

10. WOMEN, PATRIARCHY AND LAND REFORM IN SOUTH AFRICA

“This one they call farmer: send in teachers to teach him to farm (while I am out growing the food); lend him money for tractors and tillers (while I am out growing the food); promise him fortunes if he would only raise cotton (while I am out growing the food). No, I dare not stop working, and I will not abandon that thing I was born for – to make sure my children have food in their bellies”¹

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. First, to investigate whether the land reform programme in South Africa has benefited women and also to evaluate why women did (or did not) benefit. Second, to use the concept of gender (as it relates to power relations in rural societies) to illustrate the importance of taking socio-economic differences into account, when policies are developed and implemented, to contribute to successful land reform. As such, this chapter highlights a salient theme that emerges from the thesis as a whole – the important implications of socio-economic differentiation in social and/or economic reform programmes. This chapter should be read in conjunction with (or as building on) chapters two, three, four, six, seven, eight and nine.

Section one provides data and statistical information to illustrate the disadvantaged social, economic and political position in which women in general find themselves. However, there is particular emphasis on rural women from South and Southern Africa. Section two is an inquiry into the level of institutional, legislative and government commitment to gender equity in social, political and economic life, with emphasis on equity in land ownership. Section three is an exposition of the process of transformation with regard to gender equity within the Department of Land Affairs itself. Section four is an inquiry into the way in which (or whether) women benefited from the Land Reform Pilot Programme. Section five is a similar inquiry into the Redistribution Programme, section six the Restitution Programme, section seven tenure reform in communal areas, section eight tenure reform among farm workers and labour tenants, and section nine, equity schemes and land re-occupations/invasions. Section ten is an exposition of women’s access to credit and financial institutions, which although not a land reform programme is a crucial component of successful land reform (see chapter four). Section eleven (and its various components) attempts to explain the findings of the previous sections (i.e. why has land reform failed women).

For the purposes of this chapter, the term “women” is used in two ways. Firstly, to denote “women in general” as a counterpoint to “men in general” – this is not to argue that there are no differences among women², but rather to point out what women (in

¹ An African women farmer in 1984, quoted in French M, *The War Against Women*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 28

² Obviously women are not a homogenous group and they differ in terms of, for example, race, class, religion, education, marital status, number of children, location (urban or rural) and many more. This

general) are disadvantaged when compared to men (in general). Secondly, “women” refers to (depending on the context) poor, black women in South Africa’s rural areas. Unless specified otherwise, broad categories like communities, farm workers, the poor (and any other collective) are assumed to include women and men.

1. Demographics

The Secretary General of the World Conference of the United Nations’ Decade for Women stated that women are “basically powerless and propertyless”.³ This is not an exaggeration. In 1980, women still owned only an estimated 1% of the world’s property – and part of this 1% masks male ownership hidden for tax purposes.⁴ Despite more than a decade of land reform in Zimbabwe, men still own 90% of the land in rural areas.⁵ Female-headed households, in Botswana, own a third less land than male-headed households.⁶ In Nigeria in 1990, women still constituted 50% of those who lived and worked in rural areas, but owned less than 5% of the total land area.⁷ In Tanzania, it was only with the introduction of the Village Land Bill, in 1999, that women were officially allowed to own land.⁸ In South Africa, it was only through legislation introduced in 1985 and again in 1988 that rural African women were no longer legally considered minors in land related transactions.⁹ (However, the “new” legal status is not necessarily reflected in current customary law and practices).

In 1980, women as a group still received only 10% of the world’s income.¹⁰ Women, who comprised 55% of the total adult population of South Africa in 1996¹¹, are poorer than men, are less likely to have a job and earn less than men when they have one.¹² According to the former minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs, Derek Hanekom, 48% of South African women compared to 43% of South African men live in poverty.¹³ The National Land Committee estimates that the figures are closer to 60 and 41% respectively.

chapter highlights many of these differences. However, women (as a social category) share (or have in common) a number of issues/problems by virtue of being female in a patriarchal society.

³ Ngadaye A, *The Multiple Roles of Women in Africa*, African Women, Transformation and Development, IFAA, UK, 1991, p.51

⁴ French M, *The War Against Women*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 24

⁵ Maocha P, “Peasant women in Zimbabwe”, African Women, Transformation and Development, IFAA, UK, 1991, p. 43

⁶ Roe E.M, “Public Service: Rural Development and careers in public management: A case study of expatriate advising in African land reform”, World Development, Vol. 21, 3, 1993

⁷ Idike A.A, “Transformation for rural women in Nigeria: Myth or Reality”, African Women, Transformation and Development, IFAA, UK, 1991, p. 15 & 16

⁸ Sunday Independent, February 14, 1999

⁹ Mann M, *Women’s access to land in the former bantustans: Constitutional Conflict, Customary Law, Democratisation and the Role of the State*, Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, 2000

¹⁰ French M, *The War Against Women*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, pg. 24

¹¹ NLC, “Land Reform Policy Proposals”, Braamfontein, August 1998

¹² Albertyn C, “Gender and Human Rights”, Election Talk, 3, EISA, March, 1998

¹³ Speech by the then minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs, Derek Hanekom, at the International Consultative Conference on Food Security and Nutrition as Human Rights, SAHRC, March, 1999

The 69% of African women living in South Africa's rural areas constitute the bulk of the victims of poverty.¹⁴ Female-headed households (accounting for at least 40% of the total number of South African households) are more likely to experience poverty and approximately 75% of these households are classified poor.¹⁵ Figures contained in the 1996 Population Census indicate that the percentage of female-headed households (both urban and rural) is even higher. According to the census, 45% of urban and 43% of non-urban females were never married. A further 3.5% of urban and 4.7% of non-urban females were divorced, and 8% of urban and 7.8% of non-urban females were widows.¹⁶ These statistics are particularly significant when one considers that fewer female household heads, than male household heads, are formally employed and that female household heads, on average, receive lower incomes when they are employed.¹⁷ Female-headed households, more so than male-headed households, are often prevented by financial constraints from participating in land redistribution projects.¹⁸ The minimum own contribution required for participation in the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development Programme may exclude even more women from the benefits of the national land reform programme. Furthermore, with the exception of labour, female-headed households have fewer endowments and achieve lower returns from their livelihood tactics than male-headed households do.¹⁹

Gender inequity is clearly reflected in income and unemployment figures. According to the 1996 Population Census, 60% of rural and 48% of urban African women are unemployed. Twelve percent of employed males in urban areas earn less than R500 per month, whereas 26% of employed women in urban areas earn less than R500 per month. The respective figures for rural areas are 39% and 62%.²⁰ Furthermore, women (particularly in rural areas) are isolated and have limited access to training and educational opportunities. These factors culminate to ensure that women have difficulty accessing information pertaining to the land reform programme and, to maintain women's inferior status in society in general.

2. Institutional, legislative and government commitment to gender equity in land ownership

In terms of policy and legislation, there is no doubt that the ANC-led government is committed to gender equity. The ANC's 1992 Land Policy document called for special procedures to ensure that women gain equal access to land and participate effectively in policy formulation and decision making.²¹ The Reconstruction and Development Programme recognised women's land rights: "*Women face specific disabilities in*

¹⁴ NLC, "Rural Development Policy", Media Fact Sheet, not dated

¹⁵ NLC, "Land Reform Policy Proposals", Braamfontein, August 1998

¹⁶ Central Statistics Service, The People of South Africa Population Census 1996, Report D3-01-19, 1996

¹⁷ Cross C, "Women and land in rural areas", *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 12 - 25

¹⁸ Walker C, "Cornfields, gender and land", *Women, Land and Authority*, Meer S (Ed.), David Philip, Cape Town, 1997, p. 55 - 73

¹⁹ May J, "Assets, Income and Livelihoods in rural KwaZulu-Natal", *Land, Labour and Livelihoods in rural South Africa*, Volume 2, Lipton M, Ellis K, & Lipton Merle (Eds.), Indicator Press, December, 1996

²⁰ Central Statistics Service, The People of South Africa Population Census 1996, Report D3-01-19, 1996

²¹ ANC, 1992 Land Policy Document, Education Section, April, 1992

obtaining land. The land redistribution programme must therefore target women. Institutions, practices and laws that discriminate against women's access to land must be reviewed and brought in line with national policy. In particular, tenure and matrimonial laws must be revised appropriately".²² The RDP also stated that the national land reform programme should address gender inequities (section 2.4.2) and that support services and government assistance for agricultural production should especially benefit women (section 4.5.2.4).

The 1996 Green Paper on South African land reform expressed a clear commitment to end discrimination and ensure gender equity in land ownership. The Bill of Rights, of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, places an obligation on the government to "*take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources*" to ensure that "*equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms*". The Bill also prohibits "unfair discrimination" on several grounds, including gender.²³

The 1997 White Paper on South African Land Policy places considerable emphasis on gender equity in land access and effective participation of women in decision-making procedures. The paper concedes that "*a key contributing factor to women's inability to overcome poverty is lack of access to and rights in land*". The paper also points out that legal restrictions impede women's access to land and the financial services to develop it, and that gender neutral land reform policies have a negative effect on gender equality.²⁴

The ANC-led government has also guaranteed 30% representation for women on its parliamentary lists. In May 1996, Gender Focal Points were established within the South African government and, in April 1997, the Commission for Gender Equality and the Office on the Status of Women were set up.²⁵ Furthermore, in the Department of Land Affairs' 1999 gender policy framework states that "because women have much less power and authority than men, much more attention should be directed to meeting women's needs and concerns. Unless this is done, existing gender inequities in the allocation of land and its productive use could be exacerbated by the land reform programme".²⁶

Two international developments further obligate the South African government to address women's inequitable access to, and rights in, land. The first is the Fourth World Conference on Women that took place, in September 1995, in Beijing. At the conference, the Ministry of Land Affairs committed itself to "*taking legislative and administrative measures to give women and men equal rights to economic resources*

²² ANC, *The Reconstruction and Development Programme*, section 2.4.11, Umanyano Publications, JHB, 1994

²³ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, 2.25.5, 2.9.2 and 2.9.3

²⁴ DLA, *White Paper on South African Land Policy*, Pretoria, April, 1997

²⁵ Turner S & Ibsen H, "Land and agrarian reform in South Africa: A Status Report", Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, November, 2000, p. 28 & DLA, *Annual Report*, Pretoria, 1999

²⁶ Department of Land Affairs, *Land Reform Gender Policy: A framework*, Pretoria, 1999

*including access to ownership and control over land and other properties, credit facilities, natural resources and appropriate supporting technology”.*²⁷

The second is the United Nations’ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), ratified by South Africa in December 1995. Article 14 of the convention recognises rural women as a group with special problems who should be empowered to participate in, and benefit from, rural development. The convention states that women make a significant contribution to the economic survival of their families, which includes unpaid labour and subsistence farming. The convention stipulates that rural women must be able to; participate in development planning at all levels, have access to adequate health services, receive training and education, have equal access to loans and credit for farming, marketing and technology, receive equal treatment in land and farming reform – including plans for resettlement and, enjoy adequate living conditions – especially housing, sanitation, water supply, transportation and communication.²⁸

There is, thus, a clear commitment to gender equity. However, policies and legislation alone, will not result in gender equity in land access and ownership. The 1997 White Paper, for example, makes very few concrete suggestions for the achievement of gender equity. As Hall points out in her analysis of the 1997 White Paper on South African Land Policy, gender issues are largely included in statements about the vision and objectives of land reform policy, while gender is “scarcely dealt with, if at all, in the sections of the policy that deal with strategies, policy instruments and institutions”.²⁹ Hall also found that gender equity is entirely absent from crucial sections including land development and institutional arrangements, economic arguments for land reform, access to financial services and land reform delivery. Hall argues that the land reform policies deal with gender in an erratic way and that terms like “gender” and “women” are conflated and used interchangeably. Furthermore, the Department of Land Affairs had absolutely no statistics available on women’s access to land in South Africa’s rural areas (1999), despite an understanding that accurate data is required for effective policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.³⁰

3. Gender equity and transformation in the Department of Land Affairs

The White Paper states that the Department of Land Affairs should embark upon a transformation programme to change it into an institution that reflects the gender composition of the South African population. Despite policy commitments and gender mainstreaming programmes – some of which are discussed below - the Department of Land Affairs had still not achieved gender equity in its staff structures (at any level) by early 2003.

²⁷ DLA, White Paper on South African Land Policy, Pretoria, April, 1997

²⁸ United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW, *CEDAW in South Africa*, National Institute for Public Interest Law and Research, Pretoria, 1995

²⁹ Hall R, “Design for Equity: Linking Policy with Objectives in South Africa’s Land Reform”, *Review of African Political Economy*, Number 77, 1998

³⁰ Mann M, Women’s access to land in the former bantustans: Constitutional Conflict, Customary Law, Democratisation and the Role of the State, Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, 2000, p. 35

In 1999, the DLA's Change Management Committee approved a target for 40% female representation in middle and top management structures by 2005. In July 1996, the Land Reform Gender Policy and Implementation Sub-Directorate (LRGPI) was established within the Department of Land Affairs to ensure that gender issues were central to all land reform projects. The Land Reform Gender Policy and Implementation Sub-Directorate held poorly attended gender sensitisation workshops for DLA officials and included a gender module in the land reform programme's management and orientation courses.³¹ The vast majority of land reform project implementers, however, are still male and many of them are not equipped with the skills necessary to mainstream gender in land reform projects.³² Govender-Van Wyk³³ reports that the perception among female land reform beneficiaries and role players, both within and outside the Department of Land Affairs, is that policy implementers continue to view gender issues as "cumbersome". Such views suggest that policy implementers lack an understanding of the importance of gender in policy development and implementation, and furthermore, a lack of the importance of socio-economic differentiation among (potential) beneficiaries of the land reform programmes. This is reflected, for example, in the fact that gender issues are not even mentioned in the DLA's 1998 Annual Report. A change in approach is, however, apparent in the 1999 Annual Report, which allocates a chapter to gender specific issues.

The Department of Land Affairs has also not yet developed an effective tracking and monitoring system and accordingly, is unable to provide information on the number of female claimants and/or beneficiaries or, on the overall impact of the land reform programme on women. The absence of statistics, in turn, impacts negatively on the DLA's ability to formulate and implement policies that effectively address women's inequitable access to land.

A further constraint on achieving equitable access to land, for women, is the lack of government capacity (including financial resources and committed personnel) to enforce gender equity. As Walker³⁴ points out, social transformation in South Africa implies that many departments and programmes are competing for scarce resources. Land reform is but one element of the whole, and gender is only one element of land reform. It is apparent that there is an institutional commitment to gender equality and a favourable environment for incorporating gender into programmes and policies. As the following discussion will show, however, this has not translated into significant economic and/or political gain for women.

4. Women and the Land Reform Pilot Programme

³¹ Turner S & Ibsen H, "Land and agrarian reform in South Africa: A Status Report", Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, November, 2000, p. 28 - 30

³² Govender-Van Wyk, "Gender Policy and Land Reform", *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 67 & DLA, Training Directory, Second Semester, Pretoria, 1998

³³ Govender-Van Wyk, "Gender Policy and Land Reform", *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 66

³⁴ Walker C, "Land Reform and Gender in Post-Apartheid South Africa", United Nations Institute for Social Development, Gender, Poverty and Well-being, October 1998

The Land Reform Pilot Programme (LRPP) aimed “to enhance the material, political and social status of women”.³⁵ In terms of enhancing the political status of women the Land Reform Pilot Programme was a total failure as women were inadequately represented on all the institutional structures of the Pilot Programme. The material and social status of women in the projects did not visibly improve either. This was partly the result of the absence of appropriate methodologies, rigid bureaucratic procedures that inhibited innovation and tendencies ranging from the peripheralisation of gender issues to outright hostility among DLA officials and male beneficiaries.³⁶

5. Women in the Redistribution Programme

Despite the government’s stated commitment to gender equity (for example, the Department of Land Affairs’ 1997 commitment to equity in land access and ownership for women in its Redistribution Review by “giving priority to women applicants”³⁷) and the 1997 White Paper’s identification of women as one of the target beneficiary groups of the Land Redistribution Programme, poor rural women appear to have gained few benefits as a result of the Redistribution Programme. In September 1999, the National Land Committee (NLC) estimated that only 7 331 of the 50 152 beneficiary households that participated in the Land Redistribution programme were female-headed households.³⁸ In 2000, the NLC estimated that female-headed households represented only 14% of the households to whom land had been transferred under the Redistribution Programme.³⁹ Similar figures were not available from the Department of Land Affairs.

The National Land Committee and gender activists argue that poor rural women face the same constraints as their male counterparts in accessing land through a demand-driven, market-based land redistribution programme, as well as additional gender specific barriers to land access. The most frequently cited factor, that prevented women from accessing land under the 1994 to 1999 Redistribution Programme, is the fact that the Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant was paid to household-heads.⁴⁰ Policies and redistribution project business plans were often constructed without a clear definition of what constitutes a household and without acknowledging that family power relations are generally skewed in favour of men. The allocation of grants to household-heads (usually men) has meant that other household members’ access (usually women) to land continues to be mediated by, and dependent on, a spouse, partner or family member.

The Redistribution Programme (as Hall points out) was also based on contradictory tenets – in the sense that the redistribution projects were supposed to give priority to women in

³⁵ TRAC, “Land reform: beyond the pilots”, Newsletter, no.23, February 1998

³⁶ TRAC, “Land reform: beyond the pilots”, Newsletter, no.23, February 1998

³⁷ Department of Land Affairs, Redistribution Review Summit Proceedings, February 26-28, 1997, p. 12

³⁸ NLC, “Land Redistribution Media Fact Sheet, undated

³⁹ NLC, Workshop briefing paper: civil society forum on land and agrarian reform, JHB, 23 August, 2000

⁴⁰ Zulu P, “The Political Economy of rural livelihoods in KwaZulu-Natal”, *Land, Labour and Livelihoods in Rural South Africa*, Vol.2, Lipton M, Ellis F & Lipton M (Eds.) Indicator Press, December 1996. NLC, “Land Redistribution Media Fact Sheet, undated. Ngqaleni M.T & Makhura M.J, “An analysis of women’s status in agricultural development in the Northern Province”, *Land, Labour and Livelihoods*, vol.2. Lund F, “Remaking community at Riemvasmaak”, *Agenda*, 32, 1999

need, but at the same time projects that could be implemented “quickly and effectively”, were prioritised. As the discussion throughout this chapter shows, however, the least informed and most marginalised groups (and therefore least likely to access the Redistribution Programme) tend to consist of women.

Women’s isolated and inferior status in South African society contributed to the fact that women had difficulty accessing the Redistribution Programme and information pertaining to it. Very few women, for example, were aware of the fact that women in polygamous marriages who maintained households separate from their husbands/partners – depending on the circumstances – could apply independently for the Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant.⁴¹

Similarly, women were often unable to effectively articulate their demands and needs for land, which left them vulnerable to exploitation by male members of their communities. The Odendaal’s Rust community in the Free State, for example, purchased a 1 200-hectare farm, for R1.2 million, by pooling household grants. Women, in the community, were generally only interested in a homestead, while a group of men required grazing land for their cattle. Although contributing equal amounts (SLAG grants) to the project, the men ended up with much larger land areas than the women. The women also lost access to what remained of their grants - they could have used the remaining money for homestead development, had it not been appropriated by male members of the community in the form of larger land areas.⁴²

Furthermore, in those cases where communities/beneficiaries had to move considerable distances to redistributed land, particularly poorer female-headed households’ participation in the Redistribution Programme was likely to be inhibited, since they lack the money and inclination (including risk taking ability) to move.⁴³

The 2001 Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development Programme (LRAD) aims to “expand opportunities for women and youth in rural areas”, as well as to “overcome the legacy of past racial and gender discrimination in land”.⁴⁴ The programme hopes to achieve this by “encouraging” women-only projects and, by ensuring that at least one third of transferred land resources accrue to women. Under the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development programme, grants will be awarded to adult individuals rather than household-heads. The ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs argues that this will help to redress gender imbalances in land access by enabling women to participate in the land redistribution programme independently. This is a positive step towards gender equity in land ownership, but the DLA has provided no clear guidelines as to how this will be achieved.

⁴¹ DLA, Grants and services of the land reform programme, Version 5, Pretoria, 1998

⁴² Interview with Helena Dolny, June 22, 2001

⁴³ Zimmerman F J, “Barriers to participation of the poor in South Africa’s land redistribution”, *World Development*, 28(8), 2000, also see chapter seven.

⁴⁴ DLA, Executive Summary of LRAD, *Land Info*, vol.8, no.1, 2001

Given the absence of accurate statistics with regard to female beneficiaries in the redistribution programme, there is little evidence that the DLA will reach its one-third target. If power relations in society do not change, the impact of the programme on women could be very limited. There is nothing to prevent men from appropriating grants awarded to women. The LRAD programme could also have unintended consequences such as promoting polygamy, where men in positions of power could appropriate the grants of more than one wife.

Further, to qualify for a grant under the LRAD programme, potential beneficiaries have to make a minimum own contribution, in cash or kind, to the value of R5 000. The NLC has argued that this would be extremely difficult for the “poorest of the poor”. The objection holds for women as well. The concerns raised around the “elite” capture of the benefits of redistribution raised in chapter seven, apply to “women” as well. In the sense that the category “women” is just as diverse as the category “poor”. The “poorest” rural women, or women in the “most patriarchal societies”, are generally not in the position to command the resources necessary for their participation in the programme. The programme may, therefore, benefit women in strategic positions or positions of power, or women who are members of organised groups, at the expense of more isolated and impoverished individuals.

6. Women and the Restitution Programme

There are no accurate figures available, but the socio-economic position of women in land reform projects does not appear to have improved significantly from the Restitution Programme. There are four basic reasons for this, (1) the failure of the Restitution Programme to take account of women’s particular (comparatively different to that of men) experience of dispossession. (2) The fact that the Restitution Programme is rights-based, (3) the absence of appropriate methodologies and procedures in the context of a society in which power relations are skewed in favour of men. (4) The Restitution Programme was never developed with sufficient emphasis on, or understanding of, gender. According to Ruth Hall, for example, gender is mentioned in the 1997 White Paper in relation to redistribution and tenure reform, but not in relation to restitution.⁴⁵ In essence, women did not benefit significantly from the Restitution Programme because of the failure of policy developers and implementers to take socio-economic differences (in this case gender) sufficiently into account.

The NLC argues that women have faced a double process of dispossession, as black South Africans and, as women, due to discriminatory cultural and social practices and traditions relating to land ownership and access.⁴⁶ The Restitution Programme is essentially rights-based and thus restores land rights to those who formerly held them. Under Apartheid, the patriarchal system in which land rights were denied to African

⁴⁵ Hall R, “Design for Equity: Linking Policy with Objectives in South Africa’s Land Reform”, Review of African Political Economy, Number 77, 1998

⁴⁶ NLC, A History of Dispossession Media Fact Sheet, not dated

women was perpetuated. The effect is that the Restitution Programme is restoring land rights to men.⁴⁷

Power relations in society further curtail women's ability to benefit from the Restitution Programme. Women are less likely to be represented on community based organisations, representing claimant groups, and male claimants tend to outnumber female claimants.⁴⁸ As former Land Claims Commissioner Gilfillan says: "*In the Restitution Court, one often finds that the mothers and sisters simply disappear and are not accounted for in the claims for restitution. Claims are lodged by communities that see land as men's business and hence, they exclude women. It is difficult to ensure that women also benefit from the restitution claim*".⁴⁹ The Land Claims Court and the Commission for the Restitution of Land Rights are legally empowered to ensure that women have equal access to restituted land and/or compensation. The Commission, however, has no detailed guidelines in this regard. Hostility to women within communities and the lack of commitment among some officials in the DLA, also undermine the Commission and Court's powers.

Once land rights have been restored to communities, women tend to have less land, have weaker land rights, have less influence in community decision making and, tend to lose access to land as a result of inheritance systems based on male succession. In cases where chiefs are claiming or holding land on behalf of communities, the restitution process has resuscitated the chieftancy.⁵⁰ The re-emergence of the chieftancy has undermined the government's political and constitutional commitment to restructuring gender relations.

7. Women and Tenure Reform

In communal land tenure systems, women generally access land through their relationships with male relatives.⁵¹ Women's lack of authority in society also limits their control over the land resources that they are able to access. Communal tenure systems, for example, generally discourage or prohibit land sales and therefore land transactions take place privately. In cases where disputes arise, they cannot be addressed in a public forum. "*This insecurity of land transfer is serious for men, but reach prohibitive levels for women*".⁵²

South African tenure reform policy (particularly with regard to communal areas) has done very little (aside from stated commitments to gender equity in policy documents like the 1997 White Paper) to address the needs of the majority of poor, black, women in South Africa's rural areas. The Draft land Rights Bill of 1999, for example, provided that where protected tenure rights are shared by family members, the rights must be registered jointly, by two adult members, and where practical, one of these adults must be a

⁴⁷ Govender-Van Wyk, "Gender Policy and Land Reform", *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 66

⁴⁸ NLC, Land Restitution Media Fact Sheet, not dated

⁴⁹ Interview with Durkje Gilfillan, June 1, 2001

⁵⁰ See chapter 6 on Restitution Programme.

⁵¹ See chapter 8 on tenure reform as well as section 10.6 in this chapter.

⁵² Cross C, "Women and land in rural areas", *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 21

women.⁵³ The Bill did not define (or even attempt to define) what was meant by “where practical”. Furthermore, subsequent draft tenure policies may even have negative implications for gender equitable tenure systems. The proposed Communal Land Rights/Draft Tenure Bill, released in late November 2001, appeared to increase the power of traditional authorities with regard to land allocation and, introduced contentious concepts such as “tribal” land ownership.⁵⁴ Detractors maintain that the proposed Bill will undermine the land rights of vulnerable groups, especially women.

Given the difficulties women face under communal tenure systems, it seems plausible that women would fare better under freehold tenure systems where women have a legal right to own or rent land. Individualisation of tenure could enable women to purchase and hold land in their own right. The problem is that most women lack the resources to do so. Conversion to freehold tenure could mean that women end up with access to less land than they had under communal/traditional land tenure systems. Tenure reform in Kenya in the late 1960s, for example, negatively affected women, as freehold tenure rights were registered in husband’s or other male relatives’ names. Women’s rights to land in Kenya remained precarious and male mediated under freehold tenure. The experience of women on Zimbabwe’s Model A schemes, where permits for residential and productive land were given to household heads (males), also illustrates the point that women’s positions are not necessarily better under freehold land tenure systems. Women who were divorced by their husbands tended to lose their rights to land. In cases where men were evicted from resettlement schemes, their female partners also lost access to land.⁵⁵

The point is that although women are particularly vulnerable under traditional and communal land tenure systems, they are not guaranteed land rights under any system of tenure while societal values remain fundamentally patriarchal. Cross and Friedman⁵⁶ argue that tenure is best understood, not as a system of laws, but rather as a social and political process. As such, a tenure system is determined by the values of a community, the power relations in a community and the unspoken assumptions that operate in a community, rather than by a set of official rules. By implication, they argue, it is very difficult for any government to change tenure systems and women’s positions therein by means of formal legislation. This does not mean, however, that the government should refrain from taking positive legislative and policy steps in an attempt to ensure gender equity in land ownership. A redistribution project in Bangladesh, in 1997, provides a positive example. Redistributed plots in the project were leased on a permanent basis – jointly, in the names of husband and wife. In case of divorce, legislation stipulated that the wife would retain access to the land.⁵⁷

⁵³ Mann M, Women’s access to land in the former bantustans: Constitutional Conflict, Customary Law, Democratisation and the Role of the State, Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, 2000, p. 32

⁵⁴ See chapter 8 on tenure reform for more detail on the Communal Land Rights Bill.

⁵⁵ Goebel A, “Here it is our land, the two of us: Women, men and land in a Zimbabwean Resettlement Area”, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 17,1, 1999

⁵⁶ Cross C & Friedman M, “Women and tenure: Marginality and the Left-hand power”, *Women, Land and Authority*, Meer S (Ed.), David Philip, Cape Town, 1997, p. 17

⁵⁷ Islam T, “Development Bangladesh: Land Rights take poor out of poverty trap”, *World News*, November 14, 1997

8. Women as Farm Workers and Labour Tenants

With the exception of the Western Cape, very few women are able to access full-time employment on farms. Those who are able to secure full-time employment earn, on average, 75% less than their male counterparts.⁵⁸ Full-time female farm workers do not have paid leave or maternity benefits.⁵⁹ At the same time, women account for the majority of seasonal and casual farm workers - earning between R7 to R10 per day for limited and irregular periods.⁶⁰ Women's tenure rights on commercial farms remain precarious, because tenure, housing and employment are linked to the employment contracts of male relatives on most farms. Generally, if a male partner/relative is evicted, his family will also be forced to leave. Farmers generally provide housing only to male household-heads, thus, discriminating against single women and female-headed households.⁶¹ Women have virtually no access to other farm based resources such as child and health care, other than through their husbands/male relatives.⁶²

Women are also obliged to work on the farms of their husbands'/male relatives' employer and, are subject to third party agreements between male workers and their employers. Husbands/male relatives, whose employment would be jeopardised if they were unable to secure women's labour, maintain this dual system of oppression.⁶³ Research shows that 51% of employers tacitly include a male worker's female partner in his employment agreement. Furthermore, that only 37% of employers interview a women applicant herself and, that 60% of employers insist that a male worker's partner must be available to work on the farm, either permanently, or as, and when, her labour is required. In addition, 52.4% of women report that accommodation is linked to their male partner's contract and, 48% of employers state that should a male partner leave, or die, his female partner would have to leave the farm as well.⁶⁴

The Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act of 1996 was intended to provide greater security of tenure for labour tenants.⁶⁵ According to the definition of a labour tenant provided in the Act, family members are not labour tenants and therefore have no independent rights to land. In some instances, a labour tenant's family may continue to use the land in question for a limited period after an eviction (normally 12 months). Hornby argues that the mediation of rights through the labour tenant, who, in most cases, is a male

⁵⁸ Marcus T, "Women", Down to Earth, Marcus T, Eales K & Wildschut A (Eds.), LAPC, Indicator Press, Natal, 1996, p. 90

⁵⁹ Star, August 8, 2001

⁶⁰ FRRP, Farm Labour Review, November, 1996

⁶¹ NLC, "Tenure Reform Media Fact Sheet", not dated

⁶² Marcus T, "Women", Down to Earth, Marcus T, Eales K & Wildschut A (Eds.), LAPC, Indicator Press, Natal, 1996, p. 91

⁶³ Hill-Lanz S & O'Grady C, "Western Cape fruit and wine farms: land, labour and housing", Women, Land and Authority, Meer S (Ed.), David Phillip, Cape Town, 1997, p. 111

⁶⁴ Sunde J & Gerntholz, "Lobbying for women farm workers' rights", Agenda, 42, 1999, p. 33

⁶⁵ See chapter on Tenure Reform for more detail

household-head, raises questions around the constitutionality of the tenure security that the Act provides for women.⁶⁶

9. Women in other land reform projects

Share-equity schemes, in which beneficiaries are registered as independent shareholders, do not appear to have had a particularly beneficial effect on women's land access. The Surplus People's Project (SPP) conducted a study of four share-equity schemes in 1998 – Hoogland Farm in Mpumalanga, and Ebukhosini, Whitehall and Warmwater in the Western Cape. The study found that the majority of the beneficiaries were men, that gender issues were not incorporated into the business plans of these schemes and, that women were paid less than men were for similar jobs. The general perception among community members was that men were the beneficiaries of DLA grants, even when these grants were paid to the household or, when women applied as co-applicants. Women also did not get the same employment and training opportunities as men. The study found that men still tried to prevent women from participating in the schemes. Further findings show that equity schemes enabled men (and not women) to accumulate capital - when farm workers were given the option to buy more shares with their dividends, the men tended to do so, while women spent their dividends on household goods.⁶⁷

Informal land tenure and land invasions could, in some cases, provide women with a greater opportunity to access land. The Group Four residents of Merino Walk, for example, illegally invaded land in 1991. Women at Merino Walk were able to obtain access to residential land on a level relatively equal to that of the men. Middleton⁶⁸ argues that there are two basic reasons for this. Firstly, the relaxation of traditional norms and standards and secondly, the fact that women were not hampered by a lack of financial resources to obtain land.

10. Women and Credit

Since women often do not control their resources or own land in their own right, they tend not to have the collateral required to access credit from commercial financial institutions. Many women are still treated as minors and may not contract without the consent of a male guardian.⁶⁹ In Lesotho, for example, women have to obtain permission from their, mostly absent, husbands should they wish to apply for a loan from a credit union.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Hornby D, "All we need is a piece of land", NLC investigation into the current status of Labour Tenancy", March 1998

⁶⁷ Fast H, "Who holds the share? Gender dynamics and share-equity schemes", *Agenda*, 42, 1999

⁶⁸ Middleton S, "Women's rights and needs: The case of Thornhill and Merino Walk", *Women, Land and Authority*, Meer S (Ed.), David Phillip, Cape Town, 1997, p 74 - 76

⁶⁹ Mini S.E, "Gender relations of production in the Eastern Cape and the restructuring of rural apartheid", *African Insight*, vol.24, no.4

⁷⁰ French M, *The War Against Women*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 29

Sexist attitudes in formal financial institutions further limit women's access to credit. It was in this regard that the Strauss Commission, in South Africa, recommended that the government fund a gender awareness programme for staff employed in the state rural financial sector.⁷¹

Arguably, access to credit will increase agricultural productivity and profitable entrepreneurial activity among women. Given women's particular role within households (nutrition, childcare etc.), increases in women's income should contribute to increased overall household welfare.⁷² Increased access to financial resources may also decrease rural women's dependence on male relatives, and/or enhance their status within households (i.e. empowerment).

The Department of Land Affairs has made some attempts to address the gender inequity in access to credit and financial resources – notably its support for the Khula Trust⁷³ in 1999. The Land Bank has also designed products especially suited to rural women. Step-Up is a product that provides small loans to individuals who require credit for small-scale operations (micro-credit scheme) such as vegetable gardens. Clients are awarded a maximum amount of R250. Repayment qualifies them for a larger second loan and so clients build up a credit worthiness record, which allows them to eventually qualify for standard Land Bank products. In 1999, the Land Bank reported that it had 20 000 micro-finance users (of whom 70% were female) and a repayment rate of 82%.⁷⁴

Micro-credit schemes have become increasingly popular with governments and international aid agencies and organisations as a method to ensure women's access to credit. This increasing popularity is partly the result of the apparently spectacular successes of micro-credit schemes in Bangladesh, where these schemes have dramatically increased the credit available to poor rural women since the mid-1980s. The two principle indicators used to measure the "success" of micro-credit schemes are repayment rates and women's continued high demand for loans. (The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, for example, has a 98% repayment rate).⁷⁵ These indicators, however, give no evidence as to whether women have actually been empowered through micro-credit schemes and, more fundamentally, whether women actually control the financial resources allocated to them through these schemes. Issues of empowerment and control, are of utmost importance in determining the success of micro-credit schemes, since these schemes take place within societies where women are consigned to inferior cultural, social, political and economic status. Women (the beneficiaries) also continue to live and function as members of patriarchal households.

⁷¹ Dolny H, Banking on Change, Penguin Books, South Africa, 2001, p 55 - 60

⁷² See section 10.10 in the chapter.

⁷³ See Chapter four on credit for more detail

⁷⁴ Dolny H, Banking on Change, Penguin Books, South Africa, 2001, p. 115 - 117

⁷⁵ Rahman A, "Micro-credit initiatives for equitable and sustainable development: Who pays", World Development, 27 (1), 1999, p.73

A study by Goetz & Gupta⁷⁶ in Bangladesh, for example, found that a significant proportion of women's micro-loans were directly invested by their male relatives, while women borrowers bear the liability for repayment. Goetz and Gupta used a four-part index to estimate the amount of control women had over the financial resources they acquired. They found that 37% of women members of micro-credit schemes had full or significant (full control over productive process with the exception or marketing) control over the use of their loans. The other 63% had partial (mainly labour input), very limited or no involvement in the use of their loans. Rahman's study, of the micro-credit schemes of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, found that, not only were men appropriating women's loans (men were the users of more than 60% of women's loans), but that men were either "encouraging" or forcing women to obtain loans for exclusive use by them. In their response to the reasons for their initial involvement in the Grameen Bank micro-credit programme, 108 respondents, out of 120, said that they were either "influenced" or forced to join by male relatives, in order to acquire funds for male usage.⁷⁷

The study conducted by Goetz and Gupta indicates that there are three predominant factors that influence women's ability to maintain control over their loans. Firstly, women are more likely to maintain control over the use of their loans if they are widowed, separated or divorced. Secondly, the smaller the loan the more likely women are to maintain control – the inverse also holds. Finally, women are more likely to retain control over loan use when funds are invested in activities that are traditionally viewed as "women's work" or activities that are located close to the homestead. This suggests that policy makers and implementers should concentrate on providing smaller loans for activities such as vegetable gardens and poultry rearing, in a context where patriarchal norms ensure that financial resources are channelled to men. At the same time, broader intervention is required in order to ensure that women have access to education, training, technology, markets and infrastructure, thereby increasing their economic and decision making powers and reducing the role of males as economic mediators.⁷⁸

Goetz and Gupta point out that women's access to credit, in Bangladesh, has in many instances become a source of capital acquisition for men, which not only places pressure on women but, may also contribute to increased domestic violence. Rahman also found that pressure to repay loans (or to obtain consecutive larger loans) contributes to increased domestic violence and to the emergence of new forms of dominance over women. Approximately 70% of Rahman's respondents claimed that household violence had increased since they became members of the micro-credit scheme⁷⁹ Therefore, assessments of credit schemes should be based, not only on quantifiable factors such as

⁷⁶ Goetz A. M & Gupta A. M, "Who takes the credit: Gender, power and control over loan use in rural credit programmes in Bangladesh", *World Development*, 24 (1), 1996. For a list of studies indicating that men appropriate women's loans see page 49 of the same article.

⁷⁷ Rahman A, "Micro-credit initiatives for equitable and sustainable development: Who pays", *World Development*, 27 (1), 1999, p. 67 - 73

⁷⁸ Goetz A. M & Gupta A. M, "Who takes the credit: Gender, power and control over loan use in rural credit programmes in Bangladesh", *World Development*, 24 (1), 1996

⁷⁹ Rahman A, "Micro-credit initiatives for equitable and sustainable development: Who pays", *World Development*, 27 (1), 1999

repayment rates, but must also investigate relations of power and gender within households and societies.

As noted, the perceived success of micro-credit programmes is based largely on an analysis that focussed on high-repayment rates. This too needs to be investigated in the context of patriarchal society. Goetz and Gupta point out that although it may not be the intention of “*credit associations, where men use women’s loans, gender relations within the household are in effect providing a tool to ease the work of credit institutions in recovering loans*”.⁸⁰ In other words, men are using the loans, but the responsibility for repayment lies with women who are easier to find (due to culturally imposed restrictions on their movement⁸¹) and, generally, easier to intimidate. Rahman’s⁸² anthropological study on the Grameen Bank’s micro-credit schemes in Bangladesh shows that bank workers are pressed to maintain high recovery rates in order to earn the profit necessary for the economic viability of the institution. Consequently, bank workers are lending increasingly to women. Local bank workers explained to Rahman that they do not lend to men because men are “arrogant”, exhibit aggressive behaviour towards employees of the bank and “do not attend meetings”, whereas women are easier to manipulate and/or intimidate (i.e. it is easier to recover loans from women).

It is also important to investigate the ways in which repayments are made. Rahman found that many borrowers maintained their regular loan repayments through a process of loan recycling (paying of bank loans by acquiring additional loans from moneylenders). This increased overall debt and ultimately impoverished households.

There are indications that informal credit associations among women are one of the more effective ways of empowering women financially and socially/politically. Muhumuza⁸³ carried out fieldwork among six informal credit associations in the districts of Mbarara and Mpigi in Uganda. Informal credit associations develop within communities in response to the failure of state or commercial financial institutions to meet the credit needs of the individuals concerned, and serve as a coping or welfare mechanism rather than as a method of capital accumulation. Nevertheless, members of the informal credit associations studied in Uganda appeared to be financially better off than non-members were. Members also reported that child nutrition and their ability to pay school and medical fees had improved since they joined the associations.

Interestingly, Muhumuza found that the majority of informal credit associations were organised separately according to sex. Women-only informal credit associations were not only more prevalent (probably because of the general cultural and economic marginalisation of women) but, also more successful (i.e. high repayment rates, longevity

⁸⁰ Goetz A. M & Gupta A. M, “Who takes the credit: Gender, power and control over loan use in rural credit programmes in Bangladesh”, *World Development*, 24 (1), 1996, p. 55

⁸¹ See section 10.8 in this chapter.

⁸² Rahman A, “Micro-credit initiatives for equitable and sustainable development: Who pays”, *World Development*, 27 (1), 1999

⁸³ The whole paragraph on informal credit associations in Uganda from Muhumuza W, *State Dysfunctionalism, poverty and social capital*, unpublished draft submitted for publication in *African Studies*, 2001

and benefits accruing to members). Women-only associations operated on the basis of consensus, whereas male or mixed associations were either less democratic or operated according to strict principles of majority rule. The reasons given by women for excluding men from their associations were, that men were “problematic and difficult to work with”, “forceful and quarrelsome”, “impatient”, “selfish”, lacked compassion, did not attend meetings and defaulted on loans. Furthermore, men and women have different interests (i.e. men joined exclusively for financial reasons whereas women’s reasons include social contact and skills acquisition).

Women-only credit associations are also able to overcome some of the problems discussed with regard to institutional and micro-credit schemes in this chapter and in chapter four. Firstly, no collateral (or very little) is required to become a member of an informal credit association and, therefore, these associations present an opportunity for poorer women to access resources. Secondly, the women-only associations in Uganda, studied by Muhumuza, paid benefits in kind (i.e. land, clothes, cattle, school fees) and not in cash, thereby preventing male relatives from appropriating women’s resources. In terms of empowerment, informal credit associations in Uganda empowered women financially by enabling them to engage in income-generating activities or paying for household consumption needs and, thereby, reduced their dependence on husbands or other male relatives. Furthermore, participants in women-only informal credit associations developed other skills, including leadership, management, public speaking and literacy. In some cases, increased access to financial resources also elevated women’s status within households.

11. Why has the Land Reform Programme failed women?

The preceding discussion indicates that the South African Land Reform Programme has done little to improve women’s access to land, wealth and authority. The Land Reform Programme failed women because policies and procedures did not take account of the fact that women’s position in society is fundamentally different (inferior). Women’s particular position is influenced by the unequal division of labour, institutionalised violence, lack of legal protection, social services, education and training, patriarchal patterns of land allocation and inheritance, traditional authorities and culture, restrictions on their movement and, the omission of women’s voices from the processes of policy formulation and implementation.

11.1. Women and Violence

Gender inequities in land access and ownership are exacerbated by the fact that women face the additional burden of domestic violence. Social isolation and the lack of places of safety for abused women in rural areas combined with the fact that many women retain access to land, housing and employment only through male relatives, leave rural women with little option other than to stay in abusive relationships.⁸⁴ In a study conducted by

⁸⁴ Artz L, “Shelter in the Southern Cape: Gender violence undermined development”, *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 55 - 57

Artz⁸⁵, 100% of respondents said that they feared losing everything if they brought a charge against their abusive partners. Studies indicate that domestic violence in rural areas is on the increase.⁸⁶ Some argue that this is the result of high unemployment levels and the consequent return of men to the rural areas.⁸⁷ May et al, for example, document frequent reports of domestic violence as unemployed men return to the rural areas and beat their wives either to assert their authority and/or to appropriate their wives' meagre assets.⁸⁸ Others argue that societal change is a stressful condition for individuals and, because the gender power balance is weighted against women, women bear the brunt of men's negative responses to change.⁸⁹

11.2. Women as a monolithic category

In general, the national Land Reform Programme (and its sub-programmes) is based on genderless categories such as households, families and communities. As a consequence of the current power relations in (rural) society and current traditional/patriarchal practices regulating land access and ownership, the benefits of land reform tend to accrue to men. However, simply introducing "gender-specific" policies will not solve the problem.

The gender specific policies, for example, that the national and provincial departments of Land Affairs do have, tend to treat "women" as a monolithic category. This can, for example, be seen in the Department of Land Affairs' definition of target groups – i.e. women, youth and the rural poor. Implying that "women" on a whole will be positively served by land reform policies. Of course, women are not a monolithic category and differ in terms of tenure preference, backgrounds, land needs, social standing, class, access to wages⁹⁰, location (urban or rural), size of family, position within a family⁹¹, number of children, interests and capabilities and many more. Some policy interventions

⁸⁵ Artz L, "Shelter in the Southern Cape: Gender violence undermined development", *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 55 - 57

⁸⁶ Walker S, "Land Reform and Gender in Post Apartheid South Africa", United Nations Institute for Social Development, Poverty and Well-being, October 1998

⁸⁷ For example, Cross C, "Women and land in rural areas", *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 12 - 25

⁸⁸ May J, Atwood H, Ewang P, Lund F, Norton A & Wentzel W, "Experience and perceptions of poverty in South Africa: an entitlement approach, unpublished report to the World Bank, Government of the Netherlands and ODA, Data Research Africa, Durban, 1997

⁸⁹ Cross C & Friedman M, "Women and tenure: Marginality and the left-hand power", *Women, Land and Authority*, Meer S. (Ed.) David Phillip, Cape Town, 1997

⁹⁰ Levin et al argue that the women who are most likely to benefit from increased rural income (whether through wages, small business or agriculture) are those who are already comparatively "better-off" – these are generally women who have access to wages (either their own or migrant wages) and are able to pursue income generating strategies such as hawking. Levin R, Russon R & Weiner D, "Class, Gender and the Politics of Rural Land Reform" in Levin R & Weiner D (eds.), *No More Tears . . . Struggles for Land in Mpumalanga, South Africa*, Africa World Press Inc., Asmara, Eritrea, 1997

⁹¹ For example, women's labour may be exploited by their husbands, and yet, simultaneously, women may have control over the labour power of their children and/or at times their daughters in law. See pg. 121 of Levin R, Russon R & Weiner D, "Class, Gender and the Politics of Rural Land Reform" in Levin R & Weiner D (eds.), *No More Tears . . . Struggles for Land in Mpumalanga, South Africa*, Africa World Press Inc., Asmara, Eritrea, 1997

will naturally benefit women in general (and if not, will not disadvantage any category of women) – for example, establishing places of safety for abused women in rural areas.

On the other hand, policies that fail to address the socio-economic differences among women are likely to benefit only certain groups (most likely those with access to some asset-base). For example, the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development Programme that sets (commendable) quotas for female participation, but requires a minimum “own contribution”, is likely to only benefit those women who already have access to relatively significant resources. A further example can be obtained from the contradictory effects that resettlement schemes in Zimbabwe had on women. Jacobs⁹² explains how the failure to take account of differentiating factors, such as class and marital status, contributed to the continued marginalisation of most women, while others made significant gains through the resettlement programmes.

11.3. Women’s demands for land

Like many rural men, many rural women look at the urban sector and urban employment as a route to household economic survival and advancement.⁹³ In a context of already high unemployment rates, women are less likely to secure employment and are paid less when they do. Access to land thus remains a crucial factor in the economic survival of female-headed households in rural areas. At the same time, skewed power relations in society results in the fact that men are more vocal about their land demands. Accordingly (and also because of insufficient gender mainstreaming in the land reform sector) land reform officials tend to assume that the perspective put forward by male members of communities represents the overall community perspective. Since women have very different⁹⁴ demands and needs for land (when compared to men), however, they tend to be excluded from the benefits of land reform projects.

In Merino Walk (a land reform project in the former Ciskei), for example, the initial resettlement plan was based on the community’s apparent demand for large residential and arable plots, and ample grazing land. When the women from the Merino Walk community were finally consulted, it became apparent that these women demanded small gardens or small fields on which to grow vegetables and not large grazing areas.⁹⁵

Similarly, a study of the Ekuthuleni community at Labuschagneskraal in the Midlands regions of KwaZulu-Natal revealed that because households are sites of struggle and, because men continue to dominate in decision-making structures, a large proportion of the land at Ekuthuleni was set aside for grazing. This, despite the fact that the female-headed households of this community rarely owned cattle (considered a source of wealth). By implication, the female-headed households that do not own cattle are unable

⁹² Jacobs S, Gender, class and democracy in Zimbabwe’s land resettlement programme, Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, 1999

⁹³ Walker S, “Land Reform and Gender in Post Apartheid South Africa”, United Nations Institute for Social Development, Poverty and Well-being, October 1998

⁹⁴ And different women have different demands and needs for land.

⁹⁵ Middelton S, “Women’s rights and needs: The case of Thornhill and Merino Walk”, Women, Land and Authority, Meer S (Ed.), David Phillip, Cape Town, 1997, p. 74 - 83

to benefit from having a proportion of their land available for grazing. In most instances, men/ wealthier households will use (sometimes rent) the grazing land of poorer/female-headed households. A survey conducted among the beneficiaries at Ekuthuleni indicated that the women of this community wanted land for cultivation (mainly subsistence cultivation) but, because men dominated the decision-making process and negotiations with the Department of Land Affairs, large land areas were allocated for grazing needs. In addition, the survey showed that the women in the community tended to obtain access to more marginal, more remote and less fertile land (particularly the single women). In cases where land legally belonged to “the household”, 72% of the female respondents from this community felt that their male relatives owned the land.⁹⁶

Many women’s demand for land is tied to their social reproductive function in society. The majority of women interviewed in a study conducted in KwaZulu-Natal, for example, identified the following principle uses for land: gardens for subsistence and income generation, infrastructure, residential use and growing thatching grass.⁹⁷

Further case studies have also shown that men and women have different interpretations of the optimum resolution of their land claims. In many cases, women tended to push for options where they would remain in current settlement areas (close to employment opportunities, schools, and community structures) and receive additional land and priority access to development and social services, while men tended to argue for resettlement and agricultural production and/or grazing land.⁹⁸ Due to their social responsibilities, many poor rural women tend to be bound to their neighbourhood locale or home and, thus prefer to acquire land situated near the homestead. Mjoli⁹⁹ argues that this gives these women more control over their resources so that men are less likely to appropriate the land. It also enables women to engage in agricultural production while fulfilling social responsibilities like child rearing at the same time.

My literature-based research indicates that the majority of women involved in land reform demand land for the production of supplies to supplement household income and food security.¹⁰⁰ Their demands are centred on survival and securing a place to live. This is not because these women are unwilling to engage in commercial agricultural production, but is the result (as further discussion will show) of oppressive societal relations.

My fieldwork and other case studies consulted indicate that women tend to place more emphasis on the provision of social infrastructure. Female members of the Sheba community in Mpumalanga, where I conducted fieldwork, called for the provision of schools, clinics, roads, employment opportunities, sports facilities, training and water,

⁹⁶ Ekuthuleni case study from May J, “Assets, Income and Livelihoods in rural KwaZulu-Natal”, Land, Labour and Livelihoods in rural South Africa, Volume 2, Lipton M, Ellis K, & Lipton Merle (Eds.), Indicator Press, December, 1996

⁹⁷ Ngubane S, “Title to the land”, Agenda, 42, 1999

⁹⁸ NLC, Land Restitution Media Fact Sheet, not dated

⁹⁹ Mjoli-Mncube N, “Land and housing: Women speak out”, Agenda, 42, 1999, p. 4 - 6

¹⁰⁰ Marcus T, “Demand for Land”, Down to Earth, Marcus T, Eales K & Wildschut A (Eds.), Land and Agricultural Policy Centre, Indicator Press, Natal, March 1996, p. 6 - 11

while older male members were interested in large-scale farming and grazing land.¹⁰¹ Walker's¹⁰² research also indicated women's preference for social infrastructure. Walker argues that this preference is strongly linked to women's desire to invest in the future of their children. Even when men and women express similar needs for the provision of infrastructure such as water, their perspectives differ. Mjoli¹⁰³ found that in her study men chose water points located far away from homesteads. Men based their choice on convenience for livestock production. This increased women's workload - i.e. fetching water. The women in Mjoli's study preferred water resources closer to homesteads, for domestic and labour saving purposes.

11. 4. Women and beneficiary selection procedures

International experience indicates that beneficiary selection procedures based on assumptions about "sustainable" or "efficient" land reform have discriminated against women. Internationally, marital status and gender have been used to identify potential beneficiaries. Empirical evidence indicates that married beneficiaries outperform unmarried beneficiaries.¹⁰⁴ As a result, land reform project planners tend to award land to male-headed households. Beneficiary selection in Kenya aimed to ensure that land ownership went to the most "able" farmers, in other words, those with the resources to invest in land, effectively excluding women. In Zimbabwe, the shift from a land reform programme focussing on poverty alleviation and justice (1980), to a policy emphasising efficiency and sustainability (1986), has negatively affected women's access to land. The requirement that potential beneficiaries have a Master Farmer Certificate and agricultural implements effectively excluded women from beneficiary lists.¹⁰⁵

As long as the majority of the rural population is excluded from beneficiary lists, no land reform programme can be "sustainable" or "efficient". Quota systems (e.g. 40% women) and target groups need to be incorporated in beneficiary selection procedures. In Bangladesh, for example, divorced women and widows constituted a target group of the land reform programme.¹⁰⁶ The LRAD programme has placed particular emphasis on empowering rural women and a target (33%) was set for the number of female beneficiaries. In a context of limited government capacity, patriarchal social systems and the absence of effective monitoring and evaluation structures, however, it remains unlikely that this target will be achieved.

¹⁰¹ The following two responses serve to indicate the differences. To the question "what is your biggest need, what do you want from the land reform programme" an elderly male member of the Sheba community said: "We need land for farming and for our cattle. We would like to buy a big farm in the area to farm and keep our cattle". A single mother replied, "we don't have water and I need money to send my children to school, but we need water here". Interviews with Sheba community, June 27,28 & 29, 2001

¹⁰² Walker S, "Land Reform and Gender in Post Apartheid South Africa", United Nations Institute for Social Development, Poverty and Well-being, October 1998

¹⁰³ Mjoli N, "Democratising control of water resources", *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 62 & 63

¹⁰⁴ Kinsey B.H & Binswanger H.P, "Characteristics and Performance of Resettlement Programmes: A review and some lessons from experience", World Bank & LAPC Workshop Paper, Swaziland, November 1993

¹⁰⁵ Goebel A, "Here it is our land, the two of us: Women, men and land in a Zimbabwean Resettlement Area", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 17,1, 1999

¹⁰⁶ Hargreaves S, "Chilli powder and kitchen knives", *Land and Rural Digest*, May/June, 2001

11.5. Women and market based land reform

Bernstein argues that the commitment to redressing gender inequalities is constrained by trying to meet this objective within the framework of a market-based reform.¹⁰⁷ A combination of apartheid laws and cultural and social norms has limited African women's access to land. Market-based land reform cannot address this inequitable distribution of land unless social and power relations in society change fundamentally. Furthermore, because women generally lack purchasing power, they are not likely to access land through the market.

11.6. Cultural and social discrimination

The 1997 White Paper on Land Reform acknowledges that discriminatory customary and social practices are largely responsible for gender inequities in land ownership and access and requires that traditional tenure systems adapt to accommodate the changing position of women. This commitment to gender equity in land ownership has not translated into reality for two principle reasons. Firstly, patriarchal attitudes among community members and leadership structures ensure that women do not participate effectively in the land reform process. In many cases, the largely male leadership structures have argued that the government cannot prescribe gender relations to communities.¹⁰⁸ Secondly, there appears to be a tension between the ANC's commitment to gender equality and its reluctance to alienate, or effectively curtail the powers of, traditional authorities.¹⁰⁹ This tension has been carried through to the 1996 Constitution, which includes the equality clause in the Bill of Rights that expressly outlaw gender-based discrimination and imposes proactive duties on the state to prohibit unfair discrimination, and a continued role for traditional authorities.

Women's access and rights to land are mediated through male relatives in communal tenure systems and land reform projects. Thus, the labour tenant community that acquired the farm Gannahoek in KwaZulu-Natal "*had very conservative feelings about holding and transferring land, and it was difficult to persuade them to grant rights to women*".¹¹⁰ There is enormous variation from one communal tenure system to another and different groups of women experience different levels of discrimination. Nevertheless, women usually do not qualify to hold land independently from men. With regard to married women, for example, a survey conducted in the Eastern Cape found that communities considered the allocation of land rights to married women impossible.

¹⁰⁷ Bernstein H, "Social change in the South African countryside? Land and production, poverty and power", PLAAS, UWC, 2000

¹⁰⁸ Govender-Van Wyk, "Gender Policy and Land Reform", *Agenda*, 42, 1999, p. 66 - 69

¹⁰⁹ Turner S & Ibsen H, "Land and agrarian reform in South Africa: A Status Report", Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, November, 2000. Walker S, "Land Reform and Gender in Post Apartheid South Africa", United Nations Institute for Social Development, Poverty and Well-being, October 1998.

Govender-Van Wyk, "Gender Policy and Land Reform", *Agenda*, 42, 1999

¹¹⁰ Marcus T, "Women", *Down to Earth*, Marcus T, Eales K & Wildschut A (Eds.), LAPC, Indicator Press, Natal, 1996, p. 91

All such rights are vested in husbands who are considered household-heads.¹¹¹ The NLC argues that this is a nation-wide tendency.¹¹² The Eastern Cape survey indicated “considerable relaxation” of traditional attitudes towards single women, with single women increasingly gaining rights to residential land. Practices vary, however, and according to the NLC, single women are usually prohibited from owning or accessing productive land. In yet other cases, single women are denied access to land altogether, unless they can rely on mediation by a male relative.¹¹³ Widows, in some cases, gain access to residential and productive land through inheritance. According to the NLC, the rights of widows tend to be stronger where the widow is older and has children. On the other hand, there are many cases in KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and elsewhere in South Africa, where widows are deprived of their property after the death of a spouse.¹¹⁴

Inheritance in rural South Africa is along patriarchal lines. This is the case despite the promulgation of the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act that states in section eight that “all forms of gender discrimination”, including “the system of preventing women from inheriting family property” are prohibited.¹¹⁵ Widows can inherit land, but would usually claim or receive the land in the name of a son. Women who inherit land often sell their land before a male relative can claim it. The Zimbabwean Model A resettlement schemes provide a relatively successful example of overcoming societal inheritance taboos. Unofficial government policy on the Model A schemes allowed land to be registered in widows’ names. This has improved the status of some women when compared to the status of widows in Zimbabwe’s communal areas.¹¹⁶

A South African redistribution case study, at Cornfields, indicates that views and attitudes to inheritance are changing. Although the norm at Cornfields is that the oldest son inherits land, a survey showed that 76% of men and women – with more women than men – agreed that the law should be changed to allow women to inherit and own land.¹¹⁷ A case study of Gallawater A Farm in the Queenstown district of the Eastern Cape also indicates that inheritance practices are becoming less patriarchal. Mokgope¹¹⁸ found that although sons still tend to be the ones to inherit land from parents, any interested child can inherit and in cases where there are only one child or where only the daughters are interested in farming, it is assumed that they will inherit the land.

¹¹¹ Turner S & Ibsen H, “Land and agrarian reform in South Africa: A Status Report”, Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, November, 2000, p. 27 - 30

¹¹² NLC, Tenure Reform Media Fact Sheet, not dated

¹¹³ Thorp L, “Access to land: a rural perspective in tradition and resources”, Women, Land and Authority, Meer S (Ed.), David Philip, Cape Town, 1997, p. 36 - 43

¹¹⁴ Thorp L, “Access to land: a rural perspective in tradition and resources”, Women, Land and Authority, Meer S (Ed.), David Philip, Cape Town, 1997, p. 36 - 43

¹¹⁵ Mann M, Women’s access to land in the former bantustans: Constitutional Conflict, Customary Law, Democratisation and the Role of the State, Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, 2000

¹¹⁶ Goebel A, “Here it is our land, the two of us: Women, men and land in a Zimbabwean Resettlement Area”, Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 17,1, 1999

¹¹⁷ Walker C, “Cornfields, gender and land”, Women, Land and Authority, Meer S (ed.), David Philip, Cape Town, 1997, p. 55 - 73

¹¹⁸ Mokgope K, Land reform, sustainable rural livelihoods and gender relations: A case study of Gallawater A farm, Volume One, Research Report Number 5, PLAAS, UWC, November 2000

On April 30, 2003, the Deeds Registries Amendment Act 9 of 2003 came into operation in South Africa. One of the purposes of the Act is to amend the Deeds Registries Act 47 of 1937 and, thereby, provide for the registration of immovable property in the name of persons married under the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act 120 of 1998. According to section 7 of the Act, a customary marriage entered into after the date of commencement stipulated in the Act (November 15, 2000), in which a spouse is not a partner in any other existing customary marriage, is a marriage in community of property and of profit and loss, unless such consequences are specifically excluded in an antenuptial contract regulating the matrimonial property system of their marriage.¹¹⁹ If people are made aware of the Act, it could give women stronger land rights and may also undermine some of the current patriarchal inheritance practices.

11.7. Women and authority

The Land Reform Programme has not produced tangible results for women with regard to authority. Rural women remain grossly under-represented in local government structures and are still excluded from public life. Land administration in rural areas is still largely based on the jurisdiction of traditional authorities who tend to discriminate against women. This effectively excludes women from the structures of authority that regulate access to, and use of, land within communal tenure systems.¹²⁰

With regard to tenure reform, the 1997 White Paper on Land Reform was clear on the requirement that women should have equal decision-making and land holding rights in any group that received land rights. The Communal Property Association Act 28 of 1996 requires a land holding group to draft a constitution which sets out the rules governing access to and management of jointly owned land. These rules should conform to the Constitution of South Africa, which implies equal rights for women.

Empirical evidence from South African case studies¹²¹ indicates that women are still under-represented on CPAs and other community decision-making structures and, that patriarchal decision-making remains the order of the day. In the case of the formation of the Sibongile Trust in Kwakwatsi in the Free State, only 32 of the 166 beneficiaries are female and only three of the six trust members are female.¹²² Of the Solane Community Trust, in Mpumalanga, where I conducted fieldwork, only two of the ten trustees are women.¹²³ A study by the Monitoring and Evaluation section of the DLA in the Northern Province found that in two land reform projects (Makuleke and Mashashane) women were excluded from decision-making on production and identification of land, despite the

¹¹⁹ *Star*, "Deeds Amendment Act", June 19, 2003

¹²⁰ It will be interesting to see whether the ANC's commitment to gender equity – i.e. quota systems for electoral nomination lists and attempts to ensure female representation on rural local councils – will have an effect on women's access to authority and power in future.

¹²¹ See, for example, Mann M, *Women's access to land in the former bantustans: Constitutional Conflict, Customary Law, Democratisation and the Role of the State*, Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, 2000

¹²² Bonti-Ankomah S, "Land Redistribution Options for South Africa", NLC, 1998

¹²³ Interviews with Solane Community, June 29, 2001

fact that they actively participated in the election of executive committees.¹²⁴ In Cornfields, of the two key decision making structures, the Residents' Committee does not have any female members and the Trust Committee has a minority of women members who lack community support.¹²⁵ The Sheba Community Trust¹²⁶ in Mpumalanga has 13 members, five of whom are female.¹²⁷

Cousins and Cousins, therefore recommend that a quota system be introduced to ensure female representation on CPAs and other community decision-making structures.¹²⁸

11.8. Patriarchal constraints on women in agriculture

Although women are often de facto rights holders in rural areas as a result of male migration to urban areas, their ability to make decisions is restricted by the requirement that they obtain their husbands' permission on issues of substance.¹²⁹ In Zimbabwe, for example, women who spend 90% of their time on the land cannot decide what to grow or how to utilise resources.¹³⁰ Many Lesotho men work on South African mines, yet their wives need their permission to start farming operations and have no rights to the cash incomes from the crops that they produce.¹³¹

Societal restrictions on women's movement are a further constraint to female entrepreneurial activity. In traditional Zimbabwean society, for example, all married women who travel without the permission of their husbands – whether locally or further afield – are regarded as breaking their wifely duties.¹³² Traditional authorities also have a negative impact on women's ability to engage in agricultural production. Women who start farming land as entrepreneurs often face the possibility of sanctions from traditional authorities.¹³³

And, as if it is not enough that many women's agricultural efforts are curtailed by traditional authorities, some women also have to overcome stereotypical ideas prevalent among officials from the provincial departments of agriculture. In a study of a redistribution project in the Eastern Cape (Gallawater A Farm) Mokgope¹³⁴ found that women were not seen as targets for agricultural extension officers, but rather as targets

¹²⁴ Odhiambo A, An overview and trends of beneficiaries in the land reform programme, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate of the Department of Land Affairs, July, 1999

¹²⁵ Walker C, "Cornfields, gender and land", Women, Land and Authority, Meer S (Ed.), David Philip, Cape Town, 1997, p. 55

¹²⁶ Where I conducted fieldwork

¹²⁷ Interview with Elizabeth Nkosi (member of the Sheba Community Trust), June 27, 2001

¹²⁸ Cousins B & Cousins S, "Lessons from Riemvasmaak", UWC, Farm Africa, January, 1998

¹²⁹ NLC, Land Tenure Reform Media Fact Sheet, not dated

¹³⁰ Maocha P, "Peasant women in Zimbabwe", African Women, Transformation and Development, IFAA, UK, 1991, p. 43

¹³¹ French M, The War Against Women, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 29

¹³² Pankhurst D, "Constraint and incentives in successful Zimbabwean agriculture: the interactions between gender and class", Journal of Southern African Studies, vol.17, December, 1991

¹³³ Mjoli-Mncube N, "Land and housing: Women speak out", Agenda, 42, 1999, p. 4 - 6

¹³⁴ Mokgope K, Land reform, sustainable rural livelihoods and gender relations: A case study of Gallawater A farm, Volume One, Research Report Number 5, PLAAS, UWC, November 2000, p. 20

for home-economics extension services, despite the fact that many of the women in the community were farmers.

The argument is often made that secure access to land is one prerequisite for efficient agricultural production. If this argument is accepted, it stands to reason that women's insecure tenure rights is a major impediment to the development of female agricultural production. Similarly, as long as women lack control over the resources at their disposal their ability to use land for productive purposes will be limited.

11.9. Women, agriculture and technology

Skewed power relations contribute to the fact that women are still not consulted on the introduction of new technology. Accordingly, when new "labour saving" technology is introduced, it is often inappropriate to women's needs. Much of the technology and equipment is designed for traditional male duties such as ploughing. In Nigeria, this led to the displacement of women.¹³⁵ In Zambia's northern province, the introduction of tractors meant that larger land areas were cultivated. This increased the demand on women's labour, as weeding increased with the land areas under cultivation.¹³⁶

11.10. Women and agricultural development programmes (including livelihoods and food security)

In many African counties, agricultural development programmes have not solved problems such as profitable production and food insecurity because these policies did not recognise women's particular contribution to agriculture. Endely¹³⁷ argues that various approaches and models – intensive and large-scale farming, integrated rural development, green revolution and land reform – had more negative than positive effects on women's agricultural activities. There are three basic reasons for this. Firstly, many of these reform projects focus on cash and export crop production. This effectively excludes the majority of African women who are involved in small-scale farming aimed at attaining food security or selling on a local market for a small cash income.¹³⁸ The production of cash crops (for example, coffee and sugar cane in Kenya¹³⁹) tends to increase the work burden on women. Policies to promote cash crop production in Zambia, in the 1960s, also increased the demands on women's labour. The result was a decline in the nutritional status of children under five, because women no longer had time to prepare meals.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ Idike A.A., "Transformation of Rural Women in Nigeria: Myth or Reality", African Women Transformation and Development, IFAA, UK, 1991, p. 15 - 18

¹³⁶ Moore H & Vaughan M, "Cutting down trees: Women, Nutrition and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1920 – 1986", African Affairs, Vol. 86, 345, October 1987

¹³⁷ Endely J.B, "Strategies and Programmes for women in Africa's Agricultural Sector", Alternative Strategies for Africa Volume 2, Suliman M (Ed.), IFAA, London, 1991, p. 132

¹³⁸ Endely J.B, "Strategies and Programmes for women in Africa's Agricultural Sector", Alternative Strategies for Africa Volume 2, Suliman M (Ed.), IFAA, London, 1991, p. 132 - 138

¹³⁹ Anderson M.B, "Kenya: Eagerton College", Gender Roles in Development Projects, Overholt C, Anderson M.K, Cloud K & Austin J.E (Eds.), Kumarian Press, Connecticut, 1985

¹⁴⁰ Moore H & Vaughan M, "Cutting down trees: Women, Nutrition and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1920 – 1986", African Affairs, Vol. 86, 345, October 1987

Cash crop production also had negative effects on the socio-economic position of women in South Africa, as the following two case studies suggest. In the Ekuthuleni case, the introduction of cash crops increased competition for land, thereby reducing the amount of land available for household food production. By implication, women in Ekuthuleni depend increasingly on cash to buy the food that their households consume.¹⁴¹ The fact, that only 5% of the households in Ekuthuleni have access to (outside) paid work, suggests the possibility of future impoverishment and increased food insecurity and malnutrition.

In a study of the Waterval Coffee Plantation project in Marite Village, Lebowa - which was implemented to increase cash crop production by bringing land that was previously used for residential and subsistence purposes under cash crop production – Bob¹⁴² found that the increase in the production of coffee increased the competition for land for food production and residential use. The consequences were particularly negative for women (i.e. there was less land available), many of whom depended on subsistence production for survival.

Furthermore, cash crop production tends to give men more control over income and resources. The result is that despite increases in overall family income, families tend to eat less and poorer food. Women tend to spend their money on their families, household goods, and on local goods (thus contributing to community development).¹⁴³ Men, on the other hand, tend to spend money on themselves: radios, liquor, sex-workers etc.¹⁴⁴ In India, for example, researchers estimate that men spend 80% of their earnings on themselves, while Indian women spend 95% of their earnings on their children.¹⁴⁵ Thirdly, agricultural development policies tend to recognise men and, not women, as potential contributors to agricultural development. Policies are developed to integrate men into commercial agricultural production while women remain in small-scale subsistence farming.¹⁴⁶

A possible solution would be to invest in women's education. Research conducted by Sender & Smith¹⁴⁷ in Tanzania, for example, suggested an association between female education and the development of progressive farming. As the authors argue, "*in the longer run, women's access to education and, therefore, to higher status wage and salaried employment, enables them to question and resist the prevailing basis of intra-*

¹⁴¹ May J, "Assets, Income and Livelihoods in rural KwaZulu-Natal", Land, Labour and Livelihoods in rural South Africa, Volume 2, Lipton M, Ellis K, & Lipton Merle (Eds.), Indicator Press, December, 1996

¹⁴² Bob U, "Gender struggles and social differentiation" in Levin R & Weiner D (eds.), No More Tears . . . Struggles for Land in Mpumalanga, South Africa, Africa World Press Inc., Asmara, Eritrea, 1997

¹⁴³ Mjoli-Mncube N, "Land and housing: Women speak out", Agenda, 42, 1999, p. 4 - 6. French M, The War Against Women, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 29 & 30

¹⁴⁴ Tinker I, "New technologies for food-related activities: an equity strategy" in Dauber R & Cain ML, Women and Technological Change in Developing Countries, Boulder, Westview, 1981

¹⁴⁵ French M, The War Against Women, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 29 & 30

¹⁴⁶ Endely J.B, "Strategies and Programmes for women in Africa's Agricultural Sector", Alternative Strategies for Africa Volume 2, Suliman M (Ed.), IFAA, London, 1991, p. 132

¹⁴⁷ Sender J & Sheila S, Poverty, Class and Gender in Rural Africa: A Tanzanian Case Study, Routledge, New York, 1990

*household distribution of power and resources. The link between improvements in female education, improved child nutrition and, therefore, reductions in infant mortality are well established. Thus, a concentration of resources on improving women's education is possibly one of the most effective means of alleviating malnutrition".*¹⁴⁸

11.11. Women, potential and small-scale agriculture (including livelihoods and food security)

Women in South Africa's rural areas are arguably the mainstay of small-scale agriculture (60%), of the farm labour force and of day to day subsistence production but, are generally not involved in commercial/large-scale production.¹⁴⁹ Women engage in subsistence and small-scale production primarily for food security, to save money against household budgets and as insurance against cash income failure or unemployment.¹⁵⁰ Women are relegated to small-scale and subsistence agriculture primarily because they lack the resources (financial and land) necessary to farm large pieces of land, to enter cash crop production, or to compete with established commercial farmers. A survey in the Northern Province in 1995, for example, found that men consistently achieved higher earnings from agricultural production due to their larger land holdings. Social norms and cultural discrimination also contribute to women's inferior economic status.¹⁵¹

During the 1993 land reform policy formation process, World Bank sponsored researchers argued that although small-scale female farmers need assistance, to focus development aid on them would be too costly and non-replicable, as opposed to concentrating resources on more commercially orientated farmers.¹⁵² Further research appears to support this argument. Cross¹⁵³ found that women are more risk averse than men, that men are more likely to risk cash investments, that men's approach to farming is more profit driven, and that men are more likely to invest in agricultural equipment.

This also appears to be the perspective adopted in the 2001 Land Redistribution and Agricultural Development Programme (LRAD). Although the LRAD programme aims to ensure that one third of its farmer settlement programme beneficiaries are female, the NLC has expressed doubts about women's ability to benefit given the limited resources

¹⁴⁸ Sender J & Sheila S, Poverty, Class and Gender in Rural Africa: A Tanzanian Case Study, Routledge, New York, 1990, p. 127 & see following discussion

¹⁴⁹ Adams M, Ashworth V & Raikes P, "Agricultural Supporting Services for land reform", LAPC, World Bank, September 1993. Cross C, "Women and land in rural areas", Agenda, 42, 1999

¹⁵⁰ Cross C, "Women and land in rural areas", Agenda, 42, 1999, p. 20 – 23

¹⁵¹ Ngqaleni M.T & Makhura M.J, "An analysis of women's status in agricultural development in the Northern Province", Land, Labour and Livelihoods, vol.2. Lipton M, Ellis F & Lipton M (Eds.), Indicator Press, December, 1996

¹⁵² Adams M, Ashworth V & Raikes P, "Agricultural Supporting Services for land reform", LAPC, World Bank, September 1993. Cross C, "Women and land in rural areas", Agenda, 42, 1999

¹⁵³ Cross C, "Women and land in rural areas", Agenda, 42, 1999 & Bruce J. W & Migot-Adholla SE (Eds.), Searching for Land Tenure Security in Africa, Kendall-Hunt Publishing, 1994 & Bryceson D, Women Wielding the Hoe: Lessons from Rural Africa for Feminist Theory and Development Practice, Oxford Publishers, 1995 & Cross C, Mngadi T, Mbhele T, Mlambo N, Kleinbooi K, Saayman L, Pretorius H & Bekker S, An Unstable Balance: Migration, Small Farming, Infrastructure and Livelihoods in the Coastal Provinces, Volume 1, Development Bank of Southern Africa, 1997

available to them. The NLC argued that in setting up a distinction between land redistribution for the poor focussing on subsistence, and economic growth through support to mostly male commercial farmers, the DLA has created a land reform mechanism that will exclude the very poor in rural areas (mostly women) and has consigned women to the limitations of subsistence activities.

On the other hand, research has also provided ample evidence in support of the argument that women have the potential to make a significant contribution to agricultural and rural development. Cross found that women are willing to start production with less land and that women plant all their land more often than men do. The 1995 Northern Province survey found that women consistently had higher yields, that women indicated a strong interest in deriving an income from agriculture, that women were very responsive to incentives and, made greater use of technological improvements such as new seed varieties and fertiliser.

Women certainly are experienced farmers and, as the NLC argues, although agricultural production makes up only 10% of the income of rural African households, it is the third most popular source of livelihood and remains one of the only options open to the very poor (female-headed households) in rural areas. However, with regard to livelihoods, it would probably be more appropriate to provide poor women with access to small pieces of land (to produce food for household consumption, for example), close to their homesteads (enabling them to exert control), and which is suitable to the amount of time and labour they have available.

The Department of Land Affairs, as discussed, is constitutionally mandated to address gender inequities in land access and economic development. Given the prevalence and importance of women in farming areas and the lack of employment opportunities in rural areas, transformation of the rural economy will not be possible without accommodating women in the process.¹⁵⁴

11.12. Time: the capital constraint and implications for food security and livelihoods

The Secretary General of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women argued that women perform one third of the world's quantified work in addition to the uncounted work they perform at home.¹⁵⁵ Women also produce 45% of the world's food.¹⁵⁶ African women perform multiple roles in society ranging from production, marketing, food processing, animal husbandry, caring for aged and disabled members of society, child care¹⁵⁷, house cleaning, building and maintaining traditional

¹⁵⁴ Ngqaleni M.T & Makhura M.J, "An analysis of women's status in agricultural development in the Northern Province", *Land, Labour and Livelihoods*, vol.2. Lipton M, Ellis F & Lipton M (Eds.), Indicator Press, December, 1996

¹⁵⁵ Ngadaye A, "The Multiple Roles of Women in Africa", *African Women, Transformation and Development*, IFAA, UK, 1991, p. 51

¹⁵⁶ French M, *The War Against Women*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 24

¹⁵⁷ Naturally, the amount of time that individual women will have to spend on childcare will differ significantly. It will be influenced by their resources (i.e. can they pay someone to take care of the children), the number of children, the size and nature of the family (i.e. is there a grandparent or older child

houses, and the collection of fuel and water. The AIDS pandemic is likely to increase women's burden and place greater demands on their time. A study conducted by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation found that African women are responsible for 70% of food crop production, 50% of animal husbandry, 60% of marketing, and 100% of food processing, in addition to child care and other household responsibilities.¹⁵⁸ Women in East Africa are responsible for 75% of all farm labour.¹⁵⁹ In Zambia, women perform 60% of the total farm work in addition to their other responsibilities.¹⁶⁰ In Malawi, women put as much work as men into raising cotton and doing domestic chores, but also do twice as much work as men growing corn.¹⁶¹ In the Ivory Coast, adult women's workload is twice that of men's, and in Burkina Faso women do all household work and still spend 82% more time on farm work than men.¹⁶² The shortage of labour saving technology and urban migration further increases the burden on women in Africa.

In South Africa, women are responsible for the majority of agricultural (70%) and household labour. The LAPC estimated that South African women contributed 80% of unpaid labour.¹⁶³ In 2000, Statistics South Africa conducted the fieldwork for the first time-use study in South Africa.¹⁶⁴ The study found that men (on average) spent 13% of their day on activities that are included in calculations of gross domestic product and 6% of their day on non-SNA production.¹⁶⁵ Women spent (on average) 9% on their day on SNA-production¹⁶⁶ and 15% of their day on non-SNA production. Men spend (on average) less than 1% of their time caring for persons in their households, while women spend at least 2% of their time doing this. Finally, women, with children living with them, spent on average 87 minutes a day on childcare compared to seven minutes per day for men in the same situation.

Time, is therefore, a scarce resource for women. As Cloud¹⁶⁷ argues, "*women in rural households work very long hours trading off the value of time used in one activity against*

who can look after the children), the role that the father/husband/partner is willing to play, whether there is a husband/partner and so forth. Also see Zimmerman F J, "Barriers to participation of the poor in South Africa's land redistribution", *World Development*, 28(8), 2000, p. 1449 on the impact of (migrant) wages.

¹⁵⁸ Idike A.A, "Transformation for rural women in Nigeria: Myth or Reality", *African Women, Transformation and Development*, IFAA, UK, 1991, p. 15

¹⁵⁹ Anderson M.B, "Kenya: Egerton College", *Gender Roles in Development Projects*, Overholt C, Anderson M.K, Cloud K & Austin J.E (Eds.), Kumarian Press, Connecticut, 1985

¹⁶⁰ Moore H & Vaughan M, "Cutting down trees: Women, Nutrition and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1920 – 1986", *African Affairs*, Vol. 86, 345, October 1987

¹⁶¹ French M, *The War Against Women*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 26

¹⁶² French M, *The War Against Women*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 26

¹⁶³ Modise M, "Women in Agricultural Development", *Land Update*, No.66, April 1998

¹⁶⁴ All information on the study from Chobokoane N & Budlender D, "Methodology used to measure childcare in the South African Time Use Survey", *Agenda*, 51, 2002, p. 92 - 98

¹⁶⁵ Non-SNA production includes household maintenance, care of children, the sick, elderly and disabled and community services to help other households.

¹⁶⁶ SNA-production includes employment for establishments, primary production activities not for establishments and services for income and other production of goods not for establishments.

¹⁶⁷ Cloud K, "Women's Productivity in Agricultural Systems: Considerations for Project design", *Gender Roles in Development Projects*, Overholt C, Anderson M.B, Cloud K & Austin J.E (Eds.), Kumarian Press, Connecticut, 1985

the value in another". These unrealistic demands on women's time and labour have a negative impact on society as a whole. Experiences in Zambia's northern province clearly illustrate this point. From the 1930s, low agricultural productivity and food insecurity in Zambia's northern province has primarily been explained as a result of the absence of male labour due to the migrant labour system.¹⁶⁸ Moore and Vaughan quote from a study conducted in the 1930s which found, however, that food insecurity was just as prevalent in areas where the ratio of men and women were more or less equal. What the study showed was that food supply was adequate during certain seasons of the year but that families lacked access to food and nutrition because women were too busy to prepare meals.

Comparative studies of Africa and Southeast Asia (in regions with similar levels of poverty) found that mortality rates for children in Africa were significantly lower. One of the factors arguably accounting for this difference is that women in Africa tend to have higher status than women in South Asia do.¹⁶⁹ Another example is Burkina Faso, where people lose weight during the rainy season because women are too exhausted to cook. "*Evidence suggests that it is as hard for a man to prepare a dinner as it is for him to have a baby*".¹⁷⁰

It is the failure to account for women's role in food production and preparation that underlies the limited successes of a wide variety of projects and policies to reduce malnutrition and increase food security (principally through increased production). As Kent argues, malnutrition and food insecurity is partly the result of the fact that women have not been able to play a significant role in their societies and therefore, the key to increased food security is to "have women play more of a decision-making role, helping to shape the social conditions under which food systems function".¹⁷¹

A survey in South Africa's Northern Province found that younger women especially, are constrained by household chores and therefore cannot engage in commercial agricultural activity.¹⁷²

The Land Reform Programme, therefore, cannot address gender inequities in land access and ownership unless policies acknowledge that time is a scarce resource for women. An example, of a policy intervention that could improve women's economic status and agricultural productivity, is improved access to water and fuel (i.e. the provision of electricity). The 1996 South African Population Census estimated that 45% of African households were still obtaining water from dams, rivers, springs and wells and that 75.7% of Africans in rural areas did not have access to electricity.¹⁷³ Fetching water and

¹⁶⁸ Moore H & Vaughan M, "Cutting down trees: Women, Nutrition and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1920 – 1986", *African Affairs*, Vol. 86, 345, October 1987

¹⁶⁹ Kent G, "A gendered perspective on nutrition rights", *Agenda*, 51, 2002, p. 43 - 49

¹⁷⁰ French M, *The War Against Women*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1992, p. 26

¹⁷¹ Kent G, "A gendered perspective on nutrition rights", *Agenda*, 51, 2002, p. 43 - 49

¹⁷² Ngqaleni M.T & Makhura M.J, "An analysis of women's status in agricultural development in the Northern Province", *Land, Labour and Livelihoods*, vol.2. Lipton M, Ellis F & Lipton M (Eds.), Indicator Press, December, 1996

¹⁷³ Central Statistics Service, The people of South Africa Population Census, 1996, Report 03-01-19, 1996

firewood absorbs time and energy that could be devoted to agricultural production. In the dry-season in the low-rainfall areas of Tanzania, for example, a women might have to walk ten kilometres, using most of the day, to provide a family with one four gallon container of water.¹⁷⁴ As a Tanzanian man complained: “*Water is a big problem for women. We can sit here all day waiting for food; there are no women at home. They are always going to fetch water*”.¹⁷⁵

Other policy interventions should include the provision of rural childcare facilities, women’s abuse centres, transport facilities, communication systems and effective empowerment of women to enable them to play influential roles in decision-making structures. Childcare facilities in rural areas may be a particularly useful intervention and many contribute to greater equity. As Bob¹⁷⁶ points out, unequal access to childcare contributes to social differentiation among women. For example, mothers in/of households with older women (grandmothers) or older daughters who can take care of younger children will have fewer domestic responsibilities and more time and freedom of movement and can, therefore, engage in more lucrative employment opportunities. It is absolutely crucial that women gain access to education. Education (as Bob¹⁷⁷ points out) makes upward mobility possible (i.e. can find (better) employment). An empirical study conducted in India, for example, indicated a direct correlation between increased education for women and improved child nutrition. Furthermore, a study by the International Food Policy Research Institute found that women’s status and education levels account for 54.6% of the variation in child malnutrition.¹⁷⁸ This is particularly important in South Africa, where 39% of the population is vulnerable to food insecurity.

12. Conclusion

Section one illustrated that women in South Africa (but particularly black women in rural areas) continue to be disadvantaged economically, politically and socially. Although there are many socio-economic and cultural differences, the previous statement is true for South African women in general, when compared to South African men in general.

The discussion in this chapter has shown that although the South African government exhibits a commendable commitment (and has a legal obligation) to gender equity, the policies introduced to achieve equitable access to land and economic resources for women have been largely unsuccessful. The South African Land Reform Programme has done little to improve women’s access to land, wealth and authority. The land reform programmes failed women because policies and procedures did not take account of the fact that women’s position in society is fundamentally different (inferior). Women’s

¹⁷⁴ Boesen J, Havnevik KZ, Koponen J & Odgaard R (Eds.), Tanzania: crisis and struggle for survival, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, 1986, p. 108

¹⁷⁵ Whitaker JS, How can Africa survive, Harper & Row, New York, 1988, p. 152

¹⁷⁶ Bob U, “Gender struggles and social differentiation” in Levin R & Weiner D (eds.), No More Tears . . . Struggles for Land in Mpumalanga, South Africa, Africa World Press Inc., Asmara, Eritrea, 1997, p. 147-149

¹⁷⁷ Bob U, “Gender struggles and social differentiation” in Levin R & Weiner D (eds.), No More Tears . . . Struggles for Land in Mpumalanga, South Africa, Africa World Press Inc., Asmara, Eritrea, 1997

¹⁷⁸ Kent G, “A gendered perspective on nutrition rights”, Agenda, 51, 2002

particular position is influenced by the unequal division of labour, institutional violence, patriarchal patterns of land allocation and inheritance, traditional authorities, cultural restrictions on women's movement and lack of legal protection, social services, education and training.

The Land Reform Pilot Programme, for example, failed to benefit women for a number of reasons that include the absence of appropriate methodologies, rigid bureaucratic procedures¹⁷⁹ that inhibited innovation and, which indicates that women were not sufficiently part of the process, and tendencies ranging from the peripheralisation of gender equity issues to outright hostility among Department of Land Affairs officials and male beneficiaries.

Reasons why the land Redistribution Programme failed women include; paying the grants to household-heads (men), and women's isolated status, which curtailed their ability to access the Redistribution Programme or information pertaining to it. Although the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development Programme addresses some of these problems (i.e. paying grants to individuals) and sets quotas, it does not address the fact that power relations are skewed in favour of men.

There are three basic reasons for the failure of the Restitution Programme to significantly improve the socio-economic position of the women who participated in the restitution projects. First, the failure of the Restitution Programme to take account of these women's particular experience of dispossession. Second, the Restitution Programme is rights based and, third, the absence of appropriate methodologies and procedures in the context of a society in which power relations are skewed in favour of men. In other words, the failure of policy developers and implementers to take socio-economic differences (in this case gender) sufficiently into account.

The tenure reform programme failed to significantly improve the position of women with regard to secure access to land because of the failure of relevant actors to understand that tenure systems are the product of a social and political process determined by the values of, and power relations in, any given community.

Credit policies have not been successful either. This is partly because of the qualifying requirements of the formal financial sector. And, partly because programmes that give women access to credit will be useless as long as women continue to live in households and communities where they are not able to control their own resources.

Three salient themes emerged from the inquiry in this chapter as to why various policies and programmes failed to significantly benefit women. Firstly, the continuing patriarchal nature of South African society, secondly, the failure to take socio-economic differences into account in policy/programme formulation and implementation and thirdly, the need for women to initiate direct action and sustained social mobilisation.

¹⁷⁹ See chapter seven for a discussion on the relationship between excessive bureaucracy and lack of beneficiary participation.

The patriarchal nature of South African society (particularly in rural areas) is apparent throughout the chapter. Nevertheless, the following examples will emphasise the issue. Section three, for example, indicates that despite commitments to transforming the Department of Land Affairs, after almost 10 years the Department of Land Affairs had not yet achieved gender employment equity. This is partly the result of the complexities around gender mainstreaming, and partly because of a lack of understanding of the importance of gender – i.e. where male staff view gender equity as cumbersome and consequently lack the commitment to help transform the department. Such views (e.g. that gender is cumbersome) suggest that policy implementers lack an understanding of the importance of gender - as well as socio-economic differentiation among (potential) beneficiaries of the land reform programmes - in policy development and implementation.

Another example is the “reality gap” between the official policy and policy/project implementation (i.e. the effect of the programme staff on the process), and the even bigger “gap” between official policy and community living (i.e. real life). The question that this “gap” raises is; in a context where communities/society is so fundamentally patriarchal, how does official gender equity policies translate into daily life (and business)? Especially when principles of gender equity are sometimes totally foreign?

This chapter also emphasises the important implications of not taking socio-economic differentiation into account in the development and implementation of social and/or economic reform programmes.

South Africa’s rural areas are highly differentiated, for example, and it is important to understand these differences as well as the implications thereof for policy development and implementation. Any group of people (or different groups) will be differentiated in terms of class (or position within that class), family relations, community status, access to labour, religion, interests, demands, needs, access to natural resources, income-generating ability and access (or lack thereof) to migrant wages/remittances.¹⁸⁰ What the discussion in this chapter has suggested is that the failure to take differentiation into account (e.g. assuming that the perspectives put forward by more vocal male individuals are the perspectives of the community) can result in the implementation of inappropriate policies that ultimately fail (e.g. redistributing large areas for cattle grazing when women are unable to use this and in reality required small plots close to their current homestead).

This chapter concludes with a range of recommendations that will increase the likelihood of women benefiting from land reform. However, most of these recommendations have less to do with land reform and more to do with changing (or contributing to the change) or rural society in general. No land reform programme will succeed as long as women are oppressed and unable to utilise or control their resources.

What is required is a radical transformation of society in order to defeat the patriarchal norms and standards that contrive to tyrannise women. The emergence of a strong

¹⁸⁰ Bob U, “Gender struggles and social differentiation” in Levin R & Weiner D (eds.), No More Tears . . . Struggles for Land in Mpumalanga, South Africa, Africa World Press Inc., Asmara, Eritrea, 1997

women's rural movement is a necessary condition for radical change. The prospects for the emergence of such a movement, however, are not good. As Levin¹⁸¹ argues, demobilisation has followed the 1994 elections, and the plethora of women's rural organisations that do exist have rarely made an impact on mainstream politics. For example, the Rural Women's Movement (facilitated by TRAC) drafted a constitution, which included demands for forums for rural women, equal rights to land for women, and a say in national and local politics for women¹⁸², but have since not been able to apply consistent and sufficient pressure to bring about these changes.

As Mann¹⁸³ argues, however, "it is the women who live in these communities who must decide whether they are oppressed by any given cultural practice . . . to avoid a situation where mainstream feminists make choices for other women, thereby contributing to their oppression and silencing".

Recommendations

- The Department of Land Affairs does not even have an effective tracking and monitoring system and, accordingly cannot even provide accurate information on the number of female land reform (potential) beneficiaries. The absence of accurate information impacts negatively on the Department of Land Affairs' ability to develop and implement policies that effectively address women's inequitable access to land. It is, therefore, recommended that the Department of Land Affairs develop and use an accurate accounting system as part of an equally necessary well-designed monitoring and evaluation programme.
- Land acquired through any of the land reform programmes in South Africa, should be registered jointly in the name of wife and husband/life partner. In case of divorce/legal separation the women should automatically retain the land.
- Provide women with credit (small loans) for activities that are traditionally viewed as "women's work" close to current homesteads.
- Encourage women-only agricultural and other income-generating activities.
- Encourage, implement, support and develop activities and projects that will reduce women's dependence on men (husbands or male relatives). A number of the following recommendations will speak to this (e.g. education, places of safety). Further options include skills development projects, life skills and leadership training, management training and public speaking.
- Women cannot be productive citizens until they are safe. It is necessary to establish places of safety for women and children in rural areas. This should be coupled to accessible legal aid and a gender-sensitive and effective police presence in rural areas.

¹⁸¹ Levin R.M, "Land Restitution, the Chieftancy and Territoriality: The case of the Mmaboi Land Claim in South Africa's Northern Province, Centre for African Studies, March 1996

¹⁸² Mann M, Women's access to land in the former bantustans: Constitutional Conflict, Customary Law, Democratisation and the Role of the State, Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, 2000, p. 23

¹⁸³ Mann M, Women's access to land in the former bantustans: Constitutional Conflict, Customary Law, Democratisation and the Role of the State, Occasional Paper Series, PLAAS, UWC, 2000, p. 21

- All land reform and/or rural development programmes should have a set quota (suggested 50%) for women beneficiaries/participants. In addition, a significant number (for example 20%) of the female beneficiaries should be unemployed.
- When project planners visit communities, women should be interviewed individually and anonymously in order to get a more accurate understanding of the needs and demands of a community.
- All staff from the national and provincial offices of the departments of Land Affairs and Agriculture should participate in gender-sensitisation programmes/workshops.
- Project/programme planners and implementers should make sure that women gain access to land that they can realistically use – i.e. it should not be so large that it increases a woman's workload to the extent that she does not have time to care for her children. Also, the land should be close to current homesteads whenever possible.
- The government should invest heavily (and provide) social infrastructure to rural areas. This must include electricity (free up to a certain amount), water (free up to certain amount), schools (within walking distance), passable roads, sports and recreational facilities and communication technology (at least working public phones within walking distance).
- It is necessary to invest in and encourage private sector involvement in employment creation in rural areas.
- Support the many informal activities that women engage in to generate income – for example, baking, beer brewing, sewing, woodwork/carvings, traditional medicine, and food preparation.¹⁸⁴
- Promote, assist and educate women regarding the establishment of small and medium-scale business enterprises in rural areas.
- The power of traditional authorities to allocate land and regulate land use should be curtailed through the effective implementation of (and the development of the capacity necessary to enforce compliance with) legislation such as the Bill of Rights.
- Quota systems should be introduced for women in local and provincial government structures.
- Agricultural extension services should especially be provided for women and extension officers should be trained to deal specifically with gender issues in a rural setting.
- It is extremely important to invest in education for women. This has a wide variety of possibly profound and positive consequences that include increased agricultural production, access to higher wages in the long run, empowerment of women socially (and financially), the improvement of child nutrition and a reduction in infant mortality rates.
- Invest in and develop projects that give women more time. Childcare and frail/elderly care facilities in rural areas will be particularly useful. Tap water, electricity and other affordable labour saving technology could also be provided.
- Invest in and facilitate travel for women – e.g. a sponsored trip to an agricultural exhibition.

¹⁸⁴ For details on these and other activities see Bob U, "Gender struggles and social differentiation" in Levin R & Weiner D (eds.), *No More Tears . . . Struggles for Land in Mpumalanga, South Africa*, Africa World Press Inc., Asmara, Eritrea, 1997, p. 141

- Invest in adequate and secure housing for women. The South African government (and, therefore, the Departments of Land Affairs and Agriculture) is committed (in terms of the constitution, the 1997 white paper and various international conventions) to providing women with access to adequate living conditions – in particular, housing, sanitation, water, transportation and communication.
- The provision of health services and related education will help to improve the living and working conditions of women in isolated rural areas. Health services should include clinics with specialised sexual health and abortion facilities.
- With regard to the above and domestic violence, clinics should also be a place where women can access counselling and/or talk to social workers and relevant government representatives.
- Proactive steps must be taken to ensure that women participate in land reform projects, pre- and post-settlement.
- Support should be provided to “women-only” credit associations, while official credit programs and commercial credit institutions need to factor the effect of inequitable household relations into product development – i.e. providing credit “in kind” or for small projects located close to homesteads.
- Non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, churches and other institutions active in rural areas (including the departments of Land Affairs and Agriculture) should conduct workshops on women’s rights.
- Introducing, monitoring and enforcing compliance of legislation to strengthen women’s participation on community structures and landholding structures.