

**CHANGING ROLES OF WOMEN IN
HOUSING PROCESSES AND
CONSTRUCTION: THE CASE OF
LOBATSE TOWNSHIP, BOTSWANA**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores variations and shifts in gender roles in housing delivery and the construction. Although presently excluded from construction activities, women have in the past constituted substantial proportions of builders in many countries worldwide. In parts of sub-Saharan Africa, for example, women have traditionally been responsible for building house. However, recent studies and reports indicate that women in Botswana and other countries in the region are grossly underrepresented in construction activities. The few women currently employed in the construction industry work mostly as labourers.

Boserup and other scholars have attributed the gendered division of labour to economic development, technological changes, patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism or modernisation. Based on qualitative and quantitative studies undertaken in the township of Lobatse, Botswana, and adopting a pluralistic and holistic approach, I however posit that gender roles and relations are outcomes of negotiation and normalisation processes through which men and women (as individuals or in groups) use their power and positions in society to access and control resources and services. The outcomes and negotiation processes are themselves conditioned by a web of interacting and intersecting historical, social, economic, political and environmental factors.

I further argue that in the context of Botswana, traditional gender roles were shaped by prevailing patriarchal ideologies and institutions, the country's fragile environment, subsistence modes of production, and frequent intertribal wars that characterised the region. However, men's takeover of housing and construction activities that emerged during the colonial period was due to the intersection of Western influences, men's temporary migrations to South Africa, commoditisation of labour and the introduction of the market economy. Women's exclusion from the construction industry has since been

entrenched through the atrophication of women's traditional building skills caused by widespread preferences for exogenous building materials and Western style houses. Due to lack of non-traditional building skills, women have been forced to work as labourers in the waged construction industry or as unpaid managers, supervisors and caterers in self-help housing. Robbed of their ability to build houses, women have been obliged to negotiate new gender relationships and strategies for accessing and owning houses.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late mother,
Maria Thereza Mukebiita,
With everlasting love,
May God rest your soul in eternal peace!

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the whole of this thesis, except where acknowledged in the text, is my own original work. All sources quoted or paraphrased have been duly acknowledged.



Faustin Tirwirukwa Kalabamu

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As usual, I take responsibility for all the defects and inadequacies in this work.

Faustin Kalabamu
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PREFACE

This thesis presents various pieces of research work which, technically speaking, started in 1995 when Professor Musyoki invited me to undertake a joint research on access to urban housing by women in Botswana with her. Through readings and interviews with respondents, it became apparent to me that, contrary to findings from studies on rural housing, people in Lobatse did not physically participate in the construction of their houses. More striking was the realisation that, although rural women were reportedly leaders in the house building process, women in Lobatse were virtually excluded in the same process. However, some men took part in the construction of houses, which was again contrary to reported practice in Botswana's rural areas.

I then decided to carry out a mini study to explore whether the exclusion of women in building activities was limited to self-help housing or extended to commercial or waged construction industry. Results of the study showed that although women were perceived as reliable and efficient employees, contractors in the waged construction industry preferred employing male over female workers. Furthermore, the research revealed that women were mostly employed in times of male labour shortage and were the first to be retrenched when workloads shrunk. The few women employed in the industry were young school dropouts in their late teens or early twenties. Most of them were rural urban migrants with relatively poor parents and relatives. The majority of these female workers in the construction industry were employed as manual labourers and a few as cleaners and painters. A very tiny minority of slightly educated women were employed as clerks-of-work.

During the above-mentioned research on access to urban housing by women, it was revealed that none of the women respondents had actually participated in the building of their homesteads although 25% of the male respondents said they had done so. A few questions remained unanswered though. Why don't urban women build houses as their counterparts do in rural areas? Are women just by-standers and watchers as men build homes? What are women's contributions in terms of ideas, decision-making, finance etc in the self-help housing process? The basis of these questions is the assumption that women must have developed new, probably invisible, roles in the housing and construction processes. These unanswered questions led me to undertake a wider and more comprehensive study on gender roles in the construction industry using both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

The work presented in this thesis has benefited substantially from participants at workshops, seminars and conferences where my preliminary ideas were questioned, critiqued and refined including peer reviewers of the following articles and works:

- 1 (1996) "Women Labour in the Construction Industry in Lobatse, Botswana" *African Urban Quarterly* Vol. II Nos. 1 and 2, pp 48-54
- 2 (1998) "Gender Neutral Housing Delivery Systems: A Critical Analysis of Housing in Botswana" in Larsson et al. (Editors) *Changing Gender Relations in Southern Africa: Issues of Urban Life*. Institute of Southern Africa Studies, Lesotho pp.56-76

- 3 (2001) "From Builders to Unskilled Labourers" in Assefa, T., Rugumamu, S.M., and Ahmed, A.G.M. *Globalization, Democracy and Development in Africa*. OSSREA, Addis Ababa pp. 327-346
- 4 (2001) "Housing Delivery Systems in Botswana: The Inadequacy of Gender Neutral Policies" in Rwomire, A T (Editor) *African Women and Children: Crisis and Response*. Praeger, Westport, pp 205 – 224
- 5 (2001) "Westernisation of Gender Roles in House Construction in Botswana" *Third World Planning Review*. Vol. 23 No. 3 pp. 301-322
- 6 (2003) "An Exploration into Changing Gender Roles in Self-help Housing Construction" in Larsson, A., Mapetla, M., and Schlyter, A. *Gender and Urban Housing in Southern Africa-Emerging Issues*", Institute of Southern Africa Studies, Lesotho pp.46-73
- 7 (2003) *Changing Gender and Institutional Roles in Self-help Housing in Botswana*. Institute of Southern Africa Studies, Roma
- 8 (2004) "Changing gender roles in house construction in East and Southern Africa: the case of Botswana" in Clarke L., Pedersen E F, Michielsens E, Susman B and Wall C (Editors) *Women in Construction*. CLR Studies, Bruxelles., pp.50-63
- 9 (2005) "Changing Gender Contracts in Self-help Housing Construction in Botswana: the case of Lobatse" *Habitat International* Vol. 29 No. 2 pp. 245-268
- 10 (Inprint) "Patriarchy and Women's Land Rights in Botswana" *Land Use Policy*.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The main goal of this thesis is to explore women's roles and shifts in gender roles with respect to housing delivery and construction activities with particular reference to Botswana and the Township of Lobatse. It seeks to identify factors and conditions which have made it possible for women to be engaged in construction work in certain countries, communities and periods but only to be excluded later from the core of the construction activities. While women have been able to enter and exit various sectors (e.g. manufacturing and agriculture) in many countries, it seems the universal tendency has been to increasingly exclude women from the core activities of the construction industry and/or to delegate them to manual work. Although the construction industry is one of the largest sectors in many developed and developing economies, female employees in the sector are in the minority (when compared to male employees). This is so even in countries such as Botswana, Lesotho and parts of Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Kenya where they used to be in the majority. The thesis attempts to explore these issues in order to enhance our understanding of the causes, intricacies and effects of the gendered nature of housing delivery and construction processes. 'Housing delivery and construction process' is here used as shorthand for all activities involved in the formulation of policies, programmes and projects as well as the planning, design, financing, assembly of building materials and labour, erection, servicing, maintenance and administration of residential properties. However, the definition of 'construction industry' is limited to design, management of construction site and erection of buildings as well as production and transport of building materials, plant and equipment (Clarke et al., 2004:8).

This chapter provides a global view of past and present roles of men and women in house building and construction work before it highlights the objectives and questions to be addressed in the thesis. It then presents definitions of key terms, concepts and terminologies followed by the research and data collection approaches used in several studies on which the thesis is based. The last section presents the organisation of the thesis.

1.1.1 Gendered division of labour and women's role in housing and the construction industry

The purpose of this section is to present an overview of the relationships between socio-economic development and changes in the division of labour between men and women as a global and regional context within which changes in women's role in housing and the construction industry in Botswana, and Lobatse in particular, will be analysed and contrasted. It notes that, except in Asia where women work in large numbers as labourers on construction sites, men dominate the construction industry in most parts of the world including Botswana where women played a dominant role in the past.

1.1.2 Shifts in the gender division of labour

As argued by Boserup (1970 and 1990) in her ground breaking works, the roles of men and women tend to change as societies transform from one mode of production to the other. Changes in gender roles are often accompanied by a multitude of social, political, demographic, geographic and human relationships as well as behaviour, beliefs and sometimes religion. Boserup notes that due to lack of labour specialisation, hunter-gatherer communities did not define or assign specific roles to either men or women. She, however, observes that under shifting cultivation, women's roles tended to be confined to reproductive tasks (including housekeeping, food processing, cooking and nursing the sick and the elderly) while men specialised in hunting and warfare (Boserup, 1970:15-35). Further, Boserup argues that labour specialisation, economic development and technological improvements sharpen the distinction between male and female roles to the extent that members of any given community tend to believe that their particular sexual division of labour is the natural one because it "may have undergone little or no change for generations, other communities may have completely different ways of dividing the burden of work among the sexes, and they too, may find their ways just as natural" (Boserup, 1970:15).

Boserup's arguments have since been criticised on several grounds. First, as de Groot (1991) observes, gender roles and relations do not change automatically as societies transform from one mode of production to another. Gender roles and relations are, in practice, shaped by class and community solidarities and conflicts, men's and women's interests, men's power and kinship relations as well as state interventions (or lack of it) in everyday life (de Groot, 1991: 122). Second, as Pearson (1998) notes, changes in gender roles are neither linear unidirectional nor universal. For example, while industrialisation led to the exclusion of women from waged employment in Europe, it had the opposite effect in Asia and Central America. The establishment of labour intensive industries in Asia and Central America created more jobs for women than men. For over three decades these industries have been producing clothing and electronic goods for export mainly to Europe and North America. Furthermore, according to Irwin and Bottero (2000), the recent shift from manufacturing to service sector as the dominant employer in Europe has led to more job opportunities for women than men to the extent that by the 1980s dual earner families became the majority group among two-parent families. In the meantime, industrialisation has not created jobs for women in sub-Saharan Africa (Pearson, 1998:174). Third, and contrary to the above views, women in sub-Saharan Africa have increasingly taken over roles that were traditionally undertaken by men as noted by Lado (1992), Eldredge (1993) and Blackden and Bhanu (1999). Men have reportedly been unwilling or unable to take part in 'women's work' except in instances where such work carries monetary remuneration or involves use of modern machinery. Instead, African men have been drawn into new sectors such as cash crop farming, mining, manufacturing, commerce and transport at the exclusion of women.

Changes in gender roles have had profound effects on social structures - especially on women and family forms. While the nineteenth century exclusion of women from waged employment in Europe is said to have preserved tradition, culture and families, twentieth century gender equalisation is accused of tearing them up by promoting individualism and commoditisation of female labour (Irwin and Bottero, 2000: 262).

Other effects recently noted in Western countries include increasing trends to defer the timing of family formation, declines in fertility, a growing incidence of childlessness, rising divorce and an increase in lone parenthood. In sub-Saharan Africa, shifts in the gender roles have also impacted negatively on family forms and women's well being. According to Blackden and Bhanu (1999) and Lado (1992), changes in gender roles have disrupted the complementarities and sharing of responsibilities that traditionally existed between men and women in rural Africa. Second, due to prolonged men's absence from homes while in urban, farm and mine employment, women's workload is said to have increased forcing them to work longer hours each day. Third, due to separate living – men in town and women in villages – women have less access to men's incomes and resources (Blackden and Bhanu, 1999). In short, while women in sub-Saharan Africa “carry a heavier load in production and reproduction, they do not enjoy similar rights in terms of access to resources ... and they do not enjoy similar rights in decision-making processes” (Meena, 1992:12).

The following four sections provide a comparative overview of changes in gender roles within the construction industry in Europe, United States, Asia, Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa as a prelude to examining the situation in Botswana.

1.1.3 Women's employment in the construction industry in Western countries with special reference to Britain, Sweden and Denmark

Clarke et al (2004) observe that although the construction industry is the single biggest industrial employer and one of the major contributors to the gross domestic product (GDP) in many Western countries, it is the most male dominated industry as well. In most Western countries, women are grossly underrepresented in all these construction activities. In the United States, women make up about 2.4% of all skilled workers in the construction industry (Clarke et al, 2004; Eisenberg, 2004; and Price, 2004)

In the European Union where construction accounted for 8% of total employment in the region, women constituted only 8.6% of all employees in the construction industry with Germany (13.2%) and Switzerland (12.2%) having the highest female employment in their national construction sectors; Greece (1.7%), Portugal (4.4%), Ireland (5.0%) and Spain (5.2%) having the lowest representation of women; and other countries (e.g. France, UK, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Italy) having between 6 and 10% of women employees in the construction industry (Michielsens et al, 2004: 81-82).

Michielsens et al (2004) observe that the majority of women working in the construction industry in most countries within the European Union are administrators, technicians and professionals rather than tradeswomen – except in Denmark where 33% of painters are women. According to Clarke et al (1999: 139), “there are more women working in painting than the other skilled construction trades because painting has only a weak association with societal notions of ‘masculinity’, compared with, say bricklaying”. In Britain, for example, 78% of women employed in the construction industry are engaged in administrative work (Michielsens et al, 2004: 82). Furthermore, women constitute less than 6% of construction staff that are in the professional and managerial levels of the industry (Greed, 2000: 181-182). The

following sub-section sheds light on the evolution of women in Britain and Swedish construction trades – evolutions that are remarkably similar to other countries in the region.

Although, according to Clarke and Wall, the building industry (together with agriculture) was one of the sectors where waged labour emerged and became established in Britain more than seven centuries ago, “it remains an almost exclusively white male preserve [and] the most segregated sector in the economy” (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 24). Despite this observation, Clarke and Wall note that there have been periods in the British history when women had a significant presence in the construction trades – especially during the feudal era and in times of war.

According to Clarke and Wall (2004), women’s participation rates in the building trades during the feudal era were as high as 10%. Girls accounted for about 34% of parish apprentices in parts of England between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, women appeared on building sites as labourers carrying sand and lime, gravel and mortar and also as material suppliers. However, the 1814 repeal of the Statute of Artificers which had hitherto allowed females to be admitted into the apprenticeship system and to practice their trades upon successful completion, resulted in virtually all ‘male’ trades (including carpentry, bricklaying, plumbing, painting and glazing) becoming more male dominated and ‘female’ trades (e.g. dressmaking and ribbon making) becoming more heavily female (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 29-30).

The masculinisation of trades was accompanied by a shrinkage in the range of occupations open to women to the extent that only five out of 75 trades in some parts of England were mixed, the remaining 70 being totally segregated (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 30). Besides the repeals of wage fixing and apprenticeship clauses of Statute of Artificers in 1814, the exclusion of women from most trades was exercised through trade union rules that regulated entry into the industry through apprenticeship. The policy of all trade unions was to exclude or segregate women on the fear that they might undermine the standard wages that men negotiated during times of labour shortage such as wars (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 32-33). The standard wages being then defined as the wage paid to a married male worker and which is adequate to raise a family (Irwin and Bottero, 2000; and Clarke and Wall, 2004). Thus while men became bread earners, women became unpaid household workers and constituted the majority (up to 80% by 1890s) of able-bodied paupers on outdoor relief (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 33).

During the first half of the twentieth century, according to Clarke and Wall (2004), a significant number of women trained and worked in the British construction industry only during the first and second world wars – although employers were initially reluctant to take them on and trade unions strongly resisted the idea. Soon after the First World War, “the majority of women were ejected from their jobs and directed back to traditional employment ... mainly in domestic service, shop work and clerical jobs” (Clarke and Wall, 2004). Only painters and decorators were able to retain their jobs in substantial numbers. However, after the Second World War many women, besides painters and decorators, retained their jobs in the construction industry much as they were a cause of friction and uncertainty among male union members.

Between 1951 and 1961, the proportion of women as a percentage of British building workforces increased from 0.74% to 1.0% but had declined to 0.7% in 1971 (Clarke and Wall, 2004: Table 2). Despite the passing of the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and Equal Opportunity policies aimed at recruiting women into areas where they were underrepresented, women's employment rates in the construction trades has remained low – at about 0.2% - due to peer pressure, lack of information and employer prejudices (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 41-43).

According to Olofsson (2004), until the end of the nineteenth century women in Sweden were commonly found on construction sites as bricklayers' mates. They worked as unskilled labourers (and were paid low wages) because the apprenticeship training system was not open to women. However, due to industrialisation and the introduction of new labour wages at the beginning of the twentieth century, women "disappeared from the actual work of building and went to another heavy job – cleaning buildings" for which no qualifications were required (Olofsson, 2004:122 and 124). 'Mine girls' disappeared from mining sites in the same way about the same time (ibid.).

Since the 1970s, the Swedish government has offered incentives in the form of extra points to vocational students who choose unconventional occupations. However, "once women have been trained as building crafts persons, firms have only occasionally been willing to employ them ... management seldom permits more than one woman to work on any one site" (Olofsson, 2004:125). To date, building contractors are dominated by men and women constitute 1-2% of the labour at building sites in which they are represented (ibid.). Olofsson (2004) attributes the low numbers and rates of women in the construction industry in Sweden to three factors: the exclusion of women in the apprenticeship training system; reluctance of building firms to employ women; and lack of facilities, practical rules and language used at building sites.

Clarke et al (1999: 142-143) note that although women make up about 59% of the labour market in Denmark, they account for only 1% the construction sector workers. However, the majority of women are concentrated in the painting trade where their proportion has risen steadily from 1% at the beginning of the 19th century to 15% after the Second World War and to 27% by 1998 (Clarke et al, 1999: 143). Clarke et al (1999:143) further note that over the years the "proportion of female brick layers [in Denmark] has also risen slowly ... whilst the proportion of [female] carpenters, plumbers and electricians has been volatile and has – in the case of carpenters – even fallen." Clarke et al (1999:143) attribute women's inroads into the construction sector in Denmark to "the chance to earn a 'male' wage, the high levels of satisfaction that can be gained from creating a physical product and the greater autonomy in the workplace"

1.1.4 Women in the construction industry in developing countries

According to Wells (2004) and Moser and Peake (1987), rates of women in waged employment in the construction industry in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa are very low – averaging 5.5% for most countries for which data are available. In both regions women constitute less than 0.5% of the total production labour force in the construction industry. Moser and Peake (1987) note that women's participation in

mutual self-help housing delivery systems is slightly more visible in the supply of some building materials (mainly hand made concrete blocks) and community organisation than in the trades.

However, unlike Western countries, Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa where women are excluded from and invisible in the construction industry, women outnumber men at construction sites in Asia. According to Wells, in Thailand, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka women account for 95%, 88% and 78%, respectively, of all employees undertaking production work in the construction industry (Wells, 2004: 67-68). Despite being visible at construction sites, women account for a small proportion (about 14.6%) of all people employed in the construction industry in Asia - at least 19.4% in China, 17.9% in Thailand, 12.2% in Sri Lanka and 5.7% in India. Again, unlike Western countries where women are employed in administrative, technical and professional work, women in Asia are generally employed as labourers or helpers at construction and building material sites. In these countries, women constitute

“the bottom end of the job hierarchy, as unskilled workers and head-load carriers. They undertake some of the hardest and most arduous tasks... [and] are paid less than men undertaking similar tasks. Sometimes they are not paid at all, as in many cases payment is made to the husband” (Wells, 2004: 66).

Wells (2004) attributes Asia's exceptionality to the caste system, which undervalues women and female labour; dependence on labour intensive technology in the construction industry; as well as widespread poverty and landlessness among men and women in the subcontinent. Ongulana et al. (1993) attribute women's preference for construction work in Thailand to higher wages compared to other manual work in the country's rural areas.

1.1.5 Men and women in non-waged house building and the construction industry in sub-Saharan Africa

‘Non-waged house building and construction’ is here used to refer to erection of houses using household labour although non-household labour may also be utilised for free or on reciprocal basis. It is almost synonymous with self-built housing. In contrast, ‘waged house building and construction’ is, in this thesis, used to refer erection of houses using paid employees (engineers, artisans and labourers). As noted earlier, the number and proportion of women in the waged construction industry in Africa is very low. Furthermore, sub-Saharan Africa lacks female operatives and entrepreneurs as revealed by recent studies commissioned by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and carried out in Cape Town, Nairobi and Kumasi (Wells, 2004:67). Studies undertaken in South Africa by Radebe (2003) and Ndinda (2002 and 2003) also note the scarcity of female building contractors and builders. According to Ndinda (2003:29) women's employment rates in the construction industry in South Africa during the late 1990s were about 6% of the total labour force in the industry. Despite the above empirical evidence and observations, women in sub-Saharan Africa have always taken part in the construction of houses in rural areas and informal urban settlements. As discussed below, a hundred or so years ago men were excluded from the construction industry in parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

Talle (1987), Ensminger (1987), Eldredge, (1993), Larsson and Larsson (1984) and Mafico (1991) note that traditionally, women in parts of Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa and Lesotho were responsible for building houses for their families. Then, men's principal duty was to graze and look after cattle. Other men's duties included hunting and defending the family and the tribe in times of war. This is, of course, a generalised view obscuring differences between places and dynamics over time. It, however, provides a basis for further discussion and analysis of gender roles in sub-Saharan Africa.

Maasai women (of Kenya and Tanzania) were in charge and managers of the houses in which they themselves, their children and husbands lived. Maasai women "build their houses themselves, and a woman is considered an owner proper (*enopeny enkaji*) of her house. To build, repair and keep the house is entirely her work and responsibility" (Talle, 1987:64-65). Maasai men did not have their own houses within a compound or homestead. Young and unmarried men were affiliated and attached to their mothers' houses while married men circulated among the houses of their wives and more or less took their meals and slept where it suited them. Men would never enter a woman's house without first notifying the owner. The usual haunt for men was outside the house, in the cattle corral or just behind the bush in the immediate proximity of the homestead (Talle, 1987:65). Similar arrangements existed among the Galole Orma tribe that live along Tana River in Kenya. According to Ensminger (1987), Galole Orma women spent most of their time on house construction and upkeep. Within each compound, women built several houses for sleeping, cooking and/or receiving visitors as well as wind shelters for evening socialization and permanent corrals for calves and kids.

In Lesotho, women cut grass and reeds for thatching and built the reed and grass enclosure around the courtyard of the home. They also built houses out of poles that they placed upright close together and then plastered inside and outside with a mixture of dung and mud. They plastered the walls intermittently, at least several times a year (Eldredge, 1993:27).

Similar to the Maasai, Galole Orma, Basotho and Ndebele, women in Botswana bore the responsibility of building houses and maintaining them. Once a man had acquired a residential plot, it was the responsibility of the wife to decide on the number, location and size of the various house structures to be erected within the compound. Within each compound or homestead, they built houses that served as the parents' bedroom, girls' bedroom, boys' bedroom, visitor's bedroom, kitchen and storage. According to Larsson and Larsson (1984: 96-97), building a traditional Tswana house was an uncomplicated process involving gathering materials and a few simple tools to be used – the hand being the most important tool. The knowledge of building was passed on from one generation to the next one by participation and observation (Larsson and Larsson, 1984: 97). As will be fully discussed later, 'traditional' refers to indigenous, local or past 'ways of doing things' as opposed to 'modern' which refers to contemporary or present ways and processes. The two are by no means exclusive but co-exist in a continuum.

Traditional Tswana houses, popularly known as *rondavels*, consist of a cone roof over a cylindrical wall (Figure 1.1). The roof structure is made of a timber truss covered by

grass. Grass and timber poles are obtained from the respective village and its outlying areas. Walls are built of hand moulded mud bricks. Wet bricks of varying sizes and shapes are placed in vertical layers and immediately plastered with a rough coating of mud. One or two more coatings are added to fill the cracks. The final coating is a thin layer of a mixture of cow dung, soil and water. Finally, the wall is coloured and decorated using different types of soil or lime. Although traditional Tswana houses have no formal foundations, they do have floors built of a mixture of cow dung and mud. The several house structures within a compound are usually connected or surrounded by a short wall built of mud bricks. The space enclosed by the wall in front of the houses, locally known as *letwapa*, is used for family gatherings and receiving special guests.

Figure 1.1 Traditional Tswana house and homestead



Source: Author, 1998

Once a woman has decided on the number and location of the various house structures, she would then peg or set out the outer walls for each structure using her foot or, more recently, nails and a string (Larsson and Larsson, 1984: 101). The nail is pegged at the centre of the proposed structure and the string used as a compass to mark out the walls. "After the house has been marked out a small trench is dug along the line, about 10cm deep, and the wall is built directly in the trench" (Larsson and Larsson, 1984: 101). The walls are built of either wet or dried mud bricks moulded from a mixture of clay soil, sand, cow dung and water. The soil is collected from within or adjacent to the yard or plot and carried in baskets to the site. After erecting the walls, she would cut wood and erect the roof structure; then collect grass and thatch roofs; and finally decorate the walls. Traditionally, both grass and poles are collected on the village periphery and carried on their heads. Walls and roofs have to be repaired often – normally during the dry winter season. Traditionally each homestead was known by the name of the wife or woman occupying it even though the husband or son owned the land rights and habitually shared the homestead with her (Schapera, 1943:86).

During the colonial period, building houses among pastoral communities in Botswana, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Kenya became a shared activity between men and

women. According to Larsson and Larsson (1984:96-97), Larsson (1989: 509-515; and 1990:63) and Mafico (1991:43) women in Botswana and Zimbabwe moulded mud bricks, constructed wall and floors and sometimes thatched the roofs while men erected collected timber poles from the forests, erected the roof structure of poles and also sometimes thatched the roof. It was their responsibility to plaster and decorate walls and floors. Both women and men either did the work themselves or sought the assistance of friends and relatives (Larsson and Larsson, 1984:100). As Mafico (1991) observes, the important feature of the then building process was that everyone in the society knew and understood the various house types and how to build them. "The difference among the people was just a question of the degree of mastering the skills" (Mafico, 1991:44).

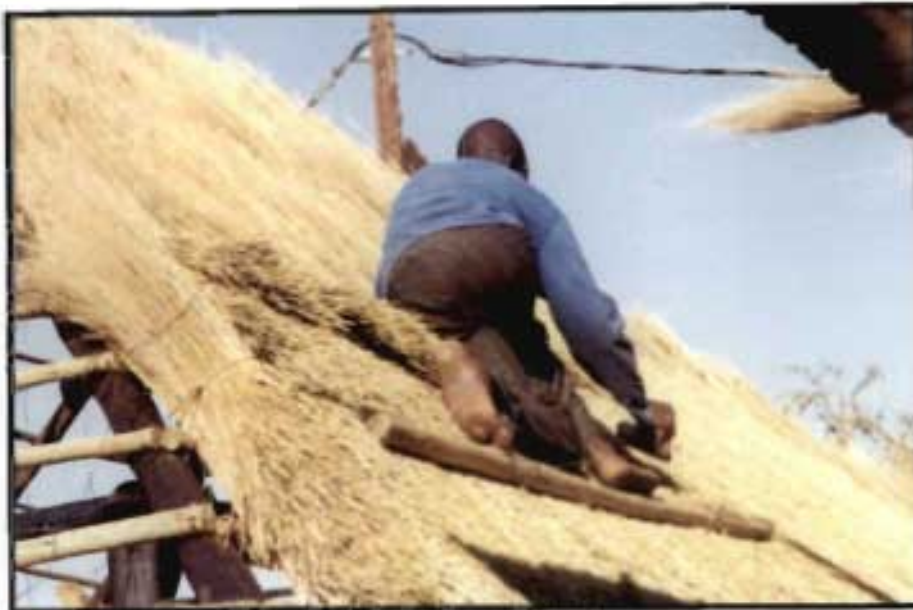
Men's entry into the non-waged house building and construction industry was marked by the provision of food and beer, which people ate and drank as they worked. Although the practice motivated workers and promoted cooperation and reciprocal assistance between men, women and neighbours, it tended to benefit male household members because, as Eldredge (1993:33) observes, women had to brew beer and cook the food besides taking part in construction activities and serving the food and beer.

A number of factors necessitated men's entry into the non-waged construction industry. First, due to increased human and animal (especially cattle) populations coupled by increased agricultural and other land use activities, it became difficult to obtain good quality grass and poles in and around homesteads. As reported by Larsson and Larsson (1984:108-109), it is presently difficult to find hard species of trees such as *Morukuru* (*Spirostacys africana*) in forests close to villages. *Morukuru* posts, which are resistant to termite attack, are used as king posts and beams in Tswana house construction. The long distances involved forced men to collect timber posts. Having collected the posts, men were obliged to use and replace them as well as determine their quality and suitability. In addition, while traditionally the roof structure rested on mud walls, increasingly roof structures are made to rest on posts alone or on both mud walls and posts. The increased use of posts to support roof structures required more male labour. Finally, it is pertinent to consider the two different roof thatching styles, namely, the indigenous thatch carried out by women and the 'Boer' or 'Afrikaner' thatch carried out by men. In the indigenous method of thatching, grass is spread out with seed-ends facing downward and cut ends upwards. In the Boer thatch, bundles of grass are spread out over the battens with seed-ends placed upwards and the cut-ends downwards (Figure 1.2). Underneath layers of grass bundles are sewn on the roof structure with tree bark or sisal (Larsson and Larsson, 1984:120). The Boer thatch style lasts longer but requires specialised training and uses a special type of elephant grass.

According to Larsson (1989), the involvement of men in non-waged house building and construction activities during the colonial era did not disrupt housing systems in Botswana - in terms of meaning, value and organisation of space. She attributes this continuity to the persistence of subsistence forms of livelihood that characterised rural Botswana during the colonial period (see section 3.3). Silitshena (1982), Larsson (1989) and Hardie (1980), among others, note that the layout, use of spaces and settlement patterns remained the same because they were determined by expressions of the Tswana culture, which (as discussed in Chapter 3) was largely uninterrupted during the colonial era. It is worth briefly mentioning here that during the colonial era, Western influence on everyday life was quite limited in Botswana because few Europeans settled in the

country. Even the colonial administrators resided in South Africa rather than in Botswana.

Figure 1.2 'Boer' thatch under construction



Source: Author, 2001

1.1.6 The advent of waged labour and male house owners

Men in sub-Saharan Africa did not just become active in the house construction processes, they also built and owned houses besides acquiring specialised building skills and becoming wage earners. According to Eldredge, "in the nineteenth century some Basotho men began building with cut stone, and building increasingly became men's work" (Eldredge 1993: 27). As Talle (1987: 65) notes, by 1987 some wealthy Maasai men, unlike in the past, had started owning houses for personal use and for entertaining guests. Houses owned by Maasai men differ substantially from those owned by women. Men's houses are built of brick walls with corrugated iron roofs. Maasai men hire craftsmen, often of non-Maasai origin, to build houses for them with concrete or mud-and-wattle walls and iron sheet roofs (Talle 1987: 74-75). However, the 'cost of labour and building materials are usually the responsibility of the [Maasai] men, who then regard themselves, and not their wives, as owners of the concrete houses. This exclusive position is symbolised by a lock and a key, which the 'owner' either "carries with him or leaves in the custody of the wife he trusts most" (Talle 1987: 75).

Schlyter notes that although the production of mud bricks is largely women's work in the poor suburb of George in Lusaka, Zambia, only in exceptional cases do women make concrete bricks (Schlyter 1988: 117). Schlyter further notes that the transfer from mud bricks to concrete blocks has reduced the amount of labour that women householders' put into house production. Their input is now mostly managerial, as they organise production on their plots: they buy the sand and the cement, arrange the transport, and hire professional block-makers to make the concrete blocks (Schlyter

1988: 117). Nimpuno-Parente (1987) noted similar women labour input in the Dandora sites and services project in Nairobi, Kenya.

According to a census carried in Botswana in 1945, the country had about 87 carpenters and 95 bricklayers all of whom were men (GOB, 1946:xi). By 1964, the number of employees in the construction industry within the protectorate had increased to 2704 of whom only 26 (about 1.0%) were women (GOB, 1965:100). The 1964 census does not indicate the nature of trades or occupations by sex or gender. By 1991, women employees accounted for about 13.3% of labour force in Botswana's construction industry (Kayira, 1995:6). Preliminary data from the 2001 census indicate that women's participation rate in the construction industry in Botswana is still low - about 13.6%.

Of course, the above statistics are a gross under-representation of female labour in house building and the construction industry within sub-Saharan Africa as numerous women in rural areas, informal and semi-formal urban settlements in Botswana and other countries continue to build, rebuild and maintain houses. However, women's labour goes unrecorded because it is often non-waged and frequently categorised as domestic work.

The foregoing sections have highlighted several issues that are central to the remainder of this thesis. First, we have noted that changes in gender roles (including those in house building and the construction industry) are neither linear nor unidirectional. Instead they differ from place to place and over time. Second, changes in gender roles have profound effects on family norms as well as women's well being. Third, unlike in the past when women played a leading role in house building and construction work in parts of sub-Saharan Africa (including Botswana), house building became a shared activity between men and women during the colonial period but presently appears to be segregated and dominated by men. Causes, extent, nature and effects of this segregation and male dominance in the contemporary house delivery and construction activities in Botswana have yet to be documented hence they constitute the focus of this work.

1.2 REVIEW OF EXISTING STUDIES ON GENDER ROLES IN HOUSING PROCESSES AND CONSTRUCTION

Larsson's extensive work on housing in Botswana initially centred on the design and construction of traditional houses; then on house ownership as a survival strategy among urban women; then on modernisation of traditional housing; and lately, rural-urban linkages. The study by Radebe (2003) focuses on black women building contractors in South Africa but excludes the role and status of female employees and builders in other sectors of the construction industry. Studies by Ndinda (2002 and 2003) explore women's participation in housing delivery in a broader sense – including layout design, infrastructure and service provision, supply of building materials, construction of social amenities and supply of fittings and furniture. Ndinda does not explore the roles played by women in the erection of house structures. The article by Matere-Lieb (1995) is equally relevant to the present study but fails to identify contemporary roles played by women in housing delivery processes. Studies by Ndinda and Matere-Lieb and those edited by Moser and Peake (1987) focus on women's participation in housing and pay less attention to their participation in construction work. Furthermore, the studies do not differentiate between activities

undertaken by male/female household members and those carried out by men and women from outside the household – that is, between hired and household labour.

Although studies by Talle (1987), Ensminger (1987), Schlyter (1988), Larsson (1990 and 1989), Mafico (1991) and Eldredge (1993) indicate that men, in some parts of sub-Saharan Africa, have taken over the leading role of women in housing delivery processes and the construction industry, few studies explore the causes and effects of this take over. However, Eldredge and Larsson developed more elaborate theoretical explanations on why more men than women are now engaged in house designs, building and ownership. According to Eldredge (1993), men's participation in house building in Lesotho was part of the labour negotiation process between men and women in the light of Lesotho's transformation from a subsistent to a capitalist economy. She argues that the transfer of house building responsibilities to men could have decreased women's workload and allowed them more time to attend to other important family activities such as crop cultivation and firewood collection. She further argues that

“... the intrusion of capitalism, aided by colonialism, both perpetuated and intensified women's subordination by creating additional incentives and opportunities for [women's] subordination. In the domestic struggle over household resources, women made gains in the middle of the nineteenth century and were perhaps minimally empowered by their productive activities. But the colonial system, by depriving Africans in general of their productive resources, intensified the struggle over remaining resources, which heightened the struggle between rich and poor and between men and women. Because the colonial system favoured rich over poor and men over women, women were losers on two counts” (Eldredge, 1993: 41-42).

Eldredge's explanations leave a number of questions unanswered - for example, why house building was initially assigned to women and why women have not reclaimed their house building roles long after the demise of colonialism. Furthermore, her explanations do not account for women's – especially unmarried women's - exclusion from non-waged housing delivery processes, which fall outside the capitalist system or state why unemployed women do not take up jobs as labourers in the waged construction industry.

To Larsson, men's participation in housing and construction activities in Botswana has been due to the transfer of housing “from the sphere of women to the sphere of men, but more importantly from the domestic sphere to the public sphere” (Larsson, 1989: 518). She further argues that men have not only invested their monetary earnings in cattle, but in housing improvements as well, which has

“... led eventually to housing becoming the *concern and responsibility of men*, thereby part of the public sphere. It is by becoming a *symbol of self-identity*, as opposed to family-identity in the traditional sense and status, that the shift of housing into the public sphere should be understood. Houses have achieved a similar position to cattle. Even though the domestic sphere is still almost entirely the responsibility of women, it has been deprived of the task of providing housing” (Larsson, 1989: 521). (Emphasis added).

Similar to Eldredge's explanations, Larsson's arguments deserve revisiting because a review of another study by Larsson (1989a) and studies by Moser and Peake (1987), Datta (1995), Lee-Smith (1997) and Matere-Lieb (1995), among others, show that women are more concerned with housing at community and household levels than men are. Like Eldredge, Larsson's studies did not explore why single and unemployed women have to hire men to build houses for them nor do they explain why women became builders in the first place and what role they now play in housing delivery processes.

While one of Larsson's latest study (Larsson, 1999) identifies gender contracts in pre-colonial Botswana and how these were redefined during the colonial era, she does not do the same for the post colonial era. To date, no study has applied the concept of 'gender contracts' to housing delivery, management and ownership processes. Larsson's application of the 'gender contract' theory in Botswana focuses on land rights and relationships between men's public sphere and women's domestic sphere whereby she identified 'marriage' as the "uniting force between the two spheres" (Larsson, 1999: 72). On the other hand, Lee-Smith (1997) examines changes in gender and power relations in housing in Kenya. She, however, concentrates on the dynamics of property ownership in rural, plantation and urban settings and develops a typology of subsistence, transition and market gender contracts on marriage, land and house ownership, work and house building. She notes that under subsistence gender contract, "house building is nominally done by men for their wives. In practice, however, it is a community activity engaged in by men and women doing different tasks (Lee-Smith, 1997:84). Under the market gender contract, both men and women buy and own land and housing in urban areas. However, only unmarried (single, separated or divorced) women could buy and own property independent of men. In the transition gender contract, both men and unmarried women reside in rented houses while married and cohabiting women live in houses rented by their male partners. It appears the study by Lee-Smith did not cover Kenya's pastoral tribes (e.g. Maasai and Galole Orma) where, traditionally, women built houses for themselves, their children and husbands.

In brief, existing literature on gender roles in housing delivery processes in Botswana and other pastoral communities in southern Africa do not highlight women's roles after the transfer of housing from the domestic to the public sphere. Secondly, they do not identify gender relationships and the status of women in light of men's take over of house building and construction works. Thirdly, they do not fully explain why in the past house building roles were assigned to women or why women have not reclaimed those responsibilities long after the demise of colonialism. This thesis, therefore, seeks to fill these gaps by:

1. Identifying the extent to which women have been excluded from housing with men's take over of roles that were traditionally played by women in housing delivery and construction processes;
2. Providing qualitative and quantitative data on the roles currently played by women in housing delivery and construction activities;
3. Identifying current gender contracts that govern relationships between men and women in housing delivery and construction processes; and
4. Offering a comprehensive explanation on (a) why in the past women were assigned the role of designing, building and maintaining houses in Tswana societies; and (b) why women continue to be excluded from house building

and construction work long after the factors that initially led to men's take over became irrelevant.

The thesis does not examine women's participation rates in housing projects at community level (e.g. administration of housing projects or provision of infrastructure services) because this has already been adequately covered by, among others, studies reviewed above. It, however, builds on studies by Larsson, Eldredge, Lee-Smith and others that have examined women's roles in house building as well as gender relationships in house ownership and control. Unlike previous studies which concentrated on colonial or immediate post colonial periods, this thesis focuses on shifts in gender roles - from about the time of colonisation through the colonial period to the post colonial eras. The temporal dimension is designed to underscore the dynamic nature of gender relationships, which are critical in addressing social, economic, political and cultural gender inequalities that characterise almost all societies.

1.3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The broad aim of this thesis is to identify, account and document contemporary gender roles and relations in housing delivery process as well as their impacts on women's access to housing and ability to provide housing for themselves and their dependants. The specific objectives of the thesis are to: -

- (a) Identify the role and status of men and women in the various forms of the construction industry and housing delivery processes in Lobatse;
- (b) Identify and account for emerging gender relations and contracts in self-help housing in Lobatse;
- (c) Explore the effects of changes in gender roles and contracts on women's access to housing.

1.4 KEY QUESTIONS

The key questions to be addressed by this thesis are: -

1. What are the current roles and positions of men and women in waged and non-waged forms of housing construction and delivery systems in Lobatse?
2. To what extent have social, economic, political and legal dynamics affected gender roles and status of women in housing and the construction industry in Botswana and Lobatse in particular?
3. Why do women in Lobatse and Botswana in general presently appear to be marginalized in housing processes and the construction industry when they were leaders in the past?

4. What are past and present socially accepted rules and norms that define women's and men's behaviour, expectations, fears and beliefs in housing construction and house delivery systems?
5. Do women in Lobatse have equal access and control over land and housing? What factors inhibit or promote women's ownership of houses?

1.5 JUSTIFICATION

Sub-Saharan Africa (including Botswana) lacks disaggregated data as well as documentation and information on the role of women and men in housing and construction activities. We do not know, for example, whether the few women working in the construction industry are employed as labourers, technicians, artisans, professionals or administrators. Nor do we adequately understand why women in Botswana and other countries have been replaced by men in an industry that they had traditionally dominated and what this means in terms of women's access to housing. Furthermore, we do not know why current women's employment rates in the construction industry in sub-Saharan Africa (including Botswana) are low compared to some Asian countries. As observed by UNCHS (Habitat), the lack of "quantitative and qualitative data on women in construction sector hinders the identification of problems, of constraints to and of potential for their employment" (UNCHS, 1989:61).

Secondly, availability of gender disaggregated data and understanding of constraints and problems that exclude women from certain forms of employment are critical not only in empowering women but in alleviating poverty and integrating women in mainstream developments. Understanding when, how and why women are excluded in particular industries and sectors is critical in the formulation of gender inclusive policies, programmes and projects.

Thirdly, the thesis seeks to underscore the importance of and need to mainstream gender in so the called professional and technical fields such as engineering, architecture and town planning, which are often assumed to be 'gender neutral'. However, as numerous previous studies (e.g. Moser and Peake, 1987) have shown, decisions made by these professionals have a bearing on gender roles in development projects located in both the private and public sectors.

Lastly, a gender perspective of housing production is not only of feminist and academic interest but also of social, political, economic and practical importance. Lessons and conclusions drawn from this thesis will assist in the formulation of appropriate and gender sensitive laws, procedures, housing policies and strategies. Hopefully, it will help policymakers to pinpoint areas that constrain women's access, control and ownership of houses in rapidly urbanising communities in the region.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This thesis is written from the perspective of a 'town and regional planner' for colleagues who, like the author, lack formal training in gender studies. Writing this

thesis has been a rich learning experience. It enabled me to reflect on my life experience from childhood - as an African man born and brought up in rural Tanzania but who has since lived in many cultures. Of growing up with my widowed mother, who undertook many tasks and decisions as *de facto* head of our household although our paternal uncle fronted as the 'head' during public functions. I was born an 'animist' but became a Christian at the age of twelve. After college, I worked in Tanzania, went to study in the United Kingdom, and then worked in Bangladesh, Zimbabwe and Botswana. I am married twice – first from my own patrilineal society and the second time from a matrilineal society – and have six children (three sons and three daughters).

My view of life and gender issues is, therefore, shaped by experience as a son brought up by a widow in an African patriarchal society based on subsistence economy; an 'animist' who converted to Christianity but lived among Muslims; and a physical planner with strong interests in land and housing issues researching on gender. My conception of gender is also shaped by my experience of living alone with four of my children for a period of more than seven years while on separation from my first wife; a self-help house owner; and of working in Bangladesh where women labourers outnumber men at construction sites.

In brief, I address issues of interest and concern to urban and regional planning and related professions such as architecture, civil engineering, human geography and environmental science. In doing so, I look not too much into intra-household gender dynamics (as a sociologist, ethnographer or anthropologist would do) but rather into how household gender dynamics intersect with other arenas in the public sphere (political, social, economic, environmental and technological) in the definition of gender roles and contracts over time and space. My prime concern is to enhance our understanding of past and present gender inequalities, ideologies and discriminatory practices as a basis for planning for a better, just, equitable and gender inclusive built environments. As McFadden (2001: 69) posits,

“Most African women, given a chance, would opt for modern, dignified life, with education for themselves and their children, with tap water and school in close proximity ... with electricity and a safe aesthetically pleasing home to live in, and with a right to be an autonomous individuals who can relate to other humans through systems and choices which fulfil them as persons and part of their communities”

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

This section attempts to define and distinguish key concepts, namely, 'sex and gender roles', and 'traditional and modern housing', largely because various authors and scholars use them differently and, sometimes, interchangeably. Other terms and concepts have been or will be briefly defined when they first appear.

1.7.1 Sex and gender roles

It has been observed that before the 1960s, the terms gender and sex were used interchangeably to distinguish male from female person. The term 'gender' has since become a scholarly term as used by researchers "to conceptualise the social

construction of masculinity and femininity” (Mbilinyi, 1992: 34). It is generally defined as socially, psychologically and historically constructed beliefs, perceptions, roles, values and relations between men and women (Homborgh, 1993: 15-16; Meena, 1992: 1-2; Mies, 1998; and Buswell, 1989: 5-20). To Cornelius (2002:51), gender is a combination of conscious and unconscious social and cultural construction. It is associated with institutions and social structures that determine or assign roles, tasks and statuses to people according to sex in a given community at a given time. The term sex, on the other hand, has generally been reserved for the differentiation of people according to their biological characteristics. Tadesse (2003:71) observes that sex roles (which are associated with reproductive activities) tend to be universally homogeneous while gender roles relate to productive activities, are heterogeneous and responsive to changing material conditions.

Although the above definitions and distinctions are widely accepted, some scholars continue to use them interchangeably while others define them differently. As Mbilinyi (1992:51) observes, gender has been ‘feminised’ for example when scholars speak of ‘gender oppression’ instead of women’s oppression. Furthermore, as Bulbeck (1998: 154-165) observes, a person’s identity as a woman or man is not determined only in terms of physical characteristics but in terms of social roles as well. She notes that, with or without ‘transsexual’ or corrective surgery men perform socially defined women’s roles in different societies all over the world and vice versa. As a result, we have a ‘third gender’ consisting of persons who can neither be categorised as men nor women due to their dual identities. According to Bulbeck (1998) men and women may perform ‘third gender’ roles through:

- (i) ‘male-female’ or ‘female-male’ transsexual or corrective surgery undertaken to enable a man/woman who identifies himself/herself as the opposite sex to performance the sexual function of the opposite sex;
- (ii) Homosexuality whereby men/women performance sexual roles of the opposite sex without undergoing any corrective surgery; and
- (iii) Performance of social roles usually assigned to the opposite sex such a woman ‘marrying’ another woman or a man working as a housewife without providing sexual services. Persons performing social roles of the opposite sex may undergo operation in which original sex organs are removed but not replaced with the opposite ones. They dress like the opposite sex, socialise with people of the opposite sex and may work as wives and mothers or husbands and fathers in social terms and/or homosexual terms as well.

In summary, Bulbeck notes that societies have different ways of negotiating sexual and gender identities. While in some societies cultural roles support sex roles, in other societies the binary distinction as determined by the body is more critical and may have to be achieved through corrective surgery. With current scientific advances (especially asexual reproduction such as test tube babies and cloning) procreation is no longer a universal characteristic that distinguishes sex roles. The emergence of same sex couples; sex change practices; ‘gender bender’; and gender reassignment (= the strong belief that one is not what he/she is anatomically speaking) have further complicated the distinction between gender and sex giving rise to the ‘third gender’.

However, in this thesis, gender is used in two senses: in its ideological sense as socially constructed relations between men and women; and as a tool for

understanding past and existing "relationships between men and women, in order to give attention to the specific experiences and opportunities of women" (Larsson, 2001:5). I also use the term "gender roles" as a tool for analysing socially defined duties and responsibilities of men and women. I will not attempt to grapple with sexual roles as, I believe, these are largely intra-household dynamics with little impact on gender and relationships in housing delivery processes.

1.1.2 Traditional and modern housing

'Tradition' is an antonym of modern or contemporary (Kapoport, 1989). It refers to old, past, primitive or pre-modern ways, culture, values, beliefs and artefacts and is often used interchangeably with other terms such as indigenous, vernacular, customary, local, folk and primitive. However, Shils (1981:12) and Oliver (1989: 34) define tradition as "...all that a society of a given time possesses and which already existed when the present possessors came upon it and which is not solely the product of physical processes in the external world or exclusively the result of ecological and physiological necessity..." This definition highlights two important points. First, it emphasises that tradition is a social construction and clearly excludes supernatural forces or God given conditions. Second, that those social constructs are passed from generation to generation within a given society. Oliver (1989:33) emphasises that "the establishment and maintenance of a tradition requires the passing of its essential elements from the members of a group to their successors..." which may be done verbally, graphically or by way of example or practice. To this may be added a third characteristic: the sharing of knowledge and free exchange of skills.

Bourdier and Aisayyad (1989) note that tradition must be a result of transmission – that is, capable of being continuously inherited from generation to generation. It must also be based on a common culture – that is, it must be shared by all ordinary people and not propagated by individuals such as professionals or leaders. Giving examples of the grid city pattern developed in Europe and currently characteristic of third world cities and the implantation of Roman architecture (prototype forum, coliseum, public bath etc.). Tuan (1989) condemns splendour by kings and the "ruling class" as a mere manifestations of power rather than tradition in a sense that it does not involve ordinary people. Rapoport (1989) identifies the major attributes of a tradition as being:

- Indigenous - that is free from undue external or non-local influences
- Informal – not being regulated by anyone individual or group of individuals
- Homogenous/anonymous – overwhelming similarities that may not be attributable to anyone person
- Working by example - not a result of prescribed knowledge or formal education
- Strongly symbolic – giving meaning to the product by expressing cultural values, lifestyles and social norms of the common people in a society
- Reflection of accumulated wisdom and experiences -- that is, a result of many experiments whereby the good workable elements are retained and poor ones dropped to adapt to socio-geopolitical and climatic conditions.

The term tradition may carry negative, neutral or positive perceptions depending on context and the position of the individual or group of individuals. However, as Rapoport notes, "tradition does not need to be rejected or embraced in toto [because] it is possible to admire artefacts while rejecting the tradition that produced them..."

(Rapoport, 1989: 81). Furthermore, as Iuan observes, in a large, dynamic, pluralistic and global society "what we must seek to retain are not so much particular artefacts and buildings (though we should try to do so in exceptional instances), but rather the skill to reproduce them. If we retain the skill, then no human work is irrevocably lost" (Iuan, 1989:33).

if defining tradition is problematic, defining 'traditional housing' and 'modern housing' is even more so because everything in the present has had a past however brief and is, in that literal sense, traditional (Iuan, 1989:27). The key factors in traditional housing and architecture, as observed by Oliver, "are unreflective and unselfconscious house designs: use of spaces in accordance with dictates of custom: and adherence to established techniques and processes in building construction" (Oliver, 1989:56). "Traditional building is based on tried and tested techniques that have been accepted uncritically as matters of habit and established values (Iuan, 1989:33). Furthermore, traditional housing entails working together as a family and/or community as well as sharing of specialised skills and techniques on reciprocal basis.

To Larsson (1990:21-24 and 1996:17-19), traditional housing, in the context of Botswana, refers to production of houses using: -

- (i) Building materials that can be easily collected, at no monetary cost, from the village or town and its surroundings;
- (ii) Household members build the houses by themselves using skills inherited from their parents and grandparents;
- (iii) All spaces and structures within the plot or yard must be designed and used in a manner similar to previous generations - that is daily activities take place both indoors and outdoors.

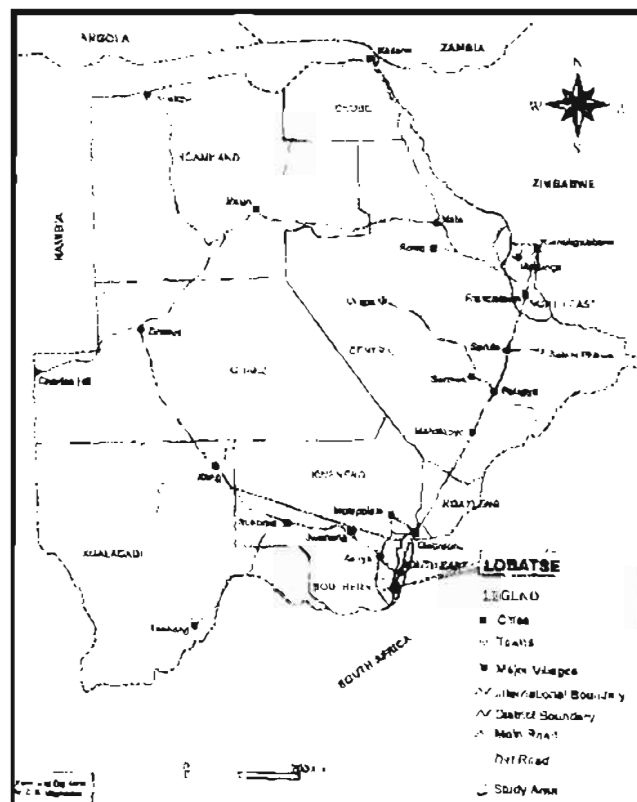
While Larsson's definition is generally acceptable, it appears to be too stringent because it is difficult to find out whether materials were bought and/or whether someone was asked or hired to erect part or the whole structure. Suffice, therefore, to define **traditional housing** simply as houses built of or using common skills, readily available local materials, techniques and designs inherited from previous generations with or without mutual assistance. Larsson further defines 'modern housing' as production of houses using materials that have been purchased, labour that has been hired and whereby all daily activities are designed to take place indoors (Larsson, 1996:17). Again the definition appears too stringent. In this thesis, **modern housing** is simply defined as houses built (or the process of building houses) using skills, technology and designs acquired or learnt through formal or special training. Often, modern houses are wholly or predominantly built of non-indigenous and processed materials.

Self-help housing is a term and concept that cuts across both traditional and modern housing. Defined in its generic sense, 'self-help housing' is synonymous to self-built housing whereby household and community labour is utilised to erect its shelters. However, in this thesis, *self-help housing* is used to refer to self-built housing as well as self-managed and self-financed housing whereby artisans are hired to construct the shelter under the supervision and management of some household member. Free or non-waged household and community labour may also be utilised to complement and supplement hired and paid labour.

1.8 DATA SOURCES AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Data for this work is drawn from three studies undertaken by the author in the Township of Lobatse between 1995 and 2000. Lobatse is located about 70 km south of Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana (Figure 1.3). Lobatse is the second oldest town (after Francistown) in Botswana and currently the fourth largest town (29689 residents in 2001) in the country. Of the seven townships in the country, Lobatse and Francistown have the highest (at 42%) rates of women headed households – a factor that made it ideal for my studies on gender, which are elaborated upon in sub-sections 1.8.1 – 1.8.3 below.

Figure 1.3 Location of Lobatse Township



Source: Author, 2005

The choice of methodological approach adopted in all the three studies (discussed below) were informed by feminist standpoint, which rejects neo-positivist notions that true knowledge is that produced by scientist, using scientific methodologies whereby “the researcher tries to remain outside of the world under study, so as not to bias the findings” (Mbilinyi, 1992: 53). With the exception of the physical sciences, feminist epistemologies deny any possibility whereby the researcher is absolutely neutral, value-free and knowledgeable in the subject being researched because of the researcher’s interests in issues being investigated. As Mbilinyi (1992) observes, in social sciences the researcher is often inevitably part of the study, which impacts on the conception of the research problem, choice and construction of the research instruments as well as the interpretation of data. This thesis is concerned with lived

experiences in order to “do philosophy that is informed by and informs our best everyday judgements about the character of discursive transaction” (Fricker, 2000:158).

I started each of my study with an open mind and identified themes, patterns and explanations or theory as each study developed. I did not have predetermined hypotheses or theoretical frameworks that strictly defined limits of my studies. I, however, worked with tentative concepts and theories – such as modernisation, westernisation, domestic and public sphere and patriarchy. I constantly referred to them, added new ones and refined them as my thesis developed.

In the light of the foregoing, I have relied on exploratory methods – mainly observational and interactive approaches through in-depth interviews in the first two studies and both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods in the third study. This approach enabled me to interact with my respondents while it provided respondents with opportunities to narrate their experiences as well as express their opinions and feelings about various aspects of accessing and building houses. In all the three studies, I employed purposeful and target sampling techniques to select respondents for two reasons. First, I wanted to capture the experiences of people (that is, women as a gender category) that were relevant to the study on the assumption that women’s experiences can only be reflected upon by women themselves. The use of positivist random sampling techniques to select heads of households as preferred respondents tends to leave out women because men are often taken as heads of households. Second, I wanted to make women visible and audible, something that cannot be achieved using quantitative data. Qualitative techniques enabled me to understand respondents’ housing conditions, struggles and perceptions – knowledge that cannot be obtained from quantitative data. I interviewed few men because men’s experiences, roles and status in the construction industry and housing delivery system are generally well documented and known. Third, I have considerable belief in qualitative data because I feel that the experience of each respondent matters and constitutes her/his uncontested view of the world – even if it was a lone voice.

1.8.1 Study on women’s access to housing

1.8.1.2 Goals and objectives

The principal goal of this study was to identify and document the extent to which Botswana’s transformation from a rural based subsistence economy to urban market based economy had impacted on women’s access to housing. The study sought to answer the following questions: -

- What gender relations and attitudes constrain women's access to housing and/or house ownership?
- What cultural, social, legal, environmental and administrative factors inhibit or promote women's access to urban housing?
- What coping strategies have women developed to enhance their ability to access to housing and house ownership?

- Are there emerging stratifications in housing and house ownership among women? What are the distinguishing factors?

1.8.1.3 Methodology

The study was carried out through:

- a) Review of existing documentation on legislation, official policies, programmes and strategies on access to, and ownership of, landed property in Botswana.
- b) In-depth interviews with officers who handle or make decisions pertaining to the acquisition of land and landed property, housing finance, property registration as well as community leaders.
- c) Household interviews with women and men from various socio-economic groups and marital status within Lobatse.

In carrying out this study, I decided to use a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach on two grounds. First, adequate quantitative data on house ownership by gender/sex could easily be obtained from the census office and reports. Second, the aim of the study was to obtain and capture respondents' experiences rather than to test the replicability or frequencies of data. I believe people's knowledge and experiences shed more light on practical realities than mathematical correlations and tests. Again, more women than men were selected in order to capture women's experiences, which have to date been largely invisible in literature on housing.

For the purpose of household interviews, the town of Lobatse was divided into three residential categories:

- (1) Upgraded spontaneous low-income settlement i.e. Peleng;
- (2) Planned low income areas i.e. Woodhall I and II;
- (3) Medium and high-income i.e. 'B.C. Thema' and the entire area west of the railway line (Figure 1.4).

As more fully discussed in Chapter 4, Peleng is inhabited by low-income households. Although Peleng started – just outside Lobatse Township boundaries - as a 'squatter' or an illegal settlement for people of African origins in the 1920s, it has since been incorporated into the township and the residents accorded legal status. Woodhall I and II are self-help housing or sites and services areas developed in the 1970s and 1980s. Like Peleng, most residents in Woodhall I and II are low income earners. 'BC Thema' was established in 1922 as a suburb for medium income households (mainly for coloureds and people of Asian descent). Suburbs for high income households (e.g. Jacaranda and Bonsweletau) are located west of the railway line as shown in Figure 1.4.

Table 1.1 below shows total population in each area and the respective number of interviews conducted therein. The number of interviewees selected from each zone was approximately proportional to its share of the total population in the township except that the low-income group is slightly under represented while the medium and high-income

group is just over represented. This anomaly arose because the first interviewee in B.C. Thema was a foreigner and we believed we needed an indigenous person to complete the circuit. A total of 31 adults (22 women, 7 men and a couple) were interviewed.

Having adopted the qualitative data collection approach, the selection of respondents was based on purposive sampling techniques. The aim of the study was to obtain a fair representation of female and male tenants and landlords from all corners of the township. On entering a residential area, I would interview the first partner (male or female) that I found at home and was willing to grant me an interview. After the interview, I would move on to another part of the suburb and interview a willing male or female partner from the first homestead I came to and depending on whether my intention was to obtain a male or female tenant/landlord. If a targeted respondent (e.g. female tenant) could not be found in the selected homestead, then I would move on to the next homestead until I identified such a respondent. The approach enabled me to obtain views, perceptions and experiences of various population groups - tenants and landlords by gender and levels of income. The final number of respondents was determined by the saturation point, that is additional respondents did not yield new data - views, experiences and perceptions.

Table 1.1 Access to housing household survey

Income Group	Main Localities	Estimated households	Number of households interviewed
Low income (spontaneous / unplanned)	Peleng	1130	11
Low Income (Sites and services)	Woodhall 1 Woodhall 2	1540	13
Medium and High Income	Western suburbs, Town and Centre and B.C. Thema	470	6

Source: Author's construction

Each interview was guided by a set of questions (Appendix 1.1). As indicated in Appendix 1.1, selected tenants and house owners were first asked to provide information about their age, educational achievements, marital status, whether married in- or out-of community, household size and composition, and household income. Then house owners were asked to narrate their experiences on how they built their houses, motivations, land acquisition, sources of housing finance and constraints faced by women in Lobatse when they attempted to build houses for themselves and whether these problems were different from those faced by women in rural areas. Respondents were further asked to express their opinion on whether women in Lobatse should have houses registered in their names; how property should be shared on divorce; and changes required in the present systems in order to facilitate women's easier access to land, credit finance and housing. Tenants were requested to narrate their experiences on renting a house or room in Lobatse and how they overcame obstacles that they faced.

The questions were written in English but posed to the respondents in Setswana (the local language) by an interpreter. The interpreter briefly translated the response into

English before I posed the next question. All the responses and summaries – whether in English or Setswana – were tape-recorded. Questions were not asked strictly as arranged or phrased in the schedule but were posed in such a manner as to promote a relaxed conversation. The strategy to interview women and men from across the income spectrum was adopted so as to obtain income and gender desegregated data. In order to include as many occupational groups as possible, all household interviews were conducted on public holidays and weekends.

The researcher or his assistant completed the section on ‘Housing condition’ in the research instrument before or after the interview. The information on type of housing unit, building materials, facilities and quality of the structure was deemed necessary in comparing housing conditions of men and women headed households.

Figure 1.4 Study areas



The use of interpreter did not in anyway compromise my connection with respondents. First, I understand Setswana although I am unable to speak the language. Second, interviews were not always strictly conducted in Setswana. Often respondents – especially the younger ones - switched from English to Setswana and vice versa. Third, the task of transcribing the narratives was done by research assistants thereby reducing

translation errors. In fact, as a male foreign researcher, being accompanied by a local woman helped to reduce suspicions. It facilitated easy entry into the respondents' world. Besides, she is an experienced interpreter. She has worked with Anita Larsson and many other foreign researchers. I utilised the same interpreter in all the studies.

Key informant interviews were held with a number of local and central government officers including the following:

- Registrar of Deeds, Gaborone
- Deputy Town Clerk, Lobatse Town Council
- Treasurer, Lobatse Town Council
- Principal Housing Officer, Self-Help Housing Agency (SHHA), Lobatse Town Council
- Senior Housing Officer, Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC), Lobatse,
- Loans Officer, Botswana Building Society (BBS)
- Physical Planner, Lobatse Town Council

The above officers were selected because each of them does, in some way, make decisions which affect peoples' access and control of land and/or housing – whether through purchase, renting or self-help building. The interview with the Registrar of Deeds sought clarifications on procedures and requirements for registering, transferring and disposing of landed property; and whether single, separated, divorced and married women were accorded equal opportunities and treatment with men. The interview was also aimed at identifying effects emanating from recent legal reforms – notably the introduction of Married Persons' Property Act in 1971 and amendments to the Deeds Registry Act in 1996. The Deputy Town Clerk and the Treasurer were interviewed on the procedures and requirements for accessing houses owned by the Lobatse Town Council. The Principal Housing Officer was interviewed in order to obtain information on criteria and procedures followed by the Lobatse SHHA office in allocating, registering and developing land under their jurisdiction in Lobatse Township while interviews with the BHC and BBS officers were also aimed at finding out whether criteria and procedures for accessing their products disadvantaged various groups of women or not. The Physical Planner provided information on requirements and procedures for issuing development permits. All the above interviews were conducted using gender lenses in order to identify the extent to which various criteria, requirements, procedures and rules advantaged or disadvantaged women with different employment, income, marital and educational backgrounds. See Appendix 1.2 for guidelines of questions for interview with key informants.

1.8.2 Study on women in waged house construction

I was motivated to undertake this study by preliminary finding of the study on women's access to housing discussed above (subsection 1.8.1). As my research on women's access to housing progressed, I realised that women, regardless of their marital and socio-economic status, were rarely involved in the construction of their houses in Lobatse. In order to triangulate my data, I decided to find out whether women were engaged in the construction of other people's houses – at least for a pay. I undertook the field the studies in October 1995.

1.8.2.1 Objectives

The aims of this study were twofold:

- (a) To explore the extent to which women were involved in the waged construction industry at national level and Lobatse in particular;
- (b) To account for the apparent low levels of women participation rates in urban based construction activities.

1.8.2.2 Methodology

The study relied heavily on secondary and published data and in-depth interviews with contractors and selected female employees at construction sites. At the time when I undertook the study (October 1995), there were six contractors engaged by the Botswana Housing Corporation to build about 500 medium cost houses in the township of Lobatse (see Figure 1.4 for location of construction sites). On average each contractor had 117 employees at the site. In total, there were 700 employees at the six construction sites. Of the seven hundred employees only 19 (2.7%) were women. All the workers (231 in total) engaged by the largest contractor were men.

All the six contractors were interviewed on:

- (i) Why they did not employ women or why they engaged few women;
- (ii) Status, duties and responsibilities of women in their employment;
- (iii) Whether their companies observed any segregation policies;
- (iv) Their assessment of women workers in comparison with men;
- (v) Whether they preferred women workers in certain trades or not (Appendix 1.3).

I took hand notes throughout the interviews. It is worth noting that all the six contractors were male.

Six (or one third) of the 19 female employees were interviewed - including 2 painters, 3 labourers and a clerk of work. Where a site had one or two female employees, both of them were interviewed unless they both did the same type of work. One site had 13 labourers of whom 3 were interviewed. With the help of a schedule of questions (Appendix 1.3), the selected female employees were requested to indicate their levels of education, training, marital status, residence, employment history, reasons for joining the industry and their future plans or desires. All the interviews in this study were conducted in English because all respondents could speak the language.

1.8.3 Study on women's roles in self-help housing

Again this study was motivated by a gap in knowledge and apparent contradictions revealed by findings in my two previous studies (subsections 1.8.1 and 1.8.2). Results of the second study showed that although women were perceived as reliable and efficient employees in the construction industry, preference was given to males and women were mostly employed in times of male labour shortage. Women were also the first to be retrenched when workloads shrunk. The two studies had raised more questions than they answered. Are women just bystanders and observers as men build homes? What are women's contributions in terms of decision-making, mobilisation of

financial resources, supply of building materials and work supervision in the home building process? How do women negotiate to get their housing wishes and dreams fulfilled? The above questions formed the basis of my study on emerging gender roles in informal and semi-formal housing delivery processes. This study was carried out in two phases – I collected quantitative data in June 1999 and qualitative data in October 1999.

1.8.3.1 Objectives

Objectives of this study were:

- i) To identify tasks and roles assigned to women, men, daughters and sons within various forms of households in the design, finance and construction of private dwelling units in urban areas.
- ii) To document the extent to which women and men participate in decisions on finance, design, hire of labour and erection of various parts of a house in the self-help urban housing processes.
- iii) To identify, and account for, factors which inhibit or promote female and male contribution and participation/involvement in self-help urban housing.
- iv) To identify women's and men's perceptions on past and present gendered roles in the delivery of households' dwelling units
- v) To recommend measures that would enable women to reassert their roles in self-help housing activities.

1.8.3.2 Methodology

In the absence of any meaningful data to rely on, I decided to collect both quantitative and qualitative data in this study. A total of 169 households were interviewed. Besides looking at socio-economic characteristics, the questionnaire covered decision making in the process of building or expanding owner-occupied dwelling units; each spouse's contribution and influence on the design, choice of building materials, hire of labour, supervision and project management; and each household member's financial direct and indirect inputs (see Appendix 1.4 for sample of questionnaire). In order to tease out presumed gender biases, two issues (household furniture/items and car/cattle) – which are not directly related to housing - were added. Finally, respondents were asked open-ended questions which sought to find out whether they were conscious of the changing gender roles in housing and factors responsible for the identified changes. The majority of questions had pre-coded responses to limit variations and misinterpretations by interviewers. Two research assistants who had just completed their Bachelor of Science degree in Urban and Regional Planning administered the questionnaires, under my supervision.

Respondents were chosen from two self-help-housing areas in Lobatse – Peleng and Woodhall (see Figure 1.4 for location). The first house in each area was randomly selected for the interview. Thereafter, every 10th or so house was selected. Every attempt was made to cover each housing area evenly. Peleng, an upgraded traditional settlement with many houses built using indigenous materials and techniques was

specifically included to facilitate comparison with traditional gender roles. In both areas, only households that had built dwelling units on their own - with or without hired/voluntary labour – were interviewed which excluded households who bought or rent finished products from the Botswana Housing Corporation, employers, and the private market. Tenants were not interviewed.

Table 1.2 Quantitative household surveys in Peleng and Woodhall

Area	Estimated households	Number of households interviewed
Peleng	1130	90
Woodhall I and II	1540	79
Total	2670	169

Source: Authors construction

The qualitative survey was carried out through in-depth interviews and observations. Again to enable comparison with traditional gender roles only households that had built their houses on their own - with or without hired/voluntary labour – were interviewed. The interviewees were selected from respondents in the above quantitative study. Only questionnaires in which it was acknowledged that at least one member of the households had participated in the construction production of their houses in Woodhall were selected. A total of 30 households were short-listed. However, only 17 respondents were finally interviewed because some of the short listed residents were not willing to give a second interview. Besides, additional interviews appeared to raise no new issues. However, an attempt was made to cover all household categories (especially by marital status) and the whole housing area evenly.

The 17 interviewees consisted of 13 women (5 married, 2 cohabiting, 2 separated, 2 widowed and 2 single): 2 married men and 2 couples. Couples were interviewed together. More women than men were deliberately selected in order to capture women's personal experiences. The interviews covered decision making and contribution in terms of ideas, labour input, financial outlay etc. during the entire house development process – from identifying the need for their own house to the final decisions on choice of building materials and furniture as presented in Appendix 1.5. Each respondent was asked to give her or his personal contribution as well as her or his partner's contribution and influence on the design, choice of building materials, hire of labour, supervision of builders; and every household member's direct and indirect inputs. The study was thus able to identify every household member's contribution in collection of building materials, construction of foundation, walls and roof; painting, decoration, furnishing and maintenance of the dwelling unit even though those members were neither directly interviewed nor present during the interview. Children, spouses and relatives present during the interviews were allowed to correct or remind the respondents of the true experiences and/or facts. However, questions which sought to find out whether respondents were conscious of the emerging changing gender roles and factors responsible for the identified changes were personal and answered without interjections from other household members present.

The interviews were conducted in a relaxed manner while respondents carried on with their domestic chores or paused to allow for the same. They were also allowed to ask

questions to seek clarification or the purpose of a particular question. The order of posing questions also varied from case to case. The key issue was ensuring that all relevant questions had been posed and satisfactory responses obtained. Since I am not fluent in Setswana (the local lingua franca), I posed the questions in English, the interpreter asked the respondent in Setswana and translated the responses in English to me and so on until I was satisfied with the response and moved on to the next issue.

The in-depth interviews were accompanied by critical observations on family / household structure, size and design of houses, available facilities, and informal economic activities on the plot. I sought clarification whenever and on whatever caught my attention and often ended up taking photographs of the items. Some of the observations were made before or after the formal interview and lead, on some occasions, to extending the interview further.

All the interviews were recorded using a highly sensitive micro-tape recorder. The respondents were aware of the recording. Due to the high sensitivity of the recorder, neither the respondent nor the interpreter had to speak to the machine or through a microphone. It was as if the tape recorder did not exist. I later transcribed the recorded data with the help of a Setswana-speaking research assistant.

1.8.4 This thesis

This thesis views and utilises data from the three studies in a holistic manner because the studies are not only interdependent but have both forward and backwards linkages. The studies inform each other. I, therefore, treat each study as a phase of a long project. The studies adopted a *post facto* approach. Respondents were asked to narrate on how they built their house several years ago and not on how they would like to build their houses at the time of the interview. As observed in Chapter 4, most residents in Peleng built their houses between 1950 and 1970 while those in Woodhall I and II did so during the 1980s and 1990s. However, statistics from the 2001 census and other secondary sources were used to triangulate quantitative data collected in 1995 and 1999. The various sources of data have enriched the thesis.

1.8.5 Data analysis

All quantitative data collected through the use of structured questionnaires was analysed through the use of computers. Coded data was entered into 'Excel Sheets' but I used SPSS packages to analyse the data. Due to the purposeful nature employed in the selection of respondents, attempts to subject data to advanced analytical tools (beyond descriptive analysis) did not yield meaningful results. Open-ended questions were manually analysed. For each question, all responses were studied, categorised and, where appropriate, counted to generate quantitative data. The latter were then entered into Excel for analysis. The techniques were considered adequate since the study was explorative and had no preconceived hypotheses to be confirmed or rejected.

Qualitative data collected in the three studies was analysed through listening to the tape and re-reading the transcripts several times while noting emerging issues, similarities and differences between case studies. The analysis centred on identifying new gender roles; the extent of involvement of each gender/sex group; emerging

categories or stratification of women/men and their roles; gender contracts; and actors' perceptions on the justification of past and present gender roles, responsibilities and contracts at household and community levels. In other words, the analysis centred on why and how women and men share responsibilities in modern house construction.

I also utilised the 'constant comparative analysis' technique in analysing qualitative data. As I conducted the interviews, read the transcripts and reviewed the literature, I constantly reflected on my experiences as a son of widow who carried out responsibilities culturally attributed to men; as a father on separation who performed domestic chores against societal expectations and pressures; and on my observations of builders and building processes in Tanzania, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe and Botswana. I further constantly compared findings with theories and explanations offered by previous researchers.

1.9 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

The thesis is presented in 7 chapters. Chapter 1, the present chapter, provides a brief review of the close relationship between changes in gender roles and the status of women and socio-economic transformations as experienced in various parts of the world and how these changes have been played out in the construction industry. It then states issues and problems addressed by the thesis, its objectives, justification and methodological approaches. Chapter 2 presents a critique of the most common theories, concepts and explanations used to account for the causes and effects of the sexual or gendered division of labour. It notes that while early scholars and commentators attributed gender roles and the status of women to biological differences, feminist scholars initially saw socialisation processes - notably patriarchal ideologies - as the main cause. Patriarchy has since been supplemented and contrasted with other concepts and theories including modernisation, westernisation, and the domestic/public sphere opposition. This thesis argues that a web of interacting and intersecting economic, social, political and environmental factors determines gender roles, relations and the status of women in each society. Women and men position themselves (as a group or individuals) to exercise power within their realm or to negotiate with those in power over access and control of critical resources, which include employment, land and housing. It is further argued that any material change in the composition and interests of the power group or over whom power is exercised may lead to redefinition of gender roles and the status of women. It, therefore, posits that to identify, appreciate and account for gender roles in each society (and why these roles change over time) require an understanding of historical, cultural, religious, social and economic contexts.

Chapter 3 presents the national, political, social, legal, economic and historical context for understanding contemporary gender roles in the construction industry and housing delivery systems in Lobatse Township. It notes that traditionally Tswana societies were based on unequal gender power relationship characterised by male dominance and female subservience. Then, men controlled access and ownership of key livelihood resources, namely land and cattle. They also dominated and excluded women from administrative, political, legal, religious and military activities. At the household level, only men assumed household and family headship. Men's power and dominance were transferred from fathers to sons through inheritance rules and

procedures that excluded daughters and other female siblings from succession to their fathers' socio-political positions as well as inheriting land and cattle. Gender relations and gender roles in particular were then defined and shaped by the unequal power structures, subsistence modes of production, the fragile semi arid environment and the insecurity caused by frequent intertribal wars over cattle, land and water resources. The chapter further notes that colonialism undermined men and chiefs' powers by, among others, subjecting chiefs to a superior authority, introducing female and male waged employment and male migrant labour systems. The new order provided women with an opportunity to challenge traditional norms of marriage and male household headship. As women established their own households, chiefs were forced to allocate land to women, especially unmarried mothers. The introduction of Western style houses and building styles heralded men's entry into the construction industry in Botswana. The chapter ends by noting that the replacement of traditional leadership with a democratic government in 1966 (together with the country's economic transformation from a rural based subsistence economy to a capitalist market economy) have immensely impacted on gender roles and status of women in general and women's participation in the construction industry in particular.

Chapter 4 presents the case study area. It discusses the origin and growth of Lobatse; the major characteristics of the town's residents in terms of income, employment and other features; land delivery and ownership including formal and informal systems, self-help and government supported programmes. It ends with a discussion of housing and tenure systems. It particularly notes that although Lobatse is the second oldest township in the country, it is currently the fourth largest town and that the majority of its residents originate from its immediate hinterland. It further notes that Lobatse has a high rate of women headed households which are larger than men headed ones and reside in less quality housing than their counterparts.

Chapter 5 starts with a presentation of women's and men's experiences in accessing rented accommodation in Lobatse. It notes that due to differences in income and employment status – as well as ideological and historical factors- men, compared to women, have easier access to both public and private rental housing. As a result, women view self-help housing as a strategy for accessing housing. The chapter notes that women's access to self-help housing is, however, constrained by lack of skills for construction of non-traditional houses, operative building regulations and patriarchal discriminatory practices. It further notes that, unlike in the past, the construction industry in Lobatse, regardless of whether it is waged or non-waged, is heavily segregated and male dominated. The few women found at construction sites work as labourers or, at best, painters and cleaners. Finally, it notes that although women are excluded from the actual house construction processes, they take part in other aspects of self-help housing including decision-making, provision of finances and supervision of hired builders.

Chapter 6 presents respondent's views and perceptions on the roles of women, men and state institutions in self-help housing. It notes that some plot holders (notably women) were unhappy with advices and assistance rendered to them by council technicians. A number of women claimed that they were compelled to erect 'modern' houses while they had wanted to build traditional ones. Respondents in Lobatse generally perceived housing provision and construction as the duty of male partners - except female heads of households who have to hire men to build houses for them. It

also notes that to access housing women in Lobatse use a number of strategies including marriage, cohabitation, male labelling, solidarity and trustworthiness. Furthermore, the chapter identifies emerging rules that govern gender relationships in various household forms and structures – including the general assumption that ‘housing construction is masculine work’, ‘men are responsible for housing provision’ and that ‘men make decision on financial matters’ while ‘women furnish and take care of the homes’. Finally, that chapter offers explanations on why in the past women in Botswana were assigned house building roles; why men took part in house building activities during the colonial period; and why men have come to dominate the waged construction industry. It argues that while gender roles in pre-colonial Botswana were largely shaped by male dominance of decision making structures and control of livelihood resources, the subsistence economy, semi-arid conditions and intertribal wars, men’s participation in house construction during the colonial period was influenced by Western culture, colonial policies and the introduction of waged employment. It is further argued that men’s dominance in house building and construction activities in the post-colonial era have been fuelled by widespread preference for Western style house designs and building materials at the expense of traditional housing, as well as men’s resistance to female employment in construction work and acquisition of ‘modern’ building skills.

Chapter 7 presents a summary of the major findings and conclusions by noting that although men have indeed taken over house building and construction activities in housing delivery processes, women have not been completely excluded. Depending on income, employment and marital status, women contribute ideas, money, and labour while others manage and supervise construction work or cater for builders. As a result of changes in gender roles, data from the study area show that there has developed new socially defined responsibilities and rules of what is expected of men and women in housing delivery processes. The responsibility of providing a family with housing has shifted from women to men although women are still expected to furnish and look after it. It also notes that gender roles and relationships are not determined by one or two factors but a complex set of historical, social, political, economic and environmental circumstances.

CHAPTER 2: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THEORIES ON THE GENDERED DIVISION OF LABOUR

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Early scholars and philosophers attributed gender roles and women's subordinate social status to nature. According to Cornelius, Aristotle saw women's roles in society as being naturally determined and argued that "the male is by nature superior, and the female inferior. The one rules and the other is ruled. And this inequality is permanent" (Cornelius, 2002: 52). Engel's postulation of women's role under subsistence agriculture (a standpoint which is still maintained by radical feminists) as well as Boserup's initial thesis on the role of women in development was largely informed by biological determinism. Biological determinism ascribes women's perceived weakness and male power to nature. This standpoint has often been used to exclude women from roles perceived to be 'masculine' including construction trades in Europe during the 19th century. In Germany, for example, women were barred from the architectural profession during the first quarter of the 20th century because of their sexual anatomy. According to Stratigakos, men argued that a woman who became an architect would endanger her femininity to the extent of failing to find a man to marry her because, they argued, if a woman's "body was feminine, she could not be an architect; if her body was that of an architect, she renounced her femininity" (Stratigakos, 2001: 92). The presence and success of numerous female engineers, architects and builders all over the world strongly negates the view that gender roles in the construction industry depends on one's physical strength. If that were the case then women's role in the industry would be similar all over the world and at all times and not different as noted in section 1.2.

In contrast to early scholars and philosophers, feminist and gender sensitive scholars have attributed women's low participation rates in the building trades in Western countries, Africa and Latin America to patriarchal controls, segregation of the labour market, lack of political will and vocational training systems (Clarke et. al, 2004). Others, as noted in section 1.2, attribute shifts in responsibilities for housing delivery to the transfer of housing from the female domestic sphere to public sphere of men.

The following sections present the various theories that have been advanced to explain the causes, the context or effects of gendered division of labour with reference to women's role in the construction industry. Each theory is evaluated or critiqued on the basis of its theoretical foundation and its validity using evidence from published studies and research reports. The last but one section presents the theoretical approach or framework to be adopted in this thesis. The last section is a summary.

2.2 PATRIARCHY

According to Coetzee (2001) the concept of patriarchy started as an idea of the father leading and protecting a close circle of the family but was later extended to other spheres of society and finally dominated all other forms of social intercourse. Feminists adopted patriarchy as an ideological concept in gender discourses in order

to differentiate the forces maintaining the discrimination and domination of women from other oppressive forces such as feudalism, capitalism and racism (Mannathoko, 1992:76; and Mies, 1998).

2.2.1 Patriarchal controls

According to Clarke and Wall (2004) the feudal patriarchal system in Britain (which was similar to other countries in Europe) regulated women's participation in the construction industry in three ways: restraining women from the building trades, denying married women own wages, and socialisation. Entry into building trades "was only through apprenticeship, controlled by a master who enrolled the apprentice with the trade, company or corporation for seven years" (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 26). Apprenticeship was a period when the role of the male apprentice moved from the older generation to younger one, from man to lad. During the seven years of apprenticeship, male apprentice were not allowed to marry because, besides learning the skills, this transitional period helped the apprentice to identify the role of the institution with masculinity and exclusion of women. However, between 1562 when the *Statute of Artificers* was enacted and 1814 when it was repealed, the same feudal system allowed girls to join the apprenticeship and train in building trades. Under this statute, which was necessitated by the shortage of labour associated with plague, boys were enrolled in parish apprenticeship until they were 24 and girls until they were 21 or were married. Before the *Statute of Artificers* married women had no separate wage under common law - women's earnings were paid to husbands. Thus the statute and the parish system advantaged women not only because women became wage earners in their own right as builders and material suppliers. In principle women graduated at an earlier age than men did. However, social conventions - reinforced by superstitions and taboos - discouraged women from entering building trades. Consequently, despite the advantages women had under the *Statute of Artificers*, the building production system in Britain remained a male dominated system with strong artisan characteristics until the advantages were gradually eroded and finally razed with the repeal of the *Statute of Artificers* in 1814 (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 29).

According to Clarke and Wall (2004), women's employment in the British construction industry diminished further under capitalism due to three interrelated factors: technological changes in the construction industry; increasing split between home and the place of production; and the introduction of waged labour (see section 2.4 below for details). Since then, women have only been welcome to participate in the construction industry in times of male labour shortage, especially during the 1st and 2nd World Wars.

While, as noted in section 1.1.4, women largely participate in the construction of buildings and production of building materials in Asia, their involvement is limited to unskilled work. Wells' review of women in construction in Asia reveals close similarities with feudal Britain. Reporting on findings of a survey undertaken in Mumbai, India, by Shah, Wells notes that women labourers on construction sites were eager to learn the building trades but could find no one to teach them. According to Shah

“... supervisors and skilled workers became angry when they [female labourers] requested training. They met similar responses from their

husbands. Building trades are an exclusively male preserve, with skills passed from father to son or between male members of the kinship group. Skills transfer to women is not something that men are willing to think about” (Shah as quoted in Wells, 2004: 72).

Like in feudal Europe, wages of married women labourers in Asia are paid to their husbands. With the exception of single women, the number of days worked by women is added to that of their husband to whom payment is made. Wells (2004) further reports that attempts by the Sri Lanka government to train women in building trades have been thwarted by failure of female trainees to find employment as skilled workers (Wells, 2004: 77).

The above brief highlights several points. First, while men in the Asian subcontinent “do not want women to acquire skills because that would mean more competition and might pose a threat to their dominant status in the construction industry” (Wells, 2004: 72), the exclusion of women from building trades in feudal Europe was a strategy designed to ensure that the transfer of property and power remained in the privileged group (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 26). Second, male builders are unwilling to share skills and employment opportunities with women unless there are not enough men to do the job. Greed conceptualises the construction industry as “a hostile world inhabited by the construction tribe, which is itself divided into aggressive sub-tribes, corresponding to the different professional bodies and specialisations within the construction” (Greed, 2000: 181). Third, the construction industry is not only highly gendered it is also strongly classed, quite feudal and militant (Greed, 2000: 189). Fourth, women are generally tolerated in the industry as manual workers especially in times of male labour shortage or when the financial rewards are paid to the husband. Fifth, men - in the construction industry (or ‘tribe’) in Britain and other parts of Europe - have for centuries relied on the state to regulate and sanction women’s entry into and exclusion from the industry. The next sections will examine the concept of patriarchy in order to enhance our understanding of this phenomenon.

2.2.2 Patriarchy as an ideological concept

In classical terms, patriarchy is “a set of social relations between men, which have a material base, and which create material interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women” (Coetzee, 2001:301). Men’s power within the family “is reproduced through the ability of fathers to bequeath to their sons the power to command resources, direct the labour of their wives and children, monopolise material control of the ‘public sphere’ ... [and] enforce ideologies which legitimate all this as natural, godly and inevitable state of affairs” (MacInnes, 1998: 3).

To radical feminists, patriarchy is a system in which men, as a group, dominate women, as a group, and in which men are the main beneficiaries of the subordination of women (Walby, 1990:3-7). Male domination of women, according to radical feminists, is exercised through appropriation of women's sexuality and bodies, rape and women battering – all of which seek to satisfy men’s desires. Batterings is justified as a means of controlling women while rape is attributed to psychological problems among a few men (Mannathoko, 1992: 76). Radical feminists’ standpoint has been criticised for ignoring social and cultural socialisation and tending more to biological determinism and universalism by assuming that all men everywhere dominate all women (and women only) at all times. To Marxist feminists, male domination of

women emanates from capitalist exploitative class relations. Women, as housewives who undertake unpaid domestic and reproduction work, subsidise capital by providing cheap labour. The 'family wage' paid to men by capital does not cover costs for household chores such as cleaning the house, washing clothes, cooking and child-care. Marxist feminists have also been challenged for their failure to acknowledge the existence of gender inequality and female subordination in non-capitalist societies (such as feudalism and socialism).

Liberal feminists disassociate male domination of women from both biological determinism and capitalism per se while contending that women's disadvantaged positions arise out of a summation of small-scale deprivations - notably denial of equal access to education and employment. Consequently, different attitudes towards women give rise to varying forms of patriarchy. The position of postmodernist feminists is in many aspects similar to that of liberal feminists. Postmodernist feminists prefer a pluralistic approach which assumes that women's position in a given society is determined by numerous interacting factors that need to be contextualised. That is, neither capitalism, religion, politics, patriarchy nor any other factor alone, is responsible for male domination of women; rather many factors combine to generate gender inequalities and the subordination of women.

Rogers posits patriarchy as "a system of domination whereby men dominate women, with high-status men dominating other men as well" (Rogers, 1998: 1). According to Rogers, although almost all men share in masculine privileges and the institutionalised subordination of women, the privileges accruing to men vary according to "class, age, race, able-bodiedness and sexual orientation" (Rogers, 1998: 2). Put differently, she argues that, in each society, men of higher status (by virtue of age, skin colour, wealth, political responsibility etc.) dominate all women and men of lower social standing. As Greed (2000) observes, the construction industry or 'tribe' is such a patriarchal system. It consists of subtle "vertical divisions among men with different skills, and between those with different levels of responsibility ... Every man knows his place, and 'who' is above and below him" (Greed, 2000:189). It "is one of the few remaining areas where a large 'male manual working class' still exists, but unlike factory workers or miners ... this group is mobile, independent and often self-employed" (Greed, 2000: 189).

As Walby (1990: 20-21 and 173-179) observes, patriarchy is not a historical constant but a dynamic system that needs to be conceptualised as a system of social relations composed of six structures, namely:

- i) Patriarchal mode of production
- ii) Patriarchal structures in paid work
- iii) Patriarchal relations in the state
- iv) Male violence
- v) Patriarchal relations in sexuality
- vi) Patriarchal relations in cultural institutions.

The first three and, to some extent, the last one are more relevant to the present work and deserve expounding albeit briefly. To Walby, the patriarchal mode of production refers to class relations within the household where housewives are the producing class and husbands or male partners are the expropriating class. Patriarchal structures within paid work refer to closures within which male "waged labour exclude women from the better forms of work and segregate them into the worse jobs which are deemed to be less

skilled" (Walby, 1990:21). Although Walby is theorising patriarchy in generic terms, the construction industry fits her typology pretty well. The construction industry, as described by Wells (2004), Greed (2000) and Clarke and Wall (2004), among others, is highly segregated and gendered.

2.2.3 Private and public patriarchy

To Walby, the six structures are often combined or co-exist in varying degrees in different patriarchal societies or over time in the same societies giving rise to a continuum consisting of private patriarchy, at one end, and public patriarchy, at the other. Private patriarchy is characteristic of societies in which men in their positions as husbands or fathers control household labour and regulate the fertility and reproduction of women. Furthermore, under private patriarchal systems, women may be systematically excluded from participating in public activities including work and community leadership. Under public patriarchy women may have access to both private and public spheres while the ability of men to dominate and oppress women in the private sphere is seriously restricted (MacInnes, 1998: 4). Under public patriarchy women have reduced dependence on husbands or fathers: they may live independent of husbands or divorce husbands; control their own fertility; raise their children without any man's assistance; and choose to work for pay outside the home. According to MacInnes, the rise of public patriarchy has been due to "the development of modernity, individual rights, capitalist relations of production, commoditization of labour, and the decline in household or subsistence production" (MacInnes, 1998: 11).

2.2.4 Criticisms of the patriarchy theory

Patriarchy has been criticised for closely associating gender roles with nature. As Crompton observes, "despite successive modifications to and extensions of the concept, [patriarchy] as a universal theory of gender relations its essentialist and structurally determined features have not been overcome" (Crompton, 1998:4). However, as Bulbeck (1998: 19-20) observes, there have always existed matriarchal societies in various parts of the world where women dominated men, manipulated and controlled husbands' labour. In these societies, lineage and inheritance are through the mother. Men in matriarchal societies have neither property nor land rights, they work for their wives. On termination of marriage through death or divorce the ex-husband is obliged to go back to his mother's family or clan (Beidelman, 1971; Geisler, 1990; and Kalabamu, 2000). Furthermore, women in patriarchal societies are not inherently passive victims of patriarchal activities - unquestioningly accepting whatever is handed or assigned to them. Women have always challenged patriarchal positions and attitudes as individuals in their every day lives or as organised civic movements. Finally, patriarchy as a tool for analysing social structures and gender relationships fails to account for differences in gender roles over space and time.

2.3 STATE AS PATRIARCHAL INSTITUTIONS

As noted in early parts of section 2.2, states are major role players in the definition of gender roles in the construction industry. For example, until the year 1814 state laws in Britain regulated women's entry into apprenticeship while under common law women had no separate wages. Rai (1996:5) defines the state as a network of power relations that exist within a grid composed of economic, political, legal and cultural forms - all interacting on, with and against each other - and not just a unity of structure and power. According to Vargas and Wieringa (1998:3) the state is generally characterised by

permanence, sovereignty, legitimate use of coercion and force, a bureaucratic apparatus and a political executive. The state, argues Walby, "is systematically structured in a way that makes it appropriate to regard it as patriarchal" (Walby, 1990: 160). Walby's view is contested by Crompton who concedes that although states "were initially constituted in a manner which systematically reproduced women's subordination in the household and workplace ... [many] states have also adopted policies which have sought to improve the position of women" (Crompton, 1998:3). Crompton further argues that state policies, ideologies and actions may unintentionally work in favour or against women's interests.

However, proponents of state patriarchy contend that "the diminution of private patriarchy has been replaced by public patriarchy (Bulbeck, 1998:60). Despite recent egalitarian and democratic principles upheld in most countries, there still exist systematic gender patternings within the distribution of state personnel in all parts of the world. It has been aptly demonstrated that modern states, including welfare state structures, are generally characterised by "concentrations of men in top management, in the apparatuses of coercion (military, police, judiciary, prisons) and in quasi-industrial activities such as transport and construction... [and] concentrations of women in secretarial work, in certain professional areas, and in certain kinds of unskilled work (e.g. cleaners)" (Franzway, Court and Connell, 1989: 8. See also Walby, 1990: 25-29; Esping-Andersen, 1990; and Sainsbury, 1996 and 1999). Not only do men overwhelm women in terms of numbers in top government positions, the judiciary, military and other institutions, but the manner and style with which states function and conduct their business is unduly masculine. The majority of women employees in government ministries and departments work as clerks, typists, secretaries, primary school teachers, nurses and social workers. Franzway, Court and Connell (1989: 9 and 27-28) argue that as a result of male dominance in state apparatuses and businesses, the making of state decisions and enforcement of those decisions is substantially in the hands of men and that, because the state is male dominated, it acts as an agent of patriarchy and on behalf of men's interests. The state itself, or at least the core part of it, is patriarchal as when it is itself the oppressor. Because the state is patriarchal, it is justified to view the state as a process of mobilisation, institutionalisation and negotiation of hegemony between social groups and as a social force in its own right instead of as an uninterested or neutral party (Franzway, Court and Connell, 1989: 33). "Those who administer power over public services also have power over the degree of freedom for local inhabitants, and over individual capacities to integrate the private and the public" (Forsberg, 1998:192).

States can be clustered into three groups along the private-public patriarch continuum according to the extent or degree to which they support female subordination and exclusion from the public domain: conservative, progressive, and neutral states. Conservative states are characterised by entrenched private patriarchal structures, policies, practices and legislation that seek to propagate domestication and subordination of women by men. Progressive states include those states which have consciously adopted policies and reformed laws aimed at empowering women and enabling female participation in the public sphere. The third group, neutral states, have neither laws nor policies which specifically discriminate against women nor any that seek to favour women in particular. Neutral states rely on democracy, equal opportunity and market forces to create efficient and equitable socio-economic environments for both men and women. They have laws, procedures, policies, programmes and strategies which are often spelt out in so called 'gender neutral' - such as the 'individual', 'the household', 'the economic actor' and 'the entrepreneur' all of which are abstracted from the social

relations of gender in order to conceal men's privileges or naked patriarchy. In practice, however, the entrepreneur, for example, is assumed to be a man who "has a wife to cook and clean for him and raise his children while he battles it out in the grim deregulated marketplace" (Franzway, Court and Connell, 1989: 5). As many authors have observed, even policies and programmes designed to benefit women often turn out to be of more benefit to men than women.

Conservative patriarchal states, as defined above, no longer exist in Europe but may be found in parts of Asia and Africa where women are restricted from paid employment or to specific workplaces. During the 19th century and for the larger part of the first half of the 20th century, many European countries had laws which forbade women to work in certain professions such as underground mining and engineering jobs or restricted the hours and times of women's employment in factories and workshops. Until 1965, men in France were legally able to prevent their wives from taking paid employment (Crompton, 1998: 12). In many countries, state laws restricted women from voting or being voted into positions of political leadership. Legal arrangements and procedures for marriage, divorce, contraception and abortion as well as those governing access to land, housing, credit finance and education discouraged women from paid employment and independence from men (Walby, 1990; and MacInnes, 1998).

Over the second half of the last century most states have joined the progressive patriarchal state group by pursuing policies and programmes targeted at women's employment and welfare. Initially, most states "focused on women's actual or potential roles as wives and mothers, rather than their rights as individuals and/or roles as workers" (Crompton, 1998:5) without challenging patriarchal attitudes and perceptions. Later progressive state policies and actions centred on elimination of institutionalised gender discrimination, and for political and economic autonomy for women. The latest approach centres around the state's acknowledgement of the rights of each individual within a household, family, community and nation to work, determine their choices and participate in domestic and public activities.

Franzway, Court and Connell (1989), Walby (1990), Esping-Andersen (1990), Sainsbury (1996 and 1999) and Crompton (1998) note that although legislation reforms, state assistance for child-care and reproduction etc. have created jobs for women and released women from the confines of the domestic arena, the majority of women are employed in service work (particularly health and education) rather than in manufacturing, mining, construction and other 'traditionally' masculine jobs. With regard to Britain, Walby (1990:168) notes that: "Today the organisation of the [British] welfare state is headed principally by men, with a predominantly female workforce. Previously privatised domestic work is carried out under more public forms of patriarchal organisation." The same could be said of other nations.

States have been implicated in men's continued dominance in 'traditionally' masculine jobs, high status and top management jobs in several ways. First, the patterning of sexual division of labour has tended to depend on the assumptions the states make as to whether they want women to be seen primarily as mothers or workers. MacInnes (1998) notes that, when Europe experienced rapid decline in fertility rates, many nation states adopted policies designed to encourage women to become mothers or housewives by promoting their dependence on male breadwinners. However, when later faced with labour shortages and as more and more women joined the labour force, many European states

adopted equal pay policies and assisted in the cost of child-care instead of relying on unpaid labour of wives thereby releasing women into paid employment. Second, states have assisted men to "indirectly fence off" certain job markets from women through 'masculinisation of bureaucracy'. This is done by grooming young, up-coming and promising men to top positions within departments through informal male networks from which women are quietly excluded or through the construction of career paths which favour men's life styles and place a stress on mothers with families to look after (Franzway, Court and Connell 1989: 48), Third, and related to the above, since both the state machinery and the private sector are male dominated, decision-making and practical interpretation and implementation of laws, policies and programmes is done in the interest of men. Fourth, state policies have condoned persistent unequal access to education, income, resources and employment opportunities created through a long history of socialisation and patriarchy. Perceptions and mind-sets on male and female types of employment cannot be changed over one or two generations.

Although states may be guilty of being party to the gender patterning in the construction industry, they are by no means the major determinants. As noted earlier, few women in Britain capitalised on the opportunities and advantages provided by the Statute of Artificers that allowed girls to train in building trades. Attempts by some states (e.g. Sri Lanka) to promote women's acquisition of building skills have been stalled by trainees' inability to find employment as skilled workers. Michielsens et al (2004) note, with dismay, that gender inclusion policies pursued by EU countries for over 20 years have had little impact on the inclusion of women in the construction industry in Europe. "Women's inclusion in the construction sector is not a priority issue – even on the agenda – for the majority of the social partners [European countries]" (Michielsens et al, 2004: 100). Price (2004) reports similar results in respect to affirmative actions taken in the United States since the 1980s to integrate women in the construction industry. Price attributes the poor results to occupational segregation by gender and race.

2.4 CAPITALISM AND LABOUR MARKET

In classical economics, capitalism is a mode of production whereby the means of production (capital) are owned by a few individuals in their private capacity but hire labour to produce goods and services for exchange on a free market to earn private profits. Workers compete freely on the labour market while capitalists hire labour on the basis of its marginal productivity. Wages paid to workers are based on output and profits made or expected to be made. Although, as Lim observes, "productivity differences may be correlated with the sex of a worker, sex itself, like race, religion and other ascriptive characteristics, is irrelevant in the hiring process" (Lim, 1983:76). In a capitalist market economy, rational choice underpins the segregation of labour markets as individuals enter occupations willingly and according to their preferences, capabilities and educational training (Clarke et al, 1999: 139).

However, as noted in section 1.1.3, the transformation from feudalism to industrial/capitalist market economies in Europe led to the shrinkage in the range of occupations available to women. Capitalism and its attendant market forces have been blamed for increased female exclusion from waged employment in Europe and the construction industry in particular. Women's exclusion from paid employment in Europe has been attributed to the collusion between the capitalists, trade unions and

the state (Clarke and Wall, 2004; and Janssen, 2004) through 'collective bargaining'. It is argued that while State governments gain political mileage from any labour settlement, capitalists maintain their profits and workers (read 'male workers') earn higher wages on commitment to higher productivity or longer working hours.

The second half of the last century, as noted by Standing (2001), Posel and Todes (1995), Yeandle (1996a), Beneria (1999), Irwin and Bottero (2000), among others, has witnessed increasing 'feminisation' of the labour force in both developed and developing countries. Posel and Todes (1995: 229-236) attribute the rise in female employment to increasing real wages available to women workers; socialisation of women whereby women are becoming more work oriented by challenging their 'domestic role'; changes in household composition and structures; depressed state economies which have pushed women into self-employment and other survival strategies; the shift from the manufacturing sector to the tertiary (service provision) sector as the major employer especially in developed countries; and preference of female over male labour by some industries (e.g. textile and electronic) and occupations (e.g. clerical work, cleaning, reception and sales). According to Standing (2001), the feminisation of the labour force has partly been due to growing labour market flexibility, informalisation of employment (e.g. preference for casual labourers) and weakening of unionised male power.

Irwin and Bottero (2000:261) observe that the recent feminisation of the labour force in developed countries has been facilitated by "the shift from manufacturing to service sector employment, the emergence of a new distribution of employment insecurity ... dramatic changes in women's expectations and commitments in respect of employment, and seismic shifts in family forms". Consequently, dual earner families have become the majority group among two-parent families and women have increased their share of household income relative to men which have been accompanied by deferment in the timing of family formation, declines in fertility, growing incidence of childlessness, single parenthood and rising divorce rates (Irwin and Bottero, 2000: 262). Irwin and Bottero (2000) further note that the conventional family form looks increasingly tenuous as advantages of the domestic division of labour that tie men and women into breadwinner-unpaid caring contract diminish.

As Blackden and Bhanu (1999) note, the introduction of plantation, mine and urban wage employment in Sub-Saharan Africa led to women's take over of men's roles in rural areas. Moreover, unlike 19th century Europe, recent expansion of industrial/capitalist market economies in Asia, Latin America and other regions has been associated with increased female participation rates in the manufacturing sector. According to Standing (2001:324-325), in the developing world, female labour force participation rates have been high and risen in countries (notably Southeast Asia) that have pursued export-led industrialisation strategies since the 1960s or tolerated flexible and informal employment. The establishment of export-led industries has been in effect a relocation of electronic, textile and garment industries from Western Europe and North America to developing countries in order to lower production costs and increase the competitiveness of European products with those originating from Japan or produced elsewhere under import substitution policies in developing countries (Pyle and Dawson, 2001; and Lim, 2001). Consequently, the "pursuit of international competitiveness have made wage and labour costs more important in determining the

geographical changes in production and employment and thus determining which groups [of men or women] are employed (Standing, 2001:326).

According to various commentators (e.g. Standing, 2001; Lim, 2001; Wong, 2001; and Pearson, 1998 and 2001), managers of multinational corporations consider women to have special qualities – docility, diligence, tolerance and nimble fingers – necessary for swift work. Besides, female labour in developing countries is said to be more productive, cheaper and easier to fire than male labour. Thus, these multinational companies tend to hire young and single women who are considered easy to train and pay less. Married women are viewed as less productive due to their family responsibilities.

It is worth noting that while increases in export-led industries have been associated with increases in female labour participation rates, it has had the opposite effects in some countries such as Mexico (Pearson, 2001), Turkey and Ireland (Cagatay and Berik, 2001). In Ireland the state awarded financial incentives to enterprises that would employ less women workers while in Mexico women wanted bigger salaries due their family commitments. The use of highly mechanised technology is blamed for low levels of female participation rates in the manufacturing sector in Turkey. Women in the economies of the former Soviet Union “have suffered disproportionately from the social costs of the transition [from state to market economies], including unemployment, gender discrimination, and reinforcement of patriarchal forms ... and relegated women to temporary and low-paying jobs” (Beneria, 1999: 72-73). Of course, women are disproportionately concentrated in unpaid production of goods and services (e.g. subsistence agriculture, domestic chores and volunteer work), which only are indirectly linked to the market (Beneria, 1999:70).

In brief, industrialisation, capitalism and market systems have had differing and contradictory effects on the gender division of labour – at times excluding women from paid employment and including them at other times. As Beneria observes, decisions to exclude or include women in paid employment structures are made by businessmen, bankers, officials and intellectuals who “control many of the world’s governments, and the bulk of its economic and military capabilities” (Beneria, 1999: 68). “It is generally argued that women have been drawn into paid employment at low wage rates as part of a general set of moves to reduce labour costs and increase flexibility, reflected in the significant growth in the proportion of part-time and casual employment (Irwin and Bottero, 2000: 270). Global feminisation of labour, as Pearson argues,

“not only highlights the fact that women’s share of industrial employment has increased because of the reorganisation of the geography of global manufacturing; it also contends that women have replaced men under conditions of ‘flexible’ and deregulated employment. Rather than suggesting that industrialisation [in Asia and Central America] employment relies primarily on the employment of women it is postulated that [such] industrialisation depends on the conversion of all industrial employment to the (inferior) conditions endured by female labour” (Pearson, 1998: 176).

The success of the feminisation of labour under export-led industrialisation depended on strict control of labour unrest (e.g. disallowing trade union activities in export-processing zones or enclaves), generous tax incentives and adequately well developed infrastructure and public services (Kabeer, 2004; and Wong, 2001). Women's exclusion from waged employment becomes a means for reducing competition and keeping wages high. Female exclusion from construction industry under capitalism (for example, in Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia) is achieved through socialisation and training rather than changes in technology or industrialisation per se because, regardless of sex, any person can be trained to operate and manoeuvre any machine or manage any technology.

Finally, it is worth noting that while industrialisation increased female labour participation rates in the manufacturing sectors in some Asian countries, it led to the decrease of women in the construction industry as happened in 19th century Europe. In Singapore, for example, the proportion of women in the construction sector decreased from 2.1% in 1957 to 1.4% in 1979 (Wong, 2001: 146). However, the extent to which industrialisation and the pursuit of flexible labour markets have affected female labour participation rates in the housing delivery and construction sectors in developing countries appears to be grossly understudied.

2.4.1 Socialisation and Training

Training has been defined as a process of teaching or transferring knowledge and superior skills, culture or religion from one generation to the other (Shills, 1981: 179 and 245; and Boserup, 1990: 19). The receiving generation may make minor improvements or variations that they then pass on to the next generation. According to Brion, within an education system, socialisation and stereotyping of sex roles happens at three levels: institutional, behaviour and content levels (Brion, 1994: 173-195). The institutional level is characterised by power relations in class and training institutions and access to formal education by men and women. The administration of education and training institutions as well as decision making on education matters are dominated by men and, as a result, are biased in favour of men. The predominance of men in senior teaching (e.g. professors) and administrative posts (e.g. principals and head teachers) denies girls role models.

The behaviour level is characterised by the varying education orientation given to young boys and girls. At household level, parents teach on tasks that should be performed by girls or boys only. At the cultural level, society expects boys and girls, as distinct gender groups, to 'sort of naturally' undertake specific categories of work. In each society, women are expected and required to carry out tasks 'appropriate' to their so-called natural endowments and age just as men are required to undertake tasks commensurate to their God-given physical powers and according to their ages. It has been argued that while ideas about sex roles (what men or women should do) are formed during childhood, socialisation and formal education reinforce the perceived roles. While boys are encouraged to train as, and aspire to be, engineers, mathematicians, architects and so on, girls are discouraged to take such training. Girls are, instead, streamlined into welfare and domestic oriented education – cookery, nursing and domestic science. Advertisements, the media and film industries reinforce gender patterning and stereotyping. The third level, the education content, is characterised by teaching materials, aids, examples and language that also reinforce gender stereotyping. "The role

of school systems is not only to teach intellectual skills and scientific knowledge, but also to indoctrinate pupils with the dominant cultural values. However, cultural education for both girls and boys is usually ... a teaching of traditional prejudices... against members of the female sex" (Boserup, 1990: 19) although this is changing due to globalisation and increasing gender equalisation. As Beneria (1999:73) argues, the industrialisation/capitalist market system can lead to break-up of patriarchal traditions, curtail factors that limit individual autonomy or accelerate the diffusion of both liberating and sexist practices.

In ending her review of post primary and secondary education training systems in the Netherlands, Anneke Westerhuis concludes that "education is to blame in not using the potential of its wide knowledge of social, economic and cultural developments in society [to] initiate a dialogue with industry to consider the changing concept of work and their implications for the organisation of work and education ..." (Westerhuis, 2004: 118). Clarke and Wall (2004) look further than talking to industry. They argue that women can only be integrated into traditionally masculine jobs through "a transformation of the system of training and greater regulation of employment and social relations in the industry" (Clarke et al, 2004: 45).

2.4.2 The domestic and public sphere

The domestic sphere, in this thesis, is taken as being synonymous to the private sphere and to refer to activities that are undertaken from home, undervalued and often unpaid for. By public or extra-domestic sphere I refer to activities that are often located away from home, more valued and paid for. This categorization is particularly useful when discussing construction activities in subsistence and market economies. As noted earlier, while women were included in construction work in subsistence economies they tended to be excluded when the construction activities became commercialised, mechanised and located away from home under capitalism.

The domestic and public sphere opposition has been defined as a "structural model that relates recurrent aspects of psychology and cultural and social organisation to an opposition between the 'domestic' orientation of women and the extra-domestic or 'public' ties that, in most societies, are primarily available to men" (Rosaldo, 1974: 17-18). Rosaldo, to whom the theory is credited, notes that, although there are variations in feminine and masculine roles and behaviour between tribes and societies, there are also universal "characteristic tasks, manners and responsibilities primarily associated with women or with men" (Rosaldo, 1974: 18). To Rosaldo, what is most striking and surprising is "the fact that male, as opposed to female, activities are always recognised as predominantly important, and cultural systems give authority and value to the roles and activities of men" (Rosaldo, 1974:19). She notes that asymmetry in the cultural evaluations of the importance of female and male activities are universal. She acknowledges that, although biological traits constrain and direct human activities, they are not responsible for evaluation of female and male roles except for the "fact that, in most traditional societies, a good part of a woman's adult life is spent giving birth to and raising children leads to a differentiation of domestic and public spheres of activity that ... shape a number of relevant aspects of human social structure and psychology" (Rosaldo, 1974: 23).

Rosaldo defines the 'domestic sphere' as "those minimal institutions and modes of activity that are organised immediately around one or more mothers and their children" and the 'public sphere' as "activities, institutions, and forms of association that link, rank, organise, or subsume particular mother-child groups" (Rosaldo, 1974: 23). To Rosaldo, the domestic/public sphere opposition does not "determine cultural stereotypes or asymmetries in the evaluation of the sexes" but underlines the "identification of women with the domestic life and of men with public life" (Rosaldo, 1974: 23-24). Rosaldo notes that "women gain power and a sense of value when they are able to transcend domestic limits, either by entering the men's world or by creating a society unto themselves" and that the most egalitarian societies are "those in which men value and participate in the domestic life of the home ... [and] in which women can readily participate in important public events" (Rosaldo, 1974:41).

Capitalism and industrialisation have been blamed for increasing the "split between home and the place of production, which reinforced the gender division of labour and made for a narrowing of the possibilities for female artisans" (Clarke and Wall, 2004: 29) in contrast to pre-capitalist systems where production was undertaken at home or close to thereby. Women, according to Boserup (1970: 79-105), prefer to work in home-based industries or in service trades rather than in large-scale industries. She attributes women's preference for home-based small/informal sector industries to women's need for flexible working hours, proximity to homes and fear of exposure to strange men (Boserup, 1970: 114). In other words, women's preference for working close to home is a reflection of their need to balance their reproductive and productive roles. Such work arrangements, it is claimed, enable women to simultaneously take care of the infants and attend to domestic chores. There is a presumption that men are not involved in child caring or in domestic activities and are, therefore, preoccupied with public activities including politics and administration. In the same vein, women are said to be more likely than men to participate in unpaid activities aimed at uplifting family welfare while men prefer to work for money.

The female-domestic/male-public sphere model is flawed in several ways. First, there is a presumption that women's decisions to work close to home are made independent of men's influence thereby ignoring effects of gendered segregation, socialisation and stereotyping. Second, there is an erroneous assumption that women have no interest nor would they like to identify themselves with economic goods located in the public sphere. Rational economics, on which capitalism is based, dictates otherwise – unless it is contended that women are not rational. As Bulbeck (1998: 93-94) argues even such issues as surrogacy (to sell or give away one's baby) are influenced by patriarchal structures in as far as it is the husband of the other couple who supplies the sperm. Third, women all over the world have increasingly, albeit to differing degrees, made inroads into the public sphere – taking up roles that were previously the preserve of men. In fact, the public/domestic sphere divide in most countries is increasing becoming blurred rendering the theory ineffective as more and more activities shift from the domestic sphere to the public sphere. Fourth, the model is based on essentialism and universalism by treating women and men as separate but homogeneous groups when, as noted earlier, they are not. Feminisation of export-led industries in Asia, central and southern America is a full proof that women (including married women) can work away from home as reported by Wong (2001), Lim (2001) and Pyle and Dawson (2001), among others.

As noted earlier, Anita Larsson observes that, traditionally, responsibilities for housing production in Botswana were located in the domestic sphere of women. However, with the introduction of the cash economy and labour migration to South African housing production has been transferred to the public sphere of men. She further notes that the transfer of housing to the public sphere has been paralleled by the diminishing importance of cattle in social and economic terms and, furthermore, that men have not only invested their monetary earnings in cattle, but in housing improvements as well (Larsson, 1989 and 1990). However, other studies (e.g. Datta, 1995, and Larsson, 1989a) indicate that women are strongly interested in housing as a survival strategy and a source of livelihood. That is, women's interests in housing appear to have survived in spite of the transfer of house building roles from women to men. Second, the rise of men's interests in housing did not necessarily extinguish women's concerns and desires to own, control or provide housing for their families. Third, and related to the second problem, housing may serve as both men's and women's identity without excluding the other party despite having achieved a status similar to cattle. Both may symbolise social and economic status to whoever owns them regardless of sex, marital or household headship status. It is the intention of this thesis to find out whether housing is now the concern or symbol of identity for men only or both men and women; whether housing has achieved a status similar to that of cattle; and whether women are excluded from housing provision and responsibilities.

In brief, this section has shown that decisions on the location, type and nature of female roles and employment largely depends on the interests of male capitalists, bankers, politicians and other world, national and community leaders that define cultural norms, market rules, control labour movements and make investment decisions. "The possibility that women might seek waged employment or other forms of income generation to *liberate* themselves ..., to pursue alternative futures ..., or to establish alternative households has had little consideration" (Pearson, 1998: 182). Women have had to constantly negotiate between the perceived interests of capital and labour depending on available opportunities for income-generation "as well as the differentially gendered power of women to assert their conditions in the bargain" (Pearson, 1998: 182). However, capitalism and its attendant division of workplaces into domestic and public spheres do not adequately account for the transfer of house building in Botswana and other parts of Africa from women to men.

2.5 GENDER CONTRACTS AND SYSTEMS THEORY

The gender system and contracts theory questions and rejects the association of female and male tasks with nature and the physiology of women and men. Yvonne Hirdman, to whom the gender system and contracts theory is credited, argues that explanations which seek solutions on gender inequalities and subordination of women through the traditional premises of biological differences between men and women and historical evolution of human kind should be rejected because they are inherently based on circular reasoning and suppositions without theoretical validity.

While historical evolution is used to attribute present gender inequalities "to traditions carried over from [the past] agrarian society", biological determinism suffers from a syndrome of "obvious circular reasoning: a 'difference' arises because there is a 'difference'" (Hirdman, 1991:188). Having attributed contemporary gender inequalities and female subordination to the past and/or nature, theories based on biological

differences and historical evolution (e.g. modernisation and dependence) tend to assume that "a levelling of differences between sexes will immediately and automatically occur [in the near future]" (Hirdman, 1991:188). However, past experiences have shown that the disappearance of one form of subordination, discrimination or exclusion on the basis of class, sex, race and caste is often immediately replaced by another form.

On the other hand, sex role theories avoid discussing the issue of power as a feature of social structure and, instead, tend to generalise by classifying all women as part of the women's role and all men as part of the men's role and by creating normative stereotypes and deterministic theories to which deviations can be discovered (Hirdman, 1991: 189; and Franzway et al, 1989: 15). Hirdman accuses sex role theories of failure to explain why women and men accept roles assigned to them. She notes that with gender systems, it is possible to discern differences between women in terms of class, age or family status and the role played by gender-differentiation in social, economic and political spheres.

Hirdman defines 'gender contract' as a way of giving a name to a complicated process by which relationships between men and women are shaped and the consequences the process has in institutional, cultural and biological terms (Hirdman, 1991: 190). To Hirdman, gender contracts are abstract phenomena or invisible relationships between men and women based on perceptions of how men, women, girls and boys ought to behave (Hirdman, 1991: 191). According to Hirdman, several gender contracts constitute a 'gender system' under which "a number of 'irrefutabilities' ... [and] 'obvious statements' about how things are ... [or] they should be" (Hirdman, 1991: 191). "The gender system operates by creating new segregation and new hierachisation in societies as conditions change ... [such as] what machines men and women should use, what work they should do and how they should behave" (Lee-Smith, 1997:70. See also Larsson and Schlyter, 1995:213-215 for similar observations). Tasks are assigned to women and men according to social rules that are subject to negotiation and redefinition over time. At this stage, it is worth emphasising that gender contracts are negotiated and formed over long periods of time through day-to-day interactions rather than arrived at in a couple of days through individual or face-to-face negotiations.

To Moghadam (1996: 101), gender contracts are "rules, which may be formal and codified or unwritten and assumed, [that] govern the position of women and the prerogatives of men within the family and household, in the sphere of production or the labour market, in the political system, and the cultural institutions". In brief, Moghadam has extended Hirdman's defining by noting that gender contracts are just abstract phenomenon but may find expression in formal laws and regulations.

Hirdman identifies three levels at which gender contracts are negotiated – namely, interpersonal, community and institutional levels – while Agarwal (1997), in her discourse on bargaining power and gender relations, identifies four levels: being the household/family, the community, the market and the state. Agarwal correctly splits Hirdman's institutional level into two – the market and the state. The household or family level refers to relationships between married, cohabiting or casual sex partners as well as between female and male members of various ages and status in a household or extended family. According to Agarwal (1997: 29), a community may be defined either in spatial terms (e.g. village, town or region) or social identity (e.g. race, class, ethnicity, tribe, clan or religion). Of course, many people belong to several communities both

simultaneously and sequentially. While the 'market' refers to the extra-domestic arenas where goods and services are traded, the 'state' refers to public structures including central and local government, the parliament, the judiciary, police and other organs that define, interpret and implement policies and/or enforce legislations.

Gender systems and contracts at various levels are subject to negotiation, re-negotiation and redeveloped in relation to existing ones (Hirdman, 1991: 191 and Larsson and Schlyter, 1993). To effect change, women either elaborate their strategies within the space of action and entry points available in a given gender system or they try to expand the space through negotiations (Larsson and Schlyter, 1993: 14). Rural urban migration, for example, has been cited (Lee-Smith, 1997; Datta, 1995 and 1996; Phizacklea, 1996; Larsson, 1999) as one of the emancipation processes which offers women a possibility to escape poverty and oppressive patriarchal structures in rural areas or poorer regions to cosmopolitan centres where traditional laws, attitudes and perceptions are neither strictly defined nor observed. Urban environments have enabled women to remain single, become breadwinners, access land and own property for the benefit of themselves and their children.

In her study of women's access to land and housing in Kenya, Lee-Smith (1997: 79-100) identified three categories of gender contracts:

- (i) Subsistence gender contract dominant in rural areas,
- (ii) Market gender contract which characterises urban areas;
- (iii) Mixed gender contract evident mostly in plantation areas.

To Lee-Smith, the subsistence gender contract is based on pre-colonial social, cultural, political and economic relations whereby "both men and women were engaged in the production of subsistence [crops] for consumption by the family and community" (Lee-Smith, 1997: 80). Under the subsistence gender contract, men may marry several wives, inherit land and build houses for their wives, herd livestock and may take up wage employment. On the other hand, each woman must be married to one husband, cannot inherit land, controls own house and grain stores and produces subsistence crops.

Lee-Smith attributes the emergence of the market gender contract in Kenya to British, Islamic and capitalist economic and social influences on indigenous African practices. Under the market gender contract, observes Lee-Smith, women may marry one husband or stay single, may buy land and own a house but cannot inherit rural land, may be self-employed or engaged in subsistence farming. As in the subsistence gender contract, men may marry one or several wives, own, buy or inherit land and houses but, and most significant, men are expected to work for wages and provide money income for the family: men must be breadwinners.

The mixed gender contract, according to Lee-Smith, contains features of both subsistence and market gender contracts and the two exist side by side. It is characterised by divorced or widowed mothers living with daughters and their children. The mothers are wage earners concurrently engaged in informal or self-employment businesses (including prostitution) and subsistence production. They do not own land or houses but rent a room or two. In conclusion, Lee-Smith (1997:99) notes that the subsistence gender contract in Kenya features strongly at interpersonal level as well as the cultural level and is weak at the institutional level because of the legal system and practices introduced through colonisation. In other words, the subsistence gender contract in Kenya is

strongly linked to private patriarchy and weakens with the growth of public patriarchy and westernisation of the legal and economic system, which are dominated by the market gender contract.

Forsberg (1998) too identifies three major categories of gender contracts in Sweden (but uses different terminology from Lee-Smith), namely, traditional gender contracts, modernized gender contracts and non-traditional gender contracts, which roughly correspond to subsistence, market and mixed gender contract identified by Lee-Smith. According to Forsberg, traditional gender contracts in Sweden are common in forestry and industrial sectors characterised by the dominance of male employment while modernized gender contracts are "built on functionalist idea of the effective society, rather than a patriarchal one. The social infrastructure is predominantly provided by the state, and men and women are relatively well integrated in both public life and the labour market" (Forsberg, 1998: 12). She further observes that modernized gender contracts are ubiquitous in Sweden's 'escalator regions' that is, metropolitan regions (e.g. Greater Stockholm) and large towns.

Under non-traditional gender contracts, commonly found in cosmopolitan regions with a history of international exchange and trade, the labour market is traditional although women are well represented in all sectors and income distribution is similar to modernized regions. Put simply, similar to Lee-Smith's mixed gender contract, non-traditional gender contracts stand somewhere between traditional and modernized gender contracts. Like in Kenya, gender contracts in Sweden differ according to three major factors: the level to which private or public patriarchy dominates social and political life; heterogeneity or the cosmopolitan nature of a place; and the state policies, rules and regulations.

Eldredge (1993) considers the changes in gender roles in Lesotho's agricultural and housing sectors to be part of the negotiation process between men and women in face of changing socio-economic circumstances. She argues that both men and women benefited from the changes. For example, the transfer of house building responsibilities to men could have decreased women's workload and allowed them more time to attend to other important family activities such crop cultivation and firewood collection given dwindling natural resources and livestock products. In Lesotho, women encouraged men to own ploughs and harrows in order to increase food production. She argues that although the process transformed arable agriculture to the public sphere of men, it reduced women's workload (Eldredge, 1993:36-38). In trying to account for changes in gender roles, Eldredge does not commit herself to a single explanation but rather to a combination colonialism, capitalism, specialisation of labour and negotiation. She writes,

"In Lesotho ... the intrusion of capitalism, aided by colonialism, both perpetuated and intensified women's subordination by creating additional incentives and opportunities for [women] subordination. In the domestic struggle over household resources, women made gains in the middle of the nineteenth century and were perhaps minimally empowered by their productive activities. But the colonial system, by depriving Africans in general of their productive resources, intensified the struggle over remaining resources, which heightened the struggle between rich and poor and between men and women. Because the

colonial system favoured rich over poor and men over women, women were losers on two counts" (Eldredge, 1993: 41-42).

Although the gender system theory enables one to account for geographical and temporal differences in gender roles as well as identify power relationships between men and women in changing socio-economic circumstances, it does not attempt to search for origins of gender segregation and female subordination nor does it "really give space for explanations on why it is that women and men reconstruct the system" (Mapetla and Schlyter, 1998:2). The gender system and contracts theory may also be criticised for assuming that both parties - women and men or the suppresser and the suppressed - negotiate or challenge each other with equal force. In brief, proponents of the gender contract and systems theory have to date not adequately elaborated on how gender contracts are negotiated between two parties with unequal powers. As way of improving the gender contract theory, the next section elaborates further on the question of power, women's agency and ability to challenge the status quo and how power impacts on gender contract negotiation processes.

2.6 POWER AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Most feminists currently attribute women's subordination and exclusion from various activities and benefits to the unequal distribution of power between men and women. As Kandiyoti observes, "Power does not merely manifest itself in and through gender relations but gender is constitutive of power itself insofar as relations which may not always literally be about gender utilise the language of sexual difference to signify or legitimise power differentials" (Kandiyoti, 1998: 145). Men derive their power from culturally constructed rules on marriage, inheritance, work, social status and participation in politics and other extra-domestic activities. Other sources of power in contemporary societies include education attained, special skills acquired, income earned and official or political position occupied. As Kabeer observes

"... power relations are expressed not only through the exercise of agency and choice, but also through the kinds of choices people make ... [and which] derive from a 'deeper' level of reality, one which is not evident in daily life because it is inscribed in the taken-for-granted rules, norms and customs within which everyday life is conducted" (Kabeer, 1999: 441).

In other words, people often make choices to conform to societal expectations rather than what would have been their independent preferences. For example, women's tolerance of domestic male violence or women's desire to bear many children (especially sons) to the detriment of their health in order to please husbands are based on societal expectations and women's fears to meet those expectations.

As MacInnes notes,

"... in all western industrial capitalist nations, including those of Europe, men have far more status, power and resources, on average, than women ... a person's sex is a major determinant of all their social relations and life chances, in both

the public sphere of work and politics and the private sphere of the family and intimate relations" (MacInnes, 1998:1)

Walby (1990) and MacInnes (1998), among others, note that until the early 1900s husbands in most countries in Europe had absolute power over family property and could virtually rape, beat and otherwise abuse their wives with legal impunity. It is thus through the exercise of that power, that male heads of households, community and political leaders and capitalists determine and assign roles to other men and women and reserve socially and economically more valued roles to themselves.

As noted earlier (section 2.3), the state is a patriarchal institution whose decisions and actions impact on gender roles and relations. Resistance to the power of the state emanate from actions of the individual and those of the civil society – this being defined as "a plurality of organised interest groups playing an organically conservative role by serving as a two-way barrier - protecting the state from spontaneous 'mass' impulses, as well as shielding those with a significant stake in society from possible interventions by the state" (Gibbon, 2001: 820). Civil society constitutes the normalising force. Vargas and Wieringa (1998:9) note that the civil society regulates relations in the personal, family, cultural and economic spheres and is constrained by the state much as it plays a part in shaping state structures. It is a realm of social life between the family, community and the state. In other words, at any moment in time, gender roles and relations, reflect normalisation results of forces emanating from the state, civil society and the individuals within society.

Vargas and Wieringa (1998: 4-6) further note that throughout history, women have striven to have their interests and concerns taken seriously and included in the normalisation process. Women's interests are defined as "processes which are constructed in specific historical contexts and in confrontation, negotiation or alliance with men, society, the state and each other" (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998:6. See also Molyneux, 1998: 231). Women's struggles have been about empowerment - the right not only to choose but also being able to make a deliberate, unconstrained and informed choice. According to Vargas and Wieringa (1998), Kabeer (1999), Rai (1996) and Molyneux (1998), among others, women's empowerment is dependent on collective solidarity in the public arena as well as individual assertiveness in the private sphere. Individual assertiveness is operationalized through 'bargaining and negotiation', 'deception and manipulation', 'subversion and resistance' or other forms of silent struggles.

2.6.1 Negotiation

Negotiation is a process through which women as individuals, or groups of individuals, position themselves to benefit from or access resources and services owned, produced or controlled by men. Negotiation seeks to challenge gender inequalities within households, communities, the market and the state. These negotiation or bargaining processes are characterised by cooperation and conflict and may be explicit or implicit in everyday life. The extent to which women or men are willing to cooperate or not to cooperate depends on the expected outcome. For example, "Household members cooperate insofar as cooperative arrangements make each of them better-off than non-cooperation" (Agarwal, 1997: 4).

According to Agarwal (1997) the outcome of any negotiation process depends on each member's bargaining power which, in turn, is dependent on numerous factors including:

1. **Personal assets and endowments:** ownership and control of property (land, house, cattle etc), education, job training, skills, type of employment and level of income. For women, personal endowments may include their sexuality and presumed weaker positions.
2. **Exchange entitlement mapping:** the possibility of using personal assets and endowments for production and trade such as seeking employment.
3. **Fallback support position** which refers to a person's ability to survive outside a given relationship (e.g. marriage), household, family or community. These include access to parental wealth, non-wage income (e.g. remittances and pensions), access to communal resources (e.g. land, forests and water), social support systems (e.g. the extended family, kinship, friendship and patronage), legal structures governing marriage and divorce, as well as welfare facilities offered by the state and non-governmental organisations.
4. **Social norms:** which define and set limits on issues that may be negotiated as well as behaviour that is acceptable and tolerable. Social norms reflect the dominant perceptions on the needs and rights of women and men in a community. They define the extent of women's voices and impinge on the possibilities of exit, say, from unhappy marriages. Furthermore, social norms may set limits on women's employment outside the home or in certain fields (e.g. army or mining), which in turn restricts women's income earning capabilities and weakens their bargaining power.
5. **Social perceptions:** which refer to how society values women's contributions, needs and abilities and whether women's work is 'visible'. Perceptions which undervalue work undertaken by women and label as 'skilled' work undertaken by men (even if they require same skills as those undertaken by women) diminish women's bargaining power at home, within communities and in the labour market.
6. **State support** – the extent to which the state structures (e.g. the police and the judiciary) are democratic, interact with women groups or sensitive to gender-related concerns.

As Agarwal (1997) emphasises, the above factors are interactive and interdependent – complementing and substituting for one another. For example, women's employment and ownership of land and property tend to strengthen their bargaining power as well as their fallback positions. A woman's loss of job and/or property not only does it diminish the income she brings into the family but could "lead to marriage dissolution and family abandonment in periods of severe crisis (such as famine) ..." (Agarwal, 1997: 9). On the other hand, a woman's bargaining power at household level stems partly from her individual economic and political positions as well as from gender-progressive coalitions within the community.

Manipulation has been cited as an example of cooperative strategy employed by women in Asia to strengthen their fallback positions if their marriages were to break up. Women in Asia often waive their inherited land rights to their brothers, which strengthens their future claims on their brothers' resources (Kabeer, 1999: 443-444; and Agarwal, 1997).

2.6.2 Defiance

Individual women have challenged patriarchy through making inroads into male arenas. Examples of women who have defied traditions and entered the male sphere include politicians such as Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi, Gold Meir etc.; women bus drivers in South African cities (Khosha, 1998), women architects (Stratigakos, 2001); and female contractors (Radebe, 2003). Individual women such as Laeticia Mukurasi, Unity Dow, Wambui Otieno and Holalia Pastory (Stewart, 1996; Tamale, 1996) have openly challenged and questioned laws, attitudes and practices that treat women and men differently or deny women access to certain jobs or resources. By utilising the national judicial systems, individual women in the above cases were able to expose weaknesses and injustices in national laws, customary practices, unfair job dismissal and harassment of women. All the above women were urban based, educated and motivated by the unbearable domination of women by men.

Defiance may also be characterised by open confrontation or impulsive uprising due intolerable domination or threat requiring immediate action in order to redress the wrong or pre-empt it. Open confrontation requires a "high degree of organisation and shared vision of oppression and the necessary action to counter it" (Tamale, 1996:12). Tamale (1996:6-9) cites two cases of open confrontation in Nigeria and Cameroon where women utilised traditional ways of chastising men to rise against the British colonial state. Traditionally, women in Nigeria and Cameroon used identifiable cries and gestures to enlist assistance and punishment to individual man's abuses against women. The women employed the same tactics to mobilise themselves against the colonial state for allegedly trying to introduce policies and programmes that were likely to increase taxation on women, disposes women of their land rights and/or to increase women's farm workload. According to Tamale, women burnt and destroyed public property while some made obscene gestures, displayed their private parts and other sexual insults to oppose the impending discriminatory policies. As a result, the policies were reportedly suspended and women's representation in local government structures increased (Tamale, 1996:8-9).

2.6.3 Civil society: Women's movements

Vargas and Wieringa define women's movements as "the whole spectrum of conscious and unconscious actions of individuals, groups or organisations with the aim of combating gender subordination" (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998:5). Like all other civil societies, women's movements serve as negotiation platforms between communities and the state. On the basis of organisational structures, Molyneux (1998) has classified women's movements into three categories: associational, directed, and independent movements. She defines associational movements as independent women's organisations, with their own goals and institutional autonomy, which choose to form alliances with other political or social organisations with whom they have similar objectives and interests (Molyneux, 1998: 228). These include alliances

that partly aim to mobilise and encourage women to promote their own interests and rights including emancipation of women from traditional forms of oppression. Some of the alliances in Western countries were formed with labour and civil society that campaigned, among others, for universal suffrage, equal employment opportunities as well as emancipation of workers and slaves (Vargas and Wieringa, 1998; and Molyneux, 1998). However, in such alliances women's interests sometimes become overshadowed by a multiplicity of general and/or men's interests. Other forms of alliances, and of least concern to the present study, may be aimed at achieving general political, religious, etc. objectives.

Molyneux defines directed women's movements as women's organisations that are controlled by political organisations and/or governments while Tripp (2001) defines them as inclusive of women's wings, leagues or unions tied to the ruling parties. Such movements are often "depoliticized, conservative and focused on narrowly defined 'development' objectives such as income generation", singing, dancing and cooking food at party functions (Tripp, 2001:40-41). Some commentators exclude state-linked and partisan organisations from women's movements (Molyneux, 1998: 224).

Independent women's movements are defined as non-partisan, self-organised, autonomous associations (independent of the state) that seek to advance women's interests, rights and political representation (Molyneux, 1998:226; and Tripp, 2001:47). While partisan women's organisations focus on self interests or individual betterment (e.g. appointment to senior political posts), homemaking, child rearing skills and women's morality, independent women's movements tend to pursue strategies that challenge government policies, resist state patronage and corruption, and fight for greater female political representation (ibid.).

Women's individual and collective challenges of patriarchal systems and structures have immensely contributed to demystifying stereotypes in gender roles, relations and contracts. Consequently, most states and societies today are more gender sensitive and egalitarian than they were several decades ago. However, in Africa women's movements have largely been urban based, elitist, educated middle class women whose "interests, priorities and agendas are not always identical to those of grassroots women ..." (Tripp, 2001: 49; and Mannathoko, 1992). Consequently, as aptly noted by Molyneux, although the number of women in formerly male dominated state apparatuses and political arenas has been growing, this "has not implied an erosion of gender roles as such; rather it has required a redefinition of women's place within society as a whole, one which has added on, rather than eliminated, their traditional gender responsibilities, while leaving men's largely untransformed" (Molyneux, 1998:222). One may add, because most countries are ruled by patriarchal structures that first and foremost serve the interests of the dominant male group – the feudalist, capitalists and bureaucrats.

2.7 ADOPTED THEORETICAL APPROACH

The preceding sections in this Chapter underscore the lack of consensus, contradictions and complexities inherent in various attempts to account for women's subordination, unequal access to resources and the sexual division of labour that characterise almost all societies worldwide. The disagreements arise, in the first place,

from differences in political, professional and epistemological standpoints among scholars and academics. While economists, for example, tend to emphasise economic factors such as market forces, sociologists may emphasise social factors such as patriarchy and changes in household/family structures. Third world scholars have, on the other hand, tended to blame the advent of colonialism, the introduction of capitalism and Western culture influences as the major causes for shifts in the sexual division of labour that were experienced during the last century.

Feminists too differ on the origins and causes of the gendered division of labour and women's subordination. Informed by classical liberal theories of human equality regardless of sex, colour or race, liberal feminists attribute variations in gender roles to women's exclusion and denial of equal opportunities to participate in all spheres of production and reproduction. They, however, refrain from questioning structural inequalities but, instead, demand equal access to education, employment and politics positions. Marxist feminists reject liberal theory as bourgeois ideology and attribute women's oppression and exclusion to class structures arguing that social forms of labour determine fundamental features of society including their forms of rationality. They further argue that:-

“... early societies had a sexual division of labour, with men producing means of subsistence and women working in the household. Developments of the forces of production in the male sphere gave men social dominance. Wanting to control the inheritance of wealth, men instituted monogamy as an instrument of the economic dependence and subordination of women ... [which societies maintain] because it serves the interests of capital” (Peet, 1998: 251).

Although Marxist feminists have since amended the above standpoint to include politics, culture and psychology discourses, class remains central to their analysis.

Besides the consideration of historical and social processes that create gender, race and ethnicity, socialist feminists consider class, and capitalism in particular, to be central to women's subordination (Bulbeck, 1998: 8). Socialist feminists argue that women's unpaid domestic labour benefits husbands as well as capitalists who can hire workers at lower wages than would otherwise be possible (Bulbeck, 1998: 8; and Peet, 1998). According to socialist feminists, women are constituted by the social relations they inhabit and types of work they perform. At early adulthood boys are separated from their mothers to extra-domestic sphere while girls continue to inhabit the domestic sphere together with their mothers. Girls attain femininity by staying with their mothers while boys are socialised into achievement-oriented individuals by working outside the home. To socialist feminists, the public/private sphere distinction rationalises the exploitation of women (Peet, 1998:253) although the two are mutually interdependent. The socialisation process posited by this school is highly questionable in today's world where both girls and boys spend most of their childhood and teenage years in schools.

Radical feminism associates women's roles and position in society to nature or biological determinants by giving prominence to issues of reproduction, sexuality, male violence and coercion in analysing women's oppression. To radical feminists, women are closer to nature than men due to women's reproductive roles as mothers.

They see women as being essentially nurturing and caring but weaker due to their reproductive physiology. They argue that mother-child interdependence shapes the physiology of women while biologically based social institutions reinforce male domination. To some radical feminists, especially those in the United States, the world has for generations witnessed women's oppression based on sex. "Radical feminism puts sexuality and reproduction and patriarchy at the centre of arena and changes in women's political consciousness ... [through] the slogan, 'The personal is political'..." (Mannathoko, 1992:75).

To postcolonial feminists – composed mainly of women movements established in the third world countries during the struggle for independence or soon after attainment of political independence – largely attribute women's exclusion from certain forms of work and political leadership position to policies, laws and constitutional provisions that discriminate against women or emphasise the role of women as mothers (Mbilinyi, 1992; Mannathoko, 1992; and Gaidzanwa, 1992). Some socialist feminists from the Third World view sexism, racism, ethnicity, colonialism and imperialism as the major determinants of gender roles and women's oppression

Informed by post-structural epistemology, postmodernism feminists contest the validity of universal theoretical grounding by emphasising the plurality and instability of the concepts of women and feminism. Postmodernism feminists acknowledge that women are not a homogeneous group - they are differentiated and divided by "class, race/ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, marital status, age [and] individual psychology" (Mbilinyi, 1992: 45). As a result, each 'woman' has multiple, and sometimes conflicting, identities over time and at any time (*ibid.*). To postmodernism feminists, "to recognise the difference is to meet an obligation to political inclusiveness rather than to empirical accuracy" and calls upon feminists to be concerned with lived experiences in order to "do philosophy that is informed by and informs our best everyday judgements about the character of discursive transaction" (Fricker, 2000:158). Postmodernism is based on pluralism which "promotes a practice of reason that permits different perspectives to come to the fore not merely in order that they should gain expression, but in order that they should contribute to an ongoing critical discursive practice" (Fricker, 2000: 160).

As a result of differences in standpoints, "[e]ach type of theory examines at least one significant facet of the present transitional condition ... without resorting to linear, teleological, hierarchical, holistic, or binary thinking or being" (Peet, 1998:161).

In an attempt to account for origins and shifts in the gendered division of labour, I have in this thesis adopted a holistic and pluralistic approach with emphasis on gender contract and systems theory. From where I am positioned, I see power and the exercise of that power as being central to the definition of gender roles and statuses in different communities. Although most societies are characterised by spatial and cultural divisions of living, recreational and work places into domestic, extra-domestic and public spheres, the roles and statuses of men and women in these spheres are dynamic and dependent on economic, social and political power held by each group, which in turn differ from society to society and over time in each society. The extent to which women (and/or men) are excluded or integrated in each sphere in any given society depends on a web of interacting and intersecting social, economic, historical, political, cultural, demographic and environmental factors as well as gender

interests and women's self-identity and bargaining powers (section 2.6). The roles undertaken or assigned to women and men tend, therefore, to be outcomes of the negotiation, renegotiation and normalisation processes that are continuously taking place at the interpersonal, community, market and state levels. Consequently, changes in gender interests and family structures, women's empowerment and bargaining powers, production and market systems or any other factors often create new platforms and opportunities for redefining and negotiating a whole range of gender roles, contracts and relationships or gender systems. The opportunities result from failures of prevailing gender contracts to adequately apply to hitherto unknown social, economic, demographic and political structures, relationships and movements. Again due to variations in environmental, historical, political, cultural and other geographic or local conditions, the effects of new changes on gender roles often differ from society to society. This, therefore, calls for a historical and contextualised approach in seeking explanations on shifts in gender roles and relationships.

In light of the foregoing, I will therefore start by exploring factors that shaped gender roles and contracts at the time of Botswana's colonisation and then examine the influence of exogenous forces (notably colonialism, Western culture and capitalism) on local politics, economy and family structures; and how they affected women's and men's roles at the household, community and cultural levels during the colonial period. I will finally analyse and account for the emerging gender roles and contracts in post-colonial housing delivery and construction processes in Lobatse. By taking a historical perspective, I do not, by any means wish to romanticise or call for a return to the past. I am, however, uncovering contexts that created opportunities for the renegotiation and redefinition of gender roles and relationships.

2.8 SUMMARY

This chapter has examined several theories relevant to the present work. It has noted that neither patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism, class, race, ethnicity nor any other factor alone determines gender roles but rather a multiplicity of complex factors are responsible for the gendered division of labour. It has further noted that due to gendered power structures, historical, contextual and philosophical differences, none of the theories has universal acceptability and applicability. Besides focusing on gender contract and systems theory, this thesis has, therefore, adopted a historical, contextual and multi-dimensional approach in its attempt to identify factors that have to date tended to influence gender roles in housing delivery and construction activities in Botswana.

CHAPTER 3: THE NATIONAL CONTEXT OF CHANGING GENDER AND INSTITUTIONAL ROLES IN BOTSWANA

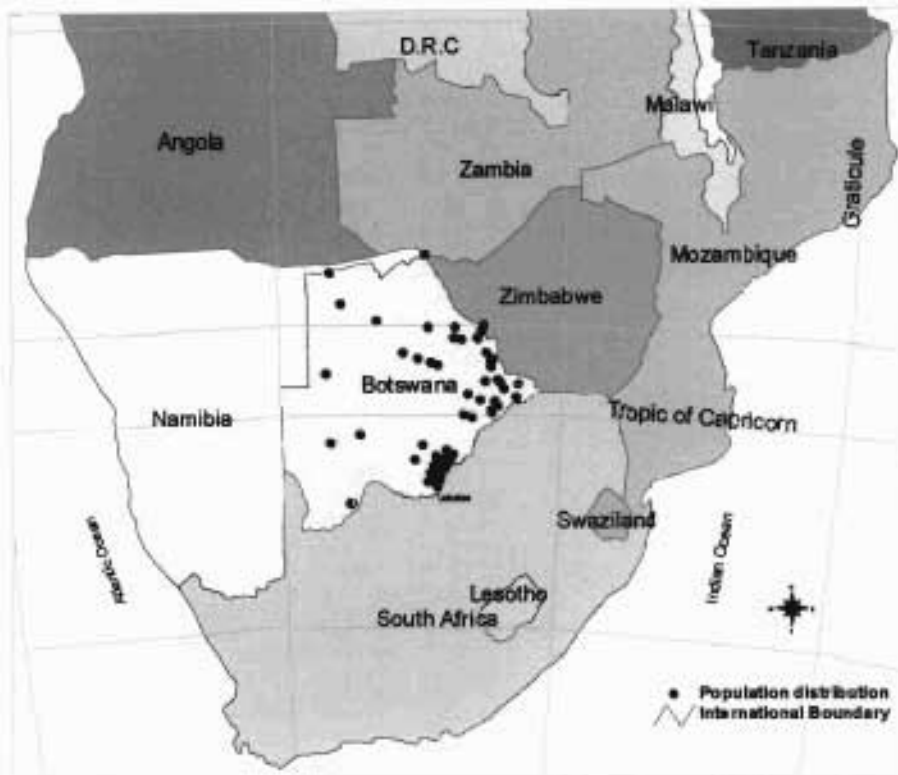
3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses national, political, social, legal and economic contexts within which past and contemporary gender and institutional roles as well as women's participation in the construction industry will be analysed and contrasted. After a brief historical and geographical context presented below, it explores traditional socio-political organisation of Tswana tribes and how these were based on unequal gender power relations as expressed through male dominance of administrative, judicial and military institutions as well as ownership and control of livelihood resources, namely cattle and land. It then presents a discussion of administrative, political, economic and demographic changes during the colonial era and how these affected gender roles including men's entry into the construction industry. This is followed by the discussion on increased male dominance of the construction industry as the use of exogenous building materials and technology became more widespread as a result of post-colonial economic changes and social transformations.

According to Colclough and McCarthy (1980), Campbell (1982) and Schapera (1943), among others, the geographical area currently known as Botswana, was initially inhabited by the San (or Bushmen) and Khoi (or Hottentots) peoples whose origin is unknown. The Tswana, a group of Sotho-Bantu speaking peoples, migrated into the country from the Transvaal region of South Africa between AD 1500 and 1800. Other Bantu speaking people (notably the Kalanga) migrated into Botswana from the north and northeast. Later, the Tswana split into eight major tribes, spread throughout the eastern (or hardveld) part of the country and established their rule and culture over other tribes. The San and Khoi peoples have to date largely occupied the sandveld and remained hunters and gatherers while the Tswana and other Bantu speaking groups have long lived in the eastern part of the country as pastoralists and peasant farmers.

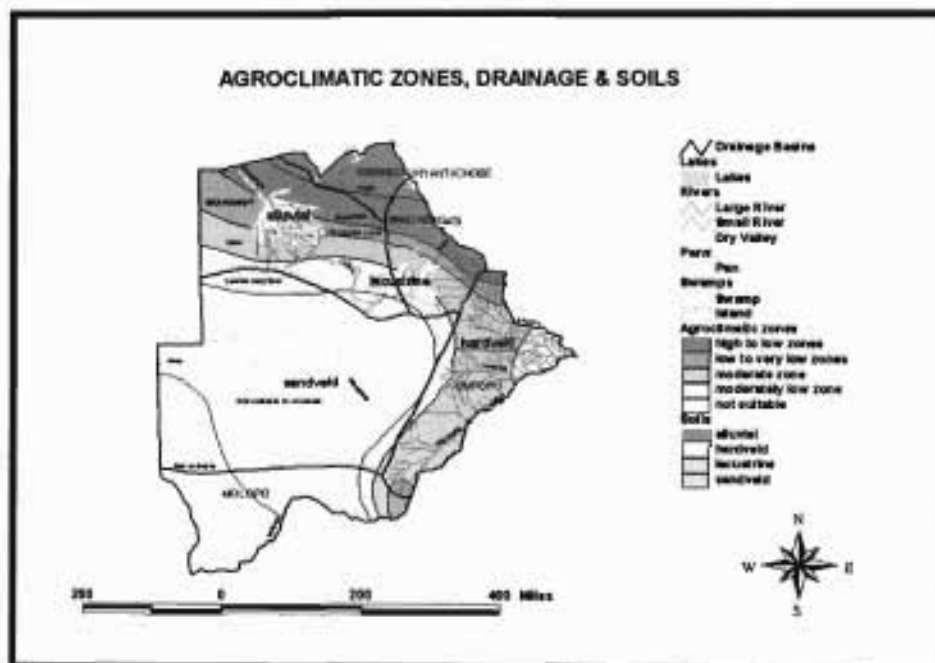
Thus on the eve of colonisation, what later became Bechuanaland Protectorate (the current Botswana) consisted of several major ethnic groupings: the Bakalanga who are allied to the Shona and Ndebele in Zimbabwe; the Baherero with roots in Namibia; the Basarwa who, it is claimed, are the first people to settle in Botswana; and the Setswana speaking people known as the Tswana. The latter group, on whom this study is centred, largely outnumber the rest. It is worth mentioning here that a tribe "was not a closed group, and it was not necessarily homogenous, culturally or linguistically. It comprised members determined by birth or descent as well as those incorporated or absorbed through consent or conquest" (Ng'ong'ola 1992: 144). Families or individuals dissatisfied with conditions in one tribe could renounce their membership of the tribe and join another tribe.

Figure 3.1 Location of Botswana in Southern Africa



Source: Compiled from Botswana National Atlas, 2005

Figure 3.2 Botswana's agro-climatic regions



Source: Gitonga and Kalabamu (2004:17)

Botswana had a population of 1.7 million people in 2001. As shown in Figure 3.1, it is a landlocked country surrounded by South Africa on the south and southeast; Zimbabwe on the northeast; Zambia, Angola and Namibia on the north; and Namibia on the west. The country's mean altitude above sea level is about 1000 metres while its total land area is about 582000 km². Most rains in the country occur between October and April. The rains are, however, very unreliable and variable both in time and space.

The western part of the country – constituting more than two thirds of land mass - is covered by the Kalahari Desert or sandveld. The Kalahari sandveld supports some shrubs and grasses but lacks surface water. The northern and eastern parts of the country, the hardveld, receive more rains than the sandveld and, therefore, supports more vegetation and livelihoods. Besides the Okavango Delta and Makgadikgadi Pans (Figure 3.2), Botswana lacks large natural water bodies. Most of its rivers are ephemeral. As a result, more than 80% of the country's population and economic activities are concentrated within a stretch of less than 200 km. along the eastern border or hardveld (Figure 3.1), which has better soils, surface water availability and rainfall. The soils and rains are good enough to support livestock keeping and growing of drought resistant crops such as sorghum, millet, beans and, to a limited extent, maize.

3.2 THE TRADITIONAL BOTSWANA SOCIETY

This section provides a description and analysis of Tswana societies as recorded by Schapera in his first major publication "A Handbook of Tswana Law and Customs". The publication, based on his fieldwork during the 1920ies, gives the overall pattern of traditional Tswana customs and practices including those on land tenure, housing and settlement. His description serves to provide a basis on which to explore political, socio-economic, cultural, demographic, and gender dynamics that have since taken place. Although changes were most likely slow, they did take place before and during the colonial time.

3.2.1 Tswana tribes as patriarchal societies

At the time of colonisation Botswana was inhabited by several 'states' or tribes (*morafe*) each of which "occupied its own territory, and managed its own affairs under the direction of a chief (*kgosi*), who was independent of the rest" (Schapera 1943: 8). The territories were, however, not clearly defined, which was one of the causes of frequent intertribal wars over grazing and water rights. Similar to most communities in sub-Saharan Africa, Tswana tribes were based on patrilineal and patriarchal ideology, power and gender systems characterised by "the notion of male leadership and dominance and corresponding female subservience" (Dow and Kidd, 1994: 1). Consistent to the definition of patriarchy (sections 2.3-2.4), Schapera (1994:28) observes that, "in Tswana law [women] are always treated as minors. Before marriage a woman must submit to the authority of her father or guardian, while after marriage she comes under the control of her husband, and, on his death, of some other male member of his family." [See Dow and Kidd (1994), Molapo (1994) and Burnet et al. (2003) for similar observations on Botswana, Lesotho and Rwanda respectively]. Women were also barred from attending *kgotla* (tribal court and/or

assembly) meetings and proceedings and, under certain conditions, coming to the tribal cattle-kraal. Women were also excluded “from taking a leading part in sacrifice and other active phases of the traditional cult of the ancestral spirits” (Schapera, 1994:28). All these were part of Tswana patriarchal ideology seeking to uphold male supremacy at the cultural level.

Male superiority was further expressed at the household level. Once a man set up his own household, he was for all practical purposes his own master and responsible for the actions of his wife, children and other dependants. As a rule, a wife or child could not sue or be sued except through him. If a wife or child did wrong he was generally held liable and had to pay a fine or damages incurred. The husband had the right to beat a wife, albeit lightly, if she ‘misbehaved’ (Schapera, 1994:151-177). Extreme beating or punishing of a wife was liable to punishment at a *kgotla*. Women “were expected to be humble and respectful, to work hard, and in effect to be the general servant of the household” (Schapera, 1994:149).

Men derived their power from domination of political, administrative, military and judicial structures as well as control and ownership of livelihood resources – mainly land and cattle. In all tribal and community meetings, courts and gatherings, the husband – who was socially and legally considered to be the head of the household, represented each family and its members. Decisions at such gatherings “were taken by the chief in collaboration with married men...” (Larsson, 1999: 72). However, age was an important factor in the social-political Tswana structures. According to Schapera (1994:29-30), older members of Tswana communities expected to be respected and they usually obtained respect from younger members. Young boys and girls were always under the control of their mothers. Once old enough to herd cattle, boys were “freed to a considerable extent from the control of [their] mothers” (Schapera, 1994:175). Then, boys learnt more from their fathers and could be rather scornful of their mothers. On the other hand, as girls grew older they remained in close contact with their mothers, worked with them and got most of their education from them.

As noted earlier, women did not take part in the government of the tribe. According to Schapera (1994), the **chief** was the head of the tribe and by far the “most important member ... with outstanding privilege and authority” (*ibid*, 30). Each chief was head of a *civil-cum-military* structure entrusted with judicial, legislative, religious and other powers for maintaining law and order. The chief’s relatives shared in his prestige, privileges and political influence. Chiefs were assisted by a number of headmen each of whom represented the respective chief at ‘ward’ level. A ‘ward’ was composed of families related to one another through blood or marriage and living together in a small village or section of a large village (Schapera, 1994:19). The headman could either be the chief’s relative or a person who was royal and trusted by the chief. Within the ward, headmen enjoyed social and political status equivalent to that of the chief. People became and remained members of a tribe by submitting to the rule of the chief and his headmen. It was primarily through people’s allegiance to the same chief that the different communities and individuals making up a tribe gave expression to their unity (Schapera, 1994:5).

Chieftainship was, as a rule, hereditary in the male line, passing normally from father to son. A chief was a chief because he was born to it – he succeeded automatically to

his office by right of birth as the son of a reigning chief. Daughters never succeeded to chieftainship although mothers could serve as regents for their infant sons. If the chief died without leaving any male descendant, the chieftainship passed to his immediate junior brother or any other male member of his paternal lineage. A chief's son by a concubine did not have the right to succeed him even if there were no legitimate male descendants unless the chief subsequently married the mother of the 'illegitimate' child (Schapera, 1994: 54).

Much as the chiefs were powerful, they were not above the law. Victims of the chief's offences or unfair treatment were allowed to complain to the chief's confidential advisers, senior relatives or to air their complaints during kgotla meeting. Thus, it was said, "*Kgosi ke kgosi ka morafe...* [meaning] A Chief is a Chief by the grace of his tribe" (Schapera, 1994: 84). In order to get anything done, the chief had to get the support of his advisers, tribal headmen and the consensus of the tribesmen – seldom were chiefs absolute rulers or autocratic despots.

Men's political and intra-household decision making powers were augmented by their control and ownership of livestock (notably cattle) and land. Schapera (1994: 214-215) observes that, before the coming of the Europeans, Tswana people kept cattle, sheep, goats, fowls, and dogs but added donkeys, horses and pigs after the coming of the Europeans. Cattle, of the domesticated animals, were the most highly valued because, besides their utilitarian uses, they were used as medium of exchange in the prevailing barter trade system. They were also used to pay fines, *bogadi* (bride price) and for sacrifices (Schapera, 1994:214). Any person, regardless of age or sex, could 'own' cattle. However, cattle owned by married women were kept, to date, at the cattle-post of her husband or guardian. The woman cannot dispose of them without the permission of the husband or guardian because they are kept at his cattle-post and he looks after them (Schapera, 1994: 220 and Dow and Kidd, 1994:30). Cattle belonging to unmarried daughters and sons are kept the father's cattle-post and control.

3.2.2 Gendered land ownership and rights

Traditionally, ownership of land in each tribal territory, *morafe*, was vested in the respective *jural* community and administered by chiefs and headmen (Schapera, 1943: 40-46; and Jeppe, 1980). When a piece of land was not actively used for cultivation other members of the tribe had a right to harvest natural resources (such as honey and firewood) or graze their animals on those farms. Similarly, in times of need land could be reallocated to various subgroups that constitute the tribe or *jural* community (Schapera, 1994: 204-205). As Biesele et al. (1991:17) note, reciprocal access by other members of the community and other forms of extended land use rights were developed to ensure well-rounded and adequate supply of land and equal access to land resources by all. These extended land rights were necessary in the light of differences in land suitability that characterise the region. Essentially what this meant was that individual land rights were inferior to communal land rights that anyone could and did exercise such rights as and when necessary. Tribal members were, therefore, free to travel, hunt and collect or harvest natural resources anywhere within their territory provided they did not cause damage to improvements (e.g. crops) on land. It is worth mentioning here that the above is a generalised description of the numerous customary land tenure systems that operated in the territory.

Schapera (1994: 195-211) observes that, except among the Bakgatla tribe where women held arable land rights, no land could be allocated to women – whether single, divorced, widowed or any other circumstances. Women accessed land only through their husbands, fathers, brothers or other male agnate. Besides allegiance, chiefs and headmen did not receive any form of payment or tribute for allocating land to tribesmen.

Every son who became of age (just before marriage or soon thereafter) was entitled to two pieces of land – one for his *lelwapa* or homestead and another for ‘his’ *masimo* or arable fields (Schapera, 1994: 194-204; and 1943: 79-87). Usually he obtained the pieces of land from his father’s land holdings. Any piece of land to be given to the son had to be inspected by the headmen and other male family heads in the ward, who had to satisfy themselves that indeed the land belonged to the family and the allocation did not encroach upon holdings of some other family. Otherwise, the son would be allocated land from the tribal reserve. Once allocated and built upon, the residential land was said to remain the exclusive property of the head of family occupying it as long as the family continued to belong to the tribe or unless there was some ward or village re-organisation. No outsider could lay a claim to the site so long as it was being used. If the owner abandoned the site, it would remain unoccupied and undisturbed or it would fall back into the family pool for possible reallocation. The owner could, however, allow a relative or friend to live there, in which case the *de jure* owner could reclaim it back at any time.

Arable land was zoned in fertile areas around the residential zone. Every adult man would be given land according to the size of his family (Schapera, 1994:197-204; and 1943:143-152). Men with bigger families received larger portions while polygamous ones received several *masimo*. Then, the man re-allocated each *tshimo* (arable field) to one of his wives. Crops from each field belonged to the woman to whom it was allocated and the field could not be used by anyone else without her permission. The right to arable land was said to be merely one of usufruct, for purposes of cultivation, and not one of absolute private ownership. While the rights holder could not be deprived of his right to cultivate the land by anybody except the chief, he could transfer his rights to his sons, male relatives or friends or he could lend out the field for an indefinite or specified period. He could not, however, sell or hire out the land for a fee or profit. If he parted with his right to cultivate a piece of land, he had to do it freely and free of charge. Every transfer of arable land had to be reported to the headman and other members of the ward to avoid future disputes.

3.2.3 Inheritance: Generational transfer of power

As theorised in section 2.2.2, men’s power in Tswana tribes or *morafe* was reproduced through inheritance or the ability of fathers to bequeath to their sons the power to control livelihood resources and monopolise material control of the public sphere as well as reinforce patriarchal ideologies. Property inheritance and succession to leadership positions were strictly genealogical on paternal lineage. Traditionally, chieftainship was hereditary in the male line: the chief succeeded automatically to his office by right of birth as the son of a reigning chief. Women never succeeded as chiefs (Schapera, 1994: 53-58).

The first heir to the chieftainship was the chief's eldest son by his 'great wife' or the first son of his second wife if his 'great wife' had no male issue. The chief's great wife "was officially selected for and betrothed to him during his youth by his parents and the tribal councillors" (Schapera, 1994: 55). If the chief's eldest son of the 'great wife' predeceased his father, the succession passed to his male descendant. If the chief's eldest son and all his male descendants were dead, "the right to the Chieftainship [passed] to the second son or, failing him, to his male senior descendant. If no heir [could] be found in this line, the next in order of succession [was] the third son, or, failing him, his senior male descendant; and so on" (Schapera, 1994: 54).

If the chief died without leaving any male descendant, the chieftainship passed to his immediate junior brother. If a chief died without a surviving brother or male descendants of his brothers, then he was succeeded by a male member of his paternal uncle's family in the same lineage as discussed above. A chief's son by a concubine did not have the right to succeed him even if there were no legitimate male descendants unless the chief subsequently married the mother of the 'illegitimate' child (Schapera, 1994: 54). Schapera (1994: 56-67) further observes that, lines of succession were not always as smooth as outlined above. Sometimes chiefs arbitrarily conferred seniority on undeserving wives or brought in 'substitute wives' for barren women or wives who died without any male issue. Such practices led to conflicts between rival claimants "frequently resulting in civil war and a split in the tribe" (Schapera, 1994: 57).

Schapera (1943 and 1994), Roberts et al (1970), Othogile (1992) and Dow and Kidd (1994) observe that traditional provisions for property inheritance among Tswana tribes excluded or disadvantaged women. Under the general customary law, and disregarding operational differences between tribes, when a spouse died, the surviving spouse assumed responsibility for the family property. Persons who were not married to each other could not assume such responsibility over property of a deceased partner. When a man died, the eldest son, if mature, assumed his father's position as head of the family. He became chairman of the family meetings and representative in matters needing male representation. He also assumed management of the family cattle. When a man died before marriage or without a male issue, the father, brother, or any other male agnate inherited his property.

If or when siblings were old enough, the eldest son (in consultation with paternal uncles and the widow) may choose to divide the estate of the deceased father. The type and amount of property each child was entitled to inherit was dictated by the child's sex and position in the family. Children born outside marriage inherited only from their mothers - and not their biological fathers - unless the deceased biological father had formally acknowledged such children as his. The largest share of the deceased man's estate went to the eldest son or principal male heir. He inherited most of the cattle, land and the family cattle-post. The remainder of the estate (mainly cattle) was divided among other children. According to Schapera (1994:231), daughters and widows received no cattle at all. However, the eldest son or principal heir was obliged to maintain and support them while they lived with him. He could permit his brothers to continue to keep their cattle at the family cattle-post.

The next sections will explore the extent to which the traditional power structures found expression in gender roles and spatial land use patterns and how these, in turn, shaped or reinforced patriarchal ideologies and power systems.

3.2.4 Traditional gender roles

As noted in section 1.1.5, women in Botswana and other pastoral communities in eastern and southern Africa were traditionally responsible for designing, building and maintaining houses. Within each compound or homestead, women built several traditional houses for sleeping, cooking and/or receiving visitors as well as wind shelters for evening socialising and permanent corrals for calves and kids. Based on a review of various ethnographic records by travellers, missionaries and traders, Larsson (1989: 507; and 1990:48-66) observes that women in Botswana were traditionally responsible for housing provision. With the assistance of girls and young boys, women collected clay soil, sand, cow dung and water, mixed them and moulded bricks; then erected and plastered walls. Finally, they decorated the walls and maintained the structures. Women carried the above activities of building and maintaining structures in the homestead during the dry winter season. According to Schapera (1943:86), each homestead was traditionally known by the name of the wife occupying it even though the husband - who was the household head - habitually shared it with her.

Under subsistence economy, all work related to the care and well-being of the family was the responsibility of women (Larsson, 1990: 76-79). Women undertook all reproductive activities such as child rearing, taking care of the sick and the elderly, food processing and cooking, and brewing beer. They also collected wild fruits and vegetables, grew subsistence crops, and looked after goats, sheep and other small stock that graze close to homesteads. They undertook these duties with the assistance of girls and young boys. Adolescent boys assisted their fathers. Some women specialised in the making of clay pots and certain types of baskets, which they sold to other families. The skills, according to Schapera (1994:175) were only handed down from mother to daughter in the same family. In short, it was the responsibility of women to “keep the homestead clean and in good repair, stamp and grind the corn, prepare the food, fetch water and firewood, make conical baskets and the grass aprons of the small girls, mend and wash the clothes of the family, and look after the young children” (Schapera, 1994:152).

The major role of men was to graze cattle and other large animal stock that graze long distances from villages and homesteads. Other roles performed by men included hunting wild animals; defending the tribe against invaders; and administration. Thus while women controlled the domestic sphere - that is, activities such as house building, crop growing and small stock grazing that took place around the homestead - men controlled the extra-domestic sphere as fully discussed in section 3.2.5, men “participated in domestic work to a limited degree” (Larsson, 1990:77).

According to Schapera, besides the general roles discussed above men also:

“cut wood and bushes for building and fencing, and for the manufacture of various wooden utensils, make sleds for transport purposes, bring wood and earth from afar for their wives when necessary, make certain kinds of baskets, and from the skins of wild and domestic animals make a

variety of objects, such as mats, karosses, riems, sandals, milksacks, and (in the old days) the clothing of the family” (Schapera, 1994:152- 153).

Some men specialised in making wooden products (e.g. eating-bowls) and iron goods (e.g. hoes, spears and axes) which they exchanged for cattle or grain and assisted clearing bushes from the fields although women were largely responsible for the care of the fields – men merely cleared the trees and bushes from the fields. Then women “had to break up the soil with their hoes, plant seeds, remove the weeds, keep off the granivorous birds and other pests, and finally reap and thresh the crops” (Schapera, 1994:152).

In brief, Schapera (1994:152- 153) observes that the roles of men and women in all Tswana tribes were defined according to the sexual division of labour and whether they fell within the domestic or extra-domestic sphere. Second, house building and maintenance were some of the domestic chores undertaken by women. Third, men were not completely excluded from domestic or reproductive tasks. They undertook the so-called heavy tasks such as clearing bushes and making household utensils. Fourth, both men and women developed specialised skills for making utensils, equipment and tools related to their major day-to-day activities: women made pots for drawing water and cooking, men made spears and axes for hunting and cutting meat. While women passed the skills to their daughter, men passed the skills to their sons – thereby keeping knowledge within families along sexual lines. It may, therefore, be argued that having invented axes and other metal tools men were obliged to use them to assist women with reproductive work such clearing the bushes and making sledges.

3.2.5 Land use and settlement patterns

Land uses and settlement patterns in each tribal area were expressions of intersections between patriarchal power structures, gendered division of labour and environmental conditions. Members of each tribe resided in one large village or settlement usually located on a hill or easily defensible space and close to a perennial water source. Some large tribes, e.g. Bamangwato, lived in one large village – the tribal capital – and several satellite villages. Chiefs governed tribal village capitals while headmen governed satellite villages, where they existed. The villages, especially the chiefs' capitals, were large and nucleated settlements similar to the indigenous "towns" in West Africa (cf. Mabogunje, 1974 and O'Connor, 1983). Within each village or tribe, the smallest unit was the family or household composed of a man – as the head – his wife or wives, unmarried children and other dependants. The size of each family depended largely on rank, wealth and age of the head (Tlou, 1974). Families grew and raised their own food and cattle, which they supplemented with wild meat, fruits and vegetables. Families and households exchanged goods on reciprocal basis and paid tribute in the form of milk, meat and labour to the chief and headmen.

Every tribal land area was divided into four exclusive land use zones: residential, arable, grazing (pasture), forestry-cum-hunting zones. As mentioned above, residential areas were confined to hilltops while fertile areas surrounding the residential zone were reserved and utilised for cultivation - with the chief taking the best piece. Further away, beyond the arable zone, were located grazing, forestry and hunting areas. No household or family under whatever circumstances was permitted

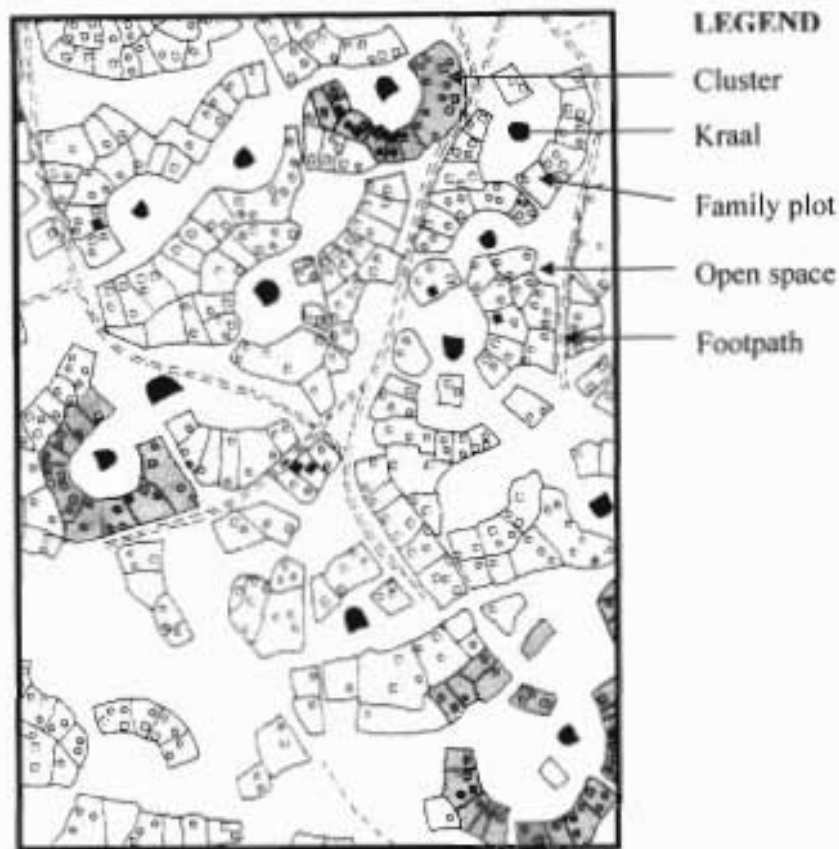
to build its house or settle outside the village residential zone. Although villages moved fairly frequently, their general layout plan remained the same.

Several households, closely related to each other either by blood or through marriage, constituted a 'ward' or 'kgotla' and lived together within the residential zone. As shown in Figure 3.3, homesteads or compounds within each ward were arranged in horseshoe patterns. The chief's ward, together with the tribal *kgotla* and kraal, occupied the centre of the village and was surrounded by other royal wards. Then radiating out in a circular form were located wards of the less royal community such that wards of the aliens and least royal units were sited on the village periphery. Royalty was determined by historical descent of the ward headman – the closer the headman's blood relationship to the reigning chief, the higher the ward status. The continual shifting of villages "allowed for the settlement pattern to be dynamic, accommodating changes in the internal organisation as they became necessary" (Hardie, 1982: 205).

The above land use patterns allowed for a clear and well-defined spatial distinction between the domestic sphere dominated by women and men's extra-domestic sphere. Women dominated residential zones (where they built houses and undertook other reproductive roles) and arable areas (where they grew crops, raised small stock and collected wild fruits and vegetables) while men's grazing and hunting areas were literally located far from home and exclusive to men only. Although the tribal *kgotla* as a court or assembly point was physically located within the residential zone and women's domestic sphere, it was socially inaccessible to women during political or court proceedings, that is when it was a public sphere. Women could visit, clean and maintain the *kgotla* as a space but could not attend or participate in *kgotla* proceedings. The *kgotla* "essentially operated to facilitate social control by the leadership" and was utilised by chiefs as a "forum to generate a consensus for the actions they proposed (Good, 1992:70). Thus, while women were excluded from the extra-domestic and public spheres, men had dual access rights as household heads and holders of residential and arable land rights over and above their exclusive access to public and extra-domestic spheres.

In brief, traditional Tswana tribes or *morafe* were characterised by patriarchal ideologies, institutions, gender and power systems. Men derived power from dominance and exclusion of women from political, judicial, military and religious activities as well as ownership and control of major livelihood resources – notably cattle and land. Men retained their dominance through inheritance rules, which facilitated male vertical and horizontal descendants to succeed to their predecessors' wealth and political positions. As argued in section 7.13, these power relationships and hierarchies intersected with economic, environmental and geopolitics to define traditional gender roles in pre-colonial and the early years of colonial rule. The next section will explore the extent to which colonisation affected social, economic, demographic and household dynamics as well as settlement patterns, gender roles and women's rights to own and control property.

Figure 3.3 Horse-shoe pattern of traditional Tswana homesteads



Source: Traced from 1963 Kanye topographical map by the Department of Surveys and Mapping

3.2 TRANSFORMATIONS DURING THE COLONIAL ERA

As earlier noted (sections 1.1.5 and 1.1.6) men in pastoral communities within the region started to build houses during the colonial era. This section elaborates further on changes in gender roles and women's land rights that took place during the colonial period. However, before exploring these changes, we examine the nature of the colonial state in Botswana.

3.3.1 The Botswana colonial state

According to Colclough and McCarthy (1980:12) and Selolwane, (1978), what is now Botswana became the British Protectorate of Bechuanaland in 1885 after much hesitation and reluctance on the part of the British government. The British were reluctant to colonise the territory because it apparently lacked economic resources and was considered not good enough for widespread European settlement. The final decision to extend British rule over Botswana was made in order to guarantee the route from the Cape and Rand [Witwatersrand] regions in South Africa to the north –

especially the then Southern and Northern Rhodesia British colonies (now Zimbabwe and Zambia, respectively). At that time the settlement of the Germans in South West Africa, the Portuguese on the east coast and the expansionist attempts by Boers in the south were threatening to close off the British route between the Cape Colony and the two British colonies in Central Africa. At the same time, Tswana chiefs were anxious to obtain British protection against Boer incursions into their territories. Consequently, as Selolwane (1978) notes, there were differing interpretations of what being a 'protectorate' meant. To the chiefs, protection meant protection of the territory against foreign powers especially Boers and Germans while, to the British Government, it meant loss of sovereignty by chiefs. The chiefs objected to the latter interpretation because, they argued, they were neither conquered by the British nor had they signed any treaty under which they had agreed to give up their absolute powers. The views of the chiefs notwithstanding, the British introduced new administrative, judicial, economic and land tenure systems all of which had profound effects on gender roles and the status of women in the territory.

3.3.1.1 Changes to administrative structures

In order to keep financial costs of administering the Protectorate to a bare minimum, the British Government introduced the 'indirect rule' system. The chiefs were granted liberty to continue to rule their people as they did before colonisation. In return, they agreed to collect a hut tax from their subjects for which "the British paid them a commission of 10 per cent of the revenues they collected" (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980:19). Consequently, the British Colonial Office never appointed a Governor for Bechuanaland. Instead they appointed a Resident Commissioner for the Protectorate and stationed him in Mafikeng, South Africa. The Resident Commissioner "was formally responsible to the High Commissioner for the three protectorate territories [of the then Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland], who was also, after 1910, Governor of the Union of South Africa" (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980:19).

In practice, the 'indirect rule' meant two parallel and, at first, mutually exclusive administrations: the District Administration, which regulated the affairs of traders, missionaries and other Europeans; and the Chiefs' Administration which ruled and collected tax from non-Europeans (Picard, 1987: 36-39). Despite the 'indirect rule' approach, the colonial administration did, in due course, take measures to limit powers enjoyed by the chiefs and headmen. According to Colclough and McCarthy (1980: 23-27), the changes were promoted by a growing uneasiness on the part of the British administration over the manner in which the chiefs had enriched themselves and used their positions to pursue their personal gains rather than that of their respective tribes as a whole. "In some tribes ... proceeds of fines imposed in the Kgotla, of levies, rents, and mining subsidies [were] absorbed into the personal income of the chief" (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980:24). Chiefs were also misusing tribal labour for private works as well as placing stray cattle (*matimela*) to personal herd (Good, 1999: 187-188).

As a result, the colonial administration sought to restrain and limit the powers of the chiefs through a series of proclamations and orders such as Native Administration Proclamation (No 74 of 1934), which replaced the increasingly autocratic leadership of the chiefs with 'Native Authorities' composed of 'councillors' nominated by the Resident Commissioner; the Native Courts Proclamation (No 13 of 1942 as amended by No 33 of 1943) which transferred judicial powers from the chiefs to Native Courts

composed of chiefs and educated individuals; and the Native Tax Proclamation of 1943 (as amended) and the Native Treasuries Proclamation (1938), which deprived the chiefs of powers to levy taxes at will. In short, the chiefs “could no longer impose tribal levies without written approval from the Resident Commissioner and without the agreement of tribe in Kgotla, and they were obliged to carry out all ‘lawful’ orders issued to them by the Resident Commissioner” (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980:25). Furthermore, chiefs' religious and magical powers were cast in doubt with the introduction of Christianity. Chiefs and headmen, however, retained powers to administer and allocate tribal land.

Colclough and McCarthy (1980:25) note that some chiefs strongly objected to the above measures on the grounds that they severely encroached on traditional law and custom and were contrary to the spirit of ‘indirect rule’ agreed upon between the chiefs and the British administration in 1891. The chiefs challenged the proclamations in court and lost when the judge ruled that the High Commissioner had to respect, but did not need to be bound by, native law and custom.

To closely monitor activities and operations of the Chiefs and Native Authorities, British colonial administration introduced the office of the District Commissioner. The District Commissioner was “the most important representative of central government in the district with considerable local executive authority” (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980:39; and Picard, 1987). The Commissioner “served as a watchdog over tribal chiefs and headmen to make sure they ruled their subjects according to what, in the view of the colonial administrator, was reasonable governance” (Government of Botswana, 2001: 106). The District Commissioner served as a link between local communities and the Resident Commissioner.

3.3.1.2 Socio-economic changes

Compared to South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia, the British did not invest much in Botswana nor did Botswana experience widespread land dispossession. According to Selolwane (1978: 25) British unwillingness to invest in Botswana was designed to support labour migration to South Africa rather than retaining labour in Botswana. To encourage labour migration to South Africa, the British Administration discouraged large-scale mines exploration in Botswana and discouraged investment into the country. They also introduced the tax system to integrate men into the capitalist cash economy. Various forms of taxes (hut, native and African) were payable by every African male adult of the apparent age of 18 years or above. Although the colonial administration levied poll taxes on men, it neither used the revenue to provide services, invest into the country nor create jobs and other means from which people could locally earn money to pay the taxes (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980:27-33). The minimal investment made by the colonial administration was directed at the control of veterinary diseases, construction of abattoir, education and health facilities that benefited the few European settlers rather than African communities.

In order to meet poll tax obligations, adult men who did not own cattle were forced to seek paid employment in South African mines, farms and towns while those who owned cattle were forced to sell some. Many men were forced to work abroad (mainly in South Africa) since opportunities for cash employment in Botswana were literally non-existent (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980:22; and Good, 1992:71-72). The

colonial administration believed that working in South Africa would help the natives to get a little money which they badly needed, and would enable the Administration to raise more revenues (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980:21). The need for cash employment was further exacerbated by the desire to acquire European products such as ploughs, guns, clothing and other domestic appliances, which as Kooijman (1978) observes, became indicators of success and wealth in rivalry with cattle.

Through labour migration some men became cash-earners and were able to acquire more cattle while women became beer brewers and sellers to returning migrants (Larsson 1999: 73-74). In due course, there developed individualism and markets for some indigenous goods (e.g. cattle and traditional beer) giving rise to wealth and economic inequalities among men and between women and men. Socio-economic inequalities were further exacerbated by differences in formal education and prospects for local wage employment. According to Schapera (1994:28-33), schools had more girls than boys because most boys were either busy herding cattle or working in South African mines. Due to the attainment of formal education, some women were employed locally as clerks, interpreters, teachers, nurses etc and gained greater social and economic freedom from the control of fathers and husbands (Schapera, 1994:33). Partly due to formal education, Christianity and exposure to Western life styles, marriages for boys and girls were no longer arranged by parents – but through mutual agreement between the intending couples that would then inform parents for approval (Schapera (1994:129).

3.3.1.3 Changes to land tenure

Again through a series of proclamations and several orders in council, the landmass in what had become Bechuanaland in 1885 was divided into three categories - native reserve lands or tribal territories; crown lands; and freehold lands. In the words of Colclough and McCarthy (1980: 14), the definition of tribal reserves and creation of crown lands sought to protect “tribal land from seizure by Europeans” and as a way discouraging widespread European settlement in the country. Freehold land covered land holdings – notably farms – which had been acquired by European settlers either through concessionary agreements between chiefs and settlers; or governments grants parcelled out of crown land and bestowed on settlers (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980: 14; and Ng’ong’ola, 1997: 7). Freehold land rights conferred on owners fairly unrestricted and exclusive control over the land. On the eve of independence, freehold land included Molopo Farms, Lobatse, Gaborone, Tuli and Tati Blocks being farms and ranches sold to the British South Africa (BSA) Company and the Tati Concessions Limited; and the Ghanzi Farms in the western part of the country. The Ghanzi Block was created and allocated to a column of Boers to act as a buffer against German expansion from South West Africa (now Namibia) (Ng’ong’ola, 1997: 8). The farms covered some of the most fertile land in the country.

Crown lands covered areas that the British administration perceived as not being actively utilised. Hence, most of the land covered by the sandveld and utilised by the hunter-gatherer San and Hottentots tribes was considered unutilised and declared crown. The crown land was under the authority of the British Majesty or the Crown. It is unclear what the precise nature and content of the rights of the Crown in the land were. All that was stated in legal documents was that rights in Crown Lands would be exercised by the High Commissioner, who would also have the power to make grants or leases of the lands on terms and conditions he deemed fit (Ng’ong’ola, 1996).

According to Colclough and McCarthy (1980: 14), only five tribal reserves were defined in 1899: the Bamangwato, Bamangwaketse, Bakwena, Batawana and Bakgatla who were regarded by the colonial administration as the principal Tswana tribes in the protectorate. Three additional territories for the Bamalete, Batlokwa and Barolong were later carved out of freehold farms. One more reserve was created for the African communities in the Tati freehold area. No reserve or territory was created for hunter-gatherer tribes. The administration of land within the tribal reserves remained with the respective chiefs and headmen. There was no concept of individual or private ownership of land introduced within tribal reserves as land was said to belong to the respective tribes. There was no transfer of title to the colonial authorities either. The British administration expected customary rules and procedures for access, use and transfer to be applicable to every piece of land in these areas (Dickson, 1990). In order to preserve tribal territories, the colonial administration outlawed sale of tribal land and allocation of tribal land to people who did not belong to the tribe – including Europeans

Despite the colonial administration's intentions to preserve the customary land tenure rules among Tswana, the system did experience some modifications. As noted above, following the construction of boreholes and other manmade perennial sources of water (e.g. wells and dams) for livestock populations, the concerned individuals or syndicates created exclusive land rights or zones around these sources. In addition, although, traditionally, women could only access land through their husbands, fathers, sons or other male relatives, by the 1930s chiefs had started allocating land to unmarried women (Larsson, 1999: 75-76; and Schapera, 1994). Larsson (1999:77) attributes chiefs' allocation of residential and arable land to unwed mothers to two factors: land allocation to women did not threaten men's interests because there was no shortage of tribal land; and the allocation only enabled women to cater for their children and carry out their domestic and reproductive duties.

Women could also buy, receive, inherit or otherwise acquire own cattle but since they had no training in cattle management women were forced to entrust their beasts with their husbands, sons, fathers, brothers or paternal uncles (Dow and Kidd, 1994: 42-43). Girls could inherit their mothers' arable land and receive land as gifts or donations from their male relatives although married women could not readily inherit property from their natal homes. According to Larsson (1999:77) and Dow and Kidd (1994:68), cattle were considered to be too valuable a property to be surrendered to women while arable land was conceived as being plentiful and less valuable. Thus women's inheritance and acquisition of residential and arable land did not threaten men's interests. If anything, it propagated women's reproductive role – it enabled women to cater for their children's food and shelter needs.

3.3.1.4 Changes in settlement patterns

According to Schapera (1955), the British colonial administration outlawed shifting of villages soon after assuming responsibility over the territory. To the colonial administration, shifting of villages was costly in terms of erecting new office buildings every time a village moved from one site to another. It also presented logistical and administrative problems. As a result no village has changed location since 1912 when the Bamangwato moved from Palapye to the present site at Serowe. To accommodate population increases, villages reportedly expanded laterally thereby encroaching on

arable and grazing land. By the 1930s, some fields were located as far 15-30 kilometres from villages forcing most households to have three homes: in the village, cattle-post and at the lands (Schapera, 1955; and Silitshena, 1978 and 1982). During the crop growing season, women, girls and young boys would migrate temporarily to the lands to plough, sow seeds, weed and harvest crops. Men and older boys spent most days of the year at the cattle-posts returning to villages occasionally in order to attend kgotla meetings, weddings and other family ceremonies. In effect, colonialism increased the spatial separation between the domestic sphere of women and the extra-domestic sphere of men.

3.3.2 Redefined gender roles and relationships

Changes in administrative, political and socio-economic structures as well as changes in land tenure arrangements and settlement patterns provided opportunities for negotiating new gender roles and contracts. Women were forced to challenge the traditional marriage contract while men became crop farmers and builders.

3.3.2.1 Women heads of households

With prolonged absence of men while in paid employment abroad or at the cattle-posts, women increasingly became 'heads of households' - a social status that had traditionally been the prerogative of men. According to Larsson (1999:74), by the 1930s numerous unmarried mothers had set up independent households while many married women had become *de facto* household heads resulting in many children who were born out of wedlock. Larsson (1989a: 44) attributes the emergence of female household heads to three major interrelated factors, namely, men's weakening authority caused by their prolonged absence in large numbers from villages while on wage employment in South Africa; increased numbers of unwed daughters falling pregnant in the absence of their fathers who were expected to prevent them from becoming pregnant; and parents encouraging their sons not to marry while in paid employment. "According to traditional obligations, an unmarried son should share his earnings primarily with his parents" (Larsson, 1989a: 44). The ability of women to earn independent incomes (through wage employment as nurses, teachers and clerks or by selling traditional beer) should have contributed to women's ability to manage their own independent households. Equally significant was the weakening of patriarchal ideologies and power structures that previously buttressed men's power at the household level. Women could appeal in common law courts against decisions and rulings made by chiefs and headmen. With the establishment of Native Courts, chiefs lost their absolute judicial powers.

As noted above (section 3.3.1), in recognition of women's role as heads of households, chiefs were obliged to allocate land to unwed mothers. Women were also able to inherit and buy their own cattle but since they had no training in cattle management, they were forced to entrust their beasts with male relatives (Dow and Kidd, 1994: 30) and Schapera, 1943: 153; 1970: 144-145; and 1994: 44). At the same time, it appears that chiefs and headmen introduced regulations that tended to restrain and limit women's attempts for personal freedom and independence (Schapera, 1970 and 1994). First, chiefs discouraged divorce by increasingly allocating large proportions of households' cattle to female partners when men wished to divorce without 'good' cause (Larsson, 1999: 75-76). Second, chiefs increasingly recognised cohabiting as a form of marriage especially after a male partner had made a personal promise to marry a girl regardless of whether parents of either side were involved.

Third, attempts by some chiefs to regulate and control the brewing, sale and consumption of 'traditional beer' on moral and religious grounds (Schapera, 1994: 44; and 1970: 25-26), had the unintended effect of restraining women's ability to generate independent income. Fourth, despite being recognised and accepted as heads of households, women continued to be excluded from participation in political, judicial and other decision making structures. The majority of women (especially married women) continued to legally depend on their absentee husbands and fathers. Even those women who had obtained formal education generally fell "back into the routine tribal life" (Schapera (1994:29). In effect, despite their renegotiated roles and statuses as income earners and heads of households, women continued to be regarded as 'minors' in other aspects. Women continued to be excluded from attending *kgotla* meetings and participating in political activities (Larsson, 1999: 76-77).

3.3.2.2 Men in 'women's work' and 'domestic chores'

Besides taking part in waged and non-waged construction work (as noted earlier in sections 1.1.5 and 1.1.6 and 3.2.1) and contrary to Tswana cultural norms, men started taking part in crop cultivation. Men became responsible for the ploughing while women carried out most of the weeding, harvesting and crop processing work (Schapera, 1994:152). Male farmers bought ploughs, tractors and other modern equipment, applied improved crop farming methods and fenced off their fields (Mathuba, 1982). The introduction of improved technology and commoditisation of cattle and food crops did not only attract men into crop cultivation, it led to the redefinition of arable and grazing land rights. With the passage of time men cultivated fields independent from those of their wives' and grew crops mainly for sale. Pastureland with manmade livestock watering points and/or fenced arable land subject to improved farming methods become 'private' land accessible and controlled by individual men or male syndicates. As Kalabamu and Morolong (2004: 45-46) note, the rise of 'private' land rights gave these individuals and syndicates dual access and grazing land rights. While other members of the tribe were excluded from fenced fields and land surrounding boreholes and other manmade watering points, owners of 'private' land could graze their cattle and harvest natural resources from the rest of the communal land and unfenced fields. Eldredge (1993) reports similar changes in gender roles within the agricultural sector in Lesotho during the colonial era.

On the eve of independence, the majority of people in Botswana (91%) worked in the agricultural sector: 92% in self-employment and only 8% as paid employees (Government of Botswana, 1965: 96-99). Of the 118962 women in the agriculture sector, only 3% were in paid employment compared to 13% among the total male labour force of 108047 men. The remainder of this section concentrates on non-traditional / non-agriculture sectors in order to highlight the influence of colonialism and capitalism on gender roles in Botswana.

Of the 23869 labour force in non-agricultural sectors, only 6239 (26%) were women. As shown in Table 3.1, the majority (56%) of women in paid employment outside the agricultural sector were employed as service workers of whom 97% were employed as cooks and maids. The service sector was followed by professional and technical workers or artisans (18%) and craftsmen (15%). Physicians and nurses, and teachers accounted, respectively, for 29% and 68% of women employed as professionals and technicians while the craftsmen category was dominated by bakers and brewers (31%)

and basket makers (34%). In brief, women in waged employment served mostly as domestic workers, teachers, nurses, basket makers and beer brewers: professions that are closely related to reproductive roles and the domestic sphere.

In contrast with female employment, the majority of the 176333 men in waged employment outside the agricultural sector were engaged as craftsmen and production workers (about 43%) and to a less extent as service providers (15%). About 49% of the 7532 men in the craftsmanship category were employed as general labourers and 15% as bricklayers and construction workers. The key revelation is the employment of men in previously female dominated activities: namely, housekeeping and the construction industry. Of the 2663 men in the service sector, 46% worked as cooks/maids and 47% as policemen/guards.

Table 3.1 Waged non-agriculture labour force by sex and occupation in 1964

Occupation	Men %	Women %	Total %
Administrators and managers	2.5	0.4	2.0
Professional and technical workers	9.9	18.0	12.1
Clerks	4.8	3.1	4.3
Sales workers	8.2	5.3	7.4
Miners, quarry workers, etc.	8.4	0.8	6.4
Transporters and communication workers	7.3	0.6	5.6
Craftsmen and production workers	42.8	15.1	35.5
Service workers	15.3	56.4	26.0
Others/not stated	0.8	0.3	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Numbers	17633	6239
			23869

Source: compiled from Government of Botswana, 1965: Table XIX

Of the 1622 people employed as electricians, carpenters, painters, bricklayers and construction workers, only 20 (1.2%) were women: 3 electricians, 4 carpenters, 2 painters and 11 bricklayers. Thus the commoditisation of labour, crops and housing processes motivated men's participation in productive activities hitherto regarded as women's responsibilities. It is also worth noting that women were literally excluded from the commercialised sectors of these activities. Furthermore, it was not until after attainment of independence when women made inroads into traditionally men's activities.

3.3.3 Interpersonal gender and sexual relationships

Changes in social, economic and gender roles were accompanied by the weakening of the marriage gender contract and the emergence of two new forms of sexual relationships. As noted in the foregoing section, by the 1950s chiefs had started to recognise cohabitation or 'living together' as a form of 'marriage', which was cemented by bearing children and performing public household duties (e.g. participation in the burying of men's relatives) together as 'wife and husband' (Molokomme et al, 1998: 29). Concubine or *nyatsi* was the third form of male-female relationship. In a *nyatsi* relationship partners live separately but have regular or frequent sex without any immediate intention or commitment to either live together or

marry. Such partners would only offer solidarity to each other by attending public activities (e.g. burying of relatives) in their private capacities rather than by posing as 'husband and wife'. This form of relationship is common among *de facto* women heads of households.

In brief we note that the advent of colonialism and market/cash economies provided the first opportunity for women to question and challenge traditional patriarchal ideologies and unequal power relationships mainly at the household level. Some women became economically independent of men and assumed control of their sexuality and became 'heads of households'. The above changes notwithstanding, traditional power structures at the cultural level remained largely conservative, thereby limiting the scope within which new gender relations, roles, contracts and statuses could be defined. Under colonialism and market forces, gender roles were partly swapped around as a substantial number of men sold their labour in productive activities hitherto located in women's domestic sphere.

3.4 POST- COLONIAL POLICY CONTRADICTIONS AND CHALLENGES

3.4.1 Introduction

At the time of attainment of independence in 1966, Botswana, then with a population of about half a million people, was said to be one of the 10 poorest countries in the world. At that time, the bulk (over 95%) of the nation's population lived in rural areas depending almost entirely on subsistence agriculture (mainly animal husbandry) and wildlife products. The few settlers and prosperous farmers were engaged in rearing cattle for exports, which formed the basis of the country's market economy. While many men could obtain waged employment in South Africa, the few local jobs were dominated by men including those sectors traditionally reserved for women. This section notes that despite the post-colonial government claim for equality, democratic rule and governance, women continue to be discriminated and excluded from decision-making structures and from accessing and controlling critical resources such as land and housing.

3.4.2 Making women legally invisible

Although Botswana's Constitution forbids all forms of discrimination, it does not specifically mention sex and/or gender as one of the bases for discrimination or exclusion from any sector or activity. As a result, legislation and policies adopted immediately after independence ignored, in theory and practice, women's needs and interests and were blatantly more favourable to men than women. Most of them have, however, since been amended to make them gender-neutral or to make women's exclusion invisible.

3.4.2.1 The Tribal Land Act

In its original formulation, the Tribal Land Act of 1968, which transferred the power to administer and allocate land rights in tribal areas from chiefs and headmen to land boards (also established by the same Act), bore all the hallmarks of a patriarchal

institution. Throughout its length and breadth, the Act referred to “tribesmen”. Much as the Act defined the term “tribesman” as a “citizen of Botswana who is a member of the tribe occupying the tribal area”, its widespread usage tended to reinforce the patriarchal perception that land in Botswana belonged to men. This perception was vividly exposed in Section 10(1) of the Act, which provided that, “All the right and title to land in each tribal area ... shall vest in the land board ... in trust for the benefit and advantage of the tribesmen in that area...”

By referring to ‘tribesmen’ only, instead of ‘tribesmen and tribeswomen,’ the section was making women invisible despite the fact that some women already owned land as noted earlier. In any case, as Mathuba (1989: 2-3) observes, the Act “was never meant to uproot the [customary land tenure] system ... but to improve it by introducing a modernised land institution and by having a written law which can be easily referred to.” It particularly sought to promote and support livestock farming (GOB, 1970: 31) – an industry that hitherto formed the backbone of the country’s economy and which, according to Good (2002:12), was dominated and firmly controlled by the ruling elite composed of “men of landed wealth”.

The secondary object of the Act was to make it possible to use land rights in rural areas as economic assets – both saleable and bankable (GOB, 1983a: 2 and 5). To that effect, Part IV of the Act made provisions for acquisition of common law land rights for grazing, housing, manufacturing and commerce, but excluded arable agriculture. Individuals could also convert customary land rights to common law leases for most land uses except arable land (*masimo*). It is worth noting that arable agriculture was, and still is, women’s responsibility unless it is carried out on a commercial basis whereupon it falls in the realm of men. By excluding arable land from common law leases, state patriarchy was effectively denying women opportunities for participating in the land market.

The exclusion of arable land from common law leases was, according to the Presidential Commission on Land Tenure, based on the assumption that such land was not readily transferable because it did “not yet have sufficient market value to make it attractive to lenders as security” (GOB, 1983a: 12). In a sense, this is tautological and cyclic thinking. Of course, arable land rights were not marketable because such rights could not be converted to common law leases. Or was it because it could not attract male buyers? That is, commercialisation of arable land was not in men’s interests.

To protect the interests of male livestock farmers, Section 10(2) of the Tribal Land Act, excluded “any land or right to water held by any person in his personal and private capacity” from being vested in any land board. In effect, land boards were denied powers over large tracks of land and boreholes that were owned by the ruling elite. Indeed, as Ng’ong’ola (1997: 14) observes, the haste (only 2 years after independence) with which the Tribal Land Act was passed suggests that the government wanted greater control over the administration of land rather than modernising the system as noted by Mathuba. The Tribal Grazing Land Policy introduced in 1975 to facilitate better management of communal grazing land through creation of ‘commercial ranches’ on tribal land had the effect of promoting exclusive land rights for the benefit of large cattle owners - who were, invariably, rich men.

The Tribal Land Act was overhauled in 1993 not because it was gender insensitive but because section 10(2) was utilised by individuals to challenge and prohibit land boards from dealing with arable land held under customary land tenure but acquired before the Tribal Land Act became effective in 1970. Arable land rights holders argued, as evidenced in the landmark case of one *Kabelo Maltho and others vs. Kweneng Land Board*, that section 10(2) of the Act effectively granted them deemed but unregistered freehold tenure rights on their holdings and that such land lawfully fell out of the jurisdiction of the land boards. Their arguments were supported by the Attorney General and upheld by the High Court. The provision had been amended because it had been misinterpreted / misused – that is, to legislators (most of whom were men), the section had to be deleted because it empowered the wrong people: women and men of lower social standing.

With the 1993 amendments, the words ‘tribesman’ and ‘tribesmen’ were replaced with ‘citizen/citizens of Botswana’. The amendments were ostensibly carried out to achieve gender neutrality. However, with or without the amendments, the Act does not spell out gender rights for married, unmarried, single, divorced or cohabiting women and their siblings. Furthermore, in practice, many land boards do not allocate land to married women without the written consent of their spouses while the same land boards do not apply similar rules before allocating land to married men (Kalabamu and Morolong, 2004; and Molokomme et al, 1998). Land boards justify their actions by saying that “traditionally a woman could not request a plot independently from her husband, and to allocate her one would be seen as divorcing the couple ... [or] that there is a shortage of land so that each couple should be allocated only one plot” (Natural Resources Services, 2003:163). Some land boards deny land rights to unmarried women as well “on the grounds that their male relatives or parents should assist them” (Natural Resource Services, 2003: 164; Molokomme et al, 1998: 26-27).

3.4.2.2 Deeds Registry and Married Persons Property Acts

The Deeds Registry Act of 1960 sought to consolidate and amend all laws relating to the registration of deeds that were in force as of July 1960. Until 1971, when the Married Persons Property Act was passed, husbands were sole administrators of properties held by either party before and after marriage. Each husband had absolute power over the joint estate and was at liberty to dispose of it in any manner without the wife’s consent. The wife could not acquire any property or loan without the consent and assistance of the husband. The only decisions wives could make independently were purchase of household goods and receipt of medical treatment for themselves and the minor children (Molokomme, 1986; and Dow and Kidd, 1994). To date, unmarried women aged below 21 years have to obtain the consent of their parents in all property transactions. Unmarried men do not have to.

The Married Persons Property Act provided intending couples a choice to marry either in-community of property or out-of-community of property. If married under out-of-community arrangements, properties belong entirely to the spouse in whose name they are registered, bought or otherwise acquired to the exclusion of the other partner unless he/she produces evidence of his/her contribution. On separation, divorce or death, each partner takes whatever he/she brought into the marriage plus his or her personal belongings inclusive of gifts (e.g. land, houses, cattle and cars)

bought, donated or registered in their names by their erstwhile husbands (Molokomme, 1986).

If married under the in-community-of-property regime or under customary law, properties bought, inherited or otherwise acquired by either partner (before or during the subsistence of the marriage) belong to both parties in equal but undivided shares. Should the couples legally divorce, their properties are divided equally (50% to each) regardless of either party's quantum of contribution and reasons for divorce. However, during the subsistence of the marriage, the husband is the sole administrator of the joint estate.

At a glance, the Married Persons Property Act appears to favour women especially wives without paid employment or with low wages but married to well-paid or rich husbands. It is expected that, on divorce, such women would then obtain shares larger than their actual financial contribution. However, since immoveable properties could only be registered in the names of men and husbands were the sole administrator (as discussed below), men could secretly dispose of property before divorce or as soon as cracks in the marriage start to appear. With the exception of arable fields (*masimo*), rural properties could also be conveniently converted to common law leases (as provided under the Tribal Land Act) and sold or otherwise transferred in anticipation of divorce. Also, as noted elsewhere (Kalabamu, 1998), women have been socialised into rejecting the out-of community-of-property option because it is assumed that marrying under such a regime denotes lack of commitment to marriage on the part of a woman. Consequently, very rarely do people marry under this option. The option only exists in theory and not in practice.

Until 1996, section 18 of the Deeds Registry Act required every woman – whether unmarried, married, widowed, or divorced – or her agent not only to disclose her full name and marital status but, if married, the full name of the husband and whether the marriage was contracted with or without community of property as well. No immovable property could be registered in the name of a woman-married in-community-of-property unless the property was by law or condition of bequest or donation excluded from the marital power of the husband. Even then, the husband was required to give his consent if the wife wished to mortgage or sell the property. According to the Registrar of Deeds, the other exception was when a wife was a sole proprietor of a business. Apparently the latter exception was made in order to safeguard the marriage's "community property" (sic). Otherwise the wife's name could not appear on the register because it was assumed to be contained in the husband's name which shows the extent to which women were regarded as minors and partly explains why women adopted their husbands' residence and surnames on marriage.

Sub-sections 18 (3) and (4) of the Deeds Registry Act were amended in 1996 to provide that neither spouse, whether married in community of property or not, may alone deal with the Registrar of Deeds without the written consent of his/her partner. Amendments to Deeds Registry Act do not affect husbands' 'marital power' under the Married Persons Property Act. First, under the latter Act, women married in-community-of-property may, for example, not obtain credit to buy land without the husband's consent and assistance. Second, the amendment fails to address the management and disposal of unregistered properties such as customary land grants in

rural areas and self-help housing plots in urban areas. Third, the amendments do not deal with issues of inheritance, and properties of cohabiting partners. Fourth, subsections 18(1) and (2) which require women to disclose their full names, marital status and their husbands full names were not amended to require men to do the same.

3.4.2.3 Renegotiated inheritance under customary laws

Since women have for several decades owned properties, customary rules on inheritance have been reformed. The reforms have partly been influenced by “new forms of property such as cash, vehicles and others that can easily be individualised and disposed of [and] for which customary law does not provide” and by regular failure of heirs to “support the females and other dependants of [the] deceased father” (Molokomme et al., 1998: 26). Unlike in the past when cattle and land were the major objects of inheritance, contemporary items that people consider liable to inheritance are, in order of perceived importance, residential plots/homesteads, money, business, arable fields, cattle and personal possessions – notably cars (Kalabamu, 2004). Residential plots are preferred because they enable one to erect rental rooms.

Under contemporary Tswana customary law, any cattle that a woman brings into a marriage remains her own property until she bears a child in the marriage whereupon such property becomes family property. The same fate meets any further property she may acquire (Molokomme et al., 1998:27). However, according to a study by Kalabamu (2004), the old practice whereby the eldest son inherited the lion’s share of the family estate is no longer a preferred option. The current general practice is to divide the deceased estate equally among all siblings regardless of sex. The lastborn son (but a girl as well if not married) should inherit the homestead. Any unmarried son or daughter has a right to reside in the inherited homestead but he/she is encouraged to acquire his/her own residential plot. The lastborn daughter (or son, if parents so wish) inherits the mother’s arable fields while other fields and cattle (if any) are subject to equal distribution among all siblings. Again unlike in the past, contemporary inheritance rules are not cast in stone. They provide a parent the right to decide how their estate should be distributed by either leaving a written will or publicly distributing the properties before he/she dies. The study further revealed that cohabiting partners might be granted a share of the deceased partner’s estate if there is adequate evidence that the two had lived together for several years and/or had children together. Furthermore, inheritance has become both patrifocal and matrilineal – that is children inherit the mother’s estate or the estate developed by the joint effort of the mother and the biological father. Children may not inherit from stepparents in either simultaneous or serial polygamous marriages nor from paternal uncles and grandparents.

The above differs from findings by Molokomme et al (1998:27) which noted that, despite claims that the current trend is to divide property of a deceased person equally between children irrespective of age and sex, female children were being given token shares (e.g. one beast). The study by Kalabamu (2004) showed that differences in the quantum of inheritance were largely due to variations in the siblings’ economic status and assistance rendered to parents during their illness or last days. Wealthy children were least interested in inheritance while children (notably unmarried daughters) who took care of their parents got a lion’s share. Any person (child or surviving partner) aggrieved with the manner in which the deceased person’s estate was shared out may

appeal to the customary courts or common law courts including the high court (Molokomme et al. 1998; and Kalabamu, 2004).

3.4.3 State policies oblivious of women's needs

During the initial post-independence years, the government of Botswana - like the preceding colonial government- did not have defined long-term policies on land and housing. Its main focus was to construct houses for middle and senior level personnel (the majority of whom were male) employed by both local and central governments. The government subsidised rents paid by civil servants residing in public houses (Government of Botswana, 1970:92). Within a period of four years, the government realised that it could not provide subsidized houses to all civil servants and, consequently, established the Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) in 1971. The corporation was given the task of providing houses for civil servants and for renting to the general public as well as assisting other persons, companies and institutions wishing to carry out housing schemes in the country (Government of Botswana, 1970: 1993).

It was not until the mid 1970's that the government adopted its first land and housing policies. In 1975, the government launched the Tribal Grazing Land Policy (TGLP), which sought to provide owners of large herds of cattle "with exclusive [land] rights under long term common law leases ... in the expectation that they will develop commercial ranches and reduce pressure on communal lands" (Government of Botswana 1983:6). However, according to Mathuba (1989: 24), TGLP commercial ranch owners have dual grazing rights as they also have access to the remainder of communal grazing resources.

At about the same time, the government adopted self-help housing schemes when it realised that BHC was unable to provide "the full range of housing needs of the urban population, in particular, it could not provide accommodation which was affordable by the lowest income group without substantial subsidy, which the government could not afford" (Government of Botswana, 1983:28). According to Dickson (1990:11), the adoption of self-help housing schemes was based on the advice of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and influenced by sites and service schemes that were being undertaken in neighbouring Zambia. Details of self-help housing schemes as undertaken in Botswana are discussed in the next chapter. Suffice to mention here that, with financial and technical assistance from Britain, United States of America, Canada and the World Bank, the government was able to supply at no cost to the beneficiaries minimally serviced residential plots, building material loans and technical advice to middle and upper sections of the low-income urban groups. The scheme benefited some women (especially single women) as well. For example, although only 34-39% of households in Lobatse, Gaborone and Francistown were headed by women according to the 1991 census, female landlords accounted for up to 60% of self-help housing plot owners in the above townships (Molamu, 1989; Datta, 1995; and Kalabamu, 1998).

In 1978 the government announced its *Urban Development and Land Policy* under which any citizen of Botswana would be allocated one residential plot in each of the towns (Government of Botswana, 1978:27). The policy did not make special

provisions for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups such as the poor, elderly, women and youths. Four years later, the government announced its first *National Policy on Housing* under which the government undertook to promote the building of new urban housing for all income levels at a pace which would ensure that no citizen of an urban area was forced to reside in an unauthorized or squatter settlement (Government of Botswana, 1982:3). A few years later, in 1985, the government adopted the its first *National Policy on Land Tenure* described as the “only comprehensive and conclusive document dealing solely with land tenure issues” (Government of Botswana, 1985:1).

National policy on land tenure reiterated and endorsed most of the government’s intentions, programmes and provisions contained in previous policy statements such as the Tribal Grazing Land Policy, 1978 Urban Development and Land Policy and the 1982 National Policy on Housing. It, however, went a step further by calling for the amendment of the Tribal Land Act to extend common law leases beyond grazing land to commercial, residential and industrial user rights. In effect the focus of the 1985 national policy on land tenure was to promote and provide for the commoditisation of commercial, industrial, and residential land in rural areas by “giving people rights in land that can be used as an economic asset both saleable and bankable ...” (Government of Botswana, 1983:2). It is worth noting here that the 1985 policy did not extend common law leases to arable land because, it was argued, such a change on arable land rights would “have little or no impact on the flow of funds into arable agriculture” (Government of Botswana, 1985:6). This was blatant gender discrimination because arable land was utilised by women to grow crops. Its exclusion, therefore, pre-empted cash flow into this sector and condemned women peasants to perpetual poverty.

The Accelerated Land Servicing Programme (ALSP) launched in 1989 was yet another policy designed to “maximize residential and marketable land while providing adequate space to meet the physical, social and aesthetic needs of the citizens” (PADCO, 1989:3;GOB, 1992:1-2). Contemporary land and housing policies and programmes are based partly on the 1999 National Policy on Housing and experiences gained from Accelerated Land Servicing Programme (ALSP). The government has conceded that in spite of its past efforts in spearheading the self-help housing schemes and the accelerated land servicing programme as well as providing financial support to the Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC), the availability of safe and sanitary accommodation has not shown much improvement as evidenced by long waiting lists for serviced land and housing (Government of Botswana, 2000: 3-6). It therefore decided to change its role from that of housing financier, producer and landlord to that of a facilitator in partnership with the private sector and employers. According to Government Paper No.2 of 2000, the role of the government will be “to provide overall guidance in land acquisition, planning and control, design and provision of infrastructure, community services and technical assistance in both urban and rural areas” (Government of Botswana, 2000: v).

BHC will commercialise its services and products and become part of the envisaged State-Private Sector partnership. Under this partnership, the government provides peripheral services (primary roads, main sewer lines etc.) and community facilities (schools, clinics, police etc) and sells blocks of such land (up to 10 hectares) to private developers who then subdivide the land into small plots and provide secondary and tertiary services such as access roads, water and sewer connections. The private

developers may sell vacant plots or erect houses for sale. To subsidise low income earners, the Government either buys (from the developer) serviced plots then reallocates them to beneficiaries at affordable prices or pays the subsidies to the developer upfront who is then expected to sell the plots to beneficiaries at affordable prices.

Under the 1999 housing policy, the government has assigned the responsibility for satisfying housing needs of the destitute to the Department of Social and Community Development, which provides them with food, clothing and shelter as well. The department “provides free housing where the destitute individual has no recourse to any other alternative assistance” (Gwebu, 2003: 425). The government intends to assist middle and poor households through what it calls *Integrated Poverty Alleviation and Housing Scheme*. The focus of the scheme is to integrate skills acquisition, employment creation, income generation and shelter provision by engaging youths and other unemployed individuals in the production of building materials (e.g. bricks) and construction of houses (Government of Botswana, 2000; and 2003: 333). The scheme “is based on the assumption that poverty is the underlying cause of homelessness; by addressing poverty, lack of housing would be solved” (Gwebu, 2003: 425).

Much as the current housing policies and programmes are largely home grown and attempt to address the plight of low-income earners and destitute populations, they are likely to deliver more benefits to rich men and male contractors than to poor men and women. First, as Gwebu (2003) points out, with increasing poverty and other demands related to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the long-term ability of the Department of Social and Community Development to provide housing to the destitute is highly questionable. Second, only men and a few women with building skills are likely to benefit from such schemes as the integrated poverty alleviation and housing programmes because women are hardly involved in modern house construction. Third, unlike self-help housing schemes when subsidies went directly to plot developers, the subsidies now go to the private developer with no guarantee that he/she will pass the subsidies on to low-income earners. Under the present arrangement, the government is subsidising the servicing of plots and not the construction of houses.

In brief we note that Government policies on land and housing have consistently been based on so called ‘gender neutrality’ – that is, policies and regulations that do not explicitly appear to favour men (or women?). Such policies and programmes do not refer to women, men or any terminology insinuating sex or gender. They avoid the use of such words as men, women, girls, boys, father and mother in preference to ‘gender neutral’ phrases such as “households”, “citizens”, “lower/middle/high income households”, “their staff”, and “government officers”. With the exception of the 1999 national policy on housing (which has six lines on gender issues in a 24-page document), post-1980 policies lack gender analysis and avoid mentioning gender or making reference to women’s needs and interests.

In pursuance of ‘gender neutral’ policies, public land is currently allocated on the basis of “first-come-first-served”. This procedure and ‘gender neutral’ policies in general, may be criticised for attempting to ignore historically constructed economic, political, cultural and social differences between men and women. They assume that

gender equality before the law automatically makes men and women equal despite a long history of women's exclusion in major economic, social and political spheres observed earlier.

Despite attempts to strictly observe 'gender neutrality', land allocation procedures in both urban and rural areas have tended to discriminate against women. First, as noted above, land boards and town councils have been reluctant to allocate land to married women on the grounds that doing so would be tantamount to breaking up families and encourage unruly behaviour (Molokomme et al 1998: 27; Kalabamu and Morolong, 2004; and Natural Resource Services, 2003). Second, unmarried women often have to be assisted by older men and/or parents before they can get plots (Molokomme et al 1998: 27). Third, as noted by Kalabamu (1998) and Kalabamu and Morolong (2004), land – especially urban and peri-urban land - is no longer availed on the first-come-first-served principles, but largely on the basis of economic power and affordability.

As a result of the above, state policies and programmes have benefited and empowered more men than women. For example, since most residential and grazing land rights were, by tradition, held by men, the conversion of such rights to common law leases targeted men as the principal beneficiaries. The conversion could not benefit all women because the Deeds Registry Act did not permit women married under customary law or in-community-of-property to have land registered in their names. Worse still, husbands - as sole administrators of family estates - could mortgage or dispose of pieces of land under common law leases without their wives' knowledge or consent. Only self-help housing schemes benefited more women than men. However, the schemes have since been discontinued without clearly stated alternatives on how the government intended to assist youths, poor women and men incapable of actively participating in land, housing and the property markets.

3.4.4 Drivers and stoppers of women's visibility

The legal and official policies on land and housing discussed above (sections 3.3.2 and 3.4.3) are characterised by contradictions and inconsistencies – because at times women's interests appear to be taken on board and ignored at other times. This section seeks to identify drivers and stoppers of progressive changes. Drivers have included adherence to democracy, globalisation, feminist campaigns and economic transformations while changing men's interests in land; and persisted patriarchal structures have acted as stoppers.

3.4.4.1 Democratic governance

As observed earlier, the Botswana Government adopted a Constitution that sought to guarantee non-racial democracy; freedom of speech, press and association; afford equal rights for all citizens; and forbid all forms of discriminations. According to Larsson (1999: 74 and 77), the constitution gives women the same rights as men and provides a platform for challenging any form of female discrimination within homes, workplaces and public places. It is on this platform that some women (e.g. Unity Dow) and non-governmental organisations (e.g. Emang Basadi) have challenged discriminatory laws in Botswana and agitated for more equality between men and women. Following the case of *Unity Dow vs. Attorney General* in 1991, sections of the Citizenship Act that discriminated against children born by Botswana women

married to non-citizen men were repealed and replaced with gender-neutral provisions in 1995 (Molokomme et al., 1998: 5). Other pieces of legislation that have been amended following pressure from civil society include the Marriage Act; Married Persons' Property Act; and the Deeds Registry Act, which have been discussed above.

3.4.4.2 Globalisation and feminist campaigns

According to Molokomme et al (1998), since the 1980s Botswana has been a party and signatory to several regional and international movements, campaigns and conventions advocating for women empowerment and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. The Government of Botswana is signatory to the 1997 Blantyre Declaration on Gender and Development that seeks to repeal and reform all laws, amend constitutions and change practices that continue to discriminate against women and to enact empowering and gender sensitive laws. The declaration also seeks to increase women representation in the parliaments of SADC states to at least 30%. In 1996, the Government of Botswana acceded to the United Nations Convention of the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination Against Women (Molokomme et al., 1998: 5). Botswana sent high-level delegations to women's conferences in Nairobi and Beijing. As Molokomme et al. (1998: 5) note, government collaboration with Women's NGOs has resulted in the identification of critical areas of concern, establishment of the Department of Women Affairs, and the adoption of a National Policy on Women in Development, among others. Women and the Law in Southern Africa (WILSA) has probably been the most influential non-governmental organisation agitating for reform/repeal of laws that discriminate against women in various countries within the region.

3.4.4.3 Economic prosperity and transformation

Women empowerment in Botswana may also be attributed to the economic boom and transformation that the country has enjoyed since the early 1970s when large mineral deposits were discovered and exploited. The sale of mineral products has enabled the country's economy to grow at an average of 6% per annum between 1966 and 1995. Consequently, the country's per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose, at constant prices, from Pula 1683 in 1966 to Pula¹ 7863 in 1995. While the contribution of the agricultural sector to GDP was reduced from 43% in 1966 to 4% by 1995, the contribution of the mining sector rose from zero at independence to about 17% in 1975/76, reached a peak of about 49% in 1985/86 and then declined to about 34% in 1994/95 (GOB, 1997: 17-19).

The economic boom has created numerous opportunities for cash employment especially in urban² areas. Due to rural-urban migration and in-situ urbanisation³, the population living in urban areas has increased from 20993 or 4% of the national total population in 1964 to 876949 or 52% in 2001 (Kalabamu and Thebe, 2002). While men dominated urban populations up to the 1970s, contemporary urban centres are characterised by almost equal numbers of men and women with the exception of

¹ Pula (P) is Botswana's monetary currency. In 1995, 1 US Dollar = 4 Pula. At present, 1USD = 5 Pula.

² For census purposes, an urban area in Botswana is defined as a settlement with a minimum population of 5000 inhabitants and whose at least 75% of its labour force are employed in non-agricultural activities.

³ A process through which a village or any other rural settlement attains urban status as defined in footnote 2 above

mining towns such Selebi-Phikwe, Orapa, Jwaneng and Sowa where men outnumber women. Male dominance in mining towns is, however, declining. For example, in Orapa the proportion of men declined from about 81% in 1971 to just below 53% in 2001 (GOB, 1998 and 2002). Inevitably, urbanisation has been accompanied by increases of people in cash employment. The proportion of economically active population⁴ in cash employment⁵ increased from about 8% in 1964 to 18% in 1971 to 63% in 1991 and 66% in 2001 (GOB, 1965 and 1972:136; CSO, 1994: Table 1; and Siphambe, 2003: Table 3).

In the meantime, women as a percentage of population in cash employment increased from 24% in 1971 to 37% in 1991 and 41% in 2001. Women have also made inroads into hitherto male exclusive fields. Botswana boasts of a number of female magistrates, several high court lady judges, women chiefs, ministers, permanent secretaries, managers, priests and other top dignitaries including governor of the central bank. These social economic changes have not only enhanced women's self-esteem and economic independence from men, but also positioned them in equal status with men and as a force to reckon with.

3.4.4.4 Increased freedom and female household headship

As seen earlier, contrary to customary rules, a number of women who had never married were allowed to form their own households. Women heads of households have since become a normal phenomenon in Botswana. The proportion of female-headed households countrywide increased from 45% in 1981 to 47% in 1991 and 46% in 2001. In cities and towns, female-headed households increased from 33% in 1981 to 34% in 1991 and 40% in 2001 (GOB, 1982a and 1994; Kiamba and Otugha, 2003). In rural areas, households headed by women increased from 48% in 1981 to 52% in 1991 and to 49% in 2001. Ingstad (1994:214) estimates that, with the exception of mining towns, as much as 75% of all households in some settlements may be headed by women. According to Datta, women have come to regard marriage with growing ambivalence while unmarried "women are no longer scorned but respected" (Datta, 1995:186).

Besides increasing female headship, there has also developed a tendency among women in Botswana to either remain single or marry late in life. In 1971, only 23% of women aged 15 years and above had never been married compared to almost 45% in 1981, 50% in 1991 and 52% in 2001 (Kalabamu, 1996:7-8; GOB, 2003: 29). The proportion of men who had never married increased less dramatically during the same period – from 44% in 1971, to 55% in 1991 and 58% in 2001. During the 2001 census, 19% of women aged 15 and above were married, 19% cohabiting, 39% never married and the remainder were separated from their husbands, divorced or widowed. According to Molokomme et al (1998:28), young people attribute increased cohabitation to lack of parents' cooperation. Parents are said to be reluctant to initiate marriage negotiation processes on behalf of youngsters intending to marry "or cause unnecessary delays, because they do not approve their choice of spouses" (Molokomme et al, 1998:28),

⁴ Defined as all individuals aged 12 years and above who worked as employees, self-employees, in a family business or at the lands, farm or cattlepost or were actively seeking employment.

⁵ Defined as all persons that worked for money- wage, salary, fees, commission, business profit etc.

Remaining single or delaying marriage is a strategy that has enabled women to acquire land, moveable property and financial credit without the assistance of the husbands. Being unmarried is thus a way of challenging both private and public patriarchal institutions and norms.

3.4.4.5 Shifts in men's interests

Changing men's interests in land and economic opportunities has probably been the most influential factor in determining when and what type of land rights are availed to women either by default or by design. In the past, especially during the pre-colonial and colonial eras, men were mostly interested in cattle and, indirectly, in grazing land. According to Schapera (1994) women were excluded from use of grazing areas including visiting cattle posts but were granted access and use of arable and residential land. Products of the latter (cereals and mud-thatch houses) were then seen as socially less valuable than cattle. To that end, women were granted ownership of land rights over arable and residential land during the colonial eras when the chiefs deemed it necessary for reproductive purposes.

Policies adopted soon after independence (1966 to the mid-1970s) ignored women's land rights. As noted earlier, the Tribal Land Act served men's interests in rural areas. Through this Act state patriarchy supported and promoted establishment of commercial ranches in communal areas. According to Fosbrooke (1971 and 1971a), the government encouraged permanent migration to the lands in order to boost food crop production. Then land boards and the government tolerated and condoned self-allocation⁶ of arable fields (Kalabamu and Morolong, 2004). Within urban areas land requirements for women and the poor were ignored while the state provided free or subsidized housing to middle and senior public servants - most of whom were men. However, between 1975 and 1990 women were able to acquire urban residential land through self-help housing projects. More women than men acquired self-help housing plots simply because women constituted the largest proportion of the urban poor for whom the plots were designed to benefit.

From the mid 1980s, male focus and interest in land appear to have increasingly shifted from rural areas to urban centres. This shift may be attributed to two major factors:

- (a) Government desire to diversify the economy and increase citizen ownership and management of retail and manufacturing businesses as exemplified by the introduction of the Financial Assistance Policy in May 1982;
- (b) Increasing perception that cattle keeping was a risky and less profitable industry due to severe and persistent droughts; high input costs; and lack of insurance cover schemes.

The change of focus was, as expected, translated into increased demand for residential, commercial and industrial land in major towns such as Gaborone, Francistown and Lobatse. The Government responded to this demand by launching the Accelerated Land Servicing Programme (ALSP) in the late 1980s (Kalabamu and

⁶ Self-allocation is defined as acquisition and occupation/use of public land, or transfer of such land from one individual to another, without the knowledge and approval of responsible public body (e.g. land board).

Morolong, 2004). The P500 million ALSP sought to place a substantive quantity of serviced land onto the market in all major urban areas in order to meet immediate and future needs. Under the ALSP, the use of pit-latrines, public water standpipes, gravel roads etc that had until then minimised servicing costs for self-help housing plots were discontinued. With improved standards, the government decided that self-help housing plots would no longer be availed for free – beneficiaries were now required to pay affordable prices⁷.

According to Datta and Jones (2001) the need to pay affordable prices, coupled with development standards and regulation introduced under the ALSP, placed self-help housing land beyond the reach of the poor. It also encouraged people to look for cheaper land in peri-urban villages such as Mogoditshane and Tlokweng. As more and more people failed to obtain land in towns, the demand for, and value of, peri-urban arable land increased remarkably. By the late 1980s, arable land in Mogoditshane was up for sale (Kalabamu and Morolong, 2004) to which the government responded by setting up a Presidential Commission of Inquiry to investigate the purported illegal sale and transfer of tribal land (GOB, 1992 and 1992a).

The setting up of the Commission heralded the state's entry and focus on arable land, which it had, until then, ignored because it belonged to women's domestic sphere. The commission concluded, and the government concurred, that the majority of residential land in Mogoditshane and other peri-urban settlements had been changed from arable to housing and transferred to individuals without the land board's approval and the transactions were, therefore, 'illegal'. While the government had condoned and encouraged self-allocation of arable fields so that households (mainly female members of households) could produce adequate amounts of food to feed their children, the same government was now labelling the process 'illegal'. The point is, now that arable land had attained market values, patriarchal state structures considered it necessary to control and administer its transferability.

However, when the 'illegal' land transfers continued unabated, in August 2000 the President ordered the land board to demolish all houses built on 'illegally' acquired land in Mogoditshane and other areas. The demolition process involved the President, the police, army and land boards, which serves to underline men's heightened interests in peri-urban arable land and the desire to extinguish women's interests in such land. Land that was previously undervalued had effectively been transferred to the public sphere of men.

3.4.4.6 Persistent patriarchal structures

Despite the replacement of chiefly political, military and judicial rule with modern democratic institutions (an elected government, local authorities and independent judiciary), patriarchy is still dominant in Botswana. Women are still grossly underrepresented in decision-making and policy enforcement organs such as the cabinet, parliament, house of chiefs, local authorities, the judiciary and the police. For example, women account for about 11% of members of parliament, 17% of urban and district councillors, 13% of cabinet ministers and 22% of town clerks/council secretaries and their deputies (GOB, 1998b). Findings of the study by Kalabamu

⁷ Calculated as being no more than 25% of the total income of a low-income household.

(2004) revealed that, despite increased tendency towards gender equalisation in inheritance matters, male youths in Tlokwenj village still expect to inherit more than their sisters and mainly from their fathers' while female youths were less interested in inheritance issues, rules and procedures.

Good (2002) and Colclough and McCarthy (1980) attribute the persistence of patriarchal structures and attitudes to lack of material change in the country's role models and leadership. They note that the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), which has formed all post independence governments, was founded by wealthy men who had deserted chieftaincy and successfully transformed themselves into democratic leaders. Post-colonial policies have, therefore, been informed by the interests of BDP founders. Land policies and legislation enacted soon after independence (e.g. Tribal Land Act and the Deeds Registry Act), for example, were meant to uphold the rule of men and benefit cattle and property owners – the wealthy. Legal and policy reforms carried out since the 1980s have been forced on the political elite by local and international feminist campaigns rather than by an inherent desire to address the plight of women. As Good contends, post-colonial official policies are rooted in the philosophy of rewarding “those who make the biggest contribution to Botswana's economy” which severely “disadvantages the many who are already weak and impoverished...” (Good, 1999: 199).

Almost all legal, constitutional and policy reforms in favour of women achieved in Botswana have been by default rather than by design. To date no single policy has ever been formulated to address women's housing needs or land requirements. Neither the National Gender Policy adopted after the 1995 Beijing conference, nor the 2000 National Housing Policy have provisions for addressing women's housing and land needs. The 2003 National Land Policy proposals focus on laws that need to be amended to improve women's land rights but fall short of stating how women's land requirements would be addressed in light of increased land commoditisation and feminisation of poverty. There is strong belief that legal amendments would eventually translate into women's empowerment. In any case, legal changes do not immediately translate into gender equalisation and, therefore, do not threaten men's interests – at least not immediately.

3.4.4.7 Gendered poverty

Despite Botswana's economic boom and government's generous expenditure on development and public welfare programmes, poverty is widespread especially among women, women headed households and rural residents. BIDPA (1997:1) and Jefferis (1997:474) define poverty as “an inability to meet basic needs” including both physical (e.g. nutrition, shelter and clothing) and social (e.g. social commitments and recreation). At the household or individual level, poverty is characterised by lack of choice, arising from low income and/or low human capabilities” (BIDPA, 1997: i) as well as lack of “material resources such as cattle and land, and access to political organisation and influence” (Good, 1999: 187). Women's poverty arises from their historical exclusion from cattle ownership and management as well as contemporary female exclusion from lucrative and well-paid jobs. According to Machacha (2003:7), only 23% of cattle owning households were headed by women in 2001. However, although still low, Machacha notes that this was an improvement compared to previous periods when women heads of households accounted for 12% in 1983 and 14% in 1993 of cattle owning households.

About 25% of women were unemployed (seeking jobs) in 1981, 17% in 1991 and 24% in 2001 (Kayira, 1995:280; and GOB, 2003: 147). In comparison about 8% of men were unemployed in 1981, 11% in 1991 and 16% in 2001. Higher unemployment rates among women have been attributed largely to differences in formal education and acquisition of skills (Kayira, 1995:278; and Jeferris, 1997:489). Unemployment among women is further exacerbated by state policies and practices that exclude women from certain employment such as mining and the military.

As a result, women and female-headed households are more vulnerable to poverty than men and male-headed households. In 1993/94 about 41% of all female-headed households were categorized as poor compared to 34% among male-headed households. The incidence of poverty among female-headed households has further been attributed to high dependence ratios and low incomes (Jefferis, 1997:489), which is exacerbated men abandoning their female partners by begetting children outside marriage. According to Schapera (1994:138-145), children born before marriage or payment of the bride price (*bogadi*) belong to the mother and no biological father may lay claim on them. Any man who later marries the woman becomes the 'father'. Furthermore, due to individualistic tendencies, when people earn money these days they do so separately from their families and tend to share less within a narrower family circle. Thus, single and unemployed mothers with limited resources of their own are the poorest of the poor. "In spite of their energy and competence, women householders have trouble in making ends meet [because] they have few resources, insufficient access to male labour and little support from spouses" (Larsson, 1989a:48)

3.4.5 Contemporary gender roles

Contemporary gender roles are basically a reshuffled and consolidated pattern of gender roles that emerged during the colonial era. As noted earlier, the number and proportion of women playing the role 'father' has increased since attainment of independence to the extent that women headed households presently account for more than half of all households in Botswana. Household headship by women is currently accepted as a social norm rather than an exception.

In contrast to the colonial and pre-colonial eras, subsistence agriculture (crop and livestock farming) is no longer the major source of livelihood. According to the 2001 census, 99% of Botswana's working population depend on cash earnings of one form or the other. Furthermore, women constitute a substantial proportion (41%) of the working population. As shown in Table 3.2, only 8% of waged population depend on agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing. Instead, the majority of people are employed in administration and service provision. Production industries - agriculture, mining, manufacturing and construction - account for a combined total of only 34% of all working population. It is worth noting that, of the four production sectors, the construction industry accounted for the highest proportion (13.4%).

Despite dramatic changes in sources of employment and livelihoods, there still exist clear distinctions between male and female spheres. As shown in Table 3.2, women are dominant in reproductive and service industries such as domestic and personal services (16%), Education (16%), sales (14%), health and social work (6%) and hotel

and restaurants (5%) while men are dominant in productive and public administration sectors, namely public administration (22%), construction (14%), agriculture (12%) and mining (5%). Manufacturing and real estate business are two sectors where neither men nor women are glaringly dominant.

In terms of occupational categories, both women and men are concentrated in elementary occupations, at almost 32% and 28% respectively (Table 3.3). While 42% of women in elementary occupations worked as maids and cooks, men worked as labourers either in the agricultural sector (37%) or the construction industry (18%) (GOB, 2003: 238-239). Since attainment of independence and economic transformation, men have withdrawn from housekeeping to the extra-domestic sphere. Women's employment as domestic workers, teachers, nurses, basket makers and beer brewers had diminished and shifted to other services (notably sales) and clerical occupations thereby underlining attempts to streamline women into the so-called soft jobs and care-giving roles. This transformation whereby women are increasingly concentrated into sales, clerical and light industries (textiles, clothing and electronics) is a global phenomenon as noted earlier in section 2.4.

Table 3.2 Waged population by sex and industry in 2001 (in percent)

Industry	Men	Women	Total
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	11.5	3.0	8.1
Mining & Quarrying	5.4	0.8	3.5
Manufacturing (including repair of machinery and equipment)	6.5	9.4	7.7
Water, Gas & Electricity	1.4	0.4	1.0
Construction	18.8	5.6	13.4
Wholesale & Retail Trade (including repair of motor vehicles)	8.9	13.6	10.8
Hotel and Restaurants	1.6	5.0	3.0
Transport, Storage & Communication	4.3	2.3	3.5
Financial intermediaries	1.0	2.2	1.5
Real Estate, Renting and Business activities	6.5	5.1	5.9
Public Administration	22.3	14.1	19.0
Education	6.4	15.6	10.2
Health and Social work	2.1	6.1	3.7
Household and Personal Services	2.6	16.0	8.0
Other and Unclassified	0.7	0.8	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Population	219098	149854	368952

Source: compiled from GOB, 2003:238-239

Furthermore, in Botswana men occupy most senior positions in sectors dominated by women. For example, although women outnumber men in the health sector, only 23% of all doctors, dentists and pharmacists are women while only 8% of all nurses are men (GOB, 1998b:11). In the education sector, female teachers constituted (82%) of primary school teachers, 44% of secondary school teachers, 40% of tutors in vocational/technical colleges and 36% of tutors in colleges of education (GOB, 1998b:15).

Table 3.3 Waged population by sex and occupation in 2001 (in percent)

Occupation	2001		
	Men	Women	Total
Administrators and managers	3.1	1.9	2.6
Professionals	5.1	5.0	5.1
Technicians and para-professionals	5.6	13.6	8.8
Clerks	5.9	17.5	10.6
Services and sales workers	11.7	18.1	14.3
Skilled agricultural workers	1.0	0.9	1.0
Crafts and trades workers	24.0	9.2	18.0
Plant and machine operators	11.2	1.7	7.3
Elementary occupations	27.6	31.5	29.2
Others/not stated	4.7	0.6	3.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
% Numbers	219098	149854	368952

Source: compiled from GOB, 2003

Data from the 2001 population and housing census shows men's consolidation of their acquired dominance of the construction industry (Table 3.4). Out of 1974 architects and engineers, only 169 (8.6%) were women while only 281 (11.0%) out of 2544 physical and engineering science technicians were female. Women accounted for only 8% of the 2981 building and construction trades workers in the country. According to the 2001 census, the construction industry accounted for almost 19% of men in waged employment surpassed only by public administration, which accounted for 22% (GOB, 2003: 238-239).

Furthermore, while almost two-thirds of men working in the construction industry are craftsmen and tradesmen, the majority of the few women in the construction industry work as labourers (52%) followed by crafts and trades (34%) and clerks (9%) as indicated in Table 3.5.

Table 3.4 Professionals and technicians in construction related fields, 2001

Occupation	Men	Women	Total
Architects, engineers and related professions	1805 (91.4%)	169 (8.6%)	1974 (100.0%)
Physical and engineering science technicians	2263 (89.0%)	281 (11.0%)	2544 (100.0%)
Building and construction trades workers	34943 (92.0%)	2981 (8.0%)	37924 (100.0%)
Total	39011 (91.9%)	3431 (8.1%)	42442 (100.0%)

Source: Central Statistical Office, Census Unit, Gaborone.

Table 3.5 Waged labour in the construction industry by sex and occupation in 2001

	Men		Women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Administrators and managers	511	1.4	61	0.7	572	1.2
Professionals	394	1.0	39	0.5	433	0.9
Technicians and para-professionals	633	1.5	76	0.9	709	1.4
Clerks	615	1.4	772	9.2	1387	2.8
Services and sales workers	190	0.5	94	1.1	284	0.6
Skilled agricultural workers	3	0.0	7	0.1	10	0.0
Crafts and trades workers	25238	61.4	2890	34.3	28128	56.8
Plant and machine operators	2566	6.2	61	0.7	2627	5.3
Elementary occupations	10904	26.5	4407	52.3	15311	30.9
Others/not stated	44	0.1	16	0.2	60	0.1
Total	41098	100.0	8423	100.0	49521	100.0

Source: compiled from GOB, 2003

Men's increasing dominance of the construction industry has been accompanied by decreasing popularity of traditional Tswana houses and the use of indigenous building materials and technology. According to Sebinyane et al (2000) rural settlements within a radius of up to 200km from Gaborone and other major towns are characterised by non-traditional houses. According to the 2001 census, only 22% of all households in Botswana reside in traditional houses (*lelwapa*) while another 18% live in compounds with a mixture of 'modern' and 'traditional' houses (GOB, 2003: 462). A longitudinal study undertaken by Larsson (1996) in four different villages revealed that traditional Tswana rondavels were either being supplemented or replaced by multi-roomed houses built of non-indigenous materials. The rondavels were then allowed to deteriorate because the elderly women with the knowledge and skills for maintaining them were "too old and lack the physical strengths to carry out the work ... [while] most young women are not prepared to do the work, even if they are unemployed and have been taught the skills" (Larsson, 1996: 63).

In effect, women's role as builders of traditional Tswana houses is declining with increasing preference for non-indigenous house types and building materials. Taking Lobatse as a case study, the following chapter explores the extent and nature of contemporary gender roles and contracts in the construction industry and the erection of owner-occupied housing in particular. The exploration is based on the assumption that women are not bystanders but have developed new roles and relationships with men and other women in the industry.

3.5 SUMMARY

This chapter has noted that traditional gender roles and the sexual division of workplaces into the domestic sphere of women and public sphere of men were shaped by a web of complex and intersecting factors including men's domination of decision making structures at domestic and cultural levels; men's apparent ownership and control of 'valued' resources, namely land and cattle; the subsistence economy based on crop growing and livestock keeping; the semi-arid environment; and frequent intertribal wars over cattle and pasture land. However, the commercialisation of

labour, crops and other traditional products and services during the colonial period coupled with male sojourn migration to South Africa enabled women to become wage earners, independent, and heads of households. Meanwhile, men also become wage earners as builders, farmers and domestic workers - fields that had hitherto been perceived as women's domains. Despite becoming heads of households, women continued to be excluded from management of cattle and decision-making process in the public sphere. Furthermore, chiefs' attempt to regulate the brewing, consumption and sale of 'traditional beer', as well as discourage the *nyatsi* system, had unintended effect of restraining women's freedom and ability to generate own incomes. The chapter has also noted that since the country's attainment of independence and the establishment of democratic structures, women in Botswana have achieved more economic independence and made inroads into previously male dominated spheres. Despite these achievements, there have emerged new industries dominated by women and others by men. Women have been streamlined into new forms of the so-called soft jobs (e.g. sales and clerks) and reproductive occupations (e.g. domestic services, hotel and restaurant, education and health services) while men have been concentrated into administrative and apparently hard/rough occupations such as agriculture, mining and construction. The next chapters examine emerging gender roles and contracts in the construction industry and house building in Lobatse Township.

CHAPTER 4: LOBATSE - ITS HISTORY, PEOPLE, LAND AND HOUSING

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the local context within which changes in gender and institutional roles as well as new gender contracts are negotiated and defined. It particularly explores the historical origins and growth of Lobatse; demographic and socio-economic characteristics of Lobatse population in comparison with other towns in the country; colonial and post colonial land ownership and delivery processes within the township; and ends by discussing the town's housing tenure and conditions.

4.2 ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF LOBATSE

According to Mgadla (1978) before Tswana tribes moved into the present day Botswana, the area in and around Lobatse was occupied by the Bakgalagadi who were pushed out by the Bamangwaketse. The latter, together with the Bahurutshe (in South Africa) used the area for farming and cattle grazing until about 1820 when the area was occupied by the Bendebele under Mzilikazi. The Bendebele moved out of the Lobatse area in 1837 for fear of attacks from the Boers; and the area reverted to farming and pasture uses by the Bamangwaketse and Bahurutshe until it was acceded to the British South Africa (BSA) Company in 1897 by the colonial administration as part of the Lobatse Block of freehold land.

Because of relatively reliable rainfalls and surface water supply coupled with rich soils, white settlers in the Lobatse Block used the area for livestock keeping, grain and vegetable farming just as their predecessor, the Bamangwaketse and Bahurutshe, did. The Lobatse Block was partly acceded to European settlers in order to halt Boer encroachment into Botswana.

Lobatse started as a small station in 1905 during the construction of the railway line from Mafikeng (in South Africa) to Bulawayo in the present day Zimbabwe. Due to the readily available water, the site was considered ideal for the steam driven locomotives. However, the small station quickly grew into a small town that served white farmers who had become successful through exporting beef and milk products to South Africa. Lobatse also served as a centre for recruitment and export of male labour as well as timber to South Africa.

By 1920, Lobatse boasted of a number of retail shops, a wholesale shop, hotel and a timber export yard (Mgadla, 1978 and GOB, 1984). Lobatse did not only serve prosperous white farmers from the Lobatse Block but people from Molopo farms and Kanye village as well. It also provided employment and a source of cash income for Africans residing in the neighbouring tribal reserves. By the mid 1920s, the 'township' had running water, sewerage, schools and a hospital. However, most of these facilities were designed to serve the Europeans although Africans could

somehow access them. For example, although Africans were not allowed to eat in the hotel or sit with a European at the same hotel table, they could buy food and drinks at the counter (Mgadla, 1978).

Africans, except those who worked as maids, cooks and gardeners, were prohibited from residing in areas distinctively designed for Europeans and, as a result, 'squatted' on BSA land located on the slopes of the hill overlooking the small rail station. With time, the settlement grew and became known as Peleng. The settlement was condoned because the people of Peleng served as a labour reserve for European farmers, homeowners and traders. Most of these people worked as sweepers, cleaners and labourers while a few worked as shop assistants. Others were petty traders, traditional beer brewers, milk and wood vendors. The area was congested and characterised by lawlessness necessitating the establishment of a police post in the area during the early 1920s. Unlike European areas, Peleng area lacked basic services such as running water, sewerage and schools.

During the Second World War, Lobatse served as one of the centres for recruiting combatants for the war. However, the 'township' experienced a substantial boost in 1952 when the government took over a small facility for processing butter and cheese and turned it to an abattoir that later became the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC). The abattoir "represented the first large economic development to occur in Lobatse and a major complex of residential and industrial complex grew around [it]" (GOB, 1984: 5). Lobatse was one of the four settlements (together with Francistown, Kasane and Ghanzi) to be conferred township status in 1960 under the 1955 Township Proclamation (currently the Township Act, Cap.40:02). The development of Lobatse received a further stimulus when, a couple of years before independence, a number of Government departments relocated to the Township from Mafikeng where the Protectorate had been administered. Departments that relocated to Lobatse (and continue to function from there) include the High Court and the Department of Geological Survey. Lobatse was at one time seriously considered the capital of an independent Botswana and only lost to Gaborone because the latter had a better site for a larger dam.

On the eve of Botswana's independence in 1966, Lobatse (with a population of 7613 inhabitants in 1964) was the second largest town surpassed only by Francistown (population = 9525). The third substantive town was Gaborone, established just before independence to serve as the capital of the new nation of Botswana. Then, as is still the case today, Lobatse was characterised by a sharp distinction between low cost developments east of the railway line and high cost developments west of the same railway line. To the east of the railway line, lay Peleng, BC Thema, BMC village and New Look residential areas.

Peleng, as noted above, started as a squatter settlement. However, according to the 1984 Lobatse Development Plan, by the mid 1950s the District Commissioner was responsible for the allocation of plots in the area (GOB, 1984: 5), which probably accounts for the existence of linear gravel roads/paths. BC Thema residential area (just north-east of Peleng) was surveyed in 1922 as a residential area for Asians and coloureds but remained sparsely developed until independence. Consisting mainly of single quarters, the BMC village was developed in the mid 1950s to meet housing needs of the abattoir's low-income employees while New Look was established just

before independence to provide accommodation for junior civil servants of departments that were relocating from Mafikeng. To the west of the railway line (as shown in Figure 4.1), lay the town centre (south most corner), the BMC abattoir, high cost residential areas (Jacaranda and Botswelatlou) and the airstrip, among other activities. The town's linear morphology was basically determined by the north-south mountain ranges located due east and west of the railway line.

Lobatse's population growth has been less dramatic than other towns such as Gaborone, Francistown and Selibe-Phikwe due to a number of factors (including lack of mineral resources and its close proximity to Gaborone), (Table 4.1). For example, while the population of Gaborone increased by almost ten times from 18799 inhabitants in 1971 to 185891 in 2001, Lobatse's population increased by only two and a half times from 12362 in 1971 to 29747 in 2001. As shown in Table 4.1, by 1971 Lobatse had dropped from being the second to the third largest town in Botswana, and to the 4th position by 1981 – a position it has maintained to date. It is worth noting that Selibe-Phikwe, Jwaneng, Orapa and Sowa are mining towns while Gaborone is the national capital. Francistown was established in the late 18th century as a gold mining town but has since become a regional centre serving the northern half of the country (see Figure 1.1 for the location of these towns).

Table 4.1 Population Growth of Lobatse and other towns in Botswana (1964-2001)

Township	1964	1971	1981	1991	2001
Gaborone	3855	18799	59657	133468	185891
Francistown	9525	21083	31065	65244	84406
Selibe-Phikwe	-	5259	26469	39772	50012
Lobatse	7613	12362	19034	26052	29747
Jwaneng	-	-	5567	11188	15179
Orapa	-	1222	5227	8827	9244
Sowa	-	-	-	2228	2877
<i>All towns</i>	<i>20993</i>	<i>58725</i>	<i>147019</i>	<i>286779</i>	<i>377356</i>
	<i>(4.2%)^a</i>	<i>(9.5%)</i>	<i>(15.6%)</i>	<i>(21.6%)</i>	<i>(22.5%)</i>
<i>Botswana</i>	<i>514876</i>	<i>596944</i>	<i>941027</i>	<i>1326796</i>	<i>1678891</i>

Sources: Kalabamu and Morolong (2004: Table 2.3)

A comparison between aerial photographs taken in 1963, 1975 and 1982 (Figure 4.1) shows that Lobatse did not experience significant spatial growth between 1963 and 1975. Instead, the township had experienced residential infilling, densification and squatting. Peleng experienced all the three processes – infilling, increased densification and squatting up the hill slopes (GOB, 1984: 39). A small new squatter settlement named Maipaafela (literally meaning 'I placed myself here') with about 200 houses had emerged east of New Look. Areas west of the railway line experienced only infilling due to increased developments of staff housing by the Government, Botswana Housing Corporation and the Botswana Meat Commission.

^a As a percentage of national (Botswana) population

Lobatse received a development booster in the late 1970s when the Botswana Government – with British financial assistance – initiated squatter upgrading and sites and services programmes in the township. The programme resulted in the provision of basic infrastructure services to Peleng and Maipaafela residents, the development of Woodhall I low-income residential neighbourhood and Woodhall industrial area (Figure 4.1). The 1980s saw the extension of Peleng to Peleng East and Woodhall I to Woodhall II while the 1990s saw the establishment of another industrial giant – the Lobatse Clay Works – and the servicing of Woodhall III and BC Thema Extension residential areas (see Figure 4.2). Lobatse Clay Works, like Botswana Meat Commission, is a state owned enterprise and the largest brick manufacturing facility in the country.

In summary, we note that although Lobatse was established during the early years of Botswana's colonial history, its growth has been less dramatic than that of the cities of Gaborone and Francistown and the mining towns established after independence. This was mainly due to lack of enthusiasm and interest in the township by colonial administrators – that is, until the 1950s when they supported the township's abattoir. The prospect of Lobatse being a national capital stimulated the town's development briefly before independence while the choice of Gaborone as the country's capital city has had negative effects on Lobatse. The recent establishment of the country's largest brick factory in Lobatse has been town's new stimulus for development. Lobatse's evolutionary growth makes it an ideal site for studying transformations in gender roles and relations as evidenced by the remainder of this thesis.

4.3 THE PEOPLE OF LOBATSE

As noted above, Lobatse is an old town and one of the two towns established during the colonial period. Lobatse is not a mining town, which makes it to be more reflective of everyday urban life than the mining centres of Orapa, Jwaneng, Selibe-Phikwe and Sowa. Lobatse and Francistown have the highest proportions of female-headed households. These three factors presented Lobatse and Francistown as the appropriate centres for studying everyday changes in gender roles and relations.

As shown in Table 4.2 (and as previously mentioned), Lobatse has continuously been unable to attract many people from the countryside. It has, therefore, grown slowly in comparison to other towns notably Gaborone. Both Francistown and Lobatse experienced a population decline before independence – presumably lost to Gaborone – but picked up thereafter. Partly due to state policies and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the country's towns recorded less growth rates over the last (1991-2001) inter census period. At 1.3%, the annual population growth rate for Lobatse during the period 1991-2001 fell below the national average and was the second lowest among the country's seven townships.

Figure 4.2 Lobatse in 2002



Source: Department of Town & Regional Planning, 2002

Table 4.2 Annual population growth rates for Lobatse and other towns in Botswana (in percent)

Period	1946-1964	1964-1971	1971-1981	1981-1991	1991-2001
Gaborone	-	15.9	12.2	8.4	3.4
Francistown	-0.6	7.9	4.0	7.7	2.6
Selibe-Phikwe	-	-	18.8	3.1	2.3
Lobatse	-0.1	4.8	4.4	3.2	1.3
Jwaneng	-	-	-	7.2	3.1
Orapa	-	-	15.7	5.4	0.5
Sowa	-	-	-	-	2.6
<i>All towns</i>	<i>-0.2</i>	<i>9.5</i>	<i>10.5</i>	<i>6.4</i>	<i>2.4</i>
<i>Botswana</i>	<i>5.5</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>4.6</i>	<i>3.4</i>	<i>2.4</i>

Source: Kalabamu and Thebe, 2002: 4

Results from the 2001 census indicate that of the 29689 people resident in Lobatse, 14205 (=48%) were men and 15484 (=52%) were women, which is consistent with all towns whereby women outnumber men except in the mining towns of Orapa, Jwaneng and Sowa. Furthermore, 34.8% of the 29689 residents were born in Lobatse itself, 36.0% in Southern District, 2.3% in Gaborone and 2.4% in South East District (GOB, 2003: Table X.1), which means that about 75% of all the residents were born in the township and its surrounding settlements. The remainder came mainly from Central District (10.3%), Kweneng District (5.0%) and Kgatleng District (2.5%). Any insignificant proportion (0.3%) was born abroad. The areas of origin of Lobatse residents noted above are consistent with observations made by Gwebu about 30 years ago (GOB, 1983: 37)

Out of 8523 households enumerated in Lobatse during the 2001 census, 3605 or 42.3% were headed by women. Only Francistown (with 42.1% women-headed households) competes with Lobatse in this regard. The proportion of women headed households in Lobatse and other towns have been increasing in tandem with national trends as shown in Table 4.3. It is worth noting that, traditionally, mining towns have had the lowest proportions of women headed households.

Table 4.3 Percentage of women headed households

Period	1981	1991	2001
Gaborone	31.1	33.5	39.0
Francistown	38.8	38.8	42.1
Selibe-Phikwe	25.4	31.8	39.6
Lobatse	34.7	37.0	42.3
Jwaneng	19.2	23.5	33.8
Orapa	26.6	28.2	35.0
Sowa	-	28.9	30.3
<i>Botswana</i>	<i>45.2</i>	<i>47.1</i>	<i>46.1</i>

Source: GOB, 1982b; 1994; 2003.

According to the 2001 census, female heads of households in Lobatse (as in other towns) have a higher dependency ratio than male heads (Table 4.4). In Lobatse, the average number of persons per women headed households is 4.3 compared to 2.9 for men headed households. Disparities between men and women headed households are

most pronounced in the mining towns of Jwaneng, Orapa and Sowa. For each town, the dependency ratio among households headed by men is lower than the national average of 3.7 while it is about the same for women headed households. According to the 1991 census, about 75% of the female heads of households were single parents compared to 42% for male heads of households.

Table 4.4 Average number of persons per household in 2001

Town	Women headed households	Men headed households
Gaborone	4.1	2.6
Francistown	4.4	3.0
Selibe-Phikwe	4.2	2.6
Lobatse	4.3	2.9
Jwaneng	4.8	2.9
Orapa	4.8	2.6
Sowa	4.4	2.3
<i>Botswana</i>	<i>4.7</i>	<i>3.7</i>

Source: computed from GOB, 2003: Tables I.10 and I.14

During the 2001 census, women constituted 47% of the 13950 residents that were economically active and 61% of those reported to be economically inactive, which was an improvement over the 1991 census when women accounted, respectively, for 41% and 69% of the economically active and inactive population (Table 4.5). However, the proportions of men and women seeking employment have increased. Table 4.5 further shows that the proportion of economically inactive men undertaking domestic work has also increased – from 10% in 1991 to almost 15% in 2001 - while the percentage of economically inactive women in domestic services declined from 49% to 42%. Probably due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the proportion of sick people, which was insignificant in 1991 was notable (at 2.2%) in 2001.

Table 4.5 Economically active and inactive populations in Lobatse (in percent)

Employment status	1991			2001		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Economically active						
Employed	81	65	74	72.7	65.1	69.1
Self employed	7	12	9	9.6	8.4	9.0
Family Business	1	1	1	0.1	0.2	0.2
Family Farms	1	1	1	0.2	0.0	0.1
Seeking employment	10	21	15	17.4	26.3	21.6
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
(Number)	(7032)	(4953)	(11985)	(7386)	(6564)	(13950)
Economically inactive						
House work	10	49	37	14.6	42.0	31.5
Student	74	47	55	65.1	48.7	55.0
Retired	5	3	4	5.2	2.2	3.5
Sick	-	-	-	2.5	2.0	2.2
Others and not stated	11	1	4	12.6	5.1	7.8
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
(Number)	(2061)	(4670)	(6731)	(3382)	(5404)	(8786)

Source: computed from CSO, 1994; and GOB, 2003

The majority of economically active men are employed largely in four sectors – manufacturing, public administration, construction and, of late, wholesale and retail trade (Table 4.6). During the 1981 census, about 60% of economically active were employed in manufacturing and public administration. In 1991 the construction industry had overtaken public administration as the second largest employer of male labour but had been relegated to 4th position by the 2001 census (Table 4.5). While the proportion of men employed in the manufacturing industry has been declining, the proportion of women employed in the same industry has been increasing – from 9.5% in 1981 to 17.3% in 2001. However, the main employer of women has been the service providing industries: wholesale and retail trade; education, health, domestic and community services. The proportion of women employed as domestic workers has declined substantially – from almost 28% in 1991 to about 12% in 2001. Women’s participation in the ‘construction industry’ has remained low – approximately 2% during the three census (Table 4.6). Between 1991 and 2001 the number of economically active men in Lobatse declined by 221 from 6326 to 6105. The above structural changes in employment are consistent with worldwide and national trends as discussed earlier in section 2.4 and subsection 3.4.5.

Table 4.6 Economically active population by industry and sex in Lobatse 1981-2001 (in percent)

Industry	Men			Women		
	1981	1991	2001	1981	1991	2001
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	1.1	2.9	1.5	0.5	1.7	1.6
Mining and Quarrying	2.7	1.6	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.2
Manufacturing	41.0	25.0	22.4	9.5	12.1	17.3
Water, Gas & Electricity	1.5	1.7	1.2	0.1	0.4	0.3
Construction	7.7	19.3	11.3	1.5	2.2	2.0
Wholesale and Retail Trade	9.0	12.8	16.0	19.6	23.3	18.5
Transport, Storage & Communication	4.6	5.5	5.5	1.1	1.1	1.3
Business services	1.5	6.2	-	3.0	3.7	-
Hotel and Restaurants	-	-	1.1	-	-	4.0
Financial intermediaries	-	-	1.3	-	-	2.1
Real Estate, Renting & Business activities	-	-	6.9	-	-	3.7
Public Administration	19.0	10.7	19.0	16.8	6.5	12.9
Health, domestic and community services	8.9	-	-	36.8	-	-
Education	3.0	3.5	5.6	11.1	10.8	12.9
Health and Social work	-	2.1	2.8	-	6.3	8.6
Household and Personal Services	-	3.3	0.9	-	27.8	12.3
Other community, social etc. services	-	-	3.4	-	1.8	3.3
Other and Unclassified	-	1.3	0.4	-	1.7	0.6
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(Number)	(4203)	(6326)	(6105)	(2166)	(3909)	(4839)

Source: GOB, 1982, 1994; and 2001 census data supplied to author by Census Office, Gaborone.

Table 4.7 shows that, in terms of occupational status, the majority of women (about 42% in 1991 and 33% in 2001) are primarily employed in elementary occupations and, secondly, in the provision of services as sales workers (15-18%) and clerks (13-16%) and as technicians and para-professionals (13-14%). Compared to men, women are underrepresented in middle and senior level positions of administrators and

managers, professionals and crafts and trades workers much as there appears to have been some improvements in the professionals category – from 2.7% in 1991 to 4.6% in 2001. This means that, despite having a higher dependency ratio, more women than men have low incomes; and that more women than men occupy decision-making position in the economic sphere.

In brief, the overwhelming majority of people in Lobatse have migrated into the township from rural areas in Southern and South East Districts. Although women outnumber men in the township, the latter account for a larger proportion of economically active population. Furthermore, economically active women are concentrated in lowly remunerated jobs with less decision-making responsibilities in the public sphere yet women head close to half of the households. Women headed households are larger than those headed by men. The next sections will explore the extent to which public policies have addressed women’s land and housing requirements in Lobatse.

Table 4.7 Economically active population by occupation and sex in Lobatse

	Men		Women	
	1991	2001	1991	2001
Administrators and managers	3.3	5.2	1.8	2.8
Professionals	3.5	5.4	2.7	4.6
Technicians and para-professionals	6.3	7.9	14.3	13.2
Clerks	5.7	7.4	12.8	16.2
Services and sales workers	11.5	13.8	14.9	17.7
Skilled agricultural workers	0.8	0.6	1.0	0.3
Crafts and trades workers	26.9	24.5	8.6	9.0
Plant and machine operators	9.7	12.3	0.4	2.5
Elementary occupations	29.4	21.6	41.7	33.1
Others/not stated	2.9	1.3	1.8	0.6
Total % (Number)	100.0 (6326)	100.0 (6105)	100.0 (3909)	100.0 (4839)

Source: compiled from GOB, 2003

4.4 LAND DELIVERY AND OWNERSHIP IN LOBATSE

4.4.1 Introduction

Land delivery processes experienced in Lobatse have, in the main, been a response to the township’s historical character and population growth. The site around the railway station (which currently forms the town centre) was surveyed and established as such by the landowners – the British South Africa Company (BSA) - in 1909. The second major development was the establishment of the B.C. Thema (located east of the railway line) to accommodate Asians and people of mixed races in 1922 (GOB, 1984: 5). As noted in sections 4.2 and 4.3 above the growth and expansion of Lobatse has since been modest.

Until the end of the 1940s, the township's expansion was mainly due to the success of white cattle farmers who utilised facilities and services provided by the township but resided on their farms. Besides maids' and servant quarters, neither land nor housing facilities were designated for people of African origins that required residing in the township. As a result, most Africans ended up 'squatting' in Peleng area. However, with the establishment of the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) and the need to employ more Africans, the District Commission started to allocate plots in Peleng while the Botswana Meat Commission developed the BMC Village - close to the abattoir but east of the railway line - for its junior employees most of whom were Africans. BMC senior staff were housed just south of the abattoir.

A few years before independence, the government, through the Department of Works, acquired land in Boswelatlou and Jacaranda areas in order to build houses for senior civil servants that were relocating from Mafikeng (in South Africa) to Lobatse - then expected to become the capital of an independent Botswana. Junior civil servants were housed at New Look - east of the railway line. In 1966 the British South Africa Company (BSA) sold its land holdings within Lobatse Township to the Government of Botswana (GOB, 1984: 5). According to the 1984 Lobatse Development Plan, out of the 3788 hectares that constituted Lobatse Township, 2268 ha (60%) were owned by the state, 400 ha (11%) by the Lobatse Town Council, 120 ha (3%) by state owned companies (basically the BMC) while 1000 ha (26%) were privately owned. Most of the privately owned land consisted of land within the town centre, the BC Thema suburb and farms surrounding the built up areas. The government has since acquired Woodhall and Readfontein farms to provide land for the township's expansion.

4.4.2 Informal access to land

As noted earlier (section 3.4.3), until the mid 1970s the Government of Botswana did not have clearly stated long term policy or laid out procedures for either urban development or allocating urban land. The Government simply acquired land to build houses for civil servants until it established the Botswana Housing Corporation in 1971. The corporation took over the mandate and responsibility of building houses for civil servants and the general public. Parastatals and the Lobatse Town Council also acquired land and built houses for their employees. People who were neither employed by the government, council nor parastatals could only access land through squatting or buying privately owned. However, since most of the privately owned or farm land was expensive, the majority of self-employed people opted for self-allocation of land or squatting.

As observed earlier on, 'squatting' or informal land acquisition in Peleng area is as old as the township of Lobatse. The BSA condoned the 'illegal' settlement of Peleng because it provided accommodation for African labourers required by settler farmers and traders in and around the township. According to Mgadla (1978) and Setimela (1984), Peleng population increased rapidly between 1958 and 1965 when hundreds of Bahurutshe and Bazezeru families crossed into Botswana from South Africa due to skirmishes and misunderstandings with Boers. Although Peleng is almost as old as Lobatse, Peleng "residents have had something of a limbo existence enjoying a degree of legal protection but never having full security of tenure" (GOB, 1983). First, between its establishment and the mid 1950s, when the District Commissioner's

office took charge, Peleng was tolerated and 'controlled' by the British South Africa Company. Second, from 1966 to 1974, central government became responsible for Peleng's administration. In 1969, the Department of Surveys and Lands demarcated plots, collected taxes and issued Temporary Occupation Permits to plot holders (GOB, 1983: 38-39) thereby regularising their occupation. Third, despite central government intervention, 'squatting' continued up the hill slopes (Figure 4.3) beyond the demarcated area until 1974 when the settlement was handed over to Lobatse Town Council and an upgrading plan drawn. Then Peleng had about 956 plots with a population of 7935 residents or almost half of the township's population. While authorities were trying to control and bring Peleng to order, a new 'squatter' settlement – Maipaafela - emerged close to New Look and Woodhall housing areas. By 1975 or before it was upgraded, Maipaafela had about 720 dwelling units. According to the 2001 population census, Peleng as population of 8628 residents of whom 4091 (47%) are male and 4537 (53%) are female. It is worth noting that the Peleng population increased by only 8% between 1975 and 2001.

Figure 4.3 A view of part of Peleng



Source: Author, 2005

As noted earlier in section 3.4.3, the Government of Botswana introduced settlement upgrading and self-help housing schemes when it realised that state institutions could not satisfy the full range of urban housing needs. The 'squatter' settlements in Lobatse (Peleng and Maipaafela) were among the first to be upgraded. The upgrading of Maipaafela (1975-1978) was financed by the Government of Botswana "taking advantage of the mains installations associated with the adjacent Woodhall I" scheme (GOB, 1983). As noted below, Woodhall I was a sites-and-services scheme (popularly known as 'self-help housing' in Botswana) undertaken with financial assistance from the British Government. In the course of the Maipaafela upgrading process, over 500 households were relocated to Woodhall I. The upgrading of Maipaafela involved provision of infrastructure services (roads, water, street lights and refuse collection

service) as well as identifying plot owners and boundaries, plot rationalisation, pegging and gazetting. The rationalisation and relocation processes, reduced the number of plots to 215 for which owners were issued Certificates of Rights (COR) (GOB, 1983).

The upgrading of Peleng was wholly funded by the Botswana Government. The 1975 upgrading plan prepared by the Lobatse Town Council in collaboration with the Department of Town and Regional Planning sought to “give Certificate of Rights to all households, to control further development and upgrade services to site and services standards while minimising disturbances to ... [existing] structures” (GOB, 1983: 39). However, due to lack of adequately trained personnel the plan fell through. The Council in conjunction with the Water Utilities Corporation was able to install over 50 public water standpipes. To date, plot rationalisation and road widening have never been carried out although primary distributor roads were tarred during the 1980s. Residents were also encouraged and advised on how to dig and build pit latrines. Plots were finally rationalised and owners issued Certificate of Rights in the mid 1980s.

Thus plot owners who started off as squatters on private land in Peleng and Maipaafela were granted indefinite leaseholds - in the form of Certificate of Rights - on state land. The Certificate of Rights (COR) lease system was introduced in the 1970s in order to provide the urban poor with secure land tenure while avoiding the complexities and costs associated with statutory land titles such as freeholds and registered leases (Government of Botswana, 1983:18 and Dickison, 1990:26-30). COR leases have been extensively used in self-help housing projects and squatter upgrading schemes. Under the COR, leaseholder rights are usufruct for the sole purpose of erecting an owner-occupied residential house. Although the land rights conferred by the COR are perpetual and inheritable, financial institutions have not accepted them as collateral presumably because, in cases of default, lenders would have to seek state approval before disposing of property to make good the debts. A COR lease title may be converted to a registered lease provided the plot is title surveyed and a diagram thereof approved and registered by the Director of Surveys and Mapping.

4.4.3 Land for self-help housing

Until the 1950s, land rights in Lobatse could only be acquired through purchase of freehold land from the British South Africa Company or squatting – the latter being illegal and secure but the only alternative available to Africans with very low incomes. Only residents of European or Asian origins could afford the price for freehold in the township. Between the mid 1950s and 1966, people of African origins could be allocated undefined land rights by the District Commissioner (DC) on freehold land in Peleng. No title or ownership certificates were issued to people allocated land by the DC. After independence in 1966, low-income residents (notably those that were self-employed or employed in the private sector) accessed land through ‘squatting’ in Peleng and Maipaafela until the mid 1970s when self-help housing plots were made available in Woodhall I (Figure 4.2).

Co-financed by the British and Botswana governments, Woodhall I was the third site and service scheme to be undertaken in Botswana in the mid 1970s. A total of 589

plots were serviced under Woodhall I scheme. Each plot holder was initially issued with a Temporary Occupation Permit and required to dig and build a toilet and at least one habitable room before he/she could be issued with a Certificate of Rights. Plot holders were permitted to erect and reside in temporary structures on their plots while building permanent ones. The Government of Botswana undertook additional site and service schemes – Woodhall II and III (Figure 4.2) - during the 1980s and 1990s respectively. A total of 537 and 488 plots were serviced under Woodhall II and III respectively. Since then no additional site and service plots were provided as the scheme was replaced by the Accelerated Land Servicing Programme (ALSP) launched in 1990.

Site and service schemes in Botswana were implemented through Self-help Housing Agency (SHHA) established in each township in the 1970s. Self-Help Housing Agencies in various townships were charged with four main responsibilities: -

1. To receive and process applications for low-income plots.
2. To provide technical assistance to plot developers.
3. To disburse building material loans.
4. To collect service levies.

The above eligibility criteria are similar to those applied in other sites-and-services projects such as Dandora in Nairobi, Kenya except that, according to Nimpuno-Parente (1987) potential beneficiaries in the Dandora project were expected to be heads of households and to have lived in Nairobi for more than 2 years. Furthermore, the above criteria are typical examples of so called 'gender neutral' policies that seek neither to favour nor discriminate against anyone on the basis of sex. Such policies, however, do not adequately reflect everyday life and realities. For example, the minimum age limit of 18 years is unwarranted in the Botswana society where many girls as young as fifteen years are parents and/or heads of households.

All applications for self-help housing plots in Lobatse were received and processed by the SHHA office. Each application had to be made on a standard form and submitted with the following: -

1. Duly completed "employment/self-employment verification form"
2. Evidence of regular income (e.g. salary slips and/or monthly account sales);
3. Two passport size photographs;
4. National identity card;
5. Self-employed applicants must produce a sworn statement about their incomes and employment status.

The income and evidence for regular formal employment may be criticised for discouraging unemployed or self-employed people with other sources of income (e.g. remittances and livestock). Such people (e.g. cattle owners or recipients of remittances from children) are left without alternatives for self-help housing. In a society where extended family networks are very strong and capable of raising the necessary finance, the minimum income criterion is very much unwarranted.

People allocated self-help housing plots were required (in terms of the Building Control Regulations) to submit plans of their proposed permanent houses to SHHA office for approval before the commencement of construction works. The SHHA

office also advised developers on building materials, house sizes, site plans and housing quality. Given that most self-help plot allottees were unfamiliar with architectural, engineering and site plans, the Lobatse SHHA offices produced standard house plans (Figure 4.5 and 4.6).

A number of observations may be made on the plans. First, we note that although the symbol for "Lobatse SHHA" is a traditional thatched house, none of the house plans is traditional or uses traditional building materials. Core elements or features (such as out door living and privacy through separate sleeping units and use of yard) that characterised the traditional Tswana homestead were not taken on board. All the plans emphasised indoor living by placing all key activities (sitting room, bedrooms, kitchen, toilets etc.) under one roof instead of separate units and open spaces within the yard. All plans are in form of rectangles instead of the traditional circular pattern. Building materials recommended by SHHA office include cement bricks and metal roofs instead of mud-bricks, stone, thatch or any other locally available materials. In addition, no attempts were made to adopt or popularise improved and/or locally available materials (e.g. treated grass, poles and timber, mud-cement-bricks, burnt bricks and tiles,) in low-income house construction (Government of Botswana, 1983: 204). Mud and/or thatched houses were only allowed as temporary structures to be demolished as soon as the approved house is completed. Some plot-holders have to date retained the mud structures (Figure 4.4) for use as stores or similar activities.

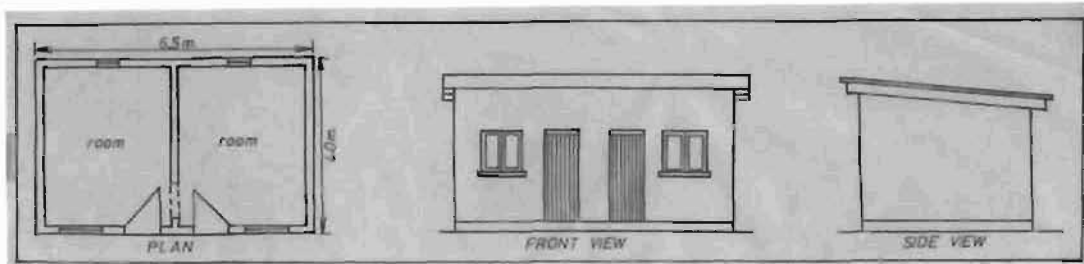
Figure 4.4 Main house, back yard house and 'temporary' mud house



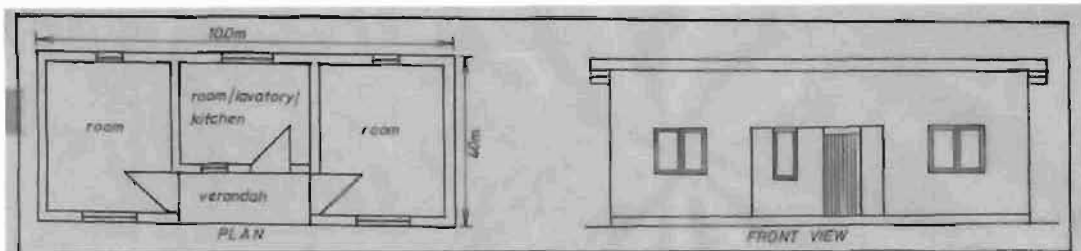
Source: Author, 2000

Furthermore, the site layouts (use of the plot) is based on indoor living (all domestic activities designed to take place under one roof) instead of the traditional outdoor living whereby every space in the yard is assigned an activity. Finally, the house types appear to be getting larger and more complex with the passage of time. While house plans designed in the 1970's were smaller in size and simple in form, plans offered by the SHHA in the 1990s were complicated bungalows and appear to be well beyond the affordability of low-income earners.

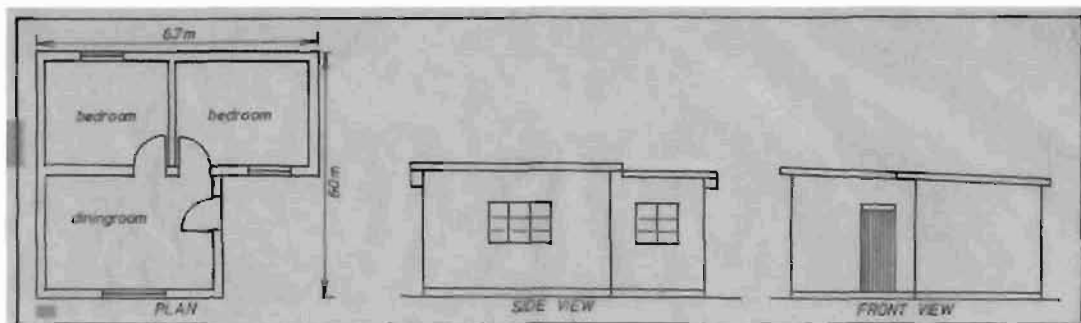
Figure 4.5 SHHA prototype house plans



(a) Floor plan, front and side elevations of a two rooms house plan



(b) Floor plan and front elevation of a two-three rooms house plan



(c) Floor plan, side and front elevations of a two-three rooms house plan

Source: Redrawn from Lobatse SHHA prototype house plans

Figure 4.6 SHHA prototype houses



(a) Two rooms



(b) Two rooms with veranda toilet/shower room



(c) L-shaped

Source: Author, 2000

SHHA officers assist allottees to choose a plan that the officers believe the allottee can afford to build. The poorest were given the prototype house plan with two rooms only (Figure 4.5). Having agreed on the “acceptable” house plan, the allottee formally lodges the application and pays fees for a planning and building permit to the SHHA office. An allottee may submit his/her own plan or work with SHHA office to make a basic drawing of a special plan, which the SHHA office later approves if the plan meets the affordability criteria. SHHA officers regularly visit construction sites to inspect and advise on the siting of buildings on the plot, observation of building lines and general construction work.

According to the Lobatse Principal Housing officer, the above procedures were devised in order to speed up the Planning and Building Permit process so as to enable plot beneficiaries to build quickly as well as to free the responsible committee from tedious work of checking and scrutinising each application. However, as Larsson observes, “most of the houses cannot be regarded as being low-cost houses... None of the house types takes into serious consideration the need for space and arrangement for cooking, whether it is in line with traditional or modern patterns” (Larsson, 1990: p. 123). She concludes that the image of a modern house, that is a house made of modern materials with several rooms (one of which may be labeled “kitchen”), was more important than provision of space and facilities for household duties that were carried out only by women. SHHA reviews (GOB, 1983 and 1992) made similar observations noting that SHHA officers encouraged plot holders to use modern materials.

To provide financial assistance, SHHA granted Building Materials Loans to self-help plot holders. The loans, up to a maximum of P6000 (in 1999) each, were payable over a period of 15 years and carried an annual interest of 9% on outstanding balance. The loans could only be used to purchase materials or obtain materials from SHHA stores. The loans could not be used to pay labourers or builders. The building material loan was given only once to each allottee. To qualify for the loan, the applicant was required (i) to have a signed certificate of right lease; (ii) not be in arrears on service levy; and (iii) to be in possession of an approved house plan. The loan amount was determined according to the affordability criteria -- monthly loan repayments for each loan could not exceed 25% of the combined applicant’s and spouse’s monthly income. Building material loans could also be obtained for improving, expanding or completing a house. This option was mainly utilised by households in upgrading areas.

According to the SHHA review report (GOB, 1992) very few plot holders utilised the building material loan facility. Only a third of self-help plot allottees applied for building material loans. The report attributed the lack of interest to, among others: -

1. Uncertainty and worries about being able to repay the loan
2. Lack of adequate information about the building material loan facility
3. Loans being too small
4. High interest rates charged on the loan
5. Lack of trust in SHHA.

The maximum loan ceiling was recently increased to Pula 20 000 and the interest rate raised to 10%. Although the 10% interest rate is lower than the current premium

charged by commercial banks, defaulting on loans might increase. There have also been demands for building material grants instead of loans, which the government has rejected on grounds of non-sustainability

4.4.4 Accelerated land servicing programme

Between 1990 and 1995, a total of 2409 plots were serviced in Lobatse under the Accelerated Land Service Programme (ALSP) of which 1311 (54%) were reserved for low-income earners and the remainder 1098 (46%) were for middle and high-income groups. ALSP plots are located northeast of BC Thema suburb, north of Woodhall III and part of the now disused airport. By January 2001, of the 1311 low-income plots, 697 (53%) had been allocated individuals. Most of the middle and high-income plots have been allocated to the Botswana Housing Corporation.

With effect from 1992, any citizen is entitled to apply for at least one plot in each township. All applications for medium and high income plots are received and processed by the Department of Lands in Gaborone. Applications for low-income plots are received and processed by SHHA offices in Lobatse for onward transmission to the office of the Department of Lands in Gaborone for issuance of Fixed Period State Grant (FPSG) title. On payment of the stipulated price, the Department of Lands through its computerised Botswana Land Information System (BLIS) generates a duly completed FPSG certificate for signing and registration by the Registrar of Deeds. In effect, the COR has since been discontinued. It is worth noting that all ALSP are title surveyed and fully serviced with reticulated water, sewerage and tarred roads. They are availed to applicants at affordable prices for low income earners, at cost recovery prices for medium income earners and market prices for high income people.

‘Cost recovery price’ has been defined as the price which has been calculated to ensure recovery of all costs related to servicing of land including an economic return on resources, recurrent servicing, maintenance and overhead costs accrued during the project life while ‘affordable price’ was defined as a price that a potential buyer can afford to pay without the benefit of a subsidy. This was calculated as being no more than 25% of the total income for a low-income household (Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing, 1990: 68). In effect, self-help housing plots are no longer availed for free but at a minimal cost to the disadvantage of low-income households the majority of whom are headed by women.

4.5 HOUSING CONDITIONS AND TENURE

Although the majority of residents are indigenous people who have migrated from rural areas close to the township, the proportion of households living in traditional (*lehwapa*) type of houses declined from 12.5% in 1991 to only 1% in 2001 (Table 4.8). The majority of households (53%) live in detached and semi-detached houses or rent rooms in such houses. The ratio of rooming households (that is, several households living independently of each other in one house or homestead, whereby each household rents one or two rooms) has increased from just over a quarter in 1991 to over a third of all households in 2001). Very few households live in shacks and similar forms of substandard houses.

It is worth noting that Table 4.8 does not reveal any significant differences between the type of houses occupied by men and women headed households. Analysis of materials used in house construction by the sex of household heads does not bring out any significant gender differences as well. However, analysis of infrastructure services available to households by sex of heads of households indicates that women headed households have less quality services than men headed households as shown in Table 4.9. Despite improvements in the quality of infrastructure services provided, higher proportions of male-headed households had access to better sanitation, water and lighting services than women headed households. For example in 2001, 40% of men headed households had access to flush toilets compared to 33% among women headed households while almost 39% of men headed households had access to piped water inside their houses compared to 32% among women headed households. Furthermore, a lesser percentage of households headed by women has access to electricity compared to households headed by men (Table 4.9). Factors limiting women's access to better serviced housing are discussed in Section 5.2 below.

Table 4.8 Household heads by sex and type of housing unit in Lobatse (in percent)

	1991			2001		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Traditional (<i>lelwapa</i>)	11.0	15.2	12.5	1.0	1.1	1.1
Mixed (traditional/modern)	-	-	-	3.2	3.9	3.5
Detached/semi-detached	53.0	51.1	52.3	53.3	53.1	53.2
Town house/flat	2.8	2.6	2.7	3.4	2.1	2.8
Part of commercial building	0.3	0.1	0.2	1.2	1.3	1.3
Servant quarters	1.2	3.1	1.9	-	-	-
Rooms	27.4	25.8	26.8	34.7	36.4	35.4
Shack/moveable	4.0	1.6	3.2	2.8	2.2	2.1
Others/not stated	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Computed from data provided by Census Office, Gaborone

According to the 1991 and 2001 housing and population census, the majority (over two thirds) of the households in Lobatse reside in rented accommodation. Most households (about 45%) rent houses or rooms from individual or private landlords (Table 4.10). Households residing in their own houses account for just over a quarter of all households in the township. Because of gender differentiated access (section 5.2), the percentage of households living in their own houses is higher (at 32% in 2001) among women headed households than men headed ones whereas the proportion of men headed households residing houses rented from companies is higher than that of women headed households (Table 4.10). It is also worth noting that the percentage of women who inherited houses is slightly higher than that of men headed households

Table 4.9 Infrastructure services by sex of household head (in percent)

	Facility	1991			2001		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Sanitation	Flash toilet	31.4	20.3	27.3	40.0	33.0	37.0
	Pit latrine	55.5	65.0	59.0	24.2	28.6	26.0
	Ventilated pit latrine	-	-	-	30.1	33.3	31.4
	Neighbours' toilet	-	-	-	2.6	3.2	2.9
	Other/not stated	13.1	14.7	13.7	3.1	1.9	2.7
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Water supply	Within plot	37.8	28.4	34.3	-	-	-
	Piped indoors	-	-	-	38.5	32.1	35.8
	Piped outdoors	-	-	-	23.4	25.7	24.4
	Communal tap	62.2	71.6	65.7	38.0	42.0	39.7
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Source of energy for lighting	Electricity	16.6	10.8	14.5	34.3	30.2	32.6
	Paraffin	55.3	60.4	57.2	42.3	46.8	44.2
	Candle	26.4	27.3	26.7	14.9	13.6	14.3
	Paraffin/candle	-	-	-	7.5	7.6	7.6
	Gas	0.9	1.1	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3
	Others	0.8	0.4	0.6	0.4	1.6	1.0
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Computed from data provided by Census Office, Gaborone

Table 4.10 Tenure of housing unit by sex of household head (in percent)

		1991			2001		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Owner occupied	Purchased	2.8	3.5	3.1	4.9	4.5	4.7
	Inherited	0.9	1.6	1.1	1.9	2.0	1.9
	Self-help	18.7	27.6	22.0	16.8	25.4	20.5
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>22.4</i>	<i>32.7</i>	<i>26.2</i>	<i>23.6</i>	<i>31.9</i>	<i>27.1</i>
Renting from	BHC	5.5	7.8	6.3	5.9	5.8	5.9
	Government	2.2	1.9	2.1	4.1	4.0	4.1
	Council	2.0	2.8	2.3	4.1	5.1	4.5
	Individuals	43.6	43.9	43.7	45.7	44.0	45.0
	Company	14.8	3.5	10.6	10.2	3.7	7.4
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>68.1</i>	<i>59.9</i>	<i>65.0</i>	<i>70.0</i>	<i>62.6</i>	<i>66.9</i>
Undefined tenure	Rent Free	8.9	7.3	8.3	5.8	4.9	5.4
	'Squatting'	0.4	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Other/not stated	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.6	0.6	0.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	

Source: Computed from data provided by Census Office, Gaborone

4.6 SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter has noted that although Lobatse is the second oldest town in Botswana, its growth rate has been relatively slower than rates recorded by towns established after attainment of independence. This may be due to lack of exploitable natural resources (e.g. minerals) and its close proximity to Gaborone, the national

capital. However, the Government has tried to boost the township by servicing land and building residential houses through the Botswana Housing Corporation. The chapter has further noted that the majority of residents in Lobatse were born within the township and its surrounding rural areas.

Finally, the chapter has noted that a) more women than men headed households live in owner-occupied houses - notably self-help housing; b) fewer female heads than male heads live in houses rented from companies; and c) men headed households have access to better quality housing services than their counterparts. Although the differences are not enormous, they are, however, consistent and this has happened in spite of strict observance of 'gender neutral' policies. The next chapter will, among other things, attempt to account for these differences.

CHAPTER 5: GENDERED ACCESS TO HOUSING AND WOMEN'S ROLES IN HOUSING PROCESSES AND CONSTRUCTION IN LOBATSE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses various routes which men and women may take to access rented accommodation in Lobatse. It notes that men are better placed to access employer and institutional housing than women. It further notes that single women are discriminated against by private house owners and landlords. As a result, building one's own house becomes the most viable alternative preferred by women – yet this alternative too is bridled with many problems including lack of building skills and constrained access to land, finance and building materials. The chapter ends by identifying the roles and contributions made by men and women in self-help housing processes in Lobatse.

5.2 GENDERED ACCESS TO RENTED HOUSING

5.2.1 Introduction

This section presents women's and men's narratives on their experiences for getting a room or house to let. It is based on in-depth interviews with key informants and 22 women, 7 men and one couple from various residential areas in Lobatse as earlier discussed in Section 1.6.1. The section examines the procedures and requirements for renting a dwelling unit from (a) the council, as an employer; (b) the Botswana Housing Corporation, as an estate developer; and (c) individual landlords. Because of similarities in terms of access rules and procedures among parastatals and the government, only the Lobatse Town Council's operations were analysed as representative of employer housing.

5.2.2 Access to employer provided housing

Every household living in accommodation provided by a parastatal, company or the government is availed such a facility by virtue of their employment with the respective institution. For example, one cannot be allocated or offered an opportunity to rent a house owned by the Botswana Meat Commission, a private company or central Government unless he/she is employed by the said institution. In this study, Lobatse Town Council is taken as an example of the gendered access to rental housing provided by the employer.

According to the Deputy Town Clerk, Lobatse Town Council has about 216 dwelling units consisting of: -

- a) 3 bedroomed houses with servant quarters: rent P552 per month
- b) 3 bedroomed houses without servant quarters: rent P318-410 per month.
- c) 2 bedroomed houses with servant quarters: rent P357 per month.
- d) 2 bedroomed houses without servant quarters: rent P280 per month

- e) Semi-detached units (1 bedroom, sitting-cum-kitchen and a toilet-cum-shower room): rent P147 (Figure 5.1)

Figure 5.1 Semi detached council houses



(a) Two rooms per household



(b) One room per household

Source: Author, 1996

Over 1000 persons employed by (a) Unified Local Government Service Management who are working for the Lobatse Town Council; and (b) primary school teachers of the Unified Teaching Service Management working for the council compete for the 216 houses owned by the Lobatse Town Council. In considering applications for housing, top priority is given to chief officers of the council, head teachers of council primary schools and expatriates. Houses allocated to senior or junior officers must be commensurate with their status regardless of sex, marital status, household size or any other factor. Such factors are not taken into consideration in prioritising applications and the type of houses to be allocated to employees.

As a result some senior officers without dependants occupy 3-bedroomed houses while junior ranking employees with up to nine dependants occupy 2-bedroomed units. Junior officers with many dependants may only be allocated bigger units when senior officers' housing needs have been satisfied and provided the applicant is willing to pay the requisite rent. Tenancy Agreements, which every person occupying a council house is obliged to sign, stipulate, among other things, that tenants may not sublet the allocated houses and that their tenancy would cease on the day the respective tenant is deceased or disengaged from the employment of the Lobatse Town Council. High ranking council employees pay a maximum rent of P552 a month for the council's high cost houses which may fetch up to P2000 a month on the market. Besides paying below market rents, some employees do not pay for utilities such as water and electricity as narrated below:

" ... My name is Mr. Nthathe⁹. I am 38 years old and single but I live with 2 of my 4 children. This is a central government pool house. I work for the police department here in Lobatse. My salary is P2, 500 a month. I do not pay rent or utility bills. My employer pays for every expense related to this accommodation. Yes, a woman of the same rank as mine would also get similar facilities."

The council may, from time to time, allocate houses to non-council employees under special circumstances such as destitution due to natural disasters (such as floods and fire outbreaks) or deserted women and children provided the council has housing in excess of its staff needs. Deserted wives and children in need of council housing must apply through, and be recommended by, the council's Department of Social and Community Development. Allocations of council houses to non-council employees are temporary, of a fixed period and dependent on council having units. At the time of our survey, all council houses were occupied by its employees.

Several inferences may be made from housing the policies discussed above which are similar to those of other employers. First, they discriminate against those who are unemployed or in self-employment – the majority of whom are women. This is particularly critical given that most employers who provide housing to their employees are parastatals and the government itself. Both – the parastatals and the government - use public funds to build the said houses and hire them out at subsidised rents to their employees. Second, the system may be abused by well-placed married people as the following experience indicates:

"My name is Mr Kgosiemang and this is my wife. We do not have any children as yet. We have just been married. This is a central government pool house allocated to my wife as an employee of Lobatse Senior Secondary School. Before we married, I was staying in a company house, which I surrendered back to my employer. I now receive a housing allowance from my employer. Our combined monthly basic salary is about P6000 for which we pay a monthly rent of P410.00 for this house."

⁹ Actual names of respondents have been changed to protect their identity and maintain confidentiality.

Third, given the fact that relatively fewer women than men occupy top positions in parastatals, private companies and government departments (see Section 4.3), current policies and criteria for accessing employer housing disadvantage women as a group. This then explains why a relatively smaller proportion (about 4% in 2001) of women headed households live in company houses compared to a higher proportion (10%) among men headed households (Table 4.10). The relatively equal proportion of women headed households in council houses may be attributed to the predominance of female employees in health and education sectors. Fourth, large households with low incomes – who are likely to be headed by women (section 4.3) – are not favourably considered. They could, for example, qualify for bigger houses or obtain first priority if allocations criteria based on 'housing need' rather than seniority in terms of employment status are used.

In brief, the current criteria and procedures for accessing employer housing, although couched in terms of 'gender neutrality', indirectly disadvantage women – including self-employed and low income women whose housing needs are greater and more severe than those of most men.

5.2.3 Access to BHC rental houses

The Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) is a state owned company established by an Act of parliament in 1971. The functions of the corporation include the following:-

- (a) Providing for the housing needs of civil servants and the public at large;
- (b) Assisting persons undertaking housing development schemes; and
- (c) Building houses for rental and/or outright sale.

At its inception, the BHC inherited (from the central government) all low, medium and high cost housing estates previously developed and maintained by the Public Works Department in major towns including Lobatse. Until 1996, access to BHC houses was based on first-come-first-served principles. As houses became available, applicants to be allocated houses were picked from the head of a waiting list that each town held and maintained in chronological order. Any corporate body or person irrespective of age, sex, employment or marital status could apply for a low, medium and/or high cost house or flat but could not submit more than one application in each category. To avoid multiple holding, individual or married couples were allowed only one BHC house in each township. They could, however, be allocated a BHC house in a different town.

Although BHC houses appear to be equally accessible to both men and women, in practice, that is not wholly accurate. First, 40% of the houses built or owned by the corporation are allocated, in block, to the government as per Section 4.1 of the Botswana Housing Corporation Act of 1970. In effect, the Government is BHC's principal client. Houses reserved for the Government are allocated to civil servants and parastatal employees according to the criteria and procedures outlined in section 5.2.2 above. This contributes to BHC houses being more readily accessible to men than women. It enabled more men than women to have two ways through which to access BHC houses: as individuals and as senior employees of the government and its agencies.

Second, because a high proportion of women in urban areas are either in self-employment or employed in junior and least remunerated jobs, most women can only afford low cost houses that BHC offers on the market. Women and men "running small businesses refrain from using their companies to access the BHC rental housing for fear of restraining their businesses' financial resources" (Kalabamu, 1998: 62). Without the benefit of state subsidies, monthly rents for low cost BHC houses may be equal to what senior public officers pay for high cost institutional houses.

Third, as noted in Section 4.3, the majority of women are employed by private sector enterprises in the manufacturing and wholesale and retail trades, which do not provide housing for their employees. The only female employees that are normally entitled to housing are domestic workers. Thus, while male headed households reside in spacious and quality BHC houses, female headed households live in least quality single room servant quarters of BHC houses. Unlike the main houses, servant quarters in BHC estates have neither electric power connections nor ceilings, which make them very cold and humid in winter, and extremely hot in summer.

Fourth, according to BHC officers in Lobatse, the majority of their female tenants rent low cost houses because they find medium and high cost housing too expensive. Most women have no housing entitlements and may, therefore, not claim housing allowances or subsidies to offset higher rents.

In the light of the above constraints, placing one's name on the waiting list is the most popular way used by women to access BHC rental houses. The waiting lists are inevitably long and moving up the list is an extremely slow process. A self-employed lady in her mid forties who stays on her mother's plot in Peleng had this to say about accessing a BHC house:

"It is not easy to get a BHC house. I have been on the waiting list for over ten years. I applied for a medium and low cost house and latter a flat. The same thing applies to SHHA plots. I applied for a SHHA plot in 1989 but have not been allocated. The best solution is to buy a plot and build your own house."

The experience of a registered nurse working for a government hospital and staying alone in a two bed roomed BHC house shows how easy it is to get a BHC house once you acquire administrative entitlement. This is her experience:

"I first applied for a BHC house in 1983 when I was first posted to Lobatse as an enrolled nurse. Then I did not have anywhere to stay and commuted daily from Gaborone to Lobatse. At that time I thought that there was a problem with getting BHC houses because the corporation was slow in building new houses. I requested to be transferred to another town but was later re-posted to Lobatse as a registered nurse. This time the situation was quite different. It did not take me long to get this house because pool houses are given on transfer basis. I was transferred from Selibe-Phikwe to Lobatse as a registered nurse and was allocated this house six months after reporting for duty here in Lobatse. My name is still on BHC waiting list because I want to buy a BHC under the tenant

purchase arrangements. I cannot buy this house because Government pool houses may not be bought."

From the foregoing, we note that:-

- Men have several direct and indirect ways of accessing BHC houses while most women have one main route: placing their names on the individual waiting lists and waiting almost for ever.
- Female employees entitled to housing have equal opportunities as their male counterparts. However, the issue is that there are few women in positions high enough to qualify for housing entitlement.

5.2.4 Access to private rental housing

The bulk, over two thirds, of rented dwelling units in Lobatse is supplied by individual landlords mostly in the form of rooms. Women coming to reside in Lobatse for the first time, except senior public employees entitled to housing and those on transfer, said they were initially accommodated by relatives or colleagues until they obtained a job in the formal or informal sector. It was only then that they looked for their own accommodation – usually a room from an individual landlord. The following two experiences are representative of what most women said:

"I was born at Moshupa [a village located about 70 kilometres west of Lobatse] in 1955. My mother was married but she is now staying in South Africa. I was brought up by my uncle's wife. I have never attended school. I am single but have a steady man-friend. I have five children. I am staying with all of them. My man-friend is working as a messenger. I am a hawker and my average monthly income is about P500 ... Before I moved into this house, I rented a room in this location but the room was too small. The owner of this house passed away in January and his parents came to Lobatse to look for a tenant. I told them I was looking for a house so they let it out to me. I am paying P100 for this 2-roomed house. The previous room I was staying in was too small for me and my children... I am not satisfied with the present conditions of this house because – it is dirty inside and the roof leaks heavily during the rainy season."

The experience of the other respondent was as follows: -

"I was born in 1942 at Molopowabojang [a small village west of Lobatse]. My mother was never married and never worked. I completed standard 2. I am a single mother with six children. I am staying with five of them, 7 grandchildren, my mother, and my two sister's children. I came to Lobatse in 1963 and worked as a housemaid for a white. I stayed in his servant quarters. After independence the white man migrated to South Africa then I rented a room in Peleng and sold fat-cakes to secondary school pupils. After four years, I did not want to rent rooms any more. We were crowded. I was staying in one room with my mother and the children. I wanted to be free. I bought a plot with a one-roomed structure for P120 in 1970. I built this 3-roomed house by selling fat-cakes. I was not assisted by anyone when building the house. Now I am old and have no money to complete the other rooms ..."

The above cases highlight several issues. First, due to their relatively low income, self-employed women tend to go for single rooms or cheap houses. The house in the first narrative was built of poor quality bricks; the walls were dirty and neither internally nor externally plastered; and there was neither a toilet nor a water supply point within the plot. Almost all female household heads interviewed that live in houses provided by individual landlords complained of poor structural conditions of their dwelling units. Second, overcrowding is almost inevitable in women-headed households – in the above cases seven people were sharing the two rooms while 15 people were sharing 3 rooms. At the time of the interview, the first respondent was busy preparing lunch outdoors. Third, self-employed female householders get rooms or houses by chance or through relatives of house owners. Fourth, female respondents preferred building their own houses to renting.

Single mothers find it hardest to rent rooms from private landlords as exemplified by the following narrative:

"... I am 45 years old and a widow. I have five children. I live with all of them here. I am renting only two rooms. I pay P200 every month for the two rooms. I completed standard seven. I am a tailor – I get about P400 a month for repairing and sewing clothes for my clients. I had difficulties in getting these rooms. Many people do not like to hire out rooms to women with children. They complain that children will make a lot of noise. Because I have children, I have to clear the yard everyday. I rented many places before this one. Sometimes I stay in a house for two months or less because of the disagreements with the owners. I do not like to move from house to house because it disturbs my children's education and my business. I loose customers every time I move."

Other single women told us that they find it difficult to get rooms because some landlords fear that they will have many male visitors, which may lead to conflicts and fights within the yard, or because wives of landlords are fearful of female tenants going out with their husbands. Such fears were also strongly expressed by women tenants interviewed by Larsson (1990: 80-81) and Datta (1995) in Gaborone. According to Datta (1995:10), women make harsher landlords in terms of rules and regulations than men do; and if tenants do not abide by them, female landlords require the tenants to leave immediately. Furthermore, Datta observes that landlords, especially female ones, want tenants to keep a low profile, listen and take landlords' orders, make no noise as well as keep the yard tidy and the houses clean.

Contrary to the experiences of poor and single mothers, well-to-do women and married women said they did not face any problems in accessing private rental houses. One female interviewee, who lives with her man-friend and their two children, said she was offered the two rooms in Woodhall I within a day's search. The rooms were new and well built. She told us that her man-friend pays P200 for the rooms. Another lady, a secondary school teacher, who earns P3500 a month said she had no problem getting a high cost house in B.C. Thema. Her husband works in a neighbouring country for a salary of about P3600 a month. She pays P1200 a month as rent for the house. In other words, lowly paid single women who can only afford to rent one or two rooms are often denied access to such facilities by private landlords

but well-to-do women and married women living with men are not discriminated against by individual house owners.

In brief, this section has noted that current criteria and procedures for accessing employer housing favour men although women's housing needs are more acute than that of men. Women hardly qualify for employer housing due to their low employment status and when they do, they are allocated smaller houses. For the same reasons, less women than men have access to BHC rental houses. Private landlords too discriminate against single women especially those with children. Consequently, most women prefer building their own houses to renting.

5.3 WOMEN IN THE WAGED HOUSE CONSTRUCTION

This section presents and discusses women's roles in waged house construction processes. Based on interviews of men and women at six construction sites (section 1.6.2), the section further discusses the status of women and factors that hinder or promote women's participation in waged house construction in Lobatse.

5.3.1 Female professionals and technicians

As observed earlier (sections 3.4.5 and 4.3), the construction industry employs very few women in Lobatse and other towns in Botswana. In 2001, women constituted about 5% of the 699 professionals and technicians in the construction industry and its related fields (Table 5.1). At the national level, women accounted for 8% of the 43550 employees in the industry and its related fields. Women's representation is lowest (at 4%) among the tradespersons.

Table 5.1 Lobatse: Population aged 12 years and above by sex and occupation, 2001

Occupation	Men	Women	Total
Architects, Engineers and related Professionals	38 (89%)	4 (11%)	42 (100%)
Physical and Engineering Science Technicians	41 (89%)	5 (11%)	46 (100%)
Building and Construction Trades Workers	562 (96%)	26 (4%)	588 (100%)
Wood Treaters, Furniture Makers etc Trades Workers	21 (91%)	2 (9%)	23 (100%)
Total	662 (95%)	37 (5%)	699 (100%)

Source: Compiled from data provided by Census Office, Gaborone

None of the six construction sites surveyed under this study had a single female engineer or technician. Only one site had 3 painters of whom two were qualified and one was an apprentice. All other women at the sites were clerks of works (2) or labourers (14).

5.3.2 Female labourers

None of the six construction companies surveyed by the author was owned, managed or otherwise controlled by a woman while two of the six companies did not employ a single woman (Table 5.2). Company D, according to the site foreman, did not employ women

as a matter of policy. The foreman for Company F, who had just started work at the site, attributed the lack of female employees to the apparent physically demanding manual work involved in excavating foundation trenches. Of the 700 employees at the six construction sites, only 19 (2.7%) were women. Two of the 19 women were employed as "clerks of works" whose duty was to keep records of employees' work-hours and cash payments due to each. As noted above, two of the women were "qualified" painters while the third one was an apprentice painter. The rest (14) female employees were labourers whose duties were to mix cement mortar and serve bricks to builders (Figure 5.2). Company B had plans to employ 4 to 6 additional female labourers to assist in cleaning the houses before handing them to the client, the Botswana Housing Corporation.

Table 5.2 Male and female employees at house construction sites in Lobatse

Name of Company ¹⁰	Female Employees				Male Employees (as percent of total)	Total male and female
	Clerks	Painters	Labourers	Total		
Company A	1	0	0	1	82 (99%)	83
Company B	0	2	0	2	172 (99%)	174
Company C	1	1	1	3	41 (93%)	44
Company D	0	0	0	0	231 (100%)	231
Company E	0	0	13	13	76 (85%)	89
Company F	0	0	0	0	79 (100%)	79
TOTAL	2	3	14	19	681 (97%)	700

Source: Field Surveys, 1995

Managers in the construction companies attributed the small number and proportion of female builders and employees on the six sites to three main factors. First, they argued that construction work entails physically demanding manual activities that can only be executed properly by men. Women are said to be best at cleaning and at painting. Second, they said there are no skilled women for employment as tradespersons and labourers. Third, they said women did not seek jobs at construction sites. However, a foreman at one of the construction sites said his company employed the 13 female labourers because it could not find men to replace those who had left the company at the end of the previous month. Another foreman admitted having witnessed a similar experience in 1991-2 while working at a construction site in Gaborone. His company had to hire two women (instead of one man) to serve each builder.

¹⁰ Company names withheld to ensure confidentiality.

Figure 5.2 Female labourers at a house construction site in Lobatse



NB The man in a white suit is a clerk of works and not a labourer



Source: Author, 1996

It appears that in 1996-7, Lobatse too was experiencing a shortage of male labourers due to an unusual boom in construction activities. During this period, the Botswana Housing Corporation had contracted six companies to build over 420 houses in the town. As had happened in Gaborone, contractors were literally forced to employ female labourers.

Asked whether women were less efficient and reliable than men were, most contractors and foremen stated that women had more serious attitude towards their work than men. They said that most male workers want payment at the end of each day and absent themselves from duty at the end of the month. Furthermore, they said that women accept criticisms more readily than men and offer fewer implausible excuses for failing to turn up for work. As one clerk of works put it, "Women cause no trouble".

Contractors' views are contradictory, superficial and biased. They say women are better workers than men yet they refuse to employ them. Furthermore, women at the construction sites studied undertook more strenuous work than men. Moreover, if women are so physically weak, why is it that they build traditional houses? Building a cement-block wall requires no more muscular strength than erecting a mud wall. Due to 'modernisation', construction activities are no longer linked to family welfare and reproductive tasks but a major means of acquiring income and accumulating wealth. Indeed, women interviewed at the six construction sites considered themselves to be trespassing in a male field. Most of them, especially the young ones, expressed a strong desire to move out of construction into 'feminine' jobs, such as nursing and sewing - which may be attributed to western influence. Traditions in Botswana require that women build houses and men hunt and take care of livestock. The construction industry has replaced cattle rearing for a considerable proportion of men in Botswana, while building has become a specialised profession to be learnt formally rather than inherited by tradition. In the new economic environment, men have learnt the building skills as a survival strategy to the exclusion of women.

Brief life histories of three women (Mpho¹¹, Shalle and Tinny) narrated below provide a profile of female labourers at house construction sites in Lobatse. This is what Mpho said:

"I am 23 years old. I was born in Moshupa [about 70 kilometres from Lobatse] where I attended my primary school education and Junior Secondary school up to Form III. I am single but I have one child. I have been living in Lobatse for the last 5 years. I do not have a steady boyfriend. I rent a room for P40 a month.

I have been working at this site as a labourer for the last three weeks. Before I started work here, I was a self-employed hairdresser and dressmaker. I decided to look for work here because these days some clients do not pay for services and dresses that I make for them. If they can't pay, I have no money to buy materials for making new dresses. Moreover these days hairdressing is a health risk. Here I get a regular income. Yes, I will go back to dress making if I can get enough money from this job."

Shalle's experience is as follows:

¹¹ Not real names

"I am 17 years old. I completed my Form II education in 1993 in my home village, about 45 kilometres from Lobatse. I have no child but I have a steady boyfriend who works in a local bank. I stay with my sister who rents a house in town. Our father is a builder in Durban, South Africa.

I started working here as a labourer about a week ago because I could not find another job. Construction work is hard because I service builders on top of scaffolding. I have no difficulties working with men – although some of them are as old as my father. We go along well. To me this is a temporary job. I want to go back to school and train as a nurse."

Here is Tinny's experience:

"I am 23 years old. I was born in Shoshong village about 400 kilometres north of Lobatse and went to school in Mahalapye. I dropped out of school (Form I) after I had been involved in a motor vehicle accident. I am not married. I do not have a child or a boyfriend. I usually live in Gaborone but I am now living in Lobatse. I am renting a room at P35 a month. I was first employed by this company in 1991. I was promoted to a clerk of works early this year [1995]. I have had no problem working in a male dominated construction industry although I would like to work as a teller in a shop."

The above life histories indicate that a female labourer in the house construction industry in Lobatse is likely to be a young school drop-out girl in her late teens or early twenties. She is likely to have completed her junior secondary school education (Form II or III) in her home village but could not proceed further. Alternatively, she could have dropped out of school due to pregnancy or other social problems. On arriving in Lobatse, she could have shared a room with a friend, distant relative or an acquaintance from her home village. The search for the desired or appropriate job becomes fruitless as she lacks training, experience and skills. She tries to establish her own business but lack of capital and reliable customers soon prove inhibitive. Alternatively, or later, she falls in 'love' with a boy. The boy, however, abandons her after a couple of months or as soon as she becomes pregnant. Then employment as a labourer at a construction site, when available, becomes the only alternative source of income. She works for the contractor for as long as she cannot train as a nurse or teacher or find employment as a cashier or textile worker. If her hopes are not fulfilled but continues to work diligently for several years, the contractor may promote her to the post of clerk of works or as an apprentice painter or plumber. Despite the overwhelming number of men at the site, she experiences no sexual harassment or discrimination. She likes the male company but not the job, which she deems is tough and unfeminine. The above profile is similar to those of tradeswomen as narrated by Mmasentle Rantshadi (2004) except that the latter do not intend to leave the building trade and would like more women to join them.

In summary, this section has noted that in Lobatse, like elsewhere in Botswana, there are very few women employed in the waged construction industry or house building. The few women employed in the waged house building sector work as labourers. Although managers and supervisors in the industry laud women's attitude towards work, the same people only employ female labourers when there are shortages of male labourers. Women too do not like working as labourers in the construction industry because they think it not a feminine field.

5.4 WOMEN IN SELF-HELP HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

This section presents an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected during the study on emerging gender roles in self-help housing (section 1.6.3). It also borrows data from the study on women's access to housing. While quantitative data is used to indicate the extent and magnitude of various issues and phenomenon, qualitative data highlight the lived experiences of men, women, girls and boys in the self-help housing area of Woodhall, Lobatse Township. Whenever possible, the respondents' views and experiences are contrasted with those of council officers, government policies, traditional norms and previous studies. The section examines and discusses the entire self-help housing process: starting with motivations for building own house, getting the process started, land acquisition, decision making, assembling of building materials, house design, financing, erection of the structure, hiring builders, supervising construction work, catering for builders and, finally, painting and decoration. It is worth mentioning here that although the study sought to analyse gender roles, the roles played by institutions such as SHHA could not be ignored as they kept cropping up.

5.4.1 Motivation and initiation of self-help housing process

According to the 2001 census, the majority (about 76%) of owner-occupied houses in Lobatse were self-help – only 17% were purchased and 7% inherited. A number of factors encouraged residents to want to build their own houses. Most respondents (83%) residing in owner-occupied houses said that they built their own houses because they were tired of renting and/or because they felt overcrowded in rented accommodation. "I did not want to rent any more. I wanted to build my own house where I can stay with my children" was a common expression, especially from female respondents. As noted in section 5.2.4, individual landlords in Lobatse and other towns have very strict rules and regulations that are most unfavourable to women. Other factors cited include expiration of tenancy in employer housing due to loss of job with a particular employer (5%), allocation of plot by SHHA (5%), and unspecified reasons (7%).

As shown in Table 5.3, a slightly higher proportion of male partners (38.5%) than female partners (30.2%) initiated the idea of building their own houses. The idea of building their own house was only jointly initiated in 13.6% of all the cases. The proportion of the cases in which the idea originated from children is the same (at 3.6%) for both sons and daughters. Surprisingly, about 4.1% of the respondents attributed the idea of building their own house to the Self-help Housing Agency (SHHA) and another 6.5% to various members of the household and/or people outside the household. The experience of public institutions (e.g. SHHA) in initiating the idea of building a family house is inconsistent with Tswana culture where it was expected that such decisions be made by wives (section 3.2.1).

Table 5.3 further shows that the proportion of female partners initiating the idea for building their own house was substantial (43% - 47%) among single and cohabiting couples and low (16% - 29%) among married or once married (i.e. separated, divorced or widowed) couples. It is worth noting the role played by children (especially daughters) in single parent (often, unmarried mothers) in initiating the idea

of building their own house was substantial – at 11% to 14%. Furthermore, among single and divorced households the idea of building their own house was attributed to several members of the households rather than one person.

Table 5.3 Who initiated the idea of building own house?

Marital status of respondent	Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters	SHHA	Others ¹²	Total
Single ¹³	13.2%	47.4%	2.6%	5.3%	10.5%	7.9%	13.2%	(38) 100.0%
Cohabiting	21.4%	42.9%	28.6%	7.1%				(14) 100.0%
Married	53.3%	21.7%	15.0%	1.7%		5.0%	3.3%	(60) 100.0%
Separated	66.7%	16.7%		16.7%				(6) 100.0%
Divorced	42.9%	28.6%			14.3%		14.3%	(7) 100.0%
Widowed	40.9%	25.0%	20.5%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	6.8%	(44) 100.0%
All	38.5%	30.2%	13.6%	3.6%	3.6%	4.1%	6.5%	(169) 100.0%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

Contrary to expectations, the Lobatse office of the Self-help Housing Agency (SHHA) initiated the idea of self-help housing among 4% of all the households interviewed.

5.4.2 Acquisition of land for self-help housing

Out of the 169 respondents, 96 (or 57%) said it was the male partner who applied/acquired land for their house while 46 (or 27%) said it was the female partner who did so (Table 5.4). Again male dominance was more evident among cohabiting, married and formerly married couples. For example, out of the 60 married couples surveyed, 41 male partners (68%) applied for or acquired the land compared to 9 (15%) female partners while out of the 14 cohabiting couples, 5 (36%) female partners applied for plots compared to 8 (57%) men (Table 5.4). Note that very few partners (5%) claimed to have acquired land jointly. Also worth noting is the high proportion (almost 24%) of households where land was acquired by persons other than the head in single parent households. These 'other' persons included mainly mothers, male friends and cousins.

Table 5.4 Who applied/obtained the land for your house?

Marital status of respondent	Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters	Other	Total
Single	23.7%	47.4%		2.6%	2.6%	23.7%	(38) 100.0%
Cohabiting	57.1%	35.7%	7.1%				(14) 100.0%
Married	68.1%	15.0%	8.3%			8.3%	(60) 100.0%
Separated	83.3%	16.7%					(6) 100.0%
Divorced	42.9%	57.1%					(7) 100.0%
Widowed	68.2%	20.5%	6.8%	2.3%	2.3%		(44) 100.0%
All	56.8%	27.2%	5.3%	1.2%	1.2%	8.3%	(169) 100.0%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

¹² The term 'others' in these Tables, refers to situations whereby decisions were attributed to several household and family members other than the head and his/her partner.

¹³ 'Partner' in these rows refers to boy friends or girl friends, who do not live together or habitually share houses.

The proportion of women who acquired land was higher (at 37%) in Woodhall than in Peleng where it was 19%. In comparison to initiating the idea of building own house, women were less involved in the acquisition of land. Furthermore, considering that a higher proportion of female headed households reside in owner-occupied and self-help houses (Table 4.10), one expected the majority of people acquiring SHHA land to be women.

Much as the procedures and criteria for acquiring self-help housing land in Lobatse and other towns are 'gender neutral' (section 4.4.3), the majority of women who applied for land in Woodhall were either denied plots or allocated plots through men. This discrepancy may be attributed to a number of factors. First, although employment was neither officially stated nor documented as one of the criteria for acquiring a SHHA plot, it was widely applied in the Woodhall self-help housing schemes. Applicants were required to provide evidence to show that they were employed, which in effect excluded self-employed persons and those working in the informal sector – the majority of whom were women.

A female respondent who was denied a plot because she was not formally employed had this to say during the in-depth interview:

"I initiated the idea of building a house of our own because all the responsibilities in a home rest with the mother. I applied for the plot but SHHA people allocated it to my husband because when you were applying for the plot they would ask if you are working. If you are not working, they would say that you cannot build the house. They would give it to someone who is working. So because my husband was working, they wrote it in his name."

The above respondent was only able to get the plot because she was married. Were she both unemployed and unmarried, she would have failed to acquire the plot. Unemployed single women lost opportunities to access land not because of laid out rules but because eligibility criteria were re-defined during the implementation stage. As noted in section 4.3, unemployment in Lobatse and other urban areas of Botswana is more widespread among women than men.

Second, the minimum income criteria tended to exclude more women than men. The income criterion was a barrier to women's access to land for housing in two ways. Despite government's acknowledgment that SHHA schemes were never intended to cater for households whose incomes are below the minimum statutory wages (GOB, 2000: 17), the income criteria excludes the very poor - especially women who head a substantial proportion of households in Lobatse. In other words, state structures and institutions were systematically ignoring the plight of the poor – the majority of whom were women.

Furthermore, all SHHA plot applicants were required to submit proof of monthly income instead of proof of income per year. To the many women employed as casual workers or engaged in informal and home based businesses, this requirement was extremely difficult to satisfy. Consequently, many women applicants were denied access to land.

Often, income and employment were combined to determine whether the applicant qualified for the allocation of a plot or not. It was assumed that without regular wages people could not build houses. However, as Naledi's experience indicates, given a piece of land unemployed women could build houses. This is how the unemployed Naledi was able to build her house with six bedrooms:

"... My grandmother gave me the plot. The SHHA people gave her the plot and she decided to give it to me. First of all, after getting the plot, I was fetching wood and selling it. After raising some money, I approached a friend who also had a plot, which she wanted to develop. We combined our money together and started buying mealie [maize flour] and making food which we sold to people working on construction projects. So we were raising money like that.

My friends and I were helping each other. We made mortar at one place and carried it to plots using a wheelbarrow. We bought bricks from a man who was making them. We would use the bricks and pay him later. We helped each other. I didn't know how to make concrete bricks. If it was for a mud house, I would do it. The SHHA people did not allow us to build mud houses. If they did not prohibit us, I would have built a mud house.

I did not get any loan from SHHA. For some of the materials, I approached an Indian shopkeeper. The interest on SHHA loan was very high. So I decided not to take any loan from SHHA. The Indian shopkeeper did not charge any interest."

Naledi's experience shows that unemployment does not prevent people from building houses on a self-help basis. Unemployed people such as Naledi use their time and energy to raise funds and do great things for themselves. They, therefore, need not to be denied plots for housing. Second, Naledi's experience shows that to succeed one needs a combination of strategies and skills – how to acquire free or low interest loans, how to utilise household labour, mutual assistance, trust and how to pool resources together. In a society where extended family networks are very strong and capable of raising the necessary finance, the 'head's minimum income criterion' is unwarranted.

The third strategy used to deny women access to land for self-help housing was marital status. Being single or married was a constraint for female applicants wanting to acquire SHHA plots – especially in Woodhall. Married women had 'their' plots registered in their male partners' names as narrated below by one female applicant:

"... Before building this house we stayed in a BMC [Botswana Meat Commission] house because my husband was employed by the company. I talked to my husband about building a house of our own. I knew that the BMC house was not ours and we would be forced to move out when my husband stops working for the company. I knew that by the time he is not working, we will suffer. I applied for the plot in my name but later it was changed to my husband's name because he is the head of the household".

Masego too had her plot registered in her cohabiting partner's name simply because they then happened to be living together. The man later deserted her. She continues to reside on the plot, which, legally speaking, does not belong to her. This is her story:

"I was staying at Maipei where I had bought a plot with one traditional house. After buying the plot I built two additional houses – one for sleeping and another one for business. I was brewing traditional beer for sale. While staying at Maipei, I met a man who wanted to marry me. He asked me to join him here in Woodhall and the plot was registered in his name. He later dumped me and left. He does not want to come back to me. Yes, the plot belongs to my ex-partner. He is willing to transfer the plot to me or the children but he keeps disappearing. I intend to get a letter authorising the transfer from the Kgosi [Chief]. Maybe, the council will authorise the transfer...".

The above narrations constitute evidence that SHHA officers were re-making policy by redefining eligibility criteria. None of the SHHA regulations for allocation or 'registration' of land stipulated that plots for married or cohabiting couples must be registered in the names of the male partners. Unemployment was a criterion for disqualifying a person from obtaining a self-help plot.

To access SHHA plots a number of single and unemployed women who were disqualified by the redefinition of the criteria for allocation of land, had to use other means to acquire plots. They presented male acquaintances as 'husbands' to SHHA officers who then allocated and registered the land in the names of the so-called husbands. Later, the women developed the plots. It appears that the so-called husbands were not required to submit proofs of their incomes, employment and marital status.

According to SHHA officers, some women who faked marriages and presented so-called 'husbands' and/or had land registered in the names of male acquaintances have since indicated their desire to have plots re-registered in their own names. Some women have since learned that the men with whom they were cohabiting were actually married to women who were living in rural areas. Some of the 'real wives' were claiming the properties. Some male acquaintances have since disappeared leaving the women stranded as narrated by Masego above.

The tendency to register SHHA plots in the names of men may be attributed to men's desire to protect and preserve Tswana culture of male supremacy in land ownership. It is worth remembering that traditional Tswana practices allocated land rights to men only although women built and 'owned' the houses thereon (section 3.2.2). The pre-1996 Deeds Registry Act provisions that required all land titles to be registered in the names of husbands, may also have contributed to the tendency by SHHA officers to register land for married or cohabiting couples in the names of male partners. As noted in section 3.4.2, land boards are also unwilling to allocate plots to married women.

Whatever justification one makes, it is evident that patriarchal structures re-defined gender-neutral procedures and criteria for accessing land for self-help housing to preserve men's interests. Consequently, unemployed, self-employed and low income

women were denied access to land while married women were denied control of the land which they had taken trouble to acquire. The most disadvantaged groups were cohabiting women, single women and unemployed or self-employed women. In effect, the fake husbands held the rights to the land which made women's land rights insecure. The men could claim their land rights anytime as there was no written transfer, lease or use agreements. Women, such as Masego, were and still are very vulnerable. Nimpuno-Parente (1987) observes similar exclusion of women on the basis of lack of formal employment and regular incomes from accessing sites-and-services plots in the Nairobi Dandora project

5.4.3 Decision-making in self-help housing

5.4.3.1 Making final decision to build own house

As shown in Table 5.5, the proportion (43%) of male partners who made the final decision to build their own houses is lower than those who acquired the land but higher than those who initiated the self-help housing process (Tables 5.3 - 5.4). The proportion of 22% for female partners who made final decision to build their own houses is lower than those for acquiring land (27% in Table 5.4) and initiating the idea of building their own houses (30% in Table 5.3). According to Table 5.5, a relatively high proportion of partners co-operated when making final decisions to build their own houses. At 18%, the co-operation was higher than for initiating the idea to build their own house and acquiring the land, which were 14% and 5% respectively. In about 7% of the cases, various members of the households made the final decision. Again, surprisingly, the final decision to build own house was made by SHHA in 3% of all the cases. In Woodhall, 5% of the respondents attributed their decision to build their houses to SHHA.

Table 5.5 Who made the final decision that you should build own house?

Marital status of respondent	Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters	SHHA	Other	Total
Single	10.5%	47.4%	2.6%	5.3%	10.5%	7.9%	15.8%	(38) 100.0%
Cohabiting	50.0%	35.7%	7.1%	7.1%				(14) 100.0%
Married	61.7%	11.5%	20.0%			3.3%	3.3%	(60) 100.0%
Separated	66.7%	16.7%		16.7%				(6) 100.0%
Divorced	42.9%	28.6%			14.3%		14.3%	(7) 100.0%
Widowed	40.9%	9.1%	38.6%	2.3%	2.3%		6.8%	(44) 100.0%
All	43.2%	21.9%	18.3%	3.0%	3.6%	3.0%	7.1%	(169) 100.0%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

The proportion of male partners who made the final decision in Woodhall was marginally higher (at 44%) than in Peleng where it was 42% - again underlining the higher male dominance in the latter area. However, a higher proportion of female partners (28%) in Woodhall made the final decisions compared to 17% in Peleng. Co-operation between partners was higher (23%) in Peleng than in Woodhall (13%).

The relatively high proportion of women decision makers with regard to final decision to build own house may be a reflection of the fact that a substantial proportion of men who acquired land had no intention of building houses. They fronted on behalf of women. As noted in Section 6.3, this was part of a strategy employed by women at an inter-personal level to negotiate with state structures.

A study carried out by Tawengwa (1998: 37-39) in the village of Serowe, Central Botswana, revealed that, in women headed household, mothers accounted for 35% for the final decision to build their own houses while sons, daughters and male partners accounted for 27%, 15% and 8% respectively. In men headed households, male partners accounted for 47%, mothers 18%, sons 24% and daughters zero percent. Decisions made jointly by both partners accounted for, respectively, 12% and 15% in men and women headed households. From her findings, Tawengwa notes that decision making in men headed households was a "male dominated phenomenon to the extent that daughters were completely left out ... Wherever there were men, they made the final decisions" (Tawengwa, 1998: 39).

5.4.3.2 Making decisions on house sizes and designs

As shown in Table 5.6, at 29%, the proportion of female partners who decided on the size of the houses in the study area is almost equal to that of male partners, which is 31%. A small proportion of partners (11%) co-operated in deciding the size of their houses. It is worth noting that a high proportion of decisions (12%) were made by SHHA on behalf of the households. The proportion of decisions made by SHHA is highest (at 18%) in single parent households – most of which are female headed. A comparison between married and cohabiting couples shows that the proportion of female partners who decided on house sizes was higher (36%) among cohabiting couples than married or once married couples (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6 Who decided on the size of the house?

Marital status of respondent	Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters	SHHA	Other/s of stated	Total
Single	13.2%	34.2%	2.6%	5.3%	13.2%	18.4%	13.2%	(38) 100.0%
Cohabiting	28.6%	35.7%	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%	14.3%		(14) 100.0%
Married	36.7%	26.7%	16.7%	1.7%		15.0%	3.3%	(60) 100.0%
Separated	66.7%	16.7%		16.7%				(6) 100.0%
Divorced	42.9%	28.6%			14.3%		14.3%	(7) 100.0%
Widowed	31.8%	27.3%	15.9%	4.5%	2.3%	6.8%	11.4%	(44) 100.0%
All	30.8%	29.0%	11.2%	4.1%	4.7%	12.4%	7.7%	(169) 100.0%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

Almost a quarter of the respondents in Woodhall attributed decisions on their house sizes to SHHA (Table 5.7). During the in-depth interviews, respondents from Woodhall claimed that the house designs and sizes were literally forced on them by SHHA officers. They claimed that they were forced to use house plans prepared by SHHA and later asked to pay Pula 2 – whether they used the plans or not.

Table 5.7 Decision Making on House Size by Location

Location		Who decided on the size of the house?					Total	
		Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons and Daughters	SHHA		Other
Peleng	Count	32	23	14	9	2	10	90
	%	35.6%	25.6%	15.6%	10.0%	2.2%	11.1%	100%
Woodhall	Count	20	26	5	6	19	3	79
	%	25.3%	32.9%	6.3%	7.6%	24.1%	3.8%	100%
Total	Count	52	49	19	15	21	13	169
	%	30.8%	29.0%	11.2%	8.8%	12.4%	7.7%	100%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

Out of the 169 households interviewed, almost 30% said their house designs were decided upon by male partners, 27% by female partners and 20% by SHHA (Table 5.8). These proportions are similar to decisions on house sizes - indicating a relatively lower profile of male partners (in comparison with land acquisition, for example) and increased involvement of SHHA in decision-making. In Woodhall, about 30% of the house designs were decided upon by SHHA. That is, in government initiated self-help housing, decisions on house sizes and designs were largely influenced by state structures and institutions.

Table 5.8 Who decided on the design of the house?

Marital status of respondent	Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters	SHHA	Other/not stated	Total
Single	7.9%	42.1%	2.6%	7.9%	10.5%	21.1%	7.9%	(38) 100.0%
Cohabiting	35.7%	28.6%	7.1%		7.1%	21.4%		(14) 100.0%
Married	36.7%	23.3%	8.3%	1.7%	1.7%	25.0%	3.3%	(60) 100.0%
Separated	50.0%	16.7%		16.7%		16.7%		(6) 100.0%
Divorced	28.6%	14.3%			14.3%	14.3%	28.6%	(7) 100.0%
Widowed	34.1%	20.5%	13.6%	4.5%	2.3%	13.6%	13.6%	(44) 100.0%
All	29.6%	26.6%	7.7%	4.1%	4.1%	20.1%	7.7%	(169) 100.0%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

According to SHHA officers in Lobatse, the final decisions on house sizes were determined on the basis of beneficiaries' income (and, therefore, affordability). The overwhelming majority of decisions on house sizes and designs made by plot-holders in Woodhall and parts of Peleng was restricted to choosing one of the prototypes offered by SHHA office as indicated by experiences of the following three respondents:-

1. "... We obtained the plan from SHHA then we changed it. We made two rooms instead of the bathroom and toilet and made bigger rooms, because SHHA measurements are very small. We first built this house for our accommodation. Then we built more rooms outside for renting".
2. "... At first the SHHA people gave me the plan but I did not like it. I did not like the way the house was designed. There was no front or back yard. You had to enter the house from the sides. There must be a place where you enter the house. We told the SHHA people that, that was not a good plan. So I decided to make my own plan. I wanted a front so that when a person is coming inside to the house she knows where to go instead of going to the back of the house not knowing which door she should use. I like the plan. The house has six rooms".
3. "... I was given the plot by the SHHA people. I bought the house plan from other people and not SHHA. I paid two hundred and fifty Pula for the plan. I didn't like SHHA plans because the measurements for rooms are very small. I wanted open rooms so that I can have enough space for cooking, furniture and also for sleeping nicely."

The above excerpts show that while SHHA officers' were pre-occupied with quality and affordability issues as determined by house sizes and design relative to household income, beneficiaries were more interested in building houses with many large rooms.

Often the spaces labelled 'kitchen' and/or bathrooms on house plans offered by SHHA were seen as just rooms which some households converted to bedrooms and erected outdoor bathrooms and kitchens. Room sizes in house plans offered by SHHA were considered too small to adequately accommodate household items, furniture and domestic activities.

Plot owners, such as Naledi whose experience was narrated earlier, did not appreciate SHHA plans because the plans disregarded cultural requirements and individual household needs. Contrasting SHHA house plans with traditional Tswana homesteads, she criticised the former for being unambiguous on frontage compared to the latter where gates on the fence are always aligned with entrances to various structures in the compound (*lelwapa*) as detailed in Larsson and Larsson (1984). Some respondents did not like the flat roofs in SHHA house plans, which they changed to pitched roofs. The latter roofs are similar to the traditional conical roof in Tswana housing.

Some of the households interviewed said they wanted to build traditional houses because they are cheaper to erect. They said that they preferred grass thatch to metal roofs. "I would like to build a traditional house here [in Lobatse] because this one [with metal roof] is making a lot of noise when it rains. The traditional house does not make any noise," said one female respondent. However, SHHA officers did not allow plot-holders to use mud and/or grass. According to van Nostrand (1982) a great variety of houses were observed in Old Naledi, Gaborone, before it was upgraded in 1978-1982. In Old Naledi, "[m]any houses were modelled after the traditional village, lands and even cattle post shelters. Single women, for example, would build a lands-type house ... Most of the traditional and modern houses were grouped around an open courtyard or walled *lelwapa*. Moreover, most people could tell you exactly how much their house had cost to build" (van Nostrand, 1982: 29).

According to the SHHA Principal Housing Officer in Lobatse, the agency allows residents to build or use traditional materials but applicants fail to submit proper plans and/or to indicate how they will obtain the materials. This is how he put it: -

"... When a resident wants to build a house using traditional materials, we ask him to tell us the type of materials he wants to use. Then he says mud and grass. We ask him where he will get the materials. He says around the plot. We tell him but that is not his plot, so he is not allowed to excavate there. Then he says somewhere in the town. We tell him that he cannot do that either because that too is not his land. At the end he sees that it is not possible to obtain traditional materials in town. Grass is also very expensive. From this analysis and experience, it emerged that acquisition of traditional building materials was difficult and costly".

The above questioning is deliberately designed to discourage rather than encourage prospective traditional house builders. On the contrary, prospective modern house builders are not subjected to similar questioning.

The reluctance to permit use of traditional materials is based on two main factors. First, mud and grass are considered a health and safety risk in times of heavy rains and fire outbreaks. This view is implicit in the latest national policy which calls for

housing standards to "be reviewed in order to facilitate development of affordable housing and the use of durable local building materials without sacrificing health, safety and other quality requirements" (GOB, 2000:16). The Government of Botswana defines 'affordable housing' as that level of rent, mortgage or any other form of payment that a potential house developer, buyer or tenant can afford without the benefit of a subsidy (GOB, 1985:105). Second, according to a senior officer in the Department of Housing, urban planners in the country 'do not want to plan for slums'. Traditional housing or 'low cost mud and thatch' houses are equated to slums.

The single most important observation from the foregoing presentation is that, unlike in the past, decision-making in self-help housing schemes in Lobatse was generally dominated by men and state structures – notably SHHA although women initiated the idea of building their own houses.

5.4.3.3 Making decisions on other properties

An attempt was made to compare decision-making in self-help housing to other critical resources. Consequently, respondents were asked to identify the principal person that usually makes decisions on the purchase of cattle/car, and household furniture. Traditionally, cattle were located in the public sphere of men while furniture or household items were located in the domestic sphere of women. Purchase of cars was introduced to capture households that may not have cattle. It was further assumed that cars in Lobatse largely belong to the sphere of men.

As expected male partners in the study area hardly made decisions on the type and purchase of furniture and household goods (Table 5.9). Such decisions were either taken by female partners (36%) or by various members of the households – 27% of all the households interviewed. A relatively substantial proportion of households (15%) said decision on type and purchase of furniture were made by both partners. As revealed in other studies (e.g. Gwagwa, 1998), daughters participated more often than sons in matters relating to furniture and household items. Table 5.9 shows that daughters decided on type and buying of furniture in 10% of all cases and 18% in single (mostly female headed) households.

Table 5.9 Who decides on type and purchase of furniture and household items?

Marital status of respondent	Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters	Others	Total
Single	7.9%	31.6%		5.3%	18.4%	36.8%	(38) 100.0%
Cohabiting		57.1%	21.4%		7.1%	14.3%	(14) 100.0%
Married	5.0%	38.3%	23.3%	3.3%	6.7%	23.3%	(60) 100.0%
Separated		50.0%	16.7%	16.7%		16.7%	(6) 100.0%
Divorced	14.3%	28.6%		14.3%		42.9%	(7) 100.0%
Widowed	9.1%	27.3%	18.2%	6.8%	11.4%	27.3%	(44) 100.0%
All	6.5%	35.5%	15.4%	5.3%	10.1%	27.2%	(169) 100.0%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

Out of 102 households that had bought cattle/cars, 47 (46%) said the decision to buy cattle/car was made by the male partner while only 18 (18%) said the decision was made by the female partner. About 16% of the households said the decision was made by both partners (Table 5.10). The total number of single, cohabiting, separated and widowed households in Table 5.10 is too small for one to draw meaningful

conclusions. That such households have neither cattle nor cars may be a reflection of their poverty.

Table 5.10 Who decided on type and purchase of household car and/or cattle?

Marital status of respondent	Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters	Others	Total
Single	15.2%	30.8%	7.7%	15.3%	7.7%	23.1%	(13) 100.0%
Cohabiting	10.0%	30.0%	40.0%	20.0%			(10) 100.0%
Married	65.1%	9.3%	23.3%			2.3%	(43) 100.0%
Separated	66.7%					33.3%	(3) 100.0%
Divorced	75.0%				25.0		(4) 100.0%
Widowed	37.9%	24.1%	3.4%	17.2%	10.3%	6.9%	(29) 100.0%
All	46.1%	17.6%	15.7%	8.8%	4.9%	6.9%	(102) 100.0%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

The above comparison show that the proportion of male partners who made decisions on purchase of cattle/cars was about the same as that reported for the design and size of houses and lower for household furniture. This is consistent with Larsson's observation that self-help housing has been transferred from the domestic to the public sphere and accorded the same status as cattle.

5.4.4 Physical participation in self-help housing

5.4.4.1 House construction

Contrary to traditional practices, many households in Peleng and Woodhall relied on hired labour to build their houses. Out of the 169 households interviewed, 41 households (24%) used hired labour exclusively to build their houses – that is, none of the respective household members actually participated in the house building process. These findings are consistent with those by Setimela (1984) and Tawengwa (1998). According to Setimela (1984) only 12% of the residents interviewed in Peleng had built their own houses, while the majority of residents (82%) had hired contractors to build houses for them and the rest (6%) had their houses built by previous owners. According to Tawengwa (1998: 44), 91% of her respondents hired men to build their houses.

Of the remaining 128 households (out of 169) which had both hired and household members physically participating in house construction, 40% were built by hired men and male household members, 25% by hired men and female household members and 31% by hired men and both male and female household members as shown in Table 5.11. Female participation rates were highest (42%) among single households where women were, in most cases, household heads while male participation rates were highest (55%) in cohabiting relationships followed by widowed (47%) and married (42%) relationships. Surprisingly, both sexes co-operated more often in divorced/separated households.

Participation of household members in own house construction in Woodhall and Peleng was almost entirely limited to unskilled labour input such as making concrete blocks, watering the blocks, mixing and serving sand-cement mortar, passing bricks and general manual work. Unless the male partner or son was a trained builder, most households - whether male or female headed - hired skilled artisans to build, roof, plaster and paint houses for them. All the hired builders were men. The study by

Tawengwa (1998:44) also revealed that regardless of sex of the household head, all the hired skilled and unskilled labourers were male.

Table 5.11 Physical Participation in self-help houses by marital status of household head and sex of household members (percentage)

Marital Status of Household Head	Who, among your household members, participated in the actual construction of the house?				Total
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Not stated	
Single	29	42	23	6	(31) ¹⁴ 100
Cohabiting	55	18	27		(11) 100
Married	42	19	35	4	(48) 100
Separated/ Divorced	17	17	67		(6) 100
Widowed	47	22	28	3	(32) 100
Total	40	25	31	3	(128) 100

Source: Field surveys, 1999

During the in-depth interviews, some female respondents claimed to have built houses in New Look 'squatter area' before they were relocated to Woodhall sites and services project as narrated below by one of such respondents:

"... I was staying at New Look in my own house. I built the house on my own - I bought stock bricks and used mud to raise the wall. Then I put corrugated iron sheets on top and tied them to wall using wires. I did not use nails. It was a temporary house because we were told that the government was going to relocate us. I built the house because I did not want to rent. I had no money for renting".

This suggests that had SHHA permitted ploholders to use their 'skills' and ingenuity, some house owners would have built their own houses without the services of 'skilled' builders as had happened in Old Naledi before 1978.

5.4.4.2 Making final finishes

Final finishes are here defined to include fixing door and windowpanes, painting, cleaning and tidying up. Of the 169 households interviewed, 133 (or 79%) said some household members had physically participated in carrying out some final touches. Of the 133 households, 31 (23%) said only male partners took part in final finishes, 25 (19%) female partners only and 11 (8%) said both spouses were involved (Table

¹⁴ Figures in brackets indicate total frequency (count)

5.12). Contrary to traditional practices, more boys than girls took part in painting, cleaning and tidying up of houses. Such tasks were traditionally assigned to girls. Boy's involvement in final finishes was more pronounced in Woodhall than in the Peleng. In Woodhall participation by sons was recorded at 32% of all households compared to 7% for girls (Table 5.12). However, in Peleng daughters (at 17%) were more active than sons (at 13%). Furthermore, while the proportions of male and female partners in carrying out final touches were recorded at 18% in Peleng, there were marked differences in Woodhall where it was 30% for male partners and 19% for female partners. These differences indicate the existent of more persistent traditional gender relations in Peleng than in Woodhall.

Table 5.12 Participation in final finishes

Location		Who participated in final finishes (painting, cleaning and tidying up)?					Various members of the household and/or other relatives	Total
		Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters		
Peleng	Count	14	14	8	10	13	17	76
	%	18%	18%	11%	13%	17%	23%	100%
Woodhall	Count	17	11	3	18	4	4	57
	%	30%	19%	5%	32%	7%	7%	100%
Total	Count	31	25	11	28	17	21	133
	%	23%	19%	8%	21%	13%	16%	100%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

5.4.4.3 Supervision, payment and catering for builders

In almost half the household interviewed, female partners alone supervised builders and other persons hired to construct the houses (Table 5.13). No other category of household membership was as involved in the supervision of hired labour as female partners. There were no marked differences between Peleng and Woodhall.

Table 5.13 Supervision of hired labour

Location		Who supervised builders, painters and other workers hired to build your house?					Various members of the household and/or other relatives	Total
		Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters		
Peleng	Count	15	41	5	7	5	15	88
	%	17%	47%	6%	8%	6%	17%	100%
Woodhall	Count	9	39	6	4	5	16	79
	%	11%	49%	7%	5%	6%	20%	100%
Total	Count	24	80	11	11	10	31	167
	%	14%	48%	7%	7%	6%	19%	100%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

Besides supervising hired builders and labourers, female partners were also overwhelmingly involved in actual payment of workers. Female partners accounted for just over one-third of all the cases in Peleng and Woodhall, while male partners accounted for a quarter (Table 5.14). Again, there were no marked differences between Peleng and Woodhall except that there were more cases of both spouses actually paying the builders in Woodhall (18%) than in Peleng (10%).

Table 5.14 Paying hired builders

Location	Who actually paid builders, painters and other workers hired to construct the house?						Total	
	Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters	Various members of the household and/or other relatives		
Peleng	Count	24	32	9	7	8	10	90
	%	27%	36%	10%	8%	9%	11%	100%
Woodhall	Count	19	28	14	2	7	9	79
	%	24%	35%	18%	3%	9%	11%	100%
Total	Count	43	60	23	9	15	19	169
	%	25%	36%	14%	5%	9%	11%	100%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

As expected, it was women of the household (female partners and daughters) who catered¹⁵ for builders. Female partners alone accounted for 48% in Peleng and 65% in Woodhall while daughters accounted for 14% and 16% in Peleng and Woodhall respectively (Table 5.15). Male partners and sons hardly catered for builders – presumably because they themselves were builders. This could as well have been due to traditional attitudes that associate cooking and similar domestic activities solely with women.

Table 5.15 Catering for house builders

Location	Who catered for builders, painters and other workers during the construction of the house?						Total	
	Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons	Daughters	Various members of the household and /or other relatives		
Peleng	Count	3	42	3	2	14	23	87
	%	4%	48%	3%	2%	16%	27%	100%
Woodhall	Count	1	51	1	1	11	14	79
	%	1%	65%	1%	1%	14%	18%	100%
Total	Count	4	93	4	3	25	37	166
	%	2%	56%	2%	2%	15%	23%	100%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

The foregoing presentation and discussion on men's and women's physical participation in self-help housing in Lobatse reveals several outstanding features. First, and contrary to strongly held beliefs on self-help housing, it shows that most households did not depend on their own household labour for the construction of their houses. The majority hired builders to do the work for them. Household labour was used to perform simple tasks such as moulding and watering concrete bricks, digging foundations and mixing concrete. Second, contrary to traditional Tswana practices, women were seldom engaged in house building tasks. Third, although women have lost their position as home builders, they have retained their role as caterers of house builders and taken on new roles of managing and supervising home construction works as well as serving as paymasters.

¹⁵ Catering for builders means cooking and serving meals, tea, water etc to hired workers and household members during the houses construction period.

5.4.5 Financing self-help houses

5.4.5.1 Sources of funds for purchase of building materials

Money for buying building materials largely (37%) came from various household members (Table 5.16) although male partners alone financed 25% of the houses in Peleng and Woodhall – compared to 8% for women alone. Money came from both spouses in 24% of the cases interviewed while children alone (sons and daughters) provided funds for buying materials for 5% of the houses. As shown in Table 5.16, there were no marked differences in the sources of funds between Peleng and Woodhall.

That male partners provide most of the funds for buying building materials is not surprising because, as noted in section 4.3, poverty and unemployment are more widespread among urban women than men. Furthermore, 71% of the female heads of households in our sample were unemployed compared to 48% of the male heads of households that were said to be unemployed. In our sample, unemployment was more common among female youths than male youths. Of the 135 households with adult female children, 45% said all the female children were unemployed, 9% were self-employed while 44% were in paid employment. On the other hand, 121 households reported having adult male children of whom 40% were unemployed, 51% in paid employment, and 7% self-employed.

Table 5.16 Sources of funds for Purchase of Building Materials

Location		Who contributed funds for purchase of building materials?					Total
		Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons and Daughters	Various members of the household and/or other people	
Peleng	Count	23	5	22	6	34	90
	%	25%	6%	24%	7%	38%	100%
Woodhall	Count	20	9	18	3	29	79
	%	25%	11%	23%	4%	37%	100%
Total	Count	43	14	40	9	63	169
	%	25%	8%	24%	5%	37%	99%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

Consequently, as shown in Table 5.17, the major financiers in men headed households were male partners (43%) followed by both partners (31%). In women headed households, male partners accounted for 9% of financiers, female partners 18% and both partners 16% - the major financiers being a combination of various household members, relatives and friends, a category that accounted for 52% in women headed households compared to 21% in men headed households (Table 5.17). It worth noting that, out of the 84 men headed households, only 1 female partner (1%) was a major source of funds for buying building materials compared to 6 (9%) male partners out of the 68 women headed households.

Table 5.17 Source of funds for buying building Materials by headship¹⁶

Household head		Who contributed funds for purchase of building materials?					Total
		Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons and Daughters	Other	
Male	Count	36	1	26	3	18	84
	%	43%	1%	31%	4%	21%	100%
Female	Count	6	12	11	4	35	68
	%	9%	18%	16%	6%	52%	100%
Total	Count	42	14	40	9	63	169
	%	28%	8%	24%	5%	35%	100%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

5.4.5.2 Sources of funds for paying builders and labourers

Similar to provision of funds for buying building materials, male partners were generally responsible for providing funds payments for builders. In both Peleng and Woodhall, male partners accounted for 32% of financiers, female partners 15%, both partners 17%, children 8%, and others 28% (Table 5.18) indicating that male partners were less dominant than in financing building materials. In fact, the proportion (21%) of female partners that funded builders in Woodhall was closer to that of male partners (29%). As will be seen in the next section, 'unemployed' female partners devised several strategies for earning money to pay builders.

Table 5.18 Funding Payment of Hired Labour

Location		Who contributed funds for payment of hired builders, painters, etc.?					Total
		Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons and Daughters	Various members of the household and/or other people	
Peleng	Count	31	9	15	9	26	90
	%	34%	10%	17%	10%	29%	100%
Woodhall	Count	23	16	14	4	21	79
	%	29%	21%	18%	5%	27%	100%
Total	Count	54	25	29	13	47	169
	%	32%	15%	17%	8%	28%	100%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

5.4.5.3 Borrowing money and building materials

Despite the availability of Building Material Loans (BML) facility operated by the Lobatse SHHA office, over two-thirds of the households in both Peleng and Woodhall did not utilise this facility. Respondents who declined building material loans often cited high interest rates charged by SHHA as the main constraint. Out of the 58 households that borrowed building materials or money, the major borrowers were male partners (43%), followed by female partners (31%), and both partners at 12% (Table 5.19). However, in Peleng a considerable proportion (21%) of the borrowers were sons and daughters indicating a high dependence on children in the area. It is worth noting the absence of others in Table 5.19, which shows that borrowing money is an individual person's responsibility - various members of the household do not share it.

¹⁶ Excludes child-headed households

Table 5.19 Borrowing to Self-help Housing

Location		Who borrowed money buying building materials, paying artisans etc.?				Total
		Male partner	Female partner	Both partners	Sons and Daughters	
Peleng	Count	11	7	4	6	28
	%	39%	25%	14%	22%	100%
Woodhall	Count	14	11	3	2	30
	%	46%	37%	10%	7%	100%
Total	Count	25	18	7	8	58
	%	43 %	31%	12%	14%	100%

Source: Field surveys, 1999

This section has noted that the overwhelming majority (more than two-thirds) of self-help houses in Peleng and Woodhall were built with funds contributed by various members of the respective households. Only a small proportion (25%) of houses was financed by male partners alone. Excepting in women headed households, women's financial contribution was often minimal mainly because the majority of women were unemployed. Very few households borrowed money – in material or liquid form – to finance their house building activities.

5.5 GENDER ROLES IN SELF-HELP HOUSING

As noted in the preceding sections of this chapter, and contrary to traditional practices and experiences, women in Woodhall and Lobatse in general did not physically participate in the erection of their own houses. However, further probing revealed that women did participate in other activities in the housing delivery processes. The extent and nature of women's participation in the process appear to have been influenced by marital, income and employment status as discussed below.

5.5.1 Married Women motivated husbands to build houses

Almost all the married female respondents demonstrated a great deal of pride in having initiated the idea of building own houses to the extent that some felt that, without their inspiration, their husbands would never have built the houses. As captured in the quotations below, women's drive for self-help houses arose out of their concern for children's present and future accommodation.

- *"This plot belongs to my husband and he was allocated the plot before we got married. He built two rooms before he married me. After marriage we extended the house from two to four rooms. We extended the house because we wanted accommodation for the children so we built a larger house. I encouraged him to extend the house. Men do not know how to use money wisely. If you see that the man is not using the money properly, then you encourage him by doing other things so that he can think that this woman is really doing well. If he gives you say P200 you use it carefully so that he thinks that my wife is very clever she knows how to use the money rather than demanding more money."*

- *“I encouraged my husband to build the house because I was tired of renting and wanted proper accommodation for children. At that time, the children were studying and had no permanent place to stay”.*

By carefully spending whatever little funds they received from their husbands, women encouraged their partners to save money for investing into housing. They also argued that, in the long run, paying rent was more costly than building their own houses.

5.5.2 Self-employed married women contributed ideas, money and labour

Besides encouraging men to invest savings into self-help housing, married but unemployed women tried to raise money to complement their husbands’ incomes. Most unemployed partners raised money through home-based businesses such as sale of traditional beer and chibuku or running tuck shops. Some got money from their children – especially daughters - while others sold goats that they kept in their home villages as demonstrated by the following excerpts:

- *“I contributed money. I sold chibuku¹⁷ and traditional beer in order to get some money and help my husband. I did not want to just sit at home and let him do everything. After selling the beer I hired people to mould bricks”.*
- *“At that time my husband was still working for BMC and I was running a tuck shop. So, we contributed together to build the house – money from his salary and money from the tuck shop”*
- *“I contributed ideas and money. I got money from making and selling traditional beer and also from my daughter who was employed as a teacher. She is now late. My husband contributed money as well. I bought food from beer money while my husband’s and daughter’s money was spent on building the house”.*
- *“When we started to build this house, I sold some of the goats which I kept in my home village so that I could contribute some money”.*

It is worth noting that women did not pass money to their husbands. They used their incomes to either pay builders or purchase building materials and food but used money from husbands on building the house. Some gave food and beer to the builders in lieu of cash payments and were able to use the due cash to buy more building materials and/or mould more bricks.

Although women in Woodhall did not construct foundations, walls or roofs, housewives and self-employed women did assist, in one way or the other, with construction works as exemplified by the following responses:

- *“During construction, I helped by mixing the concrete for making bricks and mortar. I made bricks. I learnt how to make bricks from my father. I did not lay bricks for our house because I am*

¹⁷ Commercialised 'traditional' alcoholic beverage

now old. I have seven children. I also helped by drawing water for the builders and cooking for them. I also gave builders some chibuku”.

- *“I also watered the bricks. The bricks must be watered to make them hard. After that I packed them nicely. My husband gave the money to me and I bought the building materials and gave them to the builder because I was not working.”*
- *“Personally, I helped by watering the bricks and packing them. My husband provided the money and I bought the materials.”*
- *“I assisted by picking out the soil in the foundation trench. I used the spade to pick out the soil. I mixed the concrete for my sons when they were moulding the bricks”*
- *“I bought 2 window frames from SHHA using my own savings. I also laboured to the builder but not all the times, because the builder had his own assistants. Sometimes I passed bricks to the builder. I also fetched water and cooked for the builders.*
- *“My husband is a builder. He built the house himself and I was labouring for him. He built the main house. We moulded the bricks ourselves – myself, my husband and the children.”*

Women’s practical contribution consisted mainly of activities that either do not require special skills or training such as watering bricks, stockpiling bricks and passing bricks to builders; or activities related to traditional roles of women – drawing water and excavating foundation trenches. Women with some previous experiences in modern housing, mixed concrete and made bricks. Female respondents considered purchasing of building materials and cooking for builders as part of their labour contribution to the house construction process. Assembly of building materials, cooking and serving beer to builders has its roots in Tswana culture. As noted earlier, traditionally, women of the household collected grass, drew water, made mud bricks and served beer to people that assisted with house construction activities. They also cooked and served food to them.

Women – notably those without formal employment – served as supervisor or site managers. “The builders lived in the neighbourhood. I saw them building for other people and decided to engage them” said one woman. Women spotted, engaged and supervised hired workers. They identified and assessed builders in terms of their skills, labour and payment conditions as revealed in the following experience:

“He [the builder] was just building around. He was very good. He would build for you then you pay him in instalments later. He was using children – so if the mother was interested, he would use his sons. He would make the children help him and then later he would pay them some small amounts of money”.

5.5.3 Employed married women contributed ideas and money

Married but employed women tended to contribute more in terms of money than personal labour. Working women preferred combining their salaries together with their partners' salaries and then budgeting and investing from a common pool as told below:

"We were both working. At the end of each month, we would contribute our money together and make a budget – money for buying food, materials and everything we needed we just list the things and budget from that whole amount of money".

Unlike self-employed partners, married women in formal employment have inflexible working hours and limited time to spend on domestic activities including those related to house building. One such lady married to a working husband said she did not even have time to cook for the builders. She instead hired someone to cook for the builders while she was at work. "We bought the bricks and everything and hired a builder. I could not make the bricks because I am working," said another workingwoman.

The experiences of the working women narrated above also show that working married women are more open to their partners about what they earn than self-employed wives. While the latter tend to spend thriftily, save secretly and shy away from demanding money from their husbands, working women prefer joint budgeting and expenditure.

5.5.4 Self-help housing is an uphill struggle for unemployed single Women

The experiences of unemployed single women show that to them self-help urban housing was an uphill struggle – they had to struggle to access land as well as to raise money for paying builders and buying building materials. The following extract from one of the respondents highlights this view:

Question: How did you get this plot?

Reply: *My grandmother gave me the plot. The SHHA people gave her the plot and she decided to give it to me.*

Question: How did you manage to build such a big house?

Reply: *First of all, after getting the plot, I was fetching wood and selling it. After raising some money, I approached a friend who also had a plot which she wanted to develop. We combined our money together and started buying mealie and making food which we sold to people working on construction projects. So we were raising money like that.*

Question: How did you build the house?

Reply: *My friends and I were helping each other. We made mortar at one place and carried it to plots using a wheelbarrow. We bought bricks from a man who was making them. We would use the bricks and pay him later. We helped each other.*

Question: Why didn't you make bricks for yourself?

Reply: *I didn't know how to make concrete bricks. If it were for a mud house, I would do it.*

Question: *Why didn't you build a mud house then?*

Reply: *The SHHA people did not allow us to build mud houses. If they did not prohibit us, I would have built a mud house.*

Question: *Did you obtain any loan from SHHA?*

Reply: *I did not get any loan from SHHA. For some of the materials, I approached an Indian shopkeeper. The interest on SHHA loan was very high. So I decided not to take any loan from SHHA. The Indian shopkeeper did not charge any interest.*

The respondent in the above extract is a single mother with seven children – 5 of her own and 2 from her late sister. Her grandmother gave her the plot located in Woodhall I. The grandmother was allocated the plot by SHHA and she decided to pass ownership to the woman who could not be allocated a plot of her own by SHHA because she was unemployed. With a plot in hand, she was determined to build a house of her choice. She first built two temporary rooms – one for her use and another one for the children (see Figure 5.3). Then, she built two more rooms according to prototype SHHA house plan. Finally, she built the main house with her own design - six bedrooms, a large sitting room and a veranda.

Figure 5.3 One of the initial temporary room



Source: Author, 1999

To raise funds, she started by collecting firewood and selling it to various households in the township. She, however, later realised she could add value if she used the firewood to cook food for selling. She also co-operated with women in similar circumstances to raise viable working capital. To minimise costs, she used her own labour where she could and took interest free building material loans from the brick maker and hardware shop. She also saved on rent by erecting and using a temporary shelter on the same plot. The bricks in the temporary shelter were not bonded but simply placed on top of each other. Metal sheets that formed the roof were not

permanently attached to the wall but held in place by use of weights such as bricks and stones. The arrangement facilitated easy re-use of building materials as and when required.

This woman's experience shows that unemployment does not prevent people from housing themselves adequately. Unemployed people can use their time and energy to raise funds and do great things for themselves. They, therefore, need not to be denied plots for housing. Second, her experience shows that building a low cost house is not solely determined by reductions in floor spaces, but by a combination of several construction management skills – acquisition of free or low interest loans, use of household labour, solidarity, mutual assistance, co-operation, trust and pooling of resources together.

5.5.5 Employed single women provided money

Similar to married women with formal employment, the role of working single women in self-help housing centred mainly on providing funds and, to some extent, watering bricks. Unlike married women, they also had to contract male builders whom they used to buy building materials from the producers or shopkeepers. The following experience of a single mother who was employed as a domestic worker and ran her own tuck shop tells it all:

“... I was [previously] staying at New Look in my own house... I moved to this plot [in Woodhall II] in 1988. The government moved us. There [in New Look] it was crowded and everything was not in order. I was given this plot by the government. I bought the house plan from other people and not SHHA. I paid P250 for the plan. I didn't like SHHA plans – the rooms are very small. I wanted open rooms so that I can have enough space for the cooking, furniture and also for sleeping nicely.

At the time I started building this house, I was working as a housemaid and running a tuck shop like this one. At that time, the tuck shop was making a lot of money. I combined my salary and money from the tuck shop. I also borrowed some money from my boss. He lent me P1000, which I used to buy rafters. I repaid the loan through monthly deductions.

I did not do anything. I hired people to mould the bricks. I was working late so I had no time to make bricks. Sometimes I watered the bricks. I did not supervise the builder because he had built a house for me in Mochudi. I first saw him around building for other people then I took him to Mochudi to build the house. I knew the builder. I would give him the money, which he would use to buy materials and later show me the receipts.

I could not build this house by myself because this one is not like the one at New Look. That one was a temporary house. I could not build a traditional house because here in Woodhall there are SHHA regulations whereby you are given measurements you should use for

the house and for space in front of the house. So it was not easy for me to do it. My house in Mochudi is also a modern house. Nowadays building a traditional house is very difficult - you have to roof it every three years. It is not like the corrugated iron sheets - they can rust but they will not let water through."

Although the respondent had previously been involved in the assembly of building materials and actual construction of houses, she was unable to undertake the same activities in Woodhall because of several factors. First, she said she did not have time to carry out these activities. Second, she considered it more prudent to concentrate her efforts on raising money through various ways (including borrowing money from the employer and running a tuck shop) than labouring for the builder or running around looking for building materials. Third, she wanted a house that satisfied her aspirations while meeting SHHA building regulations so she entrusted the whole process to people with the necessary skills – brick moulders and the builders.

5.5.6 Cohabiting unemployed women were least interested in housing

The experience of a female cohabiting partner was quite different from that of married and single women. Her involvement in self-help housing was negligible. She said she only cooked for the builders. Although she was unemployed, she did not bother to fetch water for builders, pass bricks or do any act to reduce monetary costs. Until the time when the man lost his job, the woman did not struggle to complete or otherwise improve the house. Without regular funds from the male partner, the woman started selling beer to finance the construction of rooms for renting. This is her story:

"Before we moved onto this plot, we used to rent a private room in a council house. We were allocated this plot because the government wanted to use the area for something else. The plot was allocated to my husband.

We obtained the house plan from SHHA, we later extended the house so we could have some rooms for renting and repay the SHHA loan.

I did not contribute money for building the house because at that time I was not working. I started this business [selling beer] after my husband is not working. My husband provided everything. He was employed at Agriculture. I only cooked for the builders. The builders fetched water for themselves. He hired the builders. I did not serve bricks to builders. The children did not help because they were young. I did not worry because my husband was working for me. We did not pay rent to council. I now hire builders and pay them."

At the time of the survey in October 1999, she was busy cooking and selling traditional beer in a temporary shelter adjacent to where she was developing a three-roomed structure. The new structure was at the foundation stage. The principal house also was incomplete and exhibited poor workmanship. It was not plastered and lacked a proper floor. The respondent did not want to spend a minute with me. She appeared extremely busy and in panic. I had to break the interview many times. In short she was trying to compensate for lost opportunities. As a cohabiting partner, she did not want to put her resources into the partner's property hence the erection of a separate

structure. Since the two were cohabiting, the children belonged to the lady which also explains why she wanted a separate structure as the children could not lay claims on the man's property.

As summarised in Table 5.20, we note that women's experience in self-help urban housing is first and foremost determined by marital status and secondly by type of employment and income. As suspected, unemployed women contribute more in terms of labour input than pecuniary expenditure while women with formal employment, regardless of their marital status, tend to contribute more in monetary terms than physical labour. Due to lack of flexibility in formal employment conditions, working women do not even have time to cook for builders. Women in cohabiting relationship tend to limit their contribution to the bare minimum when the plot being developed belongs to the male partner. Married women play a key role in initiating and encouraging their husbands to spend their savings on housing.

We also note that women's practical roles are limited to tasks that require no previous training or skill (e.g. drawing water, watering bricks, passing bricks and, to a less extent, mixing concrete and making bricks); or to provision of services such as cooking and serving beer and food. Unemployed women play supervisory and building material collection roles as well.

5.5.7. Male partners provided money

All married or cohabiting respondents interviewed said that men provided the bulk of the money used to pay builders and buy building materials thereby confirming the results of the quantitative surveys (section 5.5). "My husband gave the money to me and I bought building materials and gave them to the builder" was a common response from married women with regard to their partners' contribution. "Male builders are employed to do the construction work. Family male members just contribute money for buying building materials and paying labourers," said one married woman. A married man narrated his role as follows:

"... I built the temporary house we started with on the plot. For this house, I bought the zinc, rafters and cement. My wife and myself contributed money. We saved together. I could not build the house alone because I was earning very little. If my wife contributed something, at least that helped a bit. I could not build the house myself because I am not a builder. We got a builder from one of the villages near here. The builder was known to my daughter. We engaged him because he could give us some discount. I would like to build more rooms but I have no money because I am no longer working."

Table 5.20 Roles of Women in Modern Self-help Housing by Marital and Employment Status

Marital / employment status	Indirect roles	Economic contributions	Practical roles
Married self-employed / unemployed women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage husbands to build own house • Encourage husbands to save money for housing • Contribute ideas • Provide moral support to husband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partly pay for hired labour and materials with money from informal businesses, savings, remittances etc. • Undertake cost saving measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and hire builders • Oversee and pay builders • Identify and buy building materials • Prepare and serve beer and food to builders • Draw water for builders • Water and pack bricks • Mix concrete • Make bricks • Occasionally serve as labourer
Married formally employed women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage husbands to build own house • Encourage husbands to save money for housing • Contribute ideas • Provide moral support to husband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute funds for paying builders and purchase of materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire someone to cook for builders
Single self-employed / unemployed women		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise funds through informal businesses, remittances etc. • Acquire building materials and labour on interest free credit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, hire, oversee and pay builders • Buy and assemble building materials • Prepare and serve beer and food to builders • Draw water for builders • Water and pack bricks • Mix concrete • Make bricks • Occasionally serve as labourer
Single formally employed women		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise funds through savings, informal businesses, remittances etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and hire trustworthy builders • Occasionally water bricks
Cobabiting unemployed women			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook and serve food to builders

Source: Author's construction

As the above experience indicates, besides contributing money, male partners participated in buying building materials and hiring of builders. In the households where both spouses had full time employment, men hired and supervised builders and bought/assembled materials. Households, in which men played the role of supervisor were, however, less common than those where women took a leading role in the procurement of building materials and supervision of builders. As noted earlier some

male partners collaborated with their female counterparts in the moulding of bricks and actual construction of the houses. Such men were often skilled builders. While women said their urge to own houses was motivated by the need for adequate and secure accommodation for the family (especially the children), men were driven mainly by the need to generate money through rentals. "My husband initiated the idea of extending the house when he realised that he was about to retire and wanted a regular source of income from renting the additional rooms. I got money from him and hired people to do the extension work," said one a woman married to a retired husband.

5.5.8 Young children contributed their labour

Children, both boys and girls, between the ages of 10 and 16 years, assisted their mothers and builders by serving as casual labourers - fetching water, mixing concrete, making bricks, watering bricks and/or passing bricks to builders.

"My sons helped by giving bricks to the builder. At that time, my eldest son was doing Form III and the second one Form I. The boys helped by mixing sand with cement and plastering." said one female respondent.

Children of both sexes were equally involved in similar activities. Regardless of sex, they worked hard together to help their parents as one daughter (aged 20 years at the time of the interview) told me:

Question: Who taught you how to make bricks?

Reply: *We did not learn to make bricks from anyone.*

Question: Who actually made the bricks? You or your brother?

Reply: *We made the bricks together. Sometimes, he operated the machine and sometimes I did that.*

Question: What are you doing now?

Reply: *I am an insurance agent.*

Question: Why didn't you become a builder?

Reply: *I did not become a builder because it is hard work.*

Question: If you could do it at ten years old, why can't you do it now?

Reply: *We were still helping each other.*

Question: Why can't you help each other now?

Reply: *Ha! No. It is a hard job.*

Question: But mothers in the villages used to build houses on their own and never got tired.

Reply: *Ha! Well, they were using the Tswana skills and materials.*

Question: Is it not the same thing?

Reply: *You see, in Tswana you use your hands and there are no machines.*

- Question: So you think it is the machine which is a problem?
 Reply: *Yes.*
- Question: Why were you not interested in other building fields – electrical, carpentry, etc.?
 Reply: *I am interested in business and not building.*
- Question: Why?
 Reply: *I need to socialise.*
- Question: If you are building, you do not socialise?
 Reply: *Not much.*
- Question: What then motivated you to make bricks although you knew it was hard work?
 Reply: *I wanted to save money. to help my parents.*

The above citation shows that, regardless of sex, the respondent and her brother undertook the same tasks. This is consistent with Tswana tradition, which assigns similar tasks to boys and girls before puberty. It further shows that older women still control children and use them in house building activities as in the old tradition. Children of cohabiting parents did not participate in house building while children belonging to single unemployed mothers participated in self-help housing more often than those whose parents were married and/or employed. Children of cohabiting parents did not participate in house building. Some adult boys – belonging mostly to single mothers - erected toilets or roofs for their mothers' houses. Contrary to traditional practices, some boys (not girls as expected) decorated houses. The boys' decorations (Figure 5.4) depict geometrical shapes – rectangular, triangles, arcs and numbers – with a few plants. Some of the most decorated houses in Woodhall (Figures 5.5 and 5.6), however, belong to adults. The wall in Figure 5.5 was decorated by a single (unmarried) man who was formerly an employee of a certain church. His decorations are dominated by spiritual figures and biblical quotations. One old lady did the decorations in Figure 5.6. Men's decorated concrete/stone walls while women decorated mud walls.

The art works by men in Woodhall differ substantially from traditional decorations made by women including the old lady mentioned above. Traditional decorations depicted shields, elephants and abstract art (Grant and Grant, 1995: passim), which are reminiscent of rural and pre-modern environments while decorations by men in Woodhall depict formal or Western education (e.g. geometry) and Christianity. Furthermore, the men in Woodhall used manufactured paint and brush while women's decorations are made by hands using mud.

Figure 5.4 Decorations on concrete wall by a secondary school boy



Source: Author, 1999

Figure 5.5 Decorations stone wall by an ex-catechist adult male



Source: Author, 1996

Figure 5.6 Decorations by old women on mud walls in Woodhall and Peleng, Lobatse



Woodhall I



Peleng

Source: Author, 1996 and 2000

However, girls were excluded from working with male builders as the following interview shows:

“The builder worked with my sons. He never worked with girls. One of my sons is now a builder employed by the Lobatse clay works. One is a storekeeper with Lobatse Town Council. The third one is a builder/labourer with a company which is constructing a Police College at Otse. My daughter is an insurance agent in Gaborone. My first son built the sitting room while he was being trained by the builder” said one female respondent.”

Thus girls were denied training opportunities, which discouraged them from developing interest in building professions. While some of the boys who participated in assisting builders or making bricks proceeded to become builders or are still engaged in construction activities, no girls proceeded likewise. Girls, as adult females, have shied away from construction work and opted for white collar jobs such as insurance agency. To both boys and girls, the image of a contemporary builder is related to ‘men’ as the builders who were all males and preferred working with boys to girls.

5.5.9 Adult children contributed money

Grown-up boys and girls contributed more in monetary terms than labour. “My son, who was working at a bar, helped the father by contributing money. My son did not buy anything but gave out the money, which was used together with our contribution. Money was pulled together and used as a whole like that” said one woman. Another said she got money from her late daughter who was employed as a teacher. “My daughters were also helping. They hired youths to make bricks and paid them,” said another lady. Some children borrowed money in order to assist their parents. “My daughter gave me money for the outside room. She got a loan from the bank where she is employed. We bought bricks and everything and hired a builder” said one lady working for the council.

5.5.10 Relatives and friends provided labour and money

Field interviews revealed that besides household members, there were relatives, friends, and acquaintances, in-laws and shopkeepers who assisted in self-help housing. Most assistance came in the form of free or discounted labour charges. Most people hired builders that they could trust (such as in-laws) or those who would give them discounts. A widow mother who had her house built by a son-in-law is a case in point. Excerpts from our discussion:

Question: Who built the house?

Reply: *The father of my first daughter’s children.*

Question: Your son –in-law?

Reply: *Yes*

Question: Are they married?

Reply: *No. They were having children but he was staying with us.*

Not only did builders offer free and/or discounted services, they also allowed staggered or payment in instalments by house owners. They also helped household to save on labour costs as well as generate some additional incomes by using household labour – usually sons. Other builders would plaster walls, build floors etc. for girl friends as revealed in the following case of a daughter who was living in her mothers house: -

Question: Where are your mother and other children?

Reply: *My mother is staying at the village and my elder brother is working in Gaborone. I am staying with my younger brothers who are studying here in Lobatse.*

Question: Why can't you complete the house?

Reply: *I have no money.*

Question: Why don't you do the work yourself?

Reply: *I cannot. It is a hard job. My boyfriend is a builder and I can see from him that it is a hard job.*

Question: Did your boyfriend build the house?

Reply: *No. He plastered this room and did the floor.*

Question: Did you pay him?

Reply: *No. We did not pay him. He just helped.*

Question: Does he live with you here?

Reply: *Yes. I am staying with him and my daughter that is why he is doing the floor in the other room.*

Question: Do you intend to complete the other rooms?

Reply: *Yes. I would like to look for a job and then hire a builder to finish the two rooms.*

Question: What do you intend to do with the room?

Reply: *If I can complete them, I will rent them.*

Shopkeepers have also assisted by running their own form of 'building material loan schemes'. Shopkeepers did not charge interest on outstanding debts which made their loans apparently cheaper and appealing to some household especially women with irregular sources of income.

This section has revealed that, according to responses from households interviewed, gender roles as played by women, men and children within various forms of households were shaped by marital, income and employment status. It was not possible to identify roles played by cohabiting formally employed women nor self-employed cohabiting men because I could not identify such people during the field surveys. It was also not possible to identify single men living in self-help houses

within the study area. The absence or near absence of the above groups of people may be attributed to several interrelated factors. First, because plots were allocated mainly to formally employed people, unemployed men could not get plots in Woodhall. Second, unmarried women had to use employed men to access plots. Third, formally employed women did not need the assistance of men – employed or otherwise, to be allocated plots. Fourth, this may be an indication that investing in housing is not a priority among single men

The general picture emerging from Table 5.20 indicates that men's major role in self-help housing was to provide money while women contributed labour, managed and supervised construction activities. Women fetched water for builders, watered bricks, bought building materials, and cooked for the builders. Women's roles were generally dependent on monetary earnings, marital status, family considerations and employment status. Unemployed women made more practical contributions than formally employed women did. The role of women with full-time regular employment was similar to that of men – providing funds - while unmarried women, as one lady put it, "have no one to rely on so they do the duties of men" as well as those of women.

The interviews indicate that at early ages, there was no sex differentiation between tasks performed by children. Both boys and girls undertook similar tasks. Adult youths - both boys and girls - contributed money towards their parents' houses. Some boys also assisted with construction works – such as roofing, plastering, painting, decoration and erection of toilets. Adult women tended to shy away from construction activities.

The findings also indicate that urban self-help housing is a 'family' undertaking - it involves all members of each household. All household members contributed whatever and whenever they could. SHHA practices do not recognise such concerted efforts but base their assessment of capacity to build on head of household's income. Furthermore, and contrary to the original spirit of self-help housing schemes, SHHA building regulations and practices in Lobatse limited the freedom to build. Were women free to build according to their wishes, abilities and experiences, the end results would have been substantially different from what this thesis has revealed

Table 5.21 Emerging Gender Roles in Modern Self-help housing

Category	Marital status	Formally employed	Self-employed / unemployed
Women	Married	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute money • Hire someone to cater for builders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute unskilled labour • Make, water and pack bricks • Cater for builders • Contribute money • Assemble building materials • Hire, oversee and pay builders
	Single	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise housing finance • Acquire housing loans • Hire, oversee and pay builders • Water bricks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute unskilled labour • Make, water and pack bricks • Cater for builders • Raise housing finance • Acquire building material loans / credit finance • Assemble building materials • Hire, oversee and pay builders
	Cohabiting	Not available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cater for builders
Men	Married	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise housing finance • Acquire housing loans • Hire, oversee and pay builders 	Not available
	Cohabiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute skilled labour
Children	Under 16 years	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute unskilled labour • Make bricks
	Above 16 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls and boys contribute money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boys contribute unskilled labour • Boys erect some simple structures • Girls contribute some skilled labour though boyfriends

Source: Author's construction

5.6 SUMMARY

Field data has revealed that the women - notably single and self-employed women - face a number of barriers in their attempt to access rental housing in Lobatse. While married and cohabiting women are able to access housing more easily, employed women are allocated smaller and less quality employer housing units due to their low ranks in the employment hierarchy. Building their own house is one of women's strategies for satisfying their housing needs. However, women are unable to build their own houses due to lack of skills required in the erection of houses approved by the Lobatse Town Council. Women's direct participation in the construction industry

in Lobatse is limited to manual non-skilled activities such as mixing concrete, transporting bricks, cleaning up and cooking for builders. These limitations notwithstanding, both qualitative and quantitative data show that women have developed new ways of participating in self-help housing, which include initiating and motivating partners to invest more funds in housing, supervising and catering for hired labourers. The data further shows that the extent and nature of women's participation in self-help housing is largely dependent on marital and employment status with self-employed women providing more labour than salaried women who prefer to provide funds for labour. The data has also shown that women (especially single mothers) in Lobatse utilise children's labour in self-help housing according to Tswana tradition. However, both adult sons and daughters, like male partners, prefer providing funds to direct labour participation. As a result, most houses are built through the use of hired male builders with limited labour input from household members. Finally, field data revealed that, through SHHA, the state and Lobatse town Council are heavily involved in making decisions on behalf of self-help house builders – especially with regard to house designs, sizes and building materials.

CHAPTER 6: PERCEPTIONS, CONSTRAINTS, COPING STRATEGIES AND GENDER CONTRACTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents views and opinions expressed by respondents on various aspects of the roles of men and women as well as institutional roles in self-help housing. Data used in this chapter was derived mainly from the qualitative survey and open-ended questions posed during the quantitative household surveys (1.6.3). The chapter discusses respondents' gendered stereotypes of women in the self-help housing processes and their assessment of whether 'modern' houses are better or worse than traditional houses. It also discusses beneficiary's views on technical assistance rendered by SHHA officials and how female plot owners survived the constraints rampant in self-help housing. This is followed by a discussion of the emerging gender contracts in self-help housing in Lobatse. Finally, the chapter attempts to account for changes or shifts in gender roles and contracts in the context of the construction industry in Botswana and, in particular, self-help housing in Lobatse.

6.2 PERCEPTIONS

6.2.1 Modern versus traditional houses

As noted in Chapter 5, some female respondents said they would have liked to build traditional houses in Woodhall. They preferred traditional houses to 'modern' houses because the former were cheaper to erect – plot owners do not have to buy building materials or hire builders. Some prefer grass thatched to metal roofs as one lady said, "I would like to build a traditional house here because this one is making a lot of noise when it rains. The traditional house does not make any noise."

However, most respondents said SHHA officers did not allow them to build traditional houses in Woodhall. "The SHHA people did not allow us to build mud houses. If they did not prohibit us, I would have built a mud house" said one lady. Others prefer modern building materials to traditional ones. One lady said she prefers modern materials "because if you roof with thatch grass, it becomes old then later you have to replace it with new one which is scarce these days." Another lady said she did not build a traditional house because she does not like to live in dust. "I wanted a concrete house – a modern house" was her unambiguous view. Peer pressure was another factor that influenced some people's preference for modern houses. According to one lady, she did not build a traditional house because people would laugh at her that she was building a mud house while they are staying in a modern house. Another lady said she had wanted to build a traditional house because she was then not working. "Now I have a modern house and I am working. I do not need a traditional house," she said.

Thus, although some self-help housing plot-holders felt constrained by SHHA regulations and practices which required them to build modern houses, they have no

regrets. A number of respondents now share the same values as SHHA officials and aspire to own modern houses which are considered durable, hygienic and reflective of their cash earning (working) status.

6.2.2 Men should provide the family house but they are lazy and irresponsible

Respondents – both male and female – said male partners bear the responsibility of housing their families. In response to the question, “Whose responsibility is it to provide a house for your family?”, about 48% of the respondents said it was the responsibility of male partners, 27% said both spouses, 15% said female partners and the rest 10% said sons and/or daughters. The responses are generally contrary to Tswana traditional practice whereby women/mothers bore the responsibility of ensuring each household is properly sheltered. The change appears to be based on the perception that housing is the responsibility of men as heads of households or to be attributed to natural forces as captured in the following responses:

- *“Men. They are household heads and strong and as housing is a big job, they have to be responsible”,* said one lady.
- *“Nature has made us believe that it [housing] is a man’s job. Women are naturally weak and men are strong”,* said one cohabiting lady..
- *“Males but females can provide housing if men fail”,* said one man.
- *“Father has to provide a house using the mother’s idea”* said one old woman.

Although the respondents did not expect daughters alone to provide houses for the family, some mothers do so especially in Woodhall. Expecting children to provide houses for the families is also non-traditional and may be a reflection of the recent economic changes. Within each family, a person with employment or a reliable source of income is expected to satisfy the household’s housing needs.

Much as respondents perceive men as being responsible for providing the family house, women respondents – especially single mothers – have negative views on what to expect from men. They think men are lazy and irresponsible as variously expressed below:

- *“I have never seen men doing anything in housing provision. Men are very lazy even when they have money, they can spend it on anything else apart from housing”.*
- *“Men never do anything in housing provision”.*
- *“Men never do anything. They are useless. They have no brains. They are handicapped. They often prefer to spend their money on other things [rather than housing] such as alcohol and girlfriends”.*
- *“Men are normally lazy. They never want to participate in housing if it requires their labour/physical contribution”.*

- *“Role of men is to work as labourers and to provide funds”.*

The above indicates that women would like men to play a more proactive role in housing than what they are currently doing. That is, women consider provision of money by partners as being inadequate. They would like their partners to spend their spare time to assist with digging foundation trenches, making and watering bricks and other manual activities that tend to reduce the cost of housing.

6.2.3 Women builders? The differing views.

Besides identifying emerging gender roles, I wanted to know if women really regarded house building as a male task. I asked them if they would mind working as builders or object to their daughters becoming builders. The overwhelming responses indicate that women don't mind as exemplified by the following responses:

- *“Modern houses mostly are built by men that is why I was labouring for him. I would like to be a builder if I had a chance”* said a woman married to a builder but who is currently employed as a refuse collector.
- *“I don't mind being a builder because I used to build with my father but the women of today do not want to become builders. I do not mind my daughter becoming a builder.”* said a married woman who used to make bricks, as a girl.
- *“I would not mind my daughter becoming a builder. At first, it had to be done by men only. Nowadays, both men and women can build “* said another married woman.
- *“I would not mind my daughter working as a builder but she will have to decide for herself. Building business used to be a man's work but these days it is for both men and women,”* said a married woman.
- *“I would like my sons or daughters to become builders or carpenters. I like children who work with their hands”* said a deserted female respondent.

Besides liking children who work with their hands, mothers want their children to acquire various skills and increase their employment opportunities:

“I would like my daughter to become a builder because nowadays women are building. It is also good because if she has various skills she will have a choice of jobs,” said a single mother whose sons have become builders.

However, some respondents doubted if their daughters would want to train as builders. *“I don't mind [my daughters becoming a builder] but because they are working, they cannot agree to become builders or carpenters”* said a widow. Another lady, who runs a tuck shop together with her daughter, doubted if it was worthwhile for her daughter to diversify and train as a builder because, she thinks, there are no

jobs to be found any way. She said, "I can agree for my daughter to become a builder but she is already a saleslady. Nowadays even if you want your daughter to become a builder, there are no employment opportunities," said a single mother

The above responses indicate that, unlike in the traditional societies, mothers cannot pass on indigenous building skills to their daughters or oblige them to acquire modern skills or enter certain professions. Daughters choose their own careers without reference to their parents' wishes. Some mothers see emerging equal opportunities between men and women and the women's re-entry into the construction industry as a means of widening job choices. Others think that the opportunities have already been missed – no more jobs for builders. The latter view may be based on the slow down of self-help housing activities in Lobatse and Botswana in general, since the early 1990s.

Daughters' views, as noted earlier, differ from their mothers'. Young ladies want to work as sales persons – as cashiers or attendants in shops or as insurance sales agents. Both trades are white-collar jobs with plenty of opportunities to meet new people or, as one lady put it, "to socialise". Girls probably feel they cannot readily socialise in manual jobs such as building. At the time of the interview, one of the respondent girls currently employed as an insurance agent was as meticulously dressed as a super advertising or film model. It was hard to believe that she used to make cement blocks. Young ladies will undertake construction activities when they lack alternative opportunities in white-collar professions.

6.2.4 Why did women not build their own houses?

Responses on why women do not or did not physically build their houses in Woodhall differed considerably although the majority of the responses centred on the use of modern materials. "I did not build the house because building with mud is different from building with sand-cement concrete" was a common reply. "I only know how to build with mud bricks. If it was a traditional house, I could do it. Concrete houses are difficult to build" was another common response. Other women indicated lack of training as the main constraint. "You can only do something if you were taught how to do it. I was never taught how to lay these modern bricks. I only know how to build the temporary houses. I built the hut we started with on this plot," said one lady.

Other respondents attributed failure to build their own houses to SHHA regulations. "I could not build the house by myself because this one is not like the one at New Look. That one was a temporary house. I could not build a traditional house because here in Woodhall there are SHHA regulations whereby you are given measurements you should use for the house and for space in front of the house. So it was not easy for me to do it," said one lady. A mother who had made bricks for her house and previously assisted her father who was a builder said she could not lay bricks for her own house in Woodhall because she is now old- and had seven children.

Formally employed men and women said that they did not have time to spend on assembling building materials or supervising builders let alone participating in actual house construction. One lady went to the extent of hiring someone to cook for the builders.

6.2.5 Current gender roles in self-help housing differ from the past

The overwhelming majority of respondents – over 87% - considered roles currently expected of men and women to be different from rural or traditional gender roles. Some respondents believe the roles have not changed except that, as one couple put it, *“Building in towns does not allow women to participate in housing construction”*. Some female respondents concurred with the above couple. A single lady noted that *“The roles are not different. It is only that we hire builders but both men and women do the same jobs.”* Another lady said that, *“Women are also involved in modern housing. They build walls, roof and do the plastering. Men do not recognise the importance of women in housing provision. They still can't believe a woman can do such a great job as housing”*.

The various reasons given to account for changes in gender roles in self-help housing areas in Lobatse could be divided into six categories as shown in Table 6.1. About half of the respondents attributed the changes in gender roles to the introduction of exogenous building materials and equipment. They expressed this in several ways such as:

- *“Women are able to build themselves traditional houses and not a modern house. They were made to know how to build using their hands instead of the modern building equipment. In the early beginnings of modern building, it was mostly men who went for training to do the building and women were not interested.”* (married lady)
- *“The roles are different. Men cannot handle mud with their hands. Modern building materials (e.g. cement) damage hands so they cannot be handled with hands. They need modern equipment which women cannot use”* (married lady)

The two ladies sum up three major statements, (i) women are still able to build houses except that they cannot build modern houses; (ii) women's inability to build modern houses is due to lack of the requisite skills for manoeuvring machines which men acquired through training; (iii) failure to acquire the skills was due to lack of role models and women's exclusion in training.

However, other respondents tended to relate new building materials and changes in gender roles to nature or biological traits as observed by one lady who said that *“Cement is heavier than soil but women are weak so they cannot lift it.”* A married man with 14 children said that *“When men and women do the same work, women become weak or sick. This shows that we cannot be equal. A woman is meant to bear children and should be preserved. She weakens with every child she bears.”*

Table 6.1 Factors perceived to be responsible for changes in gender roles in self-help housing (in percent)

Location	Respondents	What factors have caused the variation in the responsibilities of women and men in housing provision?						(Total) Percent
		Changes in building materials and equipment	Changes in house designs and sizes	Modernisation/ fashion/ new lifestyles	Official policies, rules, guidelines etc	Women have money to hire men builders	Women have no time to build houses	
Peleng	Female	61.9	12.7	17.5		4.8	3.1	(63) 100
	Male	26.7	13.3	33.3	13.3	6.7	6.7	(15) 100
	Couple	55.6	16.7	22.2			5.5	(18) 100
	All	55.2	13.5	20.8	2.1	4.2	4.2	(96) 100
Woodhall	Female	46.2	7.6	23.1	16.9	3.1	3.1	(65) 100
	Male	45.5	9.0	45.5				(11) 100
	Couple	46.6	6.7	26.7	13.3	6.7		(15) 100
	All	46.2	7.6	26.4	14.3	3.3	2.2	(91) 100
Both Areas	Female	53.9	10.2	20.3	8.6	3.1	3.1	(128) 100
	Male	34.6	11.5	38.6	7.7	3.8	3.8	(26) 100
	Couple	51.5	12.2	24.2	6.1	3.0	3.0	(33) 100
	All	50.8	10.7	23.5	8.0	3.8	3.2	(187) 100

Notes: Figures in brackets indicate total multiple frequencies/counts.

Source: Field Surveys, 1999

About 24% of the respondents attributed changes in gender roles to 'modernisation' or the new urban lifestyles: "They are different because of development. The economy has gone high" said one single male doctor, who is a traditional doctor. Consequently, as one couple put it, "Modern housing requires a lot of money."

Other respondents (11% of total) believe the changes in gender roles are due to the relatively large sizes of modern houses. "Modern housing is difficult. Tswana houses are not big but modern houses are usually big and women will not be able to cope" said a couple from Woodhall.

Official policies, building regulations and plot development rules and guidelines were cited as the fourth common factor responsible for changes in gender roles. Here are some of the views expressed by the respondents:

- "SHHA regulations restrict women to build houses [in mud]." (couple)
- "Council does not consider traditional housing as development. These are always demolished; therefore women do not do much in housing" (married lady)

- *“SHHA prohibits use of traditional materials. We cannot use soil and mud for walls or fence with trees”* (married lady)
- *“The involvement of the government – its rules, orders and commands everything about the environment. We cannot cut trees, grass or find soils”*. (married lady)
- *“The government does not allow traditional houses. The traditional house at the back is there because we begged them not to demolish it because we were congested”*. (married couple with 12 dependants)
- *“Today everything we do needs money. SHHA would not allow people to build using mud. If allowed to use mud, people would build mud houses while saving for a house they would desire to live in.”* (Single lady)

Several observations may be noted from the foregoing citations. First, some developers have been forced to build modern houses which they consider expensive. Second, there is a feeling that the government is interfering with people’s domestic/private lives by outlawing traditional houses and dictating how they should manage their surroundings. Third, because traditional houses are not permitted in self-help housing, women are unable to participate in house construction processes.

Two other reasons were given: ‘women have money to hire builders’ and ‘women have no time to build houses’. The two factors were given by 7% of the respondents. While one lady said that *“Most women in towns feel they have money so they can employ men to do their work”* another lady thinks that *“A woman has no time for these. She is held up by children and the house”*. These statements reflect the triple roles of women as breadwinners, housekeepers and child-bearers which can be quite burdensome for single mothers.

6.3.6 SHHA – an accessory or adversary?

From the foregoing, it is evident that respondents had mixed feelings about the role and assistance offered by SHHA. As seen earlier, SHHA is expected to provide technical advice to plot holders on how to erect their houses in accordance with the existing development and building control regulations. Plot-holders were forced to take plans for modern houses and asked to pay P2. If one did not use the plan, one was still required to pay the P2. As mentioned earlier, plans offered by SHHA to plot-holders did not include traditional house plans or provide for the use of traditional materials. According to the SHHA Principal Housing Officer in Lobatse, the agency allows residents to build or use traditional materials but applicants fail to submit proper plans and/or to indicate how they will obtain the materials. SHHA officers deliberately and insistently discouraged erection or use of traditional materials such as mud and grass. Through such manoeuvres, plot-holders were literally forced to build

modern houses – houses that were unfamiliar and unaffordable to low income households.

Not only were plot holders forced to build modern houses but were introduced to new concepts such as paying interest on building material loans and indoor toilets and bathroom. As noted earlier, very few plot holders took building material loans from SHHA. Plot holders preferred to raise money under difficult conditions or borrowing from shopkeepers to getting loans from SHHA. They also replaced indoor spaces meant to be toilets and bathrooms with bedrooms. Furthermore, respondents felt they were being monitored rather than being assisted. “SHHA people came to see if the builder was doing the right thing” was a common expression.

However, the households in which both spouses had full-time formal employment appreciated SHHA’s contribution. SHHA officers were indirectly supervising, directing and monitoring builders on behalf of employed plot owners who had little time to spare for such activities. To some, the appreciation came later after occupying the modern houses and assessing advantages of modern houses over traditional houses. Some plot holders are still bitter with SHHA – they continue to long for traditional accommodation. Thus, although SHHA insistence on the use of modern materials and erection of modern houses was initially viewed as restrictive and technical advice as intrusive, some plot holders are appreciative of SHHA’s role while others are still apprehensive.

6.3 CONSTRAINTS AND COPING STRATEGIES

As observed above as well as in Chapter 5, women’s access to housing in Lobatse is characterised by numerous constraints or barriers. First, fewer women than men have access to employer housing because the majority of women are unemployed, self-employed or employed in the private sector. Second, due to the low ranks occupied by women in paid employment, the few women eligible for employer housing are entitled to small and less quality housing (e.g. servant quarters or semi-detached one roomed houses) compared to men who are allocated spacious, high quality and fully serviced houses. Third, due to low, irregular and non-verifiable incomes, many women in Lobatse as well as the whole of Botswana are unable to acquire houses offered by the Botswana Housing Corporation. Fourth, women – especially low income single mothers – cannot readily rent houses or hire rooms from private landlords.

To the majority of women in Lobatse and other towns in Botswana, ‘building their own houses’ is the most plausible solution to their housing problems. This solution was, however, also beleaguered with multitudes of problems, constraints and barriers as summarised in Table 6.2. Consequently women had to negotiate and devise several strategies to access resources controlled by men at both domestic and public sphere levels. The coping strategies employed by women in Lobatse are identified below.

6.3.1 'Marriage'

To access self-help housing plots, unemployed and self-employed women had to negotiate with the state structures (e.g. SHHA) by showing that they were married to men with regular employment, which proved that they belonged to households with financial means to develop the plots. The state patriarchal structures are compromised by registering the plots in husbands' names. Single women too were able to access plots by presenting male acquaintances as 'husbands' although this caused some problems later by rendering their land tenure insecure. In times of sour relationships, male acquaintances in whose names the plots were registered could legally reclaim the plots or otherwise disturb the plot occupants.

Table 6.2 Constraints and women's coping strategies in Woodhall

CONSTRAINT	SOLUTION / COPING STRATEGY
Denied access to rental housing Uneasy/tired of high rents, rooming and discriminatory rental rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present male colleague as 'husband' • Build own house
Denied access to land for self-help house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for land in the name of formally employed husband • Present male colleague as 'husband' • Use parents or close relatives with verifiable / regular income.
SHHA building plan is too small or unacceptable plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change indoor space designated for toilet and bath to bedroom • Instruct builder to increase room sizes and include veranda • Change from flat to gable pitched roof • Consult a private draughtsman
Male partner unwilling to spend money on housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid confrontation over money with husband • Be trustworthy • Motivate him through buying basic building materials e.g. bricks • Discuss children and family future housing requirements with husband
Inadequate income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise money through informal businesses • Sell beer, cigarettes etc. to hired builders as part payment • Combine incomes and have a common budget • Sell some property (e.g. goats) kept in rural homes • Obtain financial assistance from children, friends and relatives • Acquire interest free building material loans • Stagger payments for hired labour • Form informal building brigades • Use household labour (children, partners etc.)
No time to spend on housing activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire a trustworthy builder and use him to organise construction activities and buy building materials • Buy all building materials required • Hire someone to cook and service builders

Source: Author's construction

Cohabitation, a pseudo form of ‘Marriage’, was used by some single women to access skilled male labour as demonstrated by the following experience:

“... Before coming here we lived at the Brigade where my mother was working as a cleaner. My mother is currently staying at the village and my elder brother is working in Gaborone. I am staying with my younger brothers who are studying here in Lobatse ... I have no money to complete the house. I cannot build the house myself. It is a hard job. My boyfriend is a builder and I can see from him that it is a hard job. My boyfriend plastered this room and did the floor. We did not pay him. He just helped. I am staying with him and my daughter that is why he is doing the floor in the other room. I would like to look for a job and then hire a builder to finish the two rooms.”

In this case, the plot belongs to a retired mother who, at the time of survey, was living in a village outside Lobatse. The daughter, who was residing in the house with her own child and school going young brothers, was unemployed and, therefore, unable to hire a builder. However, the boyfriend, who was a builder, did some construction work on the house ‘free’ of charge or return for sexual favours, free accommodation and domestic upkeep. Sexual relationships had been extended into housing relationships. The respondent was, however, desirous to enhance her bargaining power by getting paid employment (money) and hiring a builder. In other words, a job would decrease her vulnerability and dependence on the boyfriend.

6.3.2 Avoiding confrontation over money with husbands

Married women employed strategies based on cooperation (rather than non-cooperation and confrontation) in order to convince their male partners into spending more money on self-help housing. The experience of a woman elaborated below summarises these strategies:

“... I encouraged him to extend the house. Men do not know how to use money wisely. If you see that the man is not using the money properly, then you encourage him by doing other things so that he can think that my wife is really doing well. If he gives you say Pula 2000, you use very carefully so that he thinks that my wife is very clever – she knows how to use the money rather than demanding more money.

... I sold chibuku and traditional beer in order to get some money and help my husband. I did not want to just sit at home and let him do everything. After selling the beer, I hired people to mould bricks. I also helped by drawing water for builder and cooking for them. I also gave the builders some chibuku. Before we started building, we agreed that he would buy cement, metal sheets and rafters and pay the builders... During construction time, I helped by mixing concrete for making bricks and mortar. I made bricks. I learnt how to make bricks from my father. I did not lay bricks for house because I am now old. I have seven children ... as a woman you have to be strong and build a house even if the husband

gives you little money when he gets a big salary. You just have to use money wisely.”

First, having convinced her husband on the advantages of extending the house to provide adequate accommodation for the family, she undertook to prove to her husband that she is trustworthy and thrift with money. Second, she obtained his commitment on how to share responsibilities in the housing process. She could fall back on this commitment whenever additional funds were required. Third, instead of often demanding more money from the husband, she stretched whatever she got from him through supplementation with money she obtained through informal businesses. Furthermore, she devised cost saving mechanisms by working as a labourer – drawing water, mixing concrete and cooking for the builders. These strategies enabled her to bargain for more funds from the husband.

Avoiding confrontation was complemented with seeking consensus – not only on sharing responsibilities but on how to spend money as well. Consensus seeking was particularly vital in households where both couples were formally employed. Although the woman in the following case took the lead by applying for the plot and having it registered in her name, she endeavoured to carry her partner on board by seeking consensus in decision making at critical points. While her leadership was characterised by 'I' - I applied for, I wanted, I hired, I have put and I intend, consensus was characterised by 'we' - we discussed, we decided, we agreed, and we paid. In practice, the woman undertook all the preliminary work that did not require money (such as applying for the plot and deciding on the house size) then involved and sought agreement with the male partner on issues necessitating the use of money. Commitment and consensus was obtained through cooperation and pooling monetary resources together. Both partners combined their incomes, made a shopping list and budgeted together. These are the words:

“... I applied for the plot and it was given in my name. Both my husband and myself agreed to the [house] plan and later the SHHA people approved it ... then we started building. The SHHA people showed us where to erect the house on the yard. We built a four-bedroom house because I wanted enough space for the furniture and children. We were both working. At the end of each month, we would contribute our money together and make a budget -- money for buying food, materials and everything we needed. We just listed the things and budgeted from that whole amount of money ...”

6.3.3 Male labelling

Responses from some single and cohabiting women revealed that cooperation with their male partners was less forthcoming. As noted above (section 6.2) men who were unable or unwilling to provide funds or labour for housing were labelled as being lazy, stupid or incapable of making wise decisions. While women may have employed nagging as a strategy to force men into spending more time, energy and money on housing, the complaints indicate that, unlike married spouses, casual male partners are reluctant to spend money on their girlfriends' properties.

6.3.4 Being Trustworthy

Although single women received cold shoulders from their male partners, they negotiated more successfully with men outside the domestic sphere. In the following case, the respondent negotiated with two men: the employer and a builder. She obtained a cash loan from the employer and repaid the loan through monthly reductions. She also obtained 'free managerial labour' from the builder. The builder bought and assembled building materials on her behalf. Her story:

" ... At the time I started building this house, I was working as a housemaid and running a tuck shop like this one. At that time, the tuck shop was making a lot of money. I combined my salary and the money from the tuck shop. My son, who was employed by a co-operative, occasionally gave me some money. I also borrowed some money from my boss. He lent me 1000 Pula that I used to buy rafters. I repaid the loan through monthly deductions. ... I hired people to mould the bricks. I was working late so I had no time to make bricks. Sometimes I watered the bricks. I first saw him around building for other people then I took him to Mochudi to build a house for me there. Then he built this one. I knew the builder. I would give him money, which he would use to buy materials and later show me the receipts."

Other women interviewed in Lobatse said they had obtained interest free loans in the form of building material from hardware shop owners or opportunities to pay builders in instalment long after they had completed construction works. Being 'trustworthy' was the strongest tool used by women to negotiate with men in the public sphere. She borrowed money from the employer and repaid it. She also trusted the builder with money for buying building materials on her behalf.

6.3.5 Solidarity and networking

Solidarity and networking, especially among single women, was a widespread strategy employed in negotiating with men and other women in the community. A number of women told the author that they pooled their money and other resources together in order to raise their working capital. The experience of one woman who obtained a plot from her grandmother after failing to acquire a plot of her own from SHHA because she was unemployed is a good example. Despite being unemployed, she was able to raise money by cooperating with other women who were unemployed. At first, she tried to raise money on her own but soon realised she was not making any headway. Then she decided to collaborate with another unemployed woman who was also trying to develop her plot. They raised money together, mixed concrete in one place and assisted each other to transport it to the construction sites. They also purchased bricks together. Using 'trust', they obtained the bricks from a male builder on loan. The woman also obtained other building materials at interest free loans from a shopkeeper.

6.3.6 Personal involvement

Personal involvement is one strategy that cuts across all the cases cited above and which came out strongly during the interviews. With the exception of women residing

and cohabiting with men, all female respondents (whether married or single parents) expressed great concern and the need for their own house – especially for the welfare and benefit of their children. Consequently, they worked hard to acquire land and money for building the houses. They spent time and energy to raise money and/or prove to their male partners that housing was more important to their families than leisure and other activities.

However, cohabiting women were less enthusiastic about developing their partners' plots. In one case (narrated earlier) the respondent who was cohabiting with a man employed by a government ministry was unwilling to contribute any money to the development of her partner's house.

6.3.7 Other strategies

As noted earlier, several modifications were made to prototype house designs supplied to plot holders by SHHA officers. First, plot owners simply asked builders to increase the number of rooms and/or sizes without reference to the SHHA office. They also converted indoor spaces designated for toilets and bathrooms to bedrooms, which was a logical initiative given that Woodhall area lacked a central sewerage system to enable the use of water borne sanitation facilities. Second, some plot owners asked the builders to erect pitched roofs for their houses instead of the flat roofs designed by SHHA technical officers. Third, others took SHHA house plans but asked private draughtsmen to design houses of their liking for them. These modifications were undertaken in order to increase indoor living space while satisfying SHHA conditions and Lobatse Town Council building regulations.

6.4 GENDER CONTRACTS

This section seeks to identify and highlight gender contracts – the unwritten rules and agreements – between men and women in the self-housing process as shaped by the above contemporary household and state structures. As noted in Chapter 3, the Botswana society has, over the last hundred or so years, experienced tremendous social, economic, political, cultural and environmental transformations – including the composition and organisation of household structures and power relationships at household and community levels. First, there has been the emergence of widespread and socially accepted women headed households. As heads of households, women have attained the same social status as that which has traditionally been accorded to male heads of households. As household heads, women have to make decisions that would, customarily, be made by men. Second, a substantial proportion of women (single and married) have become breadwinners – again according women economic status similar to that of men.

Third, despite the increase in the number and proportion of female breadwinners, the majority of women in Lobatse (as well as elsewhere in Botswana) are either unemployed or employed in lowly remunerated jobs. Thus poverty is more widespread among women and women headed households than among men and men headed households. Fourth, although traditional patriarchal structures have largely been replaced by democratic structures, most state organs and institutions are dominated by men - especially at the levels of decision-making and policy formulation. Fifth, the above changes and transformations notwithstanding, the

Botswana society remains a patriarchal society in terms of public image and every day life as evidenced by contradictions in official policies and practices.

It is worth emphasising that while gender contracts in traditional Tswana societies were shaped by men's control of resources critical to subsistence livelihood – land and cattle – as well as dominance and exclusion of women from the public sphere, analysis of data in this study shows that negotiation and definition of gender contracts in self-help housing in Lobatse were influenced by at least four concrete realities: (i) male domination of state apparatus responsible for controlled access to land; (ii) gendered income disparities; (iii) lack of 'modern' construction skills on the part of women; and (iv) the type of housing structures permitted by the state in self-help housing areas.

6.4.1 House construction is 'masculine work'

A principal gender contract, from which other contracts in self-help housing appear to be derived, is the widespread acceptance that only men could undertake house building and related construction work in Lobatse. Although some women had previously built traditional houses in their home villages and unplanned areas in Lobatse, female respondents said they could not build houses under self-help housing schemes. They had internalised their inability to build modern houses. "Nature has made us [women] believe that housing is a man's job. Women are naturally weak and men are strong," said one woman. Another female respondent said, "This [building houses] is a difficult job meant specifically for men. Women are not able to do this".

Through the enforcement of urban development standards, building codes and regulations, state apparatus had mystified self-help housing and, therefore, defined what is socially acceptable housing. As observed in Section 5.3, to date the overwhelming majority of people equipped with modern building skills and abilities to read and interpret engineering and architectural drawings and plans are male. These are the people who can effectively physically participate in house construction.

6.4.2 Men are responsible for housing provision

The second contract is a logical follow up to the first one in that respondents expected men, the builders, to provide houses for their families. As noted in section 6.3 above most respondents interviewed in Lobatse said it was the responsibility of men to provide houses. Only 15% considered women to be responsible for housing provision. Slightly over a quarter of the respondents (28%) thought that both male and female household members are responsible. These findings contradict the traditional gender contract in Botswana where women were responsible for housing provision. Then, men were expected to look after cattle – a contract that appears to be binding to date as almost three-quarters of the 169 respondents interviewed in the Lobatse self-help housing areas expected men to provide expensive and socially highly valued items such as cars and cattle. Asked why men in Lobatse should provide houses for their families, respondents tended to argue that 'since men 'are household heads and strong and as housing is a big task, they have to be responsible'. Others argued that the 'Father has to provide a house using the mother's idea'.

6.4.3 Women furnish and take care of houses

An overwhelming majority (72%) of the respondents interviewed said they expected women to provide furniture and domestic appliances. Less than one fifth of the respondents (17%) believe it is the responsibility of both men and women. These expectations are consistent with the traditional gender reproductive contract where women were responsible for the domestic chores. “Women take care of the house. Men use the house and do not take great care about how the house is organised”, said one woman. “Although men are heads, women are overseers of all household matters” said another woman emphasising the role of women as house minders.

6.4.4 Men make financial decisions in self-help housing.

Both qualitative and quantitative data presented in Chapter 5 showed that male household members are expected to make financial decisions in the self-help housing process. Male dominance in decision-making is more pronounced in matters having monetary implications such as making final decisions on whether to build own house or not (section 5.4.3). Men made the final decisions to build own houses in 43% of the responses compared to 22% for women. In the majority of men headed household (64%), final decisions to build their own houses were made by male partners compared to 24% in female-headed households.

Furthermore, a higher proportion of men (38%) made final decisions in women headed households than women did (12%) in men headed-households. The ratio of joint decision-making was higher in female-headed households than in male-headed ones – at 22% and 16% respectively. Thus, effectively, men in Lobatse participated more in deciding to build their own houses than women did. Again these findings are inconsistent with Tswana culture where decisions on when to build new houses were the domain of female spouses.

6.4.5 Women play supportive roles in self-help housing processes

Most respondents said they expected women, especially married women, to play supportive roles to husbands in the provision of housing. As one woman put it, “mother is always the one who pushes the husband to do everything” including housing. According to some respondents, “... women can provide housing if men fail” and when “men are not there, women can do the job”. Thus women are expected to be supportive when the male partner is around and active or step in when the male partner is absent or incapable of providing housing for the family.

In their supportive role women may contribute funds for buying building materials and paying builders; supervise builders; and/or cooking food for builders. The exact nature of support rendered, as noted earlier, depends on marital status and whether the woman is or is not living with her male partner. For example, cases where women contributed funds for buying building materials were very negligible (about 1%) in male-headed households compared to almost 18% in female-headed households. It is worth noting that in almost 52% of the cases, funds for buying building materials came from various members in women headed households compared to just over 21% in male-headed households – emphasising the emerging gender contract. That is, where there is a male spouse, it his responsibility to provide housing for the family.

Furthermore, women (female partners and daughters) are expected to cater for builders. Women alone catered for builders in 71% of the households interviewed while men alone featured in only 4% of all households interviewed. None of the male partners catered for builders in households headed by women. This finding is consistent with the traditional gender contract where cooking and other domestic chores are considered to be women's responsibilities.

Despite the supportive gender contract, women compete with men on decisions regarding house sizes and designs. Although about 31% of decisions on house sizes in the study area were made by male partners compared to 29% made by female partners, the ratio of decisions made by men was almost twice that of women in male-headed households. The opposite was true in female-headed households – again highlighting the emerging gender contract of assigning housing responsibilities to men when there is one.

With regard to house designs, male partners accounted for 30% compared to 27% for female partners. The general pattern of decision making on house designs by male/female heads of households was similar to that observed for decisions on house sizes – i.e. men dominating in male-headed households and women in female-headed households. Probably more surprising was the unexpected SHHA influence. SHHA was responsible for 20% of house designs in our sample. SHHA designed almost a quarter of houses in male-headed households while women heads preferred other designers. About 13% of female heads used other 'designers'.

During in-depth interviews a number of women criticized house plans supplied by SHHA offices for being too small or having too few rooms to adequately accommodate household furniture and domestic activities. "... I bought the house plan from other people and not SHHA. I paid Pula 250 for the plan. I did not like SHHA plans because the measurement for rooms are very small ...” said a female respondent. "... I did not like [the SHHA house plan]. I did not like the way the house was designed. There was no front or back. You had to enter the house from the side” said another woman who believes SHHA house plans disregard Tswana culture.

6.4.6 Married women should not own land rights

Despite several pieces of legislation and amendments (section 3.4), land tenure contracts have not been changed in practice. Women continue to be excluded or otherwise discriminated against in the allocation and utilisation of land. The 'out of community of property' option is not readily acceptable by intending couples because it is widely believed that women who acquire land and houses under their own names are not totally committed to the marriage contract. To assure husbands of their commitment, women always choose the 'in community of property' option. Indeed, as the Registrar of Deeds told me, marriage officials hardly present the options to the intending couples. They routinely complete the 'in community of property' certificates for the wedding couple. The registrar's office was at one time concerned because all marriages from a certain district were 'out of community of property'. On investigation, they found that the "district had run out of the proper forms" (personal communication). Apparently, they do not feel concerned when all marriages celebrated nation-wide are 'in community of property'.

The allocation of SHHA plots also tended to favour men. First, as noted earlier, due mainly to differences in employment status, more men often qualified for allocation of plots than women. Second, whenever a man and a woman were living together, the plot would be registered in the man's name regardless of whether they were married or cohabiting and/or whether they were married in or out of community of property. Even if the woman applied for the plot, it would be registered in the man's name as long as the officers were knowledgeable of the marriage or cohabiting status. This practice may be linked to the traditional land tenure contracts whereby only men could hold land rights. Third, whenever they are unable to acquire land rights on their own, some single women used male acquaintances to do so.

Although rules governing access to and ownership of land rights have been legally changed in favour of women, in practice the traditional land tenure contract still predominates. As noted in section 3.4, the legal changes were not specifically designed to address women's disadvantaged position in a society dominated by men, but rather to appear not to be officially discriminating against women. Patriarchal structures and gender systems continue to be propagated through the adoption of 'gender neutral' and legal technicalities which do not readily translate into enabling women – especially single women – to own land rights.

As argued earlier (section 3.4.4), the persistence of the gender contract whereby 'husbands' only may hold land rights may be linked to changes in the meaning and value of landed property – from use to exchange value. Houses in traditional Tswana societies had only use values - that is households built houses for owner occupation and not for subletting, renting or sale. In these societies only livestock - especially cattle - had social and exchange value. It appears that SHHA officials too viewed housing in terms of use value – as a shelter, that is, a hygienic structure that protects its inhabitants from bad elements of the weather such as rain, sun, wind and cold. Hence the emphasis on durable building materials, sanitation facilities, water supply and adherence to building regulations. They even made it illegal to let, sublet or sell self-help houses. Conditions on the Certificate of Rights (COR) require plot holders to get written consent of the council before renting or selling houses developed in SHHA areas. While some respondents upheld the use value of housing as well, others appreciated its monetary value. The former wanted secure accommodation for themselves and their children while the later foresaw opportunities for renting part of their houses.

Thus persistent attempts to exclude married women from ownership of land rights are designed to disempower them and, consequently, uphold the elements of the traditional marriage contract.

6.5 WHY CHANGES IN GENDER ROLES AND CONTRACTS?

This section accounts for changes in gender roles and relations in Botswana on the basis of the theoretical framework adopted in Section 2.4. It argues that gender roles and relationships in pre-colonial Botswana were determined by the intersection patriarchal ideologies and power structures with the subsistence economic systems, regional geopolitics and environmental conditions. It further argues that while shifts in gender roles and relationships experienced during the colonial era were a result of colonial and Western cultural influences, post independence changes were occasioned

by the demise of chieftainship, mineral led economic transformations and protracted Western influences.

6.5.1 Traditional gender roles

It can be argued that, in the past, gender roles in Botswana – whereby women were responsible for designing, building and maintaining houses - were shaped by private and public patriarchal structures, which were in turn a reflection of the fragile environment, modes of production, social insecurity, and frequent intertribal wars that characterised the region. The intertribal wars were fought by men over land and cattle and men, rightly or wrongly, considered it right to control their ownership and disposal. Then men's power was driven from the ownership and control of these two resources – which were the most valued resources in the region. Because of its fragility, land had to be utilised very carefully, hence the distinct and segregated land use zones observed in each tribal area. The insecurity also contributed to the determination of land use and settlement patterns – the latter being symbolised by the horseshoe layout of homesteads noted in section 3.2.3.

The need to respect land use zones and to protect cattle that grazed far from home, obliged men to spend most of their days' time out there. Men also hunted and collected wild products from these areas during the daytime. Over time, this led to separate and distinct spheres: the domestic sphere or the homestead and its surroundings customarily occupied by women and the extra-domestic sphere or areas located away from homesteads often occupied by men and their cattle.

To fight wars and protect their cattle, men in each tribe needed to work together – in solidarity against men from other tribes. Chiefs and headmen, who may have initially been war leaders and commanders, became symbols of unity and solidarity. They had to network, trust each other, co-operate and respect chain commands. To function as a unit, men in each tribe had to share secrets, new skills, values, beliefs and attitudes amongst themselves. Co-operating meant abiding by agreed rules, procedures and secrets; and trusting that none will betray them.

It appears that over time, men (and members of society) came to regard cattle keeping, hunting and waging intertribal wars as superior to cultivation, building houses and other tasks located into the domestic sphere. At the same time, men's regular daytime withdrawal from the domestic sphere became a breakthrough point for them as:

- (i) It excused them from the domestic sphere and its reproductive work;
- (ii) It provided them with time and space to think, be creative and develop skills and knowledge on how to carry out their duties (e.g. hunting, confronting dangerous animals and managing cattle) in the extra-domestic sphere;
- (iii) It provided them with time and space to develop equipment, machines and technology for higher efficiency and production;
- (iv) It provided them time and space to network, exchange ideas, develop solidarities and interest groups, and engage in politics.

In brief, by excusing themselves from reproductive roles and withdrawing from the domestic sphere, men were able to create space and time for themselves to be innovative, creative, and imaginative as well as engage in politics including setting rules and norms that should govern the rights, roles and conduct of men as well as women in each tribal community. The *kgotla* became a place and time for disseminating new rules, passing judgment over offenders and enforcing the penalties. In order to safeguard 'men's interests' and keep 'male secrets', women were barred from attending *kgotla* proceedings although, as noted earlier, these meetings were held within residential zones customarily inhabited by women (and elderly women) during the daytime. The *kgotla* was an extra-domestic place within the domestic sphere from which women were excluded. The exclusion of women from the *kgotla* enabled men to agree on rules that gave them power over the former.

Men's oppression and subordination of women within the domestic sphere (section 3.2) was buttressed by male control of public sphere as represented by the chiefs, headmen and the men that constituted the *kgotla* assembly. Thus domestic or private patriarchy was not only sanctioned and protected by public or state patriarchy but was itself part of the public patriarchy as the same men attended and made decisions at the *kgotla*. Female subservience was ensured through marriage and denying women direct ownership of land and cattle. Consequently, women had less bargaining power than men – unless, of course, they were elderly or daughters/wives of chiefs and headmen. However, regardless of their age and/or royal disposition, women were responsible for building houses for themselves, husbands and their children.

6.5.2 Gender roles during the colonial era

While gender roles and relations in pre-colonial Botswana were largely determined by the intersection of patriarchy, environmental and insecurity due to intertribal wars, gender roles during the colonial period were, as noted in section 3.3, to a very large extent influenced by state policies which, among other things, promoted male labour migration from Botswana to South African farms, mines and towns; weakened chiefs' political and judicial powers; brought intertribal wars to an end; and, above all, established a capitalist market economy. Colonial state policies were complemented by exposure to Western lifestyles (both in South Africa and Botswana) and the introduction of formal education by missionaries.

The introduction of market economies, migrant labour and waged employment provided women with opportunities and a platform for challenging the traditional patriarchal system, redefining gender roles and bargaining for new gender contracts which led to formation of new household structures and weakening of private/domestic patriarchy as women became heads of households and the marriage contract became less relevant.

At the time of initial contacts, European technologies, skills, artefacts and religions were more advanced compared to those that prevailed in Africa. Because of their relatively superior quality, European ways of life, technologies and skills dominated African or indigenous sciences, beliefs and modus operandi. As observed by Mafela (1994 and 1995) and others, the manner in which European technology and skills were transferred to indigenous communities determined the subsequent gender roles, contracts and relations at household and community levels as well as institutional and administrative

structures. The principal early educators, the missionaries, who were mostly male, chose to transfer the advanced construction and other technologies and skills developed in Europe to African men without taking cognisance of the then prevailing gender roles. At about the same time, wives of missionaries taught African women Western housekeeping skills.

It can be argued that had the European missionaries tried to acquire indigenous Tswana construction skills, they would have been taught by women. Probably European women would have become builders of traditional Tswana houses. In the same vein, had building technologies continued to be improved and developed from within, it is most likely that women in Botswana, Lesotho, and other pastoral communities in Africa would have continued to work as architects and builders of 'modern' houses. Conversely, had the transfer been spontaneous rather than taught, it is quite plausible to assume that women, rather than men, would have upheld their house construction roles but adopted building skills and technology originating from Europe into Tswana building technology. As it is, 'Boer thatch' which is an improved or 'modern' grass thatch is carried out by men while traditional thatching continues to be undertaken by women. To date, women build traditional houses while men build modern houses.

Since construction of 'European' style houses was associated with men, early African male builders and their European counterparts became role models to later generations. Of course, missionaries preferred to transfer the construction technologies and skills to African men because during the colonial period (late 19th and early 20th century) the construction industry had become a male dominated sector in Britain and other European countries. To European missionaries and settlers, it was then the most logical or natural way to proceed.

The introduction of European technologies, skills, administrative institutions and religious beliefs did not replace indigenous ones but were rather superimposed over them. To date, Botswana (like most countries in Africa) is characterised by both traditional and foreign (mostly European) elements in almost every sector. Christianity is practised and mixed with indigenous religions; modern medicine is practised in parallel with traditional herbs and witchcraft; commercial farming goes on alongside peasant agriculture; and many households in rural areas build both modern and traditional houses on the same plots. Many Africans belong to two worlds at the same time and/or different times - adhering to traditional ways of life while embracing Western/Christian values. They may reside in modern houses in town and traditional houses in the village, or go to church in the morning and consult traditional 'doctors' in the evening, for example. A substantial number of urban dwellers in Botswana consider their stay in town temporary and only for the purpose of earning money. Their intentions are to go back to their home villages on retirement or for burial (Larsson, 1998).

The first generation of 'European' houses built in Africa belonged to and were occupied by families of European missionaries, settlers and colonial administrators. Other early buildings erected with European technology were churches, schools, hospitals and government offices - some of which continue to punctuate the countryside and/or dominate the urban scene. Overtime some chiefs and wealthy Africans started owning these 'modern' houses. With the proclamation of townships, traditional houses were outlawed in the affected areas. Examples of such townships include Lobatse and

Francistown in Botswana, Salisbury (now Harare) and Bulawayo in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Dar es Salaam and Nairobi in East Africa. Traditional houses were outlawed in these townships as one of the measures designed to protect the health of the European settler.

Although the formal education meted out to women was less professionally oriented compared to that received by men, it nevertheless enabled women to earn their own incomes (independent of men) as nurses, teachers and secretaries. Unmarried mothers set up independent households while many married women became *de facto* household heads – a phenomenon that has persisted to date. While the new status enabled women to have direct access to land for housing and crop farming, it did not affect their exclusion from political, judicial, military and other structures located in the public sphere of men. In other words, patriarchy was weakened at the household level but remained unchallenged at extra-domestic or public level, which may be attributed to two factors – the indirect rule policy adopted by the colonial administrators and the fact that most urbanisation and market exchange forces were taking place out of the country, in South Africa.

6.5.3 Post colonial era – the case of Lobatse

Further shifts in gender roles – and increasing male dominance of the construction industry in particular - noted in section 3.4.5 and Chapter 5 above may be attributed to several factors. First, and most important of them all, shifts in gender roles in post colonial Botswana may be attributed to the declining use and dependence on traditional housing. Men's involvement in the construction industry did not have widespread effects on gender roles during the colonial period mainly because few Western style houses were erected in the country during that era. However, as noted earlier, the use of Western style houses, building materials and techniques have since become popular because of their perceived durability. Factors that have increased the popularity of non-indigenous houses include the country's rapid economic growth, non-availability of traditional building materials (especially appropriate thatch grass and timber poles) and socialization. Traditional houses are currently associated with poverty and lack of development. Furthermore, building rules and regulations discourage and, in practice, outlaw the use of traditional building materials in unprocessed form. For example, mud bricks are not allowed but burnt bricks are. Boer thatch is permitted but traditional thatch is not. The 'Building Control (Grade II Dwelling Houses) Regulations of 1981 - which were designed for low income housing - insist on concrete foundations, walls built of solid bricks or blocks, and roofs of durable and weatherproof materials. The use of concrete foundations precludes the use of traditional materials such as timber poles and mud while weatherproof material requirement for roofing excludes grass as it decays easily. The outlawing of traditional materials rendered women's construction skills useless in urban areas such as Lobatse while the promotion of foreign building skills and materials increased the demand and social value of male labour.

Second, and emanating from the above, is the atrophication of women's traditional building skills. Women's construction skills that were locally developed and perfected generation after generation have been devalued and rendered useless. European missionaries and settlers initiated the atrophication of women's traditional building skills when they failed to recognise the role of women as builders and, at the same

time, ignored local building materials and technologies. With the exception of a few studies (e.g. Ngowi, 1997 and 1997a), no meaningful research has been undertaken locally to either improve the performance and quality of traditional building materials such as mud, grass, poles and stone or to demonstrate and popularise their use. Nor have there been attempts to look for alternative affordable and appropriate local building materials. The abundant stones have so far been overlooked in preference of concrete blocks. Mud bricks have not been improved either. Traditional skills, house designs and patterns have not been adequately studied by local researchers and academicians nor adopted in modern housing in Botswana. It appears everything traditional, indigenous or local is despised, disregarded and prohibited in preference for exotic flavours, which in itself reflects on the type of education, and training received by artisans, architects, engineers, planners and other professionals in the country. As noted by Ngowi (1997a), until recently most technical and professional engineers in Botswana were either foreigners or Batswana trained in Britain or institutions approved by the British universities and institutes.

The atrophication of women's traditional building skills is likely to increase rather than decrease as more and more households in both urban and rural areas opt for 'modern' houses and as more and more villages urbanise. All villages declared urban areas are automatically 'planning areas' and subject to the Town and Country Planning Act building rules and regulations.

Third, both formal and informal (on the job training) educational facilities have tended to exclude women from acquiring 'modern' construction skills. As noted earlier, builders in Lobatse could work with boys but were unwilling to do so with girls. Some boys went to become builders. Despite government policies seeking to ensure equal opportunities and access to vocational education and training to women and persons with disability, education facilities continue to segregate students by sex and to limit the number and proportion of female trainees in construction trades (GOB, 1977: 8 and 1997). At the Lobatse Brigade Centre, for example, boys dominate building trades while girls are concentrated in business-oriented trades where the proportion of male apprentices fell from 29% to 9% between 1995 and 2005 (Table 6.3). Although the proportion of female apprentices in building trades (e.g. plumbing, building, electrical and carpentry) is low, it is increasing. The plumbing trade is close to levelling off having increased from 17% in 1995 to 46% in 2005. Welding too appears to be popular among girls.

At the Lobatse Brigade centre and all over Botswana, enrolment in vocational training centres is dominated by boys who constitute 75-79% of all trainees (GOB, 1993: 41). The majority (50%) of the few girls at vocational training centres enrol in two fields: business and textile trades. Bendera and Mboya (1996) report similar gender streamlining in Tanzania's educational institutions. Besides gender segregation and limiting the number of female trainees admitted to construction apprenticeship, girls are socialised (at domestic and public image levels) into perceiving these trades as being heavy, too complex and unsuitable for women.

Table 6.3 Enrolment at the Lobatse Brigade Centre

Year	1995			2005		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Business / Commerce skills	9 (29%)	22 (71%)	31 (100%)	3 (9%)	37 (91%)	40 (100%)
Plumbing	24 (83%)	5 (17%)	29 (100%)	28 (68%)	13 (32%)	41 (100%)
Building	55 (100%)	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	54 (92%)	5 (8%)	59 (100%)
Carpentry	53 (90%)	6 (10%)	59 (100%)	59 (75%)	20 (25%)	79 (100%)
Electrical	24 (80%)	6 (20%)	30 (100%)	28 (82%)	6 (18%)	34 (100%)
Welding	-	-	-	18 (69%)	8 (31%)	26 (100%)
Total	166 (81%)	39 (19%)	205 (100%)	190 (68%)	89 (32%)	279 (100%)

Source: Centre's administration

Fourth, shifts in gender roles and atrophication of women's skills in house building have been promoted by increased state involvement in self-help housing. Unlike in the past when the role of the state was confined to allocation of residential land rights, the state defines and enforces developing control codes and building regulations – all of which do not provide for the erection of traditional Tswana house or the use of indigenous building materials such as mud bricks, poles and grass as noted in Sections 6.2 and 6.3. State institutions (notably SHHA) permitted the use of indigenous skills and materials for the erection of temporary structures – which were to be demolished upon completion of the 'approved' buildings.

Fifth, commercialisation of construction labour has tended to exclude 'free' non-household labour. Unlike in the past when neighbours, friends and relatives assisted each other on reciprocal basis, house owners have to pay for almost all forms of skilled and semi-skilled labour. Because they lack the requisite training, women can only be engaged as labourers. The exclusion of women from training in construction trades and professions noted above is a men's strategy for protecting their employment or reducing competition from women. It protects men's interests and job market.

It is worth noting that, unlike in Britain and other countries where state laws and labour regulations disallowed women from training in construction trades or joining waged labour in the construction sector, Botswana has no rules that prohibit the training and employment of women as builders. It is through patriarchal practices, ideologies and attitudes that women are systematically excluded from the sector. Sex and biological differences between men and women are often used to justify women's exclusion from construction work. Construction work is presented as being too heavy, complex and inappropriate to women. However, in practice laying burnt bricks is no more demanding in terms of physical labour than laying mud bricks, nor is Boer

thatch more complex than traditional thatch. In fact, female labourers at construction sites in Lobatse undertake more strenuous work (e.g. mixing and transporting concrete mortar) than male builders do.

Although, as noted in section 2.4, Larsson (1989 and 1989a) attributes changes in gender roles in Botswana to the transfer of housing from the domestic sphere of women to the public sphere of men, both qualitative and quantitative data collected by author in Lobatse do not support this argument. Instead, the data showed that women in Lobatse were more concerned about their households' housing needs than men as vindicated by their initiatives, motivation and struggle to build their own houses. They work hard to make their spouses, partners and husbands spend more money and time on self-help houses.

At household level, neither male nor female spouses or partners are builders of their own houses. Women together with their children (both boys and girls) provide labour to builders and undertake unskilled tasks while men are content with giving out funds. Men are paid builders in the extra-domestic sphere. Due to historical reasons, men are more concerned with housing policies and programmes at community and national levels. Men are builders not so much of their houses as of other people's houses which explains why there are very few single male house owners and more female landlords than male landlords in Lobatse, Gaborone, Francistown and other urban centres in the country (Datta, 1995). Furthermore, I did not come across any man who strongly identified himself with his house. However, many female respondents did identify themselves with their houses. Men did not even bother to critique house plans offered by SHHA. In other words, at the household level, housing is still predominantly in the domestic sphere of women – at least in Lobatse.

In summary, we note that while the country's fragile environment, political instability, patriarchal institutions and subsistence forms of agriculture (notably livestock keeping) played a major part in shaping gender roles and relationships during the pre-colonial period, colonial policies and Western cultural influences were largely responsible for changes in household forms as well as gender relations and shifts in gender roles at household levels. Although shifts in gender roles commenced during the colonial era, they become more pronounced and distinct after the country's attainment of independence as the country transformed from a rural subsistent economy to an urbanised market economy. Protracted shifts in gender roles in housing delivery and construction have been due to the decrease in use and popularity of traditional houses which have in turn led to declining demand of women's traditional building skills. Having taken a lead in the acquisition of 'modern' or Western house building skills and technology, men have been unwilling to share these new skills with women.

6.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has noted that changes in gender roles have affected respondents' views and opinions regarding preferences of traditional houses over 'modern' ones and vice versa. While state institutions envisaged the construction of 'modern' houses, some beneficiaries, especially low income single mothers, had wanted to build traditional houses in Lobatse. However, most respondents were satisfied with their 'modern' houses. Widespread use of male builders has been accompanied by shifts in cultural

norms and perceptions of what is or is not a female role in self-help housing. House building has become a 'masculine' job and men who fail to provide houses for their dependents are considered lazy and irresponsible. Women are expected to support their partners, provide furniture and take care of the houses. To overcome constraints in the male and state dominated self-help housing process, women have devised several strategies including pseudo marriages, solidarity and networking, male labelling and being trustworthy. Finally, it has been argued that the above changes have not been due to one single factor (e.g. advent of colonialism and capitalism or transfer of housing from the domestic to the public sphere) but rather to an intersection of several historical, ideological, cultural, political, economical, and environmental factors. While in the past gender roles were shaped by the intersection of patriarchal structures and ideology with subsistence forms of production, regional political instability and the fragile environment, colonial economic state and their attendant male out-migration and cash incomes (as the new sources of livelihoods), resulted in new forms of household structures and the redefinition of gender roles whereby men started to take part in house building activities. Men's take over of house building roles in the post-colonial era has been due to widespread use and preference of non-indigenous building materials and house styles which have been promoted by state institutions and the country's economic boom coupled by the commoditisation of construction labour. The demand for women's traditional building skills have declined and rendered obsolete.

CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 SUMMARY

The main purpose of this section is to highlight and summarise key findings and the contribution made by this thesis in terms of knowledge and theory. The thesis draws on data collected using explorative, observational, interactive and reflective methodological approaches. By adopting in-depth interviews, the researcher was able to relate more closely to respondents than what could have been achieved through the so called 'scientific methods' namely, random sampling and quantitative data collection techniques. The approach created opportunities for the researcher to probe for insights and explanations wherever new findings arose or contradicted themes identified earlier. In this way, it has been possible to identify roles of some actors such as hardware shop owners and 'private' employers who were not anticipated because they are invisible in the current literature. By adopting an explorative approach, it has further been possible to go beyond the traditional premises (such as patriarchy, capitalism, colonisation and modernisation) used to account for the gendered division of labour and shifts in gender roles. Had the thesis adopted predetermined hypothesis and theoretical frameworks, it would have been obliged to reject or accept the hypothesis and speculate on possible reasons and factors that account for any variations and/or similarities. However, through probing and the use of in-depth interviews it has been possible to gain insights, answers and explanations to contradictions and inconsistencies in quantitative data. The historical, pluralistic and holistic approach has made it possible to break away from oppositions of the binaries - namely, men/women, traditional/modern, rural/urban or subsistence/cash economy - that were utilised by previous researchers. Furthermore, by exploring past and contemporary women's roles in the construction industry beyond Botswana and sub-Saharan Africa, it has been possible to demonstrate that shifts in gender roles are not an African or third world phenomenon but a worldwide practice; and that these shifts are neither uniform, linear, unidirectional nor automatic. The thesis has, therefore, been able to contribute to a better understanding of the nature, causes, origins, processes and effects of women's inclusion and exclusion from construction activities and housing delivery processes across cultures, space and time. In addition, the choice of qualitative methodologies has enabled the author to identify emerging gender contracts and various role players at household, community and public levels while quantitative data has been used to indicate the extent of women's inclusion and exclusion from housing delivery processes and the construction industry in Lobatse Township, Botswana and the rest of the world. Finally, the approach has given a voice to women builders, house owners and tenants in Lobatse.

7.1.1 Shifts in gender and institutional roles in housing delivery

As expected, this thesis has shown that gender roles in housing processes and construction in Lobatse differ from those experienced in traditional Tswana societies where women were responsible for designing, building and maintaining houses for themselves, their children and husbands. Unlike previous studies (e.g. Talle, 1987; Ensminger, 1987; and Eldredge, 1993) who just identified men's take over of women's traditional roles in housing, this thesis has identified the roles played by

men, women, boys and girls in various forms of households as well as the roles played by non-household members in self-help housing processes. The thesis notes two forms of housing delivery processes: waged and non-waged processes. The waged housing delivery process employs a few women. The few women employed in the waged house construction industry work are unskilled, badly-paid labourers whose main duties are to mix concrete, pass bricks, clean buildings or cook for male builders. Female labourers in the waged construction industry in Lobatse are young women who dropped out of school or failed to pursue training in the so-called feminine professions – e.g. nursing and education.

The thesis has noted that, like the waged house construction industry, the non-waged or self-help house building processes in Lobatse are also dominated by men. However, unlike previous studies which created an impression that husbands had taken over their wives' roles in house building, this thesis has revealed that few husbands and wives participated in the actual erection of their houses. They, instead, hire skilled builders to do the work for them. Household labour - consisting mainly of mothers and their young children (both boys and girls) - is utilised in the non-technical jobs such as excavating foundation trenches, production and watering of concrete blocks as well as cleaning up. It has also revealed the increased participation of state institutions in self-help housing processes. Furthermore, unlike traditional Tswana housing processes which comprised of three main tasks - land acquisition, assembly of building materials and erection of structures – tasks in self-help housing processes in Lobatse and other towns consist of ten stages, namely: -

1. Completion, submission and verification of land application forms
2. Acquisition of certificate or land ownership title
3. Preparation or acquisition of house plan
4. Application and acquisition of building permit
5. Raising of funds or credit finance
6. Assembly / purchase of building materials
7. Hiring of builders
8. Erection of structures
9. Supervision and payment of builders
10. Acquisition of occupation permit

As Ngowi (1997:293) observes, construction has been split into a maze of specialised tasks which has, in turn, necessitated creation of several intermediaries in the form of project managers or contractors, foremen, supervisors, charge hands, etc. In the same vein, self-help house construction is no longer a few days' activity but may take months or years. Indeed, many houses in Lobatse self-help housing areas look incomplete to date. As shown in Table 7.1, the only traditional roles which women have carried into the contemporary self-help housing processes are cooking and brewing/serving beer to builders. This activity is, however, executed by unemployed or home based self-employed women. Adult girls do not help their mothers with this traditional task probably because they are usually busy trying to earn a living for themselves. Both women and men have retained their roles of assembling building materials although the types of materials being assembled are no longer traditional. While traditionally women collected grass and mud and men assembled materials for roof construction, there is no gendered division of materials collected in urban housing. Men and/or women collect all types of materials required in the housing

process. The thesis revealed that the extent to which women are involved in the collection of these materials depends on their marital and employment status. Unmarried women and unemployment mothers tend to carry out all tasks of assembling building materials on their own while married and/or employed women tend to share the task with their spouses. Male and female spouses of the respective households undertake no other traditional activity, besides assembly of materials, cooking and brewing beer.

Table 7.1 Traditional and Modern Gender Roles in Self-help Housing

Sex / status of household member(s)	Traditional roles	Contemporary roles
Male spouses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acquisition of land 2. Collection of timber poles 3. Erection of roof structure 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide funds 2. Pay labourers and builders 3. Assemble building materials 4. Supervise and manage construction works
Female spouses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Setting and design of structures on the plot 2. Moulding of mud bricks 3. Erection of walls 4. Assembling grass and thatching of roofs 5. Repair and maintenance of structures 6. Cooking and brewing beer for volunteer builders 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supervise and manage construction works 2. Provide funds 3. Assemble building materials 4. Work as no-paid casual labourers 5. Water and pack cement bricks 6. Cook and brew beer for sale and/or serving builders
Adult daughters	- same as female spouses -	Provide funds
Adult sons	- same as male spouses -	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide funds 2. Build toilets, walls etc. 3. Work as non-paid casual labourers 4. Decorate walls
Young children (boys and girls)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist female spouses in collecting water and moulding bricks 2. Helping with casual activities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mould cement bricks 2. Work as non-paid casual labourers
Other people	Relatives and neighbours provide free assistance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relatives and male friends provide money as grant or loan 2. Male friends provide unpaid for skilled labour to female house developers 3. Male builders provide paid skilled and unskilled labour
State institutions	Chiefs and headmen allocate land	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shopkeepers, banks and employers provide financial and building material loans 2. Government services and allocates land; provides technical advices, house plans and building material loans; sets and enforces building regulations and standards

Source: author's construction

Of the numerous non-traditional tasks, provision of funds is the single activity undertaken by all adult members of both sexes in each household. Relatives and friends also contribute money. The thesis revealed that adult daughters undertake no other activity besides providing funds even if they had previously participated in house building activities during their younger ages. Supervision of builders and management of construction activities are also not gendered. All other activities are either gender and/or age specific. Women and young children participate in casual/manual work such as carrying bricks, drawing water, mixing concrete and cleaning – tasks that are looked upon by adult daughters and male spouses. It is specifically because men do not participate in such activities that women consider men as being lazy to do. Most children working as labourers and/or machine operators belong to unemployed, single mothers.

The thesis revealed that adult sons in Lobatse physically participated in self-help house construction activities more than any other age-sex group within various households. They provided funds; built simple structures such as toilets and fence walls; excavated foundation trenches; decorated walls; and/or worked as non-paid casual labourers. Their active participation in construction work was contrary to traditional norms whereby they would be looking after cattle and well distanced from the domestic sphere of women and house building activities. Their involvement is by all accounts inspired by the presence of skilled male builders employed to erect the houses. Adult daughters lack role models and drop out of the construction industry while boys go on to become builders, carpenters and so on. In this way, ‘modern’ building skills are passed from one male generation to the other unlike in the past when they passed on from one female generation to the other.

The thesis also revealed that reciprocal labour from relatives, neighbours and friends has been replaced with financial assistance. Except for sons who have taken over the task of decorating houses from women, there has generally been no reversal of roles at household level. Husbands and male spouses have not taken over roles that were traditionally the preserve of wives, daughters and female spouses. As indicated in Table 7.2, traditionally female tasks have been taken over mainly by men from outside the household or public institutions. State institutions, whose past roles were limited to facilitating male ownership of land rights, have become very dominant and a constraint to some plot holders – especially women.

In brief, this thesis has gone beyond the findings of previous studies which only recorded the transfer of house building activities from women’s domain to men’s realm. It has identified roles played by male and female household and non-household members as well as the increased participation of state institutions in self-help housing processes.

Table 7.2 Reallocation of traditionally female roles in self-help housing processes

ACTIVITY	NEW ACTORS / RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTIONS
Setting and design of structures on the plot	1. Council through SHHA 2. Hired male builders 3. Hired male architects / technicians
Moulding of bricks	1. Hired male builders 2. Young children (boys and girls)
Erection of walls	1. Hired male builders 2. Adult sons
Thatching of roofs	1. Hired male builders 2. Adult sons
Decoration / painting of walls	1. Adult sons 2. Hired male builders
Repair and maintenance of structures	1. Hired male builders 2. Adult sons
Cooking and brewing beer for builders	Female spouses

Source: Author's construction

7.1.2 Effects of shifts in gender and institutional roles in housing

The thesis has noted, in the first instance, that women's desires or plans to build their own houses are punctuated, at the cultural level, by numerous barriers including reinterpretation of plot allocation criteria to exclude married women from land ownership; discrimination against unemployed and self-employed women; provision of house plans incommensurate with household needs; and the need to satisfy non-indigenous building standards and norms. At the household level, women's barriers to self-help housing include male partners' unwillingness to spend larger proportions of their incomes on housing while at the personal level the barriers include inadequate income among unemployed and low-income mothers as well as lack of time among employed women.

To access self-help housing plots, single women in Lobatse presented male acquaintances to SHHA officers as their 'husbands' while others used cohabitation to access male labour. Solidarity, cooperation and male labelling were other strategies employed by single women to raise funds or get financial and labour assistance from male friends or partners. Demonstrating that one is thrifty and trustworthy as well as avoiding confrontation were strategies employed by married women to ensure their partners invest more funds in self-help housing. Women used 'trust' to get 'financial' loans from builders, employers and shopkeepers.

The thesis also identified gender contracts – the unwritten rules and norms that govern relationships and expectations between men and women in self-help housing process. It noted that, contrary to traditional norms, both male and female respondents in Lobatse view construction activities as 'masculine work'. Consequently, men are expected to provide their households with houses while women are expected to furnish and take care of the houses. Women are also expected to support male partners in their endeavour to raise funds and/or build the family house. These gender contracts differ from the traditional Tswana gender contract where housing was the

responsibility of women / wives. The traditional gender contract whereby married women are denied land rights was also rife in Lobatse self-help housing projects.

7.1.3 Accounting for shifts in gender roles in housing construction and processes

As noted earlier (Sections 1.2 and 2.4), previous studies (e.g. Larsson, 1989a; and Eldredge, 1993) attributed men's take over of women's roles in house building and management to colonialism, the intrusion of capitalism and, subsequently, the transfer of housing from the domestic sphere of women to the public sphere of men. These explanations were criticised for failing to indicate why housing was initially located in the women's sphere and why women have not reclaimed their roles long after the demise of colonialism. Instead, the tendency throughout the region has been to edge women out of both waged and non-waged house building processes (Sections 1.1.5-1.1.6; and 5.3-5.4). To address these shortcomings, this thesis adopted a holistic and pluralistic approach taking into consideration historical, political, cultural, social, economic and environmental factors. It has argued that, in the context of Botswana, pre-colonial gender roles reflected (i) the dominance of patriarchal structures at all societal levels; (ii) subsistence modes of production; (iii) dependence on livestock and wildlife products; and (iv) frequent intertribal wars over land and cattle. The fragile environment that characterised the region led to the segregation of land use activities and the distinction between the domestic and extra-domestic spheres. While women controlled and dominated activities (including housing, subsistence farming and food processing) carried out around homesteads, men controlled extra-domestic activities such as livestock keeping and hunting. With the passage of time, women developed and perfected skills for managing activities in the domestic sphere while men did likewise for activities located in the extra-domestic sphere. As Larsson (1999) rightly observed, marriage was the force that united the two spheres while patriarchal ideologies informed cultural norms and rules about how things are or should be.

However, due to Botswana's colonisation and exposure to British and Western culture (including education, housing and building styles), gender roles and relations started to experience some transformations. Colonial taxation policies were particularly critical in the disintegration of traditional gender roles, contracts and relationships. The policies forced men into regular and prolonged absence from their home villages while in employment in South Africa – thereby enabling women to become temporary *de facto* household heads. The commoditisation of labour enabled some women to be self-reliant and economically independent of men – which, in turn, enabled them to bring up their own children without the support of male partners. Thus, colonialism provided an opportunity for women to challenge male power and the marriage gender contract. As either *de facto* or *de jure* heads of households, these women had gained the same social status as male heads of household and, therefore, became entitled to land ownership – a right to which all women were previously denied.

It was during the colonial period that men started to take part in construction activities – partly because men had been exposed to working with European builders and partly because, as noted by Larsson and Larsson (1984), of the long distances involved in the collection of timber poles. Exposure to European builders demystified the

traditional female exclusive nature of the house building sector while, as noted earlier, colonial policies outlawing shifting of villages increased distances to natural resources such as forests. Waged employment also contributed to men's entry into roles such as house building, cooking, gardening and housekeeping, which had hitherto been located in domestic sphere of women. Although women heads of households had achieved the same status as men heads of households, women – regardless of their marital status – continued to be excluded from political leadership and participation in decision-making at the community/public image level. That is, patriarchy had only been weakened at the domestic or private level. The persistence of public patriarchy may be attributed to the indirect rule system adopted by the colonial administration with respect to Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and other countries in the region.

However, since Botswana's attainment of independence women have been able to make further inroads into traditionally male arenas including chieftainship, political and civil leadership as exemplified by a number of female chiefs and headmen, cabinet ministers, permanent secretaries, high court judges, senior magistrates, bank managers and the like. Women rights have also been improved through amendment of laws such as the Tribal Land Act (1993), Deeds Registry Act (1996) and Married Persons Property Act (1971) that excluded sections of women – especially married women – from direct property ownership. The Government policies on land, housing, employment and other sectors have also shifted from favouring men to being 'gender neutral'. These achievements may be attributed (as noted in Section 3.4.4) to the country's post colonial economic transformations, women's self-empowerment, replacement of chieftainship with democratic governance, globalisation and other social forces. This has resulted into the weakening of patriarchy as the dominant ideology.

Despite the replacement and weakening of patriarchal structures and ideologies, this thesis has observed protracted exclusion of women from the housing construction industry – including self-help housing – although women consider building their own houses as the most viable solution to their housing problems. The thesis has attributed continued exclusion of women from construction activities in Botswana and Lobatse in particular to several factors including widespread adoption and preference of non-traditional building materials and house designs which have, in turn, rendered women's construction skills irrelevant; urban development regulations that promote the use of non-traditional building materials and discourage indigenous ones; social and cultural attitudes that discourage women from training in 'modern' construction trades; commercialisation of construction labour; unwillingness of formal and informal institutions to train women in construction trades; and persistent patriarchal attitudes or men's desire to exclude women from occupations perceived to be 'masculine'.

It appears that due to the effects of globalisation, the current rate of women's participation in the construction industry in Botswana is similar to those reported for European, Asian and Latin American countries except that in Europe the majority of the few women in the construction industry are employed as administrators, technical and professional employees - with the exception of Denmark where the majority of women work as painters. Like Asian and Latin American countries, the majority of women in the waged construction industry in Botswana work as labourers, which is quite different from their traditional disposition. However, unlike Asian countries and

pre-capitalist Britain where women's earnings were paid to husbands, women in the waged house construction sector in Lobatse are single girls working for themselves and their children. Furthermore, the current distribution of women and men according to occupational categories and/or industrial sectors in Botswana (Section 3.4.5) is similar to that of Britain as reported by Yeandle (1996a) and Irwin and Bottero (2000). In brief, rather than singling out one or two factors as the major determinants of shifts in gender roles within the housing delivery and construction processes, the thesis has adopted a holistic and pluralist approach.

7.2 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As noted in Chapter 5, both waged and non-waged house construction activities in Lobatse and in Botswana in general are dominated by men. The few women in the sector are employed mostly as labourers and cleaners while women who want to build their own houses have to hire male builders. Women have been deprived of their traditional and cheaper way of providing housing for themselves, their children and husbands. Unless deliberate and proactive interventions are put in place, current trends indicate that masculinisation of the housing construction industry will intensify rather than weaken due to a number of factors. First, as noted earlier, the use of and preference for non-traditional materials and houses is becoming increasingly more widespread as evidenced by census results. That is, the demand and application of women's traditional building skills is declining – and may become obsolete in the near future. Second, the type of 'modern' houses currently promoted in both urban and rural areas demand high construction skills than those built in Lobatse during the 1970s and 1980s. To the government, SHHA houses appear incomplete and in need of improvements (GOB, 2000) probably because the majority of them are built of cheap concrete bricks and poor workmanship. They are neither externally plastered nor painted. Urban development standards adopted under the Accelerated Land Servicing Programme, for example, outlawed the use of pit latrines and communal water taps with central sewerage and private water connections which have not only increased construction costs but raised the quality of standards required in low cost housing. Higher standards mean decreased participation of people without the requisite training – the majority being women.

Third, although the national policy on vocational education and training (GOB, 1997a) acknowledges that women have less access to trades training, no concrete practical measures have been designed to enrol more women than men in building. The current general trend at vocational colleges and brigades is to reserve about 10% of the vacancies in traditionally male trades for women. This is not adequate because it will only perpetuate the status quo. In terms of gender equality, the most plausible alternative would be to reserve, at least in principle, half of the vacancies to girls only. In principle this is because, due to socialisation, there may not be enough numbers of girls willing to train in building trades. However, with concerted efforts aimed at deconstructing gender myths, more and more girls may enrol into construction trades training. The deconstruction will require revision of school curricula, public education and sensitisation of young girls.

Women's training in 'modern' construction trade is plausible because, with or without amending building regulations, it is unlikely that Lobatse residents will ever revert to

traditional houses. Indeed respondents who had initially wanted to build traditional houses are now happy with the 'modern' ones. In some countries, e.g. Tanzania, whole neighbourhoods with traditional houses built during the colonial period were razed to the ground and rebuilt soon after attainment of independence under the banner of 'slum clearance' (Grohns, 1972). The only country within the region in which an independent government has tolerated traditional housing in urban areas is Malawi where neighbourhoods have been reserved for traditional housing in the country's new capital city of Lilongwe.

Besides encouraging and promoting women's training in construction trades, there is need to reconsider the state's position on pursuing and maintaining 'gender neutral' policies, strategies and programmes. This thesis has once again showed that 'gender neutral' or blind policies and projects do not benefit all households and people equally. It has demonstrated that although women are more concerned with households' housing needs state policies often target 'men' as if all households are headed by men. Furthermore, as shown in this thesis and other studies, men do not always give as much priority to housing as women do (Chant, 1996: 15; Lee-Smith, 1997; and Gwagwa, 1998). It is, therefore, advisable that future housing projects and programmes target more women than men because women in Lobatse and Botswana in general are the key movers as far as self-help housing is concerned.

Future policies will also need to take into consideration gender differentials in skills and distribution of resources within households and endeavour to harness them accordingly. Since self-help housing has generally been redefined to 'self-funded' housing, future policies need to take cognisance of financial disposition of various individuals within each household. In general terms, this thesis has revealed that household members contribute money according to employment, income, age and marital status. Future housing policies and programmes need to consider incomes of all household members and not of 'household heads' only as per current practices. 'The household head income criteria' commonly used to determine affordability levels are totally irrelevant in an African setting with extended families and reliance on rural resources.

Lastly, there is need to undertake more research in male dominated sectors such as the metal industry, armed forces, mining and police because these sectors offer more and better paid jobs and career opportunities than the so called 'feminine' sectors such as clerical work, nursing and primary education. Future research should seek to identify *new forms of gender inequalities, exclusion and women's subordination as the country and society undergo further social, economic, political, demographic and cultural transformations.*

7.3 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has confirmed that men in Botswana and Lobatse in particular have taken over women's traditional house building roles. While men's initial entry into house building processes in some tribal communities in Botswana, Lesotho and Zimbabwe tended to complement women's efforts. Evidence from Lobatse has shown that women are generally excluded from house building work – whether paid or not. This has, in effect, reduced women's access and control of urban housing. Unlike previous studies, this thesis has shown that, despite being excluded from house building

processes, women have developed new roles in self-help housing. Women initiate and encourage their partners to invest in 'family' houses; they produce and assemble building materials, work as labourers, supervise and cater for builders. Thus, despite men's take over of most activities in the modern of housing delivery and construction processes, women have not been entirely excluded from housing.

This thesis has further shown that advent of colonialism and capitalism was not the only factor that influenced men's entry into previously female dominated spheres. It has argued that gender roles are determined by a multitude of intersecting environmental, geopolitical, social, economic and cultural factors. It further argued that in the context of Botswana, before the advent Western and colonial influences gender roles were shaped by the fragile ecological system that supported free range cattle keeping and some limited crop farming and required separation of land use activities. Due to poor and unreliable rainfall, cattle served as the most reliable source of livelihood and were, therefore, the most socially valued household possessions and the subject of numerous intertribal wars that characterised the region. Men drew self-esteem and respect from cattle management – an activity that was located long distances from homes and from which women were consequently excluded. While men developed and enhanced their cattle management skills, women specialised in activities located close to home including crop growing and house building. The gendered spatial separation of workplaces enabled men to network and to develop solidarity for defending their cattle possessions and, probably later, control women that they left in villages. This gave rise to patriarchal structures that characterised sedentary pastoral tribes in the region.

Although taxation policies, waged employment and market economies introduced during the colonial period resulted into new household structures and gender relations, they did not substantially alter gender roles in the house construction industry. Far reaching shifts in gender roles in this sector took place during the post-colonial era as a result of economic changes and transformations arising from the discovery and exploitation of diamond, nickel, copper, coal and soda ash mineral deposits. The economic boom experienced in the country has in turn led to rapid urbanisation and realignment of gender roles in almost all sectors and occupations including those in the construction industry. Cash and waged employment have replaced cattle as the most important source of livelihood. In response, men have shifted from cattle herding to waged employment including employment in sectors such as house building, agriculture and domestic services that were traditionally considered feminine.

Although men have increasingly replaced women as builders, women have not replaced men as cattle herders. Instead, patriarchal structures have created new well paid predominantly male sectors (e.g. mining) and occupations (e.g. engineering and medicine) and streamlined women into less lucrative ones (e.g. clerks and sales). To protect their privileged positions, men have been reluctant to share skills for building non-traditional houses with women. As a result, women have been reduced to labourers in the waged house construction sector and sidelined to indirect roles (e.g. catering for builders) in self-help housing. Consequently, women who want to build their own houses have been obliged to develop new gender relations with men at household, community and public levels and to devise new strategies for accessing men's skills and wages.

Unless the state adopts deliberate, affirmative and proactive actions to change the mindset and encourage women to train in building trades, women's chances of re-entering the construction industry as builders remain remotely obscure despite Botswana women's demonstrated self-empowerment capabilities. This will continue to deny women access to one of the well paid and rapidly growing employment sector.

Finally, this thesis has highlighted a unique example of how men and women negotiate and re-position themselves to access, control and otherwise benefit from resources and opportunities created by changing circumstances. While traditionally women in Botswana prided themselves as house builders, the new economic order has reduced them to labourers. In the meantime, men have been transformed from cattle herders to waged builders in step with the global occupational order.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1.1

ACCESS TO URBAN HOUSING BY WOMEN IN BOTSWANA – THE CASE OF LOBATSE GUIDELINE QUESTIONS FOR HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS

Interviewee Number.....
Interviewee's Name.....
Date Time Start.....
Time finish.....

OBSERVATIONS

Part I Housing condition

1. Location: Plot No..... Area's Local Name.....
2. Type of dwelling unit: Detached/Semi-detached/Servant Quarter/Lolwapa Unit/Town House/Flat/Shack/Movable/Rooms
3. Type of Building Materials: Floor..... Roof.....
Walls.....
4. Conditions of dwelling unit: Very Good..... Spacious.....
Good..... Moderate.....
Satisfactory..... Congested.....
Poor..... Too Small.....
5. Facilities Available: Power.....
Sanitation.....
Water supply.....
7. General Remarks _____

Part II Personal Particulars of Interviewee

8. What is your age or when were you born?
9. Where were you born?
10. What was the marital status of your parents? Are/were your parents employed?
11. Where did you attend school?
12. What highest grade did you attain?
13. Are you married or single?
14. If married, are you married with or without community of property?
15. How many children do you have? How many live with you here? Any other dependents?
16. If single, do you have a steady man-friend?
17. Do you and your husband/man-friend work? Where? What job? If not, what is your main source of income?
18. What is your average monthly income?
19. What is your husband's/man-friend's average monthly income?

Part III House ownership

Do you or your spouse own this and/or any other house? If no go Part IV.
If yes

1. Where did you live before building the house?
2. What motivated you to acquire this and/or the other house?
3. How did you acquire the land? What motivated you?
4. How long did it take to get the land and what problems did you face?
5. How did you get the funds/money to buy/build the house?
6. What type of assistance did you receive from your spouse, parents/brothers, friends etc?
7. What would you say are the major obstacles faced by women in trying to buy/or build their own houses in town? Are they different from rural areas?
8. Are you satisfied with your house? Any future housing plans?
9. Do you think women should be registered house owners?
10. If the house belongs to you and your spouse, who should own it were you to be divorced?
11. What changes are needed to enhance women's access to land, finance and quality houses?

Part IV House Tenancy

If you are a tenant:-

1. How did you get this unit? Explain the procedure?
2. How long did you take looking for such a unit?
3. Where were you living before? Why did you move out?
4. What problems did you meet in trying to get this unit?
5. Are you satisfied with your present conditions?
6. What would you say are the major obstacles which women face in trying to rent, buy or build houses in this town?
7. How do women cope with these problems?
8. What changes are needed to enhance women's access to land, finance and quality houses?

Appendix 1.2

ACCESS TO URBAN HOUSING BY WOMEN IN BOTSWANA – THE CASE OF LOBATSE

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS WITH INFORMANTS

LIST OF INFORMANTS

1. Registrar of Deeds, Gaborone
2. Deputy Clerk, Lobatse Town Council
3. Treasurer, Lobatse Town Council
4. Physical Planner, Lobatse Town Council
5. Principal Housing Officer, SHHA, Lobatse Town Council
6. Senior Housing Officer, BHC , Lobatse Office
7. Loans Officer, Botswana Building Society
8. Council Housing officer

QUESTIONS

1. What are the procedures does your office follow in assisting applicants for house/plot/ loan?
2. Are there special requirements that a female applicant must follow?
3. Are there any statistics that indicate the rate of applications and allocations by gender?
4. How does one have to wait?
5. Do you receive more applications from married or unmarried women? Educated or less educated? Salaried or self-employed? Young or old women? Mothers or childless mother?
6. What deliberate policies do you have for assisting women and/or disadvantaged groups?
7. What changes are needed to enhance women's access to land, finance and quality houses?

Appendix 1.3

WOMEN IN WAGED HOUSE CONSTRUCTION IN LOBATSE

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS FOR HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS

Questions for the building contractor

1. How many people are employed on this project?
2. Of all the employees how many are women?
3. In what capacity are the women employed?
4. Of the female employees, how many are engineers, builders, carpenters, electricians, painters, cleaners or administrators?
5. Do women often come to seek employment at this site?
6. What is your company policy with regard to employment of women?
7. Does your company prefer women over men? Or vice versa? Why?
8. Why are only a few women employed in such construction work?
9. Any other comment?

Questions for women builders/labourers

1. When and where were you born?
2. Did you attend school? To what grade?
3. Are you married or single?
4. Do you have any children?
5. Do you live with your children here in Lobatse?
6. When did start living in Lobatse?
7. Whom do you stay with?
8. What work did you do before coming to work at this site?
9. Why did you look for construction work at this site?
10. When did you start working at this site?
11. What work do you do at this site?
12. Do you like this work? Why?
13. Are you comfortable working with so many men?
14. What are your future plans?
15. Any other comment?

Appendix 1.4

GENDER ROLES IN SELF-HELP HOUSING IN LOBATSE

STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

Interviewer's name	Plot No	Location
Date	Time started	Time Finished

To be read to the respondent

The research I am undertaking is part of the network on gender and housing in the SADC region. Your responses will be used in understanding the various roles played by men, boys, women and girls in urban housing so as to enable governments and policy makers to initiate programmes and strategies to assist each group accordingly. All your replies will be treated with utmost confidentiality. I thank you in advance for your co-operation.

PART I HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

1.1 What is your marital status? (mark one)

- [1] Single
- [2] Cohabiting
- [3] Married
- [4] Separated
- [5] Divorced
- [6] Widowed

1.2 How many members of your household are

- [] Female Children (aged 15 or Under)
- [] Male Children (aged 15 or Under)
- [] Adult females (aged 16 and above)
- [] Male Adults (aged 16 and above)

1.3 Who is the head of this household?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse/man
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse/woman
- [3] Son
- [4] Daughter
- [5] Other (specify relationship)

1.4 What is the highest level of education attained by the male spouse (if any)

- [1] Primary School
- [2] Junior Secondary
- [3] Senior Secondary
- [4] Post Secondary (tertiary) education

1.5 What is the highest level of education attained by the female spouse (if any)

- [1] Primary School
- [2] Junior Secondary
- [3] Senior Secondary
- [4] Post Secondary (tertiary) education

1.5 What is the highest level of education attained by the other female adult members of the household (if any)? {Complete the table}

	F1	F2	F3
Primary School			
Junior Secondary			
Senior Secondary			
Post Secondary (tertiary) education			

1.5 What is the highest level of education attained by the other male adult members of the household (if any)? {Complete the table}

	M1	M2	M3
Primary School			
Junior Secondary			
Senior Secondary			
Post Secondary (tertiary) education			

1.6 Of the female adults how many are

- [] Not employed
- [] Looking for a job
- [] Self-employed
- [] Employed in the private sector
- [] Employed by a parastatal
- [] Employed by Town Council
- [] Employed by the central government

1.8 Of the male adults how many are

- [] Not employed
- [] Looking for a job
- [] Self-employed
- [] Employed in the private sector
- [] Employed by a parastatal
- [] Employed by Town Council
- [] Employed by the central government

1.9 How much does each of the employed members of your household earn in a month? {Complete the Table}

	P1-500	P501 -1000	P1001-2000	P2001 +
Male spouse				
Female spouse				
F1				
F2				
F3				
M1				
M2				
M3				

PART II DECISION MAKING

2.1 Why did you decide to build yourself a house in Lobatse?

- [1] We/I could not obtain satisfactory accommodation to rent
- [2] We/I considered rents to be too high
- [3] We/I needed a house of our/my own
- [4] We/I felt congested in rented house
- [5] Other reasons (specify)

2.2 Who initiated/started the idea of building the house?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

2.3 Who made the final decision that you should build the house?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

2.4 Who applied/obtained the land for your house?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

2.5 Who decided on the size (how big) of the house?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

2.6 Who decided on the design (how the house should look like)?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

2.7 Who decides on type and purchase of furniture and household items?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

2.8 Who decides on type and buying of the household car and/or cattle (if any)?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

PART III FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

3.1 Who contributed funds for purchase of building materials?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

3.2 Who contributed funds for payment of hired builders, painters etc?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

3.3 Who contributes funds for purchase of furniture and similar household items?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

3.4 Who contributed funds for purchase of household car and/or cattle (if any)?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

3.5 Who borrowed money for buying building materials, paying artisans etc?

- [1] None
- [2] Husband/father/male spouse
- [3] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [4] Both 2 and 3
- [5] Son (s)
- [6] Daughter (s)
- [7] Other (specify relationship)

PART IV LABOUR CONTRIBUTION

4.1 Who, among your household members, participated in the actual construction of the house?

- [1] None
- [2] Husband/father/male spouse
- [3] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [4] Both 2 and 3
- [5] Son (s)
- [6] Daughter (s)
- [7] Other (specify relationship)

4.2 Who, among your household members, participated in the actual painting of the house and general cleaning up?

- [1] None
- [2] Husband/father/male spouse
- [3] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [4] Both 1 and 2
- [5] Son (s)
- [6] Daughter (s)
- [7] Other (specify relationship)

4.3 Who supervised the builders, painters and other workers on your house?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

4.4 Who actually paid the builders, painters and other workers involved in the construction of the house?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

4.5 Who catered (provided food, water etc) for the builders, painters and workers during the construction of the house?

- [1] Husband/father/male spouse
- [2] Wife/mother/female spouse
- [3] Both 1 and 2
- [4] Son (s)
- [5] Daughter (s)
- [6] Other (specify relationship)

PART V PERCEPTIONS

5.1 Whose responsibility is it to provide a house for your family?

5.2 What do you consider to be the role of women (mothers and daughters) in housing provision?

5.3 What do you consider to be the role of men (fathers and sons) in housing provision?

5.4 Do you consider the above roles to be different from, or similar to, the traditional responsibilities of women and men in rural housing in Botswana? Explain

5.5 If the roles are different, what factors have caused the variation in the responsibilities of women and men in housing provision?

5.6 Whose duty is it to ensure that you have adequate furniture and other domestic appliances? Why?

5.7 Whose duty is it to ensure that the family has adequate means of transport and/or cattle? Why?

Appendix 1.5

GENDER ROLES IN SELF-HELP HOUSING IN LOBATSE

Outline of Questions to be asked to house owners. The sequence to depend on respondent's reactions, preference and co-operation.

1. What is your marital status?
2. What is your employment status?
3. Where did you reside before building this house?
4. Were you renting or staying in your own house?
5. Why did you decide to build your own house here in Woodhall?
6. Who initiated the idea of building this house?
7. Who made the final decision that you should build this house?
8. Who applied for the plot?
9. In whose name is the plot registered?
10. Who designed this house?
11. Who decided on the size of the house?
12. Are you happy with the size and design of the house?
13. What changes did you make on the original design/size of the house?
14. Why didn't you build a traditional house?
15. Did you contribute money for building this house?
16. Who else made financial contributions towards the building of this house?
17. Who, among household members, participated in the actual construction of this house?
18. What was each member's actual involvement /contribution?
19. Why don't women build houses in towns?
20. Do you mind your daughter becoming a builder?