

Supermarket resilience in Zimbabwe's volatile macroeconomic environment

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ABSTRACT

The paper describes sources of resilience in Zimbabwe's supermarket value chains and the strategies for building resilience. Although Zimbabwe has witnessed a steady growth in the number of supermarkets, that growth has been disrupted by the volatile operating environment. Data was collected from an online survey of supermarket managers, websites and secondary sources. The study found that franchising, extensive branch networks, mergers and acquisitions and multiple store formats have provided major supermarkets such as OK, TM/Pick n Pay and Spar with an adaptive capacity that has enabled them to operate for several decades in Zimbabwe's volatile food retail sector. These findings have implications for improving government policy making and supermarket managers' knowledge on developing resilient food systems under a turbulent macroeconomic environment. Further, the study provides key insights on strategies that are indispensable for building the necessary resilience ingredients required by supermarkets to absorb shocks and recover in a timely way.