



**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Department of Development Studies**

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN  
RUN SMALL TO MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES TOWARDS THE  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELLBEING OF WOMEN IN URBAN AREAS:  
A CASE STUDY OF THORNGROOVE INDUSTRIAL SITE IN  
BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AT LUPANE STATE UNIVERSITY IN  
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF BACHELOR OF SOCIAL SCIENCE  
SPECIAL HONOURS DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

**APRIL 2015**

## **ABSTRACT**

The research assessed the contribution of small to medium scale enterprises on the socio economic wellbeing of women in Thorn grove Industrial Site. The case study was used for the study and a sample size of 20 women was selected for the study. The study used the sustainable livelihood approach framework as an analytical tool to identify ways to advance the socio economic wellbeing of women in small to medium enterprises. The study therefore sought to address the contribution of women run SMEs in promoting the socio-economic development of women. Women's enterprise tend to be relatively small, have informal structures, flexibility, low capital needs, modest educational requirements, high labor and intensity and depend on local raw materials. The women undertake activities such as transport, restaurants, poultry textile manufacturers and tailoring. The study results revealed that women's small scale business activities has contributed significantly to their socio-economic wellbeing and the women have secure employment which provides them with income for the satisfaction of their basic needs. The study also revealed that most women personally fund their own businesses to undertake these activities. The study also revealed some challenges that women entrepreneurs still have to contend within the market environment and face high taxes from ZIMRA and BCC. Women still have a problem of lack of collateral. The study concluded and recommended there is need for the government to come up with the policies that can enable women SMEs to raise their capital needs without jeopardizing their businesses.