

https://dspace.org/

Commercialising subsistence farmers: a benefit or detriment to the poor?

Taruvinga, Maita

2011-08-05
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/10373

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

University of the Witwatersrand

Johannesburg

Faculty of Humanities
School of Social Sciences

Commercialising subsistence farmers: A benefit or detriment to the poor?

Maita Taruvinga

Supervisor: Dr Michelle Williams
Department of Sociology

A Research Report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts Development Studies

February 2011

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Research Report is my own, original, authentic and unaided work. It is submitted for the Degree of Masters of Arts Development Studies at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. It has not been submitted before for any other degree of examination at any other university

_____ _____

Maita Taruvinga Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to firstly thank my parents, Ranga and Brenda Taruvinga, for this amazing opportunity to continue my education. I am grateful because you have instilled in me a value for education, and have always made me feel that I can do anything if I put my mind to it.

To my colleagues and friends Trixie-Belle and Michalya, I could not have done this without your encouragement, contributions and feedback. It really helped knowing that we were all in this together!

I am thankful to Michelle for challenging me to think further and dig deeper into my critical mind. Writing this report has been an incredible journey for me and you have really encouraged me to believe in myself.

To the beautiful Mafucula community, for accepting me and allowing me to use them as a case study. I will never forget your stories, and delicious mango trees.

To my loving and supportive husband, Reagan. Thank you for believing in me when I couldn't believe in myself. You have been an incredible pillar of support for me during this time. Thank you.

ABSTRACT

The commercialisation of subsistence farmers: a benefit or detriment to the poor?

The aim of this study is to understand if rural households in Swaziland are benefiting from engaging in commercial outgrower schemes. The process of commercialising subsistence farmers has been one of the government of Swaziland's strategic attempts to lift rural households out of poverty by raising their income levels. I explore some of the socio-economic factors that are imposed on rural households, bringing into question whether or not this strategy is a viable poverty alleviation policy.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture has been central to economic development through the promotion of the export of crops and raw material. Its profitable potential provides a vehicle for using land in rural areas for poverty alleviation and rural development strategies. Commercialising subsistence farmers has the potential to offer the prospect of raising incomes, improving welfare, food security and nutritional status that could otherwise have been worse. However, this transition (from subsistence to commercial) in agricultural activities in rural communities can also have detrimental consequences such as reduce income and threaten household food security. I therefore ask the question: How have rural households benefited from engaging in commercial agriculture?

In this study I explore the process of commercialising subsistence farmers as a form of rural development. To achieve this, I have carried out a case study analysis of a rural community in Swaziland called Mafucula, which has currently been involved in the commercial agriculture of sugarcane for the last six years. Empirical data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with 30 households in this community. My findings demonstrate that with six years into commercial agriculture, this community has not benefited from this venture and continues to face the ongoing struggle of poverty.

Contents

DECLARATION i

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ii

List of Acronyms vi

List of Figures vii

Chapter One: Introduction 1

Aim of the Study 6
The Komati Down Stream Development Project (KDDP) 9
The Swaziland Sugar Industry 11
Outgrowers in Swaziland 13
Chapter Two: Literature Review 18

Contract Farming/Outgrower schemes and Smallholder Agriculture 25
Outgrower schemes, a type of agrarian reform? 30
Commercial Agriculture and Household Food Security 34
Women, Gender and Agriculture 38
Chapter Three: Methodology 43

Location of Study 43
Case Study Selection 46
Period selection 47
Data Collection Techniques 48
Access 51
Sampling and Sample Size 51
Ethical considerations 52
Chapter Four: The Mafucula Community 53

The History of the Phakama Project 59
Traditional Land Tenure in Swaziland 63
Chapter Five: The Effects of the Transition from Subsistence to Commercial Agriculture 67

Outgrower Schemes, an Opportunity or a Threat for Women? 68
Changing Structure of Land Use 71
Income, Labour and Agriculture 74
Great Expectations 78
Chapter Six: Food Security and Contract Farming 82

Contract Farming: A Benefit or Detriment to the Poor? 87
Chapter Seven: Conclusion 90

Bibliography 95

Appendix I: Interview Schedule 106

Appendix II: List of interviewees and dates 108

Appendix III: Participant Information Sheet 109

Appendix IV: Formal Consent Form 110

List of Acronyms

EU	European Union
FA	Farmer Association
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
KDDP	Komati Down Stream Development Project
LUSIP	Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project
RSSC	Royal Swazi Sugar Corporation
SHIP	Small-Holder Irrigation Project
SNL	Swazi Nation Land
SWADE	Swaziland Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise
SSA	Swaziland Sugar Association

List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of Swaziland

Figure 2: Outline of Komati Down Stream Development Project

Figure 3: KDDP Farmer Associations

Figure 4: Map of Swaziland: location of Maguga Dam, KDDP and LUSIP

Figure 5: Aerial photograph of study area

Figure 6: The Mafucula Valley

Figure 7: Break down of organisation structure of project

Figure 8: Women engaging in handicrafts

Figure 9: Women selling at the market

Chapter One: Introduction

In this study, I explore the extent to which rural households in Swaziland are affected by changing forms of agriculture from a level of subsistence to commercial. I term this transition the commercialisation of subsistence farmers. This transition into commercial agriculture introduces changes in the traditional organisation of agriculture, income, consumption and nutritional welfare in rural communities. These changes subsequently affect the household, either raising income levels and improving nutritional welfare, or by destroying the supply of food crops and threatening household food security. I aim to understand the social effects that are imposed on the household as a result of this new form of livelihood. In doing so, I bring into question whether or not commercial outgrower schemes that focus on cash crop cultivation have contributed towards poverty alleviation in rural areas.

In order to do this I have carried out a case study analysis on a small[1] rural community in Swaziland called Mafucula. The homesteads in this community have transitioned from a level of subsistence farming that was managed solely by the household, to the collaboration of farms in order to create one smallholder commercial outgrower project centered on the Swaziland sugarcane industry. I was interested in understanding how this transition had affected the household, had it lifted them above the poverty line, had it improved their income levels, were their basic needs being met, had they seen an improvement in their living conditions, did they have better access to water, electricity?

Subsistence farming for home consumption is often pursued by farmers because it is subjectively the best option given all constraints (von Braun & Kennedy, 1994, p. 4). The lack of resources and physical isolation faced by rural communities undoubtedly limits the extent to which they can expand their agricultural activities beyond subsistence. However their access to land gives them a level of security in that they are able to use the land as a

[1] Population of 2,942

form of livelihood and maintain their houshold and their family. Yet this form of agriculture is increasingly under threat from various angles. Commercialising subsistence farmers suggests the destruction of farming for subsistence. This process can be traced back to over a century ago with the rise of capitalism (Lenin, 1946). Under capitalism, small-scale, subsistence agriculture was viewed as unproductive and relatively inefficient (Lenin, 1946). It is perceived as one of the largest misallocations of human (labour) and natural (land) resources and with the population pressure in the developing world, it is becoming less and less viable (von Braun & Kennedy, 1994, p.4). Capitalism suggests that subsistence farming does not actively contribute towards the economic growth of a nation, viewing it as a misuse of land. Therefore in order to improve their levels of productivity something had to be done to eliminate this form of agriculture, replacing it with something more economically viable, commercial agriculture.

Small-scale subsistence agriculture also faces other threats. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Swaziland predicts that climate change will have an increasingly adverse effect on agricultural production, particularly on smaller households in rural areas (UNDP, 2010). Given that 75% of Swaziland's poor live in rural areas (IFAD, 2009) and practice subsitence farming based on rain fed irrigation, a large percentage of Swazi livelihoods are therefore at risk, to the attack of drought. This deems subsistence farming to be unsustainable, as rain fed irrigation is unreliable.

It is in part due to these challenges (economic growth and ecological threats) that the Government of Swaziland has placed extensive emphasis on addressing poverty through the commercialisation of subsistence farmers. This process has involved the adoption of outgrower models and contract farming[2] around the country's major crop exports to facilitate this transition. Outgrower schemes for smallholders aim at developing export

[2] Contract farming refers to a system where a central processing or exporting unit purchases the harvests of independent farmers and the terms of the purchase are arranged in advance through contracts. The terms of the contract vary and usually specify how much produce the contractor will buy and what price they will pay for it. The contractor frequently provides credit inputs and technical advice. Contracting is fundamentally a way of allocating risk between producer and contractor; the former takes the risk of production and the latter the risk of marketing (Baumann, 2000).

crops such as tea, tobacco, sugar and coffee, for national and international consumption (von Bilow & Sorensen, 1993). Contract farming is seen as a system for increasing the productivity of smallholder farming through the provision of credit, inputs and technical information provided by agribusiness (Minot, 1986, p. 26). Given the similarities between contract farming and outgrower schemes, I have used them interchangeably[3].

Contract farming and outgrower schemes are often viewed as an ideal arrangement for incorporating rural communities into economic activity, and in essence contributing towards rural development. This is because it contributes towards the overall agricultural production of a country as well as integrating rural communities into the capitalist sector by providing them with a form of wage labour and therefore ostensibly improving their income levels (Christiaensen & Demery, 2007; Vesudeva, 2006).

The commercialisation of subsistence farmers has been an ambitious attempt by the Government of Swaziland to alleviate poverty through income generation in rural areas (Vasudeva, 2006, p. 7; SWADE, 2010; Government of Swaziland, 2008). As a result of this strategy Swaziland has created an increasing number of outgrower schemes in rural communities that are located on Swazi Nation Land (SNL). I have thus chosen to investigate one of these outgrowers, the Mafucula community, located at the north eastern corner of Swaziland. Figure 1 below is a map of Swaziland, showing the specific location of the study area. The contour lines surrounding the area demonstrate that the community is situated between two mountains.

[3] Although the former is strictly a subset of the latter, there still may be outgrower schemes without written contracts (Glover D. J., 1984).

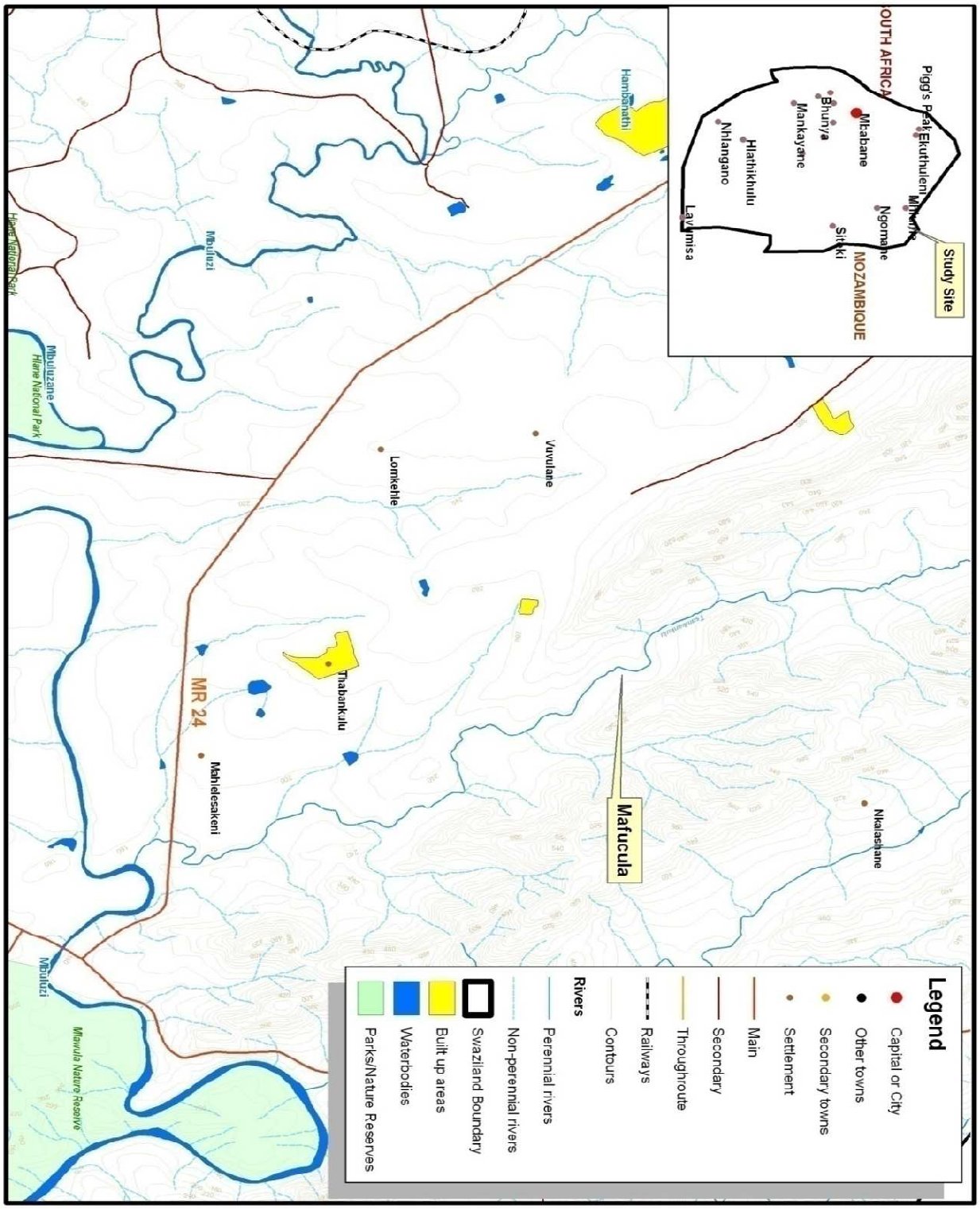


Figure 1: Map of Swaziland and Study Area

Given the vast amount of literature that says this alternative form of agriculture is the route out of poverty (Lenin, 1946, Timmer, 1992; Mellor, 1999, Glover, 1987), I was curious to investigate if this is indeed so. While some scholars and practitioners argue for commercialisation, it is also widely argued that the commercialisation of agriculture has negative effects on the welfare of the poor (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1994; Hart, 1982; White, 1997; Buch-Hansen & Marcussen, 1982). This conflicting literature has encouraged me to look at how commercialisation of agriculture in Mafucula has affected the poor.

The relevance of this study is essential when looking at development policies that are focused on the often neglected lives of those in rural areas. The success of such schemes could provide a model for addressing poverty in other countries. However, if it indicates that it could be a detriment to the poor, it would reveal areas that need to be addressed in order to improve the implementation of similar projects in the future. I have adopted Michael Buroway's extended case study method of research to show that the experiences faced by this local case study (in its micro form) can extend to a macro context, influencing development policies as a whole (Buroway, 1998, p. 2).

Initially I went into this study anticipating that incorporating rural communities into commercial agriculture projects was the answer to poverty alleviation in rural areas. I had anticipated discovering that it provided the community with a sustainable form of wage labour and income. That outgrower schemes offered a win-win scenario in that it contributed towards economic growth of the country and yet still gives the community a sustainable form of livelihood and ownership, allowing them to enter the market economy at minimal risk. However, this study has encouraged me to think further and delve deeper into fundamental socio-economic questions when looking at rural development. How are the people affected and under what conditions might the engagement in commercial contract farming be to their long-term benefit or detriment? Contrary to my preconceived ideas of this form of development I discovered from my case study that these outgrower schemes have not benefited the community and have in fact left them even more precarious than before.

From my findings, I have discovered that the commercialisation of subsistence farming can have severe implications such as threatening the level of food security within the household, and creating debt that hinders their ability to attain an income forcing households to continue to live below the poverty line. This study explores this form of 'development' strategy and unfolds the various issues related to outgrower schemes that are imposed on the homestead itself. The study argues that engaging rural households in commercial outgrower schemes is not necessarily an ideal form of poverty alleviation.

Aim of the Study

This study asks whether rural households which were previously engaged in small-scale subsistence farming practices are benefiting from engaging in commercial outgrower schemes. Through the investigation of the household level effects, I intend to explore how this process of commercialisation has contributed towards rural poverty alleviation. The reason why I have chosen to focus specifically on the household is because I believe it is at this level where efforts focused on poverty alleviation are truly realised. Is a household able to sustain itself? Are they able to afford an education for their children? Are their basic needs being met? And according to von Braun and Kennedy (1994, p.7) most of the contentious issues and valid concerns regarding poverty alleviation, nutrition and food security are at this level, which is also where the biggest gaps in knowledge have to be filled.

In addition to this, past studies on the Swazi economy indicate that land has become a tool of repression and control over the producing classes (McFadden, 1987; Neocosmos, 1987; Levin, 1997). My study indicates that the members of the Mafucula community went into the commercial agriculture of sugarcane unwillingly, emphasising that they were forced to do so by the chief who is under the authority of the King. This suggests that the process of commercialising subsistence farmers is a government initiated scheme, leading me to not only question the intent of the state in this process, but also to examine the effect of state-led policies such as these on rural households. This study demonstrates some of the

consequences this can have on the lives of people in rural areas that are under this form of state induced repression.

I therefore explore the 'benefits' in terms of income, labour and nutritional welfare that are associated with outgrower schemes and whether these benefits have been realised in this community. How has engaging in commercial agriculture affected household income levels? Proponents of cash crop production assume that household income will increase as a result of the transition to a more commercialised agriculture (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1994, p. 27; World Bank, 2008). Is this the case? Although it was challenging to compare exact income figures from before commercialisation and after[4], my research reflects that there has been little improvement in household income as a result of this transition due to the amount of debt incurred by the venture.

I further examine the effect these schemes have on the level of food security in the household. What are the changes in household food consumption that have been brought about by commercialization? There are two areas where this change can affect the household: the replacement of food crops by cash crops and the change in income. Subsistence agriculture frequently produces a rather constant flow of income in the form of food and some cash, (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1994; Marcusen, 1982; Hart, 1987). The transition into commercial agriculture suggests a focus on cash crop cultivation which destroys this flow of income in the form of food, replacing it with cash, which does not necessarily translate into food. In addition to this income from cash crops, such as sugarcane, often comes in one lump-sum payment (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1994, p. 28), this change in the structure of income could result in households struggling to survive in the middle of the year when this lump-sum payment is exhausted.

The rationale for this study is brought about by the question of who benefits from commercial outgrower schemes. In many cases, a single contract farming scheme must fulfil the multiple and often conflicting objectives of its various partners (Glover, 1987, p.

[4] This was a result of the lack of recorded income received from former subsistence farming

442) which can include private contractors, government, the outgrowers themselves as well as foreign aid agencies. In addition to this, contract farming appears in so many diverse forms, that it is necessary to focus on the motives of each 'player' and the relationships of the contracting parties (Baumann, 2000). In my case study, rural communities like Mafucula, represent one of these partners, influenced by the government and catering to the sugar industry. Rural communities often have lower levels of education and suffer from poverty (World Bank, 2008) placing them in vulnerable situations where they can be taken advantage of. What role do the outgrowers themselves play, and how does it affect them on a household level? I narrow down specifically on rural households and analyses the extent to which they are affected by these schemes. In doing so, I hope to give this community a voice, which in the midst of development policies often goes unheard, contributing towards the implementation of outgrower schemes that are focused on alleviating poverty through commercialisation in other rural communities.

Small-scale farmers are motivated by, amongst other factors, food security, cash flow and risk avoidance (Baumann, 2000; Fafchamps, 1992; Terry, 2007). Contract farming initially appeals to small-scale farmers because it offers the prospect of earning an income through the guaranteed sale of their product, reducing their risk and providing a steady cash flow to purchase food as opposed to growing it. Unfortunately in many cases of commercial outgrower schemes these farmers, who are already poor and vulnerable, become trapped into contracts that they are unable to fulfill. Evidence of this has been recorded in some of the already established outgrower schemes in Swaziland. Terry and Ryder (2007, p267) illustrate that the fall of sugar prices in 2002 left many outgrowers unable to service their indebtedness. A financial audit done on some of these outgrowers by Kobla Quashie and Associates (KQA) also indicated that the outgrowers were near bankruptcy and experiencing severe difficulties in meeting their loan obligations as well as their operating expenses (KQA, 2007, p. 24). Like Mafucula, these communities are drawn into outgrower schemes under state and/or private sponsorship (Buch-Hansen & Marcussen, 1982; Bauman, 2000), which initially sound promising, but can often be quite detrimental to the poorest of the poor.

The Komati Down Stream Development Project (KDDP)

As we have seen, subsistence farming on Swazi Nation Land is deemed unsustainable because of the uncertainty associated with rain fed irrigation. Poor access to water is a major constraint experienced by these poor farmers (Vasudeva, 2006, p. 7). For Swaziland to enable the commercialisation of agricultural activities in these areas huge investments had to be made in constructing an irrigated water supply. As a result, two large irrigation projects where developed, the Komati Downstream Development Project (KDDP) and the Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project (LUSIP). These schemes were associated with Swaziland's 1999 National Development Strategy which viewed the integration of smallholder farming into commercial agriculture as the main element in its policy to alleviate poverty (Vasudeva, 2006, p. 4). The construction of these irrigation schemes would allow for the consistent supply of water providing a sustainable crop all year round.

Part of the development of KDDP involved the extensive construction of the Maguga Dam which was completed in 2003 at a cost of ZAR 1 billion (Akins, 2010). The objective of KDDP was to reduce poverty through increased household income of over 20,000 people that were making their living in the Komati river basin (KQA, 2007, p. 1). This was to be achieved by cultivating sugar cane and other crops on about 7,400 hectares of irrigated customary tenured Swazi Nation Land as well as empowering the emerging commercial farmers with business and farm management skills and creating employment in the communities (KQA, 2007, p1). This involved forming communities living in this basin into farmer associations that would operate as an outgrower catering to Swaziland's major agricultural exports. The average size of individual farming fields in rural areas in Swaziland is approximately two hectares. Therefore, in order for this venture to be viable it would require the amalgamation of individual fields in creating one farm, under the auspices of a farmer association. Under KDDP the diversification of the crop mix reflects 5,500 hectares of sugar cane and 1,900 hectares of fruit and vegetables (SWADE, retrieved Jan 2011). This distribution shows a heavy allotment for sugarcane cultivation. I will elaborate on the sugar industry in the following section.

There are currently over thirty farmer associations created under KDDP that have provided these communities with access to sustainable irrigated water. A basic structure of this is illustrated in Figure 2 below. The Mafucula community represents one of these farmer associations entitled the Phakama Mafucula Investment (PTY) Ltd. From here on I will be referring to this farmer association as the Phakama Project or the Project.

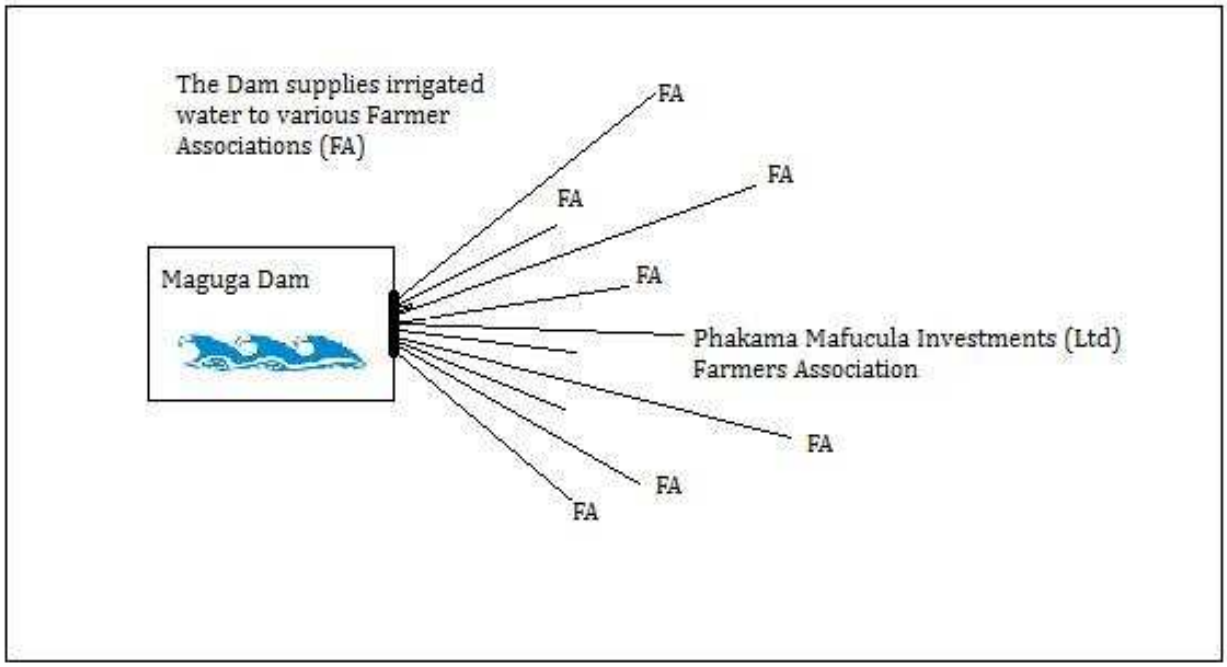


Figure 2: Outline of Komati Down Stream Development Project

The Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project (LUSIP) began construction in 2003 and is expected to provide irrigation water for 6,500 hectares in the Lower Usuthu Basin at the end of the first phase (2002-2010) and an additional 5,000 hectares on completion of the second phase by 2015 (Vasudeva, 2006, p. 7). The implementation of both KDDP and LUSIP affects the lives of thousands of people living in these areas as the supply of irrigated water drastically changes their agricultural activities. Looking at a community like Mafucula that has already undergone this transition through KDDP will provide some insight for communities that are being incorporated into these schemes and are influenced by LUSIP.

Most of these outgrower schemes in Swaziland have been modeled around the country's growing sugar industry. So why is sugarcane the cornerstone of this extensive development? Provided irrigation is well managed and water is adequate, the advantageous position for sugarcane is due to a number of favourable factors: a strong selling environment; relatively low labour costs; and good growing conditions (Lankford, 2001, p. 11). The following section will investigate the sugar industry in Swaziland, demonstrating why there is such huge vested interest from the government and agribusinesses in expanding its production.

The Swaziland Sugar Industry

The sugar industry in Swaziland can be traced back to irrigation projects initiated in the mid 1950s in the Big Bend area of the Lowveld (SSA, 2010). This was rapidly followed by the establishment of a mill at Mhlume, in the northern part of Swaziland and the opening of a third mill at Simunye in the early 1980's (SSA, 2010). Today, this industry has rapidly expanded with each mill producing roughly one third of the country's total sugar production and having a combined annual production capacity in excess of 600,000 tons (SSA, 2010).

The sugar industry plays a multifaceted role in Swaziland's economy and in its development. This is reflected in its account for 59% of Swaziland's agricultural output, 18% contribution to the nation's GDP, 7% to foreign exchange earnings and 35% to agricultural wage employment (SSA, 2010). Given the overall contribution this industry has made towards the economy and the potential it has for the future of the country's economy, it has been widely assumed that the optimal route to smallholder development is via large-scale projects with Swazi farmers having some access to the sugar market (Lankford, 2001).

In the past, the Swaziland sugar industry was privileged to receive preferential treatment from the price of sugar from the European Union (EU), which accounted for 30% of the

country's sugar sales. These protected prices made the industry more attractive for the prospect of expansion. However, the 2006 EU Sugar Regime stated that the preferential price for EU sugar would be reduced by 36% over the subsequent four years (The European Commission, 2006). This has adversely impacted the sugar industry given that a large proportion (30%) of the country's sugar production was sold at preferential prices to the EU (KQA, 2007, p.23). This drastically threatens the viability of the industry:

> '… the industry is now faced with an array of challenges, and is in a period of uncertainty, as the situation on its major export market, the EU, changes dramatically. The EU is reforming its internal sugar market, with a resultant drop in the EU price (and the price we were getting) and less guarantees on the preferential market access. This could see sugar revenues reduce substantially. This could further take away the viability of the sector whose strength was not only the low cost of production but also the sales to preferential markets (at higher prices).' (SSA, 2010, retrieved January 24, 2011)

The Government of Swaziland has therefore encouraged sugarcane production on irrigated SNL in order to improve its foreign-exchange earnings through the exports of sugar-based products (FAO, 2008). From the governments' perspective, this changes the objectives of these schemes that were initially focused on poverty alleviation, and are now focused on increasing the production of sugar in the country, for the benefit of the economy.

Presently, the industry has about 500 smallholder sugarcane growers as a result of KDDP and LUSIP developments, which were virtually non-existent in the early 1990s (SSA, 2010). This has resulted in an increase in the amount of sugar produced and exported. In 2001, prior to the completion of the Maguga dam, the total annual production of sugar was about 530,000 tons (Swazi Business Year Book, 2002). Ten years later, the 2009-2010 sugar production was 636,134 (SSA, 2010), a 20% increase, undoubtedly contributing substantially to the economy of Swaziland.

Terry (2007) claims that changes to the EU's Sugar Protocol has undermined the financial viability of the participating farmer associations and compromised the ability of the KDDP to improve living standards in the area. This study is therefore attempting to understand the often conflicting relationship between government policies aimed towards economic development and the implications they pose on the people living in rural areas.

Outgrowers in Swaziland

The establishment of these schemes has resulted in a drastic change in agricultural activities in rural areas that have subsequently affected individuals at the household level. Therefore, this study focuses particularly on the household as this is assumed by the Government of Swaziland to lift them out of poverty and benefit them considerably.

As we have seen, the Mafucula community essentially gained access to irrigated water through KDDP. Prior to this, water was a scarce commodity for the community, like many living on SNL. This made crop cultivation difficult as it was based on rain fed irrigation which during the dry season offered little food on the table for many homesteads. In the late 1980's attempts were made to construct boreholes for the residents however this water supply was unable to sustain the entire community. The community was desperate for water in order to survive, and the prospect of an irrigated water supply offered through KDDP was a vision of opportunity for the community. However the supply of water came at a huge cost for the homesteads. It involved them having to hand over their land for sugarcane cultivation, costing them not only their freedom to use their land but also the ability to ensure an adequate level of food security at home.

Part of mobilising this strategy involved forming these communities on SNL into a smallholder farmer association (as seen in figure 2.). The farmer association model is structured such that it requires the collaboration of individual farming fields by the community into creating a collective farmer association that will essentially operate as one farm run by a board of directors. The Mafucula community represents one of many farmer

associations that have been created as part of KDDP. Figure 3 below illustrates all of the farmer associations under KDDP, giving the location of Phakama Project case study.

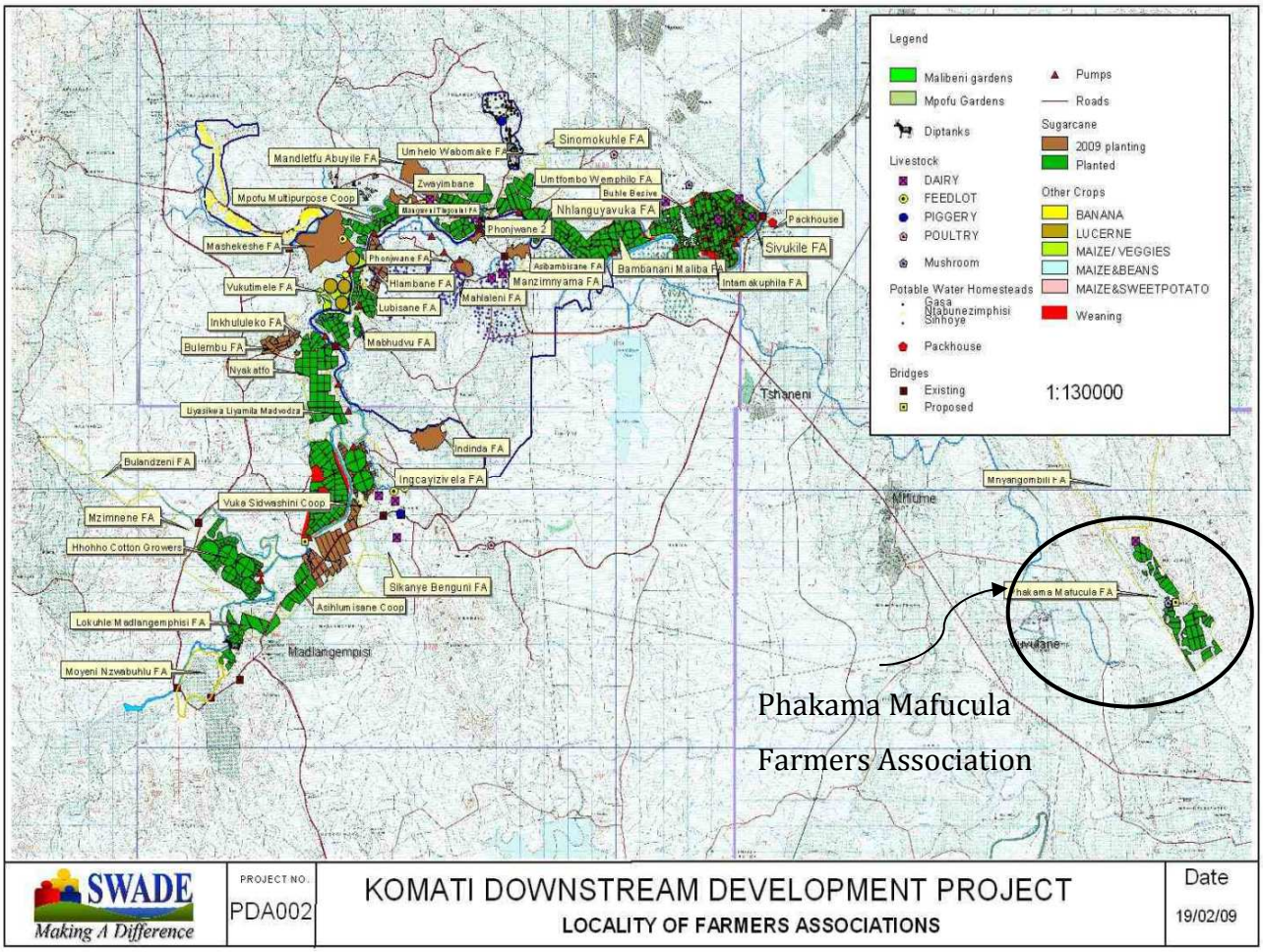


Figure 3: KDDP Farmer Associations

These farmer associations are designed to operate as outgrowers cultivating sugarcane, as well as other export crops. The green section on figure 3 illustrates the portion of land with planted sugarcane.

The farmer associations that are created operate like a business whereby each member that contributes their land and in some cases pays a joining fee, allowed to be a shareholder in the business. These terms can be different depending on the agreement of members, however in general to become a member one has to be a resident of the area, own and

contribute a piece of land as well as pay a joining fee (KQA, 2007 p.3). In doing so, they become a shareholder. Each shareholder is entitled to receive a dividend depending on the performance of the business at the end of the year. This dividend payment is in support of one of the main objectives of the smallholder sugarcane farming project to reduce poverty through increased household income (KQA, 2007 p.4). However, the amount of debt incurred by these projects has limited the amount of dividends that are paid out to the members, consequently reducing the amount of income received by the household and threatening their livelihood (Terry and Ryder, 2007). All members are granted equal shareholding irrespective of the size of the land that was contributed (KQA, 2007 p.3). Each shareholder is also given voting rights in being able to vote in a new Board of Directors when their term ends. All powers of the FA are held by the Board of Directors (KQA, 2007 p.3) and anyone who is a member of the farmer association can be nominated to serve on the Board.

This structure of outgrowers has been designed and implemented by the Swaziland Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise (SWADE). SWADE, formally known as Swaziland Komati Project Enterprise (SKPE) was formed in 1999 by the Government of Swaziland as an organisation that would plan and implement the outreach of KDDP to rural areas, forming farmer associations that would operate as outgrowers. It is a parastatal organisation under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy. SWADE aims at creating a structure for 'sustainable development' that will enable the community to sustain themselves. This is done by assisting the farmer associations into creating a business model for the farm to operate on. The foundation of SWADE rests on the following vision and missions statements:

Vision: '*to be the leading facilitator of sustainable socio-economic development in rural communities in Swaziland, using water as a catalyst.*'(SWADE, 2010)

Mission: '*to empower rural communities in designated areas to attain an improved quality of life and be able to sustain it*.' (SWADE, 2010)

As much as this mission and vision statement have admirable intent, this organisation is given the role of effectively implementing this state initiated 'development strategy'. They view themselves as a facilitator in providing business advice, coaching and mentoring that would boost the sustainability of these outgrower projects (KQA, 2007). However this 'facilitative' role can also be associated with the manipulation of these communities into carrying out government policies.

In their role, SWADE implements this development process by organising the members of the community into business groups, encouraging them to contribute their fields towards the business. This involves a mobilisation process that ensures that every household participates in the initiative, as it would be anomalous to have one small field in the middle of a mass of sugarcane. The main benefit for these communities was that by giving their land they received water.

Just as it has done in other communities, SWADE played a key role in organising the Mafucula community into establishing the Phakama Project. This essentially involved the 'training' and persuading of 246 homesteads to hand over their land for the Project. SWADE facilitated the entire business formation process which included assisting the Phakama Project to obtain the finance to run their business as well as equipping them with the required skills to manage commercial sugarcane. The relationship between SWADE and the Project has been crucial for the success of this business venture as many of the members of Mafucula lack the education necessary to run a farm on such a large scale, making them highly dependent on SWADE for their continued support.

Because many communities are desperate for water and as a result of the repressive land tenure system in Swaziland, they are forced to give up their land for sugarcane cultivation which could put them in a more precarious situation than before. Are residents of SNL condemned to the establishment of outgrower schemes that threaten their livelihood? These communities have little choice because of the unsustainablity of subsistence farming. Looking at the Mafucula community provides an ideal opportunity for assessing whether or

not KDDP has improved their living conditions and ultimately contributed towards poverty alleviation. I argue that it is actually a strategic move to make use of Swaziland's fertile soil and land with a poor population labouring for the sake of the expansion of the sugar industry for economic development, rather than for the wellbeing of the poor.

In this research report I look at literature that discusses some ongoing development debates in how to address the growing concern of poverty in the developing world. I focus in on the role agriculture plays in this fight against poverty, narrowing in on where Swaziland's approach to development fits in to the broader literature. I cover topics on smallholder agriculture, contract farming, the effects of cash crop cultivation, and the problem of food security in rural homes. My methodology has allowed me to explore this community and look into the lives of people at the bottom of this 'economic food chain', providing them with a medium in which their stories can be told seeing how this transition into commercial agriculture has affected them and if it is a benefit or detriment to their lives and income levels.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this research study, I aim to discover whether the transition from subsistence to commercial agriculture has been beneficial or detrimental to rural communities at the household level. In the past there have been a number of studies that have looked at the facilitative role agriculture plays in development, promoting commercial agriculture as an ideal means to alleviate poverty (Byres T., 2006; FAO, 2009; Oya, 2007; Minot, 1986). However in contrast there have also been a number of studies that indicate the negative implications this can have on the poor (Ojwang, 1999; Marcusen, 1982; von Bülow & Sørensen, 1986). This chapter discusses the literature associated with my research topic on the impact of commercialisation on subsistence farmers.

I begin with taking a look at some of the literature on development, exploring the unprecedented role agriculture plays in poverty reduction strategies and rural development. I explore the literature in relation to development in Swaziland. Furthermore, I engage in the conflicting discussion of contract farming as an ideal means of engaging rural communities in the market economy. What are the implications of this for these communities? I also situate outgrower schemes as a form of agrarian reform, applying the concept of the 'inverse relationship' to smallholder agriculture, and challenge the ability for labour to lift rural communities out of poverty. Finally I look at the heavily contested impact that cash crop cultivation has on household food security, touching on women's ability to ensure this.

The word development has proven to be an ambiguous expression, associated with words like economic growth, industrialisation, modernisation, dependency and in some cases, even freedom (Sen, 1999; Huntington, 1987; Kemp, 1992). It is clearly a word that can be interpreted to mean different things, depending on the context in which it is taken. But despite its vagueness, what holds true about this word is that it has been used to categorise nations on scale of developed or underdeveloped (Handelman, 1996; Chilcote, 1981). It is important therefore to clarify what these terms mean and how it affects the livelihoods of

the inhabitants of certain countries which fall under their description. The state of poverty in the underdeveloped world today has encouraged many development scholars to dig further into the meaning of development (Hirschman A. , 1989; Huntington, 1987). It encourages me to ask the question, are rural communities in Sub-Saharan Africa, like Mafucula, doomed to remain underdeveloped? Looking at some of the scholarly debates around this topic will help to understand the path of development Swaziland has taken and the role of agriculture in this process.

Development patterns have often been associated with the rise of capitalism and industrialisation which can be traced back to its origins in the British Industrial Revolution (Kemp, 1992, p. 2). Prior to that, most of Europe, and the world for that matter, were primarily agrarian based societies of which this transition into an industrial society changed the structure of agriculture, bringing about an agrarian transformation. The former peasant mode of agriculture lost its substance, and a capitalist mode of agriculture arose which contributed heavily towards industrial development. Agriculture was a source of raw materials necessary for certain industries, a source of foreign exchange needed for certain strategic imports and a source of the investible surplus that would allow accumulation in industry in the early years of industrialization (Byres, 2006). Agriculture became a sector from which resources could be extracted for the purpose of industrialisation (Christiaensen & Demery, 2007, p. 1). It was a source of labour that would man the factories (Byres, 2006, p. 225) and for some, industrial production provided a more substantial income than cultivating land, creating a migration towards urban areas (Kemp, 1992, p. 2). Although agriculture contributed heavily towards the early phases of the industrialisation movement, the drive towards industrialisation placed this sector in the background as industrialisation was viewed as desirable, as a means of raising the living standards and to ensure national independence (Kemp, 1992, p. 10; Gerschenkron, 1962; Rostow, 1960) while agrarian societies where continued to be perceived as backward and underdeveloped. 'To overcome poverty and economic backwardness a country must industrialise' (Kemp, 1992, p. 10).

The experience of Western Europe suggested a linear path towards modern development (Chilcote, 1981, p. 278), a path that implies a process of modernisation. Modernisation theory suggests that underdeveloped nations should follow a path to economic and political modernisation parallel to that of developed nations (Handelman, 1996, p. 12; Chilcote, 1981). Under this theory, Rostow (1960) provided a 'template' suggesting five stages of economic growth that would pull a nation up to a state of being developed. Huntington, also a proponent of modernisation theory, advocates for control and regulation of the modernisation process (Chilcote, 1981, p. 280) as well as the importance of political stability (Handelman, 1996, p. 14). As much as this theory attempts to improve the living conditions in underdeveloped countries, it has been widely criticised as generalisations ordering the process of economic growth is deemed unrealistic. According to Frank (1966) this theory ignores the historical conditions as well as the relations of the underdeveloped countries with the now developed countries making it impractical to implement. In addition to this, development as modernisation has exacerbated income inequalities between individuals, between regions of a country and between urban and rural areas (Mabogunje, 1980, p. 39; Frank, 1968; Hunt, 1989).

By the end of the 1950s it was becoming clear that neither development as economic growth nor as modernisation was having the expected effect on the standards of living of the underdeveloped nations (Mabogunje, 1980, p. 39). The level of dependence the Third World had on the First world based on the exports of raw materials increased their level of vulnerability towards price fluctuations. This led to a change in the structure of some economies, particularly in Latin America, with a focus on Import-Substitution-Industrialisation (ISI). ISI starts predominantly with the manufacture of finished consumer goods that were previously imported, and then lends itself to the expansion of other industries (Hirschman, 1968, p. 7). The intent was to expand industries within the economy, becoming more industrialised, and raising income level. However it resulted in a model that created an environment for the elites to prosper, widening the inequality gap between the poor and middle and upper class (Cardosa & Faletto, 1979).

These theories have suggested a growing desire for countries to become more developed. But then what is development? Palmer and Parson (1977, p. 3.) recognised the truism of economic development to mean an improved standard of living which is often mistaken for economic growth which is reflected in improved production statistics. In the past, the approach of achieving economic growth was important in the prescription given to developing countries to concentrate on export production either of agricultural raw materials or minerals (Mabogunje, 1980, p. 37). This was viewed as a means of raising real output per head and hopefully generating more surpluses to be invested in more export production and consumption goods (Mabogunje, 1980, p. 37). Many developing countries are still encouraging the increased production of export crops as a way to generate foreign exchange earnings and fiscal revenues to increase the income of small landholders and to provide employment for the rural landless poor (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1986, p. 5). The Government of Swaziland has taken this approach to development by expanding on its primary export, sugar. This strategy is claimed to be an attempt to reduce poverty through the increase in income of people in rural areas, but it can also be associated with an attempt to increase economic GDP. Hirschman (1989) addresses the issue of unbalanced growth in developing countries by suggesting that they should pursue investments in areas of production with substantial backward and forward linkages across the economy. According to him, investing in these sectors has the greater employment multiplier effect and will maximise the rate of development. For Swaziland this means investing in the multifaceted industry of sugar.

Lipton (1982) introduces the 'urban bias' theory to explain why poor people stay poor in developing countries. He attests it to the rise of a small urban elite class (governments, political parties, law, business organisations, etc.), which emerged in the fight against colonialism, to have substantial control of the distribution of resources, giving rationale for the growing income inequalities faced by these countries. He makes it a case of power, stating that 'the actions of the powerful, in almost all developing countries, have shifted income-per-person, inefficiencies and inequalities' (Lipton, 1982, p. 67). This theory encourages me to look further into Hirschman's backward and forward linkages approach

to development in Swaziland. Agriculture provides the raw material for about 33% of the value added to the manufacturing sector, while the processing of agricultural products accounts for the majority share of manufacturing GDP (IFAD, 2006, p. 3). These are clear linkages of how agriculture contributes towards other sectors in the economy but has it actually benefited rural communities, or has it consequently placed the 'power' of resources back into the hands of Lipton's 'urban elite', by-passing rural society.

Agriculture development in the third world has increasingly become a dominant approach in poverty reduction strategies. This was initially brought back in to focus with the 'success' of the Green Revolution in Asia and its perceived ability to show a direct relationship between increase in agriculture productivity and poverty reduction (Christiaensen & Demery, 2007, p. 1). However, Asia's green revolution has also been widely criticised for its inability to ensure food security for millions of poor people (Borlaug, 1970, p. 5). In addition to this, poverty still haunts Asia and reflects very wide income inequalities.

So then, how does the commercialisation of subsistence farmers equate to poverty alleviation? This transformation came about over a century ago with the fundamental and main trend in capitalism being the elimination of small production by large-scale production both in industry and in agriculture (Lenin, 1946). Timmer (1992, p. 23) recognises this as being the scientific revolution in agriculture which has transformed the potential productivity of land and rural people from subsistence levels using traditional techniques to levels producing substantial commercial surplus. The effect this has on poverty reduction is taken from two assumptions: firstly, that an increase in agricultural productivity would result in faster economic growth, and that this would in turn lead to faster poverty reduction (Christiaensen & Demery, 2007, p. 2). This is brought about by the understanding that economic growth is the main vehicle for reducing poverty and that growth in the agricultural sector, drives this growth (Jama & Pizarro, 2008, p. 219). Secondly, that the transition into commercial agriculture would be a more lucrative form of livelihood for rural communities subsequently improving their income levels and lifting them out of poverty. In this study, I challenge both assumptions, pinning it against Lipton's

'urban bias' theory, and providing evidence that the commercialisation of agriculture has not improved the standard of living for people in rural areas.

If agriculture plays a positive role in stimulating growth in other sectors, like the sugar industry in Swaziland, but needs to grow rapidly itself for the stimulation to be effective, the government's role should be very active (Timmer, 1992, p. 25). From what we have seen so far, the Government of Swaziland has played a dynamic role in bringing about the commercialisation of sugarcane on Swazi Nation Land, based on the fact that the sugar industry is central to the country's economic growth. The repressive land tenure system in Swaziland[5] provides a basis on which the Government of Swaziland is capable of doing this. Neocosmos(1987, p. 82) suggests that 'development' on SNL involves the incorporation of the peasantry into state structures which do not allow for the democratic participation of the peasantry in the development process. They therefore have the power to enforce such programs on the peasantry, and according to Marcusen *et al* (1982, p. 13) this enables the state to cream off part of the surplus either for investment in other sectors or for conspicuous consumption. Lipton (1982, p. 67) implies that developing countries have a preference for using this surplus to improve infrastructure and institutions for more urban advance relative to rural areas, which suggests that even when rural communities are labouring for economic growth they rarely see the benefits of it. Therefore, this attempt to increase agriculture activity for 'economic benefit' which would inturn lead to poverty reduction, is more so an attempt to exploit rural communities for the expansion of urban societies. According to IFAD (2006), the poverty gap and the severity of poverty were almost twice as large in rural Swaziland as in urban areas, indicating that these communities are much worse off.

Therefore, it can be said that when developing commercial agriculture the intention of the state is to expand capitalist relations and forces of production (Buch-Hansen & Marcussen, 1982, p. 13), which do not necessarily translate to poverty reduction. An increasing concern for the Government of Swaziland has been the poor contribution of customary

[5] Land tenure in Swaziland will be discussed in Chapter Four

tenure[6] Swazi Nation Land to the country's overall GDP (Terry, 2007, p. 643). This suggests an alternative motive to incorporating these communities into commercial agriculture, a motive towards increasing GDP rather than poverty alleviation.

The intention of the government also provides a cause to forcibly incorporate the peasantry into the market economy. However, poverty reduction depends both on the participation of the poor in the growth process and the pace of growth (Christiaensen & Demery, 2007, p. 47). The limited participation questions the ability for rural communities like Mafucula to be able to sustain itself in the future of these projects. It has been shown that if people have a stake in and feel ownership of an initiative, it is more likely to be both successful and sustainable (David & Craig, 1997, p. 37). The approach to commercialisation which has been implemented in rural communities in Swaziland has disguised the somewhat inadequate level of participation by rural communities. It does this by manipulating communities into outgrower schemes that focus on cash crop cultivation. As a result, their desperation for water and the power of the state forces them to participate in this government led initiative. This will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

Part of my discussion looks at how the commercialisation of subsistence farming is brought about and if this method further hinders development in rural communities. The organisation of smallholders into some form of contract farming or outgrower schemes is believed to be the most effective means of overcoming the stagnation presented by 'unsustainable' subsistence farming (Buch-Hansen & Marcussen, 1982, p. 10). I am hereby led to present the conflicting debate on contract farming and the subsequent effect it has on rural communities.

[6] SNL held under customary tenure represents 55% of the country.

Contract Farming/Outgrower schemes and Smallholder Agriculture

What is smallholder agriculture? Some consider it to be a synonym pairing it with words like 'small-scale farmers', 'resource-poor farmers', 'subsistence farmers', 'peasant farmers', 'household food security farmers' and 'emerging farmers' (Machethe C. , Mollel, Ayisi, Mashatola, Anim, & Vanasche, 2004). Cousins and Lahiff (2005, p. 127) suggest that smallholder agriculture consists mainly of the production of staple foods for household consumption. Greenberg (2010, p. 15) engages in a discussion about the often confusing definition of this concept of smallholder agriculture. He confirms that this term is often used interchangeably with the simplistic definition of subsistence farming and at the same time it is placed at the extreme end of being small farmers engaging in commercial agriculture. He elaborates this complexity by stating that 'the idea of small farmers who are intensely competitive, export-oriented and driven by profit maximisation is far from the idea of small farmers who practice ecological and low-external-input agriculture, who produce primarily for local use and who operate largely outside the market' (Greenberg, 2010, p. 15).

I recognise that this same term is being used to identify the small-scale sugarcane outgrowers, like the Phakama Project, that were viewed as rural cultivators, engaging in commercial agriculture, far from the idea of farming for home consumption. So, for purposes of my study, I will be using the term smallholder farmers and the literature based around this term in order to support the definition of the Phakama Project as a smallholder commercial farmer association. In this case, smallholders are rural cultivators practicing intensive, permanent, diversified agriculture, such as sugarcane, on relatively small farms (Netting, 1993). There are limitations to this definition as it was mentioned previously that some literature refers to smallholder farmers as subsistence farmers. However in Swaziland these rural communities are termed smallholder outgrowers as their farms are relatively small in comparison to the estates. The Project currently has 286.2 hectares of sugarcane under cultivation and is considered a smallholder in comparison to the 15,702 hectares of irrigated sugar cultivation under the Royal Swazi Sugar Corporation (RSSC)

(SSA, 2010). I will then be using the term subsistence farmers to characterize the Mafucula community farming activities, prior to sugarcane[7].

The overall potential of agriculture to contribute to growth and poverty reduction depends on the productivity of small farms (World Bank, 2008, p. 90; Byres T. , 2006; IFAD, Rural Poverty Portal, 2009). In order for this to happen, smallholder farmers need to be provided with the necessary support to engage in competitive markets (Jama & Pizarro, 2008, p. 218). According to Minot ((1986, p. 79) contract farming is successful in that it transfers these production technologies to the growers as well as providing a more secure market outlet. In this sense, contract farming and outgrower schemes are viewed as ideal.

There have been a number of studies done that look at some of the pros and cons of contract farming and outgrower schemes on rural communities in less developed countries (Marcusen, 1982; Glover, 1987; Von Bruan& Kennedy, 1986; Bauman, 2000). In Swaziland, earlier studies on the potential of these schemes for rural communities where recognised by Levin (1987, p. 172). He investigated whether or not outgrower schemes could be established on customary tenure Swazi Nation Land, questioning if private ownership in land was a pre-requisite for the establishment of viable contract farming schemes. His study indicates that private ownership was by no means a pre-requisite and from what I have seen, with the evidence of much of customary tenure Swazi Nation Land being incorporated into these schemes today, this confirms Levin's notion.

Baumann (2000, p. 8) views much of the development literature on contract farming to be polarised. On the one side, there is the theoretical view of contract farming as a simple agrarian transition and on the other a form of exploitation. The view of agrarian transition was established by White (1997, p. 102) who sees this path of agrarian transition to be changing from where primary production is not concentrated in the hands of large capitalist production but remains in the hands of smallholders. White (1997, p. 105)

[7] Again, I would like to recognise some limitations regarding the term subsistence farmers, given that some members of the Mafucula community actively engaged in cotton cultivation as a form of income. The community's primary farming activity was maize and cotton cultivation was also grown for home consumption which was lucrative for some farmers but not all.

promotes contract farming stating that 'in itself it does not spell hardship or doom for smallholders, that in fact all over the world contract farming is necessary for many or most forms of modern commercial agriculture.' He supports this argument by noting that through the 'link' (in the contract) smallholder outgrowers can indirectly capture economies of scale in access to material inputs and they can more reliably forecast their income. Glover and Kusterer(1990, p. 3) also emphasises that one of the advantages of contract farming is that it distributes the risk between firms and growers creating a relationship of interdependence between the two. Advocates for contract farming view this 'less risky' relationship to be more beneficial to the smallholder as it provides an assured market for crops, access to company's services[8] and easier access to credit (Glover D. , 1987, p. 441).

I believe this 'risk' to be relative as there are many risky factors that need to be considered for communities engaging in commercial agriculture, such as the loss of income while being in debt, sacrifices of former subsistence livelihood from loss of land, and the threat of food security as a result of transitioning into cash crop cultivation. Byres (2006) sees these as relationships of exploitation over the poor rather than mutuality as there are many avenues in which appropriation can take place:

> 'If a poor peasant takes loans at very high rates of interest, that he or she is unable to repay, then the moneylender is appropriating surplus. If a poor peasant is locked into a relationship with a trader whereby he or she is paid for his produce less than the market price, surplus is being appropriated. If a poor peasant as part of interlocked markets, supplies labour to a landlord at less than the market wage, then surplus is being appropriated. Quite simply, dominant classes are able to appropriate much of the surplus above subsistence.' (Byres T. , 2006, p. 235)

[8] Such as supplying credit, inputs, technical information and market information (Minot, 1986, p. 79)

In these outgrower schemes, the issue of food security is often overlooked. Glover and Kusterer (1990, p. 17) categorise this literature under the 'Food First' approach, which is highly critical of agribusiness for diverting resources from staple food to cash crop production and exerting monopoly over peasant producers. Smallholder farmers are therefore viewed as the weakest link in this 'interdependent' relationship between large and small scale farming. Levin (1987, p. 127) notes:

> '…Agribusiness tends to control the most profitable sector which is the marketing of agricultural commodities. It also restricts the peasantry to a production process which it indirectly controls while generally managing the scheme and providing technical services and other means of production…. It is not therefore merely the presence of a contract which is significant, but the monopoly power which agribusiness exerts over the market and which structures the relationship between smallholders and agribusinesses.'

In addition to this, Buch-Hasen and Marcusen (1982, p. 12) question the overall intent of international bodies, such as the World Bank, European Union, International Fund for Agriculture and Development, just to name a few, and their involvement in contract farming in underdeveloped countries. They claim that their strategy for the rural poor is a myth, stating that the Bank's policy towards the middle and poor peasantry is seen as deliberately introducing an even more sophisticated and exploitative system, reducing the small farmers involved to even greater misery, dependency and subordination (Buch-Hansen & Marcussen, 1982, p. 12). This literature ties in directly with the main research question: are rural households benefiting from their involvement in commercial outgrower schemes? It also challenges the intent of international organisations like the European Union who have contributed substantially to KDDP and LUSIP irrigation schemes aiding the transformation of rural communities into sugarcane cultivation in Swaziland through contract farming. The extensive support offered by these international bodies can thus

have huge consequence placing contract farming under the Dependency theory framework, as an exploitative extension of international capital (Lappe & Collins, 1977).

The ability of smallholders to compete in the market needs to be considered in order to ensure its sustainability (Zhoui, 2010). One of the central elements in the logic of contract farming is the increased productivity of smallholder agriculture (Buch-Hansen & Marcussen, 1982, p. 29). Buch-Hansen *et al* (1982) question if it is possible to make smallholder agriculture as productive as competing systems. The contract between the outgrower ('supplier') and the agribusiness ('buyer') is a vital relationship[9]. For example, an incident between Vuvulane Irrigated Farmers[10] and the RSSC have been recorded where the mill refused to purchase their sugarcane because of the poor quality of the cane (Times of Swaziland, 1983). This incident indicates a failure of agribusinesses to supply technical support. If the Phakama Project is faced with a similar situation, what state will this leave the farmer association and the residents who have invested in it? Outgrower schemes transfer the major investment burden and risk to the producers, the smallholder farmers, who may be the prime sufferers when world market prices fluctuate (Levin, 1987, p. 179). The drop in preferential treatment by the European Union for the price of Swaziland's sugar heightens this level of threat. Looking at the country as a whole, is Swaziland able to compete with world markets given this drop in preferential treatment by its major market? And what will happen to the smallholders if the sugar industry collapses? These questions challenge the ability of contract farming and outgrower schemes to improve poverty alleviation policies in Swaziland.

The notion that smallholders carry little risk by engaging in contract farming is highly contested; furthermore the elimination of subsistence farming threatens their ability to ensure household food security. Contract farming and outgrower schemes are a means of implementing commercial agriculture in rural areas which results in coerced cash crop production that constrains the capacity of smallholders to cope with the risks associated

[9] The Phakama project involves a contract with the Mhulume sugar mill however due to time and financial constraints, I will not cover this relationship within this research report. This is not, however, to deny its importance to the overall farming scheme and would contribute substantially for future research.
[10] An Outgrower in Swaziland established by the Commonwealth Development Corporation in 1962

with agribusiness production schemes (Von Braun & E, 1994, p. 24). What are the effects of cash crop production on rural households? The following section will discuss this process of commercialisation as a type of agrarian reform and bring further understanding on the detrimental effects of cash crop cultivation on rural households.

Outgrower schemes, a type of agrarian reform?

Prior to sugarcane, the Mafucula community comprised individual farms, approximately the size of one hectare each, which were tended by each homestead. That is, each homestead had their own fields and had the choice to cultivate any crops on those fields. The Phakama Project brought about the collaboration of all the fields to produce one farm that would operate as a smallholder outgrower for the local sugar mill. This farm is 286.2 hectares in size. The members of Mafucula were not given a choice of whether to join the Project or not, the chief of the community forced them to. By joining the Project they had to give their land and convert their individual farms into a communally operated smallholder commercial farm.

Redistributive land reform has been a growing topic of discussion in recent development literature, particularly in the post-colonial developing world (Byres T. , 2006; Griffin, Khan, & Ickowitz, 2002; Oya, 2007) . In economically backward economies like Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, distribution of land was very unequal as a result of colonialism and material poverty was deep and massively pervasive (Byres, 2006, p. 223). Redistributive land reform has repeatedly been advocated by governments and development theorists to address this issue. It seeks to redistribute operated holdings, taking land from those with large operated holdings and transferring it either to those with no land at all or those with tiny holdings (Byres, 2006, p. 240). One of the arguments that support this drive is the inverse relationship between land productivity and size of holdings (Byres, 2006, p. 240). This relationship advocates what is visible as redistribution of land based on the fact that small scale farming is more efficient than large (Sender & Johnston, 2004, p. 144).

> 'Small farms employ more people per hectare than large farms and generate income more likely to be spent locally on employment-intensive rural non-farm products, thereby stimulating overall economic development in the rural sector….Land in smallholdings tends to be managed more labour-intensively, raising demand for labour and increasing the wages and/or employment of low-income workers, even if they do not control any land' (IFAD, 2001, pp. 74-75).

This presents a contradicting case for the collaboration of small-scale subsistence farmers into a larger, smallholder outgrower. If small-scale farmers are more efficient than large farms, why enforce the collaboration of small subsistence farmers into one farm. Griffin, Khan and Ickowitz (GKI), proponents of the inverse relationship see small farms as having a competitive advantage over large farms in that they are more efficient in their labour relations, in their operation costs and their overall management of farming activities (Griffin, Khan, & Ickowitz, 2002, p. 286).

The 'commercialisation of subsistence farmers' in Swaziland is structured in such a way that it aims to provide a form of wage labour for the community. The Government of Swaziland views this as a poverty alleviation strategy because of the role farms play in employment and the opportunity employment offers for raising household incomes and contributing towards poverty alleviation. However, the wage rates of and the demand for the labour provided by the poorest rural people are said to be strongly and negatively influenced by the existence of large farms (Sender & Johnston, 2004, p. 147), in this case, a farm like the Phakama Project. It is assumed that this is because large farmers have an interest to cultivate their land with small amounts of wage labour (Sender & Johnston, 2004, p. 148). This is clearly demonstrated in that the labour offered by the Project is limited to a small percentage of the community, and does not cater to the demand for wage labour in the community. Currently, the Project has 55 employees, in a community with a population of 2,942. This threatens those households that end up being unemployed and landless as a result of commercialisation. Not every homestead is employed, and not every

homestead is physically capable of engaging in that form of labour, as some households are comprised of the elderly and are unable to cope with the physical demands of sugarcane cultivation. Zhoui (2010) highlights that these households are further threatened given the lack off-farm employment opportunities to smallholders who often require the education and professional skills needed.

In addition to the fact that the Project does not cater to the demand for labour in the community, can the wage labour provided be relied upon to help pull rural households in Mafucula out of poverty? This question is crucial in determining the viability of destroying subsistence agriculture on Swazi Nation Land for the purpose of creating smallholder farms in rural areas. The Government of Swaziland believes that commercialising subsistence farmers will raise household income levels. If replacing subsistence farming, a form of income and food, with wage labour is more lucrative then surely it will help raise households out of poverty. In my research, I challenge this notion based on two points. Firstly, that the community's former means of livelihood, although assumed by the mainstream as unsustainable, was more worthwhile in that they were better off in terms of food security, ensuring their children's education and maintaining household expenses. And secondly, as demonstrated by this research the wage labour provided by the Project does not cater to the demand for labour of the entire community that have contributed their land.

I also view the relationship between on-farm wage labour and off-farm income activities as highly contested. This is because many rural households in Sub-Saharan Africa derive a large part of their income from off-farm activities and from migration (World Bank, 2008, p. 72). This is supported by previous studies by Reardon *et al*. (2000, p. 266) in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and Asia who have found that non-farm income is an important addition to farm households in developing countries. They recognise strong evidence of a positive relationship between total household income and the level of income share of off-farm earnings (Tschirley & Benfica, 2001). These findings support the suggestion that off-farm activities, including migration are a more realistic route out of

poverty. This was a bonus for communities like Mafucula where households were also able to use their land to make some form of income and ensure food security by practicing subsistence farming.

In Mafucula, with their land expropriated, labour becomes their main asset. Households are forced to "sell their labour" in farm and non-farm activities or leave rural areas (World Bank, 2008, p. 202). The World Bank (2008) believes projects like these are an attractive feature in making the rural labour market a more effective pathway out of poverty. However, Tschirley and Benfica (2001, p. 338) see this as being deeply flawed because empirical findings throughout rural Africa (including Swaziland) show that the poorest farm households have least access to high paying wage labour. This suggests that even if there is a rural labour market, it will not provide an adequate wage to lift these households out of poverty.

The reality is that the heavy social implications like unemployment, food security, loss of subsistence livelihood, that are associated with this conversion of agricultural activities on the peasantry are normally not given very much consideration. This transition is a rapid change in the socio-economic life of people living in communities like Mafucula. Hart (1982, p. 89) acknowledges that the failures of these schemes are inevitable because they cannot satisfy the needs of a labour force taken out of its subsistence environment at a cost corresponding with the expected rake-off from production. This is in line with the inverse relationship in that large farms will not satisfy the labour force of the community. Hart explains that in this instance, people leave the community as their former means of livelihood have been taken away from them, the wage labour offered does not cater to everyone and the productivity of the cash crop remains low. For Mafucula, this would threaten the life of the Project and would therefore affect the lives of thousands of people living there. For a community like Mafucula this migration that was formally unnecessary will in turn affect various dynamics within the homestead such as household income and productivity.

Part of the effects that are imposed on the household are a result of the drive towards cash crop cultivation that is brought about by this commercialisation. This encourages me to look at what type of agriculture Mafucula was involved in prior to sugarcane. Much literature on agricultural economics continues to assume that African peasant farmers were exclusively self-sufficient subsistence farmers. That was also my initial assumption about the previous activities in Mafucula when I went into this study, that they produce staple foods for household consumption (Cousins & Lahiff, 2005, p. 127). The difference between food crops and cash crops is that food crops are mostly consumed by the producers themselves while cash crops are not (Fafchamps, 1992, p. 90). Therefore, while cash crops bring in income, food crops ensure household food security. The priority of subsistence farmers is to ensure food security; farmers only allocate land to cash crops provided that their food security is guaranteed (Fafchamps, 1992, p. 90). From my research, I realised that maize, a food crop, and cotton cultivation, a cash crop, were popularly grown in the community. Fafchamp's (1992) study on cash crop production on small farms in rural communities indicated that the introduction of food markets in these areas reduces the need for ensuring food self-sufficiency by subsistence farming. I disagree with this because evidence from my study in Mafucula shows that by using their land for the specialising of a single cash crop threatens their income and therefore their ability to purchase food from markets. There is still a need for food gardens to cultivate food crops in the presence of cash crop cultivation the section below will elaborate.

Commercial Agriculture and Household Food Security

It is necessary to look at household food security in the context of contract farming because there are contrasting views of how commercialisation of non-food crops affects the household. The World Bank (2008, p. 3) suggests that investment in agriculture is important to increase food security. However the question of whether the commercialisation of subsistence farming will improve food security is highly contested (Terry, 2007, p. 5). On the one hand lays the notion that the increased productivity in cash crop production will lead to a trickle-down effect for other cash and food crop production

(Buch-Hansen & Marcussen, 1982, p. 29). And on the other hand specialising in cash crop cultivation suggests a high level of threat on food security by engaging in non-food agricultural activities. This transition from subsistence to commercial agriculture therefore suggests that if agricultural activities are focused solely on non food cash crop production, households might suffer at the expense of commercialisation.

According to the definition of food security from the Food and Agricultural Association (FAO), food security exists when all people, at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO, 2009). Access to food is therefore an essential component that can be affected by engaging in sugarcane cultivation at a rural level. This is because in essence subsistence agriculture frequently produces a rather consistent flow of 'income' for households in the form of food. The production of cash crops on a large scale threatens the initial cultivation of food crops. Cash crops undermine subsistence farming, by cutting subsistence production which market relations fail to replace (Lappe, 1986). This threatens the previous access households had to food. If food cultivation is replaced with income in the form of cash, then other aspects need to be considered in order to ensure a steady flow of income that will sustain the level of food in the home, or provide an alternative means of cultivating food crops.

There is a lot of literature and debate surrounding the extent to which agricultural development influences food security (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1994; Bauman, 2000; Tafesse, 2003) . Bernstein (1994, p. 3) identifies food insecurity as being the lack of access to enough food. He supports the notion that rural communities engaging in commercial agriculture leads to a negative effect on food security because it robs them of their access to food. Von Braun and Kennedy (1994) also view this to be detrimental to the household. And studies done by Terry (2007) in Swaziland illustrate a direct negative effect of this process of commercialising subsistence farmers on household food security.

Food security at the local level is principally related to household income and access to food (Rudolph, Kroll, Ruysenaar, & Dlamini, 2008), both of which are directly influenced by the process of engaging in commercialised agriculture. Income and land are the key determinants of household food consumption (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1986, p. 28) that inturn ensure household food security. Therefore, one would expect that increases in household income associated with cash crop production would result in increases in household food consumption (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1986, p. 28). An expected increase of production capacity and income might then motivate a household or an individual household member to enter the exchange economy and engage in commercial agriculture (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1986, p. 28). Thus, insofar as increased sale of produce, and insofar as the responsibilities and preferences within a household ensure sharing of gains, it can be expected that commercialisation, or in this case sugarcane cultivation, contributes to improving the level of household food security (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1986, p. 28). In looking at the Phakama Project, an ideal world would be if the dividends paid out to the members were substantial enough to cover the annual expense of food items for an entire household. However in the case study of the Phakama Project this has not been the case, and the dividends paid are barely enough to cover household expenses.

The replacement of subsistence farming with income does not address the issue of food security. As we have seen in other literature, the smallholder farmers act as puppets bound by their contracts and rarely reap the benefits of contract farming (Byres T., 2006; Levin, 1987, Marcusen, 1982). This confirms that even if 'business is good' there is a limit to which they can increase their productivity, placing them in a position of constantly being underdeveloped in comparison to a farm that is relatively the same size but privately/individually owned. This is because, unlike privately owned farms, these smallholder farmer associations have to split their profits, which at the end of the day is barely enough to sustain one household. The minimal income they receive does not compare to the food obtained from one hectare of land that previously supplied the household. This will be covered more in Chapter Five.

In addition to this, if households were getting enough money von Braun and Kenedy (1994) note that as income increases, there is also a movement towards the purchase of non-food items which can threaten the level of food security within rural households as household finances are directed in other areas such as non-food items. This is a major issue when prior sustenance was easily accessible from the fields and now is reliant upon money that does not equate to food on the table and is allocated towards other monetary expenses. Investigating the effects of changes in income on rural households in Swaziland demonstrates the capacity at which these communities can cope with commercialisation.

Food must not only be available and accessible, but must also be of the right quality and diversity (in terms of energy and micronutrients) (World Bank, 2008). Tosh (1980), in his paper on 'Cash Crop Revolution' recognised that although the desire for a cash income from agriculture in rural areas was wide spread, the possibility that the cultivation of an inedible export crop might leave them short of food in a bad year was not to be lightly accepted. Asadi *et al* (2008) recognise that livelihood strategies of the poor are aimed at increasing income, reducing vulnerability, improving well-being and ensuring food security. For any human being food security remains one of the basic needs for survival.

Terry and Ryder (2005) in their paper on 'Improving Food Security in Swaziland' demonstrate that many farmer associations that had converted all of their former rain-fed land, cultivating vegetables, maize and cotton, into sugarcane were unable to meet basic food requirements for their households. Are rural households in Mafucula benefiting from engaging in commercial outgrower schemes or are they suffering at the expenses of national capitalist development policies? This again gives motivation to investigate how households are affected by the impact of cash crop production on food security.

Access to water is essential in ensuring an adequate level of food security in rural areas, as it irrigates crops. Mafucula has constantly faced issues of poor access to water and severe cases of drought in the mid 1990's. Access to water provides a source of sustainable food security as homesteads are able to manage food crops as well as participate in commercial

agriculture. The Komati Downstream Development Project played a significant role in arranging irrigated water supply to enable the cultivation of sugarcane in rural areas. Water was a desperate need for these communities. One would assume that with consistent access to water the issue of food insecurity would also be addressed. Terry (2007) discovered that farmer associations that incorporated food gardens in addition to sugarcane cultivation significantly enhanced the productivity of the farmers who were previously dependent upon a low and unreliable rainfall, improving their level of food security. This suggests that a diversification between cash crops and food crops within a community is necessary to address the issue of food security. The World Bank Development Report (2008) demonstrated that in Tanzania, those most successful in moving out of poverty were farmers who diversified their farming activities by growing food crops for their own consumption as well as non-traditional cash crops. My research indicates that the diversification between cash and food crops is not practiced by all farmer associations, under KDDP and specifically Mafucula. This is primarily because the irrigated water that is provided is highly controlled and households are unable to use this water for small gardens in their homesteads (details of this are expressed in Chapter 6).

This literature gives evidence that the issue of food security is heavily threatened by the transition into commercial agriculture. The role women play in agriculture and rural households is central to this discussion because they are viewed as the backbone of ensuring food security within rural households. The following section will outline literature associated with the role women play in these societies.

Women, Gender and Agriculture

Although the relationship between household gender relations and contract farming is not the focus of the research, it is important to understand women's ability and challenges, given the transition into commercial agriculture, in ensuring food security. The topic of African women in agriculture has been widely discussed in much literature (Walker, 2002; Mackintosh, 1989; Rose, 1987; Standing, 1987).

Von Braun and Kennedy (1986, p. 29) through their research on the effects of commercialization on subsistence agriculture, discovered that the direct effects that are imposed on women have rarely been included in the analysis of commercial agriculture schemes. Von Bülow and Sørensen (1993, p. 39) substantiated these findings by determining that issues on labour and gender relations at the household level are generally neglected as few researchers look at labour from a gender perspective. However while this topic is neglected I believe it holds a lot of relevance. Gender relations play a fundamental role within the structure of rural households, especially in a heavily patriarchal based society such as Swaziland (Miles, 2000). The scholarly literature concerned with African customary systems of land tenure commonly portrays African women as occupants of relatively powerless positions in terms of land control relative to men (Rose, 1987, p. 440). Under customary systems of tenure, women's land rights are secured through their membership in the lineage, with their age and marital status important determinants of status in relation to land (Walker, 2002, p. 18). In Swaziland, the structures of gender in rural households are predominantly influenced by a strong traditional and cultural foundation embedded in the mindset of the Swazi citizens. Swazi women have historically faced unequal social, economic, legal, political and cultural treatment (Daly, 2001, p. 45). This is evident in the basic land rights offered to Swazi women. Custom dictates that a Swazi woman may receive land-use rights through male relatives and use land according to the specifications of male authorities (Armstrong, 1985; Russell, 1983). With the engagement of Mafucula as a commercial outgrower, the 'ownership' of the land has essentially been handed over to the Project, and is now communally owned. Does this improve, or worsen the situation for Swazi women and their ability to ensure food security? I will further develop the answer to this question in Chapter Five.

Pre-existing farming systems were based upon gender-specific use of family labour for food crop production (Babolola & Dennis, 1988). Neocosmos identifies that in the early 1900s Swazi homesteads reflected the characteristics of a peasant gender division of labour: 'women would be in control of the entire agricultural labour process from breaking the soil to harvesting, through weeding and tending the fields' (Neocosmos, 1987, p. 86). He

identifies that this division of labour has slightly changed with the introduction of the plough, however in rural Swaziland women are still the main cultivators of the fields. This suggests that although women did not own the land they maintained a level of control given that they were able to use the land to cultivate food crop and provide for the household. To what extent has the handing over of land for commercialisation taken away women's ability to provide food for the homestead? Standing (1987) states the following:

> 'What appears to be implicit in most farming studies is that the new 'class' of commercial farmers in Swaziland is male and committed to farming as a full time enterprise. Given that women are the majority of the rural population, emerge as major producers of food, and in addition provide inputs of labour, as yet unquantified, into cash crops, it is clear that there are major structural obstacles to women joining this class' (Standing, 1987, p.139).

Gender relations have great influence on both off-farm and on-farm productivity, especially within the household. For women, this can influence their income, time or energy expenditure (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1986, p. 77), affecting the role they play in the household structure and overall household productivity. Von Bülow and Sørensen (1993) discovered with the involvement of women in labour activities, many women find it difficult to fulfil all labour tasks satisfactorily considering their many other household responsibilities in relations to domestic work, child care and their ability to provide household food security. This also leads us to ask 'how has this change in agricultural activity affected women's household productivity in Mafucula? Has female wage labour threatened their productivity? Standing (1987, p.132) suggests that it is necessary to look at women's workload as it provides suggestive evidence of an intensification of female labour in agriculture.

Female headed households are often placed in the category of being the poorest of the poor (Sender J. , 2003, p. 404). According to Tschirley and Benfica (2001, p. 342), income from

wage labour plays a key role in lifting out of relative poverty those 'female-headed' households that can obtain it. A study by Smith and Sender (1990) on Poverty Gender and Wage Labour in Tanzania confirmed this:

> 'Thus a woman who is not married, who has never been married, or is divorced, or deserted, or a widow whose deceased husband did not leave her (or, more precisely, her sons) adequate resources, does not undertake unpaid work for a man; no male household member is in a position to appropriate her labour. However, this 'freedom' from appropriation and from the struggle over intra-household distribution implies the absence of rights to the means of survival. Women in this position are, therefore, likely to enter the labour market, and those households containing no married men are precisely the households which supply wage worker' (Smith & Sender, 1990, p. 1336)

However, for some, the main challenge for these women is their ability to enter in to the labour market. This is shown in Tschirley and Benfica's (2001) study that indicated only one in five female-headed households were able to earn wage income. This continues to place female headed households in the category of being the poorest of the poor, only now, for women in Mafucula, they are unable to use their husband's land to cultivate food crops for the household.

Women's ability to access resources such as income is also heavily influenced by the transition in agriculture activities. Von Bülow and Sørensen (1993, p.342) argue that in a rural community in Kenya, the overall introduction of tea outgrower schemes led to a further widening of the gap between the resources women and men controlled, drastically changing the dynamics of gender relations in rural household. Agarwal (1997)points out that this 'widening of the gap' is revealed not only in the division of labour between men and women but also in the general ideas and representations making up the differences in abilities, attitudes, desires and personality traits between different genders. If the Phakama

Project makes a profit, it intends to pay out a dividend to each homestead that contributed their land towards the Project. Once the money comes into the homestead, how is it exhausted amongst various household expenses? Who controls the resources in the house? These questions are crucial in determining women's ability to be empowered to purchase food and ensure food security for the household.

Hart (1982) in his study of commercialisation in West Africa attests that the commercialisation of agriculture has reduced women's economic power and the social status as women have been squeezed out of modern commercial agriculture by a male monopoly of new cash crop opportunities. He identifies some indirect factors that raise this conclusion, for example the overwhelming share of opportunities in education that have gone to men. This is not necessarily the case when looking at the Phakama Project, because the proceeds of the Project are equally divided between each of the members, male or female. However, as mentioned previously Swazi women have been 'squeezed' out of their former means of sustenance, forcing them to rely on the leadership of the Project as their provider.

This literature gives evidence that gender issues are heavily at play in this discussion of agriculture and development and will be touched upon further in the discussion of my findings. In summary, this chapter has illustrated the conflicting perspectives on the effects of commercialisation on rural communities. While some advocate it is a drive for economic benefit, others feel that it has dire consequences on rural households who are the most vulnerable party and are most negatively impacted. Is this the ideal route towards development? Possibly it is, for the sake of economic growth which will reflect in improved production statistics, but not necessarily for economic development which indicates an improvement in the standard of living for those in Mafucula. I would like to conclude this chapter by restating that the push towards cash crop cultivation in rural communities is a threat to their livelihood which is primarily shown by the negative impact it has on household food security.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The study was centered on the main research question of 'are *rural households benefiting from engaging in commercial outgrower schemes?*' With this question in mind, the research explored the impact which changing forms of agriculture from subsistence to commercial has had on households in rural communities in Swaziland. The Government of Swaziland took on this initiative as a strategy to address the issues of poverty that have threatened the nation (Vasudeva, 2006). However as we have seen from the literature, these schemes present a debatable discussion of the impact these projects can have on the poor. Therefore, in order to investigate the extent of 'benefits' that are associated with these schemes, the design of this study was intended to approach the household, which is often depicted as the 'beneficiary' when it comes to poverty alleviation strategies.

Location of Study

Given the understanding that outgrower models need to fulfill multiple parties such as government, agribusinesses, aid agencies and the growers themselves it was necessary to select a site that demonstrated a high level of commitment and support from all sectors. Swaziland was selected as the ideal country for this study due to the extensive construction of the Komati Downstream Development Project (KDDP) and more recently, the Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project (LUSIP). These projects have provided a sustainable irrigated water supply to rural communities in Swaziland in order to enable their engagement in commercial agriculture, specifically sugarcane cultivation. The massive investments that have gone into the construction of these irrigation systems have displayed the high level of commitment from the government and aid agencies into transforming farming activities in rural communities from subsistence into commercial agriculture. With the sugar industry being the main vehicle in supporting this drive, the two sugar corporations in Swaziland, RSSC and Ubombo Sugar Ltd have also heavily invested in the expansion of their sugar mills in order to accommodate the increased cane that is supplied. In addition to this the European Union, in response to the drop in

preferential treatment in sugar prices, has also contributed towards this initiative. The establishment of the Small-holder Irrigation Project (SHIP), which has been running since May 2009, provides grant funding for 70% of the start up costs incurred by the outgrowers. This funding is offered to 'newer' outgrowers and mainly pertains to those under the more resent development of LUSIP and does not cover my case study, nevertheless it demonstrates their commitment towards this form of rural development.

The rapid growth in the number of outgrowers in Swaziland catering to the sugar industry calls for an investigation as to how successful these schemes have been. In addition to this, looking at a case study under KDDP helps assess the further implications this can have on the farmer associations that are being established today under LUSIP. Therefore a case study on the Mafucula community was carried out, an area which began cultivating sugarcane in 2004 and is thus directly affected by this transition.

Figure 4 below is a map of Swaziland which highlights the two main areas in the Lowveld where sugarcane is grown. It illustrates the location of the three sugar mills, namely, Mhlume, Simunye and Ubombo. The Royal Swazi Sugar Corporation owns Mhlume and Simunye mills and controls the processing of the entire northern Lowveld sugarcane. The outgrowers (including Mafucula) in this area fall under KDDP and supply these mills. Figure 3 (page 14) is a map showing all the outgrowers that fall under KDDP, highlighting the specific location of Mafucula in relation to the other outgrowers. The southern outgrowers fall under LUSIP and serve the Ubombo Sugar mill.



Figure 4: Map of Swaziland, showing location of Maguga Dam, KDDP and LUSIP

Case Study Selection

My research design involved focussing on a particular case study, a community that was involved in smallholder commercial agriculture. This strategy allowed my research to narrow in on the particular conditions that were facing the individuals in that community. A community study describes and analyses the pattern of and relations between main aspects of their community life (Robson, 2008). In this case, the study is looking at the experiences of members of a community, Mafucula, and how their lives have been affected by operating as a sugarcane outgrower. This does not suggest that the experiences of commercial outgrower schemes are the same in all rural communities in Swaziland. However it does allow for a reflection of the successes and challenges that are currently faced in their case and help understand some of the larger development issues that are at play. This approach is derived from Buraway's extended case study method of research. Buraway states:

> 'in highlighting the ethnographic worlds of the local, it challenges the postulated omnipotence of the global, whether it be international capital, neoliberal politics, space of flows, or mass culture' (Buroway, 1998, p. 31).

This approach helps to understand that the issues faced by this community extend beyond its micro context. Buroway's technique of using reflexive science to ethnographic study enabled me to engage in a series of discussions that allowed me to take an analytical approach of these projects, rather than for face value. It embeds social processes in the wider array of social forces (Buroway, 1998, p. 29), indicating that development policies as a whole are widely influenced.

Mafucula was selected as an ideal community case study for a number of reasons. Their involvement with KDDP suggested that the Phakama Project itself was a government initiated project for the community, and hence questioned the level of participation of the community members in the project. In addition to this, the physical location and lack of

water of the community indicated that some form of 'development' was necessary for the survival of its residents. Investigating if the transition into the commercial agriculture of cash crops was the answer for them gives bearing to the viability of the project as an attempt to alleviate poverty. Furthermore, the historical experiences faced by the members of Mafucula given their displacements for sugarcane cultivation nearly thirty years ago, and their struggle to survive provides a rich account for this study as an attempt to achieve development.

Period selection

The data for this research study has been collected over a period of 7 months, from July 2010, to January 2011. During July and August I was able to meet with some of the stakeholders involved in setting up outgrowers in Swaziland, namely SWADE and SHIP. I was also able to take a snapshot of some of the farmer associations that were currently being established under LUSIP providing a background for my case study. I took an overall look at the sugar industry in Swaziland, touring the Ubombo sugar mill and gaining a better understanding of the production process. The main data collection for my particular case study took place in three phases, September 2010, November 2010 and January 2011. Conducting the main data collection in intervals like this was strategic for a number of reasons. First, I was able to observe the vegetation of the community in two seasons, before and after the rainy season, viewing the devastating reality the dry seasons have on food crop cultivation given the lack of access to water for food gardens. Second, my final visit to the community was just after they had received their annual dividend payment. This third visit was necessary as it was clear from my previous interviews that the respondents were eagerly waiting for their dividends to be paid out in December 2010. I wanted to see if there was any change in the amount of dividends that they received and if this change influenced their perceptions about the Project. This proved to be very interesting to this study.

Data Collection Techniques

Due to the nature of the main research question, that is its attempt to understand people's experiences, perceptions and understandings of commercial outgrower schemes, a qualitative method of research was adopted. According to Jary *et al.* (1991) qualitative research is explained as any research in which sociologists rely on their skills as an empathic interviewer or observer to collect unique data about the problem they are investigating. This method of research allowed me to use data collection techniques that encouraged me to dig deeper and probe further into the experiences faced by members of this community in order to answer my main research question.

The research adopted the data collection technique of in-depth interviews through the use of a semi-structured interview schedule (See Appendix 1). I divided the interview schedule into four topics, background, food security, income/labour and general. These topics helped me structure my findings in a thematic model, aiding me in my data analysis.

I found this semi structured technique of data collection to be most appropriate as it allowed the respondents to express their feelings and emotion. As Robson (2008) notes, the less structured approach enables the persons interviewed to be more flexible in their responses. This was definitely the case, as respondents felt comfortable, as though we were having a conversation rather than a formal meeting. This approach also allowed for me to be flexible, as with semi-structured interviews particular questions which seem inappropriate with a particular interviewee could be omitted or additional ones included (Robson, 2008). I was thus able to probe beyond the answers for the purposes of seeking clarification and elaboration on the answers given (May, 1997). All interviews took place either in the respondent's home or place of work. This detail also contributed to their level of comfort and willingness to speak freely.

A total of 30 interviews and one focus group were conducted, see appendix II for list of interviewees[11] and dates, 16 females and 14 males. All respondents were residents of the Mafucula community and were therefore in some way affected by the recent sugarcane development. Some interviews had other members of the household present who participated in the discussion. The interviews included both male and female headed households. This was an attempt to explore the different perceptions, understandings and experiences between the different homesteads as an ethnographic study. According to Robson (2008) an ethnographic study seeks to capture, interpret and explain how a group, organisation or community live, experience and make sense of their lives and their world. Therefore, in addition to semi-structured interviews within the community, a general participant observation was also carried out during the Project's weekly board meeting. Although most of the meeting was in Siswati, the Swazi dialect, this technique proved to be quite helpful in looking at the social interactions between the board members. Staff from the Swaziland Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise (SWADE) was also present in this meeting which helped understand the relationship between SWADE and the Project. This approach allowed me to observe the behavioural patterns and business conduct of the Project.

The focus group included a total of five local women at the market stands. Robson (2008) highlights that one of the advantages of having a focus group is that participants are comfortable and able to make comments while being stimulated by the thoughts and comments of others in the group. I found this method extremely helpful as it not only encouraged the women to participate but it also made them feel more confident in their responses. The responses from this technique have added a great deal of strength to research. In this focus group my questions were aimed at understanding some of the challenges women are facing in the community in terms of employment, access to resources in the household and their ability to ensure food security in their homes.

[11] In this list, pseudonyms are used to identify interviewees.

Cultural differences and language proved to be a limitation in collecting data because few members of the community spoke English. This made it difficult for me to probe further and get clarification from the respondents. However in spite of this I made sure I had an independent translator who was not from the community and understood my research objectives, therefore able to assist me in this area. I had a translator present for both the semi-structured interviews and the focus groups. A male translator assisted me with the first phase of qualitative data collection, while a female translator assisted the second and third phase. This strategy was an attempt to avoid any limitations relating to gender from the respondents. It proved somewhat helpful as women spoke more freely with the female translator. All interviews were tape recorded to ensure a high level of accuracy while transcribing. I was therefore able to use direct quotes in displaying my findings.

In-depth interviews were also conducted with representatives from service providers from RSSC, SWADE and SHIP. I spoke to the team leader responsible for organising SHIP, as well as the outgrower department at RSSC and the SWADE liaison with the Phakama Project. These interviews were useful in understanding their relationship with the community and the background of how the Project started. It also enabled me to explore their role in the outgrower model which, as we have already seen from the literature, often involves multiple conflicting parties. In this case, RSSC represents the agribusinesses, SWADE a parastatal organisation and SHIP an aid agency under the EU. What are the intentions of these organisations and ultimately who benefits from contract farming?

Secondary data was collected through the University library, electronic journals, newspapers articles and the internet. These sources enabled the study to build a strong literature review and theoretical framework enhanced by the primary data obtained from the field work. In addition, a visit was made to the Swazi National Archives to investigate historic data on this subject matter.

Access

Contacts through RSSC played a key role in gaining access to the Mafucula community for the purpose of this research. Their relationship with the Phakama Project allowed the Board to trust my research objectives. With this trust, the Board provided me with an entire list of the members of the Project, each person who had contributed their land to become a member. This list contained the names, gender and plot numbers of all the 246 members of the Project which proved to be an excellent guide in randomly selecting members of the Project to be interviewed. It also enabled me to approach the homestead knowing the name of the person I was looking for. I was fortunate to have a guide who was familiar with the community and able to point us in the right direction.

Sampling and Sample Size

My initial sample size was to interview at least 15 members of the community, and to have a fair representation between those that were members of the Phakama Project and those that were not. During the first phase of the field work, interviews were randomly selected based on the Project membership list that was provided by the Board of Directors. This list gave an excellent sampling frame for the field work, that is, it highlighted the eligible population from which the study is done (Robson, 2008). However I did not want to limit my study to only those residents of the community that were members of the Project, I wanted to get a more informative scope of how the Project had affected other people in the community, old and young, male and female. Therefore, in the second phase of field work, snowball sampling as well as convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling involves choosing the nearest and most convenient person to act as respondents (Robson, 2008). In the end, I managed to increase my sample size and carry out a total of 30 interviews which I believe improved the scope of my study.

Ethical considerations

There were no perceived issues regarding ethics in this study, however in order to ensure this, ethics clearance was obtained from the University of Witwatersrand prior to carrying out any field work. Considerable effort has gone into ensuring participant confidentiality. All the information relevant to the participant will remain in my property, and pseudonyms have been used in order to ensure confidentiality of the participants. I verbally informed the respondents about this beforehand. Their knowledge that I was an independent researcher made them feel more confident about expressing their perceptions of the Project.

Prior to data collection I had translated my Information Sheet and Consent Form in to Siswati (see appendix III and IV) to ensure ethical consideration. However even though these documents were translated, the participants were sceptical when it came to signing the forms because many of them could not read or write. Therefore it was necessary to explain carefully the intent of the study in order to ensure they understood their involvement. Verbal consent was therefore obtained instead of written consent.

The structure of my methodology has acknowledged ethical considerations and considerable effort has gone into observing cultural differences. As a result, the collaboration of these data collection techniques and pre-existing theory on this subject matter has built a strong foundation for this case study. One that supports my argument that rural households are adversely affected by state initiated commercial agriculture projects.

Chapter Four: The Mafucula Community

The word Mafucula in Siswati literally translated means '*having been thrown away'* and the events that led up to the formation of this community is a true reflection of this definition. It is a tragic tale that displays the insensitive realities that 'development' can have on people living in rural communities.

The Mafucula community arose as a by-product of the expansion of the Swaziland sugar industry. During the late seventies the Swazi sugar industry underwent an expansion that involved building a third sugar mill in Simunye under the Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation[12] (RSSC). In order to allow for the vast extension of sugarcane that would cater to this mill, an effort was made by the Government of Swaziland to clear land and its residents in the surrounding areas. In approximately 1983[13], an entire community was forced by the King to relocate from Umbuluzi to Mafucula. The Umbuluzi area represented land that was required for the expansion of sugarcane that would supply the Simunye Sugar Mill. According to one community member, *'The king told us to move here. If ever the king says something you are not allowed to question the king. So the king told us to come here and there was nothing we could say'.* (David, October 29, 2010). As a result of this, some 3000 people were forcibly moved in RSSC trucks from their farms at Ekuhlamkeni near Ngomane on the Mbuluzi river (Ward, 1996). '*We came in trucks. They collected us from Umbuluzi. They brought us tents and we were living in those tents. There was nothing that you see around here. Then we started building.'* (Isaac, November 1, 2010). During the move, which took place in two phases, the community was divided; one group, including the chief was relocated to Shewula and the others were moved to the desolate Mafucula valley, approximately 50km away (Ward, 1996).

[12] At that time it was known as Tate and Lyle Investments.
[13] The exact date is uncertain as many the interviewees were unable to determine this. Some of them said '*the year before the big storm',* referring to the hurricane in 1984.

Mafucula is situated in the north-east corner of Swaziland between the valleys of the northern Lubombo mountain range and the Mozambique border (See figure 1 page 4). The conditions that this land presented were an unexpected life of struggle for its new occupants. Here they faced the harsh reality of being left to start new lives on land that was uncleared and dry land (Ward, 1996). Below is an account from Janine Ward, a social worker who spent time with the people of Mafucula helping them rebuild their community. These are some of the conditions that were imposed on these people during their displacement:

> 'The Government of Swaziland's resettlement involvement consisted of providing each homestead with an asbestos rondavel to live in while they built new homes, and reimbursing owners for brick houses only with the cost of materials. Farmers with plantations were paid one pound per fruit tree in compensation. All livestock was moved on foot by the people themselves. People were allocated land by their chief, but plots were smaller than the fields they had farmed at Ngomane. Some Families recall receiving three bags of fertiliser and maize from the government but they were not given help with seed, land clearing or ploughing. Five corrugated iron water storage tanks were supplied which were filled for the first few months by RSSC tankers, but thereafter the Government informed the residents that they should provide the money for a village water supply. As there are no perennial streams in Mafucula, people began sourcing their water from ditches, sugarcane irrigation run off, and seepage from the sewage ponds at a nearby cane cutters compound.' (Ward, 1996, p.3)

This eviction was expressed with a sense of great remorse from the community members, *'It was the king's wish that we move here.'* (Isaac, November 1, 2010), *'We didn't want! To go to a place we didn't even know'* (Sally, October 29, 2010). The above account suggests that before they were uprooted, these citizens were happily settled in their community, with larger plots for farming, some with fruit plantations, land that was already cleared and

homes that were firmly built, all of which were destroyed for sugarcane cultivation and the expansion of the sugar industry for economic growth. It also demonstrates the lack of effort that was invested into ensuring liveable conditions for the residents upon their resettlement.

After their relocation life in Mafucula had been an ongoing struggle as access to basic needs such as water for consumption and cultivation as well as health care had proven to be a difficulty. *'We faced a lot of challenges when we came here. Especially water. The most difficult thing was water.'* (Beth, September 30, 2010). A study on Water Supply and Sanitation was carried out in Mafucula by Fairman and Nyoni in 1992. This study reflected the efforts that have been made through constructing boreholes, digging from river beds and springs as well as building tanks that would collect rain water, in a desperate attempt to bring access of water to the community. This study also demonstrated the lack of clean water supply and poor sanitation conditions that the community was living under. For over twenty years this community struggled to survive, with the lack of sustainable water being the main problem, threatening vegetation, sanitation and food security.

During this time, given the non-existent water supply, crop cultivation in Mafucula was based solely on rain-fed irrigation. Maize and cotton were the most popular crops grown in the community. This is primarily because ground maize is the staple diet of the Swazi people and is therefore grown for food. Cotton on the other hand was viewed as an ideal crop for subsistence because it is grown as a drought resistant cash crop for income. Therefore, even if the rains were poor, the household was still likely to harvest some cotton that season. In addition to this, the Cotton Board of Swaziland provided seeds to farmers as well as transport for large quantities of cotton bales (Ward, 1996), therefore presenting a guaranteed market for the homestead to sell. The Water Supply and Sanitation study (1992) indicated that the average annual household income from cotton was E2851[14].

[14] E stands for Emalangeni, the Swazi currency. 1 Emalangeni is equivalent to 1 South African Rand.

Figure 5 below is an aerial photograph of the study area, taken in 2005. It shows the contrast in cultivation between commercial irrigated agriculture under RSSC on the east (vuvlane) and subsistence rain fed agriculture on the west, Mafucula. It illustrates a drastic difference in agricultural activities based on the supply of water.



Figure 5: Aerial photograph of study area

Mafucula currently has a population of 2, 942 which includes a total of 288 homesteads (SWADE, 2010). The location of the valley just falls into the range of the KDDP, in which its access to KDDP allowed for the implementation of sustainable irrigated water to the community. In addition to this the rich red soils they possess makes Mafucula's location ideal for sugarcane cultivation.

Today, nearly thirty years after their displacement, this community tells a different story. As you enter the Mafucula valley lush green fields of sugarcane are extended between the valleys. The solid reservoir at the entrance confirms a sustainable supply of water. In addition to this, taps of clean drinkable water, walking distance from every homestead suggest that some basic needs have been met. Trucks loaded with sugarcane imply that business is happening here. As one resident said: *'having known the place as a place that had absolutely nothing, I foresaw development!'* (Vumile, October 1, 2010).

The image below is a recent photograph taken of the Mafucula valley taken in 2010. A map of this study today, like the one taken in 2005, would show a completely different image, covered entirely with sugarcane.



Figure 6: The Mafucula Valley

The rationale behind selecting this community as a case study for this research is because of the numerous challenges this community has had to face for the sake of development. How has the commercial outgrower schemes of sugarcane cultivation affected the

households in this community? In addition to this, the fairly recent[15] running of the Phakama Project offers an ideal analysis of the implications involved with the transition from small-scale 'subsistence farming' into commercial sugarcane cultivation. Sugarcane is cultivated annually, making the period of 5 years long enough to generate the effects of change on the community. This allowed my research to be able to capture the potential adjustment factors that have been affected by this development process on the household levels in this community.

The effects on income level, food consumption, and the nutritional status of the poor depends on how increased commercialisation is brought about, that is, the design and implementation of projects and policies and the response by the rural poor to changes in incomes, prices, labour demand, and other relevant factors (Von Braun & Kennedy, 1986, p.21). Given the historical situation faced by Mafucula, the community's negative response to sugarcane cultivation proves to be quite interesting. In addition to this, the research focuses on the household level and is therefore able to look at the individual experiences of the homestead. The reason for looking specifically at this level is because the household experiences the direct effects of the social transition of this agricultural transformation as a means to alleviate poverty.

Von Braun (1994, p.7) highlights that most of the contentious issues and valid concerns regarding poverty alleviation and nutrition effects are at household levels, which are also where the biggest gaps in knowledge have to be filled. Has the Government of Swaziland's attempt to alleviate poverty through commercialising subsistence farmers as a development strategy been realised, or is it a disguise to improve the country's economic productivity?

The following section discusses the history of the Phakama Project, painting a picture of how the Mafucula community came to be involved as an outgrower in the commercial sugar industry in Swaziland.

[15] Established in 2004, yet started planting sugarcane in 2005

The History of the Phakama Project

> *'In order for us to be a member we were supposed to contribute with our fields, where we used to grow cotton. We were supposed to give that land to the Phakama Project. That was the SWADE idea.'* (Sarah, September, 30, 2010)

As mentioned in Chapter One, the creation of farmer associations into outgrower schemes on Swazi Nation Land has been implemented by SWADE. SWADE is a parastatal organisation under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy. The Phakama Project was established in 2004 through SWADE's successful efforts in implementing irrigated water to the community via KDDP. This allowed for the supply of potable water for the community as well as a system that would irrigate fields for sugarcane. According to the chairman of the Phakama project (September 30, 2010), sugarcane was seen as the only 'profitable' crop that would compensate for the irrigated water. However, in order to receive the water, every household was forced to contribute their farming fields towards the project. In giving their land they were essentially 'buying in' as shareholders in the business.

Currently the Project is made up of 246 members[16] and each member holds an equal share in the business. Of this number, 166 members' are male representatives of the Project and 80 are female. The core business of the farm is sugarcane and currently there are 286.2 hectares of sugarcane under irrigation. It is governed by a Board of Directors which consists of seven members of the Project who are voted in by the 246 members every 3 years. Each of the 246 shareholders is eligible to vote in electing the Board of Directors. All powers of the Project are vested in this board who meet weekly to discuss farm operations. The project is run by a supervisor who oversees the development of the farm.

The diagram below (figure 6) displays the organizational structure of the Project. It indicates that the Project is owned by the 246 shareholders. These shareholders can

[16] This number also represents the number of households that are involved as each household had to contribute their fields.

exercise their decisions by voting in a Board of Directors to run the business. The Board members are paid a minimal sitting fee of E500[17] a month to compensate for their time and energy that is vested into making decisions for the farm. Under the Board is the supervisor who runs the daily operations of the farm. This person is employed by the Board to oversee the entire farm. Under the supervisor are then three project managers that specialize in the different aspects in farm operations: irrigation, pesticide management and weed control. These project managers then employ members of the community to work on the farm, offering a form of wage labour to the community. This can be seasonal or permanent positions, depending on the stage of the farm. The Project also employs an office clerk whose role is to manage most of the administration and accounts of the Project. See figure 5 below for an overview or organization structure.

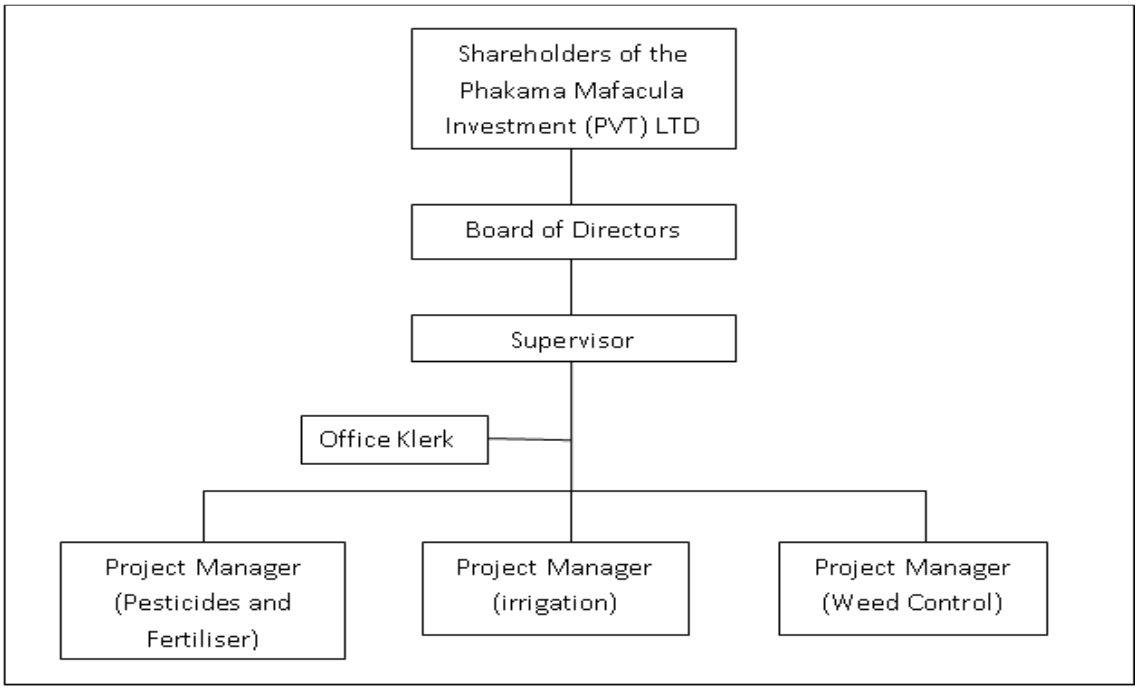


Figure 7: Break down of organisation structure of Project

All positions under this organisational structure are filled by members of the Mafucula community; however subcontracts are also made outside the community with other

[17] E stands for Emalangeni, the Swazi currency. 1 Emalangeni is equivalent to 1 South African Rand.

service providers such as the haulage of cane to the mill. The Phakama Project supplies their sugarcane to the Mhlume Sugar Mill. This mill is approximately 20km away from the Farm. There are currently 55 employees working on the project, most of whom are members of the community. Table 1 below is a list of different wages earned per job on the farm, with the supervisor being the highest paid. Irrigators, hand weeders, herbicide appliers and cane cutters are all seasonal jobs, and therefore are paid on a daily wage. See table 1 for overview of wage structure.

Table 1: Phakama Project overview of wage structure

Supervisor	E4000/month
Plumber[18]	E2650/month
Office clerk	E2000/month
Project manager	E1500/month
Team leaders	E1300/month
Irrigators	E34.80/day
Hand weeders	E31.90/day
Herbicide applier	E30.45/day
Cane cutters	E35.00/day

As with any business investment, the start up costs are usually very high as money needs to go into farm equipment and implementation of the irrigation system. Given that the Farmer Associations are located on Swazi Nation Land, the Government of Swaziland enlisted the support of the three local development finance institutions, namely, the Swaziland Development & Savings Bank (SwaziBank), Swaziland Industrial Development Corporation (SIDC) and Swaziland Development Finance Corporation (FINCORP) (KQA, 2007, p.8). The role of these institutions was to provide loans to various FA in order to fund their 'business ventures'. The high level of debt that these farms start off with forces them to struggle in reaching profits and return. In addition to this, economical factors such as the price of

[18] Maintains the irrigation, fixes leaking pipes.

sugar can threaten the financial viability of the business. As Terry (2007, p.647) notes, the EU Sugar Protocol has undermined this factor and compromised the viability of KDDP to improve living conditions in rural areas.

When the Phakama Project was initiated in 2004, the farm took a capital loan from FINCORP of E11.8 Million[19]. Since then the project has struggled in reaching profits. Because of this the Phakama Project was only able to pay out dividends in 2008 and 2009, resulting in 3 years of households not receiving any income from the Project. The dividends that were paid out were minimal. This struggle in the business has reflected drastically on the household. A newspaper article entitled 'Sugarcane farmers struggle to pay their loans' demonstrates how some of these farmer associations are distraught:

> 'Seven years later, some sugarcane farmers' associations have still not finished repaying their loans because of the ever increasing interest on loans. Some of these farmers have said they regretted falling for the idea of venturing into sugarcane farming….Most of these farmers used to produce cotton on the land before being lured by profits in the sugarcane production industry…. One of the members of the association told the board that they had become very poor because the dividends they had been receiving were insufficient to cater for their daily family needs…. "I used to grow cotton on my fields and was able to purchase three cattle per year and further pay school fees for my children… now we have been made poorer" ' (Jele, 2009)

In August 2010, the Project received E8.1 million from the Ministry of Agriculture, which was part of a total of E99 million that was given to farmer associations under KDDP to help them pay off their loans (Hlatshwayo, 2010). The Phakama Project was one of the beneficiaries of this grant. With this additional funding, the Project has been able to completely pay off the loan. In light of this the members of the Project are hopeful that they will receive higher dividends in the future that will lift them out of poverty. A follow up on

[19] Equivalent to ZAR11.8 Million

this study would be very interesting in the future. However the fact that for six years this community has been struggling to pay off debts and support itself on sugarcane suggests that this business is not ideal in efforts aimed at poverty alleviation.

Traditional Land Tenure in Swaziland

Land, for many traditional African societies signifies a sense of wealth, ownership and livelihood. In isolated rural communities, it is often the only means by which a household is able to sustain itself, be it for food cultivation or using it to earn a form of income by sale of produce. And in some societies where people have been removed from their land as a form of oppression, it represents more than simply a productive resource; it represents freedom (Cousins B. , 2008, p. 3). The findings from this study display an interesting story of how the structure of land ownership in Swaziland can subsequently control development, or more so the state's idea of development. Has imposing outgrower schemes on rural communities achieved development? This section encompasses a discussion on how the structure of land tenure systems in Swaziland has led to communities such as Mafucula to unwillingly change from subsistence to commercial agriculture. Looking into the structure of traditional land tenure in Swaziland is a central to understanding rural development (Levin, 1987, p. 151) and will help understand the conditions imposed on rural communities that are forced into commercial agriculture.

The majority of the literature that I will draw upon for this topic has been covered by Richard Levin (1997), Micheal Neocosmos (1987) and Patricia McFadden (1987) who look at the social and economic relations of traditional land tenure on Swazi Nation Land, as well as the agrarian question in Swaziland. I will also be drawing upon the work of Ben Cousins (2008) whose focus is on South African communal tenure and holds relevance to the Swazi context.

For the Mafucula community, joining the Phakama Project meant handing over their fields. The idea that their land would be taken away from them was met with great

disappointment. Their land was their main source of food security and livelihood. Yet for some the prospect of sugarcane offered a sense of hope. However, for the Mafucula community it was an all or nothing case, everyone had to contribute their fields. This decision was heavily influenced by the community's desperation for water. *'I was interested in a way because we were promised that we would get water and there was no water before here at Mafucula so the only way for us to get it was that we contribute with our land, yet they said if you want to grow cotton you won't have the water. So the only way that you can have water is that sugarcane must be grown'* (Sarah, September 30, 2010).

In order to bring about this expropriation of land, an authoritative figure needed to enforce the drive. The chief of the Mafucula community played a fundamental role in 'persuading' each homestead to give its land to the Project. Under the chief's authoritative power, every homestead in Mafucula who had farming land was encouraged to hand it over to Phakama. Whilst they were provided with another option, this option offered nothing, the alternative of leaving the community and living somewhere else. However as some members of the community are elderly, the option of relocating was unrealistic. '*It was the king who said we should give the land for the project so that we could get water. There was no way we could argue about it. Because once the king says so, then there is no way you just do so. There was nothing I could argue about because some of the people who used to live here who were against this program of growing sugarcane they were kicked out of this land because they were against it. They were told to go and build where they can do whatever they like. Those people just left this place. I am old, and alone. Where am I to go?'* (David, October 29, 2010). One woman expressed the level of mockery that was imposed on them by the chief, '*we were given an option to take away our fields but the problem is how are you going to take away your field. You cannot pick up a field and move it'* (Hilda, January 14, 2011).

These responses raise a lot of questions surrounding land tenure in Swaziland. According to Levin (1997, p. 115), there are three types of land tenure in Swaziland: private tenure, Swazi Nation Land and Crown land. The focus of this study is on the 55% of land that is Swazi Nation Land held under customary tenure. Mafucula falls under this category of

Swazi Nation Land. This is land that is held by the king 'in trust for the nation', it may not be bought, mortgaged leased or sold and is often acquired through inheritance (Levin, 1997, p. 115). Under customary tenure, the land is entirely controlled by the chiefs who allocate land to homestead heads (Levin, 1997, p. 115). Cousins (2008, p.5) defines this as the collective ownership and use of land and natural resources where some include clearly defined individual or family rights to certain types of land (for example residential areas and field cropping) where rights of access and use of land is supervised and controlled by what is most likely a chief. For Swaziland this basically means that as the land belongs to the king and activity on that land is entirely under his control, it also gives the chief full authority to dictate who gets land and how the land should be used. Under this 'law' it is expected that people living on Swazi Nation Land are forced to comply with whatever the chief says. So if *'The chief said that who so ever does not feel like being part of growing sugarcane you better move out and find your own place'* (Hilda, September 30, 2011), with the alternative not being an option, then the people are forced to do as they are told.

This structure, of land tenure in Swaziland presents for an interesting debate about the use of land and rights to land in developing countries. Cousins and Sjaastad (2008) raise the question of whether customary tenure land should be formalised. Levin (1997) argues that although this structure of 'communal tenure' allowed for the democratic involvement in the tribal context it has proved a misnomer because it conceals the power relations which underlie it and control land use and allocation. Levin displays a history of depressed peasant farm production, exploitation and forced removals on SNL, with the tacit support of those in power (Adams, Sibanda, & Turner, 1999). This is evidence that customary systems can be highly inequitable and is often depicted as a form of power of the people by local elites that steer processes of change in their own interests (Cousins B. , 2008, p. 17).

Neocosmos (1987) in his critical analysis of 'Social Relations in Rural Swaziland' explores a vast amount of evidence of the 'plunder of the peasantry' by the state. The most important power of chiefs under 'Swazi custom' is the power to allocate and withdraw land (Neocosmos, 1987, p. 108). Neocosmos (1987) identifies the understanding of the

relationship between the system of land tenure and the preservation of the power of the state being expressed in the work of Hughes (1972):

> 'One of the arguments often advanced against any change towards a system of more individualised tenure is that it would inevitably result in a complete breakdown of the whole existing social order. As one Swazi put it 'individual land tenure inevitably destroys and degenerates Swazi social life, and ultimately undermines and invalidates the honour, power and significance of royalty and chieftainship'. (Hughes, 1972, p. 239)

So the purpose of this structure is to preserve the power of the King over his people. However what if the state's development policies such as outgrower schemes inevitably threatens the livelihood of the people? What does this mean for communities on customary tenured Swazi Nation Land like Mafucula? My research illustrates that there is clearly no security of individual rights to land within the communal systems, which can inevitably threaten their livelihood. The forced removal and dispossession of land faced by this community thirty years ago demonstrates the repression faced by many homesteads on customary tenure land. This structure of tenure allows for traditional authorities approved by the state to implement commercial agricultural activities (McFadden, 1987) that could inevitably take away their freedom, their rights to use their land, and their only form of sustenance.

This chapter has raised key questions around how rural development policies affect poor people and encourages us to dig further into questions around commercial outgrower schemes as a means in alleviating poverty. Chapters Five and Six uncover the effects that are imposed on the household because of this transition into commercial agriculture, discussing my findings from this study.

Chapter Five: The Effects of the Transition from Subsistence to Commercial Agriculture

In order to answer the main research question 'Are rural households benefitting from engaging in commercial outgrower schemes?' a series of semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. These interviews were directed towards the residents of the Mafucula Community that were either shareholders in the Phakama Project or had a member of their family that was a shareholder in the project. Each person that was interviewed was either directly or indirectly affected by this change in agricultural activity in the community, therefore provided interesting and credible data for this study.

The findings that emerged from these interviews raised some interesting questions that support my argument that commercial outgrower schemes have not addressed the issue of poverty alleviation in rural Swaziland. The interview questions involved a discussion of some of the expectations that arose from getting involved in sugarcane cultivation, and whether these expectations have been met. It also looked at the agricultural practices that were carried out prior to sugarcane, specifically looking at how these changes in agricultural activities have now affected the household, in terms of income and gender dynamics. In addition to this the findings unwrap the fundamental issue of household food security, and the level at which commercial outgrower schemes have adversely affected homesteads in this community, questing its capability in contributing towards poverty alleviation.

In Swaziland, the extent to which rural communities are engaging in commercial crop production, specifically sugarcane is rapidly growing. This is evident with the current 7,400 hectares of farms under KDDP that have undergone a transformation into sugarcane cultivation and 11,500 hectares expected under LUSIP. Therefore it is important to recognise that although the scope of the findings presented in this study is small it is a critical reflection of some key issues around contract farming and outgrower schemes. It

will hopefully provide some insight on how development policies can influence social trends that directly affect the poor.

As we have seen from Chapter Four, the structure of land ownership in Swaziland has played a crucial role in forcing communities like Mafucula into commercial outgrower schemes. Given that prior to this, individuals who wanted land were able to approach the chief and receive a portion of land for farming or to build on, the recent change has subsequently affected the 'ownership' of the land, from the individual, to the community. This leads to a question around women and land ownership in Swaziland, leading me to question whether or not their situation in society has improved or worsened.

Outgrower Schemes, an Opportunity or a Threat for Women?

> *'In the Swazi culture, a woman cannot express what is on her mind. You cannot voice out an idea if you are woman in the Swazi culture. For example you cannot even go and get land for building if you are a woman, you need to have a husband or a male child'* (Sarah, September 30, 2010).

Given the difficulty that the Swazi peasantry have over obtaining individual titles over their land, the affect this places on women in the peasantry is substantially worse. This is evident in the vast amount of literature that suggests that African women occupy a relatively powerless position in terms of land control than men (Rose, 1987; Davidson, 1987; Standing, 1987; Daly 2001). Rose (1987) highlights that Swazi women rarely appear to have significant roles in land acquisition procedures before a chief, in intra-family decision making regarding land inheritance, as well as in the daily administration of land use. Although this might be changing slightly, as one male respondent said '*it used be difficult for women to get land but now, you just go there to the chief and ask if ever he can show you a certain place where you can build your own home as a women. It will depend to that chief if he will allow her*' (Herbert, October 29, 2010). Women are still faced with numerous obstacles when it comes to approaching the chief. This is evident in Rose's (1987) study on

Swazi women, entitled 'A women is like a field'. Her case studies indicate that despite perceptions of women as 'powerless' they are actively striving to assert their claims in the customary land acquisition process. She attests that the phrase 'a woman is like a field' has lost its meaning, and rather that 'the clever woman has obtained her field' to be more true. This indicates that women can obtain land, however they need to exert numerous efforts and be tactical, highlighting that although times have changed, it is still not as easy for her as it is for a man. Gender issues such as this are hard to break especially in rural communities, with Swaziland being a heavily patriarchal based society. How then has the Phakama project affected their position with regard to land ownership and rights?

The Phakama project is made up of 246 members, and each member represents the homestead as the head of the household. Thirty two percent of the members are female, suggesting that a portion of the homesteads in Mafucula are female headed homesteads. From the seven female headed households that were interviewed, it was clear that they obtained this title from their husbands who had passed away, and were thus widowed. If a household had more than one wife, which is fairly common in Swaziland, the title was then handed to the first wife. This is not the case for every household, as it is possible that in the remaining 68 percent male members, after the death of a family head, the title is then passed on to the first born son. Whether this person is a child or adult, it is often customary that they take this title. In my data collection I did not come across any child headed households however I was informed by SWADE that there are some that are represented in the Project membership.

Most literature on rural poverty takes this sub-group of female headed households as an assumption concerning the characteristics of the poorest rural people (Sender, 2003). Female headed households exert evidence of the systematic disadvantage of access to resources and the tendency to fall into poverty. In this case, given that the land belongs to the project, female headed households might benefit from this situation as the money received in dividends will go straight to them, and can therefore enable them to use the money to ensure food security in the household.

However this access to dividends for women is not necessarily the case for male headed households. The literature shows that the structure of gender in rural households in Swaziland is predominantly influenced by a strong traditional and cultural foundation embedded in the mind set of the Swazi citizens (Daly, 2001; Standing H. , 1987; Rose, 1987). Women are subsumed into homesteads under the (benign) authority of a senior male whose role is to articulate the common interest of homestead members, young and old, male and female (Standing, 1987). The responses from the research reflects a community where male domination prevails and subordination is expected from women. This was reflected in the discussions around household expenditures, money allocations and the involvement of women in family discussions of the Project. One female respondent said *'My husband decides where the money goes. If I need some money then I will tell him what I need it for and he will give it to me then I'll go and buy'* (Linda, October 29, 2010). In addition to this, the research also indicated that male headed households excluded their family from discussing 'the Project'. A focus group with women highlighted that their husbands do not share this information with their families, treating the organisation like it was a secret. This was confirmed with one male respondent who said *'the family thing has nothing to do with this project here that is happening at Phakama. So I have nothing to discuss with my family what is happening at Phakama'* (Henry, October 1, 2010). One woman said *'I do want to know what is going on because by the time when they issue out the payment I need to know that I can even ask at the right time that this member, my husband, is still having that money'* (Nozi, November 1, 2010). Women are reliant on this income for purchasing food to ensure household food security. Not knowing what is going on in the Project becomes an issue for women in male headed households who have been stripped of the land used for ploughing vegetables to ensure household foods security and are now reliant on the payment of dividends to purchase food, yet do not receive this money from their husbands. Engaging in commercial agriculture has therefore placed women at an even greater disadvantage as they are unable to grow vegetables and are reliant on dividends that are paid out in December and controlled by their husbands to ensure that the household is fed.

Is there hope for women given this transition in agriculture activity? I argue no, because as we will see, it has greatly affected their ability to ensure household food security and has placed them in a position of greater dependence on either the Project or their husbands. The following section discusses land use activities prior to the Phakama Project, exploring the level at which subsistence farming was able to sustain the household.

Changing Structure of Land Use

The average size of land that each household contributed to the project was around 1.5 hectares. Nearly all respondents were unable to determine the size so they used the term a 'ground', referring to the size of a football field. Prior to the research, two initial expectations arose with regards to land use. The first was the assumption that most homesteads exclusively engaged in subsistence agriculture, growing vegetables for household consumption, and that form of agriculture depended upon household labour to produce them. The second assumption was that sugarcane cultivation had replaced other agricultural activities such as food crops for the household, poorly affecting the level of food security within the household. This leads to the discussion of one of my main research question of 'How has commercialisation affected food security in the household'. This second assumption with regards to land use will be further discussed in Chapter Six on Food Security and Contract Farming.

In addressing the first expectation, I wanted to understand the changes in agriculture activities from before becoming a sugarcane outgrower and after. It was quickly discovered from the semi-structured interviews that cotton and maize were the primary crops that were cultivated on the land prior to sugarcane. *'I was ploughing cotton and Maize. It used to depend if there was rain. If there was no rain I had nothing to bring home'* (Henry, October, 1 2010). This statement clearly indicates the reliance people had on rain; however with cotton being a drought resistant crop it allowed the community to continue to cultivate in the dry seasons, providing some form of income for the household.

The focus on cotton challenges my assumption that most households previously cultivated for subsistence purposes only. It suggests that both cotton and food crops were their main form of livelihood. This indicates that the community was previously involved in some form of commercial agriculture already as cotton is considered a cash crop. They were able to sell the cotton in bags, providing the household with a form of income, and the maize produced was used for household consumption. Some households were able to use their land to grow other vegetables, as noted: *'We were growing maize, jugo beans, pumpkin, and peanuts'* (Lungile, October 1, 2010). What is clear from the findings is that in addition to cotton, households were able to use their land to produce food for the household and even though this form of agriculture was based on rain fed irrigation, it still empowered individuals to use their land as they saw fit. '*Here at Mafucula we are in a situation where we don't have any land to grow what we feel like growing. Back in those days we used to grow maize and cotton in one field. That would help us to have something to eat and at the same time we would have something to sell'* (Hilda, January 14, 2011). This statement clearly demonstrates that the household was able to sustain itself.

With cotton being grown for the purpose of cash income, I attempted to explore how much money households made from this venture. This was an attempt to understand the level of profitability cotton produced in order to determine whether the household income was better or worse prior to becoming a sugarcane outgrower. The respondents seemed to have mixed ideas on this topic, ranging from very profitable to extremely little. One person said *'We used to get a lot of money from the cotton and a lot of maize'* (Peter, October 29, 2010), while another *'There was a time when I got E20,000 out of it in 1996, for the whole year. I was able to take my children to school. It was a very good year'* (Busi, November 1, 2010), while in contrast, someone else indicated that *'It was little money. A big load wouldn't even get you E200'* (Isaac, November 1, 2010). These varied responses are a clear indication of the uncertainty that came with each season as income based on cotton clearly depended on the amount of rain that fell. *'We used to make money if there was rain. That was why we decided to grow sugarcane because now we do have water but for cotton when it came to making money it used to depend on the rain'* (Henry, October 1, 2010).

I struggled to find a concrete answer to this question of the profitability of cotton, so I began to take a 'then and now' approach, asking them if it was better when they grew cotton, or now that they are growing sugarcane. Here I saw a clear indication that the Project had not met the needs of its members. *'The one for cotton was better, because there was no-one who could deduct our money when we received it. We received our money then we distributed it amongst our children. Now, some children had to leave school because of the Project. Because there was no money. When we were growing cotton we used to manage to pay for our kids to go to school. But now we get very little money where we cannot afford'* (Sally, October 29, 2010). Even with the response that highlighted that now was better, there was an indication that things have not changed much. '*Now it is better compared to those times. Because those times we used to grow only to find that drought will come and destroy everything that we have ploughed. But now, the sugarcane does not rely on rain, and still we get a little money'* (Linda, October 29, 2010). These accounts clearly show that growing sugarcane in this community has not improved household income levels. As we will see further on in this analysis, the shareholders first dividend payout was only E1000, which was expected to last them the entire year.

As with any agricultural activity, access to water is a fundamental condition for determining rural livelihood strategies. The lack of access to sustainable water was clearly an issue when it came to farming for subsistence. Even though the community's prior means of sustenance was based on unreliable rain fed irrigation the residents felt a sense of ownership and freedom when it came to cultivating and reaping the benefits of their fields. '*I miss my land where I could grow whatever I want to grow'* (David, October 29, 2010). This transition forces a change in the structure of agriculture. The traditional organisation of farming (Hart, 1982, p.52) provided the household with a structure of production that had been practiced from one generation to the next. Each member of the home had their role to play in contributing to that structure. Now that their land is 'invested' in the sugarcane, even though they are shareholders, I sensed from my interviews that they do not feel the same sense of ownership as this traditional organisation of farming has essentially been destroyed. Can we call it development if the Project takes away their sense of ownership

and restricts their ability to use their land? For the household, their land represented a sense of ownership over what they reaped.

The traditional organisation of farming relies on the efforts of unpaid household labour to support it. Changing structure of agriculture affects this, which leads me into my next discussion on income labour and agriculture.

Income, Labour and Agriculture

The literature suggests that the development of smallholder farming through outgrower schemes, such as the Phakama Project plays a fundamental role as a means towards poverty alleviation by improving household income. This is in its contribution towards on-farm wage labour as well as 'trickling down' into other businesses that stem from the project. The research aimed to explore the extent to which the project has influenced these household income and access to wage labour.

Has the Contract farming improved the level of household income?

The Phakama Project proposes a change in source of household income for the members, emphasising a more profitable, and sustainable source from previous agricultural activities. Most households used to earn their income from growing cotton as well as through other forms of remittances. The structure of the Phakama project is designed to pay out a dividend (if they can afford to) to each member of the Project every year. The dividends are shared equally between all members of the Project (KQA, 2007). Since the Phakama Project was established, in 2004, the majority of profits were focused on paying off the debt of E11.8 million that was incurred to start the project. This limited the amount of dividends that were paid out to its members. As a result members only started receiving dividends in 2008. The first payout was E1,000 for the year, followed by E2,500 in 2009. This implies that between 2004 and 2008, members did not receive any form of income from the Project. In addition to this, they were denied access to land to provide an income for their household, as it was being used for sugarcane. At least with cotton they were able to gain

some form of income to sustain them. This has threatened the level of household income especially for those that rely solely on the sugarcane to support them. One man said: *'there is nothing. Before we used to plough the cotton. Now we just have to see what will happen with the sugarcane.'* (Isaac, November 1, 2010)

Even in receiving the money, what they have received has hardly supported an entire household. '*Yes we did receive some money, but it was too little. Can you imagine, for the year then you receive something like R2000, what can you do with R2000. Can you imagine? So maybe it was because we were still having a loan and maybe something will happen at the end of this year where we can now receive bigger money. We will wait and see*' (Vumile, October 1, 2010). In 2010 with the grant they received from the government, the Project was able to cover its debt, purchase a tractor, and increase their dividend payout to E3, 600 for the year. Although business might be booming, this increase in household income is nowhere near enough to lift a household out of poverty and sustain it for a year. It also begs me to question how much more they will receive in the years to come.

The low income received from the Project suggests that most households do not rely solely on the benefits of the project as a means of income. In addition to this; it also confirms that the Project has not contributed towards poverty alleviation in terms of raising income levels in the last 6 years. When asked where most of your household income comes from, some of the responses expressed other sources such as handicraft activities, or employment. *'I make sleeping mats. I sell them and get some money from them. I use that money to buy food for the house'* (Lungile, October 1, 2010); *'My income comes from building. This is how I make a living'* (Bob); *'My income I mostly get on my own. I rely on what I sew. It depends as to how many customers will buy from me then I will know how much I will make.'* (Nqobile, September 30, 2010); *'Our grandfather receives a pension'* (Peter's Wife, October 29, 2010).

These responses indicate that most households do not look to the project as a source of income. It can also imply that since cotton growing was not a reliable crop given the

inconsistent rain-fed irrigation, it forced households to look to other means of income. The largely elderly population reflected a huge reliance on the pension scheme as their source. This supports my argument that these schemes have not improved the living conditions of the community but have in fact worsened it.

Has contract farming provided access to wage labour?

There is a growing consensus amongst writers on the debate about outgrower schemes that it replaces other unsustainable agricultural activities (Ojwang, 1999) with a form of income based on wage labour. Given that most households do not rely on the dividends paid out by the Project, the research explored the extent to which it provided the community with wage labour, and if the community recognised this as a benefit of the project.

The interviews indicated that former agriculture activities in Mafucula were based on un-paid labour provided by the household and were mostly carried out by female members of the home. This restricted women from engaging in other forms of income as they were preoccupied with tending the fields that the family owned. This activity gave women access to food given that they were responsible for managing the fields and could thus grow vegetables as well as cotton. Neocosmos (1987) attests that the most men would come close to engaging in anything remotely resembling agriculture was the clearing of fields for cultivation. He admits that the introduction of the plough has changed this division of labour slightly, however this study confirms that women were still the main workers in the traditional organisation of agriculture. As we have seen, the transition in agricultural activities has introduced a form of wage labour, affecting this gender division of labour. The presence of men in this form of labour is an adjustment in the role that men have historically played in the traditional organisation of agriculture. My study highlights that traditionally un-paid labour was handed over to women, while with the introduction of wage labour in the community men are eager to get involved.

The Phakama project is structured in such a way that members of the community are employed to work on the farm, receiving a wage. There are currently 55 employees working on the farm out of 246 households who contributed their land, and a community of over 2000 residents. This number is a poor representation of the number of people in the community who need employment to contribute towards the household income. *'There are job opportunities but not enough for the whole community. There is a very small amount of people who can be employed.'* (Lulu, January 14, 2010). The ratio between men and women working on the farm fluctuates as some jobs are more ideal for one sex over the other, depending on the season. For example: Cane cutting is labour intensive and requires male physique while jobs like weeding are better suited to women, and as a result there can be a 60/40 ratio between men and women one season and the opposite the next.

When the farm requires labour, positions are the posted on local business center's notice board, calling for fit and healthy people to apply. One of the team leaders who work on the Project noted *'before putting them in the fields, we send them to the clinic to check if they are healthy enough to work here'* (Peter, October 29, 2010). This implies that employees need to be physically fit to work on the farm, indicating that the job's requirements limit the applications to young adults who are capable. One household I interviewed was of an old man and his wife, looking after their three grandchildren. Their own children had passed away.[20] This is a homestead that is physically unable to engage in wage labour and has the extra expense of caring for their grandchildren. He said '*There is no one earning money here. I am just looking forward to the money I will receive from the project.'* This community is desperate to get out of poverty and the pension received from the government is not enough to support the growing needs of children.

Despite this, the Project has presented areas of employment that were not available before, presenting an opportunity to a select few. *'Before, the only way that I could work was that I plough this cotton and reap it and go and sell those bags. Otherwise I was not going to be working if it was not for the sugarcane. Now I have a job because I am taking care of the*

[20] This is a very common situation in Swaziland. HIV/AIDS has resulted in the loss of an entire generation, leaving the very old and the very young behind.

sugarcane' (William, September30, 2010); '*Before, I was just someone who was loitering around the place looking for jobs. At times I used to do some temporary jobs. But I just used to loiter around. It was not something to be proud about. Sometimes it would be a month or two without work. It was quite a struggle. Though now I am not permanent, but my contract is renewal through my performance'* (Peter, October 29, 2010). This confirms that this model of outgrower schemes has contributed to providing a form of wage labour to some people in the community. However the fact that it only employs 55 members of the community indicates that the capacity in which it can do so to say that it is a substantial improvement in the community is very small. This supports the case for small farms over large farms based on the fact that large farms employ fewer people (IFAD, 2001, p. 74). In addition to this, the wages range between E30 to E35 a day.

Great Expectations

> *'I had it tough when I first heard that we were going to be growing sugarcane. I thought we were going to suffer from poverty. I didn't understand how we were going to manage. They said all of us are going to be one like in one organisation and they will work as a team and I didn't understand how that was going to work with such a large number of people in this community'* (Beth, September 30, 2010)

Uneducated and unfamiliar with the idea of being an outgrower, the members of Mafucula community went into this project with mixed expectations. SWADE played a facilitative role in educating the community and manipulating them into the process. Informing them as to how they will operate as one farm, in establishing a board of directors and in training the board to run the farm. In as much as there was resistance in handing over their land, there was also great excitement for the prospect of having a better life.

Water was the key factor in luring this community into this scheme. Even though there was a lot of discontentment around it, the certainty of water in their eyes made it worth it *'I wasn't too happy but what pleased me was that they were brining water closer*' (Beth,

September 30, 2010); '*We were excited because we would be getting water*' (Lungile, October 1, 2010). The lack of water in Mafucula made life very difficult, and the fact that the Project would bring this desperate commodity was an answer to prayers. In addition to this, there was the hope and expectation that things would change, that they would have more opportunities. '*We thought we would be getting a lot of money. We thought we would be rich like the other companies, Mhlume, Simunye, we thought we would be as big as those*.' (Peter, October 29, 2010); '*We thought we would earn money, that we would no long struggle. And that there would be more jobs*' (Focus group, September 30, 2010). These quotes reflect a great sense of anticipation associated with joining this Project. That poverty and struggles were behind them, and a life of surplus ahead.

However, my research found that in the six years since the Project has been operating few of these expectations have been realised. The implementation of a potable water system was met with great joy by the community members; however they did not know that the use of the water would be strictly for consumption only. This limits the household as to what they can use it for and is a major problem as households are unable to use the water to irrigate their vegetable gardens. The disappointment that is expressed reflects a sense of regret in getting involved in the project. *'I was excited when I heard about the sugarcane because I thought that we would be getting water. Only to find that this water is controlled so we are not allowed to use the water for our own gardens at home'* (Herbert, October 29, 2010). The effect this has had on food security has begged me to question the benefits of these schemes viewing them more as an attempt to capitalise on the peasantry. At this point, it is clear that for the past six years this community has been suffering at the expense of sugarcane.

This is just one example where expectations have not been met. Some respondents feel that nothing has changed in the community and that they are still struggling. *'We are receiving nothing from the project. Our desire was to build better houses for our homes but now we are even struggling to buy food.'* (Sally, October 29, 2010)

In spite of this frustration the community appears to remain hopeful that things will change. This is largely brought about by the fact that the Project's debt has finally been paid off implying that larger dividends will be distributed in the coming years. In addition to this, the Project leaders have mentioned that they are desperately trying to address the issue of water for food gardens and improve the level of food security in the community. '*they told me that they are still paying off the debt that they created when they first started the project so now we have been told that they have completed paying the debt so this year is the year that we are looking forward to receiving much more'* (Beth, September 30, 2010); '*I am not worried about what is going on with the project at the moment. I am only expecting that I will be getting something that is much more profitable than the cotton'* (Simon, September 30, 2010); *'Sugarcane hasn't helped us that much for now. There is nothing that we have benefited from yet. <u>But I am expecting.</u> We have been promised that they will bring water to our homes whereby we can grow vegetables in our homes and we can maybe sell those vegetables'* (William, September30, 2010, emphasis added). Clearly despite their current struggles, these community members are hopeful that things will improve in the future.

The expectations associated with this boost in dividend payouts are high. Is the project able to cope with the demands of its shareholders? As we have seen, with the debt paid off, the 2010 dividend payout was E3,600. Will this be enough to meet the expectations of its members in the years to come, and what are the chances that this amount will increase given the capacity at which the farm can grow? Given that the dividends are divided between 246 members, I highly doubt that there will be much of an increase in the amount of dividends paid out in the coming years. While this sum might place them in a situation that is slightly better than peasant farming, it is not adequate to lift this community out of poverty. 63% of Swaziland's population is below the international poverty line of US$1.25 per day, 1992–2007 (UNICEF, 2007). With today's, exchange rate, that is only E8.90. An income of E3,600 a year for an entire household, which is the only income some households are getting, continues to place them in this bracket of 63%. Therefore, commercial agriculture has not raised their income levels. No doubt a sustainable form of

'development' is necessary for communities like Mafucula however it is important that such strategies meet the basic needs of those communities rather than drain them of their resources.

Is commercial agriculture therefore a benefit or detriment to the poor? Aside from the lack of income that is presented, there are some fundamental consequences that face these communities. The following chapter highlights some of these detrimental side effects that I uncovered in my research, further supporting my argument against commercial agriculture as a strategy for poverty alleviation.

Chapter Six: Food Security and Contract Farming

> *'I am not happy. I contributed my land for nothing. My fields used to feed me and now I have nothing'* (Isaac, November 1, 2010)

The World Bank (2008) claims that the world is generally food secure, producing enough food to meet the dietary needs of today's global population. However true this statement might be, food insecurity, specifically in the developing world, continues to threaten the lives of millions of people. In some developing countries the problem manifests itself in the form of hunger and malnutrition and a generally less than adequate nutritional intake, particularly amongst the most vulnerable sections of the population, especially that of the poor (Studien, 1987). The causes that contribute to the growing level of food insecurity, specifically in Sub-Saharan African, are often disguised. These can range from the effects of climate on a specific area, such as drought to famine or even economic policies. However, whatever the cause that contributes to this crisis, the consequences that pertain to food insecurity on an individual and a household are alarming.

Many of the comparative studies of outgrower schemes in Africa mentioned the lack of credit for food security as a major problem for the welfare of smallholders (Baumann, 2000; Marcusen, 1982; Terry & Ryder, 2007). Large-scale agricultural development projects that focus on cash crop production in rural areas, like sugarcane, contribute to the growing food crisis (Mackintosh, 1989). Therefore the notion that contract farming can undermine food security is heavily at play.

Apart from promoting employment generation and income earning possibilities for targeted rural households, another key aim of KDDP and LUSIP is to improve food security in rural areas (Atkins, 2007). However, the findings of this study strongly demonstrate that food security continues to be a major problem for the residents of Mafucula. This is reflected in the poor income that has been distributed to the residents from the project, as well as in the lack of access to water for the cultivation of home food gardens.

The Project is designed to increase the cash incomes of the residents of Mafucula, claiming to be a more reasonable and reliable income than their prior efforts to develop their land. Income in this form is required to replace the basic food no longer cultivated due to the loss of land (Mackintosh, 1989).

The income that has been received from the project has been barely enough to cover food costs for the entire household as well as pay school fees. This is especially a concern in the case of large homesteads that are receiving the same amount of 'income' as small families. That income is expected to cover the food expenses of the entire household. In comparison to when they had land, the crops they yielded were sufficient to secure the quantity of food required for the household. *'During those days, we used to grow a lot of maize, and now we don't have a place to do that. That maize used to feed this house and as you can see we have a very big house. Now we don't have a big enough space to feed this entire family. We used to grow enough and now we don't have food'* (Sally, October 29, 2010)

This centers around my second assumption with regard to land use, that the use of land for sugarcane cultivation has replaced other agricultural activities, negatively influencing the level of food security in the household. In addition to cotton, most households used their fields to produce food for their families; now that those fields have been expropriated from them they are forced to use a small area on their homesteads to grow vegetables. However with the prohibition of water for this purpose, they are unable to do so. As we have seen from Sally above (participant in research study), households can no longer cultivate at the same magnitude as they did before.

The change in consumption patterns as a result of this appropriation has also contributed to the community's disappointment in handing over their land in the first place. Not that each household had a choice. *'It hurt us to give up our land because we knew that we could no longer plough again. We would now have to purchase what we wanted so we were not happy about that'* (Beth, September 30, 2010). The other aspect of this was that households cannot purchase what they used to grow. One family I interviewed said that they missed

the maize and pumpkin and peanuts that they used to grow '*we no longer get those kinds of things'* (Thandi, October 29, 2010).

Water plays a crucial role in its ability to ensure household food security. It enables households to cultivate small vegetable gardens that will provide nutritious food for the home. A devastating reality of the Project is the extent to which the water is controlled, prohibiting the community from using it to water vegetable gardens. Of the 25 households that were interviewed, nearly all of them said they had an area of land on their homestead where they could grow vegetables. However, only 4 households actually had vegetables growing on them. The water gained for these small home gardens was either 'stolen' from the nearby taps or the household invested in pipes to allow the supply of water directly to the home. This one homestead that had direct access to water displayed evidence of extensive farming activities, ranging from two chicken pens with 250 chickens in each, to pigs, goats, cattle and fish. This clearly demonstrated how access to water at a household level is essential not only for survival but also for economic development of that household. This was also the household of the Phakama Project farm supervisor who earns E4,000/month. Most households cannot afford this investment and are afraid of 'stealing' the water, so they opt out of the luxury of having a simple vegetable garden, and suffer at the expense of sugarcane. '*I have land for growing vegetables but the problem is that I do not have water. These are some of the things because in fact we need water for growing maize and we don't have that water'* (Vumile, October 29 2010); *'I am struggling to get water, to bring the water here so that I can have my own garden here, nearby so that I can carry on with my home'* (Herbert, October 29, 2010); *'We do have a garden but we don't have the water ready for growing the gardens so there is nothing growing there. We can't use that water from the tap because it is for consumption only. Not for garden. They don't even want us to use it for building. Only for consumption!'* (Isaac, November 1, 2010)

These responses also reflect a growing disappointment the community feels for engaging in the project in the first place. They were 'sold' on the idea of sugarcane based on the fact that the community will receive water. And they did receive water; however they got it

without the right to use it for the purpose of sustaining themselves. Indeed it must be acknowledged that water and food security were a major issue before the irrigation project was implemented in Mafucula, however the scheme, in bringing water, has not addressed the issue of food. This confirms Terry & Ryder's (2007) hypothesis that commercial farming leads to negative effects on food security in rural households. Rather, the scheme took away the community's main source of livelihood, their land. The land enabled them to plough vegetables and crops as a means of providing food for the home. The study shows that the little income that the respondents have received from the project does not compare to the remorse they feel for the expropriation of their land. The Project does intend to address this issue by providing water to each homestead that would allow them to use it as they please. However until that happens and unless there is a drastic increase in the amount of dividends received in the coming years, the community will continue to display evidence of food insecurity.

Over reliance on cash crops makes the households more vulnerable to food shortages and price fluctuations (Key & Runsten, 1999). The effect this has on women, as the backbone of household food security is devastating. Pre-independent Swaziland has greatly displaced Swazi women within the economy. Throughout the colonial period they were denied equal opportunities in education and basic skills training, resulting in them forming the category of poorly paid unskilled labour (Miles, 2000). The historical implications of this represent the extent to which Swazi women were forced to live in an unequal society. In addition to this, Sender (2003) categorises female headed households as forming the poorest rural people. With no land, and essentially no water to grow vegetables, these women continue to struggle to ensure food security in their homes. In addition to this, changes in agrarian activities influence the structure of the household. One woman expressed this by saying: '*A woman is supposed to look after the home. It is just because of poverty that you find a woman is forced to go and work so that at home they can have food on the table'* (Beth, September 30, 2010). This statement suggests that she is using the word 'poverty' to refer to the current situation of the community, after 6 years of sugarcane.

When asked 'where does your main source of income come from?' the women that were interviewed rarely spoke of their husbands as their provider. They were all engaged in some form of petty commodity production as a means of having access to cash as well as to provide food for their homes. All studies of women in Swaziland comment on their involvement in multifarious non-wage income earning activities often lumped together under the title of 'handicrafts' (Standing, 1987). *'Our income comes from the mats that we make'* (Busi, November 1, 2010) *'I make sleeping mats. I sell it and get some money from it. I use that money to buy food for the house.'* (Lungile, October 1, 2010). The pictures below illustrate the effort rural women are making in trying to earn some form of income to ensure food security in their homes. The figure 8 is a woman making sleeping mats. It takes one week to make one mat, and she sells it for E100 at the Manzini Market over 100km away. Figure 9 is some women in the market. '*We rely on what we sell at this market here as you can see'* (Focus Group, September 30, 2010).





Figure 8: Women engaging in handicrafts Figure 9: Women selling at the market

Makintosh (1989) recommends that any agricultural change which is to promote long-term national food security has to promote rural food security as part of its effects. This can also narrate to any agricultural change that promotes national economic growth, such as non-food cash crops like sugarcane. It is evident from this study that rural food security often goes ignored in these projects, and must be placed at the forefront of any development

strategy that involves capitalising on the peasantry. This study highlights that food security is the most pressing concern on rural households as a result of commercial outgrowers schemes that focus on cash crop cultivation. Life in general remains an ongoing struggle for the community.

Contract Farming: A Benefit or Detriment to the Poor?

> *'It confuses me because we are farmers. Because here we are farming sugarcane. How is that helping us! This project has not helped us at all'* (Hilda, January 14, 2011).

So what then can we say about this model of commercial outgrower schemes and its effect on the rural poor? Has development come to Mafucula? Is there hope for a better life for the people? Indeed there have been some aspects of an improvement in their living conditions that have been brought about by the transition to sugarcane cultivation. As one young man put it '*Long ago there was no water nearby the homesteads, and now there is a tap that has been brought by this sugarcane. Also electricity, there was no electricity before here in Mafucula, and now we can get it. Many people here were unemployed, but now, some are working. Before the project the youth were full of thieves, now they are working here with the project. They no longer have time to steal*' (Themba, January 14,2011). However is this enough to constitute the extent to which this form of development can lift this community out of poverty? The restricted access to water hinders their ability to use it for purposes of improving food security. Electricity is only available to those that can afford it, '*Look here at my homestead. Where is the electricity so that we can have some lights? So that we can rise up for the name of this Project! There is nothing'* (Sakhile, January 14, 2011). In addition to this, employment by the project is a poor representation of the population of the community and the dividends each homestead receives barely enables a household to purchase food for a year, let alone send their children to school.

During my final visit to Mafucula I investigated how much money they received in dividends now that the Project's debt had been paid off, seeking to determine if they were

satisfied with the progress of the project and if their attitude of great expectation for high dividend payouts had been realised. This visit confirmed my argument that this project does not contribute towards poverty alleviation, but in fact adds to the struggle of life in rural areas. During this visit, each member of the project had been paid E3,600 in dividends for the year. '*It is really difficult. In our homesteads it is really tough. When you see that E3,600 and you've got kids who go to school, what can you do with that E3,600? Absolutely nothing!'* (Cosi, January14, 2011). Her disappointment made them long for the days when she was growing cotton and maize. One women said *'We built our house during the time of the cotton. That was the only time we would get money for doing such a thing. At the same time we were sending our kids to school.'* (Hilda, January 14, 2011); '*We used to manage to buy tractors and cars with that money from cotton. But now, with the sugarcane, it is a big challenge for us'* (Cosi, January 14, 2011). Clearly, they are no better off now than they were before.

The high expectations associated with this year's dividend payout have led some households into debt. '*They said to us the debt of the Project has been completed and they even told us that maybe we will receive E20,000. We thought things would be better by then. But when they called us to the meeting they told us E3,600 instead of E20,000. With that E3,600 we had to pay some of the debt we had created because we were expecting E20,000'* (Hilda, January 14, 2011). These households are much worse off.

My prior visits displayed evidence that food insecurity was a major threat to the community. This remains a growing concern although during this final visit in January it was evident that some households had taken advantage of the rainy season and have used a small area of land on their homesteads to grow maize and other vegetables. This was comforting; however six months from now, when the E3,600 is exhausted and the community enters into the dry winter season, the issue of food insecurity will continue to prevail.

This final visit expressed the challenges households were facing in being unable to afford to send their children to school. '*The main challenge that I am facing now is paying the school fees. One is going to form 5, one in form 4, one is going to form 3'* (Sakhile, January 14, 2011). Some households have up to six children that need to be enrolled in the education system. The amount received in dividends is not enough to cover the expenses of education and food. An uneducated youth will present more problems for the future of this community in raising it out of poverty. It is therefore important to ensure these households are able to provide this opportunity to the next generation.

Six years into this Phakama Project and poverty continues to threaten the lives of those living in Mafucula. Their position as the peasantry in Swaziland gives them no authority to change their situation. '*There is nothing we can do as a community because we don't know if it is the King that is allowing this thing to happen. Because there is no way that a community member can go and explain this thing to the king* (Hilda, January 14, 2011)*'.* What then does the future hold for Mafucula? A community that has been forced into sugarcane cultivation, the research has shown, has made them worse off than before. They will most likely continue, as they have in the past, to wait anxiously for next year's dividend payout anticipating more than they received this year. My research has expressed a desperate cry from the residents of this community for the resources to improve their living conditions, one which sugarcane has robbed them of.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

This research study has provided a critical analysis of how the transition into commercial agriculture has affected the lives of former subsistence farmers, and not contributed towards poverty alleviation. In Swaziland, 75% of the population live on rain fed subsistence farming. However, the threat of drought on this form of agricultural activity places them in a situation of being deemed by the Government of Swaziland as unsustainable. In addition to this their poor contribution of to overall GDP has categorised them as a misallocation of human (labour) and natural (land) resources, claiming subsistence farming to be inefficient.

The concern of Swaziland's increasing poverty statistics in rural areas that are practicing subsistence farming has also led the way for strategic developments. Much of the literature on poverty reduction continues to focus on agriculture (Oya, 2007, p. 275), with export led commercial agriculture as an ideal vehicle for growth. This is because of its contribution towards overall GDP, as well as its ability to provide backward and forward linkages in other industries in the country. In Swaziland, agriculture provides the raw material for about 33% of the value added to the manufacturing sector, while the processing of agricultural products accounts for the majority share of manufacturing GDP (IFAD, 2006, p. 3). Therefore, an emphasis on converting subsistence farmers into commercial farmers is perceived as being attractive because it contributes towards economic activity but also because it will provide a 'sustainable' income for rural communities, subsequently lifting them out of poverty.

Commercial agriculture is the mainstay of the Swazi economy (IFAD, 2006, p. 3), with the sugar industry contributing 18% towards the country's GDP (Government of Swaziland, 2008). The multifaceted role this industry plays in the economy has made it an 'ideal' venture for rural communities to participate as commercial outgrowers. Contract farming and outgrower schemes are thus intended to aid this conversion from subsistence to commercial agriculture by supplying a market for rural communities to sell their produce.

The literature on contract farming and outgrower schemes provides an interesting debate as the impact of such schemes to contribute towards poverty alleviation. On the one hand, it suggests that they provide a mutually beneficial relationship between agribusinesses and rural communities, providing a sustainable source of income as a business venture. While on the other hand, this relationship is viewed as a means for agribusinesses to exploit land and resources in these areas. Therefore, in this study, I have questioned the ability this process has on alleviating poverty, and view it as a strategic attempt for Swaziland to expand its commercial agriculture sector, yet place the lives of people in rural communities in a more precarious situation.

The implementation of irrigation schemes through KDDP and LUSIP that intends to facilitate this development strategy will affect the lives of thousands of people living on Swazi Nation Land that are forced to participate. To be specific, it will affect the lives of 20,000 people living in the Komati river basin (KQA, 2007, p.1), and 15, 300 people living in the Lower Usuthu basin (Vasudeva, 2006, p. 7). Given the magnitude of this development strategy, it encouraged me to investigate how successful it has been in improving the living standards of these people. The aim of my study was to understand whether or not the drive for commercial agriculture in rural areas had contributed towards poverty alleviation. How had it benefited rural households?

To achieve this, my research report was based on a case study of the Mafucula community, a sugarcane outgrower for the Mhlume Sugar mill. This community became an outgrower by each house hold having to contribute their individual fields in creating a smallholder sugarcane plantation, the Phakama Project. This model rejects the notion of the inverse relationship of farm size, which suggests that small farms are more efficient and productive than large farms as they employ less people. This inverse relationship further supports my argument that incorporating rural communities into commercial outgrower schemes is not an ideal development strategy for rural communities.

I conducted semi-structured interviews with 30 households that have been affected by the Project in Mafucula, exploring their perceived benefits. Results from my study revealed a true sense of unwillingness to participate in the commercial agriculture of sugarcane from the community. It also demonstrated a threat on household food security as well as a poor contribution towards overall household income. A growing disappointment has been the restricted access to the provision of water that lured most households to get involved in sugarcane in the first place. Water is forbidden to be used for food gardens on their homesteads which forces most household to purchase their foods. In addition to this, the land which has been expropriated from them has left some households in a situation where they are unable to cultivate any crops to ensure an adequate level of food security in the home.

Furthermore, the expected increase in income that was assumed would lift rural communities out of poverty has not been realised. Now, households are struggling to purchase food, which they can no longer grow. They are unable to send their children to school, and are forced to continue to supply the Swaziland sugar industry, if not for the sake of poverty alleviation, for the sake of economic growth. In the six years that this community has been involved in commercial agriculture, there has been little improvement in their standard of living. My findings have encouraged me to believe that these projects have left rural communities more precarious than before.

The drive towards commercial agriculture as a development strategy has successfully promoted export led economic growth for the country as well as the elimination of so called unsustainable subsistence farming. The idea of the Phakama Project as a rural development model portrays an image of sustainable development that not only facilitates economic growth for the nation, but could also attempt to address the growing concern of poverty in Swaziland. In an ideal world, this Project would provide a consistent and reasonable income for the homesteads, allowing them to ensure food security, allowing them to provide education to every child in the home, as well as providing them with a true sense of ownership and participation. However, the study indicates that at this time, the

project has failed to deliver, and the last six years have been an ongoing struggle for the members of the community, with no land, and no water to grow vegetables.

Yet the private sector and the economy have benefited substantially with an increase in the production of sugar through these schemes as well as with the benefit of reducing their risk associated with growing sugarcane. The major risk is on the smallholder. Key's (1999) highlights that an assessment of the impact of contract farming on rural development must weigh social and economic trade-offs at the household, regional, and national levels to be viable. This research study clearly shows that rural households are not benefiting from commercial agriculture and therefore some development policies need to be revisited. For smallholder commercial agriculture to be significant and sufficient, a level of commitment needs to be made to ensure that the basic needs, such as food security, in rural communities are being met.

Current developments under LUSIP have demonstrated a more accommodating approach towards smallholders in providing them with land and water for vegetable gardens. This caters to the concern of household food security in this area as households are still able to feed their children and possibly earn an income from the sugarcane. However, as improvements are made in the development of future farmer associations, communities like Mafucula that are already 'established' in a farmer association and assumed 'successful' are placed in the background. Their basic needs for survival and concerns go unheard, as they continue to be expected to supply the mill with sugarcane.

I believe this study holds a considerable amount of relevance in contributing towards rural development for many developing countries. Agriculture has consistently been viewed as a vehicle for growth and economic development in Africa and plays a supportive role in poverty alleviation. Rural poverty is an ever growing concern given the lack of food security and infrastructure available for those living in rural areas. Understanding the effects of development policies and the influence of global and economic factors on rural households as a result of agricultural development will bring to surface the overall

influence of these policies affecting rural communities. In this move towards commercialisation there is a need for smallholders to maintain subsistence food production. For Swazi's living on Swazi Nation Land, there is a need for the opportunity to participate; there is a need for freedom.

Bibliography

Adams, M., Sibanda, S., & Turner, S. (1999). *Land Tenure Reform and Rural Livelihoods in Southern Africa.* Overseas Development Insitute .

Agarwal, B. (1997). Bargaining and Gender Relations: within and beyond the household. *Insititute of Economic Growth, University of Dehli* .

Asadi, A., Akbari, M., Fami, H., Iravani, H., Rostami, F., & Sadati, A. (2008). Poverty Alleviation an dSustainable Development: The Role of Social Capital. *Journal of Social Science* .

Atkins, S. (2010). *Background notes on Swaziland, Surudec Study Tour.* Surudec.

Atkins, S. (2007). *FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF SMALLHOLDER SUGAR CANE PRODUCTION IN SWAZILAND.* RDMU.

Babolola, S., & Dennis, C. (1988). Returns to Womens' labour in Cash Crop Production: Tobacco in Igoboho, Oyo State, Nigeria. In J. Davison, *Agriculture, Women and Land, the African Experience* (pp. 79-89). Boulder & London: Westview Press.

Bank, W. (2008). *World Bank Development Report - Agriculure for Development .* Washington DC: World bank.

Bauman, P. (2000). Equity and Efficiency in Contract Farming Schemes: The Experiences of Agriculture Tree Crops. *Overseas Development Institute* .

Bernstein, H. (1994). Food Security in Democratic South Africa. *Transformation* .

Borlaug, N. E. (1970). The Green Revolution Revisited and the Road Ahead.

Buch-Hansen, M., & Marcussen, H. S. (1982). Contract Farming and the Peasantry: Cases from Western Kenya. *Review of African Political Economy* , 9-36.

Buroway, M. (1998). The Extended Case Method. *Sociology Theory* , 2.

Byres, T. (2006). Agricultural Development: Towards a critique of the "New Neoclassical Development Economics" and of teh "neoclassical Neo-populism". *Agriculture and Development* .

Cardosa, F., & Faletto, E. (1979). *Dependency and Development in Latin America .* Berkley: University of Califorina Press.

Chilcote, R. (1981). *Theories of compariative Politics The search for a Paradigm.* Boulder: Westview.

Chitiga, M., & Mabugu, R. (2008). Evaluating the impact of land redistribution: A CGE Microsimulation Application to Zimbabwe. *Journal of African Economies, Volume 17* .

Christiaensen, L., & Demery, L. (2007). *Down to Earth: Agriculture and Poverty Reduction in Africa.* Washington: The World Bank.

Cousins, B. (2008). Contexualising the controversies: Dilemmas of comunal tenure reform in post apartheid South Africa. In C. A, & C. B, *Land Power Customs: Controversies generated by South Africas Comunal land Rights Act.* Capetown: UCT Press.

Cousins, B., & Lahiff, E. (2005). Smallholder Agriculture and Land Reform in South Africa. *Institute of Development Studies* , 127-131.

Cousins, B., & Sjaastad. (2008). Formalising land rights in the South: an Overview. *Land Use Policy* .

Daly, J. (2001). Gender Equality Rights Versus Traditional Practice: Struggles for Control and Change in Swaziland. *Development South Africa* .

David, R., & Craig, Y. (1997). Participation Begins at home: Adapting Paticpatory Development from Southern Concepts. *Gender and Developmetn* .

Fafchamps, M. (1992). Cash Crop Production, Food Price Volatility, and Rural Market Integration in the Third World. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* , 90-99.

Frank, A. G. (1966). The Development of the Underdeveloped. *Monthly Review*.

Gerschenkron, A. (1962). *Economic Bakwardness in Historical Perspective: A Book of Essays.* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Glover, D. (1987). Increasing the Benefits to Smallholders from Contract Farming: Problems for Farmers Organisations and Policy makers. *World Development* , 441-448.

Glover, D., & Kusterer, K. (1990). *Small Farms, Big Business.* Hampshire: MacMillan.

Government of Swaziland. (2008). *Country Stragey Paper and National Indicative Programme.* Mbabane: Government of Swaziland .

Greenberg, S. (2010). *Status Report on Land and Agricultural Policy in South Africa.* University of Wesern Cape: Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies.

Griffin, K., Khan, A., & Ickowitz, A. (2002). Poverty and the Distribution of Land. *Journal of Agrarian Change* , 279-330.

Handelman, H. (1996). *The Challenge of Third World Development .* New Jersey: Prentic Hall.

Hart, K. (1982). *The Political economy of West African Agriculture.* London: Cambrige University Press.

Hirschman, A. (1989). Linkages. In Eatwell, & M. a. Newman, *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economcis: Economic Development .*

Hirschman, A. (1968). The Political Economy of Import Substituting Industrialisation in Latin America. *Quarterly Jouranl of Economics* , 1-32.

Hughes, A. (1972). *Land Tenure, Land Rights and Land Communities on Swazi Nation Land in Swaziland: a disscussion of some inter-relationships between the traditional tenurial system and problems of agrarian development .* University of Natal, Durban: Institute for Social Research.

Hunt, D. (1989). *Economic Theories of Development: An Analysis of Competing Paradigms.* London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Huntington, S. (1987). The Goals of Development. In M. Weiner, & S. Huntington, *Understanding Political Development .* Boston: Little.

IFAD. (2006). *Kingdom of Swaziland - Country Strategic Opportunities Program.* Rome: IFAD.

IFAD. (2009). *Rural Poverty Portal.* Retrieved January 21, 2011, from International fund for Agricultural Development : http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/web/guest/country/statistics/tags/swaziland

IFAD. (2001). *Rural Poverty Report 2001.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Jama, B., & Pizarro, G. (2008). Agriculture in Africa: Strategies to Improve and Sustain Smallholder agriculture . *United Nations Development Program* , 218-232.

Jele, L. (2009). sugarcane farmers struggle to repay loans. *Swazi Times* .

Kemp, T. (1992). *Historical Patterns of Industrialisation.* London: Longman.

Key, N., & Runsten, D. (1999). Contract Farming, smallholders, and rural development in LA: The organisation of Agroprocessing Firms and the Scale of Outgrower Production. *World Development* .

Lankford, B. (2001). The Rise of Large Scale Formal Smallholder Irrigation Schemes in Swaziland; An Appropriate Solution for Rural Livelihoods and Agricultural Prduction? . *School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK* .

Lappe, F. (1986). *World Hunger: Twelve Myths.* New York: Grove Press.

Lappe, F., & Collins, J. (1977). *Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity.* San Fransisco: Institute for Food and Development Policy .

Lenin, V. I. (1946). *Capitalism and Agriculture.* New York: International Publishers.

Levin, R. (1987). Contract Farming in Swaziland Peasant Differentiation and the Constraints of Land Tenure. In M. Neocosmos, *Social Relations in Rural Swaziland Critical Analysis .* Kwaluseni: University of Swaziland.

Levin, R. (1987). Traditiional Land Tenure in Swaziland . In M. Neocosmos, *Social Relations in Rural Swaziland Critical Analyses* (pp. 151-168). Kwaluseni: University of Swaziland.

Levin, R. (1997). *When the Sleeping Grass Awakes.* Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Lipton, M. (1982). *Why poor people stay poor.* London: Hutchinson & Co LTD.

Mabogunje, A. (1980). *The Development Process, A spacial Perspective.* London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd.

Mackintosh, M. (1989). *Gender, Class and Rural Transition: Agribusiness and the Food Crisis in Senegal.* London: Zed Books Ltd.

May, T. (1997). *Social Research: Issues, methos and Process.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

McFadden, P. (1987). The State and Agri-Business in the Swazi Economy. In T. Mkandawire, & N. Bourneane, *The State and Agriculture in Africa* (pp. 87-115). London: Codesria Book Series.

Miles, M. (2000). Urbanisation in Swaziland - A post-Independence Assessment of its Implications on the changing role of Women. *Urban forum* , 103 - 113.

Minot, N. (1986). Contract Farming and its Effect on Small Farmers in Less Developed Countries. *MSU International Development Papers* . Michigan, USA: Michigan State University.

Neocosmos, M. (1987). *Social Relations in Rural Swaziland: A critical Analyses .* Kwaluseni: University of Swaziland Social Science Research Unit.

Neocosmos, M. (1987). The Agrarian Question in Swaziland . In M. Neocosmos, *Social Relations in rural Swaziland: A critical analysis .* Kwalusenit: University of Swaziland.

Netting, R. (1993). *Smallholders, Householders: Farm families and the ecology of intensive, sustainable agriculture.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Ojwang, A. (1999). *The Socio-Economic Impacts of Contract Timber Farming on Rural Women: A study of Small Scale Growers in Kwazulu-Natal.* Johannesburg: Faculty of Arts, University of Witwatersrand.

Oya, C. (2007). Agricultureal Maladjustment in Africa: What have we learned after Two Decades of Liberalisation? . *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* .

Palmer, R., & Parsons, N. (1977). *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa .* Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Reardon, T., Taylor, J., Stamoulis, K., Lanjouw, P., & A, B. (2000). Effects of Non-Farm Employment on Rural Income inequalities in Developing Countries: An Investment Perspective. *Journal of Agrarian Economics* .

Robson, C. (2008). *Real World Reserach .* Oxford: Blackwell publishing .

Rose, L. (1987). Women are Like Fields: Women Strategies for land access in Swaziland. In D. J, *Agriculture, Women and Land* (pp. 440-446). London: Westview Press.

Rostow, W. (1960). *The Stages of Economic Growth: A non-Communist Manifest .* Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sender, J. (2003). Rural Poverty and Gender: Analytical Frameworks and Policy proposals . In H. Chang, *Rethinking Development Economics* (pp. 404-416). London: Anthem Press.

Sender, J., & Johnston, D. (2004). Searching for a Weapon of Mass Production in Rural Africa: Unconvincing Arguments for Land Reform. *Journal of Agrarian Change, Vol 4* , 124-164.

Smith, S., & Sender, J. B. (1990). Poverty, Gender and Wage Labour in Rural Tanzania. *Economic and Political Weekly* , 1336.

SSA. (2010). *Importance of the Sugar Sector to the Swazi Economy*. Retrieved January 24, 2011, from Swaziland Sugar Association: http://www.ssa.co.sz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=110&Itemid=84

SSA, 2. (n.d.). *Swaziland Sugar Association Home page*. Retrieved from Swaziland Sugar Association : http://www.ssa.co.sz/

Standing, H. (1987). Gender Relations and Social Transformation in Swaziland. In M. Neocosmos, *Social Relations in rural Swaziland: A Critical Analyses* (pp. 127 - 149). Kwaluseni: Social Science Research Unit, University of Swaziland.

Studien, K. (1987). *Food Security and Macroeconomic Stailization: A case study on Botswana* . Colorado: Westview Press.

SWADE. (2010). *Welcome to SWADE*. Retrieved January 24, 2011, from Swaziland Water and Agricultural Development Enterprise: http://www.swade.co.sz/index.html

Swazi Business Year Book. (2002). *Agriculture*. Retrieved Februrary 12, 2011, from Swazi Business: http://www.swazibusiness.com/sbyb_new/agri.html

Tafesse, M. (2003). *Small-scale irrigation for food security in Sub Saharan Africa.* Development Bureau, Ethiopia: CTA and Tigray Water Resources.

Terry, A. (2007, Februrary). The Komati Down Stream Development Project: Achievements and Challenges. Bristole, University of West England , United Kingdom: School of Geography and Environmental Management .

Terry, A., & Ryder, M. (2007). Improving Food Security in Swaziland: The transition from Subsistence to Communally owned cash crops. *Natural Resource Forum* , 263-272.

Timmer, P. (1992). Agriculture and Economic Development Revisisted . *Agricultural Systems* .

Tschirley, D. L., & Benfica, R. (2001). Smallholder Agriculture, Wage Labour and Rural Poverty Alleviation in Land-Abundant Areas of Africa: Evidence from Mozambique. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* , 333-358.

UNDP. (2010). *Country Programme Documents for Swaziland 2011 - 2015.* Geneva: United Nations.

UNICEF. (2007). *Swaziland Statistics*. Retrieved January 21, 2011, from UNICEF : http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/swaziland_statistics.html

Vasudeva, P. (2006). *The Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project Swaziland Mid-Term Report.* Inteca-Inarsa.

Von Braun, J., & Kennedy, E. (1994). *Agriculture, Commercialisation, Economic Development and Nutrition.* Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Von Braun, J., & Kennedy, E. (1986). *Commercialisation of Subsistence Agriculture: Income and Nutritional Effects in Developing countries.* Washington: International Food Policy and Research Institute.

von Bülow, D., & Sørensen, A. (1993). Gender and Contract Farming: Tea Outgrower Schemes in Kenya. *Review of African Political Economy* , 38-52.

Walker, C. (2002). *Land Reform in Southern and Eastern Africa: Key Issues for strengthening Womens acces to land rights.* Harare: Food and Agricultural Organization.

Ward, J. (1996). *The Mafucula Community Development Program Application to the overseas Development Administration Joint Funding Scheme.* Mafucula Community Development Program.

White, B. (1997). Agroindustry and Contract farming in Upland West Java. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* , 100-136.

World Bank. (2008). *World Development Report: Agriculture for Development.* Washington: World Bank.

Zhoui, Y. (2010). Smallholder Agriculture, Sustainability and the Syngenta Foundation. *Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture* .

Appendix I: Interview Schedule

Semi-Structured interview with households in Mafucula

Background

1. How long have you lived in Mafucula?
2. How big is your household?
3. When you first heard about growing sugarcane here in Mafucula, what did you think about it?
4. Can you tell me about how the Phakama Project started here in Mafucula.
5. How did you become a member of the Project? Did you want to become a member?
6. What do you miss the most about your land?

Food Security

1. How much land did you contribute to the sugarcane farm
2. What were you growing on your land before you gave it to the Project?
3. What types of crops/vegetables were you growing?
4. Do you have a vegetable garden now? What kind of vegetables do you grow?
5. Where do you get most of your vegetables from?
6. How many meals a day do you eat?
7. Where do you access your water from?

Income/Labour

1. Did you make any money from growing cotton?
2. Do any members of your household work on the project?
3. How many people in this household earn a wage?
4. Where does most of your household income come from?

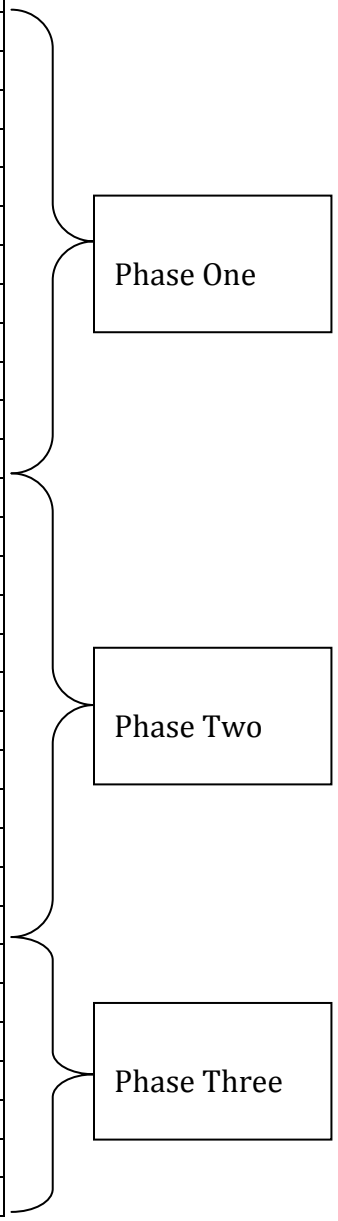
5. Have you received any money from the Project? How much?
6. What do you spend most of the money on that you receive?

General

1. How has growing sugarcane in Mafucula helped your household?
2. Are you able to afford to send your children to school?
3. Do you attend the meetings for the Project? Do you understand what is going on?
4. What are some of the changes you have noticed in the community since the sugarcane?
5. What are some of the challenges that your household is facing at the moment?

Appendix II: List of interviewees and dates

	Pseudonym	Date of Interview
1.	Helen	September 30, 2010
2.	Simon	September 30, 2010
3.	Beth	September 30, 2010
4.	William	September 30, 2010
5.	Sarah	September 30, 2010
6.	Nqobile	September 30, 2010
7.	Focus Group	September 30, 2010
8.	Lungile	October 1, 2010
9.	Vumile	October 1, 2010
10.	Bob	October 1, 2010
11.	Samuel	October 1, 2010
12.	Henry	October 1, 2010
13.	David	October 29, 2010
14.	Herbert	October 29, 2010
15.	Peter	October 29, 2010
16.	Linda	October 29, 2010
17.	Sally	October 29, 2010
18.	Thandi	October 29, 2010
19.	Victoria	October 29, 2010
20.	Cindy	November 1, 2010
21.	Shelter	November 1, 2010
22.	Busi	November 1, 2010
23.	Isaac	November 1, 2010
24.	Nozi	November 1, 2010
25.	Hilda	January 14, 2011
26.	Themba	January 14, 2011
27.	Sakhile	January 14, 2011
28.	Cosi	January 14, 2011
29.	Nyemu	January 14, 2011
30.	Vusi	January 14, 2011
31.	Lulu	January 14, 2011



Appendix III: Participant Information Sheet

(Siswati Version)

Department of Sociology, School of Social Sciences

The University of the Witwatersrand,

Johannesburg, South Africa

Ngibonga lelitfuba lekutsi sihlangane lamuhla kanye nekutsi unginike sikhasti sakho nelusito lwakho kulomsebenti. Ligama lami nguMaita Taruvinga, ngifundzela enyuvesi yase Witwatersrand, eJozi. Ngingatsandza kutsatsa lelitfuba ngikuchazele kancane ngalolucwaningo lengilwentako. Lomsebenti ubukete imiphumela yekushintsha tnidlela tekulima emakhaya. Ikakhulu lengifuna lwati ngako ngule commercial outgrower scheme kuMafucula , kaNgwane. Bengingatsandza futsi kukubuta imibizo lehambelana nelikhaya lakho kuze ngitokwati kutsi uphetseke kanjani wena Kubayincenye kulomsebenti:

Kumcoka kakhulu kutsi wati kutsi awukaphoceleleki kubayincenye kulomsebenti lona, uma ungasafuni kuchubeka kute lawushiyeka khona futsi kute lowutakuzuza ngekubambisana nami. Utangisita ngekuphendvula imibuto lenginayo. Mine ngitawubhala phansi kutsi utsini. Ngetsemba kutsi loku kungasitsatsa sikhatsi lesingange li-awa linye. Kungenteka kudzingeke kutsi ngiphindze ngibuye sitokhulumisana kabusha kulolucwaningo lwami. Ngiyakwetsembisa kutsi timphendvulo takho titobonwa ngimi kanye na-tishela wami kuphela. Uma kwenteka kutsi ngidzinge kubhala kutsi ngeva ngabani, ngitocela imvume yakho kucala.

Ngitsandza kukumema kutsi sibambisane kulomsebenti wami lona ngoba timphendvulo takho timucoka kakhulu lakimi. Uma uvuma kungisita kudzingeke kutsi usayine li-fomu lelikhombisako kutsi ufundzile konkhe lolokubhalwe ngetulu futsi uyavuma kusebentisana nami.

Uma unemibuzo mayelana nalolucwaningo lwami, ngingajabula kakhulu kukuphendvula. Ungangitsintsa kunayi inombholo: +27 70-380-7721 noma kulelikheli maita.taruvinga@gmail.com

Appendix IV: Formal Consent Form



Department of Sociology, School of Social Sciences

The University of the Witwatersrand,

Johannesburg, South Africa

Lifomu Lemvume:

Mine _____ ngivuma kutsi ngiyati ngalolucwangingo lwesikolwa lolwentiwa ngu Maita Taruvinga ngemiphumela yetemabhizinisi tekulima emakhaya. Ngiyati kutsi nginalo lilungelo lwekuyekela nome kunini kulolucwaningo futsi kuyekela kwami ngeke kuphatamise kuphila kwami lapha emangweni.

Kusayina ngaphansi kwami kusho kutsi ngiyavuma kusita kulolucwaningo:

_____ _____

(Sayina lapha) *(lilanga)*