In general, I argue that the GPN highlights the waves of influence (power flows and dynamics) associated with such contexts, but it is women's agency (and corresponding influences that either constrict or enhance agency) that defines and fuels these stages of action. By calling them stages of action, and seeing women as part and parcel of the fabric of social interaction capable of claiming their own space, agency is perceived as a cultivable attribute embedded in women. Put differently, women rely on agency to pursue an end, but this agency is shaped by the broader context impacting on the environment women operate in.

Drawing on my analysis of women's experience of employment and consequent agency in chapters 5, 6 and 7, I now show that agency can be broken down into three stages. First, the *conception* stage involves women's capacity or capability to weigh their position against the prevailing circumstances. That is, women gauging for themselves what they want against what is being offered to them. If what is being offered to them by prevailing circumstances meets what they want, the status quo is maintained, and agency is reflected by the outcome undertaken. But because the notion of agency *conception* is dynamic, the correspondence between what women want and what they are offered may only be a very short-lived occurrence. What women want is continuously affected and influenced by what women observe around them, and as the latter changes, women adjust their expectations accordingly.

Hence, as Kandiyoti (1998) observes, women are seen as dynamic participants capable of discerning or creating opportunities for their own benefit. Therefore, agency *conception* is about how women form ideas on how to better their positions, even within rigid social structures. This can be observed in chapter 5 based on women's motivations to work and how they navigate and weigh their circumstances to enter the labour market. Hence,

how they perceive themselves is crucial, but such perceptions must be located within a given socioeconomic context.

Second, the *gestation* stage is about mobilising resources and drawing on strategies to rationalise work (an example would be a women using changed circumstances in a home to rationalise the decision to work e.g. the need to pay school fees as a bargaining tool to convince the spouse or simply using information from the community about a job availability as a way to change current financial gaps experienced in the household). The gestation stage can also be called the intermediate stage between the conception stage (when an idea is born or seed is planted) and the delivery stage (when an idea is seen as an outcome/action or seed begins to germinate). During this intermediate stage, women pool resources to rationalise the courses of action they wish to pursue. It is also a dynamic stage in that the resources women rely upon are themselves influenced by a dynamic environment.

Both agency *conception* and agency *gestation* take place before an action is undertaken; collectively, they represent the rationalisation of a course of action, whether it be to supply their labour or to have an additional child and so forth. Third, the *delivery* stage, which is itself normally identified as the agency, can now be seen as an outcome of some process and resources. In this stage, the action is observed as women going for work or simply buying an item from the earnings. Thus, women do not simply do, they think, wait and act, while drawing on resources around them. However, it is important to mention that these stages can be mixed up, in that spontaneous (or circumstantial) decisions are made, contemplation (gestation) may come or at least they can very rapidly follow one another. An example of this inter-relation would be a woman having a child which may very well come as an unintended outcome, not a deliberated decision but how she decides her care strategies may follow the three stages mentioned as I have demonstrated in chapter 7.

Below, each of these stages of agency is further developed from the three terrains of analysis of agency that have furnished this thesis: the motivation and decision to work; women's experiences of employment; household

relations and dynamics, locating the role and agency of working women. In the process, the three research questions [What motivations, resources and strategies do women use to inform their decision to work? What are the experiences of employment in the GPNs? How does women's work affect household relations and how do women navigate between the two spaces (work and the household)) that have been addressed in the empirical chapters are extended to bridge the gap between the theoretical and empirical conceptualisation of agency in the sections below.

For Rowlands (1997), agency is a crucial aspect of empowerment; it contributes significantly to cognitive development and thus changes women's attitudes and perceptions about themselves and their environment. By recourse to agency, women can be seen as active rather than passive participants, capable of social and physical interaction within a given environment and subsequently "cause things to happen" (Rowlands, 1997: 111).

This thesis has built upon this notion of agency by bringing in the GPN as the context in which such agency is shaped and exercised. Through the GPN as part of the context of analysis in chapter 4, one can trace the influencing factors, those that shape what kind of employment is experienced, and, by implication, what kind of agency women draw on. Again, this is to re-emphasise the idea that that agency must be located within a given context, not just in cultural and social terms, but also in economic terms. Primarily, by developing the notion of agency, this thesis seeks to answer how women's agency is enhanced; that is, it seeks to establish what is going on with women before they cause things to happen. This means not only looking at outcomes as most studies of working women in global trade have done (Farnworth and Munachonga 2010, Barrientos, Mayer et al. 2011, Coles and Mitchell 2011), rather, it is about uncovering the process that led to the outcomes. The process as I have shown in the empirical chapters is demonstrated in the strategies and resources that women draw on that makes them active rather passive participants of their situations.

8.3 Locating agency in the decision to work: What motivations, resources and strategies do women use to inform their decision to work

The views expressed by women have been wide-ranging, but how they responded to diverse conditioning factors frames the type and form of agency they called upon. Here, the idea is to seek a conceptual explanation and framework that locates agency as exercised by women seeking and finding employment in Zambia's cut flower farms. But because the GPN is the overall context of analysis, agency must be demonstrated in this broader context. Hence, aspects of the GPN that constrain or enhance women's agency are identified and explained.

The juxtaposed accounts of women from different marital backgrounds, within and across them, form a powerful commentary on the often obscured agency expressed in the resolve to seek employment. The variations in responses reflected the heterogeneity of households embedded in a diversity of backgrounds, an assortment of personalities, varieties of spousal relationships and so on. When self-reflection or external stimulation catapulted their resolve to seek paid employment, women narrated different strategies that rationalised their motivation to work, often stemming from their imagination and awareness of their productive potential.

Here, I seek to explain and theorise my findings within the GPN framework the ideas of agency *conception, gestation* and *delivery* can be used to understand women's decision to work.

A woman who scans her environment and sees her (female) neighbours working outside the home may begin to view her exclusive domesticity as less than preferable, not necessarily for economic reasons but for social reasons; that is, she may desire work in order to live up to the standards of the community. Changing one's mind about one's place in society (in the home, community, workplace etc.) must thus be seen as an act of agency. It is the first stage in claiming one's space (economic space) within a given

socioeconomic context. When she observes her surroundings, ideas (seeds) are sown within her (*conception* stage), she examines and filters these ideas and then begins to position herself (through negotiation and bargaining strategy) to effectively commit to her desire (*gestation* stage- in which she draws on various resources and strategies) and then she takes action by seeking and finding employment (*delivery* stage).

During the *conception* stage, women's own assessment of their circumstances determines whether an *adaptive* or a *proactive response* is applied. This is clarified below, but it seeks to see agency as exercised by women seeking employment as a complex response function constituted of how women interpret prevailing or anticipated circumstances.

The *conception* stage identifies a woman's agency as her capability and capacity to scan her environment and to envision a space for herself. Evans (2014, 2015) has pointed out that a mass of women working legitimised employment as a socially acceptable option for women. This demonstrates that women can observe their environment and position themselves accordingly. However, observing societal practices simply sows an idea within a woman. This is the *conception* stage. By recourse to agency, women can use to their benefit the information they collect from what they observe.

At another level, a woman may seek employment in order to change circumstances at the home or as a response to changed circumstances of the home (see chapter 5). These motivations, whether to change or as a response to changed circumstances, are developed in the *conception* stage. The woman, through her agency, is capable of thinking things through. By examining what has taken place or is yet to take place within the home, she can draw on an *adaptive response* or a *proactive response*, respectively.

On the one hand, for *adaptive response*, a set of 'external' factors have imposed themselves and stimulated a survival kind of reaction. It is an *ex-post* reaction; key events and factors have already taken place, and the woman simply positions herself to minimise adverse effects of such events on her life.

It is agency nonetheless because she could have chosen otherwise. A survival kind of reaction can be seen as a cushion, in order to mitigate lifestyle deterioration when a major event has already taken place. If circumstances are not anticipated, widowed women who took on employment when their husbands passed away, are seen to have opted for paid work as a way to adapt to changed circumstances. I argue that explaining the decision to work as a reaction to absence of a breadwinner does not explain why a woman chose a particular type of employment, or did not engage in other types of income-generating activities. Hence, by seeing women as capable analytical observers of their environment, why they choose a given type of employment depends on the real opportunities available to them, and information about these is usually shared at the community level.

Similarly, women who only started working after a separation or divorce can be seen to have adopted an *adaptive response* type of agency. Indeed, a particular event (death of a spouse for example) may lead to significant disruptions in household living which in turn creates a necessity to seek employment. All in all, an *adaptive* response may generally result from a failure to anticipate changes of social and/or economic circumstances.

On the other hand, a *proactive response* manifests itself primarily to change circumstances. It is an *ex-ante* reaction, developed from anticipation and expectations rather than complacency. It is developed from women's ability to channel a crisis, fear or risk into action rather than inaction. A woman recognising that her contribution to the home basket is vital for welfare enhancement can be seen to employ this kind of agency. She acknowledges – whether her husband asked her to, whether she saw her friends working or whether it was developed from her own effort against the grain – that earnings from her productive capacity are integral to the household. Women employing *proactive agency* are seen as becoming more flexible, challenging and confronting, however subtly, the perceptions of rigidity of tradition, customs and norms. Another key reason calling forth a proactive response include a woman seeking financial freedom and independence. Ultimately, a proactive response has to do with women's ability to anticipate and then position

themselves appropriately. However, these decisions need to be set against the range of options available, which is determined by larger socioeconomic and political forces.

The GPN thus helps us to understand why a given type of employment is available. Buyer behaviour in the North makes a certain type of employment available in the South. Without buyers demanding the goods, employment in this industry would not even be an option. But also, the government, through its investment policy, perceives buyer behaviour as an investment opportunity. Hence, that women can seek employment in this industry is a manifestation of availability of a market (buyer behaviour) and government investment policy to exploit this market. Women's agency can then be cultivated given that employment is now available.

Buyer practices through the state and businesses have provided an opportunity for women. In other words, buyer practices have enhanced women's exercise of agency. In fact, Censulyte (2013:219) showed how political economy and ideological shifts towards neoliberalism can "create space for female agency and emancipation through participation in labour markets". This means that broader shifts in economic practice within and beyond an economy-which can loosely be captured by the idea of GPN-have a bearing on how agency is created and exercised (enhanced or inhibited).

Based upon this thesis, I argue that the *conception* stage profits from buyer practices which expand the choice set available to women.[16] If employment is seen as something that is readily available to (women) workers, then we cannot properly account for how buyer practices influence the choices available to women. Availability of employment (because buyers demand a product while the state and businesses represent the supply side) is one way in which women's agency is enhanced.

---

[16] All stages of decision making (conception, gestation and delivery) are influenced by buyer practices.

There is a thin conceptual line between these two categories of response: adaptive and proactive, but what is clear in terms of where to place a specific reaction depends on *how* the decision to take on employment was sparked, and *who* initiated the decision. Also, whether the decision is born out of an *adaptive* or *proactive response*, there is considerable variation both within and across these response categories, although the *ex-ante or ex-post* pattern makes the distinction. Women starting off with an *adaptive response* terms can veer towards more *proactive response* kinds in other aspects of life, as they gain experience, exposure and draw upon wider socioeconomic networks.

Hence, these types and forms of agency are not static. For instance, a woman content with being a housewife, can be seen as employing an *adaptive response* when she seeks employment due to changed household circumstances such as her child pursuing further studies and therefore requiring more financial resources. But once she experiences employment, she may enrich her social connectedness in the process, and this may cause her to begin to value her productive role leading her eventually to draw upon *proactive response* to change her lifestyle – e.g. saving part of income in order to later reinvest it into potentially more lucrative merchandise trade (by engaging in Chilimba, as seen in chapter 6).

Overall, aspects of agency as experienced by women workers in Zambia's cut flower industry were pulled out of these response actions and explained contextually. Women were aware of the social costs that came with taking on paid employment (care of children and spousal neglect), but how they dealt with these costs largely explained agency as an individual exercise, although various 'objects' or 'situations' presented themselves as a source of inspiration for women to draw on as their perception of what agency to exercise changed or was changed. The burden imposed on women workers by these social costs had varying intensities, reflecting the different strategies, circumstances, attributes and personalities exhibited by the networks and array of conditions that women workers confronted. For instance, married women were more likely to face a greater level of friction in taking on the decision to work

compared to their unmarried colleagues (see chapter 7), but still, even within the married set, intensities of friction were highly varied. Hence, for married women, the gestation period may be a lot longer than for unmarried women because they need more time to administer a strategy acceptable to the spouse.

By invoking the notion of the *gestation* stage as the time period between *conception* and *delivery*, we can make a case for a conceptual understanding of the heterogeneity of women's circumstances and broader societal context. Indeed, the length of, and strategies formulated during, the *gestation* phase, depend upon women's circumstances such as number of children, marital status and so forth. A married woman operating within a patriarchal society will more likely experience a longer *gestation* than an unmarried woman who does not require permission from somebody else. In other words, gestation depends on a particular species of relations. During the *gestation* phase, having already conceived an idea, women can observe their environment and carefully formulate strategies that help them confront and overcome the obstacles (whether social or otherwise) that prevent them from working.

Finally, when a woman is seen as working, whether due to adaptive or proactive response, this is merely an outcome that results from the processes outlined above. It is the *delivery* stage, the execution of an idea which was earlier planted and nurtured. If agency is seen as a person's attributes that causes them to make things happen following Rowlands (1997), the *delivery* stage is simply a record of observable things happening (how women choose to use their income and time use). By drawing distinctions between conception, gestation and delivery, agency can be traced by both unobservable and observable attributes. Thus, to enhance agency, both these attributes must be located, and factors affecting them must be identified.

When one listens to women's voice in their decision to work, it can be seen that earnings are means to access what they value, which may diverge from what society thinks they value, should value or have reason to value. What the analysis shows is that women's decision to take on work in the cut flower

farms was born out of varying circumstances, but ultimately, paid work can be seen as a means to an end they value. It must be emphasised again that what they value cannot only necessarily be captured by policy drives that seek gender equality or worker rights. Specific contexts, especially in relation to power dynamics must be understood (Kabeer 2004). Thus, I argue that reframing the inquiry of why women seek paid work and taking stock of power dynamics opens up avenues that establish how women exercise agency, and how decision making is itself a process that is conditioned by the choice of agency and wider context that frames the socioeconomic environment.

Women's decision to seek, find and remain in paid work reflects an extension of their domain, from the periphery of the home to productive activities outside of it, but at the same time encapsulates an expanded set of choices, and options for agency which require correct identification, interpretation and explanation. By getting out of the home and community environment to go to work, women extend the territory through which agency can be exercised, in turn impacting upon and altering experiences at home and the community.

Next, I proceed with analysis of the concepts developed here by applying them to women's experiences of work and the agency relied upon in the process.

8.4 Positioning agency within the spaces of work: What are the experiences of employment in the GPNs?

Uncovering women's agency within the spaces of work was an exercise partially dedicated to separating the ideal from the real conditions of work (see Chapter 6). By focusing on the latter, women's agency was located/situated in experiences of women at work as the women manoeuvred through work scene, exploiting existing, or creating new opportunities within the prevailing conditions of work.

But first, one must understand that the entire GPN links buyers (as the ultimate demand) with labourers (as the basic value creating units). Existing between buyers and sellers is a systemic arrangement of value creation and its

distribution embedded in local and international functionaries/agents (Barrientos and Evers 2014). It is this systemic arrangement of value creation and its distribution that governs what type of labour will be required and what kind of product will be made available to buyers. The local and international production network is ordered and mediated by agents such as the state and (global) businesses, and the three-way interplay of power between the state, labour and capital/businesses. State, business and/or labour policy is itself a reflection of this power struggle, a representation of interests of agents. For instance, weak labour policies, particularly in terms of enforcement, are reflected by poor working conditions, yet this is nothing less than the triumph of business interests over labour's interests.

State policy serving labour's interests requires strong/effective labour policy enforcement, this being reflected in decent work and humane working conditions. Hence, how (women) labourers experience employment depends on the nature of the systemic arrangement of value creation and its distribution, this being mediated by local and international agents. How women's labour services will be utilised and compensated relies upon the environment under which businesses operate (Raworth and Kidder 2009, Barrientos, Mayer et al. 2011, Barrientos and Evers 2014). Therefore, inadequacies of the cutflower sector profoundly affects women's experience of work by affecting the strategies and resources that women can draw on.

On this premise, that the GPN is defined by the commercial and social embeddedness (Barrientos, Gerreffi et al. 2010) and ordering of value and distribution, businesses (cut flower farms) as workplaces were identified as part of this system (see particularly Chapter 4 and 6), shaped by the forces and influences represented through the state and the wider market for flowers (Selwyn 2013). In a somewhat deterministic fashion, these influences and forces make the work environment what it is: a confluence of interaction between business managers and workers, and intra-worker relations.

By setting out to examine the underlying forces that govern employment in the floriculture industry and how they shape women's work, I asked women to give

an account of how they perceived their work, including what resources and interactions they encountered as a reflection and reinforcement of their agency, as discussed in Chapter 6. Within the workplace, more generally, the thesis also appraised the obstacles, pathways and mechanisms for the enhancement of women's agency.

In locating women's agency through a GPN context, I sought to elicit and establish women's voices in terms of how they experienced employment by giving their views on the work environment. This meant that women gave accounts of their impressions and misgivings on the prevailing conditions of work. This line of inquiry was important in order to establish the lived experience of work rather than the ideal, conditions of work. In general, many of the issues that the women I interviewed raised about the working conditions have been captured in the literature of women and gender in the global South (see for instance, Dunaway, 2014: 14; Selwyn, 2013: 57; Pearson and Seyfang, 2002; 45-46). However, one of the novel aspects of this thesis has been an interrogation of women's agency within the spaces of work, analysing their strategies for survival and progress.

In discussing conditions of service, women first gave their views on their wages in terms of two areas of focus: adequacy of basic wages; compensation structures in terms of fringe benefits and regularity of pay. Virtually all women reported that the prevailing wages were well below what was required for decent survival yet the continuous supply of their labour meant that this was better than the alternative. Zambia is plagued by massive unemployment with limited economic opportunities for the population (World Bank, 2013).

Hence, women operate in a highly restrictive and harsh economic environment. Nevertheless, whether women had conceded to, and accepted, the status quo or were hopeful their employment would always do better for them depended on a host of factors which reflected the heterogeneity of the women. The divide between women's expectations of their jobs and their perceptions of the realities of the job was an important attribute governing whether a woman accepted or rejected the status quo in terms of wages, and

other conditions of work. These expectations and perceptions of the job were influenced by women's unique circumstances such as their positions within the company chain of command, personal motivation, site of work, and previous work experience (similar or dissimilar work) etc. For instance, a woman with a difficult employment history (e.g. as was the case for one woman who reported that she had an abusive previous employer making irregular wage payments) appeared to be more accepting of the prevailing wage structure on the farm at which she worked because the pay was consistent.

Similarly, women's comments regarding job security, as separate attribute of working conditions, reflected these personal circumstances. Women who had experienced previous precarious employment felt more secure in their current placement at the cut flower farms. The everyday agency (acts of getting by) reflected in the personal motivation to work must be explained by unique circumstances of the women. But everyday agency can morph into strategic agency. For example, a women relying on everyday agency at work for building a positive attitude may in fact correctly interpret such agency as a requirement for job security. She may hope to avoid being laid off if she is seen to be a hard-working employee, or may indeed increase her chances of being rehired should her labour be withdrawn by whatever circumstances, say maternity issues.

Additional views on conditions of service included such things as whether a company provided protective clothing, meal options and nutrition programmes, fairness of pay along gender lines and so forth. In general, I found that poor working conditions inhibit women's agency. Aspects of social upgrading (Chapter 2) like workers' ability to organise and inconsistent pay constituted the major inhibitors to the form and type of strategies and resources (gestation) that women could draw on at any given time. Failure to pay workers on time reduces women's ability to plan for a better future or participate in informal ways of saving in the Chilimba.

This inevitably delays the gestation period in which women pull resources and strategies to deliver a course of action (delivery). Opportunity to organise is affected by lack of infrastructure where workers can interact. For example, absence of a cafeteria and meal services hindered women from networking outside of the work schedule. Workers that had lunch provided by the farms gathered around a meal and shared experiences while those workers that worked for farms that provided no lunch often had limited interactions during lunch time. The spaces of work that draw individuals into groups encourage a culture of sharing ideas and experiences. These platforms broaden workers' understanding of themselves and their colleagues. Put differently, they influence how (women) workers see themselves, the workplace and others.

Second, although recognising that the work environment had a lot to do with conditions of work, the intra-employee relations also affected the work environment. On the one hand, formal interactions were work-related; that is, the tasks workers performed caused them to interact, either in a routine or non-routine manner. I found that the much of the work done by the sampled workers was interdependent in nature. One task depended on another, and by these mechanisms, workers were drawn into a web of interactions.

Consequently, conflicts among workers sprung up. Formal procedures to deal with conflict resolution were part and parcel of the work environment, and embedded within these, were guidelines and personnel. Women workers demonstrated their agency not only in contributing to the conflict but also in resolving it by drawing on their conception (awareness) and gestation (positioning themselves to confront or avoiding conflict) aspects of their agency. The interdependent nature of cut flower farm work was reflected by the division or labour and specialisation of tasks.

However, farm practices of setting targets for employees reinforce the inevitable conflict that comes with virtually any gathering of human beings. By working towards a set target, workers, rather than see each other as allies, would at times compete for resources. Hence, to avoid conflict, a third of the sampled women during focus group discussions argued that they minimised

(gestation) informal interactions, yet the others posited that informal interactions were beneficial to their overall wellbeing since they gave women an additional opportunity to learn from others about life and living while forming lasting bonds of friendship. This shows that women approached matters differently, reading different interpretations from similar situations but that women did actually assess, strategized and then acted.

This research also showed how formal organising for labour could be driven by buyers. For instance, one farm's desire to obtain international certification required it to host a number of platforms to discuss different matters arising affecting labour. These included the broader Workers' Forum, a platform capturing all workers, discussing all matters affecting workers during the course of work. Representatives of this forum gathered information from the workers and passed it on to management.

More specific platforms were: The Gender Committee, a platform to raise women-specific matters such as pertaining to maternity, sexual abuse and rape, reproductive and sexual health; the Health and Safety Committee responsible for matters of hygiene, general occupational health and safety at work; and a Fairtrade committee. Informally, workers organised themselves into rotating credit groups locally known as Chilimba that enabled them to purchase and plan for things previously not afforded by the monthly wages. Such interactions also gave women some level of financial leverage in some aspects of their lives which was previously absent but also showed that women were actively pursuing ways to better their life.

Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of these programmes and interactions, the opportunities for organising/interacting had far reaching consequence for women's agency. It promoted a sense of belonging and influenced women's negotiation skills, enhancing their agency as they sought to communicate with others, and claim their place in relations within and outside work. All this serves to demonstrate how agency can be enhanced by women's membership in these platforms and contributes to the literature that claims collective power often called 'power with' (Rowlands 1995, Kabeer,

Milward et al. 2013) is more transformative and can be used as a weapon for vulnerable women based in such production chains to create space and reposition themselves.

8.5 Finding agency within household dynamics: How does women's work affect household relations and how do women navigate between the two spaces (work and the household)

If women are to be seen as capable agents, then they must actively participate and influence family decisions over a range of issues. Hence, I sought to understand in what ways work enabled women to contribute to the family decision making process. If women did indeed contribute to the household decision making process, then a home is not devoid of conflict. Therefore, women were seen as adopting strategies (this reflecting their agency) that contributed to the emergence and resolution of this conflict.

I argue that, when the literature (from an economic perspective) questions how work helps women with decision making at home, the analysis relies on metrics such as improved stake of women at the household level in terms of resource allocation, distribution and utilisation (Obbo,1990: Farnworth and Munachonga, 2010). But such analyses constitute an examination or identification of outcomes, with little to say about the processes that led to such outcomes. I have shown in this thesis that by understanding the underlying processes, one can account more readily for the intervening factors that lead to such (positive) outcomes for working women. These processes point to the pathways underpinning women's agency within the home.

Women were asked to comment on their personal circumstances on a range of characteristics such as allocation and distribution of household resources, and the household development cycle in terms of childbearing and childrearing. The strategies women adopted in these negotiations constituted the process which women exercised their agency reflecting how agency is indeed a constitutive process that requires women to be aware of their prevailing circumstances and then strategically reposition themselves. For

instance, about half of the interviewed married women reported that they did not disclose their salary to their husband for at least two reasons: first, it gives women a sense of ownership of their income, as they purchase what they want and can afford; second, it cultivates harmony by minimising threat on the roles of the spouse as providers and heads. Conversely, the other half of married women chose to disclose their income to their spouse in order to promote trust through transparency, hence minimising sources of marital conflict. Full disclosure did not imply surrender; it was a strategy meant to bring harmony to the home.

On the same theme of financial transparency regarding women having a secret account, two contrasting views emerged: first, that a secret bank account was unnecessary and would promote discord; second, if the marital relationship is unsound, a woman would have to protect her affairs and this may include keeping her saving in a secret account. Overall, however, decisions about whether or not to have a secret bank account were based on how women interpreted their marital relations and this in effect showed that women were aware and called on strategies and resources that favoured a particular course of action they deemed appropriate.

Further, the household development life cycle affected the form and type of resources that women could draw on. Women gave views about their role in determining family size. First, an extra child could have consequences of their temporary withdrawal from the labour market and a loss of income to a growing family. In general, childless women were often viewed as social misfits (see Fonchingong, 2006: 135; Kimani and Olenja, 2001), such that having more children was a way in which women conformed to society in general, and their spouses in particular. In part, an extra child demonstrated commitment to the family, but also could be used as leverage for future bargaining at the household level. Women also had strategies around childcare while they spent time at work. First, childcare arrangements must be interpreted as women's productive agency, a commitment to work, and, consequently, a contribution to the family purse. Thus, I argue that women's accounts of their childrearing and childbearing options to maintain their work

status and the processes they draw on to reposition themselves to take a course of action suggests that their agency is not frictional but lubricative to gender ideologies about womanhood.

Finally, women's awareness of their contribution to the family demonstrated that women reflected on their self-worth. More than half of the sampled women reported that a working woman was generally more respected within the community. That is, work enabled women to command more respect with the community and also enabled them to gain access to resources around the neighbourhood that would be unavailable to them if they did not work – for example, loan facilities. What this suggests is that perseverance within rigid gender ideologies can eventually ignite and fuel social change that sees women repositioning themselves in the home and the community.

In conclusion, I have demonstrated throughout the empirical chapters that women employed in the floriculture GPN are indeed active participants in issues affecting them. I have shown that by women drawing on institutional structures, their own interactions with their colleagues, women expressed their agency in ingenious ways. First, discerning their environment (conception and gestation, and second, positioning themselves within it (delivery). Ultimately, the women had resolved to continue working, so the onus was on them to form strategic alliances with colleagues, or forego interactions when they were disruptive, but doing so allowed them to navigate the complex maze of social interaction and allowed them to navigate between the workplace, the home and the community.

I have demonstrated that the strategies and resources that women rely on constitute the process by which the observable outcomes are derived. The observable outcomes that women derive are largely influenced by employment practices within the workplace and have a profound bearing on women's capacity and capability to call on their conception and gestation stages of agency.

8.6 Contributions and Conclusions

In exploring how women workers exercise agency within the cutflower context of Zambia using the GPN context, I gave an account of how writing on women's integration into the GPN ignores issues of gender and agency. Because this study looked at women's experience of work and their consequent forms of agency, this thesis laid out how the GVC's vertical preoccupation at the firm level is limited in identifying the diverse social/cultural interactions (Henderson, Dicken et al. 2002, Cumbers, Helms et al. 2010) that affect women workers. It then set out to analyse the notion of agency as grounded in the feminist, labour geography and GAD/ and other diverse research inclinations in the agency literature.

Further, based on the diverse literature on agency, it was established that agency is a multidimensional concept that requires many variables to measure it (Kabeer 2009, Rowlands, 1995, Ibrahim and Alkire, 2007). The value of the concept like empowerment 'lies precisely in the fuzziness of the concept" (Sen 1985, Kabeer 1999:436). Although agency was initially defined as the things people value for which they have reason to value by Sen (1985) and in terms of people's ability to make choices (Kabeer 1999), measuring the things that people have reason to value may prove to be too difficult a task especially since it is tied to the value system of individuals and groups. This thesis shows the processes of conception and gestation that affect the observable actions/choices here coined as delivery.

These processes point to the meanings and purposes behind people's actions which have to be analysed within the broader context within which those choices are being made. The overall context for the study is the floriculture industry within the GPN. As the goal of this thesis is to contribute to knowledge about agency and its corresponding mechanisms and pathways, underpinning women's agency is how farm practices and home relations affect the different stages of agency.

Thus, an exploration of women's motivations to take on paid employment led to questions pertaining to how external influences such as women's community conditioned the exercise of agency. Doing so uncovered the factors that affect their motivation and the complex feedback between the resources women draw upon for information and inspiration, and rationalisation of their decision to work as they confronted the rigidities of the social structure. Although unique household circumstances ranging from growing household needs to personal changes experienced by women and/or households themselves impacted how they utilised these resources, the different stages of agency, although themselves heterogeneous, were the main intersecting theme. Agency, seemingly homogeneous at a macroscopic scale, reflected itself, microscopically, by distinct and often interrelated complex dynamic strategies.

Indeed, having explored the motivations to work and the resources and strategies relied upon, revealed that, in general, women use two different forms of agency to put their decisions in action: *adaptive agency* (out of a forced life situation in which women have, for instance, lost their breadwinner spouses, and for sustenance, they have to take on the role of provider) and *proactive agency* (which taps on women's own aspirations to either be self-reliant or to be more active in ensuring that they meet part of the household needs, some of which may arise from specific needs such as children's school fees). But these forms of agency are reinforcing, and can be drawn upon at various phases of women's life's experiences, suggesting their non-mutually exclusive nature – one form of agency may be drawn upon in initiating the decision to work (adaptive agency), while the other type, proactive agency, can rationalise women's continuing/enduring commitment to the labour market.

In exploring how women experience work, I investigated how (women) workers relate to one another. Ordinarily, this involves taking stock of workers' 'normal' experiences pertaining to issues such as: work activities and tasks, both as individuals and as active participants in a team; actual work space and placement, pinpointing the physical and/or occupational location of their

activities – specifically, whether working the pack house or greenhouse; matters arising during the course of work affecting their experience of work – for example, conflict and grievance resolution, competition, organising and so on; incentives, strategies and resources, drawing on ancillary benefits of work such as formal and informal organising. Each of these features and traits constitute the influences that govern how women experience work. Second, because women's work activities and tasks are influenced by employers' actions, orientation and activities, it remains that farm operational policy and strategies influence their hiring practices, and how workers are treated on the work floor, including the kinds of conditions of employment the employers create.

I also explored aspects of organising and their effects on women's agency. I found that women both value and shun interaction; they value it because it helped them share and learn new things yet some women despise it because they consider it disruptive to work activities. However, women still found spaces for agency in the workplace like chilimba that they value. The farm practices combined with individual work experience affect the three stages of agency (conception, gestation and delivery earlier identified, for example, inability to consistently pay workers may affect workers' capacity and morale to interact in informal gatherings such as Chilimba thereby affecting their gestation (mobilising resources) and delivery (acquiring/ purchasing things they value) stages of agency.

In enhancing the understanding of agency in such production networks, this study has advanced the literature on how women's experiences outside the workplace affect the workplace experience, and vice versa and in turn has highlighted the spaces that women create to reposition themselves. By examining how work affects the lives of women in and outside the workplace, I illustrated the various strategies as well as the resources women use to position themselves in the household and the workplace.

I advanced the issues women consider important by reviewing women's narratives of their daily life in the space of the household and community by

examining their decision making processes (in expenditure and other finances), child bearing and rearing and their perception of how work transforms their self-worth. Beyond explaining the strategies and resources women draw on within such production lines of the GPN, the narratives of working women demonstrate how working allows women to reinvent the idea of womanhood (although this idea is context specific) so that women's roles extend the private spaces of the home to the more productive areas of their life.

Drawing on my empirical chapters, I was then able to locate and conceptualise agency by foregrounding the different stages of agency (conception, gestation and delivery). I have sought to bridge the gap between the theory of agency as has been presented in chapter two and the agency presented in the empirical chapters of this thesis by the women workers. The processes behind the strategies mentioned by authors such as Kabeer (2010) have been revealed such as negotiation, bargaining, compromise and resources (networks and earnings) that women draw on in their everyday work, home and community life. I have shown how women workers are active participants and have the capacity to navigate the social spaces to derive the things they have reason to value.

More importantly, I have argued that agency must be analysed within its context, the incorrect framing of agency can lead to incomplete policy advice and recommendation. For Farnworth and Munachonga (2010: 23), agency is narrowly perceived as one of being able to "define one's goals and act upon them", conditioned by access to resources since "without resources it is often impossible to realize a goal". This narrow view of agency drives these authors to imply that exercise of agency by women in Zambia is limited because "women generally have much less access to, or control over, critical productive resources such as land, machinery, or money, than do men" (Farnworth and Munachonga, 2010: 23). I have shown in this thesis that women's agency is demonstrated in different ways (through utilization of resources and strategies such as networking formally within the farm setting and informally in the community and the workplace through chilimba) as well

as in their ability to earn, this reflecting the broader socioeconomic, political and cultural context.

Thus, I have extended what has been done so far on women's integration into global markets and advanced the GPN framework with women workers' agency through their own accounts of work in the floricultural industry by bringing in the processes that affect the form and type of resources and strategies women draw on to pursue different courses of action (agency).

In conclusion, this study placed women workers' agency as the centre of analysis by capturing the different narratives of motivation to work, women's experience of work and how this relates to their home and community life. This study has contributed to the broader questions of whether integration into GPN contexts enhances women's agency. This study found that although the GPN provides an economic environment that undoubtedly opens up opportunities for employment for the women workers, its focus on meeting the economic upgrading options associated with the product upgrade to stay competitive at the expense of socially upgrading workers (through organising, better pay etc.) profoundly affected the types of agency workers could call on. The deliberate farm employment practices aimed at maintaining competiveness combined with poor working conditions constitute the main factors that inhibit the conception and gestation aspects of women's agency. I have shown that women engaged in such production chains still actively pursue their aspirations and reposition themselves by creatively drawing on different strategies and resources. Thus, acknowledging these resources and strategies can profoundly influence policy makers to improve the workplace to enhance women's wellbeing and agency outcomes.

Additionally, this study finds that within the Zambian cutflower context, women workers are strategic and relentless in their efforts to better their lives. Whether a woman is working for a farm that exports to the European market or regional market, the intensity and zeal that the women workers displayed was noteworthy. Each of the women interviewed demonstrated that women

are not powerless but see beyond the challenges they are presented with in the workplaces by working hard and hoping for a better future.

The women in my study have helped to bridge the gap that has been missing in the previous studies that show the outcomes of earning an income rather than the processes that led to the outcome (Barrientos, Kritzinger et al. 2005, Selwyn 2013). The conception, gestation stages of agency are much more likely to be strengthened by a change in the employment practices favouring consistent pay and farms willingness for an organised labour. Since the delivery stage is simply the observable outcome of women's choices, women's capacities and capabilities are likely to be affected by deliberate farm practices (permanent employment terms and consistent pay) that are inclined to social upgrading.

I have argued that the study of agency demonstrates that women assess their household dynamics. Hence, women cannot be seen as passive agents, rather they manipulate the environment, whether in ways that may be seen as circumspect, inconspicuous or utterly direct, they are nevertheless a result of decisive actions informing the conception, gestation and delivery stages of agency. Women demonstrate their awareness of the inequality within the household, and they understand that this is conditioned by their culturally disadvantaged position mirrored by gender stereotypes. They explain how they act decisively, negotiating or bargaining to improve their positions. Having demonstrated the mechanisms and pathways of women's agency within the GPN framework through women's experiences of work, this thesis has extended the understanding of agency of women integrated in global trade in labour intensive industries such as the cutflower industry and how paid work fits into women's profiles as homemakers.

8.7 Broader Limitations

While the GPN framework provides a compelling lens through which to view the broader context within which work and institutional relations take place (Henderson, Dicken et al. 2002), it has not been without criticism. Firstly, it

has been criticised for being too broad, making it analytically difficult to define the boundaries of both context and ensuing analysis (Cumbers, Helms et al. 2010). In practice, however, it is possible to use the GPN approach to zoom in on one aspect of context, say labour-capital relations, while relying on secondary sources to shed light on the broader context. While this demonstrates the wide-ranging vantage point of the GPN, it also casts light on its analytical deficiency because it takes for granted the insights of such sources. By focusing on agency and specifically women's integration in the GPN, other structural aspects of the GPN such as interventions of the government and local institutions may be inadequately addressed. These need to be unpacked, contextualised and integrated into the broader framework of analysis and implementation.

Agency can only be understood in context (Keesing 1981), which is informed by the complexity of structures and institutions, yet in general, the GPN literature mainly from the Manchester school (Henderson, Dicken et al. 2002, Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2010) explains this context by deference to a more general level of examining the existence of the structural constraints. The representation of the GPN from its advocates (Manchester school) as involving virtually all aspects of commercial and sociocultural production assumes that the GPN as a framework of analysis can explain the existence of the different actors. However, in reality these actors or institutions are separate from each other or, more exactly, operate in a fragmented and uncoordinated environment (Neilson and Pritchard 2009), which makes it hard if not impossible to imagine a coherent collage of relations between different and oftentimes conflicting players. In addition, it becomes difficult in practice to draw the boundaries of each institution including the scope and range of relations without reliance on the analyst's subjectivity.

Standards of production and labour via codes of conduct also represent a further index of institutional relations, pinpointing, in part, expected roles and relations of different players in the supply chain such as employers/producers and employees. In order to access international markets, farms must obtain some certification and subsequently adhere to codes of practice. Each of

these standards ranges over several broad issues such as environmental and social dynamics of production (Hughes 2001). In chapter 4, it was established that codes of conduct although themselves important for compliance and labour related issues, often run parallel to government intervention concerning production and labour, in whatever form and strength. These activities, although separate, aim to affect the agency outcomes of workers and their experiences of work. In practice, they may be disconnected from government policies and may subsequently act counter to them, or at least that the opportunities for mutually reinforcing behaviour are not captured, particularly by the standards that these employers abide by. For example, employers may abide by MPS and Global GAP standards, but as Riisgaard (2011) notes, these stress growth over social principles.

Government intervention, however, is not without fault as it may also be disconnected from growth principles that employers may follow, which in turn may compromise workers' welfare at the workplace. Indeed, government investment policy to promote sectoral competition and production can easily undermine conditions of work, subsequently constraining women's exercise of agency. For example, when the government of Zambia reintroduced import duty on greenhouse plastics, the farms responded by cutting costs of production, which, in practice, meant either one or a combination of the following: freezing wages, reducing employment, or restricting the rate of wage increases. Compared to other countries like Kenya, Zambia has limited supporting policies for cut flower farmers. Ultimately, pressure upon farm management to keep costs of production low can be passed onto workers (Kidder and Raworth 2004) through either or a combination of overtime, target setting and low wages.

Relations between institutions, actors and other players, including the underlying dynamics, all constitute the broader complexity of context. While the GPN goes some way to demonstrate its wide-ranging angle of focus, it does not address or, more appropriately, sufficiently deal with, intimate and intricate details of certain aspects of context that may affect production. For example, while the GPN has demonstrated and acknowledged the existence

of patriarchal relations at the household level and its impact upon how women experience work, the GPN fails to adequately account for the intricate details and thrust of the underlying patriarchy. That is, it does not delve into understanding what dynamics and factors cause patriarchy as a system of relations to come to being, thrive and evolve. To the extent that the GPN more or less makes light of these issues adds weight to its own weaknesses. But this also invites further analysis rather than completely diminishing the GPN as an analytical framework and calls for the use of the deficiencies of labour codes of conduct in engaging with local institutions on specialist concepts, such as that of agency, to help shine light on specific parts of the network that have been hitherto less understood. More importantly, GPN may be seen as less firm-centric than GVC and so is less adept at picking up these structural pressures. However, it is much more useful in showcasing the relationship between structure and agency as illustrated for example by the relations between workers and management within the context of cut flower farms.

Furthermore, although this thesis examined agency of women workers in the workplace and the home, some aspects of agency require further reflection. Specifically, one may reflect the idea of survival agency as this may simply explain workers' survival tactics, particularly in developing economies afflicted by absence of employment opportunities, rather than agency itself. This thesis argues that there is ambiguity or lack of clarity in the distinction between survival tactics and exercise of agency. Absence of certain employment safeguards, such as permanent and pensionable terms of employment, forced women workers in Zambian cut flower farms to rely on certain survival tactics. Withdrawing from social interaction during work breaks, for example, was seen as a viable tactic. But, in Kenya and Colombia where employment conditions and production arrangements are superior to Zambia's situation, permanent and pensionable employment, including support for mothering workers (Said-Allsopp 2013), have often improved women's experiences of work within an institutional set-up rather than leaving women to rely on their own individual initiatives. Thus, applying personal forms of agency more broadly in the GPN context must involve a deeper analysis of how agency is affected by institutions and structures beyond the production site. In addition,

other personal forms of agency may not easily be captured in the context of the GPN. In short, complex personal and structural contexts of agency may not simply be captured in the GPN framework.

Nevertheless, survival tactics are not in and of themselves static attributes of human relations, they can morph into strategic actions aimed at changing relations and improving women's conditions. But the point at which survival tactics shift into strategic agency is difficult to track because of the very nature of this evolution being a continuous rather than a stepwise or discrete process. What analysts see as outcomes are results which take place at the end of this process measured against its beginning.

Another point worth mentioning is that this thesis is based on a qualitative case which is more useful in gaining insight and enhancing the understanding of a phenomena (agency) within its specific context rather generalizing the understanding to different situations. The results of such findings cannot easily be transposed to another context bounded by its unique dynamics and complexities. While the activities of women workers in Zambia have informed the conceptualisation of agency in this thesis, it would be imprudent to apply this conceptual frame to a different context, say the Kenyan cutflower farms, without unearthing and being informed by the uniqueness of its context.

Since a case study is an in-depth look into a complex social phenomenon in its real life context (Yin 2009), I used this tool to elicit data from women workers about their experiences at work and their lives in general. Yet, the use of this method may present a challenge for those researchers attempting to generalize the understanding of such findings to broader context. For example, within the analytical schema of stages of action – conception, gestation and delivery – the context determines the exact activities (and their duration) constituting each stage. Socio-structural dynamics will affect what is conceived, how long it is nurtured and developed and, eventually, how it is executed. Thus, the inability to generalize is deeply rooted in the socio-structural context under which ideas are conceived, developed and promoted. However, I propose that conceptually defining conception, gestation and

delivery as stages of action helps to inform and acts as reference point for analysis seeking to generalize the lived experiences of different women workers.

8.8 Practical recommendations at international, national and farm levels

Given the buyer driven nature of the cut flower industry (as captured in chapter 2), the sale of cutflowers is dependent on tightly controlled export chains (Hughes 2001, Riisgard 2007). Codes of conduct, partially driven by buyers, though theoretically capable of bringing together different players including government, firms, trade unions, employer representative organizations, are incapable of ensuring decent work if left to operate in an automated fashion. Compliance initiatives have some way to go to completely understand the gendered nature of the decision to work, employment and the patriarchal nature of representative and governing institutions like trade unions despite the best efforts of NGO pressure groups such as Women at Work and Women Working Worldwide.

Although compliance standards are aimed at improving decent work for workers involved in such production chains (Hughes 2001), purchasing practices of retailers undermine the prospects for decent work (such as freedom of association and freedom from discrimination, decent pay and so on) through farm practices that favour competition among workers, encourage workers to employ survival tactics, overtime work practices with little or no pay and, discourage workers from finding time to organise. In other words, business practices employed by farm management in response to the broader international market inherently affect workers' resources and agency.

The cutflower industry in Zambia is underpinned by poor government support for farms as well as inadequate labour protection from exploitative practices practiced by employers. Absence of adequate inspection of farms and given the geographical specificity of the floricultural sector, there is potential for the local authorities to play a more active role protecting basic labour rights

enshrined in Zambian law and internationally promoted through for example the Decent Work agenda. Unfortunately, the deficiencies of labour codes of conduct in engaging with local institutions is what makes the decent work agenda program a challenging one for developing countries like Zambia.

On the one hand, there is a need to bring strong public regulation and scrutiny, which entails empowering local and national level structures of government, including representatives of labour. For example, at the local level, involvement of the local government can create a concentration of power in the interests of workers to counter and check the actions of employers. Local government councils may need to be more integrated in the areas of production to ensure that aspects of labour that do not favour decent work are confronted and redesigned. This would entail decentralisation of some structures and powers of labour agencies of the government in order to strengthen inspection and monitoring of company practices, not just in the interest of labour, but broader community interests.

The current scenario in the Zambian context generally is that local government councils do not have the power to provide checks and balances in the way farms condition employment practices as is the case in Colombia, where farms are monitored and scrutinized by local councils in an effort to encourage them to promote decent work conditions for their workers (Patel-Campillo 2012). Broadly speaking, the structural challenges such as lack of government support coupled with poor local-level involvement in the areas of production profoundly affects agency options at the level of employee-employer relations.

Also, the national-level development policies and practices influence profoundly what sort of employment opportunities are available to the household. The existing sociocultural system of relations in turn reflected in household-level participation in patriarchy promote or inhibit how labour is provided and in turn, its treatment in the farm setting. Thus, how both men and women respond to opportunities for employment and impact of these on the household dynamics must be understood partly by viewing the household as an arena of conflict, negotiation and consensus. It not simply that a woman

exploits an employment opportunity, or that the rewards of employment are shaped in accordance with her interests. She operates within the sociocultural constraints, and by relying on her agency and resources (community and household circumstances) around her, she can carve out an arrangement suitable to her.

Thus, recognising the context-specific way in which Zambian society operates can then help to locate influential actors who can then operate in a manner capable of improving conditions of employment and household relations with respect to women's disadvantages. For example, in Zambia, working in parallel to each other, the traditional system and the conventional law, can influence what aspects of both work and household dynamics require change or strengthening from a traditional and constitutional perspective. This may require engaging the community-level leaders within the communities to work closely with formal structures such as local government councils to strengthen areas of weakness in employer-employee relations, as well as household-level relations.

in a nutshell, issues of improved labour standards require a coordinated effort from multiple interactions both international and local, ranging from private standards being integrated in Government interventions at the domestic level on one end, on the other, horizontal actors such as local government though local councils, NGOs, trade unions need to work closely with each other to provide the necessary checks and balances in the industry and provide the necessary feedback to government and buyers.

8.9 Future research

I have extended the understanding of women's agency in production networks by delving into how the processes of agency (conception, gestation and delivery) are conditioned by how the GPN context affects women's capacity to reposition themselves in such chains. I have demonstrated the resources and strategies that contribute to/facilitate women's observable outcomes. However, future research might extend this analysis by examining more

closely the role of buyers (how they are motivated at present in accessing cheap labour). It may be worth investigating the role of actors and buyers and their various influences on how far this may go in affecting women's stages of agency or might even bring in new stages of agency (e.g. resistance). This would help to understand the ways in which buyers can help broaden the opportunities available to women workers especially during the gestation stage.

Further, the role of government and its policy directives on labour laws and trade policy might be influential in exposing how agency outcomes of workers could be enhanced within the GPN context especially since GPN researchers have acknowledged that the policy initiatives and labour regulations aimed at improving workers wellbeing have been insufficiently followed through. Improving worker's welfare would entail facilitating a permanent and pensionable scheme for workers and for producers, improving government's customs unit to reduce the complex export requirements imposed on producers.

Secondly, comparative studies with other countries say Kenya and Ethiopia, that already own freight carriers could help inform how having such facilities affects the working conditions of women especially because one of the reasons advanced for Zambia's cutflower sector challenges is the lack of airfreight facilities. By learning experiences from other countries with broadly similar socioeconomic challenges as Zambia, it would be tremendous import to establish how women workers in Kenya and Ethiopia experience employment and how this affects their agency.

Further, more in-depth studies interrogating men's views, and the specific context relating to patriarchy, would inform why power imbalances within and beyond the home persist (as well as how the conception, gestation and delivery stages are affected), since patriarchal relationships were a recurring theme in the analysis. Particularly, interacting with men and observing their contribution in the home setting would reveal how patriarchal boundaries affect the three stages of agency between men and women. That would give

a complete picture to that given by women's narratives of men's behaviour in the home.

Finally, my research gave me an opportunity to uncover the different processes that allowed women to take different courses of action, and helped me to foreground the many issues that have been raised within the GPN context. The findings from this study have broadened the understanding of women's position and consequent agency in agribusiness within the GPN context. I hope that the nuanced understanding and interpretation of agency presented in this thesis will profoundly affect future studies in other products within the GPN context in expanding how the quality of employment in the workplace can be enhanced so that aspects of conception, gestation and delivery can be strengthened and women's/worker's positions improved.

Appendix 1 Issues on concepts, methods and data

What constitutes as agency for women workers? Questions in women's focus group discussions

In order to establish what constituted as agency to women workers, the research focussed on asking the women in the FGDs what they were able to do after they started work as well as the things that are considered important to them. This line of questioning was intended to find what working had done for them in as far as extending their ability to make choices.

Focus Group discussions results

The focus groups responses were grouped according to the rankings of things they wanted to achieve in their lives based on women's own conceptualisation in an attempt to stay true to women's voices. However, in order to establish which of the issues ranked served to affect women's lives, the rankings were grouped according to first level choices (these were choices that were critical to women's life because they were had altered women's life, second level choices (potentially life altering) and third level choices (which were less consequential for women's lives. It was important to group the responses this was so as to determine the effects the different decisions women made about their lives in as far as illuminating the different spaces of agency and their intended or unintended purposes.

The Focus group discussions with women only groups were instrumental particularly in bringing out the different aspects of women's lives that they consider important and the reasons for valuing them. They were also important for illuminating the aspirations and goals that women had because of their work and in most instances and provided a window in extending towards the narrative of how certain aspirations and goals are defined within their work experience and illuminating on the broader life changes that women had experienced. Table below shows a summary of lists women considered important and the list of thing they could do after starting work before the

ranking of the lists by women themselves. But as can be seen from the lists below, they were recurring issues that women considered important to their lives across the different FGDs on the farms visited.

List of things considered important to the Women from different FGDs	List of things that women were able to do because of working
1. taking children to school is important because we want to give the children a bright future, that they may be able to acquire skills that may help them get higher paying jobs so that the children can then look after them in their old age or at least help them to sustain their life 2. finding money to help the children and orphans 3. selling groundnuts and maize and money to buy seed for other crops 4. I want to go back to school so that i can develop new skills 5. I want to be a landlord so that i can get rent money to help me start up a business 6. I want a business so that i can be able to pay school fees and help orphans 7. I want a different job other than this one that can pay me at least 800 kwacha 8. I want to own a house so that i don't pay rent 9. I want to take children to the university so that they can have skills to get higher paying job	• I am able to throw chilimba • paying rent • able to buy chitenges • I am able to buy my own things like soaps and clothes • I am able to buy food because I do not want my children to suffer (most men hide their money, if he hides, I hide" • work gives you a free mind, able to make my own budget • I can send my children to school • I don't have to beg • Can help relatives/parents • Free to borrow • Can start a business I want • I am more respected • My husband does not take me for granted • I don't have to depend on my husband all the time • I don't sit around to gossip at home

10. I want to live on the farm	
11. I want a car (this is something women envisioned for themselves once they saw themselves running a successful business and owning property like a house	
12. Chilimba	
13. important to be married	
14. Being respected	
1. working and getting paid is important because I can help my parents and be able to take my children to school	
2. need to educate children and look after my children because I want them to have a better future	
3. I want to buy a piece of land, build a house, rent it out for some extra income	
4. educate my siblings so that they can get better jobs	
5. want to start a business	
6. need to do some night school	
7. Salary increment, they agreed that this could go a long way sorting out most of the issues highlighted.	
8. Chilimba	
9. Being respected	
10. Being married	
1. taking children to school	
2. finding money to help the kids	

3. money to help children and orphans 4. a small piece of land to do this for agriculture 5.owning a car 6.going back to school 7.owning property and being landlords rather than having to pay someone for rent 8. to run a small business of selling household items 9. Job that could pay them at least more than 800 kwacha. 9. Owning their own homes. taking children to university 10. owning a piece of land rear some chickens other small businesses 11. Chilimba 12. Being married and respected	

Common Themes

Educating/raising children

Owning property

Doing chilimba

Being respected

doing business

Having good marital relations

Getting a bigger salary

One-on-one women worker's interviews

The one-one interviews were instrumental in deepening other aspects of individual agency that did not adequately come out in the FDGs. Particularly important were the individual changes that contribute to the definition of agency to be used in this study. These forms of agency are related to issues of self-reliance, self-confidence and having a free mind point to growing capabilities for women to create space for women to live the life they have reason to value or to self-assess their own opinions in bringing about meaningful actions to them

Cross-cutting themes between the FDGs and one-on-one women worker interviews

The Analysis of the issues raised in both the FDGs and the one-on-one interviews was followed by regrouping the themes into the cross cutting issues raised by the women in the interviews. Part of the interviews with the management and other key stakeholders sets the context of these outlined themes below. These outlined themes were derived after a close re-reading of the codes in each theme and ground the different contours of agency put forward by the women workers particularly

1. Work experience
2. Motivation to work/choosing to work
3. Time use and allocation
4. Household relations
5. Decision-making
6. Community norms and perceptions
7. Respect
8. Property ownership

9. Organising and representation

10. Doing Chilimba

11. Business opportunities

12. Women's Education and training

13. Personal well-being

14. Aspirations and Goals

It was clear from the interviews with the male workers, management and union leaders in situating and illuminating the different factors that serve to limit women's opportunities and constraints in the workplace based on the perceptions held by women working in such positions.so while women's explanations about their work experience was important, it was necessary to situate their perceptions in the broader context of the different structural constraints that serve to affect farm practices and strategies. However, the effects of these farm practices and strategies are far reaching for the women workers. Although the effects of farm practices are not immediately observable, they were reflected in the women time use at home and affected their care responsibilities.

Definition of agency arrived at

Agency is about making the most of your situation, being in a certain context limits not only your available options but how those options turn out. Agency to the women workers was about their ability to make the most of their employment benefits and use these benefits to negotiate their space for whatever action they desired in the home, community and at the workplace.

Their choices were reflected in the way they chose to work, how they used work to influence decisions in the home and how they perceived their new roles with their community members. Although there was an acknowledgement that they were deviating from the norm of their roles as home makers, women also saw themselves as victors in the community against their efforts to avoid the negative annotations of those women that had succumbed to their home making roles. They saw themselves as independent

beings in their own right but not necessarily as challengers to the patriarchal powers. Their independence was a reflection of the changes within themselves reflecting their awareness of self.

Appendix 2 Other emerging issues raised by women workers

Based on the fieldwork data analysis, they were issues that were raised by the women from all farms. These issues constituted the basis for which the experiences of work that women narrated were drawn from. The specific issues that were drawn from women's narratives were considered against the ideas of agency (purposeful/intentional actions aimed at achieving a desired end). Therefore, the major themes shown below are drawn from similar responses forwarded by different women workers from all the farms visited and thus have a bearing on the type of agency women exercised. Some of the issues are typical responses while a few are atypical, however, these issues foreground my argument of women being active participants in their circumstances.

Themes, sub-themes, Central inquiry and narratives of women

Theme	Sub-theme	Central inquiry	What women said
Work experience	Work tasks	What roles and responsibilities were assumed in working in a particular work space? Were there any differences across work spaces within the same farm?	There is no difference between the PH and GH

Women are good with their hands

The Pack house has more work

The greenhouse is better

Men do the same work as us women |

	Complaints and reporting	What issues do they face at work, say conflict and cooperation? What form do they take? How does this affect them? How does this affect their work?	I go to the supervisor when I have a complaint You have to work hard Sexual harassment cases are treated seriously here The madam helps us with anything that we need

			The manager responds very quickly when you report such cases
			We were forced to open Bank accounts
			We are charged a lot of money to maintain the accounts
			I get along with most my colleagues
			I keep to myself
			It's not easy to work with me and be their boss
			Women don't support each other
			Do not like gossiping

			Too much jealousy
	Relating with colleagues		Men are always giving excuses
			It's nice to work with women, they are a source of entertainment
			We don't get paid on time
			We have not been paid for two months
			We are paid on time
			We are not given overtime
			The boss rotates between me and my husband

	Salary issues		
			There is too much competition amongst the bunchers
			Men don't respect me here
			Women talk too much
	Incentives and motivation	Promotion: how women perceived the possibilities of promotion and opportunities at work	People here do not easily get promoted
			I have been working here for many years but I have not been recognised
			They only promote those that are liked by the supervisor
Broader life changes	Personal well-being	The changes women experienced as a results of	Work gives me a piece of mind

		working both in their experiences of work and how these experiences affect their lives outside work	I am happy that I do not have to beg
			I have shown my husband that he cannot take me for granted
			I have more control
			I am happy
			these days I don't fear my husband
			He doesn't control me
			He does not beat me
	Respect	How were women treated after starting work	My husband now respects me
			Am called on when there is a problem in the family

			Other women respect me more
			They know am making my own money
	Being independent and self-reliance		I can buy things for the house
			I can buy clothes for the children
			am able to but things independently without asking him for money
			can buy the things I want
			not having to depend on my partner

	Secret accounts	Informal ways that women use to save their money and the reasons behind having such accounts	Men drink all their money Important but brings problems We were taught at church to be open Possible depending on your relationship To ensure that children have food You can die and live your money Bad for marriage Good if husband is irresponsible

	Household relations-marital relations	Marital and family responsibilities relating to child care and other household chores	My husband now respects me He doesn't take me for granted He allows me to make decisions he is happy because i am helping to meet our family needs communication is important He used to beat me and shout all the time My husband says work spoils me There is peace in the house Not able to do the wife duties

			now he calls me sweet names such as mummy and madam
	Importance of marriage		It's important for a woman to be married
			People in the community do not respect you if you are not married
			Other women see you as a threat when you talk to their husbands

	Child care		We don't have time to look after our children
			The children look after themselves
			I rarely have time for my children
			I leave my 4-year-old with the neighbours
	Decision making-own, co-decision and men-only	Who decides what	We decide together
			My husband has a bigger say
			I make my own decisions
			Men should decide

	Ability to borrow		We decide what to buy in the house My husband can't stop me from working my husband would not say anything about family planning issues, I would do as I please I can now voice out I can buy things that are important to me

			He has a bigger say on the welfare of the kids
			I do not show my husband my money
			I will only show him my money if he shows me
			I decided to have a 3rd child
			I ask my husband just to show that I respect him
			He uses his money on himself
	Doing business		I am trusted because I work
			People in the community know that I can pay back

			I borrow every month to keep up
			At least I have another source of income
			Cannot depend on the salary alone
			No time to do business
			Plait hair
			Sell tomatoes
			Sell clothes
			Sell wigs
			Sell makeup

			Start a charcoal business
			Open a salon
			Open a restaurant
	Training and opportunities		We have been trained as peer educators
			I would love to do night school
			Want to do nursing
Property ownership	Property earnings and ownership	property acquired before and after working and the access in terms of income to this property	I have a house for rent
			My parents left me a house

			My husband left me a house
			I have some pigs
			I rear some chickens
Organising and representation	Union organising	Representation whether formal or informal at the farm and outside it	We don't know the purpose of the union
			The union has no power
			They just eat our money
			I don't pay union fees
			The union is useless
			It's important to be in the union, they can help you when you are in trouble

	Committees and worker forums		We have a worker's committee
			We have a gender committee
			We have a women's committee
			The worker's committee is more effective than the union
			The gender committee has helped us women
			We now have protective wear
			Women's issues are not recognised
			We have difficult to sit in the committee

			The company does not give us time to have meetings
	Doing chilimba		I am able to pay for university and college fees
			I started a business
			My husband is happy
			Salary is insufficient to do chilimba
			Am not able to do chilimba, money is not enough
	Church and community groups		They teach us how to treat our friends at work

			They teach us how to look after our homes
			We taught how to make your husband happy
Future aspirations	Goals and aspirations	The aspirations and goals that women had post working and the potential challenges they perceived to likely affect those aspirations	I want to start my own business
			I want a job that pays me more than 800 kwacha
			Am giving myself 5 years
			I don't see myself working here very long
	Options and strategies for exit		I don't see myself working here

			There is no time to look for other employment
			Am constantly asking my neighbours if they hear about work
			Am stopping next year, am ready to start my own farm
Community norms and perceptions	Perceptions about women's work		We have nothing to show for it
			Women who sit at home are drunkards, better to work
	Perceptions about what the community thinks about women		We are laughed at
			Women are supposed to be taking care of their husbands and children

			We are rebuked by fellow women because we leave our children by themselves
Time use and management	Time allocated for home	How women's time is allocated at work and at homes and the reasons advanced	Start early and knock off late, are like owls, we leave home when its dark and only get back when its dark
			Children and husbands are left alone but do house work late at night or early morning
			I don't have time for children's school activities and hospital runs

	Time allocated for work		We work all day and we sometimes too busy to go to the washroom
			All the hours are given to meet the targets
			we do overtime and its compulsory

Appendix 3 List of materials from various stakeholders interviewed

1. IUF Regional programme in Africa and National Union of Plantation Agricultural and Allied Workers (2010-2011): Improving the living and working conditions for workers in the flower sector through organising and promotion of Negotiations: Quarterly Report from April- June 2010
2. International Growth Centre (2014): Our work
3. Jesuit Centre for Theological reflections (2015): Basic Needs Basket Lusaka: May 2015
4. Learning Together (June 2011): An educational Manual for workers on the flower and vegetable export farms of East/Southern Africa and outsourcing on employment in the agricultural sector in Zambia
5. Government of Zambia: Statutory Instrument Number 3 of 2011: The Minimum Wages and Conditions of Employment Act (Laws, Volume 15, Cap. 276), The Minimum Wages and Conditions of Employment (Domestic Workers) Order
6. NUPAAW Report (2014) Study on the extent of Casualization of workers
7. Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Educational Fund: Translating Gender based violence
8. Zambia Export Growers Association (2005) Compliance Requirements for the Base Code (June)
9. Zambia Export Growers Association (2013) The need for incentives to the export horticultural industry: Submission of recommendations to the Minister of Finance-Honourable Alexander Chikwanda, Member of Parliament
10. Zambia Export Growers Association (2014) Chief executive report to the 30th annual general meeting of Zambia Export Growers Association held on Wednesday 24th September at the ZEGA association Boardroom.
11. Zambia Export Growers Association Manual (year not indicated, but as at 2015)
12. Zambia Export Growers Association company Cluster (year not indicated, but applicable as at 2015)
13. Zambia Export Growers Association chief executive report (March 2015)

Appendix 4 Process issues

My choice of methods may have presented (using on-farm and off- farm interviewing strategies) a challenge in as far as getting a comprehensive understanding of the cutflower industry work experiences and may have affected the quality of data collected and the conclusions drawn. To counter this challenge, I often asked some of the participants to meet me off-farm. This presented a risk to the workers especially that I did not inform farm management of my intentions. However, I would ask women to willing come and assured them that I was not to bring them any harm by mentioning these meetings to management nor their names. These interviews allowed for a more neutral environment but I was also careful not to take up much of their time especially knowing that they had family duties awaiting them. Other limitations stemmed from key informant interviews and farm management especially when it came to accessing data materials– e.g. access to employment records at farms, and current export sheets. It remained that the kinds of data that ZEGA and other industry organizations were willing to share with me was up to their discretion. This made it difficult for me to analyse the current export data against their views on losses and profit in this industry.

The interview locations on-farm were conducted within sight of company management and other workers. This may have made workers feel fearful and uncomfortable to answer the questions. However, I took great care to make the women relax and answer questions freely, and this was reflected in their responses in which a question about home life allowed them to talk in details about their marital relations.

In terms of selection, because I selected workers at random, there was an element of fear initially until I explained clearly that I was not part of management. I took great lengths to assure women that I was a researcher independent of the management by revealing my place of work in Zambia and my position. Upon revealing this information, some women that had high school children and were aspiring for their children to pursue higher education

asked me about entry requirements at the University of Zambia. I felt that revealing my position helped the women to speak freely with me.

Given the limited time I had to conduct interviews on the farms, some Focus group discussions were conducted by my partner who is also my husband currently pursuing his doctorate in economics at SOAS, University of London. I was *therefore confident* that the issues I wanted to examine at both a personal and group level would be adequately covered in his interviews. The choice to use my partner as a research assistant arose when my initial research assistant cancelled her contract due to family issues. Given the limited time I had to conduct all the interviews, my partner (being a doctoral student and having conducted similar interviews) was a safer option than training someone completely new especially that my partner was also the one driving me around the research sites. I felt that in some interviews, the women and men he interviewed were very open despite my fear that certain participants may not want to open up to a man. Therefore, the interview process went better than I expected in as far as obtaining data for this thesis.

Lastly, because this research particularly focused on women workers as the main unit of analysis in the one-on-one interviews except in focus group discussions were groups of men were interviewed (though in separate groups of men and women), I felt that the data collected from men-only focus groups did shed some light on some of the shared experiences that men and women tend to have at work. However, had resources allowed, one-on-one interviews with men would have shed more light on their personal experiences of work in a more comprehensive way.

Appendix 5 Key Interview guide

The key topic areas that were used to investigate women's experience of employment are as follows

1. What motivates women to work on the cut flower farms?

2. how do they reconcile their time use based on their experiences of work on the farm?

3. how do women deal with work space relations and dispute resolutions?

4. what are the broader life changes that have resulted from working on such farms and how does it affect their home life?

5. What forms of organizing are women engaged in at work and outside work both formally and informally?

6. What factors serve to limit women's decisions at home and at work and how do they reconcile the two?

7. Where do they see themselves in the future (regarding future aspirations with references to options for exit and strategies?

Appendix 6 Guiding Interview Questions

1.0   **ZEGA interview guide**

-What is the broad characteristics and history of the floriculture industry? (ZEGA)

-What is the role of your institution to this industry? (Asked also to different stakeholders such as ZEGA, NUPAAW, NGOs, Labour office etc.). Purpose of this question is to identify the size of the industry and general problems as defined by different stakeholders associated with the floriculture industry in Zambia.

-How often do you carry out labour inspections on floriculture farms? (National Labour office) (Here consideration of how the labour offices carries out inspections to determine whether employers comply with labour laws, and legislation concerning all workers as well as how the labour office deals with complaints

-To what extent are farms open to workers organising?

-What have been the trends regarding organising of workers

1.2 **NUPAAW interviews with representatives**

-What are have been the trends regarding organising of workers?

-Which companies are open to organising of workers?

-Which workers do you represent and why? (to find the composition of workers represented by NUPAAW)

-How do you deal with challenges of representation?

-How do the deal with work dismals, sexual harassment, worker complaints (against employers)?

-How effective are your strategies for working with complaints from workers?

-Who are your network organisations?

-What is your relationship with these organisations?

-Does your relationship affect how you represent workers? Do some of these associations deal directly with the workers?

-How do deal with employers in the industry?

-How are women encouraged to form gender committees and associations?

-What affiliations does the union have with international organisations relating to women workers?

-What are the marked improvements/not can be attributed to these affiliations that the union has had?

-What changes would you like to see in this industry regarding workers' rights?

-What do you think other stakeholders should do for these changes to happen?

-How do you see your role changing in this industry?

1.3 **Company interviews with Management**

-How long has this company been operating? (structure)

-Which type of flowers do you grow? Which of those are more marketable? (product type)

-Who do you sell your flowers to? (What is their level of dependence on the European market for export of flowers) and does this affect their bargaining power? (identify export market)

-What are the changing dynamics in the floricultural industry and how do these changes affect company strategies especially employment? (changes to product type, export market on strategies for employment)

-Who do they employ and why? (composition of workers by sex and status and category of work)

-How are the workers rewarded for hard/quality work? What qualifies as hard work/quality work?

-How are rewards distributed? (Income and other entitlements)

-How do you deal with disputes and conflict of workers? (Sexual harassment, worker complaints etc.)

-Are you involved in standard setting?

-What are the benefits and challenges of the standards currently in use?

-How has the industry evolved regarding standards of production?

To find out how employment is structured and the division of labour (workforce composition/structure and formation) and to find out how employers deal with Issues of social security related to basic hire, temporary work and overtime Other Stakeholders (different questions will be asked according to the role of the stakeholder in the industry)

1.4 **Women worker interviews**

1.4.1 **Focus Group Discussions (women workers)**

This will use activities listed in the table of focus group discussions.

To open the discussion, these are some of the questions that women workers will be asked

1.What are the broader life changes that you have experienced working in this industry?

2.When did you join this industry, how did you come to work in this industry

3.did you have a choice or not and what was your life like before you joined

4. What were expectations when you joined-especially concerning the choices and opportunities you might have

5.Have you had any new choices and opportunities since you started working here

I will then pause and prompt these questions in the different aspects of education and skills, healthcare, finances/income, housing, social, community, friends, family, status/confidence and other

They will be asked if they expected the changes

These questions will then open up for other activities like the ones listed below

-Will involve activities ranging from letting women identify the priorities that are important to them (Mapping)

-Followed by identifying priorities by order of importance (ranking)

-Followed by courses of action to achieve those priorities (river of life activity)

-Next activity will involve identifying alternatives to change (perceived alternatives to change)

For example, the river of life activity can be used to depict women worker's perspective of where they are and where they hope to see themselves (Current vs. Future plans)

1.4.2 Focus group discussion (men)

This will use activities listed in the table of focus group discussions.

How has working in this industry changed your views about gender roles?

-What do you think of the women you work with? (Finding out if the men think women are equal partners at work?

-Is your work different from what women do?

-How does this work affect you outside work? (To determine household relations and effects on community from men working in this industry).

-How are decisions about income made? (to determine how decisions about income are made; one of the activities in the focus group activity table will be chosen to depict this more clearly)

4.5 Women workers on farm and off farm (one on one priority questions)

Questions teasing out the broader life changes women workers have experienced:

a. What are the broader life changes that you have experienced as a result of working in this industry? Same question emphasised to investigate deeper how women experience working in this industry but also how this affects their agency.

b. How has working in this industry changed your views about gender/roles since you started working

c. How have your feelings about yourself changed (self-confidence, self-worth, potential etc.)?

d. What can you do now that you could not do before you started working?

e. How is gainful employment affecting your status at the household level and in the community?

Questions attempting to find a link between organising and agency:

a. What forms of interaction/organising are you engaged in? Are you a member of a group?

b. How are women working together to challenge some of the constraints they are facing? The constraints could range from long working hours with no extra pay, maternity leave, promotional issues/favours and general work place relations.

c. How do women support each other and learn from each other's actions?

d. What opposition did you encounter?

e. To what extent and how was opposition overcome?

f. What strategies/resources have you used to achieve this?

g. Did you get external assistance to help you to overcome or deal with some of the issues you are grappling with at work? If so, how?

These questions will shed more light on the kind of goals that women have, the arenas in which they exercise/or not their agency, and the potentially coercive forces that impede agency e.g. spouse, family, community etc. The

questions (1-6) below will supplement the main priority questions for women workers.

4.5.1 Supplementary questions:

1.   Personal background (start-up questions)

-       Age

-       Marital status

-       Family size; number of children

-       Level of education

-       Place of residence; type of house, number of rooms

-       Property, Assets; Do you own assets such as, Cattle, goats, chickens, etc…? Information about numbers of each asset would be useful to compile some kind of wealth index.

2.   History of work in the cut flower industry (supplementary questions that will feed into the priority questions)

-       When did you start working in this industry?

-       How did you learn about this job?

-       What motivated you to work in this industry as opposed to other industries?

3.   Decision-making (specific questions that will identify different arenas of agency and consequently feed into the power to, within, with and over analysis previously stated) many of these questions will feed into the priority questions as well as providing supplementary information)

-       How has this work shaped your household relations? Question to be elaborated during the interview

-       Has working in this industry affected your relationship with your husband/ family/friends?

-       Who takes care of the kids whilst at work? (mothers)

-       What do you spend your income on?

-       Who makes decisions about how you spend your income?

-       To what extent are you involved in making decisions about household income, both your income and that of your partner?

-       Who has rights to your house or land?

-       How does working affect your level of decision making concerning the household expenditure?

- How do you make decisions about how many children you should have?

- Do you have influence on how you raise them? To obtain this information, it would useful if she decides or is consulted in terms of which schools the children go to, who the children marry etc (education, marriage)

- Do you think you are capable of making decisions about important things to your life?

NOTE: Effect on household relations both at home and community, effect on self-identity, autonomy to make decisions about money (within sub-categories of income, assets and reproduction).

Personal effects of work

- What kind of duties do you perform at work?

- What do you think about your job status and how does your category of work affect your experience of work? Employee perception

- How do you relate with your colleagues/employers?

- Are there possibilities for promotion, how does this happen? Is the process open to anyone and is it fair?

- Are there people that have/not been promoted that you feel should have/ not been promoted?

- Does promotion change your status/ relations significantly within and outside work?

Regarding status and relations at work, bargaining power from employee's perspective, issues of promotion as well as employment quality (wages, social security, job status)

4. Organising within and outside the workplace (this is the supplementary aspect of the impact of women utilising their agency role. It has more to do with assessing impact of agency arising from collective action and how in turn collective action affects other agency regarding roles)

- Do you belong to any organisation?

- How does that organisation help you?

- To find out the channels and alliances that women use to exercise their agency (forms of organising that women engage in, both formal and informal)

- Has your experience of work changed since joining this organisation?

- What forms of organising are you aware of that you are not part of?

- Have you ever been approached to join that organisation?

- What do you think are the challenges and opportunities of being organised?

- What other networks are you involved in other than the current organisation? (church, community, women's rotate credit) If at all they belong to an organisation

(To assess the challenges and opportunities arising from organising and effects of organising on women's agency).

5. Disputes and conflicts (worker to employer relations)

Have you had any disputes or disagreements here at work and what kind, what did they involve?

- -How do you deal with disputes arising in the process of your work? (Complaints)

- Is there a support person who you can see to make any complaints that you might have?

- How discreet is this person/office in ensuring that your identity is protected?

- Are you able to complain about your problems that you have at home to this support person?

Here, conflict with other workers and employers (issues of overtime, sexual harassment will be considered, this will be done to ascertain how work place relations affect the agency role of women workers

6. Future plans

- Given the nature of your work, what are your aspirations after having worked in this industry? Life plans in general / hope for children etc. To get an understanding of the decisions that women are grappling with that will either maintain their status quo or will be empowering.

-

5.0 NGO interviews

- When did you start working with the workers?

- Which channels do you use to access the workers?

- Are you affiliated to any international organisation?

\- Can you attribute any changes to the lives of women workers that you have worked with?

\- How important is your role in this industry regarding workers' rights?

\- How do you think your role will change in the future?

To get a better understanding of how NGOs and trade unions operate and also how influential they are in helping women workers access better rights and entitlements from government and the more commercial actors

Appendix 7 List of women workers interviewed individually

Note that pseudonyms are used in order to protect the identity of the women, while a few characteristics of the women – their marital status, number of children and age –are presented here.

Pseudonyms	marital status	Number of children	age
Amai Sakala	Widow	2	50
Amake Mulenga	Single, lives with her mum	2	27
Amai Banda	Widow	3	41
Amake Lonti	Widow	4	45
Amake John	Married	2	30
Amake Lovemore	Married	3	28
Amake Chungu	Married	3	40
Amake Nelly	Married, lives with husband at opposite farm (ZAMBEEF) where husband works	3	28
Amake Sam	Divorced/Separated; lives with a sister on-farm whose husband works within the farm	2	29
Amake Davi	Married	5	33
Amake Talent	Married since 2010	3	36
Amake Zimba	Married since 1999	6	35
Amai Zulu	Divorced/Separated; lives on-farm, husband misused money	6	48
Brenda	Single, a Grade 12 graduate	0	23
Amake Pius	Married	2	22

Amake Chanda	Divorced	2	30
Amai Nyirongo	Married	5	52
Amake Mutale	Married	3	32
Thoko	Single, lives with parents	0	20
Amake Nelson	Divorced	5	35
Amake Fridah	Married	3	27
Nellia	Single, lives with parents in nearby residence, G12	0	19
Amake Dominic	Married	5	36
Amai Nyriongo	Widow	1; had four children, 3 died	55
Amake Damien	Married	6	36
Amake Mabvuto	Married	1	22
Jessy	Single	1	33
Amake Levy	Divorced	1	25
Amake Dailess	Widow	3	39
Amake Yotam	Widow	2	24
Amake John	Divorced	3	38
Amake Sibo	Married for ten years	1, 10yr old	30
Amake Gonde	Divorced because husband went mad	2	39
Amake Shuma	Married	2	28
Amake Petulo	Divorced, Husband went mad	3	23
Amai Tembo	Widow	6	50
Amai Nyirenda	Widow	6	43

Amake Sandy	Divorced	1	26
Amake Talia	Widow	3	33
Amake Mimi	Divorced	1	29
Amake Gwen	Married	7	35
Amake Mangani	Widow	1	28
Amai Kapaso	Widow	4	42
Amake Fanny	Married	2	28
Amake Mwanida	Widow	2	28
Amake Vero	Married	5	39
Amai Muumbe	Widow	4	45
Amake Nachi	Married	4	37
Amake Bibian	Divorced	2	36
Amake Nonde	Married	2	36
Amake Fidess	Single	2	23
Sibo	Single	0	21
Amai Tendai	Married	2	43
Kessina	Single	0	22
Mailess	Single, G12	0	28
Amake Vaida	Married	5	32
Amake Bona	Married	4	40
Amake Chiko	Married	2	33
Amake Lucy	Divorced	2	25

Amake Kafula	Married	2	25
Amake Misozi	Divorced	3	25
Amake Jairos	Married	1	20
Amake Petrina	Married	1	37
Amake Fanwell	Widow	4	35
Amai Mwale	Widow	2	51
Amake Rudo	Divorced	4	30
WWRGH	Married	3	30
Amake Chris	Widow	2	33
Amake Doreen	Married	8	40
Amake Chuma	Married	1	25
Amai Mwanza	Divorced	6	45
Amake Chalesi	Divorced	4	36
Amake Joze	Divorced	4	40
Amake Clement	Married	4	34
Amake Vivi	Single	1	23
Amake Faith	Married	3	36
Amake Chansa	Widow	4	35
Amake Donna	Married	4	35
Amake Tatenda	Married	4	34
Amake Mable	Married	1	37

Bibliography

(2011). The Minimum Wages and Conditions of Employment Act

(Laws, Volume 15, Cap. 276). Zambia, Government of Zambia. **(Laws, Volume 15, Cap. 276)**.

Alkire, S., et al. (2013). "The women's Empowerment in Agricultural index." World Development **52**: 71-91.

Baden, S. (2013). "Women's collective action in African agricultural markets: the limits of current development practice for rural women's empowerment." Gender & Development **21**(2): 295-311.

Bair, J., Ed. (2009). Frontiers of Commodity Chain Research. Stanford, California, Stanford University Press.

Bair, J. (2009). Global commodity chains: Genealogy and Review. Frontiers of Commodity Chain Research. J. Bair, Stanford University Press.

Bank, W. (2013). Zambia Economic Brief : Zambia's Job Challenge: Realities on the Gorund. Washington, DC, World Bamk.

Barrientos, S. (2001). "Gender, Flexibility and Global Value Chains." IDS Bulletin **32**(3): 83-93.

Barrientos, S. (2002). Mapping the codes through the value chain: from the researcher to the detective. Corporate Responsibility and Labour rights: Codes of Conduct in the Global Economy. R. Jenkins, R. Pearson and G. Seyfang, Earthscan Publications.

Barrientos, S. (2008). "Contract Labour: The 'Achilles Heel' of Corporate Codes in Commercial Value Chains." Development and Change **39**(6): 977-990.

Barrientos, S. (2013). "Corporate Purchasing practices in Global Production networks: A socially contested terrain." Geoforum **44**: 44-51.

Barrientos, S. and A. O. Bobie (2016). Promoting Gender Equality in the Cocoa-Chocolate Value Chain: Opportunities and Challenges in Ghana

www. GDI Working Paper 2016-006. Manchester, University of Manchester.

Barrientos, S., et al. (2003). "A Gendered Value Chain Approach to Codes of Conduct in African Horticulture." World Development **31**(9): 1511-1526.

Barrientos, S. and B. Evers (2014). Gendered Production Networks: push and pull on corporate responsibility. New Frontiers in Feminist Political Economy. S. M. Rai and G. Waylen. London, Routledge.

Barrientos, S., et al. (2010). Economic and Social Upgrading in Global Production Networks: Developing a Framework of Analysis. Capturing the Gains working paper, international labor Review.

Barrientos, S., et al. (2005). "Gender, Work and Vulnerability in African Horticulture." IDS Bulletin 36(2): 74-79.

Barrientos, S., et al. (2011). "Decent work in global production networks:Framing the policy debate." International Labour Review 150(3-4).

Baxter, P. and S. Jack (2008). "Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers " The Qualitative Report 12(4): 544-559.

Bell, L. (2013). Ethics and Feminist Research. Feminist Research Practice. S. N. Hesse-Biber, SAGE.

Bell, S. and K. Newitt (2010). Decent work and poverty eradication: literature review and two-country study: A study for the Decent Work and Labour Standards Forum

Ergon Associates Limited

Bhatty, Z. (1980). Economic Role and Status of Women: A Case Study of Women in the Beedi Industry in Allahabad,. ILO Working Paper. Geneva, ILO Working Paper.

Blaikie, N., Ed. (2007). Approaches to social enquiry, polity press.

Blowfield, M. E. and C. S. Dolan (2008). "Stewards of Virtue? The Ethical Dilemma of CSR in African Agriculture." Development and Change 39(1): 1-23.

Breton, M. (1994). "On the Meaning of Empowerment and Empowerment-Oriented Social Work Practice." Social Work With Groups 17(3): 23-37.

Bryman, A., Ed. (2012). Social Research Methods. New York, oxford university press.

Carswell, G. and G. D. Neve (2013). "Labouring for Global markets:conceptualising labour agency in global production networks." Geoforum 44: 62-70.

Catherine, D. and H. John (2003). "Changing governance patterns in the trade in fresh vegetables between Africa and the United Kingdom." Environment and Planning **36**: 491-509.

Cesnulyte, E. (2013). Limited Agency in a Neo-liberal World: The Case of Female Sex Workers in Mombasa,

Kenya. unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds.

Chambers, R. (2005). Ideas for Development, Earthscan from Routledge.

Charlotte, E. (1992). African men and family planning: a discussion paper, Development Fund for Africa, U.S. Agency for International Development. Washington D.C. , Development Fund for Africa, U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau for Africa.

Cleaver, F. (2001). Institutions, Agency and the limitations of participatory approaches to Development. Participation: The new Tyranny. B. Cooke and U. Kothari, Zed Books.

Cleaver, F. (2007). "Understanding Agency in Collective Action." Journal of Human Development **8**(2): 223-244.

Coe, N. M. (2009). Global Production Networks. The International Encyclopedia of Human Geography. R. Kitchin and N. Thrift. Oxford, Elsevier**:** 556-562.

Coe, N. M. and D. C. Jordhus-Lier (2010). "Constrained agency? Re-evaluating the geographies of labour." Progress in Human Geography **2**(35): 211-233.

Coles, C. and J. Mitchell (2011). Gender and agricultural value chains: A review of current knowledge and practice and their policy implications

Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Cornwall, A. (2013). Preface. Organising Women workers in the informal Economy: Beyond the weapons of the weak. N. Kabeer and R. Sudarshan. London, Zed books.

Cornwall, A., et al. (2007). Introduction: Feminisms in Development: contradictions, contestations and challenges. Feminisms in Development: contradictions, contestations and challenges

A. Cornwall, E. Harrison and A. Whitehead. Zed Books.

Cumbers, A., et al. (2010). "Class, Agency and Resistance in the Old Industrial City." Antipode **42**(1): 46-73.

Datta Gupta, N., et al. (2008). "PERSPECTIVE ARTICLE: The impact of Nordic countries' family friendly policies on employment, wages, and children." Review of Economics of the Household **6**(1): 65-89.

Dicken, P. (2011). Global shift: Mapping the changing contours of the world economy, SAGE.

Djamba, Y. K. (1995). "Family Planning in Africa: Old Belief and New Perspective." African Population Studies **10**(November).

Djamba, Y. K. (1995). "'Family Planning in Africa: Old Belief and New Perspective." African Population Studies **10**.

Dolan, C. (2004). "On farm and Packhouse: Employment at the bottom of a global value chain." Rural Sociology **69**(1): 99-126.

Dolan, C. and J. Humphrey (2000). "Governance and trade in fresh vegetables: The impact of UK supermarkets on the african Horticulture Industry." Journal of Development Studies **37**(2): 147-176.

Dolan, C., et al. (2002). Gender, Rights and Participation in the Kenya Cut Flower Industry, Natural Resource Institute.

Dolan, C. and k. Sorby (2003). Gender and Employment in High-Value Agriculture Industries. Agricultural and Rural Development Working paper, World Bank. **7**.

Duflo, E. (2011). " Women's Empowerment and Economic Development." National Bureau of Economic Research **Working paper 17702**.

Dweyer, D. and J. Bruce, Eds. (1988). Women and Income in the Third World. Stanford University, Stanford University Press.

Eade, D. and A. Leather, Eds. (2005). Development, NGOs and labor unions: Terms of Engagement. Bloomfield, USA, Kumarian press, Inc.

Elson, D. (1999). "Labor Markets as Gendered Institutions: Equality, Efficiency and Empowerment Issues." World Development **27**(3): 611-627.

Epstein, A. L. (1971). "The Network and Urban Social Organization". 'Social Networks in Urban Situations: Analyses of personal Relationships in Central African Towns'. J. C. Mitchell. Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Evans, A. (2014). "'Women Can Do What Men Can Do': The Causes

and Consequences of Growing Flexibility in Gender

Divisions of Labour in Kitwe, Zambia."

Southern African Studies **40**(5): 981-998.

Evans, A. (2015). "History Lessons for Gender Equality from the Zambian Copperbelt, 1900-1990." Gender, Place and Culture **22**(3): 344-362.

Evans, A. (2016). "'For the Elections, We Want Women!': Closing the Gender Gap in Zambian Politics." Development and Change **47**(2): 388-411.

Evans, A. (2017). "Patriarchal unions = weaker unions? Industrial relations in the Asian garment industry." Third World Quarterly: 1-20.

FAO (2011). The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11: Women in agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development.

Farnworth, C. R. and M. Munachonga (2010). Gender Aware Approaches in Agricultural Programmes – Zambia Country Report: A special study of the Agricultural Support Programme (ASP), Secretariat for Evaluation: Sida.

Fine, B. (2010). Women's Employment and the Capitalist Family. London, Routledge Revival.

Finlayson, C. and M. Palmvang (2016). "The struggle to empower trade union members: insights from Zambia." Development in Practice **26**(8): 972-983.

Fold, N. (2011). "Frontiers of commodity chain research: Book review." Economic geography **87**(1): 101-103.

Foster, S., et al. (2012). "'Sweeping is women's work': employment and

empowerment opportunities for women through

engagement in solid waste management in

Tanzania and Zambia." International Journal of Health Promotion and Education **50**(4): 203-217.

Freidberg, S. (2001). "On the trail of the global green bean methodological consideartions in a multi-site ethnography." Global Network **1**(4): 353-368.

Friedmann, S. F. (2006). Assembing flowers and cultivating homes: Labor and Gender in Colombia, Rowman & Littlefields Publishers, inc.

Gaventa, J. (2006). "Finding the spaces for change: A power analysis." IDS Bullentin **37**(6).

Gereffi, G. (1994). The organization of buyer-driven global commodity chains: How US retailers shape overseas production networks. Commodity Chains and Global Capitalism. G. Gereffi and M. Korzeniewicz. Westport, CT, Greenwood Press.

Gereffi, G. (1995). Global production systems and third World development. Global Change, Regional Response: The New International Context of Development. B. Stallings. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. .

Gereffi, G. and J. Lee (2012). "Why the World suddenly cares about Global Supply Chains." Journal of Supply Chain management **48**(3).

Hale, A. and M. Opondo (2005). "Humanising the cut flower chain: confronting the realities of flower production for workers in Kenya."

Hale, A. and M. Opondo (2005). "Humanising the Cut Flower Chain: Confronting the Realities of Flower Production for Workers in Kenya." Antipode **37**(2): 301-323.

Hansen, K. T., Ed. (1992). Cookstoves and Charcoal Braziers: Culinary Practices, Gender, and Class in Zambia. African Encounters with Domesticity, Rutgers University Press.

Hansen, K. T., Ed. (1997). Youth and the city in the Global south. Tracking Globalisation, Indiana University Press.

Harding, S., Ed. (1987). Feminism and Methodology:social science issues, Indiana University Press.

Henderson, J., et al. (2002). "Global production Networks and the analysis of Economic Development. ." Review of international Political economy **9**(3): 436-464.

Hennick, M., et al. (2011). Qualitative Research Methods, SAGE.

Hesse-Biber, S. N., Ed. (2013). Feminist Research Practice: A Primer, SAGE.

Hopkins, T. K. and I. Wallerstein (1977). " Patterns of Development of Modern World-Systems." <u>Review</u> **1**(2): 11-145.

Hughes, A. (2001). "Global commodity networks, ethical trade and governmentality: organizing business responsibility in the Kenyan cut flower industry." <u>Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers</u> **26**(4): 390-406.

Hughes, A., et al. (2014). "Embedding Fairtrade in South Africa: Global Production Networks, National Initiatives and Localized Challenges in the Northern Cape." <u>Competition & Change</u> **18**(4): 291-308.

Humphrey, J. and H. Schmitz (2001). "The Governance in Global Value Chains." <u>Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Bullentin</u> **32**(3).

Jaffee, S., et al. (2011). Making the Grade: Smallholder Farmers, Emerging Standards, and Development Assistance Programs in Africa A Research Program Synthesis. Washington DC, World Bank.

Jaffee, S., et al. (2003). Zambia: The Challenge of Competitiveness and Diversification. Washington DC, World Bank.

Jones, E., et al. (2012). "Women producers and the benefits of collective forms of enterprise." <u>Gender & Development</u> **20**(1): 13-32.

Jules-Rosette (1982). "Women's Work in the Informal Sector: A Zambian Case Study." <u>International women in Development</u>.

Justice, D. (2002). The international trade union movement and the new codes of conduct. <u>Corporate Responsibility and Labour Rights: Codes of Conduct in the Global Economy</u>. R. Jenkins, R. Pearson and G. Seyfang, Earthscan.

Kabeer, N. (1999). "Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment." <u>Development and Change</u> **30**: 435-464.

Kabeer, N. (2000). <u>The Power to Choose: Bangladeshi Women and Labour Market Decisions in London and Dhaka</u>. London, Verso.

Kabeer, N. (2000). "Social Exclusion, Poverty and Discrimination Towards an Analytical Framework." <u>IDS Bulletin</u> **31**(4): 83-97.

Kabeer, N. (2001). <u>The power to choose: Bangledesh Women and labour market decisons in London and Dhaka</u>. London, Verso.

Kabeer, N. (2003). <u>Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals A Handbook for Policy-Makers and Other Stakeholders New Gender Main.</u> London, Commonwealth Secretariat.

Kabeer, N. (2004). "Globalization, labor standards, and women's rights: dilemmas of collective (in)action in an interdependent world." <u>Feminist Economics</u> **10**(1): 3-35.

Kabeer, N. (2005). "Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third millennium development goal 1." <u>Gender & Development</u> **13**(1): 13-24.

Kabeer, N. (2010). Women's empowerment, Development interventions and the Management of information flows. <u>IDS Bullentin</u>. Oxford, Blackwell Publishing Ltd. **41**.

Kabeer, N. (2014). The rise of the female bread winner: reconfigurations of marriage, motherhood and masculinity in the global economy. <u>New frontiers in Femininst Political Economy</u>. S. M. Rai and G. Waylen. London, Routledge.

Kabeer, N., et al. (2013). "Organising women workers in the informal economy." <u>Gender & Development</u> **21**(2): 249-263.

Kandiyoti, D. (1998). Gender, Power and Contestation: Rethinking Bargaining and Patriarchy. <u>Feminist Visions and Policy: Gender analysis and Policy</u>. C. Jackson and R. Pearson. London and New York, Routledge.

Katz, C. (2004). <u>Growing up Global: Economic Restructuring and Children's Everyday Lives</u>. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Keesing, R. (1981). Introduction to Cultural Anthropology: A Contemporary Perspective. C. Obbo. New York, Hold Rinehart and Winston.

Keesing, R. (1981). <u>Introduction to Cultural Anthropology: A Contemporary Perspective</u>. New York, Hold Rinehart and Winston

Kevane, M. (2004). <u>Women and Development In Africa: How Gender Works</u>, Lynne Rienner.

Kidder, T. and K. Raworth (2004). "'Good jobs' and hidden costs: Women workers documenting the price of precarious employment." <u>Gender & Development</u> **12**(2): 12-21.

Klaveren, et al. (2009). An overview of women's work and Employment in Zambia: Decisions for Life MDG3 project Country Report. Amsterdam, Netherlands, Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labour Studies.

Knorringa, P. and L. Pegler (2006). "Globalisation, Firm Upgrading and Impacts on Labour." Royal Dutch Geograhpical society KNAG **97**(5): 470-479.

Komarovsky (1987). Book Review Of Hard Choices by Gerson Kathleen. Hard Choices: How Women decise about Work, Career and Motherhood.

Kung, L. (1994). Factory women in Taiwan, Columbia University Press.

Legge, et al. (2006). The production of fresh produce in Africa for export to the United kingdom: Mapping different value chains, Natural Resource Institute.

Lie, J. (1991). "Embeding Polanyi's Market Society." Sociological Perspectives **34**(2): 219-235.

Longwe, S. H. (1985). "Legalized discrimination against women in Zambia',." Zambia Association for Research and Development(102).

Lykke, N., Ed. (2010). Feminist Studies: A Guide to Intersectional Theory, Methodology and Writing, Routledge.

Mbizvo, M. T. and D. J. Adamchak (1991). "'Family Planning Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of Men in Zimbabwe' " Studies in Family Planning **22**(1): 31-38.

Merk, J. (2014). Living Wage in Asia Report 2014.

Merk, J. (2014). Living Wage in Asia Report 2014", Clean Clothes Campaign.

MGCD (2014). 'National Gender Policy'. Lusaka Zambia, Minnistry of Gender and Child Development.

Milberg, W. and D. Winkler (2011). "Economic and social upgrading in global production networks: Problems of theory and measurement." International Labour Review **150**(3-4).

Miles, M. B. and A. M. Huberman, Eds. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded source book. Thousand Oaks, , CA: Sage. .

Ministry of Gender and Child Development, M. (2014). National Gender Policy. Zambia.

Molyneux, M. (1985). "Mobilization without emancipation? Women's interests, state, and revolution in Nicaragua." Feminist Studies **11**(2).

Moser, C. (1989). "Gender planning in the third world: meeting practical and gender needs." World Development **17**(11): 1799-1825.

Moser, C. O. N. (1989). "Gender planning in the third world: Meeting practical and strategic gender needs." World Development **17**(11): 1799-1825.

Munday, J. (2013). The practice of feminist focus gorups. Feminist research practice: A primer. S. N. H. -Biber, SAGE.

Neilson, J. and B. Pritchard (2009). Value Chain Struggles: Institutions and Governance in the Plantation Districts of South India, Wiley.

NUPAAW (2008). Cut Flower Report Zambia. Lusaka, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Parpart, J. (2013). choosing silence:Rethinking Voice, Agency, and Women's Empowerment. secrecy and silence in the research process:Feminist reflections. R. Ryan-Flood and R. R. Gill, Taylor Francis.

Parpart, J. and N. Kabeer (2010). Choosing Silence: Rethinking Voice, Agency, and Womens Empowerment; Kabeer, Naila Voice, Agency and the Sounds of Silence: A Comment on Jane L. Parparts Paper 24 pp. (2010). Voice,Agency and the sounds of silence: a comment on Jane L. Parparts paper. N. Kabeer, GENDER, DEVELOPMENT, AND GLOBALIZATION PROGRAM:GPID/WID Working Papers.

Patel-Campillo, A. (2012). "The Gendered Production–Consumption Relation: Accounting for Employment and Socioeconomic Hierarchies in the Colombian Cut Flower Global Commodity Chain." Sociologia Ruralis **52**(3): 272-293.

Pearson, R. (1998). 'Nimble Fingers' Revisited:Relections on women and Third world industrialisation in the late twentieth century. Feminist Visions of Development: Gender Analysis and Policy C. Jackson and R. Pearson, Routledge Studies in Development Economics**:** 172-186.

Pearson, R. (2003). "Feminist responses to economic globalisation: Some examples of past and future practice." Gender and Development.

Pearson, R. (2003). "Feminist responses to economic globalisation: some examples of past and future practice." Gender & Development **11**(1): 25-34.

Pearson, R. (2005). Organising home based workers in the global economy: An action-research approach. Development, NGOs and labor unions: Terms of Engagement. D. Eade and A. Leather. Bloomfield, USA, Kumarian Press,inc.

Pearson, R. (2007). "Beyond women workers: gendering csr." Third World Quarterly **28**(4): 731-749.

Pearson, R. (2007). Reassessing paid work and women's empowerment: lessons from the global economy. Feminisms in Development: Contradictions, contestations and challenges. A. Cornwall, Harrison, E and Whitehead, A. London, Zed Books.

Pearson, R. (2014). Gender, Globalisation and the Reproduction of Labour: Bringing the state Back in. New Frontiers in Feminist Political Economy. S. M. R. a. G. Waylen. London, Routledge.

Pearson, R. and C. Jackson (1998). Introduction:Interrogating Development: Feminism, gender and policy. Feminist visions of development:Gender analysis and policy. R. pearson and C. Jackson, Routledge.

Polanyi, K. (1971). The economy as instituted process. Primitive, Archaic and Modern Economies. G. Dalton, Beacon Press**:** 139-174.

Ramazanoglu, C. and J. Holland (2002). Feminist Methodology: Challenges and Choices SAGE Publications.

Raworth, K. (2004). Trading Away our rights: Working women in Global supply Chains. Oxfarm Campaign series, Oxfam.

Raworth, K. and T. Kidder (2009). Mimicking the 'lean' in Global Value Chains: It's the Workers who get leaned on. Frontiers of commodity chain research. J. Bair, Stanford University Press.

Raworth, K. a. H., Claire (2004). 'Trading away our rights women working in global supply chains'. Oxford, Oxfarm International.

Richardson, A. M. (2004). "Women's Inheritance Rights in Africa: The Need to Integrate Cultural Understanding and Legal Reform." Human Rights **19**(11): 19-23.

Riisgaard, L. (2009). "Global Value Chains, Labor Organization and Private Social Standards: Lessons from East African Cut Flower Industries." World Development **37**(2): 326-340.

Riisgaard, L., et al. (2010). "Integrating Poverty and Environmental Concerns into Value-Chain Analysis: A Strategic Framework and Practical Guide." Development Policy Review **28**(2): 195-216.

Riisgaard, L. and P. Gibbon (2014). "Labour Management on Contemporary Kenyan Cut Flower Farms: Foundations of an Industrial–Civic Compromise." Journal of Agrarian Change **14**(2): 260-285.

Riisgard, L. (2007). "what's in it for Labour: Private Social Standards in the Cut Flower Industries of Kenya and Tanzania." DIIS working paper(16).

Robeyns, I. (2003). "Sen'S Capability Approach and Gender Inequality: Selecting Relevant Capabilities." Feminist Economics **9**(2-3): 61-92.

Rossi, A. (2013). "Does Economic Upgrading Lead to Social Upgrading in Global Production Networks? Evidence from Morocco." World Development **46**(0): 223-233.

Rowlands, J. (1995). "Empowerment examined." Development in Practice **5**(2): 101-107.

Safilios-Rothschild and Constantina (1990). 'Socioeconomic Determinants of the Outcomes of Women's Income-Generation in Developing Countries'. Women, employment and Family in the International Division of Labor. S. Stichter and J. L. Parpart. Houndmills and London, The MacMillan Press Ltd.**:** 221-228.

Said-Allsopp, M. (2013). Empowerment within Global Value Chains: a Study of the Dynamics of Employment and its Impacts on the Lives of Women Employed in Kenyan Agricultural Export Industries. School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds, Leeds, UK.

Said-Allsopp, M. and A. Tallontire (2014). "Enhancing Fairtrade for women workers on plantations: insights from Kenyan agriculture." Food Chain **4**(1): 66-77.

Said-Allsopp, M. and A. Tallontire (2014). "Pathways to empowerment?: dynamics of women's participation in Global Value Chains." Journal of Cleaner Production **xxx**: 1-8.

Selwyn, B. (2009). "Trade unions and women's empowerment in north-east Brazil." Gender & Development **17**(2): 189-201.

Selwyn, B. (2013). "Social Upgrading and Labour in Global Production Networks: A Critique and an Alternative Conception." Competition & Change **17**(1): 75-90.

Selwyn, B. (2013). women and rural trade unions in North-east Brazil. Organising women workers in the informal economy: Beyond the weapons of the weak. N. Kabeer, R. Sudarshan and K. Milward, Zed books.

Sen, A. (1999). Development as Freedom. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Sen, A. (2000). "works and rights. International labour review." International Labour Review **139**(2).

Sen, A. K. (1985). "Well-being, Agency and Freedom." The Journal of Philosophy **82**: 169-221.

Sen, A. K. (1990). Gender and Cooperative Conflicts. Persistent Inequalities. I. Tinker. Persistent Inequalities, University Press.

Sheldone, K. (1992). Creches, Titias, and Mothers: Working Women and Child Care in Mozambique. African Encounters with Domesticity. K. T. Hansen, Rutgers University Press.

Showden, C. (2011). Choices Women Make: Agency in Domestic Violence, Assisted Reproduction, and Sex Work. London, Minnesota University Press.

Silvey, R. and R. Elmhirst (2003). "Engendering Social Capital: Women Workers and Rural–Urban Networks in Indonesia's Crisis." World Development **31**(5): 865-879.

Stake, R. E., Ed. (1995). The art of case study research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stichter, S. (1990). 'Women, Employment and the Family: Current Debates. Women, employment and Family in the International Division of Labor. S. Stichter and J. L. Parpart. Houndmills and London, The MacMillan Press Ltd**:** 11–71.

Stichter, S. and J. L. Parpart, Eds. (1990). Women, Employment and Family in the International Division of Labor. Houndmills and London, The MacMillan Press Ltd.

Sturgeon, J. T. and M. Kawakami (2011). The Dynamics of Local Learningin Global Value chains:Experiences from East Asia, Palgrave Macmillan.

Sutton, J. and G. Langemead (2013). An enterprise map of Zambia, International growth centre.

Sweetman, C. (2013). "Introduction, Feminist Solidarity and Collective Action." Gender & Development **21**(2): 217-229.

Tallontire, A., et al. (2005). "Reaching the marginalised? Gender value chains and ethical trade in African horticulture." Development in Practice **15**(3-4): 559-571.

Tallontire, A., et al. (2011). "Beyond the vertical? Using value chains and governance as a framework to analyse private standards initiatives in agri-food chains." Agriculture and Human Values **28**(3): 427-441.

Tallontire, A., et al. (2004). Ethical Trade In African Horticulture : Gender, Rights and Participation-Final Report on Zambia Study, Natural Resource Institute.

Twin (2013). Empowering Women Farmers in Agricultural Value Chains. Twin. London, Twin.

USITC (2003). 'Industry & Trade Summary: Cut Flowers'. Washington, DC, United States International Trade Commission.

Verma, R. (2001). Gender, Land, and Livelihoods in East Africa: Through Farmers' Eyes, International Development Research Centre.

Wad, P. (2013). "Getting international labour rights right at a foreign controlled company in Malaysia: A global Labour network perspective." Geoforum **44**: 52-61.

Wiegratz, J. and E. Cesnulyte (2016). "Money Talks: Moral Economies of Earning a Living in Neoliberal East Africa." New Political Economy **21**(1): 1-25.

Wilson, K. (2008). "Reclaiming 'agency', Reasserting Resistance." IDS Bullentin **39**(6).

Wolf, D. L. (1992). Factory Daughters: Gender, Household Dynamics, and Rural Industrualization in Java, University of California Press.

Women Working World-wide, W. (2011). 'International meeting for organisations working to support horticulture workers: meeting report. Manchester, UK.

Wonani, C. (2010). Rapid Assessment on Raising Awareness on Women Workers' and their Rights in Zambia, International Labour Organization

Lusaka, Zambia.

Woodhouse, P. (1998). Thinking with people and Organisations: People as informants. Finding out fast: Investigative skills for policy and Development. A. Thomas, J. Chataway and M. Wutys, SAGE publications.

WWW (2008). Poor conditions for women working in African horticulture. African Horticulture: Pesticide News. W. w. Worldwide. Manchester Metropolitan University, Women working Worldwide.

Yin, R. K., Ed. (2003). <u>Case Study Research: Design and Method</u>, SAGE

Yin, R. K. (2009). <u>Case Study Research: Design and methods</u>, SAGE.

ZDA (2011). Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries: Sector profile, Zambia Development Agency.