

**Women and Livelihoods: A Qualitative Study of the Impact of Land Acquisition on  
Livelihood Strategies for Female Land Beneficiaries in KwaZulu-Natal Province**

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## **Abstract**

This study considers the relationships between women and land amongst female land owners in two communities within KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Motivated by the lack of qualitative data surrounding women as land beneficiaries, this study focuses on the extent to which land and land ownership effect women's livelihood strategies and how such assets contribute to and/or limit women's practical and strategic needs. Although this study supports data suggesting that women's access to land and land ownership is slowly increasing, it suggests that the positive effects of land on women's lives are greatly limited by poor access to basic services and agricultural inputs, and lingering patriarchal cultural norms. Such limitations, combined with low education levels amongst women regarding their land rights, have thus far hindered the South African Department of Land Affairs in meeting its targeted goals of poverty reduction and livelihood improvements.

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## **DECLARATION**

The work contained in this document was undertaken in the partial fulfillment of a Masters Degree from the School of Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

This is to declare that this research is my own work, and has not been used previously in fulfillment of another degree at this University, or any other. Any use of the work of others has been fully noted in the text.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **List of Acronyms**

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CFA	Community Forest Advisor
CPA	Community Property Associations
DLA	Department of Land Affairs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GAD	Gender and Development
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
HSRC	Human Sciences and Research Council
LEAP	Legal Entity Assessment Project
LED	Local Economic Development
LRAD	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
MALA	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSLSD	Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Program
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SALDRU	Southern African Labour and Development Research Unit
SLAG	Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant
WARD	Women in Agriculture and Rural Development
WID	Women in Development

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1 Women and Land**

In a country such as South Africa, where over 70% of all poor people live in rural areas and nearly half are chronically poor, land is an extremely valuable resource (Aliber, 2003: 74, sourced in Cousins, 2005: 222). Through agricultural production, opportunity for residence, or security as an asset, land provides rural South Africans with a means for expanding livelihoods and reducing poverty. This is especially true of rural women who live not only under the heavy hand of unemployment, AIDS, and illiteracy, but also the ingrained structures of patriarchy. As Cheryl Walker explains “land is also a major avenue through which patriarchal power is exercised and maintained” (Walker, 2002: 17).

As women comprise more than half (55%) of South Africa’s rural population, they are disproportionately affected by issues of rural development (Walker, 2002: 22) Within these rural areas, women also tend to be the poorest; female-headed households have a poverty rate of 60%, compared to just 31% for male-headed households (May *et al*, 1998). Research by Shinn and Lyne (2004) found that when comparing households with high income and wealth to those with low income and wealth, a distinction could be drawn using just two variables, gender of the household head and family size. Large, female-headed households had the lowest incomes and wealth per adult equivalent (Shinn & Lyne, 2004: 9). Yet, women have typically been the last to benefit from rural development reforms. In addition to the discrimination of apartheid, women in South Africa are also the victims of a patriarchal society that decries their ability to ‘own’ any typically male resource such as land (Walker, 2002: 28). Against such constraints, women are rarely willing to directly challenge the nature of patriarchy or its effects on their access to resources and livelihoods themselves (Kleinbooi & Lahiff, 2006: 1). Thus, in any comprehensive development program, efforts to include gender issues and address such constraints must be included.

Although women in South Africa have been identified as a priority for land ownership through land reform since 1996, when the Land Reform Gender Policy Framework was released, such policy statements have not always equated with implementation (Walker, 2003: 144). The market led approach of land reform in South Africa has traditionally ignored and/or denied the needs of women, favoring “black farmers” and “heads of household” (both predominately male groupings) as recipients of land redistributed through the South African Department of Land Affairs (DLA) land redistribution program. The shift from a “welfarist” to “productive” orientation in recent land reform policy leaves little consideration for the plight of the economically unempowered rural woman and is largely unsuited for the goal of gender equity (Walker, 2002: 16).

In the event that rural women acquire land, they continue to face numerous obstacles, including the patriarchal structures of their communities, lack of access to skills and infrastructure, and most often cited lack of access to finance (Kleinbooi & Lahiff, 2006:14). As with most land reform beneficiaries, women receive little to no post-transfer support or after-care services. However, with the additional constraints of physical and social confinement; the demands of unpaid labor in the household; male control over labor, capital and technology; limited access to information; and cultural taboos, this lack of state provided services can set rural women up for failure (Agarwal, 1994, sourced in Bob, 1999:30).

Additionally, evidence from many studies on gender-based policy initiatives indicates that even when institutions such as the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) accept and effectively implement gender policies and are able to offer gender specific support, they continue to produce outcomes which maintain patriarchy or even worsen conditions for women by mistakenly viewing them as a homogenous, rather than diversified, group (Bob, 1999: 29). This makes it imperative that program initiatives such as land ownership targeted to rural women be studied in order to better inform future land reform policies. As Walker suggests, “the voice of rural women in national policy debates, including those on land reform, is extremely muted” (Walker, 2002:31). This dissertation attempts

to examine these voices in order to highlight their struggles and achievements, and to influence future policy discussions.

Access to land provides rural women with a means for combating such power and pursuing gender equity by expanding the opportunities available to them. By engaging in multiple livelihood strategies, drawing upon social networks, and fighting for local empowerment, women provide unique and telling examples of the experiences of owning land, experiences not yet fully understood. This study hopes to elucidate such experiences. Specifically it considers the unique, and often multiple, livelihood strategies that female land beneficiaries use in taking advantage of the resources provided by land, the ways that these livelihood strategies are affected by existing systems of patriarchy, and the role that land plays in meeting both practical and strategic gender needs.

## **1.2 Research Design and Broader Questions**

By looking at women and land reform, this research attempts to meet the need, as Meer (1997:2) argues “for a gendered perspective in order to reveal the ‘hidden’ nature of rural women’s lives, in a world where women have less status, power, authority, and access to resources, than men of their race and class” Consequentially, this study focuses specifically on the land redistribution facet of South Africa’s land reform, rather than restitution or land tenure, as this is the element of land reform most directed towards improving the livelihoods of rural women. While land restitution aims to address past historical wrongs, and land tenure reform works to provide security of tenure for farm workers, land redistribution is aimed at providing land as an opportunity for growth to poor and disadvantaged South Africans, many of which are women. Additionally, as empowerment and poverty reduction are two important elements of land redistribution the effect of land on these elements within women’s lives was also considered in an attempt to better understand the DLA’s work towards its goal of “giving priority to the marginalized and to women in need” (DLA, 1997a: ix).

This study is qualitative and participatory in its approach, differentiating itself from the myriad of quantitative studies that have appeased the need to understand how much land

has been redistributed, and to whom, but have not delved into the nature of the land reform experience. Such an approach has allowed the greater how, why, and context of circumstances to be explored, and provides a greater depth of understanding of women's experiences. Several of the broad questions considered include:

1) Livelihoods: Does owning land impact women's abilities to meet practical and strategic needs? What methods of income generation/production are being used? Are women engaged in "multiple livelihood strategies" as recent studies suggest? If so, why do women do this? Is this a result of coping with a difficult situation or a result of thriving as a result of growing opportunities? Do women feel that there are opportunities and livelihood choices available to them now that were not available before?

2) Support: What resources have the women had access to in their communities? What resources are women able to access through government? What supports have been necessary in utilizing their land? What support is lacking? Do they feel able to engage in the activities they would like to or limited by the burdens of a high workload? What is the reaction of men: are they supportive or frustrated and obstructing?

3) Future: What are the women's perceptions of their future prospects? Do they foresee progress in working to meet their practical and strategic needs? What do they hope will change and/or stay the same?

### **1.3 The Study Area**

This research was conducted with two groups of female land beneficiaries at locations in Stanger and Muden, within KwaZulu-Natal Province. This area has been chosen for several reasons. KwaZulu-Natal has interesting traditional gender dynamics that still contributed heavily to everyday social and economic relations for women (Bob, 1999: 109). Additionally, the KwaZulu-Natal region was the focus of pilot land reform programs and thus provides the best opportunity to understand the impact of land reform on women's livelihoods over the long-term. KwaZulu-Natal has also been relatively more successful in land reform implementation in comparison to other provinces (DLA, 2003:

xxii). The specific locations of Stanger and Muden provide two distinct viewpoints on women's land ownership, one largely traditional and one more progressive. This has allowed for a full range of views on women and land ownership to be presented.

#### **1.4 Structure of dissertation**

The diversity and complexity of issues considered for this research requires careful and straightforward presentation. To this end, the research for this study has been presented in the following format.

Chapter Two considers the historical background to land reform, specifically within South Africa, but also with attention towards general international trends. Of consideration are the inequalities in land ownership brought forth under the Apartheid regime and the post-apartheid policies of the Department of Land Affairs meant to rectify such inequalities. This chapter will look closely at the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) and the current critiques of the program.

Chapter Three introduces the importance of gender through a discussion of current gender theories and their corresponding critiques. The chapter then considers the intersection of gender and livelihoods, specifically the importance of land to women's livelihood strategies. Finally, the chapter takes a look at the specific experience of South African women in relation to land and the consideration of their needs and roles within South African land reform thus far.

Chapter Four includes an in-depth discussion of the methodology undertaken for this research, including a description of the study areas utilized. Particular attention is paid to the participatory approach utilized for this study and the exact activities performed. The chapter also considers the inherent limitations of the study.

Chapter Five explores the results of the research conducted for this study, specifically the issues that arose during the participatory workshops with regards to livelihoods and fulfillment of practical needs.

Chapter Six further delves into issues brought forth during the participatory workshops, considering the strategic benefits of land through a discussion of the relationships between gender and land.

Finally, Chapter Seven considers the implications of such findings for the Department of Land Affairs current land reform policies and makes recommendations for future considerations of women within land reform and livelihood development initiatives.

## **Chapter 2: Land Reform in the South African Context**

The aim of this chapter is to provide the background against which the issues of women and land in South Africa can be addressed. Firstly the conditions predicating South Africa's adoption of a land reform program will be discussed, followed by an examination into the existing land reform program and policies. Finally, relevant critiques and criticisms will be considered.

### **2.1 Historical Background to Land Reform**

#### **2.1.1 Background**

A contextualization of the international trends in land reform is required in order to understand the climate under which South Africa began to contemplate concepts of land reform post-Apartheid. Land reform has been adopted internationally by many governments and newly formed developmental institutions since the end of the Second World War. Interest in land reform has often been predicated around the notion that agrarian transformation is necessary in order to redistribute capital assets and promote greater equality, a driver of national economies (Hall, 2004: 223). Thus, many of the countries first engaging with notions of land reform in the Post-WWI period were those with high levels of land and economic inequalities. A cursory look at countries with land reform agendas shows that in the early 1990s countries such as Brazil, Honduras, and Mexico all faced concentrated land ownership in the hands of an often-privileged minority (De Walt, Stonich & Hamilton, 1993). It is therefore not surprising that as a newly democratic country in which 80% of all land was still held in the hands of white commercial farmers, South Africa would consider the benefits and necessity of land reform as well.

From the immediate post-war period until the late 1970s, land reform paralleled the predominate development paradigm of social welfare which dictated that the state had an interventionist role to play in social and economic development (Greenberg, 2003: 7). In the 1980s, half of the redistributive land reform programs around the world had redistributed more than 50% of total agricultural land with at least 25% (90% in China)



of agricultural households benefiting from such reform (Greenberg, 2003: 7). Specifically within many of the newly decolonized countries of Africa, land reform was perceived as a fundamental component of attempts to rectify distorted patterns of ownership, and as a result of the welfarist viewpoint, most land reform programs focused on the reduction of poverty and development of the abilities of beneficiaries in order to equalize ownership.

Such state-run and welfarist based land reform agendas often placed considerable emphasis on poverty reduction and were supported by significant investment in social and human development (Weideman, 2004: 32). Poverty alleviation and improved social services were often seen as necessary means to economic growth as well as ends of their own accord with the state an important actor in the land reform process:

*The role of the state in land reform is crucial. This is because the state comprises the institutionalized political organization of society. It articulates and implements public policy and adjudicates conflicts. In theory, the state has a monopoly over the legitimate use of coercive force within its territory, together with the responsibility to pursue 'public good' for all its citizens. Land reform without the state's participation would be a contradiction of terms*

(Barraclough, 1999: 11). It can be argued that the role of the state was indeed extensive in many land reform initiatives, however, the level of success of such reforms varied. Successful examples of state-sponsored land reform include Cuba, which following a large-scale land reform program became one of the most egalitarian societies in the world (El-Ghonemy, 1990). Over 80% of Cuba's agricultural land was successfully redistributed to 75% of all agricultural households. Another example of state-led land reform success was the centrally planned 'land to the tiller' program implemented in South Korea which led to 4% increase in farm incomes per household between 1963 and 1975 (El-Ghonemy, 1990). At the other end of the spectrum, despite the rhetoric of 'reform' that has accompanied redistribution, several state-led initiatives have been less successful (for example, Brazil, Costa Rica, and Venezuela), often protecting the status quo as a result of their power deriving primarily from the support of landowners and the

upper classes (Borras & McKinley, 2006:2). As Barraclough (1999:45) suggests, although the role of the state in many land reform objectives has been crucial, the actual actions of the state have “sometimes promoted reform, sometimes prevented it, sometimes reversed it, and sometimes diverted it to benefit groups other than the rural poor.”

The inclusion of the state as a general rule began to change in the early 1980s as a result of expanding recessions and the growing debt burdens of the state. Conceptualizations of land reform quickly moved from a belief in the importance of state intervention and aid to promotion of the market as a primary driver of development and natural means of redistribution. Criticisms of state-led reform pointed out the slow rate of transfer and inefficiency that plagued such programs (Binswanger & Deininger, 1995; World Bank 2003). Research by individuals such as Deininger and Binswanger (1999: 267) also suggested “most land reforms have relied on expropriation and have been more successful in creating bureaucratic behemoths and in colonizing frontiers than in redistributing land from large to small farmers.”

In response to such shortfalls, arguments were made suggesting that a market-based approach would be best in terms of rectifying such issues and improving economic efficiency. In other words, it was believed that a market-based land reform would ensure that agricultural productivity and economic growth were maintained while the poor are efficiently assisted in accessing land on the market (Borras, 2003:374). It was assumed that the market would function effectively due to the presence of perfect competition. As Bonti-Ankomah (1998: 10) suggests in his study of land reform options for South Africa, “perfect competition is characterized by many buyers and sellers, homogeneity of products, the ability to enter and exit the market freely, and information symmetry.” The extent to which “perfect competition” is possible in countries where the poor are restricted from accessing land markets remains an issue of debate. According to some researchers, rather than promoting efficient and equal access to land markets, this change resulted in a concentration of land, throughout the world, into the possession of those with financial and political means (Greenberg, 2003: 7).

Although market led land reform has faced both criticism and support from researchers throughout the world, its alignment with the predominate capitalist economic policies of the day have ensured its continued utilization. Thus, by the time land reform came into consideration in South Africa, the focus was firmly market led and predominate development institutions such as the World Bank, insistent enforcers of such a focus.

### **2.1.2 South African land ownership under Apartheid**

Understanding the nature of land reform in South Africa requires not only an international context, but also knowledge of the racial, socio-economic, and political circumstances under which such policy was birthed. Historically, the right to own land in South Africa has been largely determined by race, class, and gender. Colonial legacies and the system of apartheid left small minorities of whites with control of the majority of productive land, while the majority of Africans were left landless and poor. Under the Native Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 and the Group Areas Act, 3.5 million black and colored South Africans were forcibly removed from their homes and farms and relocated to arid “homelands” where crowded communities split small plots of semi-arid land, rendering most Africans incapable of participating in systems of commercial agriculture or agriculture for subsistence means and providing a source of cheap labor (Bundy, 1979: 241). As Bundy suggests in his seminal work, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry*, the 1913 Land Act served several related purposes - preventing the rise of a class of commercially successful black farmers, ensuring a supply of migrant labor for mines and farmers, and maintaining low wages based on the justification that access to land in bantustans allowed families to supply a portion of their subsistence through farming (Bundy, 1979: 242-243).

These forced removals significantly changed the nature of resource distribution in South Africa, crowding a large percentage of black South Africans onto small areas of land with little infrastructure development to allow for adequate utilization, and freeing up large

areas for large white owned farms and private game reserves (Levin *et al*, 1997). As suggested by the Department of Land Affairs and Department of Agriculture during the 2005 Land Summit, these Acts, “not only prevented Africans from owning land outside the ‘reserves’ especially established for that purpose, but also prevented black people from playing a role in the rural economy other than in the form of wage labour” (DLA, 2005:6).

Such actions accomplished two closely intertwined goals: the consolidation of large areas of land in white hands and the creation of a landless labor force which could be used to work the white farms (Bernstein, 2004; Bryceson, 2000; Hart, 1996; Levin *et al*, 1997). “The pattern of access to land, taken in relation to production figures, makes it clear that the policy of separation of races in South Africa has given rise to two general agricultural economies and social milieus: one disadvantaged, the other well provided” (Bernstein, 1997 cited in Bob, 1999:73). Hall (2004:213) further defines this agricultural structure as

*“Dualistic in the sense that it comprises in the former ‘white’ rural areas, a capital-intensive commercial farming sector engaged in large scale production and strongly linked to global markets, and in the former ‘black’ homelands, an impoverished sector dominated by low-input, labor intensive forms of subsistence production as a key source of livelihood.”*

Such changes gave rise to a segment of the population which Cousins and Bernstein termed “the dispossessed” (Cousins, 2005: 220).

The result of such dualistic land and agricultural policies and the increase in ‘dispossessed’ labor is a country with extreme poverty and inequality. According to the Surplus People’s Project (1983), it can be argued that the racial segregation and influx control that defined such dualistic policies are major structural causes of poverty in South Africa. Following the end of apartheid in 1994, the Human Sciences and Research Council (HSRC) found that 54.5% of rural African households were poor (May, 2000:22). By 1999 this figure had increased to 60%, while less than 2% of white

households could be classified similarly (May, 2000:22). Around this time, the National Land Committee estimated that 5% of the rural population was destitute, while another 15% were highly vulnerable to becoming destitute (National Land Committee, 1995). This poverty was exacerbated by little or nonexistent land ownership, and amongst African households fortunate enough to have access to land the average size was only 2.2 hectares (Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs, 1998).

With the demise of apartheid and the creation of a democratic state in 1994, focus turned to rectifying the large discrepancy in land ownership, and more broadly, poverty within South Africa, which stood at 70% in rural areas (Central Statistics Service, 1998). In addition to the obvious implications that such a situation had for the quality of life within South Africa, research has also shown that such high levels of inequality can be damaging to future economic growth. In order to rectify such a situation, efforts needed to be made to redistribute resources and ensure that such redistribution benefited those most in need. Land, as an asset valuable for productive purposes, credit collateral, and residential security in addition to being a primary driver of inequality, was identified as a central component of future redistributive policies.

## **2.2 Land Reform Policy Post-Apartheid**

The onset of land reform in South Africa began with the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), which was devised to guide rural development in general and was supplemented by the Department of Land Affairs' White Paper on South African Land Policy. This policy was directed by the objectives of:

- redressing the injustice of apartheid;
- fostering international reconciliation and stability;
- underpinning economic growth; and
- improving household welfare by alleviating poverty (DLA, 1997a: v).

These objectives were further guided by land reform principles, the most important for purposes of this study being the social justice principal. The social justice principal asserts that land is a basic human need. Thus, government is urged to take steps in

addressing the results of generations of dispossession, including dealing with landlessness and unequal land distribution in South Africa. The social justice principal also urges a focus on the poor and articulating the needs of the poor so that they might be adequately met through land reform (Bob, 1999:75).

In order to accomplish the principles and objectives set forth by the DLA, land reform was divided into three independent components: land redistribution, land restitution, and tenure reform. Land restitution restores land rights to those dispossessed by segregation and apartheid while tenure reform seeks to improve the security of farm workers by providing them with rights to reside on the farmland on which they have worked. As of 2005, DLA records indicated that 62,127 claims for land have been resolved through land restitution, benefiting almost 900,000 South Africans (DLA, 2005:7). Numbers on the beneficiaries of tenure reform are less clear, and it has been suggested that realizing security of tenure is an “ongoing struggle” (DLA, 2005:7).

Land redistribution is the component of land reform that seeks to address the needs of poor, usually rural, South Africans by providing them with land for residential and productive purposes. Although extremely important, land restitution and tenure reform will not be considered within this study, as it will focus only on land redistribution. While land restitution and tenure reform deal with rights-based issues, the focus of land redistribution is needs based, and it is considered the largest, and most advanced, of the three land reform components. As of 2005, over 500,000 hectares have been distributed through land redistribution, benefiting over 50,000 households (DLA, 2005:7). As the Department of Land Affairs indicated in the unveiling of land reform, “The purpose of the land redistribution program is to provide the poor with access to land for residential and productive uses, in order to improve their income and quality of life. The program aims to assist the poor, labor tenants, farm workers, women, as well as emergent farmers” (DLA, 1997: 38).

From its initial conceptualization, the goal of land redistribution has faced several overarching governmental constraints. Firstly, South Africa’s constitution protects

current property holders from having their land expropriated. Thus, the DLA must find willing sellers of land in accordance with the “willing buyer willing seller” philosophy of market led land reform, which has resulted in a situation of enormous demand for land and relatively scarce supply. This ‘market led’ land reform process means that efforts to redistribute land in South Africa must happen through the negotiations of several “willing sellers” to thousands of potential “willing buyers” (Hall, 2004: 217). This has created a difficult and often drawn-out process of land redistribution (Hall, 2004: 217). Also of issue is the actual amount of land available for redistribution. Less than 15% of South Africa’s land has been classified as arable (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2005). Additionally, much of South Africa’s current commercial agriculture is considered economically and environmentally unsustainable. The resulting scenario means that the amount of land demanded by South Africans will remain significantly higher than the amount of land available, regardless of the number of land owners willing to sell. Such a situation raises important concerns for efforts focused on bringing land to disadvantaged individuals, specifically women, who may have difficulty realizing their needs in such a highly competitive environment.

Finally, a consideration of the objectives of land reform, especially post-settlement/land acquisition grant (SLAG), suggests that they may not be in complete accordance with the pursuits and goals of land beneficiaries themselves. The focus of development and support of the commercial farming sector, best illustrated in the post-2000 Land Reform for Agricultural Development program, suggests that livelihoods of all South Africans can be best improved by directing land reform towards industrialized large-scale agriculture or black, smallholder, commercial production (Butler, 2004:4). It has been argued that such a view disregards the numerous poor rural households seeking land simply to meet their subsistence needs. As Hall and Williams (2000:9) point out: “Poor and not so poor, people who acquire land will use it for several purposes and combine it with other sources of income and security. These multifaceted and adaptive strategies fitted ill with the business plans required for grants.” Research by a variety of scholars suggest that land is of primary importance to South African families, not for commercial ventures, but for small plot agriculture and domestic consumption (Ardington & Lund,

1996; May, 2000; Shackleton *et al*, 2000; Weiner *et al*, 1997). Overall such discordance suggests that, “the polarized character of current land reform initiatives - between state financed non-economic rural settlements under communal property arrangements, and private sector and Department of Agriculture initiated full-time commercial farmer opportunities - is likely to perpetuate the present ‘two economies’ structure of the rural areas” (DLA, 1998:24).

Despite such governmental constraints, the South African Department of Land Affairs has put into place several large-scale land reform policies and programs since initial conceptualization in the mid-1990s. These programs illustrate the gradual shift discussed at the beginning of this chapter from a primary focus on poverty alleviation to a greater consideration of land reform within the context of improving economic productivity and increasing the commercial potential of land use throughout the country.

## **2.2.1 DLA Programs**

### **2.2.1.1 SLAG**

In helping poor South Africans to acquire land, through the facilitation of land redistribution on the market, the DLA has historically offered poor South Africans access to grants, which can be used to purchase land for themselves. When land redistribution began, this grant was called the Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG). Through this program eligible households were provided with a SLAG, at an amount not exceeding R16,000, to be used for purchasing land (Hall & Williams, 2000:7). To qualify for a SLAG a household could not earn more than R1,500 a month. At the time that land redistribution began, the SALDRU 1994 Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development (PSLSD) found that 85% of South African black rural households earned less than R1,500 a month, thereby qualifying for the grant (Bob, 1999:78). By its nature, SLAG offered what some argued was welfare provision, offering beneficiaries land, but leaving little scope for expanding agricultural production (Hall & Williams, 2000:9).

Although the RDP envisioned that 30% of land would be redistributed within 5 years, after three years of existence, the SLAG redistribution program had transferred only 0.6%



of the 30% target (Bob, 1999:81). SLAG also faced several crucial implementation difficulties. Often, due to the low amount of the grant in comparison to the market price of land, households had to pool their grants resulting in conflict between different beneficiary interests and what was termed the ‘rent a crowd’ phenomenon (Bob, 1999:83). The primary form of land ownership born of this situation was Communal Property Associations (CPA) or community trusts, both of which require the creation of local legal entities that hold and manage the land on behalf of community members.

#### **2.2.1.2 LRAD**

In 2000, following DLA reviews of the first five years of land reform, the DLA found its programs to be falling far short of the original objectives and unable to fully utilize its existing budget. The existing SLAG program was halted and a new program developed, the Integrated Programme of Land Redistribution and Agricultural Development. LRAD retained a target redistribution of 30% but lengthened the period of attainment until 2014 (Hall, 2004: 216). While SLAG may have failed to meet its intentions of addressing the needs of the rural poor, LRAD turned the focus of land reform from poverty alleviation to agricultural production and commercial farming, thereby minimizing consideration of the poor in favor of economic factors. In the eyes of many, the intention of LRAD became the creation of a new class of black commercial farmers who could support the South African economy through agricultural economic growth. This was in line with the concurrent shift in economic policy taking place in the country through the introduction of GEAR. GEAR, the country’s growth, employment, and redistribution (GEAR) macroeconomic strategy, is defined by a neoliberal focus in which the state plays a limited role in markets. “The replacement of SLAG with LRAD at the end of the 1990s brought land reform into line with GEAR’s emphasis on entrepreneurship as a means of building a black middle class” (Hall, 2004: 220). This shift also emphasized the reduced focus on welfare provisioning and consequential move away from considering land reform as a means to poverty alleviation.

LRAD relies on a combination system of a basic grant combined with a matching grant and possible loans. The basic grant is rewarded on a sliding scale, which must be

matched by a proportionate ‘own contribution’ from participants in the form of cash, assets or labor (Hall & Williams, 2000:2). The grant ranges from R20,000 to R100,000, while the minimum ‘own contribution’ is R5,000 and the maximum R400,000. The ramifications of a minimum contribution were thought to be devastating for poor South Africans and LRAD was widely criticized for ‘abandoning’ all attempts to address poverty alleviation (Butler, 2004: 5). As a consequence, the minimum contribution clause was eventually dropped from LRAD (Hall, 2004: 216). Additionally, race became the sole criterion for applying for an LRAD grant, with no regard for the income level of applicants. LRAD, while offering broad interventions for those seeking land for subsistence, felt more concentrated interventions should focus on assisting candidates for commercial agriculture, with progress being seen as increasing scale, commercializing outputs and reinforcing a commitment to full-time farming (Hall & Williams, 2000:12). As Hall (2004: 222-223) writes, LRAD is a “clear shift away from a programme aimed at the rural poor and landless to one aimed at creation of a new class of commercial farmers.”

### **2.2.1.3 Gender Component**

Since the advent of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Department of Land Affairs has shown progressive recognition of women as a group historically denied land rights. In 1997, the Land Reform Gender Policy Framework was implemented and aimed at “creating an enabling environment for women to access, own, control, use and manage land as well as access to credit for the productive use of land” (DLA, 1997a: 2-3). The DLA has publicly committed itself to taking legislative and administrative measures towards giving women and men equal rights over economic resources, including access to ownership and control over land and other properties, credit facilities, natural resources, and appropriate technologies (DLA, 1997: 18). Additionally, the DLA (1997: ix) has asserted that redistribution will give priority “to the marginalized and to women in need.”

With regard to specific policies, the final draft of the LRAD policy document includes a Gender and LRAD section, which suggests that “LRAD provides an excellent vehicle for

redressing gender imbalances in land access and land ownership” (MALA, 2001:4). LRAD also explicitly states a target of 30% of land to be transferred to women and has streamlined efforts to meet this target by providing for the application of grants from “adult individual” rather than by household, allowing women to apply for land on their own (MALA, 2000:3). However, it must be noted that continual criticism has been leveled at the DLA’s consideration of gender equity. This criticism revolves primarily around the fact that “gender issues are largely included in statements about vision and objectives of land reform policy, while gender is scarcely dealt with, if at all, in the sections of the policy that deal with strategies, policy instruments, and institutions” (Hall, 1998 as referenced in Weideman, 2004: 366).

Gender considerations within the DLA’s land reform policy take account not only of women as beneficiaries, but also as role players in decision making and governance. Thus, the DLA (1997: vii) has indicated that “decisions around land distribution and use must be taken democratically at a local level and specific strategies. . . must be devised to ensure that women are able to participate fully in the planning and implementation of land reform projects.” This is especially pertinent in the context of CPAs and community trusts where land ownership does not equate to individual decision making. Although the Communal Property Associations Act requires that a CPA constitution ensure gender equality, there are no such regulations for community trusts (Pharoah, 1999:2).

The extent to which the DLA has been able to follow through on its identification and consideration of women as beneficiaries, economic producers, and decision makers will be considered in detail in chapters five and six.

### **2.3 Current Critiques**

Although the scope and aim of this study do not allow for in-depth consideration of the validity of the DLA’s approach to land reform, it is important to consider several of the criticisms that have been leveled against it. Practically, although LRAD targeted 30% of land for redistribution by 2015, the pace of redistribution thus far is not on target to meet

this goal. Detailed research on the nature of land redistribution specifically within KwaZulu-Natal found that between 1997 and 2003, the amount of land transferred to previously disadvantaged South Africans (the stated target of land reform) was only 8.4% of total farmland transferred (Ferrer, 2004: 4). Additionally, land transferred to those 'previously disadvantaged' was of much lower quality than land transferred to better-off recipients (Ferrer, 2004: 7). Nationally, by March 2004, the DLA had transferred only 2.9% of land via restitution, redistribution, and tenure reform (Cousins, 2005: 223).

Research by Walker (2006:143) has shown that based on LRAD's current goal of redistributing 30% of land, with selection of land beneficiaries premised only on race, it is possible to "have a successful land redistribution program that makes little or no impact on poverty reduction or the transformation of the agrarian economy." This assertion is largely supported by research that found that many of the beneficiaries of land redistribution have been relatively wealthy rural households. Sender (2002) points to data showing that a random sample of beneficiary households proved much better off than the average rural African households. For example, 27% of beneficiary households owned cattle, 42% had access to electricity, and 17% owned a car, all percentages much higher than those found for African rural households in the 1994 national Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development (PSLSD) survey (Deininger & May, 2000). As the Mail & Guardian commented in 2000, "Creating a stratum of black commercial farmers without unlocking the imbalances of power in favour of all within the agricultural economy, will only perpetuate the existing agrarian structure's bias in favour of white commercial farmers" (Weideman, 2004: 262).

Also criticized is the issue of agricultural support. According to Cross *et al* (1996), when land beneficiaries are provided with little to no agricultural support after land transaction, as is often the case with the existing DLA policies, the lack of capital, limited irrigation, and lack of access to markets and credit facilities make commercial ventures virtually impossible. The 2000/2001 Quality of Life report found that while more than three-fourths of beneficiaries expected to have better housing, roads, and sanitation, less than one quarter actually obtained such improvements (DLA, 2003: 187). Furthermore, it is

argued that the lack of skills training is also an impediment as many of the beneficiaries have little or no experience with farming, nor do they have the business and management skills necessary to run a commercial venture (Cross & Mngadi, 1996). Education and training was identified as the primary suggestion from land beneficiaries for the improvement of land reform programs (DLA, 2003: 191). Thus, it appears that when the DLA is unable or unwilling to offer such skills enhancement and inputs it is virtually impossible for beneficiaries to meet the intended goal of utilizing the land for productive purposes. Such impediments can be exceptionally detrimental to women attempting to utilize land, as they are doubly disadvantaged by existing structures of patriarchy and gender roles. It is to such issues surrounding women and land that attention will now be turned.

## **Chapter 3: Gender, Land, and Livelihoods**

Having established the context in which issues related to land and land reform in South Africa can be considered, attention can now be turned to the specific focus of this dissertation – gender, land and livelihoods. With the increasing rate of female-headed households, continuing traditions of patriarchy, and cultural preference for relegating women to agricultural duties, the relationship between women and land, and how land is utilized to support women’s needs has increasing importance in land policy discourse. Yet the research on such issues is somewhat less plentiful than works which consider the issues of rights, and efforts to consider the motivations and relations between gender, land, and livelihoods have only recently begun in earnest. This chapter will review the existing literature with an aim of providing groundwork for the subsequent discussion of the findings, which is undertaken in following chapters. Firstly, issues relating to the definition of gender and gender theories will be considered, with specific consideration for literature addressing gender needs and livelihoods. Following this, the relationship between land and livelihoods will be discussed with a specific focus on South African women’s experiences thus far.

### **3.1 Approaches to Gender**

Gender, for purposes of this study is defined as “the socially determined characteristics of being male and female” (Budlender, 2005: 156). Thus, gender relations and identities are not static, or universal, but may vary by culture or geographic location and may change over time. Understandings of gender are a product of various other socio-economic categories including race and class and are not determined by the individual, but depend on the way gender relations are institutionalized within a community. These relations are often dictated through positions of power, and thus, a gendered approach to development requires a firm understanding of such power relations, institutional structures and social norms (Budlender, 2005: 157). Gender differences may be exhibited through a variety of issues including social relations, activities such as the division of labor, access and control over resources and services, and needs (Pasteur, 2002:1). The sum total of these

behaviors and beliefs create a value structure that defines and protects often unequal power relations between men and women in all arenas of life. These unequal power relations heavily inhibit women's ability to gain access to the most basic resources that they need in order to create a sustainable livelihood and thus impact on issues of economic and social development (Pasteur, 2002:2).

Initial consideration of women's role within development is often attributed to Esther Boserup whose work in the 1970s, 'Women's Role in Economic Development,' illustrated that women play unique and significant roles within rural development and agricultural production, specifically within the Third World. Boserup emphasized that because of the distinctive roles that women played they were affected differently, and frequently more negatively, than men by attempts to increase development and modernization (Boserup, 1970). For this reason, Boserup suggested that women should be more carefully considered within development projects and policies so as to mitigate any negative consequences.

### **3.1.1 Women in Development**

Boserup's initial observations led the way for Women in Development (WID), a theoretical approach that sought to understand and support the ways in which women work within the productive sector and to measure how women's roles and lives are affected by development efforts (Jacquette, 1990; Razavi & Miller, 1995; Tinker 1990). According to Boserup and WID's proponents, women were not 'needy' beneficiaries, but rather traditionally productive members of society. This emphasis on women's productive roles contextualized the consideration of women in development within an economic framework and focused on their potential economic contributions. WID purports that by integrating women into development efforts equally to men, the productivity and efficiency of development projects can be increased (Razavi & Miller, 1995: 5). For advocates of WID, Boserup's seminal text, "legitimized efforts to influence development policy with a combined argument for justice and efficiency" (Tinker, 1990:30). Thus, WID has traditionally emphasized women-specific components, including women's projects and sectors, and has sought to raise the level of equality

between women and men in development agendas. Women in developing countries were heralded as the “missing link” in development that, once recognized, could greatly improve the impact of aid agendas and projects in developing countries (Tinker, 1990:30). As the first concerted approach to gender in development, WID has been largely responsible for the recognition of women’s issues in development agencies such as the UN and World Bank (Serote *et al*, 2001: 159).

However, responses to Boserup’s arguments have criticized WID on several accounts. Huntington (1975) noted that the historical basis of Boserup’s thesis, that women in developing countries had traditionally been allocated status equal to that of men, was questionable. She suggested that WID proponents more carefully consider the merit of equality itself rather than its justification through a historical basis (Huntington, 1975). Similarly, Jaquette (1990:65) took issue with the justification of women’s inclusion in development due to their productive potential, arguing that using productivity as a merit for inclusion in development also allows for the exclusion of women if research were to find their productivity consistently lower than men’s. Finally, WID has been criticized for focusing only on women and failing to see the broader social context of gender relations that dictates women’s roles (Razavi & Miller, 1995: 6). Thus, WID is often characterized as treating women as an “add-on” to development rather than considering the relationships between men and women that have shaped women’s role within development.

### **3.1.2 Gender and Development**

In response to the flaws indicated in the WID approach, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach appeared in the late 1970s (Pearson et al, 1981; Razavi & Miller, 1995). GAD argued that rather than looking at problems from the perspective of women alone, the relations of men and women must be considered. GAD focuses more holistically on the social, economic, and political systems and structures that perpetuate certain gender roles and relationships. The approach argues that “WID identified women’s lack of access to resources as the key to their subordination without raising questions about the role of gender relations in restricting women’s access in the first place” (Razavi & Miller,



1995:12). GAD can be considered more radical in its approach than WID, calling for not just the reform of development with relation to women, but the sweeping transformation of social, political, economic, and gender relations (Moser, 1993). It demands a consideration of relations between women and men and the power contexts in which development is occurring (Budlender, 2005: 161). Ahonsi (1995) highlights the fact that development in the Third World has often failed to consider or overridden women's reproductive roles, increased their workloads, and threatened their well-being. The structure of many development programs has resulted in low participation of women, especially those that are illiterate, which often leads to these women remaining uninformed about the projects taking place around them. These challenges are why gender and development approaches seek not just to add women into projects but also to rework the concept of development as a whole. As Pearson *et al* (1981:x) remarked in 'Of Marriage and the Market', "we wanted to develop a theory of gender which was integrated into and informed by the general analysis of the world economy."

### **3.1.3 Theoretical Approach Critiques**

Despite the widespread prevalence of WID and GAD throughout development agencies, and the incorporation of gender into virtually every facet of the development process, critiques of gender and development remain. Research by Jackson (1996:490) suggests that the growing preference for considering women has meant that inclusion of women is "in terms of how this will facilitate other development objectives rather than being an end in itself. Gender issues have been taken on board in so far as women are seen to offer a means to these other ends." This is reiterated by Goetz (1994a: 30), "WID advocates shifted the emphasis away from women's needs and interests in development to calculating what development needs from women." The inclusion of women in the development policies of such institutions as the World Bank and United Nations is justified through concepts of economic growth, poverty reduction, and population control, rather than women receiving consideration simply because they have been ignored for so long. Jackson (1996:501) suggests that viewing gender and women's issues from a poverty reduction viewpoint severely limits understandings of the nature of women's lives and their roles within society. She suggests that understandings of gender

in development must be rescued from the ‘poverty trap’ through independent gender analyses and policies which “recognize that poverty policies are not necessarily appropriate to tackling gender issues because the subordination of women is not caused by poverty” (Jackson, 1996:501). This is something neither WID nor GAD has been fully able to achieve.

Another concern raised when considering the theoretical approaches discussed previously is the frequent expression of women as a homogenous entity. Recent critiques have suggested that women are sometimes characterized within gender and development literature as having “poor education or training, limited access to resources, shortage of basic needs, excess work burdens and lack of formal work-related skills” as if women as a whole were faced with identical problems (Bob, 1999:20). Although critiques of such homogeneity were a significant point of divergence for contributors to the initial movement from WID to GAD, researchers such as Goetz (1994) continued to reiterate that gender research fails to recognize that women experience oppression differently based on their age, education, or status in a community. They argued that understanding such heterogeneity is important in uncovering the true reality of women’s experiences and their roles within the development context. As Gilbert (1994: 94) suggests, the importance of acknowledging and working with differences must be addressed so that the category women is not “essentialised.”

### **3.2 Strategic and Practical Gender Needs**

A conceptual result of the GAD approach, specifically with regard to Caroline Moser’s work, has been the introduction of “practical” and “strategic” gender needs, which form the focus of much of the research that will be undertaken in this study. According to Moser (1993), strategic gender needs are those needs that are identified in an analysis of women’s subordination to men. They generally address issues of equity and empowerment, which Rao & Kelleher (1995:70) define as “the capacity of women to be economically self-sufficient and self-reliant with control over decisions affecting their

life opportunities and freedom from violence (and discrimination).” The purpose of identifying strategic needs is to work towards the creation of an equitable restructuring of power in society. Practical gender needs focus on the basic needs of a woman in order to survive and provide for her household. Fulfilling these needs focuses on meeting the survival strategies of women to participate in income earning activities, and meet their household requirements. Practical gender needs are generally considered more urgent than strategic gender needs and the fulfillment of practical needs is often a requirement towards the consideration of greater strategic needs.

The consideration of strategic and practical gender needs is an important method for evaluating the extent to which women’s lives have or have not improved from economic, social, or political developments. Close consideration of a woman’s ability to fulfill her practical and strategic needs can also yield important clues as to elements that hinder or help women’s empowerment or development efforts.

Women’s access to their own land can be seen as both a practical and strategic gender need. Practically, access to land allows for food production and subsistence activities, in order to meet the food needs of both women and their households. However, land also plays an important role in equalizing women’s status within a community. As succinctly summarized by Bob (1999:48): “Whoever owns land generally commands power.” Land ownership gives women greater status within their household and within their community. Often, issues surrounding land ownership challenge practical and strategic gender needs simultaneously. Women who challenge existing discrimination around training and agricultural inputs for their land both work to improve the ease with which they are able to produce for their families and challenge the existing roles of production that seek to keep them out of men’s business spheres.

### **3.3 Why Land for Women?**

Considering the widespread need for agricultural support and improved land reform strategies, as discussed in the previous section, narrowing the focus to reflect on women’s

relationships to land in particular requires justification. Three predominate theories can be utilized to substantiate the intentional consideration of the relationship between women and land: the welfare argument, the efficiency argument, and the equality/empowerment argument.

### **3.3.1 Welfare**

The welfare argument builds upon the fact that land reform is explicitly focused on improving the lives of the “rural poor”, amongst whom women are a majority, and often the worse off. With land as the most basic productive resource in rural communities, and women providing most of the labor for agricultural production, women’s access to and control of land is their most important source of security against poverty (Carney, 1998). Improvement in women’s social and economic wellbeing is often directly linked to their access and use of land. Thus, the welfare argument supports women’s targeting in land redistribution as a means for improving both women’s and children’s welfare. Women need land for residential purposes and food security, and this is best secured by giving them access to these resources separate from men. Land improves women’s welfare both directly and indirectly. Directly, benefits are received through utilizing land for productive means and for security of residence. Indirectly, land can be used to facilitate access to credit and can be used as a saleable asset during crisis (Agarwal, 1997). Thus, the welfare approach focuses on mother and child needs, and household considerations, attempting to improve the situation of women and children and reduce the plight of poverty. However, the welfare approach tends to view women as passive beneficiaries of land reform, where women are simply recipients of aid in the form of land (Moser, 1993:58).

### **3.3.2 Efficiency**

The efficiency argument shifts the focus from women alone to women within the context of increasing development and economic growth. Rather than passive recipients of land reform, women are recognized as an underutilized asset for development (Bob, 1999:44). The efficiency argument assumes that if women’s participation in economic activity is

increased, through efforts such as land distribution, their equity will increase as well. While women without access to land have limited means of production, women with land not only have a greater resource on which to produce, but also better access to credit, technology, and government support. This will in turn lead to higher production. This argument is further supported by the inverse farm size productivity ratio, which indicates that small farms can be just as productive, if not more so, than large farms. However, because women face numerous cultural constraints in accessing predominately male markets or gender biases in granting inputs, the efficiency argument requires that women's access to land be coordinated with improved support efforts to reduce their constraints in accessing other goods.

Also of fundamental concern to the efficiency approach is the definition of efficiency that is utilized by researchers and theorists. If efficiency is confined to the formal productive spheres, the efforts of women within the domestic sphere are ignored and often taken advantage of. These domestic and productive efforts must be incorporated into concepts of efficiency for women to benefit.

### **3.3.3 Equity and Empowerment**

Finally, the equity and empowerment argument advocates that women have generally been a subordinate and oppressed segment of the population, previously denied access to assets such as land. They have faced the brunt of sexist and patriarchal policies and thus must be consciously targeted in land reform if the stated goals of improved equality are to be met (Bob, 1999:37). This is exceptionally true in a country such as South Africa, haunted by an oppressive legacy and firmly ingrained patriarchal attitudes. Thus, women must be empowered to challenge this oppression through social transformation and increased participation of women in economic and social spheres. Equality of rights over productive resources such as land is seen as a fundamental aspect of achieving larger gender equality objectives (Moser, 1993). Land can increase women's productive equality, but also improve their empowerment within communities and their own households. Numerous studies (Agarwal, 1996; Budlender, 1996, Meer, 1997) have shown that when women own land they have greater say in decision making.

Coinciding with empowerment is the notion of equity, and that many economic strategies, in failing to empower women, have often had a negative impact on equity within a community. The equity approach recognizes that research on men and women's interests in land have continually shown that women have different interests, needs, and goals for the land that they acquire. Women in rural areas have intimate relationships with land through their daily activities such as fetching wood, collecting water, foraging, growing food, and harvesting medicinal plants (Bob, 1999:39). They are often generally responsible for most work associated with utilizing natural resources for family needs. Thus, while men often value land for the status it presents and its effect on social relationships, women value land mainly for its productive and reproductive use (Cross and Friedman, 1997). These differences must be considered in developing approaches towards land reform and economic growth so that women are advanced on a level equal to that of men.

In reality, the welfare, efficiency, and equity arguments, while diverging on certain issues, are best taken together as a cohesive argument for the inclusion of gendered objectives within development reform. All three arguments, when considered in isolation, tend to create conceptualizations of women that are not fully representative. While the welfare argument can be initially effective in presenting a less threatening version of women to a patriarchal agenda, it also mitigates their important economic contributions. Similarly, criticisms have been repeatedly raised that the efficiency approach reduces the role of women to one of economic calculations and fails to consider their needs and interests (Goetz, 1994a: 30). It is important, as Guyer and Peters (1987) argue, to consider the role of women within development holistically, as producers, empowered individuals, and family caretakers. "It is a sad reflection on the state of our methods in development practice that a very real desire to recognize and serve individual women's needs should oppose 'women' to the 'family' and development to welfare or production to reproduction" (Razavi & Miller, 1995:11). Thus, the justification of their inclusion can be presented on a multitude of levels and can be self-defeating when reduced to a consideration of only one element. A more detailed overview of the literature

surrounding gender, livelihoods, and land can be found in Appendix 1, along with a consideration of international perspectives.

### **3.3.4 Concerns**

Regardless of which of the three arguments above is utilized in conceptualizing a land reform strategy, a concern often cited by those involved in the incorporation of gender into land reform agendas is that gender is frequently treated as an “add-on” concern (Bob, 1999:8). Rather than focusing on deconstructing gender relations and challenging cultural norms, consideration of women has been added on to projects in the form of quotas or women-focused policies. Another concern has been the continuing homogenization of women under ‘one size fits all’ land reform policies that fail to consider differentiation of women by social status, income, or location. Similar to theoretical issues raised earlier, this lack of concern for social differentiation has meant that ‘the poorest of the poor’ continue to go unnoticed as gender agendas benefit women, but only those women already relatively well off. “Appreciating social differentiation from a gender perspective will mean that since relative oppression and relative privilege exists among poor rural women, it is imperative that land reform which is intended to redress past inequalities must be sensitive towards targeting and benefiting the poorest of poor women” (Bob, 1999:50). Although research increasingly recognizes this heterogeneity, there remains little understanding of the implications of such diversity for women in rural areas.

## **3.4 The South African Woman’s Experience of Land Access**

Within South Africa, women have historically been denied access to land, and disadvantaged within their communities and households (Cotula, 2006; Serote *et al*, 2001). Under the Black Administration Act passed in 1927, women married under customary law have no rights to inherit land and property from family members or through marriage, despite their large role in agricultural work (Serote *et al*, 2001:164). Traditional systems of land distribution involved the chief (amakhosi) distributing land, predominately to male-headed households. Women were only allowed to hold land as

widows, until their sons reached the age that the land might be transitioned to them. Although processes of land distribution have become more formalized in some areas, these cultural norms remain. These traditions of bias against women are important when considering economic inequalities and discrimination and the removal of both from women's relationships with land. Women currently comprise the majority of the poor. Approximately 75% of female-headed households are classified as poor and 62% of women in rural areas earn less than R500 per month (Weideman, 2004: 6). A 2004 study by Shinn & Lyne found that in attempting to differentiate causes of household poverty, distinction could be drawn using just two indicator variables: gender of the household head and family size. Large female-headed households consistently recorded lower wealth accumulation and higher poverty rates (Shinn & Lyne, 2004: 9). This may be due to the fact that female household heads have lower employment rates, hold fewer endowments, and achieve lower returns on livelihood tactics (Weideman, 2004: 6).

In an attempt to rectify such inequality at a political and legislative level, women have long been a consideration of policy implementation. Unfortunately, these stated intentions have not always translated into action. During the era of SLAG, despite a welfarist approach, women's recorded participation in land redistribution was poor. This is largely due to the fact that SLAG was paid to household heads, thereby denying wives and daughters access to land. "At the end of 1997, out of 14,870 households that were beneficiaries of land, only 1,173 households (7%) were female-headed" (Bob, 1999:8). Within KwaZulu-Natal, where this study will be located, only 14% of households were female-headed (Bob, 1999:8). This is only one-third of the recorded 43% of households within KwaZulu-Natal that are currently female-headed (StatsSA, 2004: 78). A mid-term review of the Land Reform Pilot program found the number of female-headed households on the DLA beneficiary list was misleading, as many of these women had not actually settled on the land they had acquired or had deferred their land titling rights to male household members.

With the introduction of LRAD, more concerted efforts were made to include a commitment to gender equity, at least on paper. LRAD aimed to "expand opportunities



for women and youth in rural areas” through the promotion of women-only redistribution projects and a set quota of at least 30% of transferred land (Weideman, 2004: 9). Additionally, the administration of grants was revised under LRAD to allow for individuals to apply for grants rather than household heads. Although women’s participation seems to have improved with the introduction of LRAD, as women were found to account for 47% of beneficiaries, this data must be treated with caution as it includes households with joint titling and may be entirely misrepresentative of women’s actual levels of participation. In cases in Ekhuthuleni where land legally belonged to both the husband and wife through joint titling, 72% of female respondents felt that their husband or male relatives still owned the land (Weideman, 2004: 12).

Women have, in principle, benefited from LRAD’s use of individuals as beneficiaries rather than households; as such a change in theory opens up the possibilities for women to acquire independent land rights. The reality, however, is that given most rural women’s weak social status, it is likely that this change will benefit predominately those already better off (Walker, 2003: 122).

Within the DLA itself, attempts to introduce women into structures of authority have also failed or stalled. Women are significantly under - represented in CPAs and community structures (Weideman, 2004: 7). Meer’s (1997) study of the DLA’s budget also exposes the discrepancies between the DLA’s stated focus on gender, and the reality of their policies. Although the DLA has stated its intent to specifically target female beneficiaries, Meer (1997) found that the DLA’s actual budget could be considered gender-blind, with no specific focus on women indicated in the portioning of funds. Such research indicates what Walker (2003: 114) terms, “a disjuncture between what is said in formal policy documents and the treatment of gender issues in practice.”

Examples from past redistribution projects indicate that the DLA have failed to consider many of the lessons on gender and land cited previously. Many of their projects have overlooked the fact that men’s voices and interests are not necessarily the same as women’s. For instance, research by Marinda Weideman (2004) found that in Merino

Walk, the land resettlement plan for the community was based on the men's apparent demand for large arable plots and grazing land. However, when women were included in land use discussions they indicated a demand for small fields in which to grow vegetables, which had been overlooked by the men (Weideman, 2004: 5). Weideman (2004:5) also found that men tended to push for resettlement onto better agricultural land, while women preferred options that would allow them to remain at their current settlement, close to schools and community structures. "Achieving gender equity in land reform does not translate simply into treating men and women in the same way. Women's participation in land is hampered by the burdens of childcare and other domestic responsibilities, by threats of violence and by dissemination in the market" (Cross & Hornby, 2002:15).

Despite these limitations, some research has found women able to negotiate their roles and interests within land reform. "The fact that national policy on women's empowerment and gender equity has not been a major consideration in the implementation of land reform does not mean that land reform has had no effect on women" (Walker, 2003: 137). Rather, land reform has important implications for South African women's relationships between livelihoods and land.

#### **3.4.1 The Relationship between South African Women, Land and Livelihoods**

Research on the effect of land ownership on South African women and their livelihood strategies is relatively sparse. Past research surrounding women and land reform has typically revolved around the challenges and benefits women accrue in obtaining land rights. However, in recent years a small amount of work has considered the lives of women who own land and the effects such land ownership is having on their lives. Walker (2003), in her recent study of land reform pilot projects within KwaZulu-Natal found that the majority of female land beneficiaries she interviewed were optimistic about their livelihoods. She cites such comments as "we wanted to plough, keep stock, get firewood, and come back to our original land" and "our expectations have been met but we still have a problem with the fields" (Walker, 2003: 139). As she concludes, "land reform has offered women very little in terms of major developmental gains and new

economic opportunities. However, women in these communities experience the security that has been achieved, along with the improved access to very basic resources such as water, wood, and thatching, as positive.” (Walker, 2003: 142).

A study recently completed in Namaqualand found that even when women acquired land for livelihood purposes they continued to face a multitude of challenges, including, social exclusion from traditionally male activities such as commonage meetings, stigma around the herding of livestock, and difficulty in accessing government grants and loans (Kleinbooi & Lahiff, 2006: 2). These women suggested that by far the most difficult aspect of their attempts to produce and/or use the land to support their livelihoods was the continuous lack of access to finance. As one woman commented, “Finance is the problem. You have to be able to pay for the inputs. If your sheep needs medicines you have to be able to get it right away” (Kleinbooi & Lahiff, 2006: 14). Kleinbooi and Lahiff (2006) strongly supported arguments that women’s needs for land are often entirely different than men’s with preference towards agricultural pursuits that would help to meet their families immediate needs, such as small scale vegetable farming. They suggested, “Land reform processes in Namaqualand. . .do not appear to be addressing the specific needs of women, and are likely to mainly benefit existing landowners and stockowners, most of whom are men. The specific needs of women do not appear to have been clearly articulated as part of the land reform process” (Kleinbooi & Lahiff, 2006: 20).

Research undertaken by Oberhauser (1998) in the region previously regarded as the former homeland of Bophuthatswana considered the role of collective producer groups in women’s livelihood strategies. She looked specifically at local sewing groups who benefited from the support of a local NGO, Operation Blanket. She found that women in the sewing groups had contributed significantly to the local economic base and were supported by Operation Blanket in acquiring the basic inputs and training necessary for success (Oberhauser, 1998: 6). However, although there is demand amongst women throughout South Africa for collective organizations in utilizing their land and undertaking non-agricultural activities, these demands rarely translate into action due to the challenges of acquiring training, finances, and inputs. The sewing group in

Bophuthatswana serves as an example of the economic success that can be created when basic support is provided.

Finally, the DLA Quality of Life Survey provides an overview of the relationships between women, land, and livelihoods in South Africa. The QOL study found that while women tended to have fewer and smaller plots of land, and were less likely to use their land for crop production, their poverty levels were not substantially different from men's, suggesting that women were engaged in non-agricultural income generation efforts in order to supplement low economic returns on land (Cross & Hornby, 2002: 21). The QOL also found that when women did engage in agricultural production, they were more likely to cultivate field crops, although usually unprofitable, to avoid the risk of offending traditional divisions of labor (Cross & Hornby, 2002: 22). When considering women's roles in DLA community income generation projects, only 17% of project participants were single female heads of households, and only 6% were married women owning land.<sup>1</sup> Such information suggests "that weak female participation is being reproduced beyond the level of becoming a land reform beneficiary, with social and institutional blockages affecting women's access to the resources needed to engage in production once they are involved in a land reform project" (Cross & Hornby, 2002: 23).

## **Chapter 4: Methodology**

In an effort to better understand many of the issues raised in thus far in this dissertation, this study was conceived, using data collected in Kwazulu-Natal during April-July 2007. In this chapter I will give a brief overview of the details of the study, including the background, a discussion of the methodological approached used, and limitations that were encountered.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that not all land reform beneficiaries are participants in DLA community income generation projects. Thus, although earlier reported statistics suggest that only 7% of female headed households are land reform beneficiaries, these households do represent a more sizable presence in income generation projects, though still much smaller than their proportional presence in South Africa as a whole (37%).

## 4.1 Background

Although KwaZulu-Natal is the most populous province in South Africa, it occupies only 7.2% of South Africa's total land mass (StatSA, 2006:14). KwaZulu-Natal is currently 85% African with 54% of the province's population currently living in rural areas (StatsSA, 2006:14). KwaZulu-Natal is often typified as one of South Africa's poorer and more rural provinces as 50% of the province resides in rural areas and 30.6 % reside in agricultural households, 97% of which are African (Provide Project, 2005:9). The broad definition of an agricultural household, utilized for this paper, is one that earns income from either formal employment in the agricultural sector or as a skilled agricultural worker, or from sales or consumption of home produce or livestock. The average income amongst these agricultural households is R17,422 leaving them economically worse off in comparison to urban households with an average income of R64,517 (Provide Project, 2005:10). Thus, it is not surprising that 81% of agricultural households in KwaZulu-Natal fall below the poverty line (Provide Project, 2005:13). Additionally, KwaZulu-Natal has a high percentage of female headed households due to both out-migration and high HIV/AIDS rates, making it of significant interest when one considers the dynamics between gender, land reform, and livelihood improvements. Current statistics put the percentage of female headed households at 43 % (StatsSA, 2006:78). Within KwaZulu-Natal, considerations of the success of land reform must consider the experiences of women.

KwaZulu-Natal, and specifically the Midlands region, was also amongst the first areas to pilot land reform programs due to the prevalence of land reform's targeted population groups. As studies regarding the impact of land reform are best undertaken in areas where the land reform program has been implemented for several years, this made the province an ideal location for research into land reform and female beneficiaries. Finally, of significance is the fact that the KwaZulu-Natal's Provincial Growth and Development Strategies of both 1996 and 2005 specifically propose that land reform will "address agricultural development and address gender imbalances in land access and ownership" (Mdlalose, 2007: 12).

## **4.2 Participatory Research Methods**

Both the comparison of the Stanger and Muden workshops, and the diversity apparent within the workshops themselves, have provided the basis for the utilization of participatory research methods. Although the concept of participation can be interpreted in a variety of fashions, the form of participation referred to here is guided by the work of Paul (1987) who suggests that community participation is an active process by which beneficiary or client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their wellbeing in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance, or other values they cherish. The advantages of participation include increased efficiency, greater effectiveness, self-reliance, and sustainability (Kumar, 2002:27).

Participatory research arose from the realization that much of development work encouraged only passive participation, including people being told what is going to happen or has already happened, rather than engaging with communities. Such methods deprived communities of knowledge, empowerment, and self-ownership. Participatory methods, however, explicitly focus on transfers of power and local empowerment so that community members may gain more control over their own resources and lives. It also provides a place for the marginalized to present their problems and/or suggest solutions (Kumar, 2002: 26). The use of participatory approaches is also believed to improve the quality of decisions as it is, under most circumstances, advantageous to include as much knowledge, experience, and expertise as possible in addressing development issues (Slocum, 2003:10).

The first forms of participatory research to appear were Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and later, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). PRA is described as a method of research meant to enable local people to share, enhance, and analyze their knowledge and their ability to plan, act, monitor, and evaluate (Kumar, 2002:31). The focus is less on the researcher obtaining information than the community sharing it. PRA aims to draw from alternative data sources, and to both identify and encourage group participation in all

steps of the research. The guiding principles of PRA as identified by Chambers (1997: 10) include:

- Optimal Ignorance: applied by facilitators in knowing what is available to be known and what serves the purpose and not trying to find out more.
- Seeking Diversity: consideration of the analysis of difference rather than representation of results
- Offsetting biases and triangulation: creating a comfortable and welcoming environment for participation and considering the same topic from multiple angles to confirm data.
- Listening and learning, learning rapidly and progressively, and learning through participation.

Broadly, such methods can be categorized in terms of the aspect they consider; space, time or relationships. Spatial methods consider the space in which people operate and include exercises such as mapping and modeling. Time related methods focus on individual's perceptions of time and include trend analysis, daily activity schedules, and timelines. Finally, relationship methods consider the ways in which elements of a community interact and popular exercises include cause-effect and network diagrams. The inclusion of PRA methods has increased greatly in recent years and PRA has been applied to such sectors as natural resource management, agriculture, health, and livelihoods (Kumar, 2002:49).

#### **4.2.1 Gender and PRA**

Although interest in issues of women's needs and perspectives are well-established, participatory and gender methodologies have only recently merged. According to Chambers as a foreword to the 1998 book, 'The Myth of Community: Gender Issues in Participatory Development':

*During the past two decades, the two powerful by separate movements of gender and participation have been transforming the rhetoric and increasingly the reality, of local-level development. . .yet, astonishingly, to the best of my knowledge, this is the first book to thoroughly explore the overlaps, linkages, contradictions , and synergies between the two.*

It is not particularly surprising that PRA would be an advantageous research method when addressing issues of gender. Conventional methods have been limited in addressing gender issues as household questionnaires frequently ignore the dynamics within a household and males typically dominate focus groups or community forums. In this way gendered experiences of ownership and land often go unnoticed or under-researched. Through not only the incorporation of the marginalized, but also the reintroduction of subjectivity, PRA allows for community and household issues to be seen through the gendered lens of rural women (Bob, 1999: 116). From a feminist viewpoint, conventional research is largely masculine and objectified, often failing to reach or understand the viewpoints of the minority. “Valuing subjectivity is a central component of dispelling the knowledge produced by the dominant group that focuses on objective generalizations” (Rose, 1993:143). Through subjectivity, one is able to focus on the specific details of an individual’s lived experiences, and thus, women’s experiences or opinions that are often neglected or hidden can be both revealed and considered.

Conversely, participatory research is greatly benefited by considerations of gender. Through the understanding of gender as shaping the opportunities and constraints that women face in securing their livelihoods across political, economic, and social spheres, their roles and responsibilities within a given society, and their position in relation to access to land and resources, researchers can gain a deeper and more meaningful context in which to view development problems and initiatives (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2001: 5).

Gendered PRA is the process of:

*assessing the implications for men and women of any planned action, including legislation, policies, and programs in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women and men’s concerns an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated*



(Lidonde, 2001:110). For purposes of this research an explicit focus on gender is integral to an understanding of the ramifications and benefits of land reform for land beneficiaries. Despite the DLA's stated intention of concentrating on land redistribution for the large percentage of rural, poor, female headed households, much of KwaZulu-Natal, and South Africa in general, remain highly patriarchal. It is only through attempts to engage women in participatory research that the true nature of their experience with land can be determined.

#### **4.2.2 Some Concerns**

Although promising for considering the opinions and perspectives of rural women, participatory methods are not without limitations. Perhaps most importantly, PRA often gives undue power to generalization as it focuses primarily on groups and group consensus. Such generality can make PRA susceptible to homogenization of community viewpoints and overemphasis of the perspective of more dominant community members. As Gwaba (2003: 89) discusses,

*Indeed it is a lot easier to treat the community in this way. The reality, however, is that there are such significant differences within any given community that these need to be taken into account when using PRA methods and tools. . . communities themselves may differentiate between their members in terms of levels of wealth and well-being, marital status and many other criteria.*

For these reasons, PRA must take explicit consideration of all viewpoints and actively work to create environments where those who are typically marginalized or suppressed feel comfortable in expressing their viewpoints. While this research attempts to address the differences between men and women's perspectives, which often go unnoticed, it must also be realized that gender does not imply homogeneity and the women themselves may represent differing views based on their age, skills, or wealth.

Additionally, the applicability of PRA on a larger scale has thus far been questionable. Most high quality PRA studies have taken place on a smaller scale and when attempts have been made to introduce such methods at a larger level, quality has suffered. There

are several primary impediments to quality on a larger scale. These include a lack of skilled and experienced practitioners, increasing pressure by donors and governments to streamline PRA and increase its efficiency on larger levels, and high levels of standardization of programs, and therefore increasing inflexibility, at a larger scale (Kumar, 2002: 51). Debate as to how to address such issues continues, with growing consensus that PRA can be applicable at a larger scale, but greater emphasis must be made on taking PRA to scale without loss of quality (Kumar, 2002:52).

#### **4.2.3 Limitations of the Study**

Limitations to this study include both theoretical and personal issues. Perhaps most significantly, the presence of a white researcher in an otherwise entirely Zulu environment raises several important issues, especially within more traditional rural areas.

Issues regarding the women's level of comfort and openness while in my presence cannot be underestimated, as the majority of the women grew up during the Apartheid era. The presence of an outsider may have both limited the answers they provided and changed the extent to which such answers represented the truth. While attempts were made to reduce such limitations through the use of an isiZulu speaking facilitator and the undertaking of the workshop in isiZulu, my presence may have continued to have undue effects. My low level of isiZulu conversational skills and role as the researcher within the workshop process also created a distance between myself and the participants that must be acknowledged. At both of the workshops a special effort was made to introduce myself, explain my interest, and thank all of the participants for their time and participation. It is hoped that such efforts, while not eliminating the barrier, were able to mitigate it to some extent.

Also affecting comfort was the use of an English background form, rather than an isiZulu one. Although both the research assistant and facilitator were able to provide translation and assistance to the women, it can be surmised that detail may have been lost in utilizing

an English form, as the nuances of isiZulu do not always translate cleanly into English and vice versa.

At the conceptual level, one of the primary limitations identified in undertaking PRA, is the extent to which expectations are raised. Often when a community's participation is requested a high level of expectation is created amongst community members that the issues being pursued by the researcher will also be addressed and/or solved by the researcher (Bob, 1999: 120). This level of expectation can lead to disillusionment and anger when solutions are not generated. Every attempt was made within this research to clarify my interests and intentions. Although it was suggested that the workshops may provide valuable information and lead to positive discussion, the fact that issues addressed in the workshop would not be solved through my intervention was continually reiterated. In the case of Muden, it was offered that issues raised would be passed along to Legal Entity Assessment Project (LEAP), who did intend to work towards development solutions, and within Stanger the workshop was framed within the context of empowerment rather than economic or social development. It is hoped that this helped to minimize unrealized expectations.

### **4.3 Choice of workshop locations**

Two workshops were undertaken within KwaZulu-Natal, one comprising the areas surrounding Muden and the other in Stanger. These workshops are case studies of two groups of women and their experiences with land and land reform. The workshops were limited to two as the purpose was to gain an in-depth understanding of the women's experiences, rather than a broad overlay of statistics. Utilizing only two sites allowed for both the opportunity to address a variety of research questions while also gaining knowledge and understanding of the context in which these women lived. Such qualitative and contextual attributes may have been lost in more cursory methods. Time was also a factor in the decision to limit the workshops. Preparation for each was very time-intensive as it involved consultation with key contacts within the community, the organization of the women interested in participating, and extensive pre-workshop preparation with both the facilitator and the translator.

### **4.3.1 Muden**

Muden is located slightly south of central KwaZulu-Natal, directly outside of Greytown and east of the Drakensberg Mountains. The area is extremely rural and both traditional authority and traditional customs remain an important part of the Muden culture. Muden falls with the Umzinyathi district municipality, which is currently 96% African, 56% female, and has a poverty rate of 80% (Umzinyathi District Municipality, 2003). The Muden site was identified in conjunction with LEAP, which is currently doing research in the area regarding issues of tenure security. They were able to provide contacts and background information, and were in turn provided with an understanding of the gender issues in the Muden area. Although the Muden area comprises several land reform farms, the women who participated in the workshop all resided within Mission Farm. Mission Farm was one of the earlier farms redistributed through land reform transfers beginning in 1996 (LEAP, 2006). The land received by the beneficiaries is administered through a communal property association although traditional authority remains a prevailing force in the community. While the Inkosi is not directly involved in land reform farm decisions, he plays a role in issues such as land allocation. When an individual puts forward a request to be allocated land on Mission Farm, the trust seeks the Induna's approval of the person before they allocate the land. The Inkosi and Induna are also relied upon as mediators of conflict, rather than the Trust members.

The Muden workshop was undertaken at Zimbabeleni Community Development headquarters, which is a partner of LEAP. Sixteen women were present over the two days, although only 13 were present on either given day. This is due to the fact that three of the women participating on the first day were required to work on the second, and three new women arrived in their place. The ownership situation for women living on Mission Farm is that of a communal system. Land is owned by all beneficiaries, but administered through the Communal Trust who allocated land first to beneficiaries, and now to newcomers. Thus, "ownership" of a piece of land is to some extent predicated on the opinions/perceptions of the Trust and/or Induna. This has had important implications for the women in the area.

### **4.3.2 Stanger**

Stanger is located approximately 76km north of Durban. It falls within the Ilembe Municipality and although the Department of Agriculture building, where the workshop took place, is located in the town of Stanger, most of the women in this area are from rural areas within Ilembe. Most of the area within the Ilembe Municipality is located not far from the KwaZulu-Natal coastline and the relatively close proximity to the urban center of Durban has influenced a culture slightly less traditional than that found in Muden. Similar to the Umzinyathi Municipality, Ilembe Municipality has a population that is 91% African and 54% female (Department of Local Government & Traditional Affairs, 2006). Sugar cane farming is the main agricultural pursuit in the flatter and more fertile areas of Stanger and has allowed for a higher level of commercial agricultural activity than can be found in the Muden area.

The Stanger workshop was coordinated by an Ilembe Municipality agricultural extension officer and was held at the Ilembe Municipality LED offices. Fifteen women were present at the workshop and were explicitly chosen to represent a wide variety of economic pursuits and interests. Several of the women were successful owners of their own farms, several were engaged in farming cooperatives, and others were part of beading and crafting cooperatives that were located on redistributed land. The majority of the women were in their 40s and 50s although several younger women were present. The Stanger workshop took place over one day, from 9am to 3pm, due to preference on the part of the women attending.

### **4.4 Sampling and Activities**

The methods used in each of the PRA workshops for this study were guided by the framework described above. Each focused on illuminating the unique and often unexplored perceptions of women while also empowering them to consider and share their ideas amongst their “community” members. To this end, the primary data collected

over the course of this research was derived from 7 activities conducted over a 5-6 hour period.<sup>2</sup>

Sampling for the workshops was clearly purposive as women involved as land reform beneficiaries were invited. Keeping in the spirit of PRA, the women in the community were informed of the workshop by a community representative (development worker in Muden and agricultural extension officer in Stanger) and those women then interested in attending were invited to partake. Due to the self-limitation of daily activities, children, and employment the number of interested women at both sites fell within acceptable limits for the workshop and thus no interested women were refused. Additionally, in the case of Muden, six women were allowed to participate in only one day each due to work scheduling. Three of the woman were present for the first day and were replaced by the three previously absent women for the second day. Attempts were made to create a diversified group and both workshops included women young and old, married and single, as well as those in female headed and male headed households. Although generalizations have been made in this research that consider the women to be representative of their own communities, it is fully understood that they can in no way be considered statistically representative of rural women at large.

The activities utilized in this workshop were chosen for their perceived ability to address issues most pertinent to this study including, livelihood strategies, benefits of land, issues of ownership, and questions regarding support services. The seven activities, as described below, were presented at the workshop in the exact order in which they are presented here.<sup>3</sup>

#### **4.4.1 Gendered Activity Profiles**

Activity profiles allow for the detailing of labor undertaken on a daily basis. Gendered activity profiles expand upon such information by considering the division of labor and,

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<sup>2</sup> Although the Muden workshop took place over two days, and the Stanger only one day, the total workshop duration was approximately the same for both.

<sup>3</sup> The Pairwise Ranking activity was utilized only in the Muden workshop. Consideration of the results achieved during this exercise led the research team to believe that it was both repetitive for the women and relatively uninformative for the team. Revisions were made and this activity was replaced by the Services and Opportunities Map during the Stanger workshop.

in the case of this study, the extent to which it advantages or disadvantages rural women (Kumar, 2002: 158). Activity profiles were utilized within this research to detail the work undertaken by rural women on a daily basis and the extent to which their day-to-day lives work to meet basic and/or strategic needs. Further discussion regarding the activity profiles addressed challenges facing the women and proposed solutions to such challenges.

#### **4.4.2 Benefits Analysis Chart**

A benefits analysis chart allows for the identification of the benefits of various activities and who reaps those benefits. It is especially pertinent in considering issues of gender and the inequalities present between the inputs of both genders and the outputs received. Within the context of this research, the livelihood activities associated with land were considered and the women were asked to identify who (men, women, or both) received the benefits of such activities. The total benefits by gender were then offered to the group and discussion was encouraged regarding the women's opinions of such benefit allocation and their perceptions of what needs to change. This activity spoke to both the livelihood strategies undertaken by the women and the extent to which the benefits from such strategies are limited by the strategic restrictions of gender.

#### **4.4.3 Wealth Grouping**

The wealth grouping activity utilized for this research is a modification of the well-known wealth ranking. Rather than rank households by wealth, the women were asked to identify characteristics of wealth that would describe the four categories: "Those who are doing well," "Those who can manage," "Those who have something," and "Those who cannot manage." This methodology was utilized, as opposed to wealth ranking, due to the lack of established rapport between researcher and participant. It was believed that the sensitivity of wealth ranking might make some of the women uncomfortable and thus wealth grouping was seen as a less invasive method of acquiring similar information. Following the category descriptions, the women were asked to comment on reasons why an individual or household may end up in a certain group, what factor land plays in securing wealth, and how one is able to move from one category to another.

#### **4.4.4 Land Rights Discussion**

Although not an explicit PRA technique, a land rights discussion was undertaken in order to gain a better understanding of women's knowledge of land rights and the existing situation within their communities. The women were asked to consider concepts such as communal and individual land ownership and advantage/disadvantages of each. Questions were also asked regarding the benefits and problems of land, continuing limitations to land access, the potential conflicts of being both a landowner and wife.

#### **4.4.5 Services and Opportunities Map**

Services and opportunities maps are used to explore the spatial reality of local groups and their perceptions of the extent to which such services and opportunities are meeting their needs (Kumar, 2002: 94). The focus is on the availability of services and opportunities, and for this research follow-up discussion was utilized to determine what new service provisions female land beneficiaries would recommend. In emphasizing research objectives, the services and opportunities map allowed for an understanding of how women's basic and strategic needs are supported, as well as the extent to which services and opportunities are assisting or deterring women's utilization of land. Efforts were also made to understand women's perceptions of the existing services offered by the Department of Land Affairs/Department of Agriculture in supporting their relatively new found access to land.

#### **4.4.6 Timelines**

The purpose of timelines is two-fold. They serve as both a perception of how certain elements/factors have changed in recent history and as an aggregation of various important historical events as perceived by local people (Kumar, 2002: 118). Consideration is placed not on dates, but on the details that communities remember in regard to certain events. This research asked women to firstly identify issues of land productivity. A timeline was then created, identifying significant events in the past 30-40 years and important effects of such events. The women were then asked to consider how the issues of land productivity they identified had changed over their timeline. The discussions that followed considered reasons for such changes and hopes for the future.



#### **4.4.7 Pairwise Ranking**

Pairwise rankings allow for a better understanding of individual and group preferences, as well as the processes and criteria that are used to determine such preferences (Kumar, 2002:246). In pairwise ranking, problems and/or benefits are identified and then compared, one by one, with regards to which is believed to be more significant. Each problem/benefit is compared until all possible comparisons have been made and a ranking is derived from the frequency of problem/benefit preference. For purposes of this research, the women involved were asked to consider the problems they had in utilizing their land and which was most predominant. Discussion regarding comparisons helped to illuminate the determining factors upon which the women were basing their decisions.

#### **4.5 Fieldwork Experience**

In addition to the detailed outline of the workshop methodologies, as described above, in the context of PRA research it is important to comment briefly on the actual field experience. In respecting the notion that PRA should be guided by the community, both workshops, while keeping to the structures outlined above, also encountered issues that required flexibility. At both the Muden and Stanger workshops, time proved to be a significant factor in the process of collecting data. Having already asked the women involved to forgo their daily responsibilities in order to attend the workshop, it was of the utmost importance that their preferences with regard to time be acknowledged and followed. As the Muden workshop was conducted over two days this was lessened to some extent, but the final activity on the second day (pairwise ranking) involved limited discussions and missed understanding some of the reasoning behind answers due to the women's eagerness to be home in time to meet their children. Additionally, field experience at the Muden location indicated a degree of discomfort with being tape-recorded during the workshops. As tape recording was utilized only as back up to the research assistant's recording of workshop discussions, this was eliminated in the Stanger workshop to provide a higher degree of comfort.

Similarly, several time limitations occurred at the Stanger workshop. Due to transportation difficulties incurred by the ongoing public service sector strike many of the

women had difficulties in getting to the Ilembe Local Economic Development (LED) office and arrived over an hour late. Expecting such difficulties on the return trip home they requested to be adjourned by 2:30pm and the final activity on the schedule (timelines) was skipped in order to accommodate this request. The Stanger workshop also proved to have two extremely vocal women in the group, who it is believed may have inadvertently intimidated other women and reduced their confidence in offering their own opinions. Thus, difficulty was encountered in getting all of the women to speak during this workshop despite efforts by the facilitator to draw out each of the women's opinions and comments.

#### **4.6 Secondary Data Sources**

In addition to the information acquired from the PRA workshops, a desktop study and a short questionnaire were also utilized as secondary sources. Following the conclusion of each workshop, a four-page English text questionnaire was administered to each of the women with translation offered in Zulu. The questionnaire acted as a background form, allowing for more specific data on each woman's situation. Topics covered included a household roster, land-based and non-land based activities that were undertaken within the last year, and receipt of social grants or remittances. These questionnaires were not analyzed for statistical purposes, but served to create a contextual background against which to consider the data gathered during the workshops. In addition to having signed a consent form at the beginning of the workshop, the women were again reminded of their right to refusal to answer with regard to the questionnaires and such option was sought by several women in regard to certain issues.

Additionally, previous reports and documentation regarding both the Muden and Stanger locations were acquired during the course of the fieldwork and used to inform a desktop study. These documents provided further background in the form of agricultural assessments, business plans, and natural resource evaluations. Also acquired for this aspect of the research was numerous documentation available from the DLA considering their land reform initiatives and impacts thus far (Quality of Life Surveys). The desktop study supported the exploration of the goals and motives of the DLA's land reform

initiatives, both SLAG and LRAD, and the extent to which these initiatives have been directed towards supporting women's needs.

#### **4.7 Data Analysis**

The analysis of participatory research data remains one of the more vague elements of the approach. There are few defined rules for going about such analysis, and the bias inherent in the researcher attempting to interpret and condense the information raised during participatory activities must be recognized (Norton, 1998: 184). PRA does not lend itself to quantitative analysis, as the perceptions and opinions of respondents cannot be considered consistent amongst different groups. Similarly, certain forms of qualitative analysis can also prove difficult, as the description of PRA data cannot be separated from analysis (Norton, 1998:184).

Nevertheless, certain guiding principles of analysis of PRA were utilized in the consideration of this data. Firstly, contextualization has been utilized in clearly presenting the data as a result of the community's participation and self-analysis, rather than the researcher's perceptions alone. Secondly, multiple methods and sources of data were utilized to greater ensure the reliability of the results. Such 'triangulation' allowed for a more trustworthy interpretation of data obtained during the workshop (Mercado, 2006:3). Within this study, triangulation was undertaken on two levels. Firstly, triangulation of the perspectives of informants was pursued through the inclusion of a wide range of viewpoints including older/younger, richer/poorer, and those with and without land. Secondly, triangulation of information was ensured through the gathering of data through multiple (7) primary methods as well as the inclusion of secondary data sources.

Analysis of the data obtained from workshops and secondary sources was a continual process. During the course of the workshops opinions and commentary were continually analyzed in order to better understand meaning and determine proper follow-up questions and activities. Following these workshops, the primary goal of the PRA analysis was to select responses and observations, categorize and map such responses in relation to each other, and interpret such findings with the goal of uncovering explanations that fit both

local and researcher understanding (Mercado, 2006:14). These interpretations and relationships provided the foundation and structure upon which the larger themes and conclusions of this research are based.

Practically, the following suggested steps of PRA analysis were used (Mercado, 2006:15).

- Following each workshop data was immediately reviewed and summarized in a field report. This report served as a source for easy access to data and initial thoughts/hypotheses.
- Once both workshops were completed and all data recorded, the data was 'mapped' through the creation of themes and coding. The themes established related explicitly to the study and included issues such as 'basic needs,' 'patriarchy' and 'external support'.
- These basic themes were then clustered through the mapping of relationships to create the broader theories set forth in this paper.
- Finally, a data analysis report was created which serves as the basis for much of the information portrayed in the following chapter. However, its primary purpose has been to return the findings to both the Mudén and Stanger communities as PRA results have limited values if they are not presented in a visible form to those who may apply them (Mercado, 2006:17).

## **Chapter 5: Livelihoods and Needs**

Following the undertaking of PRA workshops at both the Stanger and Muden locations, the data recorded during these workshops was compiled into detailed Field Reports that have served as the basis for the following chapters. Although the Field Reports considered each of the locations separately, it has been deemed most beneficial for the issues relevant to this thesis to consider the Stanger and Muden locations in comparison. Additionally, having compiled the data for both PRA workshops, it became apparent that there were two predominate themes repeatedly addressed by the women: “livelihoods and needs” and “gender and land”. On a deeper level, these two areas of concern represent the importance of both practical and strategic needs in women’s lives.

It is with consideration of these two themes that the presentation and analysis of data from the case studies have been divided, somewhat untraditionally, into two chapters, each addressing one of the themes through the answers provided by the Stanger and Muden women and through comparisons across both groups. This chapter will consider the practical necessities that predominate much of women’s lives and the roles that land and land-based livelihood strategies play in addressing such needs. Chapter Seven will consider the interactions of women and land on a more strategic level, considering both groups’ views on land ownership and gendered relationships to land. It is believed that this arrangement will allow for the most clear and direct reporting of the outcomes of the PRA workshops.<sup>4</sup>

### **5.1 Daily Activities and Practical Needs**

In understanding the livelihood considerations of the women, it was firstly important to understand the nature of their day-to-day lives.

#### **5.1.2 Muden**

Activity profiles indicated, unsurprisingly, that the women of Muden are extensively involved in labor-intensive work each day. The women said they started their day anywhere between 4 am and 6 am. Their daily activity profiles can be found in Appendix III.

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<sup>4</sup> An analysis of the demographics of the two focus groups can be found in Appendix 2.

As can be seen from the lists in the Appendix many of the tasks undertaken by the women, often those most labor intensive, were required in order to meet the basic needs of the household (fetch wood, cooking, fetch water, etc). The Mudén women have very little time for social or relaxation activities and are expected to put the needs of their husband and families ahead of their own. They received no help from their husbands or other male household members, although the extent to which this is the result of men having extensive workloads of their own or stereotyped household roles cannot be determined, as men were not interviewed. One respondent suggested that, “boys wake up early in the morning, disappearing outside for play until night-time. They play, not help. As soon as they are old, the girls must help.” Once old enough, girl children were able to help in some of the family tasks including boiling water, helping in the kitchen, and helping with cleaning.

Inquiries into the nature of their land-based activities revealed the following:

**Table 1: Individual and Collective land-based activities in Mudén**

<b>Individual Farming Activities</b>	<b># of Mudén Participants</b>	<b>Collective Farming Activities</b>	<b># of Mudén Participants</b>
Small-scale gardening for food	6	Small-scale gardening for food	6
Small-scale gardening to sell	1	Small-scale gardening to sell	1
Collection of wood/fuel	6	Collection of wood/fuel	3
Farm Worker	2	Farm Worker	1
Grazing	3	Grazing	0
Poultry raising	4	Poultry raising	0
Small livestock	1	Small livestock	0
Involvement in an agricultural business/enterprise <sup>5</sup>	0	Involvement in an agricultural business/enterprise	1

As can be seen from the table above, the Mudén women were involved in a wide range of activities, though more so at an individual level. Small-scale gardening for food was the most common activity undertaken, emphasizing the importance of land in meeting basic needs.

<sup>5</sup> Defined as involvement in a for-profit enterprise based on agricultural activity (produce, livestock, dairy products, etc) and formally recognized as a business or cooperative ( as opposed to small scale farming for market purposes).

This was followed closely by collection of wood/fuel. Significantly, considering LRAD's emphasis on land redistribution for productive purposes, none of the women were involved in agricultural enterprises individually and only one was collectively involved. Such findings emphasize the limitations that a lack of basic services imposes on land use. For the majority of the women (9) the motivation behind such activities was it being a main source of food for the household. Also mentioned was utilizing such activities as a main source of income and as an extra source of income.

The women were also asked to indicate activities they participated in, as both an individual and part of a collective, that were non-land based. The most common non-land based activities included craft-making (7) and self-employment (4). Other activities that were mentioned were hawking and participation in government roadwork schemes. Reasons for engaging in these non-land based activities included as a main source of income (4) and as a main source of food (1). None of the women suggested they were able to pursue such activities as hobbies or leisure activities. The women's involvement in both land and non-land based activities clearly illustrates their involvement in a variety of livelihood-enhancing activities.

Further probing regarding the Mudén women's opinions of their daily activities and livelihoods suggests that day-to-day needs remain a challenge. Many of the problems revolved around a lack of resources and the extra effort required as a result in order to obtain those resources when needed. The women indicated that they had to go far into the mountains in order to obtain firewood, a sometimes dangerous venture due to uneven terrain, dangerous snakes and stinging insects. Water is scarcely available in the area and what is available is not clean. The women indicated that there are too many people using too few water canals, and this leaves little available water for cooking and bathing, and heavily restricts gardening and the watering of plants. Thus, at a basic needs level, the women are often denied the ability to utilize their most available connections to the land, small scale gardening, due to water shortages. As one woman suggested, "How do we grow things? There is not enough water for cooking. We cannot use water for gardens." Other problems identified included a lack of food and shortage of money for groceries and scarce public

transport. It is therefore unsurprising that the Muden women indicated that a fulfillment of basic needs would most readily change their situation for the better. To have clean and easily accessible water, to have electricity, and a local clinic were all suggestions made for livelihood improvements. Improved roads were also identified as positive changes that could be brought to their community.

The continued focus on basic needs post-land transfer suggests that such issues are not being addressed or effectively considered during the land reform process, an argument raised by several researchers. As mentioned by both Cousins (2005) and Hall (2004) the gap between land redistribution and basic social services provision appears to signify a discord between the 'big' policies enacted by the DLA and the 'shrinking state' that is charged with providing the services to support such policies. Although much effort and discussion have been put forth to rectify the politically charged and democratically significant issue of land ownership inequalities, a concurrent shift towards market focused economies and capital intensive industries has resulted in a lack of consideration for agricultural support systems to ensure that land ownership actually translates into livelihood improvements (Walker, 2003:117).

### **5.1.2 Stanger**

Perhaps due to their relative proximity to a larger urban center (Stanger), the women partaking in this workshop seemed less burdened by physical labor than one would expect of women in a more rural area. They less frequently listed activities such as gathering water, collecting firewood, or doing laundry in the river in comparison to women from the more rural Muden region. This is not to say, however, that their daily schedules were not busy. On the contrary, what the Stanger women may have avoided in physical labor to support basic needs was replaced by labor incurred through the utilization of land. The Stanger women exhibited a shift from daily activities focused largely on reproductive needs (like that of the Muden women) to a focus on productive activities. This was due largely to their proximity to an urban centre, and therefore some access to electrical services and more reliable water sources. There was little data to indicate improved basic service provision as a result of land redistribution, as in Muden; rather they simply had easier access to previously existing provisions.



As can be seen from the activity profile recorded in Appendix III, most of the Stanger women awoke at 5am and only went to sleep at 9pm or so. In between, their days were filled with providing for their families, and tending to both household gardens and crop-fields. Somewhat unsurprisingly, the needs of the family and husband are addressed first, with the Stanger women only accommodating their own needs and daily chores once both the children and male family members have left for school or work. Little time was indicated for activities such as socializing, save night-time prayer meetings that sometimes took place.

Further inquiries into the nature of their land-based activities revealed the following:

**Table 2: Individual and collective land-based activities in Stanger**

<b>Individual Farming Activities</b>	<b># of Stanger Participants</b>	<b>Collective Farming Activities</b>	<b># of Stanger Participants</b>
Small-scale gardening for food	10	Small-scale gardening for food	11
Small-scale gardening to sell	6	Small-scale gardening to sell	5
Collection of wood/fuel	4	Collection of wood/fuel	3
Farm Worker	0	Farm Worker	0
Grazing	3	Grazing	3
Poultry raising	7	Poultry raising	7
Small livestock	0	Small livestock	0
Involvement in an agricultural business/enterprise	4	Involvement in an agricultural business/enterprise	4

As can be seen from the table above, the Stanger women engaged in a wide variety of livelihood activities on their land. Small-scale gardening, both individually and collectively, appears to be the most popular activity, followed closely by poultry raising and small-scale gardening for profit. It appears promising that half of the women were involved in an agricultural business or enterprise, although unfortunately very little detail regarding these ventures was uncovered during the workshop. This is much higher than the number of women involved in such ventures in Mudén and may be due to both a reduced reproductive workload and better access to markets. For the majority of the women (9) the reason behind such livelihood activities was as a main source of food for the household. Five of the women also suggested that they participated in such activities as a main source of income, while for several of the women it was as an extra source of income and/or extra source of food.

The women were also asked to indicate activities they participated in, as both an individual and part of a collective, that were non-land based. Beading was by far the most prevalent response with nine of the women indicating their participation in beading, both individually and collectively. To a lesser extent the women were involved in sewing (6), hawking (3) and building (2). Reasons for engaging in such activities included it being a main source of income (5), a main source of food (3) and as an extra source of income (2). Two of the women indicated that they performed such activities simply as a leisure activity. This suggests a higher level of collective organizing and skill than seen in the Muden group and suggests both improved quality of life and utilization of land as compared to the Muden women. However, a similar reliance on multiple livelihood activities, as described in the Muden section, can also be seen amongst the women of Stanger.

Despite a reduction in physical labor for reproductive purposes, some of the activities undertaken by the Stanger women continued to be related to issues of basic needs. Activities such as tending to the garden and collecting firewood still comprised an important amount of their day and continue to be necessary as some of the households had better access to services than others. Women in Stanger are, however, helped in these tasks to a much more significant extent than the Muden women. It was indicated that partners offer moral support, provide the financial support to purchase inputs such as seeds, and will sometimes take part in daily activities or finishing chores such as the dishes. Both male and female children assist in daily chores after school and on weekends. A unique method of help in meeting day-to-day needs, as indicated by the Stanger women, was the utilization of “ilimo”. Ilimo is a traditional way of helping one another where, for instance, a woman will ask the other women in her community for help with household chores or in the field. She will then cook a meal for them and provide them with something to drink such as Zulu beer or amahewu (wet maize porridge). There is no payment necessary as ilimo is seen as reciprocal and the next day the women may assist on a different field or farm. The women described this as an element of “Ubuntu”, believing that you are an individual person only because of others.

The description of ilimo is in contrast to the Muden area, where the women indicated little time for gatherings. Although the exact reasons and characteristics of ilimo require further study, the dynamics of the Stanger group suggest that such organizational efforts are being greatly helped through the presence of several female “champions” or strong personalities, as described earlier. These women appear to be spearheading efforts to increase knowledge within the Stanger community of female beneficiaries, especially with regard to the importance of groups and the power of groups. Although once again more research is required to confirm such theories, it appears that these “champions” have pushed the women in realizing their new and powerful identity as “landowners” and have supported the development of such rituals as a means of merging their cultural roles as family providers with their newly developed mutual interests as land owners and producers. This is further supported by the women’s keen awareness of the importance of knowledge when discussing other activities that take place but not a daily basis. They discussed the importance of attending meetings in order to gain more information and knowledge that could be applied to their day-to-day lives. They also identified the importance of groups such as Women in Agriculture and Rural Development, as will be discussed again later, and had recently been taken to the World Congress of Rural Women conference in Durban by the “champions” within their community.

Moving back to the issue of women’s basic needs, the Stanger women indicated several challenges to the fulfillment of their basic livelihood activities. These included such issues as:

- ⇒ Taking a sick child to the doctor.
- ⇒ Cleaning time detracts from gardening time.
- ⇒ Rainy days where you cannot work on the fields/collect wood/laundry.
- ⇒ Thursday Church days-Thursdays are used to visit a selected home for the day and bring prayer and worship. This is done on all Thursdays and prevents the woman from doing their daily chores on that day.
- ⇒ Comforting family of those who have died (especially significant in the context of HIV/AIDS).
- ⇒ Brewing Zulu traditional beer.
- ⇒ Walking long distances for water.
- ⇒ Low dissemination of information.

⇒ Need for more land because pieces of land are so small.

The women also indicated a strategic impediment to their ability to complete their daily activities in the form of the obedience they must pay to their husbands. It was suggested that when a husband returns from work it is expected that the wife will give him her full attention, even to the extent of sitting and watching him while he eats. This requires the women to put aside all of their responsibilities in paying ‘homage’ of a sense to their husbands.<sup>6</sup>

## **5.2 Wealth Conceptualisations**

### **5.2.1 Mudén**

Descriptions of wealth amongst the Mudén women also supported the predominance of practical needs. Fundamentals such as having enough food to eat, having electricity, and having toilets were seen as elements of wealth, while ownership was also seen as central to achieving a “wealthy” status within the community. Owning a farm, taxi, car, tractor, a beautiful house, more than 50 cows, and/or a large piece of land were all ways in which an individual in Mudén could be wealthy.

The exact characteristics that comprised the four categories of wealth considered during the PRA activities can be found in Appendix III. For brevity’s sake they have not been included here, but the general trends will be discussed. Those who cannot manage were identified to be lacking in most basic needs, including a stable house, food, electricity, and school uniforms/shoes for their children. Those who have something were able to meet their basic needs and often had small productive resources such as small livestock. Those who can manage were able to go beyond their basic needs and exhibit a comfortable livelihood through car ownership, electric generators, and employment. Finally, those who are doing well exhibit most of the characteristics laid out in the elements of wealth.

Both land and inputs were factors leading to wealth, and can be traced through each wealth category. Those who are doing well were likely to own a large piece of land, have their own farms, have access to helpers/assistance, and have access to farm inputs. Those who can

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<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that this refers primarily to husbands who work away from home and only return monthly, although it may also apply to husbands who return home more frequently.

manage, while not owning farms, owned a large piece of land and were able to obtain tractors. Those who have something had a small plot for vegetables, while those who cannot manage often had no land at all.

Although land seems to correlate with wealth, the Muden women indicated that it was quite possible for one to own land and still be very poor. In fact, most of the women reacted with surprise when asked whether this was possible. Although the women had previously suggested that “land can make you wealthy because you can grow things,” they were quick to point out that many of their households were still poor with land. “I have land, but I do not have enough water, or time, to use my land. So I stay poor.” They also suggested that one might have land and still be very poor if a family member died or left, or if there are too many children to take care of. Thus, it seems that although land can enhance livelihoods it does not by itself secure a basic livelihood. Rather, the women suggested that one might be unable to meet their basic needs due to unemployment, illiteracy, poor financial management, lack of education, and an inability to generate products to sell at bigger markets, all of which are characteristics that land ownership alone cannot mitigate.

However, if basic needs are met, land was identified as a primary avenue through which one could rise to greater levels of wealth. One could increase their number of livestock and then sell them, or improve their skills and way of ploughing in order to better take advantage of their land. In this way, the women felt the effects of land to be more apparent to those whose basic needs were already addressed, rather than to those who were amongst the poorest and most marginalized. Thus, although not securing a livelihood, land seems to hold an important role in improving one. Such data strongly supports previous arguments made by Cousins (2005), Cross and Mngadi (1996) and Walker (2006) that rural programs focusing solely on the transfer of land and increased agricultural productivity will not reduce poverty, but must be coupled with larger social service reforms that address basic needs such as water and housing.

### **5.2.2 Stanger**

Similar to the activity profiles, wealth rankings amongst the Stanger women also supported a slight shift from focusing primarily on basic needs to considering the wider aspects of

ownership. The women in the Stanger group identified wealth as having a home, children in good schools, and property. Other items indicating wealth included:

- ⇒ Have everything that is needed
- ⇒ House
- ⇒ Expensive Car
- ⇒ Extensive land ownership
- ⇒ Large bank accounts
- ⇒ Sustainable investments
- ⇒ Tractors
- ⇒ More sales
- ⇒ Education

Thus one can see that ownership is an important element of wealth in Stanger, especially with regards to material status symbols such as cars and money. However, although the women may not have been directly aware they were doing so, many of the items they indicated as constituting wealth suggest an understanding (by themselves or perhaps by the community at large) of the importance of sustainability. Their answers reinforce the notion that wealth is sustained through the perpetuation of investment, market participation, and continual reinvestment in knowledge, all of which are factors that land alone is largely unable to give women at this point in time. These answers seem to support a more sophisticated notion of wealth among the Stanger women as opposed to the women in Mudén.

The exact characteristics that the women used to define ‘those who do well’, ‘those who can manage’, ‘those who have something’, and ‘those who cannot manage’ are listed in Appendix III. For purposes of this case study, the findings will report on the trends amongst these characteristics rather than the characteristics themselves. Those who cannot manage were perceived to be lacking even the most basic of needs, including food, housing, and clothing. For those most poor the most basic of life necessities were far from secure within the Stanger area. The women indicated that although individuals and households may end up in the “those who cannot manage” category for a variety of reasons, it was frequently noticed in their community that family members leave their home or town in search for a better life in the city and end up falling into the poorest categories, that of the homeless on the streets.

Those who have something had the characteristics of being able to meet basic needs through access to RDP homes and paraffin stoves. It was noted however, that their lives were still marred by struggle through life in informal settlements, and children having to walk long distances to school, sometimes without shoes. Those who can manage were able to not only meet their basic needs but also to improve their lives through acquiring furniture, cars, and a decent home. Those who do well exhibited most of the characteristics listed with regard to wealth, including having an expensive car, maids, sustainable investments, money for holidays, and “fat” bank accounts.

Interestingly, the one continuous trend through each of the categories was the type of schools children were able to attend. While those who were wealthy had children going to good schools, others had children going to only public schools, having to walk long distances to school, or not going at all. This suggests the recognition of the importance of good education and a focus on wealth as a means of providing educational opportunities and may be due, in part, to the higher education levels amongst the Stanger women themselves. Land also appeared frequently in the wealth categorization. Those who were wealthy were seen to have much land with access to tractors and equipment. Those who manage had access to “average land” while those who have something had access to land only for residential purposes, and those who cannot manage have nothing at all. This suggests that wealth can be exhibited through land and agricultural pursuits; though it cannot be determined whether land itself can lead to increases in wealth. Thus, land is itself a status symbol and asset, but may not be a prerequisite to obtaining such status. This is similar to conceptualizations of land within the Muden group.

Despite links between land and wealth, the women in Stanger also indicated that it is quite possible that a family can own land and still fall into the poorest category. They suggested that this might be due to households having family owned land but with such a big family that it is difficult to inherit a portion. When asked why certain families are wealthy and some are not the women suggested that this may be due to 1) personal agency and 2) family legacies. Often, they noted, the wealthy families in a community come from wealthy

backgrounds and have had the fortune to inherit their status, or because their family is wealthy they continue to be provided for. However, those not from wealthy families could also become wealthy through being educated or having access to information and resources. This suggests the importance of knowledge in improving livelihoods, and, as will be discussed further in the conclusion, the importance of considering the power of familial and traditional relationships within land redistribution. In contrast to the Mudén women, the prerequisite of basic needs provisions was less of a consideration in determining the value and income-generating power of land for the Stanger women. Although briefly discussed in the categorizations of wealth, the Stanger women were less likely to consider basic needs a limiting factor in land ownership. This is most likely due to the women's closer proximity to well established service provisions, making such necessities more of a given.

### **6.3 Challenges and Unmet Needs**

#### **6.3.1 Mudén**

According to the women, the most important factors affecting land use in the area included:

- ⇒ Water (for crop irrigation)
- ⇒ Fencing (to prevent animals from destroying crops)
- ⇒ Soil fertility
- ⇒ Dipping tank structures (for livestock disease prevention)
- ⇒ Inputs (seeds, fertilizer, etc)
- ⇒ Skills and relevant information
- ⇒ Crop rotation (to keep the land from overuse)
- ⇒ Tillage (soil preparation)
- ⇒ Burning pastures (to increase soil fertility)

In considering these factors over the course of the timeline of Mudén (Appendix III), most had worsened. Water is very scarce and levels continue to go down with little avenue for new water sources, as there are no springs or wells. Soil fertility has decreased and Mudén residents' use of chemical fertilizers has increased as traditional methods of manure have failed to meet their demands. This is compounded by the fact that the cost of fertilizer has increased, making it more expensive to utilize land. Similarly, although residents used to keep seeds from their plants for the following years crop, they must now buy seeds from the people who make seeds with chemicals. Another recent expense of land use is the building of fences. Whereas children used to herd the cattle and thus there was no need to fence, the



children are now in school and there is more livestock, so good sturdy fencing is required in order to keep livestock away from fields.

Other changes included less natural resource management and increased insect infestations within the soil. Finally, because of increased fertilizer use and changing seeds, the women felt that skills training is now required in order to understand all the elements of farming and farm productively. These changes suggest an increasing need for agricultural support systems in order to create a livelihood through the land. Due to the somewhat uncontrollable changes with water, soil fertility, and inputs, women, and the Muden community in general, are no longer able to use their traditional methods in utilizing the land. Support in the form of skills and training, and elements such as input subsidizing, may be necessary in order for land ownership to meet livelihood needs. Thus far such support systems are noticeably absent in the Muden community.

The answers given by the Muden women with regards to the most significant problems for land use correlated directly to the important factors listed above. Although the list given by the women was originally in no particular order, the women were asked to rank each of the activities against each other (Appendix III). This then allowed for ranking of the problems according to which were identified most frequently as the most important problem. The problems identified and their rankings are listed below.

**Table 3: Problems of land use and their ranking of significance**

<b>Most significant problems</b>	<b>PRA Ranking (5=most significant, 1=least)</b>
Lack of water	5
Lack of inputs	4
Lack of fencing resources	3
Lack of department agricultural support	0
Too much open access	2
Lack of markets	1

Identification of these problems support much of the data collected, and once again enforces that basic needs such as water and inputs remain a central issue, according to women, within the Muden community.

Given the importance of water even in small-scale vegetable gardens, it is unsurprising that the women identified this as their most important problem/need. Clearly, this list reiterates what has been stated previously in this chapter, that the women are still dealing with the most pressing task of meeting basic needs. They cannot consider a lack of agricultural support or markets to be of the utmost concern because they have not yet reached the stage of being able to engage in agriculture due to water, seed, and fertilizer shortages. The identification of these problems suggests that issues of both basic services provision and agricultural support must be addressed if the land transferred through land redistribution is to be effectively used and poverty alleviation goals met.

### **5.3.2 Stanger**

With regards to challenges for women and their use of land, the Stanger women were asked what they felt to be the biggest challenges in relation to utilizing their land, and what support services and opportunities they felt to be lacking.

Although the original intent was not for these two subjects to be linked, the challenges put forward by the women with regard to land use were largely related to support services. The only basic needs challenge identified was that of transport, an issue that was illustrated even in the women's difficulty getting to the workshop. However, most of the challenges related to issues of knowledge, skills, and impairment of access to support and inputs. Having a higher level of understanding of farming practices was repeatedly emphasized. The women suggested that they are tricked into contracts due to a lack of understanding of the documents they are signing, are denied the knowledge of those who have succeeded, and lack mentors and/or experts to guide them on the best methods for utilizing their land. Similarly, they indicated an absence of extension officers and the high costs of utilizing extension officers when they were available which only contributes to what they identified as a shortage of man-power. All of these challenges suggest that despite the understanding of how land can help improve their livelihoods and the drive for change, the women are not actually able to implement much of what they hope for or conceive due to lack of support, specifically information and skills support. Significantly, the women indicated that due to the instances of

exploitation mentioned above, there are little to no emerging landowners right now in this area. This has strong implications for the DLA's current land redistribution systems.

With regards to the specific services the women felt were needed in their area, the list they provided was both extensive and varied. This is unsurprising considering the only existing services the women were able to identify were schools, spaza shops, and local drinking places. Interestingly, the issue of water was raised for the first time in the workshop at this point, as the women indicated that the provision of water was a service they desired. It is curious that this did not come up earlier in the workshop, as water is quite fundamental to any land utilization scheme. Other land/agriculture specific services desired included a market area, an agricultural school to teach children agricultural modules from an early age, infrastructure development, and a centre for access to information. As the services the women desired were not limited to those related to land, but rather to all services that would improve their livelihoods, the women also indicated a desire for better recreational facilities, a better education system, crèches, a conference center, an abattoir, factories to improve employment, and social clubs where they can gather and share information or news. A Bed and Breakfast was also indicated, suggesting a possible interest in tourism ventures.

Finally, the issue of access to loans or credit was considered. The women suggested that the ease of access to financial assistance depended on the business plans put forth by the farmer or cooperative. It was pointed out that savings and credit grants are available for up to R3 million with an interest of 3-6%. However, the women reiterated the difficulties they had in learning about or accessing such grants.

## **Chapter 6: Gender and Land**

Beyond considerations of existing practical livelihood needs within the Muden and Stanger communities, and the alleviation, or lack thereof, of such practical needs through land use, the women also grappled with the strategic power associated with land. This chapter considers such elements of land use as well as the women's knowledge of their roles and relationships within systems of land ownership.

### **6.1 Women's relationships to land**

#### **6.1.1. Muden**

The women in the Muden area were very aware of the nature of their land ownership and all were able to identify the type of land ownership as being that of a trust. Answers were slightly more varied with regards to the system through which land was acquired. Four of the women correctly identified the system as LRAD, while the remaining ten felt that the land was acquired through settlement, which is to some extent correct.<sup>7</sup>

Only six of the women indicated that they had access to land for crops or livestock, suggesting that participation in the Trust has not led to land access for productive purposes for more than half of the women. Although exact details of the situations for each of the women without access to land were not uncovered, general comments about the nature of land acquisition in Muden indicates that these women most likely have been denied access to land through continuing systems of patriarchy. Women in Muden traditionally acquire land either through a husband/brother/father or through the birth of a male child. For those six currently with access to land, the average plot size was only one hectare, making usage of the land for productive purposes somewhat limited. With regards to experience, five of the women indicated that they had been involved in any kind of farming or livestock raising on their land previously. Four of the five women had participated in such activities on their land, while one had not, and in all but one instance this participation was on an individual, rather than communal, level. The average years of overall farming experience amongst the women was 6 years.

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<sup>7</sup> As Communal Property Association, Mission Farm was acquired through LRAD. However, due to the de facto ownership of the traditional authorities over the land, they continue to allot land to newcomers through settlement.

Such data, in addition to the activity profiles discussed in the previous chapter, supports existing theories on multiple livelihood strategies and suggests that the women in Muden are actively utilizing multiple livelihood strategies in the absence of opportunities to engage in agricultural production alone. The inclusion of both land and non-land based activities in the women's livelihood strategies supports the argument put forth by Walker earlier in this paper that land is significant, in the absence of jobs, not simply as a means of agricultural participation, but as a means of contributing to, and providing the security for "multiple livelihood strategies" (Walker, 2006:133). Thus, beyond its capacity as related to basic needs, land serves the strategic importance of allowing the women to experiment and diversify their livelihood activities through heightened tenure and family security. The above data also supports the notion put forth by Cousins (2005) and Barrett (2001) that rural households are far from homogenous, creating unique arrangements of activities to address the distinctive variabilities present within their lives.

When asked questions regarding the benefits available from land, the Muden women also indicated a more holistic understanding of the importance of land and land ownership. Owning land was identified as a means through which one did not have to work the six months unpaid system that was in place when they were labor tenants. It was also understood as a place where houses can be built, where loved ones can be buried, and where schools can be built for children, which they could not do before. Land was also seen as supporting indirect livelihood activities, including the keeping of livestock and care of livestock through dip tanks and grazing land, as well as access roads leading to the town (Greytown) and markets, and access, albeit limited, to clean water.

Although such ideas are fairly obvious, they seem to indicate that the women see land not simply as a support for basic needs, but also as a means through which power, in a positive form, can be acquired. Significantly, as shall be shown below, although women seem aware of the power land bestows through personal ownership, family heritage, and empowerment for future generations, and identify their lack of access to such power as an issue, their access to such benefits remain limited.

When the Mudén women were asked to identify who benefited most from the advantages land presented, the majority acknowledged that men benefited the most. Men benefited exclusively from ownership of land, from livestock including dipping tanks and grazing, and from housing. The only benefit identified as solely for women was access to water. Men and women were seen to share the benefits of not having to participate in an unpaid labor system, in acquiring arable land, schools, roads, the growing of vegetables, and burial grounds. Burial grounds, schools, and roads were perceived as mutual benefits as they addressed needs of the entire community. As one woman indicated, “we are a household. If I grow things my husband eats them. We both benefit. You cannot divide things in this way.” The women indicated that although they had the closest relationships with arable land and growing vegetables, the men also benefited as the prioritized recipients of such labors due to their standing without households.

Upon further questioning, the Mudén women suggested that they did feel there was a significant problem with this situation. They suggested that the division of benefits is to some extent culturally related or based on common practice. For example, even if the women were able to access cattle, they would not feel comfortable herding it, as this has always been a man’s job. However, they directly suggested that the persistent belief within their community that a man is superior to a woman was a problem, and that they wanted equality to be seen at all levels of life. Similarly, they suggested that they see a problem with the fact that when a woman wants to own a portion of land the authorities can deny her this, and that the tradition of husbands as heads of their wives is “for the older days”.

Women further explored the beliefs that they should more directly benefit through land in the form of land for houses and ownership, even if a male was not present in the household. Current traditions in the Mudén region dictate that a woman can have access to land ownership only through her husband/brother/father. As a female head of household, a woman is limited in that land can be acquired only if her husband passes away, land is willed to her through her family, or she gives birth to a male child (who will eventually become the owner of the land). The women felt that they should be given land when they need it even if they are

single and that when a woman wants a portion of land she should not have to have a boy child in order to acquire it.

### 6.1.2 Stanger

The Stanger women’s understanding of the type of land ownership they had and how their land was acquired was limited. Although it must be acknowledged that this could be due to the nature of the question, six of the women did not know what type of ownership they possessed, and seven were not aware of how their land was acquired. This is especially odd considering the above average education levels of this group. Of those who did know, four owned their land via individual title, three through a trust and two through a CPA. Only one woman indicated that she was participating in an equity share. Similarly, four of the women acquired their land through commonage, while two each acquired it through LRAD and SLAG. It is interesting to note that the women with less direct access to the land (Muden) are more aware of how it was acquired.

**Table 4: Forms of land acquisition and ownership in Stanger**

Type of Land Ownership	# of Stanger Participants	System through which Land was Acquired	# of Stanger Participants
CPA	2	LRAD	2
Trust	3	SLAG	2
Equity Share	1	Commonage	4
Individual Title	4	Settlement	0
Don’t Know	6	Don’t Know	7

All but two of the women had access to land for crops or livestock, with an average size of 2.77 hectares. A further twelve suggested that they had been involved in any kind of farming or livestock raising on the land they owned, and they had an average of 16.3 years of farming experience. Of those with farming experience, six were involved with farming collectively, four with farming individually, and two engaged in both individual and collective farming activities. This suggests both larger land parcels available to the Stanger women and higher skill levels in utilizing the land. As the 2000 Quality of Life study of land beneficiaries found only 23.9% of female-headed households and 31.9% of male-headed households to have 10+ years of farming experience, it seems that the Stanger group exhibits above average experience levels (DLA, 2002:33).

In comparison to the Muden women, the Stanger women appear to have more widely undertaken agricultural activities, but, as seen in the activity profiles, continue to diversify the activities in which they participate both on and off land, suggesting an expansion of their economic and social power. There are numerous elements that may have contributed to this shift, such as higher education levels, but the effect of more progressive land access and rights must also be considered. The ability of the Stanger women to engage in more widespread land-based activities not only for basic needs purposes but also for extra income and market participation (as discussed in Chapter 5) illustrates the strategic power of land. Such “extra” and multiple activities allow women greater power to negotiate for themselves and their families and provide security against future economic uncertainties (Andrews et al, 2003; Oberhauser, 1998; Start & Johnson, 2004; World Bank, 2005).

Having now had land reform land for several years the women were asked what they perceived to be the benefits of this land. The answers received from this question were quite diverse. Some suggested a realization of the role of land in meeting basic needs such as providing grazing which in turn allows for livestock that can be used for food, as discussed in Chapter 5. However, several of the answers indicated a more progressive viewpoint regarding land and how it can be used strategically to participate in cash economies or improve social situations. The financial benefits of land through the sale of crops were pointed out, as was the fact that the skin of animals grazing on the land can be used to make traditional clothing called “Isidwaba” which can also be sold. One of the women also pointed out the fact that their access to land was allowing orphanages to be built to take care of children in the community orphaned by HIV/AIDS.<sup>8</sup> These answers suggest that the women in Stanger are able to see beyond the basic needs conceptualizations of benefits and consider land as a means of power and a way to change their livelihood situations. Although this may seem obvious, these realizations were to a large extent not present in the Muden workshop. This may be due to the fact that, as will be discussed below, the women in Stanger have

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<sup>8</sup> The suggestion that AIDS accounts for many orphans in the Stanger area was not explicitly mentioned by the women, as AIDS remains a sensitive subject. However, when one considers statistical information regarding the impact of AIDS on children and orphans in KwaZulu-Natal it is reasonable to infer that, to some extent, the needs for orphanages in Stanger is being driven by the AIDS epidemic. According to Singhal & Rogers (2003), KwaZulu-Natal was home to 125,000 AIDS orphans in 2002 and a projected 475,000 by 2010 (Singhal & Rogers, 2003:68).



relatively more progressive land rights in relationship to the women in Muden as well as much higher education levels.

Such findings support the research referenced earlier in this paper suggesting that the benefits of land far surpass the notion of food production. As Marcus *et al's* (1996) research found, land confers power, security, and greater avenues of control over one's livelihood activities. These are benefits bestowed regardless of the land size obtained and agricultural potential and it appears that the Stanger women are benefiting from this increasingly open conceptualization of land.

When asked to identify who benefited most from the advantages of land identified by the women, they indicated that they were not happy with the way such a question was constructed. They felt that within their communities it did not matter who performed a task, rather it was important that the whole family benefited from such work at the end of the day. They suggested that although there was still the lingering mentality that livestock and land should be men owned/controlled and that the women should be limited to working the fields, at the end of the day the benefits from land belonged to the entire family. This stands in contrast to current scholarly perceptions that intra-household dynamics tend to disadvantage women and children in accessing benefits accrued by any family member. As will be seen below, this perception is also somewhat conflicting with the women's discussions of land rights. It is unclear if this holistic perception of benefits of land is an idealism that the women believe they are meant to portray or if it is indicative of changing systems of patriarchy and a growing awareness of equality amongst all members of the household. It is worth noting that these comments are in line with earlier comments suggesting that men in the household were not unwilling to share in the day-to-day chores typically reserved for women. It is also quite possible that through translation of both the research questions and the answers, the true meaning of the division of household benefits within these women's households has been over-simplified and/or misunderstood by the researcher.

Returning to the acknowledgement that existing perceptions remain regarding men's access to the majority of land benefits, the women felt much could and should be done to change

such perceptions. The importance of female empowerment was continually reiterated in responding to this issue. It was suggested that women should come together as one through workshops to empower themselves and network. Similarly, the importance of women organizations such as Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (WARD) was emphasized.<sup>9</sup> The women also suggested that much of the policy and legislation surrounding land needs to change, including the inclusion of women in policy formulation, the consultation of women for decisions that are made on their behalf, the recognition of women by the government, and the changing of current structures that direct funding towards the persons with title deeds (usually men) rather than those working the land (usually women). The women also suggested that male dominance needed to be avoided, that traditional laws should change, and that stakeholder participation should improve so that women are no longer dictated to and told what is good for them. Once again such answers were indicative of the more progressive movement of women in the Stanger region. Rather than being limited to considering issues of how to address patriarchy at the household level, as in Mudén, the women have been able to expand their vision to include conceptualizations of themselves as a greater group and the power inherent within that grouping, most likely due to the motivating force of the few “champions” within the group.

The women were also asked, as individuals and not as a household, what are the six most important activities that they can perform on land. The most important activities that could be performed included activities to meet basic needs such as the planting of crops, growing of fruits and vegetables, and livestock grazing, income generating activities such as tourism facilities or poultry farming, and other “livelihood enhancing” activities such as the use of land for recreational facilities and for mining sand to be used for building households. The women’s identification of these activities belies an important transformation in their community, as compared to Mudén. It seems that the acquisition and ownership of land, along with the increasing role of women as primary producers, has allowed women to take on traditionally male roles such as livestock management and to incorporate such activities as a primary part of their subsistence and income-generating strategies.

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<sup>9</sup> Although the extent of the women’s current participation in WARD is unknown, the agricultural officers in the area of Stanger were enthusiastic advocates of the program, especially during the focus group. This explains it being referenced several times during the discussion.

Finally, the issue arose regarding the difficulties of being both a mother and a farmer/entrepreneur. Despite the seemingly overwhelming workload that being a mother and businesswoman could present (considering the daily activity profiles put forth earlier) the woman indicated that handling both of these roles was not a difficulty at all. Rather, they suggested that the two work hand in hand. They indicated that in order to be a good mother they needed to be able to provide for their children, and by being a businesswoman they are able to do so. Similarly the role of businesswoman was also beneficial to their role within the household. Thus, the women felt that the two responsibilities complimented each other rather than making things more difficult.

## **6.2 Women's Knowledge of Land Ownership**

### **6.2.1 Muden**

The issue of “rights” as such is somewhat contentious. The word has acquired negative connotations in recent years, and special care was taken to explain that a discussion of “land rights” was not about issues of defiance or conflict, but rather a discussion of what one is able to do with land. The identified avenues of access for women in Muden attempting to use land were primarily working on the arable land and keeping livestock. The women stated that they were forbidden from grazing or from being directly allocated land.

Currently, the women indicated that they are able to obtain land from the Trust if they are single/widowed but have a male child, were previous farm tenants, or are divorced and seek land through their original home and family. The women did indicate that improvements have been made in regards to women whose husbands die. Previously the woman would lose everything and would not be allowed to stay on the farm because she no longer had a working individual in her household. Now, when a husband dies the wife inherits what was his. Although tenure security is well established, the women indicated that a woman could lose her land if she is a thief or does something wrong. She will also face such consequences if one of her children is found to be a thief. Considering that the DLA has mandated that, “[strategies] must be devised to ensure that women are able to participating fully in the planning and implementation of land reform projects,” it appears that the gender policies of

land redistribution have not been adequately introduced and implemented within this community (and possibly others), nor failure to meet such policies adequately addressed, by the DLA thus far (DLA, 1997:xii).

Decision-making is still largely undertaken by the husband or male household head. With the group of Mudén women, five were members of male-headed households, and eight were members of female-headed households. Interestingly, of the eight women in female-headed households, five were amongst the few households also involved in agricultural activities, suggesting a possible correlation between the two. The women suggested that when there are communal meetings they are not involved and then men make all the decisions. A conversation between two women participants indicated this situation.

Female 1: “The men make the decisions. It is what they do.”

Female 2: “Sometimes my husband asks me what I think.”

Female 1: “But they never listen. They do what they want in the end.”

Female 2: “But then when things go bad he does what I told him to do from the start!”

In situations where there is no male head, such as female-headed households, answers regarding decision-making varied. Some of the women suggested that they consulted other family members such as mother-in-laws, siblings, or children. Others said that they did not consult anyone and made their own decisions. Finally, two of the women indicated that no one ever consults with them and they are often not informed of decisions made. The women did suggest that regardless of household head, they are able to decide on their own what they would like to plant on the arable land as this is the woman’s domain.

Interestingly, at least to an outsider, the women were entirely unaware that they could organize themselves and own land on their own. This speaks immensely to the strength of the systems of patriarchy still present in the community, the lack of information campaigns with regards to land reform and land rights, and/or the DLA’s apparent lack of interest or inability to ensure that the land redistributed is allocated fairly amongst beneficiaries.

Perhaps even more interesting is the fact that although the women were not aware that such opportunities existed, all but one indicated that given the opportunity they would choose to have their own land over communal land. Interpretations of this data are largely outside the scope of this dissertation, but it may suggest that communal land tenure systems are disadvantageous to women despite the seeming security they provide. Although the exact meaning of “communal” and “individual” can be argued, as well as what interpretations of the words the women might have made, a look at their perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of communal and individual land suggests that regardless of the name given to the system of ownership, the strength of “individual” land lay in women’s power to make decisions and retain authority on her own, without being required to speak to or be accountable to a larger authority or body. It is this respect, ownership, the freedom from appealing to someone in order to obtain land, and the freedom to do what one wishes with the land. This made individual land ownership so powerful for the women. The extent to which the existing communal trusts or CPAs can ever grant such freedom is an issue that will not be discussed in this dissertation but needs to be examined critically in the South African context.

Thus, advantages of land ownership and disadvantages of communal land ownership identified by the women included:

*Advantages of Individual ownership*

- ⇒ You can do the way you want without asking for anyone’s opinion
- ⇒ Have less limitations can farm anyhow anytime
- ⇒ There will be no conflict if I own the land
- ⇒ No interference when I take a decision
- ⇒ You can lease your land without problems
- ⇒ More respect given

*Disadvantages of Communal Land*

- ⇒ There is a possibility for conflict
- ⇒ Need consultation before taking any decision or one could have negative ideas
- ⇒ People don’t all face responsibility to look after it equally. Others fold their arms and do nothing.

As indicated, these speak primarily to issues of ownership and decision-making, as well as respect. However, these qualities do not suggest that individual land is essentially good or

communal land inherently bad. Rather, the women identified some very important elements of communal land that they would be hesitant to give up.

*Advantages of Communal Land:*

- ⇒ There is a way of sharing ideas/skills
- ⇒ Work can go faster when we work in a group
- ⇒ The group can raise money easily
- ⇒ All members will bring inputs like equipment
- ⇒ Everyone could take responsibility to watch over our things

*Disadvantages of Individual Land*

- ⇒ Cannot fundraise easily
- ⇒ If you cannot afford to hire people to work, the production could be low
- ⇒ When you have land as an individual your plants and products are exposed to criminals
- ⇒ You don't get enough support when you are alone
- ⇒ You might not know what to do with your land

Communal land seems to hold great value as a means of sharing resources and ideas and mitigating the risk-taking that is inherent in farming pursuits, particularly in an area with such scarce water resources. Therefore, while an individual system of land ownership may be most advantageous for women, it is clearly an option that would be best supported by communal systems of resource and knowledge sharing.

### **6.2.2 Stanger**

The women at Stanger had a clear understanding of “land rights” and the connotations of the word, as opposed to Mudén. They did not seem to suggest having any issues with the topic as such. When asked what rights the women perceived themselves to currently have, they suggested that women seem to have relatively little or no rights at all. This is fairly contradictory to issues raised above, such as benefits to land being distributed equally and many of the women engaging on their own farms or cooperatives. The most logical suggestion for this discrepancy may be that although the women interviewed have been able to gain fairly substantial rights for themselves, the traditional culture still dictates very little rights for land when title deeds are not in place. In other words, while the Stanger women have, to some extent, been able to supersede cultural norms through land titles acquired through LRAD, such cultural restrictions against women owning land still exist and remain a

powerful force within communities, possibly leading to a general sentiment that women still have very limited rights with regards to land.

The Stanger women suggested that there are virtually no rights for women in communal land and that household land is owned by the husband and his family and only they can tell the women how to manage it. They suggested that women in their community have a low understanding of their marital rights to land and their ability to inherit land from their husbands, and because of this when a husband dies the wife is often kicked out by the husband's family who claims the land now belongs to them. Similarly, they indicated that if a couple is divorced the land remains with the husband and his family as well. Also mentioned was the fact that distribution amongst wives was not fair, as the first wife receives more land and that women are disadvantaged by deeds that list only their husband's name. Underlying all of these scenarios was the blanket assertion that gender inequalities still prevail.

Despite the limitations imposed on women regarding land rights, all of the women at the Stanger workshop were aware of the opportunity for individual land for women, and several of the women owned their own farms, having benefited from this opportunity. In considering this fact, as well as some of the other data discussed above, it suggests that the women have the knowledge, understanding, and drive to improve their land rights and thereby improve their livelihoods, and some have been able to translate this knowledge and drive into action in their own lives. However, significant change remains to be enacted within the greater community according to the women's perceptions. Whether this is due to limitations on the part of the women or the degree of entrenchment of patriarchy within the community, cannot be determined from the data obtained for this study.

Being aware of both individual and communal land rights, the women indicated what they perceived to be the advantages and disadvantages of both systems. Their answers are listed below. For comparative purposes, the Muden women's answers have also been relisted.

**Table 5: Elements of Communal Land Ownerships**

<b>Muden</b>	<b>Stanger</b>
<i>Advantages of Communal Land Ownership</i>	
There is a way of sharing ideas/skills	Access to funding is increased
Work can go faster when in a group	Sharing of ideas is increased
The group can raise money easily	Networking
All members will bring inputs	More hands for the work which saves time
Everyone can take responsibility to watch over things	Constructive criticism
	Access to markets is increased as produce is larger
<i>Disadvantages of Communal Land Ownership</i>	
There is a possibility for conflict	Arguments
Need consultation before taking decisions	Absenteeism
Group member might have negative ideas	Dominating members
People don't all face responsibilities to look after things equally	Lack of commitment/commitment varies
	Time management
	Misuse of product (consuming crops for sale)
	Not listening to each other
	Gossiping



**Table 6: Elements of Individual Land Ownership**

<b>Muden</b>	<b>Stanger</b>
<i>Advantages of Individual Land Ownership</i>	
You can do what you want without asking for anyone's opinion	Better chance of ensuring that your vision is a success
Have less limitations-can farm anyhow anytime	Own planning
There is no conflict	More satisfaction
No interference when making a decision	Money and income go directly to you
Can lease land without problems	Use of money in emergency cases is the individuals choice
More respect given	Avoid disagreements
<i>Disadvantages of Individual Land Ownership</i>	
Cannot fundraise easily	It makes it difficult to access funding
If you cannot afford to hire people to work, the production could be low	Makes it difficult to access markets
Plants and products are exposed to criminals	Not enough help from the municipality
Not enough support	No assistance when challenges arise
You might not know what to do with your land	Time taken to complete task is longer
	If you are ill all of your work must stop
	People get jealous and let their livestock graze on your crop
	Sharing of ideas is limited

Despite different levels of awareness regarding land ownership and different political and economic circumstances, the responses of the Muden and Stanger women are fundamentally very similar. Somewhat unsurprisingly the clear benefit in individual land ownership comes from the power and control it provides, and thus the ability to meet women's strategic needs. By both allowing for the women to have full control over the planning and processes involved in the land, and to know that the benefits will go to them, they are able to play a

greater role in securing their own livelihoods. Similarly, disadvantages of communal ownership are characterized by a myriad of factors beyond their control such as absenteeism, lack of commitment, misuse of product, all of which hurt the women despite the hard work they themselves may have offered. The heightened responsibility of individual land ownership does not appear to be a problem for the women, rather it is seen as leading to a greater means of ensuring success.

However, the above lists also indicate that communal land ownership is not without its merits. According to the women, it is clearly the best way for support to be garnered. This suggests that, once again, while an individual system of land ownership may be most advantageous for women, it is clearly an option that would be best supported by communal systems of resource and knowledge sharing. It also appears that the women take issue with the somewhat “Western” notion of individual land ownership and the consequential disintegration of community support mechanisms. They frequently reiterated interest in an individual ownership system that did not equate “every woman for herself” but rather realized the important role of community support, community knowledge sharing, and networking around a common goal, much like the ubuntu philosophy or the ilimo practices referenced earlier.

This “merging” of individual and communal land ownership systems that appealed to both the Muden and Stanger women appears, perhaps superficially, to be a remedy to the two problems most often cited by the women throughout this dissertation. By allowing for individual control and access to land and land opportunities, the women are able to combat the existing cultural and social structures that have prevented their voices and decisions from being heard for so long, and the discussion of individual land ownership suggests that such an opportunity is very important. However, with the reality of South Africa’s current land redistribution systems and the lack of post-transfer and social services support, the women are wise to realize the inherent value of working in groups in order to mitigate these shortfalls, and appear hesitant to renounce such elements for the right to individually own their land.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

Beyond the specific similarities and differences brought to light through the engagement of the Stanger and Muden women, two general observations also arise. Despite continued challenges and difficulties in acquiring and utilizing land, both groups of women expressed unwavering interest in land ownership and the opportunity to incorporate land based activities into their livelihood strategies. In line with such determination, the women in this study appear to be making use of their land as best they can, be that through small-scale gardens or the security of property rights, with an ever-expanding awareness of the positive roles that land can play in their individual and household livelihood strategies.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

This dissertation explored “voices” of female land beneficiaries in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Specifically, the research undertaken in this paper sought to clarify the benefits, challenges, and overall experiences of two groups of female beneficiaries of the South Africa land reform program, LRAD. At the start of this thesis, it was proposed that three important areas of concern would be addressed over the course of this paper, based on the results obtained from the Muden and Stanger case studies. These concerns included questions regarding (i) livelihood strategies used to meet practical and strategic needs, (ii) forms of support available for land ownership, and (iii) women’s perceptions of the future, as well as an overall consideration for how such elements have affected women’s practical and strategic needs.

Through reflection on these elements and the perspectives provided by the women over the course of their workshops, it has become clear that the introduction of land and land ownership in these women’s lives has thus far had less of an impact than the DLA might have hoped. There are a myriad of factors that contribute to this result, and it is this amalgamation of elements in itself that is of central concern. What has become clear through this research is that the value and impact of land are intrinsically linked to the greater social and cultural structures in place within a community and that land is simply one element of a productive chain that requires both inputs and outputs in order to translate into the economic growth and poverty alleviation objectives central to DLA policy. When discrepancies arise between these factors and the requirements of women in utilizing their land, practical and strategic needs remain unmet.

### **7.1 Cultural and Social Norms**

While women’s access to land and the benefits it can bestow have certainly improved in Stanger, and to a lesser extent in Muden, they remain limited by lasting cultural and social barriers to women’s land ownership. Both groups of women expressed their dissatisfaction with existing cultural norms and the limited avenues through which they

could acceptably acquire land. Continuing systems of patriarchy that acknowledge women as owners of land only through their husband or male sons greatly obstruct female powers of negotiation and the strategic power derived from security and uncompromised access to land. As mentioned previously in this dissertation, it appears that women are well aware of the power gained through land ownership and the disadvantages of the patriarchal structures they inhabit, but have been unable to translate such awareness into action.

Although the DLA Gender Policy Framework announced efforts to address such limitations in 1997, little appears to have been done to rectify such issues in Muden and Stanger. If the DLA is to truly meet the goal of 30% land ownership through women, and not simply a female name on a titling deed, targeted efforts at educating both males and females in the rural areas must be undertaken. Additionally, as Muden exemplifies, the imposition of government structures (such as CPAs) on traditional bodies as means of combating such customs appears to disregard the importance that traditional powers continue to have within communities. Rather, the DLA may be wise to consider working within such structures to promote change. As Cross and Friedman (1997:17) suggest,

*Tenure is best understood as a social and political process rather than as a system of laws or rules. A large part of the content of tenurial systems is determined by the values of the community, by prevailing power relations and by unspoken assumptions about how people ought to act, and so never needs to be stated in the form of official rules. Because of tenure's base in unspoken social assumptions, it is not easy to attach gender disadvantage in tenure through legal processes.*

## **7.2 Emphasis on Multiple and Diversified Livelihoods**

Many of the PRA activities undertaken by the women exhibited their reliance on multiple livelihood strategies as both a response to limiting factors and an effort to ensure better household security. In an effort to respond to variability and build on complementarity, both the Stanger and Muden women engaged in reproductive tasks such as gathering

water, gathering wood, and cooking food, as well as productive strategies in the form of small scale gardening, poultry raising, beading, and many others. With the introduction of increased opportunities for land ownership, livelihood strategies have further diversified as women take on larger and more important roles. The negative effect of balancing so many tasks on women's ability to utilize land effectively cannot be underestimated. In the framework of a land reform policy that continues to promote land ownership as a means of increasing economic growth and scale, many women find their time too limited and their perspectives disregarded.

Therefore, such multiple livelihood strategies may require a broader conceptualization of land usage and the goals of land reform. As Hart (1996:269) mentioned in an argument cited previously in this dissertation, land reform may be better suited to support the multiple livelihood strategies of women through better understanding of the value of land beyond traditional conceptions of agriculture, considering elements such as secure housing and land as a form of risk reduction. Bryceson (2000:3) takes this argument even further, suggesting that policy must be more aware of and responsive to "de-agrarianisation." De-agrarianisation is the "long-term process of occupational adjustment, income earning reorientation, social identification and spatial relocation of rural dwellers away from strictly agricultural based modes of livelihood" (Bryceson, 2000:3). Although both the Muden and Stanger women appear to retain an active interest in agricultural livelihoods, if such livelihoods are adequately supported, their continued diversification in the face of reduced agricultural opportunities may warrant the consideration of "de-agrarianisation" in future land reform policy.

### **7.3 Support for Basic Services**

In considering women's practical and strategic needs, it has long been argued that the fulfillment of practical needs is often a requirement for the consideration and fulfillment of greater strategic needs. Even if land reform policy is able to address the two issues raised above and better accommodate women's strategic needs in new policy development, it will make little difference in their lives if the provision of basic services

continues to be poor. For both Muden and Stanger, although to a much greater extent in Muden, women were denied access to the most basic of needs such as water, energy sources, and seeds. There is a discord between the provision of land to such women, yet a continued denial of access to agricultural inputs or market outputs, and this discordance has rendered them unable to participate in the agricultural economy. For the many women uninterested in productive activity, such as those searching only to support their families, limited access to water can make even a small garden impossible.

These basic services challenges were continually reiterated by the women as their most important request and greatest need. While land without basic support in the form of water or seeds cannot secure a livelihood, according to the women, when such basic needs are met, land can be of great importance in improving individual and household livelihoods. This is supported by research from Andrews *et al* (2003: 5), which found that “where rural households have been able to access agricultural markets (for inputs and outputs) and the necessary support services (such as credit, information, technology, and support services) they have succeeded in overcoming the constraints evident in most communal areas and are producing for the market.” Such evidence makes it imperative that support services for female land beneficiaries be prioritized in land reform policy.

#### **7.4 Heterogeneity**

The vast differences between the Muden and Stanger women, as made apparent in this dissertation, along with the differences inherent within each of these communities, serve to underscore the importance of considering this data within the context of the complexity and diversity present within any group of women. Although the qualitative aspect of this study served well to illuminate differences in education level, household structures, environmental factors, and awareness of land reform issues and policies, there are certainly other differences that remain undiscovered. In considering ways to address the issues present above, it will remain important to understand and recognize that within women as a disadvantaged group, there remain certain individuals and households who are particularly vulnerable, for instance those with lower education levels or higher rates

of poverty. Any effort made to improve women's access to land and ability to use such land must consider utilizing different strategies to target these different groups. Otherwise, as Walker (2003: 122) suggests, "change will benefit predominately those already better off."

Despite such differences in the experiences of land ownership for the Stanger and Muden women, and the limitations to land ownership discussed thus far, it is important to note the positive sentiment that both groups of women brought to the workshops. Despite practical and strategic difficulties, the women exhibited high hopes for the future and a commitment toward efforts to improve their rights to land and access to basic services. Rather than denounce the opportunity for land ownership, many of the more vocal women, especially in Stanger, demonstrated resolve to continue to raise awareness regarding women's rights and to include larger segments of the female community in land ownership.

### **7.5 Recommendations:**

At the onset of South African land reform in 1997, the White Paper on South African Land Policy set forth that such policy should be directed by the objectives of: redressing the injustice of apartheid, fostering international reconciliation and stability, underpinning economic growth, and improving household welfare by alleviating poverty. Simultaneously, the Land Reform Gender Policy Framework aimed to "create an enabling environment for women to access, own, control, use and manage land as well as access to credit for the productive use of land" (DLA, 1997a: 2-3). Some ten years after the presentation of this policy framework, it appears that such objectives remain largely unmet in communities such as Stanger and Muden. This is not to suggest, however, that no improvements have been made. With the introduction of improved educational access and proximity to market opportunities in areas such as Stanger, women have made important strides in forming and articulating their rights and demands, and in some cases have used both social capital and sheer determination to make opportunities happen.



However, there remains significant room for improvement within South African land reform programs and policies, as well as within the broader context of social services and poverty alleviation in general, as it must be noted that land reform alone cannot address and reform all social ills. Based on the voices and experiences captured in this dissertation, the following recommendations are offered in an attempt to continue the improvement of women's livelihoods and status through land access and use:

- Consider the creation of 'Community Land Advisors'. The importance of and social capital inherent in having group and/or community members who are well educated, well-connected, and empowered is evident in the "champions" amongst the Stanger group of women. Through their exemplary efforts to better educate their peers and to support them in their push for equality and improved access, they contributed to the improvements of livelihoods for the greater group as a whole. The introduction of Community Land Advisors into rural women's groups and communities could serve to replicate such success throughout the KwaZulu-Natal Province.

Research completed previously by this author found great improvement in economic activity in the Luweero region of Uganda through the use of community forest advisors (CFAs) who assisted community members in the start-up and development of tree plantations for commercial sale. Through their consistent and established presence as a source of knowledge, inputs, and training within the community and as a local link to the larger National Agricultural Advisory Service these community advisors successfully led and oversaw the growth of many local forestry initiatives (Groth & Burger, 2007:1). They were also able to act as champions on behalf of their local communities at a higher governmental level. This model, focusing specifically on women, could be replicated through female land advisors to assist in addressing many of the challenges and needs brought forth in this paper.

- Land reform policies and discussions must be considered within the larger context of agrarian reform. As became apparent through the discussions with the women, land ownership alone cannot mitigate all of the factors that might contribute to poverty or economic exclusion. Rather, it can be an important element of a greater strategy that includes access to infrastructure, support services, and training. Similarly, land reform cannot be expected to address or rectify all the social and economic ills plaguing South Africa. Instead, land reform and its policies must be integrated into a broader agenda that considers and includes efforts from other branches of government such as the Department of Education and Department of Labour. A wider-ranging agrarian reform would be better able to address both the practical and strategic needs put forth by the women in this study as well as rectify the challenges they continue to face.

As Cousins (2005:225) has suggested, “many of the fundamentals of the [land reform] policy framework are ill-suited to the goal of poverty reduction.” The predominate shift from a poverty alleviation agenda to one focused on commercial economic activity has created a land reform policy that has failed to meet the needs of the Muden and Stanger women. Perhaps they would be better served by an agrarian reform agenda that is “concerned with a broader set of issues; the class character of the relations of production and distribution in farm and related enterprises, within both local and non-local markets, with economic and political power and wealth and the connections between them; its central focus is the political economic of land, agriculture, and natural resources” (Cousins, 2005:232).

- As Andrews *et al* (2003) suggest, efforts must be made to move from a dualistic approach to agriculture that considers land owners to be either commercial economic participants or subsistence land users, to one that considers land use across a broader spectrum. As the women in this study have shown, land is used in many forms, for many reasons, and the ways in which it is used are constantly evolving. Women like those in Stanger use land for both family food and market

purposes, and thus defy characterization under the traditional dualistic system. “The dualistic characterization of South African agriculture should be replaced by a ‘continuum of farmers’ approach that recognizes and supports a broad range of large and small-scale, full time and part time, as well as commercial, peasant, and subsistence farmers” (Andrews *et al*, 2003: 1). It is the view of this dissertation that in addition to such characterizations, women would also be served by the consideration of landowners who utilize land not for productive or reproductive purposes, but as a means of security that allows for them to branch into other economic opportunities.

While extensive limitations remain to women’s successful utilization of acquired land, improvements to some of women’s practical and strategic needs are self-evident. Through community and individual efforts, both the Stanger and Muden women represent a growing creativity in the utilization of land through multiple livelihood strategies and a growing voice to question the cultural and governmental constraints that have constricted their participation thus far. In recognizing this creativity and these voices, the Department of Land Affairs can make great strides towards fulfilling its goal of improved livelihoods through land acquisition.

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## Appendix 1

### 1. Gender and Livelihoods

In attempting to meet their practical and strategic needs, many studies have indicated that women involve themselves in multiple formal and informal economic activities. With the combination of migrant labor and increasing death toll due to HIV/AIDS, more and more women have become the sole caretakers of their families and female heads of household. This has led to an increasing need to diversify into multiple livelihood strategies in order to meet the challenge of ensuring their own and their children's survival. Sender (2002:7) asserts "data suggests that, in order to survive, many of the children and women in the 'lone parent' households must attempt to obtain income from a source other than the earnings of an adult male." This leads to women's pursuit of multiple livelihood strategies.

Women's contributions to the household span both the productive and reproductive spheres. Women are often solely responsible for housework and caring skills, including the collection of water and wood. They also play a significant role in agricultural production; although these roles are often undervalued, women as a group still receive less than 10% of the world's income (Weideman, 2004:6).

*These (women's) activities tend to be taken for granted and not brought into the discussion of economic policy. They are often thought of as 'social roles' rather than economic activities. But they are economic activities in the sense that they require the use of scarce resources; and in the sense that they provide vital inputs to the public and the private sectors of the economy. These activities are also gendered, in the sense that they are almost invariably regarded as a special responsibility of women"*

(Elson, 1997:8). Women participate in land preparation, planting, weeding, harvesting, and caring for animals, especially when these activities are undertaken for subsistence purposes. A study by Parpart & Staudt (1989) found that as both buyers of food staples

and as sole processors, as well as vendors, of food, African women are largely responsible for stimulating the growth in food production in many parts of the continent.

Outside of the reproductive sphere, women are increasingly engaged in formal and informal productive work. The “feminization” of the labor force can be seen throughout the world as women’s participation in waged labor increases despite their continued responsibility for all work within the reproductive sphere. This has led to what researchers term the “double burden” of women to meet their individual, and often household, economic needs through wage labor, while also attempting to maintain the reproductive responsibilities of cooking, cleaning, and caring for children and the elderly (Palmer, 1991; Collier, 1989). According to Palmer (1991:163), this burden acts as a “reproductive tax” on female labor, which limits the time available for women to participate in market activities, and often results in a concentration of women working within the “informal sector.” The 2000 South African national time use study undertaken by Statistics South Africa found that women spent 21% more time on productive activities than men although only 35% of women’s productive work counted towards national GDP (Casale & Posel, 2005:32). Between 1995 and 2003 more than 60% of the jobs held by women in South Africa were either self-employment or in the informal sector (Casale & Posel, 2005: 24).

Informal activities often include such things as weaving baskets, brewing beer, crafts, food vending, and prostitution. This type of work may take place on an individual level, but often women engage in collective income-generating activities, such as cooperatives, for both the economic and social benefits (Oberhauser, 1998:1). These collective efforts may range from commercial income generating groups to welfare collective seeking to improve quality of life. Many studies (Cross *et al*, 1996; Lipton *et al*, 1996; May *et al*, 1995) have found that participation within the informal economy becomes an important part of survival strategies when poverty is acute and that women in female headed households are more likely to be employed in the informal sector, suggesting that women may diversify into informal economic activity when their livelihoods are less secure. It is precisely this type of information that helps to elucidate the relationships between gender

and livelihoods, yet such informal roles remain difficult to calculate and impede an understanding of the true nature of women's work.

## **2. Land and Livelihoods**

### **2.1 The importance of land**

Possession of land conveys multiple benefits upon its owners. As a symbol of wealth and means of securing a livelihood, land is intimately linked to issues of identity and citizenship (Walker, 2003: 132). For those living on the margins, access to land may be the difference between food security and starvation and provide security in the face of hardship. At a national level, land holds significant political appeal when considering issues of economic production, inequality, and racial redress. Traditionally, the importance of land has been largely restricted to its role in agricultural pursuits, but as the literature reviewed will show, land is increasingly important in a non-agricultural context as well.

### **2.2 Multiple Livelihood Strategies**

The growing understanding of land's importance beyond simply a means of agricultural production is evident in the increasing diversity of non-agricultural livelihood strategies amongst rural households and land beneficiaries. It is currently estimated that 40% of rural household income is derived from non-agricultural activities such as small-scale trading, provision of services such as hairdressing, repair work, child-minding, and professional employment (Bryceson, 1999: 6). Issues such as dispossession, overcrowding, and landlessness in the former homeland have created a reality where reliance on farming alone is not a viable option for many South Africans (Cousins, 2005: 229). Land, according to Walker (2006: 133), "is less of a priority than jobs for most South Africans, yet significant, in absence of jobs, in contributing to what is now commonly described as the 'multiple livelihood strategies' of the poor." It is also argued by Barrett (2001) that the high dependence of rural households on non-agricultural incomes is in response to the meager or non-existent safety nets offered by governments and relief agencies (Barrett, 2001: 12). While these "push factors," as Barrett terms them, help to improve risk reduction, the expansion into multiple livelihood strategies is also a

result of “pull factors” such as realizing how two activities can be complimentary and more economically beneficial (Barrett, 2001: 1). This is further emphasized by Start and Johnson (2004:25) who suggest that three broad factors explain the decision to engage in multiple livelihood strategies: predicting risk and uncertainty, responding to variability and discontinuity, and building on complementarity.

The livelihood strategies exhibited by rural South Africans vary tremendously, and may include such activities as agriculture on different scales, formal employment, remittances, welfare transfers, and micro-enterprise. Activities such as the harvesting and sale of natural resources also play an important role, but have frequently been overlooked (Shackleton *et al*, 2000). Research amongst rural landowners has found them to be far from homogenous. Rather, rural households are socially and economically differentiated and pursue different livelihood strategies as a result (Cousins, 2005: 229). However, the increasing prevalence of multiple livelihoods is not a South African phenomenon, but rather an adaptive response to the increasingly competitive and unprofitable nature of agriculture and the high levels of poverty present in many communities. As Gillian Hart notes:

*The perpetuation of multiple, spatially-extended livelihood strategies and efforts to retain a secure base is not just an apartheid hangover, destined to disappear in the context of political and economic liberalization. Nor are these patterns in any way peculiar to South Africa. Rather, they are defining feature of late 20<sup>th</sup> century capitalism, exemplifying the fiscal crisis of the nation state and its retreat from welfare provision.*

(Hart, 1996:269 as cited in Cousins, 2005: 230). It is in this context that many have argued for a conceptualization of land and land reform that supports such multiple livelihood strategies through enhancing understanding of the value of land apart from agriculture and including issues such as livelihoods, secure housing, and a social wage (Hart, 1996:269). The multiple and diverse character of livelihoods of the rural poor must be placed at the center of policy (Andrew *et al* (2003) cited in Cousins, 2005: 236).

### **2.3 Livelihoods and Land Reform**

In order to improve the livelihoods of the poor and disadvantaged, especially women, land policies must consider the multiple uses of land and its broadening role as a political and economic support, rather than simply a mode of agricultural production. “Rural development programs focused on improving the output and productivity of agriculture and natural resource use. . . will not reduce poverty on their own” (Cousins, 2005: 232). Focusing solely on the improvement of agriculture ignores the variety of activities that the rural poor are engaged in and defines them in terms of an increasingly unproductive field. Focusing only on agriculture is also inconsistent with the land requests of rural households. Previous research has shown that the size of land most desired is 2-5 ha (Nkuzi Development Association). A survey in the mid 1990s found that of the 68% of poor rural black South Africans who wanted land, most wanted very small parcels and half wanted one hectare or less (Marcus *et al*, 1996 cited in Hall, 2004: 222). This suggests that most rural households see land as a means of increasing or continuing the subsistence agriculture component of their livelihood strategy, rather than focusing solely on agriculture within their household. In this regard, Cousins (2005: 236) suggests that a land reform program that will effectively consider the multiple livelihoods of the rural poor must be embedded within a larger agrarian reform, which includes access to infrastructure for irrigation and transport, support services, and training. Agrarian reform would also include significant state support for DLA programs and beneficiaries, and place the multiple livelihoods of the poor at the center of policy.

Yet, recent research shows that agricultural support programs at both the national and provincial level are poorly aligned with LRAD and that inadequate resources have been devoted to such support (Cousins, 2005: 224). The National Department of Land Affairs has through policy and legislation deemed itself non responsible for post-settlement support. Rather, it has stipulated that such support is the responsibility of provincial governments. According to Weideman (2004:24), “the Redistribution Programme was very weak in building links with local and provincial government that were supposed to provide beneficiaries with extension services and so on.” As Hall (2004: 220) suggests,



South Africa has attempted to implement “big policy” with a “shrinking state” and consequentially has not been able to provide the “substantial investments needed to provide investment in infrastructure, extension services, access to inputs including credit, and access to markets - what has been termed ‘post-transfer support.’”

## **2.4 International Comparison**

International studies regarding gender and land, and the attempts to improve women’s livelihoods on land illustrate both the challenges and successes of such reforms. Funk’s 1988 study of Guinea Bissau explored societies within Africa that grant equal land rights to men and women. As consequence of this arrangement, Funk (1988) found exceptionally high levels of food security in these communities due to the fact that both men and women were guaranteed land access if they wanted to farm. Funk (1988) showed that giving women and men equal access to land resulted in a high degree of food security even in the face of a low standard of living and chronic food shortages at the national level.

However, a study by Goheen (1988) in Cameroon found that the implementation of land reform projects increased the focus of agriculture of commercial production and thereby tended to exclude women. Goheen (1988:104) also found that women were generally excluded from resources, such as credit, that might have enhanced their productive abilities, and that such exclusions had made it difficult for women to utilize their land for purposes beyond subsistence agriculture.

These needs are reiterated by Barbara Thomas-Slayters (2001) work which considered the elements necessary for women to contribute to rural development initiatives. She found the effectiveness of extension services and training to be central to women’s success. The Women Agricultural Development Project in Malawi was able to reorganize its services and provide gender-specific training in order to achieve the full integration of women into its project. Using data they had collected, the project performed a “reorientation based around the training and extension needs of women farmer” (Thomas-Slaters & Sodikoff, 2001: 50).

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## Appendix II

### 1 Focus Group Demographics

In considering the themes discussed in this paper, it is important to have an accurate understanding of the participants in order to contextualize the answers and responses they provided during the PRA workshops. The examination of the demographics of the participants presented below serves as such a reference point and provides background for consideration of discussions presented in Chapters Six through Eight.

#### 1.1 Mudén

Of the 16 women participating in the Mudén workshop, 15 were willing to fill out background forms. One of the women was unwilling to fill out a form citing time constraints and needing to leave early. The average age of the women was 35.2 years, with the youngest participant being 25 years and the oldest 65 years. All of the women indicated themselves to be African and eleven were of a Christian religious background. Of the remaining four, three indicated their religion to be Nazareth and one was a Jehovah's Witness. The household sizes of the women participating varied widely from as few as two members to as many as eight, with an average household size of four members. Questions regarding household head illustrate the preponderance of female-headed households in the Mudén area as eleven of the women classified themselves as heads of household, while three identified themselves as the wives of the head of household, and one chose not to answer. Despite the large number of women indicating themselves as household head, almost half (6) said that they were married. In one case this discrepancy can be explained by the explanation of being married but living separately, however, in the other cases it may be that there is a high level of migrant labor or that the women misunderstood the question<sup>10</sup>. Regardless of the reason for the discrepancy, it suggests the concept of "household head" may itself be foreign or confusing to these rural

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<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that such conclusions can be drawn only with regard to the women participating as they cannot be considered representative of all female land beneficiaries due to the small sample size and self-selection.

respondents. As discussed in a StatSA article regarding household headship, “The term head of household is used to cover a number of different concepts referring to the chief economic provider, the chief decision-maker, etc... and leaves room for subjective interpretation” (Hedman et al, 1996:64).

Education levels amongst the women varied. Five of the women had completed their secondary education, one of which had obtained a diploma, and a further five had some secondary education. However, four of the women had less than a primary education, with three having no years of schooling at all. Interestingly, these education levels do not correlate to age, with several of the younger women having no schooling and several of the older women having obtained matric. Unsurprisingly, more than half of the women were unemployed (8) in the formal economy and eight of the households had no working members.<sup>11</sup> Such low employment levels emphasize the importance of land for subsistence purposes. Nine of the women were receiving income through social assistance grants, primarily child support grants, with an average of R348/month received. Based on 2006 child support grant amounts of R190, this suggests an average of at least two children under the age of 14 years per household. Additionally, four of the women received remittances from migrated family members/friends with an average amount of R367/month.

## **1.2 Stanger**

Sixteen women participated in the Stanger workshop and filled out background forms regarding their demographics and activities with regard to land. The average age of the women participating was 46 years, but varied from as young as 29 years to as old as 65 years. All of the women classified themselves as African, and the majority (12) indicated that they were Christian. Two of the women also subscribed to a traditional religion. The household size for the women in the Stanger area was far from homogenous. While several women indicated only themselves and a child as residing in the household, others had households of 12+ members. Although the women at the Stanger workshop can be considered a small self-

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<sup>11</sup> Although the women meet the traditional definition of unemployment, as land owners they most certainly engage in forms of informal employment, including, but not limited to, basic agriculture.

selecting sample of women in the Stanger area in general, of those attending and being willing to indicate a household head seven of the eight were heads of their households. Although the unwillingness to identify a household head was not explored in depth, it was most likely a result of the tension between the women's primary roles as producers for their households and continuing traditional notions that a male must fulfill the household head role. It is interesting to note, however, that such hesitation was not present amongst the Muden participants. Additionally, only two of the women who indicated themselves as household heads were married. The rest were either single or divorced. This suggests that access to land may be reaching those single females who were previously denied land because they did not have a husband.

Education levels amongst the women were surprisingly high. One woman possessed a degree, while a further three possessed a diploma. Only one of the women indicated having no education at all, while the rest had completed some primary and secondary education. This suggests the women, though admittedly a small sample, had much higher education levels in comparison to provincial statistics provided by StatSA. Province-wide, one in four women has never attended school (24.6%), while only one of the women in the Stanger focus group and three in the Muden group had no education (StatsSA, 2006:54). While the majority of the women in the focus group had completed some secondary schooling, only 27% of women have done so on a provincial level (StatSA, 2006:54). Eleven of the women are currently receiving social assistance grants, most predominately child support grants averaging R691 a month. Only two of the women suggested they are also able to supplement their incomes through remittances, and neither indicated the amount they currently receive.

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## Appendix III

### Activity Profiles: Muden

#### Older women:

- 4am Sleeping/waking up  
Make a fire  
Boil water for kids for bathing and tea  
Go fetch water from river 1-3km  
Wake up the kids and husband  
Prepare kids for school
- 8am clean the house  
Wash yourself  
Brush teeth  
Eat breakfast-tea and bread or leftovers
- 11am-2pm Cook lunch for family  
Do laundry-hand wash in the river  
Fetch firewood  
Work in the fields –older girls help
- 3-4pm Back home dishing for the kids  
Prepare kids uniforms for the next day
- 4-5pm Cook dinner  
Wash the kids
- 7pm eat dinner  
Listen to the radio  
Help kids with homework where possible  
Prepare beds for sleeping for kids
- 9-10pm wash yourself  
Brush teeth  
Sleeping

Other activities: taking medication, buy groceries once a month, taking kids to the clinic or hospital, attending a school meeting, visiting neighbors, going to church

#### Younger women

- 6-7:30 make fire  
Warm the water  
Fetch water for livestock  
Wash your face  
Prepare food  
Wash children prepare them to go  
Make a lunch for the employed
- 7:30 go to the river to fetch water  
Clean the house

Drink a tea  
 Do washing  
 Collect firewood  
 Cook lunch  
 12:30 eat lunch  
 Garden  
 Fetch water from the river  
 Cook food  
 Wash water to wash yourself  
 Wash the whole family  
 Eat supper  
 Do children's homework  
 8pm sleep

### **Activity Profiles Stanger**

#### **All**

**5am-** Awake and pray  
 Make the bed  
 Take a bath and sometimes use coal to brush teeth (whitener)  
 Prepare lunch boxes for kids  
 Make breakfast for the family  
 After everyone has gone to school or work, start with daily chores  
 Tend to the garden at home  
 Work in the crop fields  
**1pm** Start cooking sugar beans, which is a low and slow boiling process and takes 4-5 hours  
 While beans boil do laundry for the family  
 Collect firewood  
**5pm** Take a bath  
 Go to prayer meeting or work on handy-craft  
 Supper  
 Bed Time

### **Wealth Categorizations: Muden**

- a) **There are those who are doing well (category 1)**
  - a. Have their own cars
  - b. Have their own farms
  - c. Employ helpers/assistance
  - d. Have beautiful houses



- e. Own taxis/shops
- f. Are able to send their kids to the private schools, even outside the country, in order to get a better education
- g. Electricity
- h. Employed-professional
- i. Have enough nice food
- j. Have toilets indoors
- k. Dress nicely
- l. Queen, double, and single beds

**b) Those who can manage (Category 2)**

- a. Nice houses
- b. Own cars
- c. Livestock
- d. Large piece of arable land
- e. Be able to pay school fees for their kids
- f. Own electrical generator
- g. Tractor
- h. Employed or self-employed-professional
- i. Use gas stove
- j. Double beds and single

**c) Those who have something (Category 3)**

- a. Own a solid house
- b. Use solar energy
- c. Employed/semi skilled
- d. Little livestock like goats/chickens
- e. Be able to send children to the local school
- f. Use paraffin for light
- g. A small plot for vegetables
- h. Old single bed/mattresses

**d) Those who cannot manage (Category 4)**

- a. House is almost falling down
- b. Use candles for light or firewood
- c. No school uniforms for children
- d. No food-ask neighbors for food
- e. No shoes for their kids
- f. Sleeps on mats/animal skins

**Wealth Categorizations: Stanger**

**1. Those who are doing well:**

- a. Home

- b. Expensive car
- c. Massive land
- d. Children go to better schools
- e. Fat bank accounts
- f. Sustainable investments
- g. Property
- h. Tractors
- i. Equipment
- j. Self employed
- k. Have maids
- l. Take holidays

**2. Those who can manage:**

- a. Decent home
- b. Average car
- c. Average land
- d. Children go to public schools
- e. Employed
- f. Average furniture

**3. Those who have something:**

- a. RDP homes
- b. Informal settlement
- c. Use paraffin stoves
- d. Their children walk long distances to school, sometimes without shoes
- e. Some leave home and live in shacks close to town in search of jobs

**4. Those who cannot manage:**

- a. Homeless
- b. Beg for food
- c. No clothes
- d. Leave homes to cities in search of a better life and end up homeless on the streets
- e.

**Timeline: Muden**

How was your land before it was taken to you in 1987?

- In 1987 there were big floods, bridges were broken down and houses were broken
- In 1983-drought
- IN 1990's political violence-soil erosion
- In 1994-First democratic elections- could access previously white owned places
- In 1995-Land negotiation and application
- In 1996- Farms were transferred
- In 2002-Foot disease and cattle died, major outbreak of HIV related deaths
- In 2005- major hail storm that destroyed livestock and crops houses soil, trees

## **Pairwise Ranking: Mudén**

### Six problems related to land

- 1) Lack of water
- 2) Lack of inputs
- 3) Lack of resources
- 4) Lack of department of agricultural support
- 5) Too much open access which results in impounding cattle
- 6) Lack of markets

### Pairwise ranking of problems

1. Lack of water more important than lack of inputs
2. Lack of water more than lack of resources to fence
3. Lack of water more than lack of Dept. Agri support
4. Lack of water more than too much open access
5. Lack of water more than lack of markets
6. Lack of inputs more than lack of resources to fence
7. Lack of inputs more than lack of Dept. of Agric support
8. Lack of inputs more than too much open access
9. Lack of inputs more than lack of markets
10. Lack of resources to fence more than lack of agric support
11. Lack of resources to fence more than too much open access
12. Lack of resources to fence more than lack of markets
13. Open access more than lack of agric support
14. Lack of markets more than lack of agric support
15. Open access more than lack of markets

### Problem ranking:

1. Lack of water =5
2. Lack of inputs=4
3. Lack of fencing resources=3
4. Open access=2
5. Lack of markets=1
6. Lack of agric support=0

