

## **Economic Strengthening Department – funded by Bread for the World**

This department's core activity is to promote community economic strengthening by reducing vulnerability, promoting resilience and enhancing the community of Chimanimani's capacity to cope with shocks. The department aims to 'wean' small subsistence farmers from solely relying on donations. Community Economic Strengthening has covered farmer produce value chains; household & group processing units; marketing linkages for smallholder produce (including organic & fair-trade products). Focusing on a 'do it yourself' (DIY) mentality the department provides farmers with solutions on how best to increase their income as households thus improving their quality of life and nutrition. Over the years this has been achieved through skills training on value addition through food processing. In addition the department contributed to farmers having access to funds through use of savings and lending schemes as (SALS) and provides the farmers with subsidised transport giving them access to the market. It drives inter-community linkages that are viable and ensure that the community itself is self sustaining. Having a market-driven principle the department integrates with sustainable agriculture such that farmers grow quality produce that meets the growing demand for organic products. The department largely emphasises on promoting fair trade and organic stakeholder collaboration, increase farmers' marketing and food processing skills as well as their access to lucrative markets (Chimani Delights, export markets). It seeks to strengthen farmer value chain, energise smallholder agriculture through increased participation of youths by having a youth focused agripreneurs programme – targeting and supporting start-ups with business development services and linking Young Agripreneurs to lucrative markets including Chimani Delights.