

RESEARCH Report 54

**Reconsidering rural development:
Using livelihood analysis to examine
rural development in the former
homelands of South Africa**

Research Report

David Neves, PLAAS, 2017



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Abbreviations

CRDP	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
CSG	Child Support Grant
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DRDLR	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
ISRDP	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme
NIDS	National Income Dynamic Study
PSPPD	Programme to Support Pro-poor Policy Development
RDF	Rural Development Framework
RDP	Rural Development Programme
RNFE	Rural Non-Farm Economy

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I. Executive summary

This report examines rural development policy in South Africa, through livelihoods analysis of impoverished and vulnerable rural households in the former homeland communal areas.

The enquiry is set in the context of South Africa's ex-homelands (or bantustans), rural areas blighted by structural poverty, deprivation and underdevelopment. Two decades since the political transition to democracy, the communal areas remain marked by limited economic opportunities and inadequate infrastructure and state services, along with enduring human development deficits. Public administration is often uneven, and rural governance contested.

Widespread poverty and vulnerability in the former homelands reflects not only a century of underdevelopment, but also their historic role as labour reserves and 'dumping grounds' for apartheid's 'surplus' populations. In the present day the communal areas continue to be an important livelihood 'backstop' for the African poor, who have tenuous footholds in the urban and industrial economy.

Against this backdrop, state-driven efforts at advancing 'rural development' within South Africa have proved largely ineffective. The reality of rural underdevelopment has been little altered by four successive iterations of post-apartheid rural development. Official ambitions at effecting rural development are characterised by five key weaknesses. Rural development policy and interventions:

- Are undermined by a reliance on top-down planning and a dearth of local participation.
- Typically entailed local 'silver bullet' income generation projects, which offer modest impacts, are resource intensive to facilitate and difficult to scale up.
- Frequently are marked by tendencies towards 'agricultural-centeredness', despite the reality of the modest and uneven contribution of agriculture to rural livelihoods.

- Are often inattentive to, and disconnected from, considerations of the larger economy (including the rural non-farm economy), along with urban linkages, employment and markets.
- Remain bedevilled by larger problems of rural governance and administrative weakness, including unclear institutional mandates, along with deficiencies in intergovernmental co-ordination.

In relation to these, the research examines how impoverished and vulnerable households in the communal areas constitute their livelihoods, ultimately in order to consider the implications for rural development policy. The following six research questions are disaggregated and examined:

How are impoverished livelihoods in the former homelands constituted?

- What factors (endowments, resources, activities) impact on the livelihood prospects of households, and how have they changed over time?
- How are rural livelihoods influenced by the larger structural, economic and institutional context?
- Which households strengthen their livelihoods over time, and which do not? What factors generate these varied outcomes?
- How do the realities of rural livelihoods articulate with official imperatives and interventions intended to facilitate 'rural development'?
- Finally, what are the implications of the above, for rural development policy as it is conceptualised, practised and implemented? And how can rural development be made more effective?

In terms of the research approach, this inquiry draws on the key theoretical precept of 'livelihoods', and examines rural livelihoods through detailed qualitative-quantitative enquiry. The livelihoods concept entails analysis focused on the contextual dynamics of

household survival, including (but not limited to) employment, informal economic activities, agricultural production and migratory urban linkages. The focus on livelihoods is further expanded through analytical attention to the macro-structural context, by drawing on an account of rural and agrarian change that is informed by attention to issues of political economy. In this, questions of livelihood diversification and social differentiation are prominent.

The qualitative component of the research was undertaken within a specific region of the former Transkei homeland, in the rural Eastern Cape. It drew on in-depth household and life history interviews, intermittently conducted over a decade (2005–2015) amongst a cohort of previously surveyed impoverished households. This analysis was augmented by village-based participatory wealth analysis, to elicit local conceptions of poverty, wealth and social stratification.

The qualitative analysis was integrated with two sets of quantitative data. The first was a fine-grained, area-based analysis of Census 2011 data, the second a longitudinal (across time) analysis from National Income Dynamic Study (NIDS). Combining these approaches enabled the depth and specificity of the qualitative enquiry to be contextualised in relation to larger (quantitative) dynamics.

It is argued that the deprivation and underdevelopment in the communal areas reflects the wider political economy of racialised poverty and inequality in South Africa. The structural context shapes the communal areas as follows.

Firstly, the inhabitants of the former homelands have, for over a century, been incorporated into labour markets and systems of money, but face declining opportunities for employment, especially in the traditional sectors of low-skilled work (such as mining, agriculture, manufacturing). Secondly, the communal areas have been long subject to 'de-agrarianisation' (the occupational, social and economic movement out of agriculture), with waning prospects for agrarian production. Thirdly, they continue to be marked by administrative and institutional weaknesses, an often under-capacitated or absent state, and enduring contestations over rural

governance (especially in relation to the institution of the chieftaincy).

Against this structural backdrop, rural households sustain themselves through a range of practices. They engaging in livelihood diversification across contexts, spaces and activities, to leverage opportunities and mitigate risk. Rural livelihoods are also rooted in culturally inscribed practices of social reciprocity, wherein material resources are transferred and crucial socially reproductive 'carework' (of the children, ill or disabled, elderly, etc.) undertaken. Finally, rural households survive through oscillatory migration and practices of spatial mobility, which link them to urban poles, opportunities and shocks. Hence, rural areas remain important sites of retreat, recuperation and retirement from the urban and industrial economy.

Cumulatively, these practices and dynamics see rural livelihoods in the former homelands constituted in relation to four key 'domains'.

Formal sector employment and remittances. These are significant local resources, despite the fact that employment rates and earnings levels are low in the former homelands. The sectoral distribution of employment shows little remunerative employment in agriculture (less than a tenth), compared to between a third to half of all workers in the rest of the (historically white owned), 'formal rural' countryside. Instead, the largest proportion of employment in the former homelands is in 'community and social services' (more than a quarter), followed by 'retail and wholesale trade', and 'employment in private households'.

Social welfare grants receipt. Cumulatively, three quarters of rural households in South Africa report either wages or social grants as their predominant source of income. Analysis shows the vast majority of individuals in rural areas are members of households that receive at least one social grant. Rural households are also more likely to be receiving social grants, and if they are not, they are more likely to begin receiving a social grant over time. Not only is average household income received from social grants highest in the communal areas, the qualitative analysis underscores the extent to which social grants underpin patterns of social reciprocity and household well-

being. Social grants also serve to animate the (often gendered) ‘carework’ on which impoverished households crucially rely.

Informal (non-farm) economic activity. Informal economic activity is constrained and statistically less prevalent than formal employment. However, the case studies partially belie this, and suggest the ubiquity of ‘hidden’, albeit small-scale, informal work. Informal activity is often connected to endowments (capital, resources and skills) accrued during formal sector employment. Moreover, patterns of informal economic activity articulate with processes of social differentiation, with better-off households more likely to diversify into higher-value informal economic activities.

Agriculture and other land-based activities. Despite the wider context of de-agrarianisation, and variable agro-ecology, more than half of households in the focal research area engaged in some measure of (often modest) agricultural production. The census data suggests women and older people are more likely to engage in agriculture. Much like economic informality in general, agriculture has synergies with resources derived from the formal sector and urban employment, which reflect and reinforce social differentiation. The highest and most remunerative levels of agricultural production (especially cattle ownership) are the preserve of relatively better-off households. Conversely, the poorest of households are estranged from agricultural opportunities.

Rural households are shaped by varied positions relative to the preceding four domains of livelihood making. This translates into social differentiation, which is presented in the following four-part typology of rural households (and draws on the work of Dorward (2009) and Scoones et al., 2012)).

An uppermost group of elite households are ‘Moving out’ of narrow, locally based livelihood-making activities. They represent approximately 5% of households, have solid labour market linkages and show evidence of reinvestment and accumulation. They are likely to diversify into higher yielding informal economic activities and agriculture.

The second group of ‘Inching up’ households have fewer remunerative or more tenuous labour market linkages. They receive more than a state old-age grant (or a comparable income) and engage in some livelihood diversification. They are not reinvesting or accumulating, even if they display evidence of modest, incremental improvements in their livelihoods and wellbeing. They are estimated to constitute between a quarter and third of households within the research context.

The third group of ‘Hanging on’ households are impoverished and often reliant on the single state old-age grant (or comparable income). Their diversification is modest and into small-scale survivalist activities and low levels of agricultural production. As many as half of communal area households fall into this category.

Proposed typology of communal area rural households (Neves, 2017)	Approximate Dorward (2009, Scoones et al., (2012) category
‘Moving out’: local elite households, strong labour market linkages, evidence of reinvestment and accumulation.	‘Stepping out’
‘Inching up’: households with middling labour market linkages, some diversification and expanded social reproduction.	‘Stepping up’
‘Hanging on’: vulnerable households with few or no labour market linkages. Limited social grant receipt and limited diversification, including agriculture.	‘Hanging in’
‘Dropping down’: the poorest and most vulnerable households seldom receive a higher-value social grant. Very little or no agriculture.	‘Dropping out’

The fourth and lower most group are 'Dropping down', destitute and represent some of the most vulnerable of rural households. They are characterised by a death of labour market linkages and weak entitlements, and are very seldom in receipt of a higher-value social grant (old age or disability grant). They are few in number (in the region of a tenth of households), and diversify into low-barrier-to-entry, low-yield informal economic activities. They are often so resource and labour constrained that they are unable to engage in any agricultural production.

From these findings and typology, the research stresses the importance of formal labour market linkages, and the often highly unequal ability of rural households to diversify into (especially more remunerative) forms of informal economic activity and agriculture. The findings, therefore, suggest how patterns of livelihood diversification are intertwined with social differentiation. These lead to the following policy recommendations.

- i. Put a livelihood focus at the centre of rural development. Doing so not only enables the plurality of rural livelihoods to be better understood, it facilitates a clearer segmentation of households, including their variable abilities to be reached by conventional rural development interventions. The poorest, most vulnerable and labour-poor of households have a limited capacity to engage with many conventional 'productivist' or agricultural-orientated interventions.
- ii. Strengthen the 'external connectedness' on which rural households depend. There is a need to recognise the extent to which rural households are connected to external markets (including labour markets), opportunities and resources. Accordingly, efforts to address rural underdevelopment demand attention to (i) facilitating access to (existing) labour markets, as well as (ii) intervening to (prospectively) engender inclusive, pro-poor economic growth, particularly at a national and provincial level.
- iii. Build the Rural Non-Farm Economy (RNFE). Rural development needs to support rural livelihoods by building on existing capacities and activities, only some of which may involve agriculture. Hence, rural development ought not to be conflated with agriculture. There is a need to support growth and employment in the RNFE, including local retail (including food), as well as 'community and social services' (including carework) and the construction sector. In many cases, facilitating more inclusive forms of economic growth will require checking the concentrated, extractive, frequently anti-competitive 'crowding out' effects of formal sector firms and interests.
- iv. Provide focused support for small-scale agriculture. Efforts to facilitate rural development need to extend basic production support to existing, and potential, small-scale farmers. Conversely, entrenched biases towards commercial producers, production systems and formal markets ought to be tempered. There is, similarly, a need to acknowledge the value of support for household food security.
- v. Recognise the contribution of social welfare. Apart from their direct welfare effects, social grant receipt is often complimentary to other aspects of livelihood making, including (albeit modest) informal economic activity and out-migration by working adults. Hence, there is a need to acknowledge the place of social protection as an adjunct to rural development, and to strengthen it. These include ensuring high social grant take-up rates, working to prevent maladministration or 'capture' (especially by commercial interests), and expanding it, including by examining how to include working-age adults within systems of social protection.
- vi. Strengthen the effectiveness of rural development interventions. This requires resolving ambiguities and contestations over rural governance, in addition to clarifying institutional mandates, easing administrative bottlenecks and improving the intergovernmental co-ordination required for effective rural development interventions. These demand attention, because their weaknesses detract from the effectiveness of the state. Finally, rural development needs to be meaningfully connected to land reform and to efforts to effect agrarian transformation more expansively.

2. Introduction

This report draws on livelihoods-based analysis, in order to examine rural development, and rural development policy, within South African's former 'homeland' (or 'bantustan') communal areas. The report commences by describing the larger context of the former homelands or bantustans, before defining 'rural development' and tracing policymakers' efforts to facilitate and effect it within post-apartheid South Africa. This constitutes the broad context for the research, which serves to 'frame' the subsequent discussion and detailed analysis of rural livelihoods.

After prefacing discussion of the policy context of rural development, the research questions and research methodology used to examine rural livelihoods in the communal areas are presented. This is followed with a brief contextualising discussion of the specific research site. The report then presents an abridged summary of household case studies derived from the qualitative data.

This data is subsequently used to build a theoretically informed account of impoverished and vulnerable rural livelihoods within

South Africa's present-day communal areas. This account expounds on both the larger structural determinants of impoverished rural livelihoods, along with the micro-dynamics of household level, livelihood-making practices.

It is argued that these dual elements – the larger structural determinants and everyday household level practices – cumulatively come to shape how households diversify their activities and engage with the four key 'constitutive domains' of rural livelihood making described in the report (viz. wages, social welfare grants, informal economic activity and agriculture). Households' engagements with these ultimately come to pattern household social differentiation, which is, in turn, explicated in a livelihoods-informed typology of communal rural households, presented at the conceptual heart of the report.

The conclusion of the report draws on the implications of this analysis of livelihoods and social differentiation, for understanding how rural development policy is conceptualised and implemented in the context of South Africa's communal areas.

3. Rural development policy in South Africa

Rural development

'Rural development' as concept and focus of public policy is comparatively new, having emerged in the post-war period. Much of the impetus for 'rural development' arose in the context of newly decolonised, low-income countries, where particularly development economists mooted the ability of the small-scale and subsistence agricultural sector to proactively contribute to national economic development. Early efforts to promote rural development were, therefore, not driven simply by the promise of increasing rural employment and food production. Instead, it was believed that rising agricultural productivity would drive national development by freeing up a marketable surplus, attracting foreign exchange, and providing a market for domestic industrial production.

In the last half century 'rural development' has undergone several iterations and shifts in emphasis. The early focus on agricultural modernisation and the 'Green Revolution' of the 1950s and 1960s made way for prominent state-based interventions in the 1970's heyday of 'integrated rural development' planning. Larger circuits of structural adjustment, market liberalisation and the retreat of the state in the 1980s was followed by the rise of participatory and actor-centred approaches in the 1990s (Ellis and Biggs, 2001). The 2000s saw both the ascendancy of the still-influential livelihoods approach, and the poverty-reduction orthodoxy (Scoones, 2009). Against the backdrop of this sequence of evolving approaches towards rural development, three key points can be made with regard to how rural development has commonly been conceptualised.

The first concerns the primacy of agriculture within rural development. Rural development has typically been predicated on agriculture, including, often, the notion of small farm efficiency and the 'inverse relationship' between

scale and farm productivity. Even when rural development has not been elided or conflated with agricultural development, agriculture has often been imagined to be the driver or a 'leading sector' of rural development.

The second point pertains to how processes of rural development are typically conceived as nested within wider processes of rural transformation, and ultimately the larger structure and growth path of the economy. Reference to 'rural transformation' conventionally encapsulates the notion of agricultural development driving a virtuous cycle of growing the rural non-farm economy, deepening economic linkages into the wider economy and expanding rural infrastructure and services. In this way, processes of rural transformation are coupled to the structure and growth trajectory of the larger economy (IFAD, 2016).

The third and final point is the emerging recognition that inclusive and pro-poor growth is far from assured within processes of rural development. Within international development discourse, it is increasingly understood that the prospects for inclusive rural economic growth are highly dependent on the specific nature and characteristics of the structural context and characteristics of the larger trajectory of development (IFAD, 2016).

The preceding three points are particularly germane to thinking about rural development theory and practice in relation to contemporary South Africa. They raise a number of critical questions, because South Africa presents a national context where chronic rural underdevelopment in the former homeland communal areas has long co-existed with a large agricultural and commodity sector in the (historically white-owned) countryside, outside of the communal areas. Present day South Africa, in other words, readily offers an example of how agricultural modernisation and processes of economic development can simultaneously bypass large territories

and vast swathes of the rural population, and leave them mired in poverty and privation.

Furthermore, with regards to the long-held axiom of rural development contributing to national economic growth, the century-long trajectory of industrialisation and economic development in South Africa has occurred alongside, and even in spite of, chronic rural underdevelopment. In other words, rural underdevelopment has hardly proven inimical to industrial modernisation; indeed many would argue that rural underdevelopment has been coterminous with South Africa's trajectory of unequal, racialised capitalist development. But the essential point is that equitable rural development clearly has not been a precondition for the 'South African path' of national economic development.

In sum, the above suggests that rural development policy in South Africa needs to be attentive to the particularity of the South African context. It needs to not only focus on the specificity of rural areas, but also consider how rural underdevelopment is nested within the larger South African context of century-old industrial modernity and patterns of national development. Hence, there is a need to closely consider dynamics of impoverished rural livelihoods as well as understand their linkages to the larger economy, markets and urban areas. This task is undertaken in detail in the main body of the report, but first the setting of former homelands and background of rural development policy in South Africa are briefly considered.

The former homelands and the context of rural (under) development

In two decades since South Africa's political transition to democracy, the homeland or 'bantustan' areas have remained blighted by high levels of poverty and deprivation, and characterised by the post-apartheid state's enduring difficulty in responding to it (Bank and Minkley, 2005; Ruiters, 2011; Sender, 2012; Rogerson and Nel, 2016). Hence, there are striking continuities in the current day spatial distribution of deprivation, with the erstwhile borders of the bantustans (Noble and Wright, 2012). These locales remain marked by high levels of unemployment, and entrenched infrastructure, service and human develop-

ment deficits (Bank and Minkley, 2005). The ex-homelands have for decades functioned as a 'poverty trap', within which the intergenerational cycle of poverty and underdevelopment is perpetuated.

Apart from enduring poverty and deprivation, the rural former homelands are subject to significant administrative and governance challenges. These include the fact that formal systems of land administration have all but collapsed, land tenure is often insecure, and a politically resurgent group of patrimonial, traditional authorities seeks to exercise influence over local governance (Ntsebeza, 2011; Ruiters, 2011).

Many of the above dynamics translate into adverse gendered outcomes. Not only is much of the burden of 'care-work' (childcare, elder care, etc.) and household subsistence disproportionately the responsibility of women, they are a group that continues to suffer from high levels of exclusion from economic opportunity, land and power.

In economic terms, the former homelands are blighted by a dearth of economic opportunities, dysfunctional settlement patterns, and 'thin markets', with limited economic dynamism and a paucity of local 'multiplier effects'. In the last two decades they have also become subject to the arrival of extractive, urban-based, corporate retail capital (Du Toit and Neves, 2007). In this way, dynamic or inclusive forms of local economic growth – a prerequisite for local economic and human development – remain elusive and largely unrealised.

However, rather than the current state of the homelands representing their exclusion from the economic mainstream, a long analytic tradition stresses how their underdevelopment was historically functional to the growth of the South African economy (Wolpe, 1972; Beinart and Bundy, 1987; Westaway, 2012). Analysis of livelihoods in the former homelands therefore needs to appreciate the manner in which they are intertwined to urban migrant 'receiving' areas, markets and employment. South Africa's communal areas continue to provide an important livelihood 'backstop' for the African poor, and remain key zones of retreat, following retrenchment, retirement or recuperation from South Afri-

ca's urban and industrial economy (Neves and Du Toit, 2013). They also continue to furnish a largely hidden and unacknowledged subsidy to South Africa's formal and urban economy.

Against this backdrop, the task of facilitating development in the communal areas, especially within the narrow policy rubric of 'rural development' remains beset by challenges. Even the ubiquitous development injunction of agriculture, long supposed to be the 'engine' of rural growth, faces considerable constraints (Andrews and Fox, 2004; Jacobs and Hart, 2014).

In South Africa the legacy of racialised land dispossession and the historic neglect of homeland agriculture co-exists with additional constraints on communal areas agriculture. These include post-apartheid agricultural market liberalisation and deregulation, which has seen a steady rise in concentration, capital intensiveness and job shedding in the agricultural sector (largely outside of the former homelands) (Greenberg, 2015). These dynamics, alongside the equally concentrated downstream agro-food processing and retail sectors, inhibit the potential for the emergence of small-scale agricultural producers. They cumulatively serve to deepen 'de-agrarianisation' (the economic, occupation and spatial movement out of agriculture) long evident in the former homelands.

Constrained prospects for small-scale agriculture in the homelands are mirrored in the informal sector more broadly. The historical legacy of prohibitions against African entrepreneurship has contributed to significant skills and capital deficits. These in turn exist alongside a powerful and concentrated formal economy that effectively 'crowds out' the space for potential market entrants, leaving South Africa with a small and marginal informal sector (Devey et al., 2006; Philip, 2010).

Limited opportunities for the poor to escape poverty through agriculture or informal sector employment in South Africa are exacerbated by rising long-term unemployment in the traditional bastions of low skill industrial employment (e.g. mining, manufacturing,) amidst larger processes of 'premature deindustrialisation' (IFAD, 2016). ('Premature', as it occurs without a commensurate growth in service sector employment). Waning opportunities for agrarian livelihoods in the for-

mer homelands are therefore unmatched by urban or industrial labour market opportunities. In this way the normative sequence of national economic development, whereby working populations in the developed country contexts have historically transitioned from agricultural to industrial employment, has been foreclosed on. The consequences of South Africa's 'stalled agrarian transition' are disproportionately borne by the African poor.

In this context, and against the backdrop of these dynamics, the research examines vulnerable and impoverished livelihoods in the rural, former homeland areas. These are contextualised within the larger structural context, and the minutiae of household livelihood-making practices, and in relation to processes of local change and social differentiation. This explication of rural livelihoods is undertaken in order to assess prevailing rural development policy and practice within the South African context. The latter is the focus to which the narrative now turns.

Rural development policy in South Africa

Post-apartheid South African has seen a succession of rural development policies, namely the Rural Development Programme (RDP), Rural Development Framework (RDF), Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme (ISRDP) and most contemporaneously, the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP). It is beyond the scope of this discussion to consider each in detail, instead salient features, commonalities and divergences are emphasised.

Agriculture has often held a prominent place in South African rural development policy, much as it does global, despite the fact that in South Africa a long-standing process of de-agrarianisation sees agriculture account for a small proportion of rural dwellers' livelihoods (Daniels et al., 2013; Nel and Binns, 2000; Neves and du Toit, 2013; Neves and du Toit, 2014). However the precise 'place' of agriculture within rural development policy, is a salient feature of the brief periodisation that follows.

Reflecting the optimism of the political transition, the RDP of 1994 regarded land reform as a mechanism for rural development. Rural development was viewed as intertwined

with the task of undoing apartheid's spatial geography and the transformation of existing, large-scale, capital-intensive agriculture (viz. agrarian reform), especially outside of the former homelands. These expansive ambitions have arguably receded from rural development policy in South Africa in the last two decades. Rural development has effectively become decoupled from halting and ineffective efforts at land reform, the latter having left the former homelands virtually untouched. Rural development has become gradually confined to the former homelands, and effectively drawn back from these early, expansive ambitions with agrarian transformation. It has increasingly limited itself to a focus on local projects, interventions and nodes.

Swiftly following the RDP, the RDF of 1997 represents, as Aliber et al. (2013) suggest, a high point in conceptualised rural development in terms not narrowly conflated with agriculture. Instead, it articulated a vision of rural development that emphasised the rural non-farm economy (RNFE) and the need for diversification and local multipliers, along with the cardinal place of linkages into urban markets and development.

However these stated policy ambitions did not translate into action, and by 2001, the third incarnation of rural development policy appeared. The ISRDP reverted back to assuming the primacy of agriculture to rural development (even if somewhat contradictorily). Moreover, while previous policy had identified the role of rural development in co-ordinating the large array of line departments and agencies with footprint in rural areas (viz. agriculture, water, education, health, cooperative governance and traditional affairs, local municipalities, parastatals, etc.), within the ISRDP co-ordination became the primary rationale of 'rural development' (Aliber et al., 2013).

The ISRDP led to the most recent iteration of rural development policy, namely the CRDP of 2009. Rural development policy had also to this point been accompanied by institutional flux, with responsibility for development in rural areas having shifted across several departments (viz. Departments of Rural Development and Land Reform, Provincial and Local Government, the Presidency, and

Land Affairs). Following the 2009 Polokwane Resolution, the Department of Land Affairs and Agriculture was split into the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). Even DRDLR's own assessment of the rural development policy recognised significant weaknesses: 'It would appear that rural policy in South Africa to date has been largely unfocused and ineffective' (DRDLR, 2011: slide 29, cited in Aliber et al., 2013).

The CRDP built on the preceding ISRDP's institutional architecture, with the ISRDP's 'nodes' of the latter segueing into the current CRDP's 'sites'. Reliant on high levels of technical and social facilitation, the CRDP's ambition was to facilitate and catalyse rural development, using a three-pronged strategy of providing agricultural support, improving economic infrastructure, and providing 'social infrastructure' (communal sanitation, sports and recreation amenities, community halls, etc.).

Implicit in the CRDP's view of rural development was a modernising vision of progression from, first, meeting basic needs, then developing local multipliers by 'crowding in opportunities' and physical infrastructure, before the final phase of 'economic take-off' marked by the rise of local small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs) and commensurate growth in local employment and markets.

Several years and at least two major official evaluations (Umhlaba Rural Services, 2009; Impact Economix, 2013; PMG, 2105) have seen the weakness within the CRDP comparatively well documented. It is here argued that these exemplify weaknesses, not only within the CRDP, but also within the dominant conceptions (or paradigm) of rural development in South Africa. Discussion of the CRDP is therefore a 'prism' through which to critically consider rural development policy and practice in South Africa.

The problem of top-down planning and local participation

The first problem with rural development in post-apartheid South Africa pertains to a predilection for top-down planning, with a dearth of community participation and stakeholder consultation. Evaluations of the CRDP,

for instance, note poor progress in mobilising and empowering local communities (Impact Economix, 2013). This not only results in inappropriate project selection, and weak implementation, it also contributes to tensions with stakeholders, including traditional authorities.

Partially as a result of this death of participation and consultation, much rural development is profoundly inattentive to the realities of rural livelihoods. It makes for an approach – and an official imaginary vision of rural development – that overlooks the micro dynamics of household livelihood strategies. It often misunderstands what is already happening on the ground, within rural communities and households.

The problem of income generation projects

The second problem with the CRPD, but echoed in much rural development practice in South Africa, pertains to the undue emphasis on local income generation projects. Often short on community engagement and implementation capacity (Economix Impacts, 2015), officials fixate on both providing infrastructural service, and running local income generating projects. Rural development, therefore, implicitly comes to be conflated with infrastructural provision, or is imagined to be resolvable with silver-bullet income generation projects. Substantial problems exist with these.

Much project-based employment is transient and low waged and offers few prospects for entry to formal labour markets (Impact Economix, 2014). It remains unclear how these interventions are suited to satisfying stated ambitions to support the emergence of rural and industrial sectors marked by small, micro and medium enterprises and village markets. Finally, the resource and facilitation intensive nature of small-scale income generation projects constrains their potential scale up. For instance, the cost to expand the CRPD and its income generation projects to all 2 920 rural wards nationally has been estimated at R61.6 billion (PMG, 2015). Finally, as will be suggested later, the focus on parochial income generation projects comes at the potential expense of examining and intervening within the larger structural and economic context.

The problem of agricultural centeredness

Thirdly, the CRDP continues a long legacy of, if not conflating rural development with agriculture, presupposing it to at last be a leading sector. It does this despite the reality of the modest and uneven contribution of agriculture to rural livelihoods in South Africa. Efforts to support agriculture in the communal areas then frequently overlook the provision of basic production support to small-scale farmers (agricultural extension, cattle dipping, elementary irrigation systems and fence repairing, etc.). Instead, agricultural support emphasises perennially problematic production cooperatives and inappropriate, large-scale, often mechanised agricultural modernisation projects. The latter are highly capital and management intensive, with production often orientated to external and formal markets. Similar impulses towards showcase market-led agricultural modernisation are further exemplified in the most recent policy proposals for Agri-Parks (Nkwinti, 2016).

The problem of external connectedness

Fourthly, the CRDP and its precursors, blinkered by the logic of 'project sites', are grounded in the administrative units of municipal wards, rather than more functional economic units. Disconnected from the wider economy – including even the rural non-farm economy – these small spatial units implicitly assume rural underdevelopment to be parochially remediable, independently of external and urban linkages and markets.

This inattentiveness to the larger context and external connections makes for an involution or 'inward-directedness' of rural development interventions. It is manifest in approaches and interventions that are highly individualistic and implicitly voluntaristic. (Such as the widespread use of the 'War on Poverty' survey-based modality, to identify and target individual rural households). They fixate on 'community cohesion' as balm for the problem of the 'community fragmentation' that they frame. In so doing they incur the risk of individualising poverty, pathologising the poor and even misunderstanding the nature of individual agency. These interventions invariably come at the expense of neglecting

the larger structural context and the affordances and constraints it imposes on rural dwellers and their livelihoods.

The problem of institutional arrangements and co-ordination

Finally, the CRDP, like other rural development interventions before it, is influenced by the structure and capabilities of the state. Unfortunately efforts to facilitate rural development are bedevilled by unclear institutional mandates and weak co-ordination across applicable line departments and agencies. So, while DRDLR expansively defines its 'role and mission as being that of facilitating integrated development and social cohesion through partnerships with all sectors of society' (DRDLR, 2013 cited in Aliber et al., 2013), an official assessment of CRDP pilots notes a lack of clarity around constitutional mandate and legislative framework, local authority and accountability, and confusion over leadership of the local pilot projects (Impact Economix, 2013). These same institutional difficulties were noted in the earlier implementation evaluation, which noted tensions between line departments, poor levels of co-ordination

including between DRDLR and DAFF, along with insufficient support for provincial and local champions (PMG, 2015).

These institutional weaknesses are deep-seated and not particular to rural development. They reveal administrative contradictions and mismatches, unclear institutional mandates and gaps in legislation between various parts of the state; both between departments and between various spheres of government. An example of the latter includes the absence of a mandate for 'rural development' within municipal spatial planning processes (Tapscott, 2016). Ultimately, these administrative and institutional weaknesses detract from the effectiveness of official efforts to engender rural development.

Having critically examined rural development policy in South Africa, the report now holds these in abeyance. It proceeds to discuss the research questions and methodology, before considering the empirical realities of impoverished and vulnerable rural livelihoods. These findings are used to re-examine the policy implications in detail towards the end of the report.

4. Research questions

Framed by the preceding discussion of rural development in South Africa, the core research question asks how impoverished and vulnerable households in the focal former homelands constitute their livelihoods, in order to consider the implications for rural development policy. This research 'problematic' can be disaggregated into six subordinate questions:

- i. How are the livelihoods of the rural poor in the former homelands constituted and structured: what, by whom and how are livelihood-enabling activities engaged with?
- ii. What factors impact on the livelihood prospects of communal area rural households? What endowments, resources and activities (and combinations thereof) are associated with improved livelihoods or prospects for livelihood making? How have these changed over time?
- iii. How are the livelihoods of communal area rural households shaped by the overarching structural context, including the larger 'distributional regime' (economy, labour markets, and the redistributive mechanisms) along with the political and institutional context?
- iv. Which households strengthened their livelihoods ('got ahead') and which have become more vulnerable or impoverished ('fallen behind') over time, within the focal research site? What constrains vulnerable and marginalised households from progressing similarly to those who fare better over time?
- v. How do these dynamics articulate with official efforts to facilitate 'rural development'? What, if any, have been the most successful policies, interventions and programmes touching the focal rural households?
- vi. Finally, what are the implications of these realities of impoverished and vulnerable rural households for public policy? How can rural development policy be made more effective?

5. Research methodology

The section that follows presents the research methodology used to examine impoverished rural livelihoods within the former homeland communal areas. However, before this is done, the concept of livelihoods is briefly explicated.

The livelihoods focus

In an early, influential formulation, a livelihood focus is described as the '...capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living' (Chambers and Conway, 1992). The livelihoods concept rose to prominence in the 'sustainable livelihoods framework', which has influenced two decades of development policy and discourse (Scoones, 1998, 2009, 2015).

The concept of livelihoods remains useful because of its emphasis on 'bottom up', contextually sensitive enquiry, attentive to the endowments, assets and activities on which impoverished and vulnerable households rely to survive. However, this focus on individual and household level agency has also been accompanied by the criticism of a lack of attention to the larger structural and political context (Scoones, 2009; O'Laughlin, 2004).

In this research attention to the specificity and plurality of rural livelihoods is augmented with a materialist, political economy informed account of rural and agrarian change (Bernstein et al., 1992). This political economy informed approach can be thought of as asking: who owns what, who does what, who gets what and what do they do with it? (Bernstein, 2010). This rubric is particularly useful for understanding livelihoods in the face of dynamic processes of de-agrarianisation, diversification and social differentiation. The research is therefore predicated on a view of social differentiation that understands it in

terms of social class and ultimately relationships to production (May, 1987). Finally, these basic questions of accumulation and class entail attention to (African) intra-group differences, a focus sometimes elided in a narrow focus on race.

The conceptual heart of the analysis, developed in what follows, therefore grapples with questions of rural social differentiation and change over time. It is an endeavour that echoes with previous efforts to formulate typologies of rural livelihoods in the South African context (Francis 2000, 2002, 2006; Hebinck et al., 2007), but is theoretically particularly indebted to Dorward (2009), Dorward et al. (2009), Scoones et al. (2012) and Mushongah and Scoones' (2012) typology of rural livelihoods. This report appropriate and builds on Dorward (2009) and Scoones et al. (2012) typology to order the data, and analytically cluster rural households. These are presented and discussed in terms of what they reveal of the wider dynamics of communal area households. To reiterate, they provide the empirical foundation on which the concluding discussion of rural development policy is built.

Research approach

The author of this paper has used qualitative-quantitative research (Ragin et al., 2003), which combines both the qualitative 'depth' of focused inquiry, and 'breadth' of locating these relative to larger quantitative data. The qualitative data draws on in-depth household interviews, augmented by community level participatory wealth ranking (Scoones, 1995). The generalisability of the data is then expanded with reference to quantitative data derived from NIDS and Census 2011, in order to locate patterns and findings within the larger context. These various components are delineated in more detail below.

In-depth interviews and participatory wealth ranking

The qualitative inquiry consists of household case studies, augmented by a participatory wealth ranking exercise. The qualitative household case studies were developed in previous research (Du Toit and Neves, 2006) were used and updated through the course of additional fieldwork (2015–2016). In the current inquiry they consisted of fifteen rural household case studies, but ten are presented here in the interests of brevity and to avoid repetition. (Individual's names have been changed to ensure their anonymity.) This cohort was sampled from an original set of 24 rural case studies, which in turn were initially randomly selected from predominantly the lowest (and third) quartile in a 2002 poverty survey of 1 358 households. The case studies were developed using semi-structured interview techniques, individual life histories (Oya, 2007), and forms of retrospective and prospective inquiry, to which household- and life history-orientated inquiry is well suited (Murray, 2001).

Over successive years of inquiry, the collected qualitative case studies were used to understand livelihood dynamics, including the manner in which activities and strategies are bound by context, culture and histories. A key focus of the case studies was on household composition, household survival strategies and livelihood activities, including employment both formal and informal, and social grant receipt. These case studies also entailed locating the households within their larger social networks, and the practices of mutual support. Connections, linkages and relationships were documented and a schematic typology of rural households developed. Finally, these household case studies were supplemented with data from a participatory wealth ranking exercise, to discern local conceptions of differentiation and difference.

While this qualitative case study data has a longitudinal component, and illustrates much of the depth and complexity of rural livelihoods in context, there are clear limits to the 'breadth' or broad generalisability from a small number of case studies. For this reason it is augmented by two sources of quantitative data, in order to forge qualitative-quantitative integration.

Analysis of NIDS (National Income Dynamics Study) data

Two datasets of quantitative data were drawn on. The first was from the National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS), a longitudinal, nationally representative household survey. Several waves have been completed and analysed; drawing on this data enables the qualitative case studies to be located within the larger universe of NIDS, and magnifies the power of the qualitative data.

The utility of the NIDS data lies in understanding change over time. Key foci from NIDS include longitudinal data on household composition, poverty dynamics and employment, along with access to infrastructure, services and land. It is particularly well suited to examining the factors associated with livelihood transitions.

Analysis of NIDS also lends itself to understanding the comparative differences between the former homeland communal areas (anachronistically termed 'tribal authority' areas in Stats SA nomenclature) and the three other spatial zones or 'geotypes'. These three are urban informal (shacks and shanty towns within urban areas), urban formal (formally developed areas in cities and towns), and 'rural formal' (the previously white-owned countryside, outside of the communal areas). Finally, although NIDS collected data on agriculture, it is difficult to use. Several changes in the NIDS agricultural module mean 'it is not possible to calculate the concept of use-value of subsistence agricultural production to the household or community' (Daniels et al., 2013, p.5).

Analysis of census data

The second of the two sources of quantitative data drawn on explore several of the preceding items covered by NIDS, but in spatial terms (rather than longitudinally across time). This component entails area-based analysis of Census 2011 data on various individual and household level characteristics, within the focal research sites. Essentially this analysis draws on different indices of poverty and vulnerability, including measures of demography, education, employment, income, assets, agriculture and access to infrastructure and services.

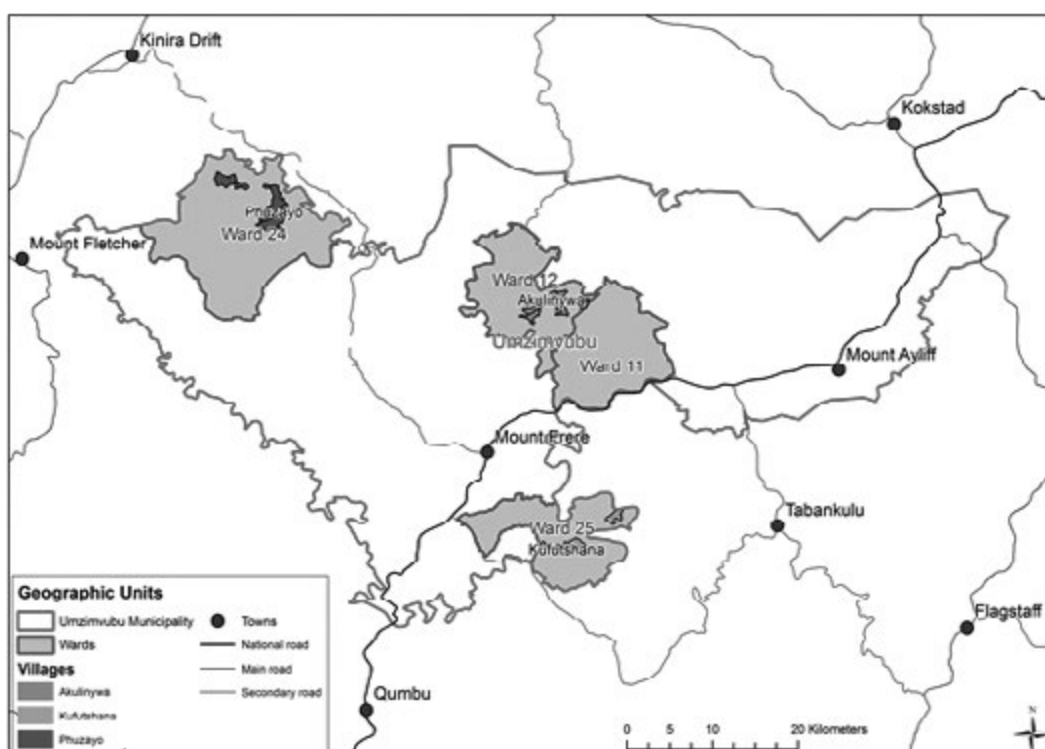
The census data was synthesised and used at three different and successively larger scales, as is evident in Figure 1. With reference to this map, 'villages' refer to the three rural settlements within which qualitative research was undertaken, each comprising between three and five census 'sub-place' units respectively (a total of 12). In 2011, the three villages concerned (viz. Phuzayo, Akulinywa and Kufutshana¹) were home to 1 713 households and 6 934 individuals. However, some census data is only aggregated by StatsSA at the larger (municipal) ward level; hence each of the three focal villages is contained within a single ward. The wards are more expansive units: cumulatively, the three wards are home to 28 345 individuals. The third and largest census spatial unit drawn on in this research was for agriculture; that of the local municipality (Umzimvubu). This municipal spatial unit contains 46 890 households. The village and ward level data described earlier are

compared with baselines within the larger municipality, the Eastern Cape province and nationally. Finally, cross-tabulations with race were not done, because the focal wards are virtually racially homogenous, consisting of 99.85% black African residents.

In conclusion, a variety of both qualitative and quantitative data provides the empirical heart of this research. The qualitative inquiry serves to uncover the underlying dynamics, drivers and strategies for the small subset of rural households described in the case studies. These are further clarified and elaborated through the participatory wealth ranking exercise conducted in the villages.

The qualitative data is combined with quantitative analysis of the NIDS and census data, both of which enable the focal qualitative case studies to be 'located' relative to larger sets of data.

Figure 1: Map showing the villages, wards and municipality examined in the study



¹ The names accorded to the villages have been changed in the interests of the anonymity of the individual research participants. However the underlying data, ward and municipal labels are accurate.

Source: Own analysis

6. Context: Poverty and vulnerability in the Mount Frere district

Having described the research methodology, this section briefly depicts the specific former homeland communal area within which the research was undertaken. The focal three villages of Phuzayo, Akulinywa and Kufutshana are located within the rural hinterland surrounding the small town of Mount Frere, all contained within the Umzimvubu local municipality. The Umzimvubu local municipality in turn, is located in the Alfred Nzo District municipality, within the northeast region of South Africa's Eastern Cape province.

The focal research context, as with the communal areas more generally, is characterised by deep concentrations of poverty, deprivation and underdevelopment (Jacobs and Hart, 2014). By several metrics, such as household food insecurity, access to services, income and infrastructure, vulnerability and deprivation are worst in the rural regions of the former homelands (Aliber, 2003; Aliber et al., 2009; Altman et al. 2009; Noble and Wright, 2012). The poorest provinces are, accordingly, those that incorporate the largest expanses of the former homelands, namely the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo (Aliber, 2003).

The discussion that follows seeks to present a brief picture of this poverty and deprivation. It is supported by tables (contained in appendix 1), as the narrative shifts between describing the particularity of the focal research sites (three villages and the larger wards within which they are located), and comparing these with the larger municipal, provincial and national context.

Education

Within the focal villages education levels are low. The census data reveals that the largest single category for educational attainment is 'some primary' schooling completed (38.4%). Although the corresponding figure for the (larger) local municipality is 35.5%, at a national level the single category that

predominates is 'some secondary' completed (Table 8), i.e. most South Africans have completed some secondary schooling. Furthermore, at the higher end of the education distribution, the proportion of individuals in the three focal villages that have completed secondary education is low (5.6%) and those who have completed 'higher' (i.e. post-secondary) education a diminutive 1.8%. Cumulatively, these two total 7.8% (Table 8), amounting to only 511 individuals out of a total of 6 932 local village residents (Table 7). The 7.8% of individuals with matric or tertiary education can be helpfully contrasted with the successively larger percentage for the municipality (10.3%), the Eastern Cape province (16.3%), and nationally (25.5%) (Table 8). This particular threshold (completed secondary schooling or higher) is significant because educational attainment is a major determinant of labour market earnings, and a completed matric is a virtual pre-requisite for formal sector employment. As post-secondary education is associated with significantly improved job and earning prospects, the low levels of educational attainment within the focal rural villages points to the extent to which local inhabitants are precluded from formal employment.

Quality of housing

Analysis of the census data reveals that 86.8% of the households in the villages within the focal research site (and 59.6% of households within the municipality) still occupy 'traditional dwellings' (Table 10). In contrast, households occupying brick or concrete block structures (even of indeterminate size and quality) only number 168 (Table 9), thereby constituting 9.8% of households in the focal villages (Table 10). The paucity of housing can be contrasted with the national picture for rural areas. Using dwelling type as a proxy for poverty, Jacobs and Hart (2014), note that, while in 1996 only half of rural households lived in a formal brick house, by 2012, two

thirds did. Reported habitation in 'traditional dwellings' (huts etc.), nationally, declined from 42.6% in 1996 to 22.5% in 2012. This proportion is confirmed by the census data (see Table 10), and pertinently suggests high levels of local deprivation and poor quality housing, even compared to the rural areas elsewhere within South Africa.

Access to water

With regards to access to water, almost half (46.9%) (Table 12) of 1 712 focal households (Table 11) reported drawing water from rivers, pools, 'stagnant water' and springs. While over a fifth (23.2%), reportedly rely on 'borehole' water, only 15.1% draw water through a 'formal water service provider or scheme'. This low level of access to treated, potable water can be contrasted with the successively larger proportions of households in the larger local Umzimvubu municipality (30.7%), Eastern Cape province (62.3%) or South African nation (79.7%) who have access to water through a formal water service provider (Table 12).

Access to sanitation

Access to sanitation underscores the larger narrative of local deprivation. If the lowermost threshold of adequate access to sanitation is drawn at a ventilated pit latrine, the local sanitation deficit comprises over two-thirds (67.1%) of local households (Table 14). Inadequate sanitation is, in other words, the

local norm within the focal research sites. Of this large tally, the sub-standard category of 'unimproved' (i.e. unventilated) pit latrines is reported by 673 (out of a total of 1 713) households in the village (Table 13). But even more disconcerting is that more than a quarter of households (viz. 27.8%) describe their access to sanitation as either 'none' (18.2%) or 'other' (9.6%) (a category likely to include defecation in the open). The absence of sanitation represents a substantial impediment to human health and development, and significant contributor to child mortality. The sanitation deficit within the villages is almost double the comparable figure for the municipality (viz. 14.9%), and four times for the national figure (7.3%) (Table 14).

Availability of electricity

The choice of fuel source for lighting reported by households within the focal research area is revealing. Electricity is most likely to be used for lighting only, as it is expensive for cooking or heating. Within the focal villages, a fifth of homes (341 out of 1 714) use electricity for lighting (Table 17), versus almost seven in ten (viz. 69.3%) using candles (Table 18). In comparative terms, the figures are inverted with those at provincial levels, with three quarters of the Eastern Cape (75.1%) using electricity for lighting (Table 18).

Having sketched a largely statistical picture of poverty within the focal research site, the case studies are presented below.

7. Summary: Household case studies

The following is a summary of ten selected household case studies. Pseudonyms have been used, and unabridged versions of these case studies are included in Appendix II.

Case study 1: Siyanda M.

This case study describes the household of Siyanda M., an occupationally injured rural returnee to the village. He and his wife occupy a solid homestead, which has been marked by significant changes in household composition over the course of time. Over the decade, teenage children leave, and young grandchildren became co-resident. The case study not only notes the (own-use) agricultural production that (disabled) Siyanda engages in, but also the complex kin and neighbourly networks of social reciprocity within which his household is embedded. As Siyanda's children age into adulthood, they find comparatively modest footholds in urban labour markets. Their parents (i.e. Siyanda and his wife) see their rural household sustained by receipt of state old age grants, few child support grants, and Siyanda's small (private sector) mine pension. Although hardly affluent, the household is able to sustain itself constantly over time. It is far from the poorest or most vulnerable in the village.

Case study 2: Mamzoli M.

Mamzoli is an elderly, retired domestic worker who receives a state old age grant and occupies a rural household with numerous children and grandchildren. The case study documents how, from the 1990s into the mid-2000s she engages in a diverse range of economic activities, including vending (meat, beer) and agriculture. Both activities are crucially facilitated by her grandchildren's labour. Mamzoli is, moreover, relatively well located within kin-based networks of social reciprocity. The case study examines the complex supportive relationship she enjoys with her urban-employed

son, who is a key benefactor to her household and the wider kinship network. It is partially through his support that several of Mamzoli's adult children (i.e. the son's siblings) study further and access better remunerated formal sector employment. This ultimately translates into increased support to Mamzoli's household, and diversification into other livelihood activities (livestock, other informal sector activities). It sees incremental material improvements in aging Mamzoli's livelihood.

Case study 3: Simpiwe M.

The case study of Simpiwe is linked to that of his mother Mamzoli (above). The case study focuses on the details of Simpiwe's work history, and captures the precise nature of the circuits of social reciprocity he develops and sustains. Simpiwe not only improves his occupational and material position over time, but later comes to reinvest in rural residency and assets.

Case study 4: Kwanele N.

This case study recounts the aftermath of Kwanele N.'s rural return, after retrenchment from decades of semi-skilled urban employment. He returns to his large household in 2005, consisting of his wife, numerous teenage and young adult children, a grandchild and his unmarried and ill adult brothers (over ten dependents). In the course of a decade, intermittent interviews catalogue how Kwanele leverages his time, effort and modest accrued income in a range of livelihood-supporting activities. These included agriculture, running a small store and establishing a church. Kwanele's workplace savings (retirement and retrenchment benefits) are also directed to educating his adult children, and therefore swiftly exhausted. For several years the unsuccessful efforts of his sons to secure jobs is a source of great concern to Kwanele and his wife – until they finally succeed. Their

solid formal sector employment sees the sons remit to the household, fund the education of younger siblings, and provide an urban foothold to their rural kin.

Case study 5: Chuma K.

Chuma K.'s case study is that of a single, female household head, and mother to several young children. Over the course of a decade, Chuma's oldest children age into their teens, one dies and others are born (to absent male partners). Chuma's household remains one of the most materially deprived and vulnerable encountered in the course of the research, even by impoverished village standards. For a decade she sustains herself and her children through receipt of paltry child support grants, informal work in the village, and intermittent support from other older women. The case study recounts the genesis of this situation, how male kin dispatched Chuma from the city back to the village to look after the family home. However, she is subsequently let down by her kin, who fail to remit to her. With few employment prospects, several dependents to care for, and weak entitlements within her kin networks, Chuma becomes effectively and unhappily 'tied down' in the village.

Case study 6: Nobuhle M.

Nobuhle M.'s complex case study centres on her household, which consists of four-generations of women (during the course of the research a fifth generation is born). The case study illustrates the sequence of each adult woman migrating to the city to engage in domestic work and remitting to the household, until Nobuhle's daughter (generation three) falls chronically ill and this pattern of livelihood making is ruptured. Not only is Nobuhle's daughter unable to remit, she comes to require constant care, heightening the household's caring for the elderly and young. This raises the household's vulnerability, and throws it back on narrow reliance on social grants and erratic remittances. Against the backdrop of these events, the household is notable for the way in which it successfully leverages a single old age grant through careful stewardship of resources, and its high levels of local social respectability and cohesive household decision-making. However, despite the women managing to judiciously

sustain the household with few resources, it remains in a highly precarious position.

Case study 7: Bulelani P.

Bulelani P. is an elderly rural returnee who spends his working life engaging in low-paid formal sector work outside of the village, while his wife builds the homestead. He returns to the village many years before (prior to 2005), and occupies the large, comfortable homestead with his wife, adult children and a large but shifting cast of grandchildren. The case study focuses on the dissimilar employment and livelihood trajectories of his adult son and daughter, as well as the differences between the adult children who successfully find footholds in the urban economy, versus those that do not. It suggests the varied and gendered patterns involved, against the backdrop of increasingly precarious livelihoods and constrained prospects for rural household formation.

Case study 8: Wilfred X.

The case study of Wilfred X. presents a picture of the village elite. He and his wife were locally employed teachers (he retired by 2015). They occupy a comparatively large comfortable home, with co-resident adult children, grandchildren and three employees. The case study shows the manner in which these members of the local elite reinvest and diversify their livelihoods.

Case study 9: Abongile G.

The case study of Abongile G. is of an older married woman with several co-resident children (several of whom are teenagers). At the beginning of the research period (in the mid-2000s) she recounted the extremely conflict-laden relationship with her urban-based husband, including his abuse and abandonment of her and the children. Her narrative (confirmed by documents shown to the researchers) suggests the complicity of the local traditional authority in her husband's victimisation of her, and asset stripping of the household's livestock. In the subsequent decade, and after a contested divorce, Abongile's position deteriorates, as does the household's ability to sustain itself. She gradually loses her sight, while her older children fare poorly at school and in

the job market. The case study concludes with the narrative of a mortally ill urban-resident daughter who returns home and soon dies, further intensifying the pressures on Abongile and her household.

Case study 10: Nothando N.

The case study of Nothando draws on interviews conducted with her, which explicate her early widowhood, migratory urban employment in the 1980s, rural return and the diversity of household livelihood activities in the 2000s. Following her 2012 death, the

case study examines the subsequent trajectory of her household, especially its remaining members, from ancillary informants. It traces a household that essentially consists of two adult men (Nothando's son and grandson), and which skits precariously close to dissolution. The case study reveals how the two men come to rely on very erratic, petty employment, and the beneficence of extended female kin, in order to survive. It reveals something of the workings of entitlement and obligation within the focal research context.

8. The political economy of poverty and underdevelopment

This section prefaces the analysis by briefly describing key structural determinants of poverty and vulnerability within the former homelands.

Rural livelihoods in the former homeland communal areas are shaped by patterns of persistent poverty and inequality in South Africa. Although it is an upper-middle income country, South Africa bears the imprint of its colonial and apartheid past, and remains characterised by unusually high levels of poverty. Moreover, these patterns are racially skewed: the proportion of the poor who are 'black Africans' remains consistently over 95%, regardless of the poverty line used (Leibbrandt et al., 2010). The distribution of poverty in South Africa recapitulates the racial hierarchy of apartheid, with poverty rates highest for black Africans, and successively lower for 'coloured', Indian and white populations.

Although still-high levels of poverty have been somewhat mitigated by the expanding social wage and welfare grants, income inequality has proved more tenacious. Not only does it remain highly racialised, mounting inequalities within the black African race group (over three-quarters of the population) are deepening national inequality trends (Leibbrandt et al., 2010). Hence, racially defined patterns of poverty and inequality are increasingly exacerbated by class-based differences.

The roots of poverty and underdevelopment within the former homelands, and within the native reserves that, can be understood in historical terms. With little mineral wealth, often limited agricultural potential and distant from urban markets, these areas were established as labour reserves in the early twentieth century. The mid-century intensification of racial segregation and rise of apartheid

saw them become dumping grounds for 'surplus' people. The effects of this legacy have been entrenched, amidst the ineffectiveness of post-apartheid efforts to reverse it (Bank and Minkely, 2005; Ruiters, 2011).

As the ex-homelands are impoverished and spatially distant from major metropolitan centres, their underdevelopment is often imagined to be a result of economic disconnection and exclusion. However, a political economy perspective rejects this, and instead understands rural underdevelopment as a consequence of the growth of racialised capitalism in South Africa (Wolpe, 1972; Bundy, 1988). The former homelands are not disconnected or excluded from the 'first', formal or mainstream economy, but rather integrated into it, only on disadvantageous and adverse terms (Du Toit and Neves, 2007). This point is not simply of arcane theoretical interest: it implies that efforts to tackle rural underdevelopment need to be informed by a clear understanding of the relationship between these locales and the larger structural context. This relationship defines the prospects and points of leverage for achieving rural development.

Framed by a political economy informed understanding, poverty and vulnerability in the former homelands or bantustans are accounted for in terms of three key legacies. The first is long-term declines in the prospects for unskilled, formal sector employment. The second are dwindling prospects for agriculture and agrarian-based activities, and the third, weaknesses within the state and ongoing contestations over communal area governance. These influence the context within which livelihoods are constituted, and the terrain on which policy efforts directed at rural development are exercised.

Money, labour markets and deindustrialisation

The first structural influence on poverty and vulnerability is the manner in which South African's rural poor have historically been incorporated into labour markets and systems of money, but for over a generation faced declining employment opportunities.

In the Eastern Cape, as elsewhere, nineteenth-century colonial conquest saw Africans subjected to colonial administration and taxation (Redding, 1993). Taxation was used to compel Africans to give up their labour to settler agriculture and the rapidly growing mining industry. Soon after the formation of a unitary South Africa, the 1913 Natives Land Act initiated the land dispossession and displacement that was to deepen throughout the twentieth century. Shrinking prospects for rural subsistence drew men into migratory labour, and African society into the systems of money and market exchange. Migration had firm regional and sectoral dimensions, for example, by the mid-1930s 40% of black miners on the Reef came from the Eastern Cape (Maylam, 1986, cited in Edwards, 2011), and from the 1970s into the 1980s, half-a-million male migrant miners were from the (then) Transkei (Ngonini, 2007). For decades migrant labour enabled rural remittances, and underpinned livelihoods in the former reserves and homelands.

The 1970s represented the zenith of demand for unskilled labour; thereafter demand and migration declined. Following the political transition of the 1990s this decline was aggravated by de-industrialisation. Regionally, the withdrawal of 'border' and homeland industrial decentralisation incentives shuttered industry in sites such as Butterworth and Dimbaza (Nel and Temple, 1992). Across the country, post-apartheid economic liberalisation drove de-industrialisation (Black, 2010; Black and Gerwel, 2014) and loss of jobs in the traditional bastions of low-skilled employment (e.g. textiles, garments, footwear and light manufacturing). Rapid agricultural market deregulation similarly drove a consolidation of commercial farmers, and pertinently, declines in agricultural employment (Greenberg, 2015). Post-apartheid trade and industrial policy have, moreover, reinforced

long-term structural biases towards capital-intensive production within the South African economy, to the detriment of low skill employment (Aliber, 2003; Black, 2010; Philip, 2010).

Hence, by the 2000s, the fastest growing sectors of the South African economy were finance, insurance and real estate and telecommunications – sectors uncondusive to low-skilled or labour intensive growth. The scale of the mismatch is evident even in the largely rural and impoverished Eastern Cape. Within the Eastern Cape the largest manufacturing sector is the capital-intensive, export-orientated automotive industry (Edwards, 2011). Clustered in two metropolitan areas and distant from the former homelands, the sector is deeply dependent on substantial state incentives (Black and Mitchell, 2002). Rural labour, 'once so eagerly desired has become a burden to the state and an irrelevance to capital' (Bank and Minkley, 2005, p.32).

Agriculture and de-agrarianisation

A second vector of rural poverty and vulnerability flows from paltry and declining opportunities for agricultural production. The occupational, social and economic move out of agriculture and agrarian-based livelihoods or 'de-agrarianisation' (Bryceson and Jamal, 1997; Bryceson, 2002) is increasingly evident across the global South (Li, 2009). But it is acute in South Africa, propelled by a legacy of land dispossession and displacement (Manona, 1998).

With their origins in dispossession, the former native reserves were stricken by overcrowding and agricultural crisis almost from the outset. By the interwar years officials sought to rationalise native agriculture through 'betterment': by planning land use zones, laying out villages and reducing overstocking (via livestock culling). Officials not only often misunderstand local production systems, the dispossession inherent in betterment provoked fierce resistance (Beinart and Bundy, 1987). By the 1950s the Tomlinson Commission proposed a 'two-stream' model for the homelands, whereby agriculturally 'unproductive' residents would make way for improving

native farmers. However, the prospect of displacing Africans into white apartheid cities meant it was never implemented.

An enduring process of de-agrarianisation within the communal areas encompasses several interlocking dynamics: social, institutional and economic. The social dimensions include the dissipation of social arrangements and cultural precepts that historically enabled agriculture. These include, for example, the concentration of cattle ownership (Cousins, 1996) reducing their wider availability for animal traction (for ploughing), rising school enrolment eroding the labour of children (for herding, etc.), and increased numbers of non-agricultural households, with little incentive to participate in communal work parties or deter stray animals from field crops (Andrews and Fox, 2004).

The second dimension of de-agrarianisation is institutional, and includes decades of underinvestment in homeland and small-scale agriculture. In the last two decades even the homeland-era provision of basic agricultural extension and infrastructure (fences, irrigation, subsidised tractors, etc.) has withered.

The third dimension, the economic driver of de-agrarianisation, includes the manner in which declining industrial employment has undermined rural back investment and procuring of crucial inputs (seed, fertiliser, ploughing services). These dynamics are exacerbated by the dominance of the commercial sector (outside the former homelands) (Greenberg, 2015). In South Africa's dualistic agriculture system a small cohort of (largely white) capital-intensive commercial farmers produces the majority of the nation's food. It is processed and distributed in a concentrated and vertically integrated agro-food system, and retailed by corporate supermarket chains, whose reach extends into township and rural markets (Greenberg, 2015). Hence the prospects for small-scale agricultural production are undercut by the highly concentrated agro-food system.

Communal area governance and the state

The structural factors shaping poverty and underdevelopment in the former homelands have been described to this point in terms

of the twin pincers of declining industrial employment and waning agriculture. The final structural constraint is the long shadow of weak administrative systems and contestations over rural governance.

From its origins as a native reserve, the former Transkei attained early self-government and nominal 'independence' in the 1970s. Governance in the former homelands was fundamentally 'patrimonial': autocratic leaders dispensed patronage to secure the support of an amalgam of elite interests, including local business people and civil servants (Peires, 1992). Although the homelands had a varied and ambiguous relationship to Pretoria, they were ultimately funded by the apartheid state.

The democratic political transition of the 1990s precipitated the reintegration of the homelands into a unitary South Africa and created novel provinces. However the Eastern Cape has never overcome its inauspicious origins as being amongst the most spatially extensive, least resourced and administratively weak of the provinces (Westaway, 2012). Not only is it amongst the largest, it uncommonly incorporated two substantial homeland bureaucracies (Transkei and Ciskei). Patterns of clientelism and patronage, fashioned under homeland-era bureaucracies, along with a range of planning, institutional and administrative weaknesses have remained difficult to overcome (Ruiters, 2011). They constrain service delivery in the present, and make for contemporary communal areas where the state is often absent or relatively under-capacitated. These weaknesses are aggravated by local contestations over rural governance.

In much of South Africa the chieftaincy was co-opted by a British colonial system of indirect rule, and latter apartheid-era authorities (Hendricks, 1990). Traditional authorities became administrative functionaries of the state, and derived considerable power from the adjudication of local disputes and allocation of resources, such as land (Ntsebeza, 1999). After 1994, municipal government was extended to rural areas and efforts were made to decouple the land administration and local rural governance, long 'fused together in one tribal authority' (Ntsebeza, 2011, p.84). However, a decade after the advent of democracy the balance of power swung back

towards the chieftaincy. The promulgation of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (2003) and the Communal Land Rights Act (2004) reanimated the chiefs, allowing them to dominate traditional councils and regain control over the allocation of communal land (Ntsebeza, 2006).

Several have argued that this renewal of hereditary traditional authorities compromises the democratic project and rural governance (Hendricks, 1990; Van Kessel and Oomen, 1997; Ntsebeza, 2006). It renders rural residents the 'subjects' of unelected,

tribal authority, in contrast with the civic citizenship and legal personhood of urban residents (Mamdani, 1996). These tensions and ambiguities are particularly keenly felt in the regional key strongholds of the chieftaincy in KwaZulu-Natal and the former Transkei regions of the Eastern Cape. They generate uncertainty and contestations over rural governance, increase the possibility of capture by the local elite, and often entail socially regressive attitudes to gender and the place of rural women (evident in the case study of Abongile), all to the ultimate detriment of efforts to stimulate rural development.

9. Communal area households: Practices of livelihood making

In the previous section the structural factors shaping impoverished rural livelihoods within the former homeland communal areas were described. In what follows the micro-level contextual practices influencing rural households are discussed. Household composition is briefly described, before practices of livelihood making are examined in terms of firstly, livelihood diversification; secondly, social reciprocity and mutuality; and thirdly, migration and spatial mobility. This contextual discussion lays the foundation for subsequent detailed explication of rural livelihood.

Households in the rural communal areas are characterised by comparatively larger household size (numbers of household members) compared to urban households (Jacobs and Hart, 2014), despite demographic processes of 'household unbundling' (increasing numbers of households, with declining average numbers of household members) (Pillay, 2008). Furthermore African households in the former homelands are best thought of not as discrete and isolated units, but rather as geographically 'stretched' between rural and urban poles (Spiegel et al. 1996; Spiegel, 1996; Ngwane, 2003; Du Toit and Neves, 2009a). In

addition, household composition is seldom static, but instead marked by dynamism and change (Ross, 1996; 2003). For instance, in the focal research site over a three-year period (2002–2005) altered household membership (apart from births and deaths) was evident in all but two of 48 households (Du Toit and Neves, 2006).

Household demography is intertwined with material and cultural factors. The decline of male labour migration has not only ruptured patterns of back investment, but also cultural mores surrounding marriage and household formation. Not only is 'household unbundling' evident, marriage rates have declined amongst Africans. Male partners are increasingly absent from households, hence the majority of African children neither live with, nor have regular contact with, their fathers (Posel and Devey, 2006). Practices of household formation, therefore, increasingly occur in a context decoupled from the traditional practices of matrimony.

The demography of rural households is graphically evident in the following population pyramids. The first (Figure 2) is of black

Figure 2: Population pyramid for all black South Africans in South Africa, from Census 2011 data

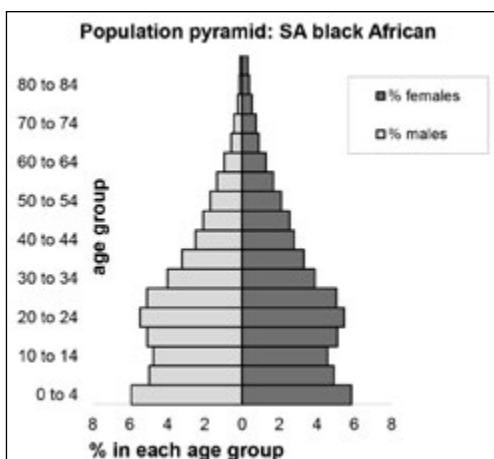
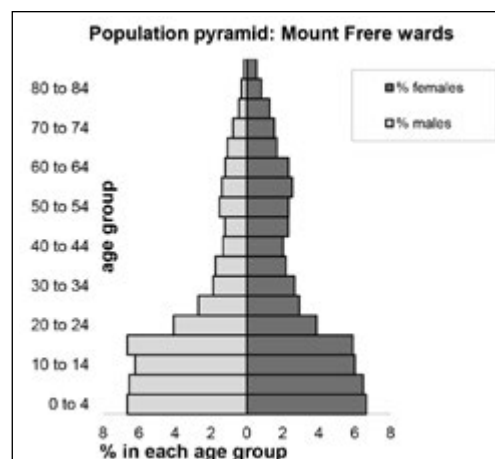


Figure 3: Population pyramid for Mount Frere wards in focal research sites, from Census 2011 data



Africans in all of South Africa, the second for the specific rural wards that make up the focal research context villages (Figure 3).

Like much of the former homelands in general, the population pyramid for the focal research site (Figure 3), in comparison with Figure 2, demonstrates the tell-tale youth bulge at the base, followed by a narrowing (with absent working-age adults), before flaring out for the elderly. Note, too, the gender asymmetry: from the age of 30 onwards women (i.e. right hand side of the pyramid, Figure 3) are a larger group than men. The predominance of women is echoed elsewhere in analysis of the household headship (Table 6) where females head 58.4% of households in the focal villages (and a majority in the municipality), but decline to a minority of household heads within the Eastern Cape province and nationally respectively.

The patterns attest to the out-migration of adults in their prime working age and disproportionately low numbers of locally resident men. They suggest the demographic basis of the ubiquitous communal area 'skipped' generation (grandchildren and grandparent) patterns of household composition. These are evident in the case studies, including of Siyanda and Mamzoli's households. Collectively, these provide the rural milieu in which practices of livelihood making are constituted.

Livelihood diversification and hybridity

Rural households across the developing world commonly engage in livelihood diversification and acts of pluri-activity (Ellis, 2000) to sustain themselves. Household members diversify their activities, across contexts, time spans and seasons, to both take advantage of opportunities and mitigate risk. This diversification entails harnessing the complementarities within activities (such as the synergies between livestock production and cropping within agriculture), but also between activities, such as leveraging formal sector employment (resources, skills) into informal economic activity.

Diverse repertoires of diversification are evident in most of the case studies. But as they often involve the labour of various household

members, a crucial precondition for diversification is the availability of 'surplus' household labour capacity. Practices of diversification therefore frequently interface with the household 'developmental cycle' (Murray, 1987), meaning ageing or labour constrained households (consisting of the elderly or young dependents) have less of the surplus labour necessary to diversify. Within the case studies examples of these small and labour constrained households include Abongile, but particularly Chuma's household.

Social reciprocity and mutuality

Acts of social reciprocity and mutuality comprise the second set of practices on which impoverished rural households in the former homelands rely. African households are embedded in dense, culturally inscribed practices of mutual aid and sharing. These practices are particularly important to the poor and vulnerable, due to their susceptibility to precipitous shocks and plunges into deep destitution. Unlike the middle class and affluent, the poor seldom have access to formal risk-mitigation mechanisms, such as insurance. This social reciprocity has been theoretically described in various ways, including as 'social capital' (Putnam, 1995), 'informal social capital' (Bracking and Sachikonye, 2006), proximal social protection (Du Toit and Neves, 2009b), or even in an Africanist register, 'ubuntu' (Kamwangamalu, 1999).

While social reciprocity consists of material transfers, it can also include unpaid 'care-work'. Carework is the (often overlooked) gendered work of caring for dependents, such as the young, disabled, sick and elderly, etc., which ensures household and generational reproduction. In the context of rural out-migration it is typically undertaken within spatially extensive, distributed 'care chains' (Hochschild, 2000). Impoverished rural households acutely feel the demands of carework, due to the scarcity of services and infrastructure in rural areas, and a corresponding reliance on natural resources (firewood, water, gathered foods, etc.). Furthermore, rural areas have high dependency ratios, as they typically substitute for care deficit in urban areas.

Practices of social reciprocity are evident in the case studies. For instance, the case of Mamzoli saw her son Simpiwe scale back his remittance to her, complete his schooling, secure a better job, and then resume remitting. The case study of Kwanele illustrates the complexity of these circuits of support. Kwanele's (uncommon) rural to urban kin remittance was sent in the (eventually realised) expectation that his sons would reciprocate, once they found urban jobs. Note, too, that reciprocity is variegated, and does not only occur in kin networks, such as in the examples of Kwanele's church building, and Mamzoli providing refrigeration to fellow villagers.

Finally, social reciprocity is not necessarily an untrammelled social good. Not only is it dynamic and subject to the pressure of changing cultural mores, urbanisation and modernisation (Mupedziswa and Ntseane, 2013), it is embedded in larger cultural practices and normative belief systems (Sagner and Mtati, 1999). Hence individuals without material resources and social standing can find themselves at a net advantage in these exchanges. The case study of Chuma, marooned in the village and unsupported by her kin, provides an example of this.

Migration and spatial mobility

The third dimension of rural livelihood making entails practices of migration and spatially mobility. Rural livelihoods in South Africa have long been rooted within systems of oscillatory migration to urban locales (Potts, 2000). Migratory practices linked rural households to external opportunities and resources, and dovetail with the practices of household formation and composition described earlier.

The prevalence of domestic (intra-national) migration is revealed by NIDS data (Table 3). It shows that between 2008 and 2012 working-age adult out-migration was high from 'tribal authority' communal areas (8%), but higher yet for rural formal areas (12%). In fact, the highest rates of out-migration were from urban informal areas (17%), and predominantly into urban formal areas (Daniels et al., 2013). Hence the analysis confirms high levels of rural out-migration, but amidst high levels of migration more generally.

In terms of rural migrant destinations Aliber et al. (2016) use census data to examine the receiving areas for migrants, including from the Alfred Nzo district municipality (the larger district municipality under which the focal villages fall). The main destinations are (in descending order): 'elsewhere within the Eastern Cape', followed by Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. The main destination for migrants from the present day municipalities that make up the former Transkei homeland are 'elsewhere in the Eastern Cape', followed by varying combinations of KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and the Western Cape (Aliber et al., 2016).

The category 'elsewhere in the Eastern Cape' is expansive, and includes two metropolitan areas, along with smaller regional cities and towns. However, it also includes proximate areas within the district, because rural dwellers migrate not simply in search of employment, but also to access superior infrastructure, social services, transport and communication nodes. These shorter bouts of oscillatory migration are associated with women, particularly as migration has become increasingly feminised and informal in the post-apartheid period (Du Toit and Neves, 2006).

The manner in which migration positions rural homes as poles in spatially extensive systems of livelihood making, both a buffer against urban-based livelihood shocks and prospective sites of retirement from urban employment and residency, is evident in the case studies. There is ample evidence of household members proactively putting back investment into their rural homes, such as in the case studies of Kwanele, Bulelani and Siyanda. Back investment and rural return are, hence, a key aspect of rural livelihood strategies.

Finally, the persistence of domestic migratory dynamics in the post-apartheid period reflects entwined material and social dimensions. Not only has the continued precariousness of livelihoods and employment in South Africa inhibited a more complete urban transition (Mabin, 1990), many rural residents continue to view rural areas as sites of 'authentic' home (James, 2001; Ngwane, 2003).

Figure 4: Varieties of household ‘connectedness’ between rural and urban

1. Rural households with an urban pole.	2. Urban households without a rural pole.
3. Rural households without an urban pole.	4. Urban households with a rural pole.

Source: Neves and Du Toit, 2013

Towards a typology of impoverished households

In conceptualising impoverished rural livelihoods, household practices of livelihood diversification, social reciprocity and migration come to converge. These are illustrated in a typology (Figure 4) previously developed to cluster households (Du Toit and Neves, 2006, Neves and du Toit, 2013). The typology is ordered in terms of the quality of the rural household’s spatial linkages to urban locales. It is discussed below, and provides a basis for a nascent segmentation of rural households.

For the purposes of the current discussion, the focus is on rural households (quadrants 1 and 3). The first are ‘Rural households with an urban pole’ (quadrant 1). They are the analogues of ‘Urban households with a rural pole’ (quadrant 4), which are nodes of the same variant of geographically stretched households. However, rural households ‘straddling’ both rural and urban sites are the current focus (quadrant 1). In these households access to wages and remittances are often combined with agricultural production, or even other kinds of informal sector activities. Returns from employment might be modest (or have ended with withdrawal from urban labour markets), meaning this group is not precluded from social grant receipt. The majority of the rural household case studies fall into this broad category of having, or having had in the recent past, a firm urban link. The exceptions to this pattern of urban links are described below.

In contrast, ‘Rural households without an urban pole’ (quadrant 3), are those that have either lost, or never had, a solid connection to urban labour markets. These households are invariably reliant on poorly remunerated local work, and receipt of social welfare. Relatively few in number, compared to the preceding group, they are amongst the poorest and most marginalised of rural households. The case studies of Chuma, and to a lesser extent Abongile and Nobuhle fall into this category.

Finally, although immaterial to the current focus, ‘Urban households without a rural pole’ (quadrant 2), are households that have made a complete urban transition. Even if they maintain sentimental links to rural areas, they invest few of their resources or aspirations in rural residency. They span a range, from successful urbanites, to vulnerable urban households that have lost their rural foothold and entitlements.

In conclusion, the above typology has implications for conceptualising processes leading to vulnerability and social differentiation. Within the sample of household case studies, those that are less vulnerable and fare better over time unfailingly have stronger urban linkages; whereas the poorest and most marginal are invariably those that have comparatively weak urban linkages. These gradations of vulnerability are the crux of the final discussion of social differentiation, but before this discussion the four key constitutive domains of rural livelihood making are presented.

10. Four constitutive 'domains' of rural livelihood making

Having sketched out the context and key dynamics shaping rural livelihoods in the communal areas, four key constitutive 'domains' of rural livelihood making are described. These are: formal employment, state social grants, 'non-farm' informal economic activity, and agriculture (Neves and Du Toit, 2013). These are discussed with reference to the empirical material, as a preface to the task of segmenting rural households.

Employment, wages and remittances

The first 'domain' through which rural livelihoods are constituted is earnings derived from formal employment. South Africa is characterised by high rates of unemployment and low average incomes, but marked by high levels of 'wage dependency'. Labour market derived income is therefore crucial to rural households, with 75% of all rural households either listing labour market or social grants as their predominant income source in 2012 (Jacobs and Hart, 2014). In what follows the extent, scale of earnings, gender and sectoral composition of rural employment and remittances are discussed.

Employment rates

In terms of the extent of employment and unemployment, own analysis of sub-place level census data shows employment rates to be extremely low (Table 16). The 'employed' category is 5.1% for the focal villages, but consistently increases across the expanding geographical scales of the municipality (9.6% employed), the province (15.7%), and nation (25.4%). With regards to unemployment, the 'Unemployed' and 'Discouraged work-seeker' categories (that cumulatively make up the expanded definition of unemployment) number between 11.6% and 14.3% of all individuals across the various scales of village, municipality, province and nation (Table 16).

While the census data point to the high levels of unemployment in the rural setting, this is not directly comparable to conventional official statistics of labour market dynamics, which are calculated only for working-age adults. By this metric the national, 'expanded' unemployment rate was 35.6% (in 2011), and 34.8% (in 2015) (StatsSA, 2016), an approximate 10% increment over the 25.4% above.

The 'Other not economically active' category, is proportionally larger at the small geographical scales of village and province, and reflects the relative dearth of prime, working-age adults in the population distribution (See the Population pyramid for Mount Frere wards, Figure 3). The essential point is that unemployment rates are extremely high within South Africa, but successively higher within the province, municipality and villages of the focal research sites.

Gender and employment

With regards to gender and employment the analysis (Table 19) reveals women account for higher absolute numbers of the employed at both ward and municipal levels than do men, but decline to below men at provincial and national level. Although women account for the majority (54.1%) of the population in the municipality, they account for an even larger proportion of the employed (Table 19). The predominance of women in the employment sector does not simply mean they are denizens of the low-paid informal sector. As will be discussed later, women account for higher levels of (albeit scarce) formal sector employment than men, at both municipal and ward level (Table 28). To sum up, employment is extremely low within the focal communal area villages, but women are well represented within the small cohort of individuals who are employed.

Earnings and employment

With regards to earnings, comparative NIDS-derived data is of value. The table below (Table 1) shows labour market incomes in South Africa; the highest aggregate earnings are achieved in 'Urban formal' areas. Although average earnings are consistently higher in 'Tribal authority' (viz. former homeland) areas, than in 'Urban informal' areas (viz. urban shack settlements, etc.) across the three waves, earnings in 'Tribal authority' areas are consistently lower than for 'Urban formal' area households. In addition, while Wave 2 (2012) shows that incomes from 'Tribal authority' areas exceed those from 'Rural formal' areas, Daniels et al. (2013) caution that the latter are skewed upwards by high-earning outliers. A final caveat is that poverty often represents the nexus of income and household demography (Lilenstein et al., 2016). As the former homelands have larger mean household sizes (roughly an average of an additional person) the indicated incomes are effectively 'diluted' amongst larger numbers of household members.

Employment sectors

In terms of sectors within which the employed work, a comparison of three key tables included in the appendices is essential. The first (Table 20) represents employment shares for all working-age adults (15–64 years) in South Africa, the second (Table 21) comparable data for 'Rural formal' areas, the third (Table 22) similar data for former homeland communal (viz. 'Tribal authority') areas.

The data reveal low levels of agricultural employment in the former homelands of 6.4% to 7.8%, across the time series data (2008, 2010 and 2012) from the QLFS and NIDS datasets (Table 22). This stands in contrast with 'Rural formal areas' (Table 21) where the comparable figures are 51.81%, 49.43% and 53.62%, in the QLFS, or 43.57%, 38.13% and 28.62% within NIDS (Daniels et al., 2013). While QLFS and NIDS figures are discrepant, they do convey a strong sense of the magnitude of agricultural employment, which accounts for between roughly a third to half of employment in 'Formal rural' areas. Compared to the less than 8% employment in the former homelands, remunerative agricultural employment is, therefore, between three to eight times more prevalent elsewhere in the countryside. Hence, a much smaller proportion of the population in the former homelands is employed in agriculture.

Even at a provincial level, agriculture is estimated to account for less than 2% of the Eastern Cape net economic output, and (using 2010 data) only 61 000 remunerated jobs (out of the 1.24 million employed) (Edwards, 2011). These would predominantly be workers in the (still) largely white-dominated commercial agriculture in the west of the province (Edwards, 2011). A final caveat is that, although agricultural employment is low in the former homelands, this is not to suggest that it is inconsequential as a source of livelihood making and food security (Rogan and Reynolds, 2017). The extent of 'own-use' value of agriculture is varied and considered in detail later.

Table 1: Mean monthly household income derived from the labour market by geotype, from NIDS data, deflated to December 2012 prices

Area	Wave 1 (2008)	Wave 2 (2012)	Wave 3 (2013)
Rural formal	3 512	3 852	7 153
Tribal authority	3 055	4 274	4 367
Urban formal	9 391	10 485	9 967
Urban informal	2 874	3 481	3 630
Total average	6 832	7 884	7 894

(Adapted from Daniels et al., 2013)

Returning to the sectoral composition of employment, the sectors with the largest employment shares in the former homelands are in descending order: 'community and social services', 'wholesale and retail trade' and 'employment in private households'. This distribution of employment is constant across datasets (NIDS and QLFS) and time spans. On average, community and social services account for over a quarter of employment (24.6%–34.7%), wholesale and retail trade roughly one in seven workers (12.8%–16.8%) and employment in private households over a tenth of jobs (10.7%–14.2%). The proportion of employment attributable to these sectors, as opposed to agriculture, is significant. 'Community and social services' account for over three times more employment than agriculture, 'trade' roughly double the proportion, and private households approximately a 50% larger share of employment than agriculture (Table 22). Once again, this underscores the small contribution of agriculture to employment in the former homelands. In fact, 'community and social services' and 'employment in private households' account for a disproportionately larger proportion of employment in the former homelands than nationally (Table 20).

Remittances and private transfers

Less readily captured in the above data are remittances and intra-household transfers. Practices of remittance sending and receipt are embedded in the systems of migration, and practices of household making and social reciprocity described earlier. The evidence suggests long-term declines in remittances (Seekings et al., 1990, Leibbrandt et al., 2010), with Jacobs and Hart (2014) recording the dissipation of half-a-million remittances in the decade from 2002 to 2012 (dropping from 23.6% to 13.3%, across all households in rural areas). However, there are complex interactions between declining remittances and livelihoods, hence declines may reflect more than shrinking labour market earnings, eroding entitlements and changing social mores (Seekings and Harper, 2010), but also the need to retain resources for increasingly 'unbundled' urban households.

Despite aggregate evidence of declines in remittances, formal labour market earnings continue to be significant resources for large

numbers of rural households. The centrality of wage labour is evident in the majority of the case studies. As will be argued later, in a comparison of households, the nature of linkages to the formal labour market is an important mediator of a rural household's welfare and relative class position.

State cash transfers

Seventeen million people, or over 30% of South Africa's population, receive means-tested state cash transfers ('social grants') (SASSA, 2016). While 3.2 million pensioners and a million disabled people receive grants, over 12 million child support grant (CSG) beneficiaries (SASSA, 2016) represent the bulk of post-apartheid expansion of the system. The CSG is valued at roughly a quarter of the higher-value old age and disability grants (R360 versus R1 510, in late 2016) (SASSA, 2016). Assorted other smaller categories of recipient include half-a-million foster grant receiving children.

South Africa's social grant system is almost a century old and has long been predicated on unemployment as a temporary or transient phenomenon. Accordingly, non-disabled working-age adults (especially men, who collect few CSGs) are excluded from the welfare net (Van der Berg, 1997). Yet South Africa has, by developing country standards, a relatively extensive system of cash transfers with the higher-value (old age and disability) grants equivalent to approximately double the median per capital income for Africans (Case and Deaton, 1998). Drawing on the General Household Survey, Jacobs and Hart (2014) note that the proportion of (all) rural households that ascribe their main source of income to social grants rises from 28.4% in 2002 to 36.6% in 2012. Social grants uptake in the former homelands is high, due to disproportionately large numbers of the eligible beneficiaries (e.g. children, elderly, disabled).

Robust welfare impacts, including improved nutritional outcomes and school enrolment are associated with social grant receipt (Samson et al., 2004; Budlender and Woolard, 2006; Case et al., 2005; Woolard and Klassen, 2004). Furthermore, through widespread practices of intra-household pooling (Posel, 2001) these welfare effects are effectively 'distributed' to other household members, especially when the recipients are women (Lund, 2006; Gold-

blatt, 2005). There is also evidence of social grant income directed to small investments in productive assets and activities (Ardington and Lund 1995; Lund 2002; Neves et al., 2009). Social grants are, moreover, associated with demographic effects, with many rural households effectively formed around a recipient pensioner (typically female) (Duflo, 2003; Woolard and Klassen, 2004). Statistically, receipt of a pension in a rural household facilitates the out-migration of working-aged women, and higher proportions of co-resident young children. The pension, especially, facilitates the ubiquitous 'skipped generation' household pattern of grandchildren and grandparents (Sagner and Mtati, 1999).

The extent and probability of social grant receipt

The likelihood and consistency over time of social grant receipt is shown in transition matrixes (Table 23 and Table 24). These use longitudinal NIDS data to show the probability and consistency of social grant receipt for rural and urban households respectively. Comparatively more individuals in rural areas (69%) were members of households that received a grant in 2008 (Table 23), than those in grant receiving households in urban areas (44%) (Table 24). When viewed over time, rural households are significantly more likely to begin to receive a social grant, undoubtedly because they are more likely to be comprised of grant-eligible individuals. Accordingly, amongst the rural households not in receipt of any social grant in 2008, almost half (47%) received one by 2010 (Table 23), compared to only a quarter of the equivalent urban households (Table 24) (Daniels et al., 2013). In other words, individuals in rural households are more likely to be receiving a social grant than those in urban households, and if they are not, they are more likely to begin to receive one over time.

Share of rural income attributable to social grant receipt

Apart from the large number of rural households receiving social grants, grant income comprises a large proportion of income in rural areas, especially the former homeland communal rural areas. In the table below (Table 3), the mean household income attributable to government welfare grants (a range

of R1 260 to R1 478) was highest in 'tribal authority' (viz. former homeland) areas (with a single minor exception in 2008).

Mean income from government welfare grants within ex-homeland communal area households is also consistently above the national average (across all three waves of the analysis). This partially reflects communal area households being of larger size and containing larger proportions of social grant eligible members. By 2012 computed social grant income accounted for 53% of all rural household income, as opposed to 38% of that for urban households (Table 4).

An instructive comparison is between social grant incomes and labour market derived incomes. Compared to average earnings from labour markets (presented in Table 1), a comparison with Table 4 shows the relatively larger proportion of household income from social grants. Within three of the four 'geotypes', viz. 'Formal rural', 'Tribal authority' and 'Informal urban' areas, average social grant incomes are equivalent to between one half to one third of the corresponding labour market derived incomes. Expressed conversely, in rural and urban informal areas, aggregate wage income is twice to three times greater than social grant income.

However in 'Formal urban' areas, mean social grant income only represents a sum equivalent to between an eighth to roughly one tenth the value of labour market earnings. In other words, the scale of discrepancy between the average social grant and labour market incomes is considerably greater in 'Formal urban' areas. This simply underscores the relative – and labour market driven – affluence of towns and cities. It also conversely suggests the significance of social grant incomes in rural areas, such as former homelands, where state-mediated fiscal transfers play an important role in sustaining impoverished livelihoods. A final caveat is that welfare transfers do not simply reflect the dispassionate beneficence of the state. Long institutionalised in South Africa, the expansion of redistributive social grants and a relatively efficient progressive taxation system are an important part of the wider, post-apartheid 'distributional regime' (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005).

With regards to the qualitative case studies, social grant receipt is as ubiquitous as might

be expected in a cohort of largely impoverished households. In many cases the higher-value grants (old age or disability grants), represent the single largest, or even primary source of household income. As will be elaborated later, the less-vulnerable households within the range of case studies, typically combine grant receipt with other ancillary sources of income. A discernible difference between households is between those that receive either of the above two higher-value social grants, and those that receive (even multiple) CSGs. In this respect, the case study of Chuma with CSG income, but no higher-value state old age grant or disability grant income, is notable.

To this point the characteristics, distribution and welfare impacts of social grants have been suggested. However social grants are typically embedded in larger systems of intra-household allocation that serve to distribute these benefits to others. This occurs not only through direct practices of sharing, but by providing material resources to enable particularly women to provide the carework described earlier. In this way formal systems of social protection articulate with the practices of 'informal social protection' (Bracking and Sachikonye, 2006) or proximal social protection (Du Toit and Neves, 2009b), or what some have termed 'non-formal social protection' (Mupedziswa and Ntseane, 2013) or 'indigenous' welfare practices (Patel et al., 2012). Social grants increase the ability of their recipients to contribute to their kin and social networks (Bank and Qambata, (1999), even if these acts of social reciprocity are subject to the constraints recounted earlier.

Informal economic activity

Non-farm (viz. non-agricultural) informal sector activities constitute the third domain of rural livelihood. Despite pervasive poverty and employment, South Africa's informal sector is small by developing country standards (Devey et al., 2006), accounting for under a fifth of the workforce (Neves et al., 2011). As already suggested, the paucity of the informal sector employment is attributable to prohibitions on African entrepreneurs, alongside present day informational, skill, credit and high-cost infrastructure constraints (Lund and Skinner, 2003; Cichello, 2005). Moreover, the informal sector exists in a context dominated

by a powerful, concentrated formal economy that effectively 'crowds out' the potential space for small-scale or 'emergent' market entrants (Philip, 2010).

In terms of the prevalence of informal sector employment, analysis of census data of individuals at sub-place level is germane (Table 15). The data reveal informal sector employment to be attributable to a very small proportion of the population (under a single per cent of all individuals) (Table 16). It is considerably lower than (already low) figures of formal sector employment in the village (viz. 3.8%) and municipality (6.9%)².

Analysis of ward-level data allows gender to be disaggregated (unlike the preceding village-based sub-place data). The data (Table 28) shows more women than men to be employed in the informal sector, consistent with findings of African women predominating in the informal sector (Devey et al., 2006). Beyond ward level, and across the sequentially larger scales of municipality, province and nationally, men constitute the majority in informal employment (Table 28). Finally, it is reiterated that the informal sector represents a small proportion of employment across all scales. The combined figures for those employed in the 'Informal sector and 'Private households' is consistently exceeded by those with formal sector jobs.

The case studies illustrate dynamics of informal sector employment invisible in the quantitative analysis. The first is the dynamic and contingent quality of much informal economic activity. This is evident in the case study of Kwanele, who in the decade since his exit from the formal labour market engaged agriculture, ran a small 'spaza' shop for two years, and then established his own church. The case study of Mamzoli's household exhibits similar shifting repertoires activity (meat vending, a tavern, agriculture, rural taxi, etc.).

The second point concerns the connection between informal self-employment and formal sector employment. Linkages to the formal sector frequently confer the capital (material and human) for informal sector success. Higher informal sector earnings are associated with concurrent formal employment, and availability of household labour (correlated with men reporting themselves as 'mar-

² A caveat is that these metrics would include agricultural activities that are not the focus of this section. However as agricultural employment accounts for a minuscule proportion of employment, it is rather the focus of the following section.

ried') (Neves et al., 2011). This is against the backdrop of churning transitions in and out of formal sector employment being a common characteristic of those engaged in the informal sector (Devey et al., 2006).

The strong association between formal jobs and higher-earning informal sector employment has important implications. It is frequently 'better off', less vulnerable rural households that are able to engage in the most lucrative forms informal economic activities. Conversely, households with weak or distal linkages to the formal labour market are unlikely to engage in high value informal sector activities. Accordingly, within the case studies, the most substantive and lucrative informal economic activities are associated with access to accrued formal sector earning, such as those of Wilfred (a rural taxi, which even he could not drive), Kwanele (spaza shop), Siyanda (agriculture); while others leveraged remittances into local remunerative activities, such as Mamzoli (a gas-powered freezer, purchased by her working son).

The case studies also underscore that informal economic activity is a far from homogenous category. The gains from informal economic activities, and the households able to engage in them, vary widely. Higher-skilled, more capital-intensive activities, such as operating a rural taxi are dissimilar to the low-yield, drudgery-intensive activities, such as collecting firewood and water, making sun-dried mud-bricks or tending livestock. The latter petty-survivalist activities see those that engage in them peddle the little they have to trade, namely their strenuous physical labour and time. So differentiated are these activities, that there is no evidence of members of less poor households engaging in the menial physical work for others outside of their household. The differential quality of these activities and how they interface with household social differentiation is re-examined later.

10.4 Agriculture and land-based activities

The fourth and final domain of livelihood making is agriculture and other land-based activities. Although these activities can be subsumed within the preceding 'informal eco-

nomic activity' category, they are sufficiently distinctive to warrant focused discussion.

The earlier framing of 'de-agrarianisation' argued that prospects for agrarian self-sufficiency amongst the South Africa's rural poor have long waned. However, assessing the precise contribution of agriculture to rural livelihoods, including in the former homelands is confounded by a number of difficulties. Firstly, small-scale agriculture potentially encapsulates diverse scales and forms of production (Cousins, 2013), ranging from market-orientated to forms of subsistence production. Secondly, agriculture is profoundly 'place-based', and shaped both by local agro-ecology and contextual variations in the kinds of social, institutional and market conditions that enable it (Aliber and Hart 2009). Thirdly, apart from agriculture practices, natural resource harvesting (for foods, medicinal herbs, natural building materials, firewood, water, etc.) (Shackleton et al., 2000, Shackleton et al., 2001, Van Averbeke and Khosa, 2007) are widespread, if difficult to accurately quantify.

In terms of numbers, an estimated 1.25 to 3 million people in South Africa engage in agricultural production nationally (Aliber and Hart 2009). So, notwithstanding its diminutive size as a source of remunerative employment, agriculture remains significant for food security (Rogan and Reynolds, 2017). NIDS data identifies the highest proportions of those who engage in agricultural activities as 'outside of paid employment' to be within the former homelands (viz. 'Tribal authority areas') (Daniels et al., 2014). The data shows that for the 2008, 2010 and 2012 waves NIDS put the proportions of households engaging in any agriculture at 35%, 16% and 18%. While the trend is sharply downwards – halving between 2008 and 2010 – it likely reflects measurement issues, notably the changes in the NIDS survey agricultural questions.

Accurately estimating the scale of small-scale agriculture in South Africa is a task bedevilled by the already suggested data and conceptual issues. Not only is there a dearth of recent agricultural census data, small-scale agriculture frequently remains elusive in the absence of dedicated inquiry. Within the Eastern Cape an estimated 473 000 people engage in subsistence agriculture (Edwards, 2011). But small-

scale agriculture not only requires favourable agro-ecological conditions; production is frequently higher in deep rural areas (that are distant from markets), which exhibit the traditional cultural and social mores (collective work parties, pooling draught animals, etc.) on which successful small-scale agriculture depends (McAllister, 2001).

The author's own analysis of census data is constrained by the fact that agricultural data is only disaggregated to the relatively 'large' unit of the municipality. Yet the majority of households in the focal Umzimvubu local municipality (26 714) report some involvement in agriculture, as opposed to those that do not (20 176) (Table 29). This is despite the fact that it is largely outside of the fecund sub-tropical coastal belt. In other words the majority of households engage in some (even very limited) agricultural activity, despite the area having less-than-stellar agricultural potential.

With regards to what kind of agricultural production, Daniels et al. assert field crops are 'the most dominant agricultural activity undertaken by households' (2013, p.9). However this appears counter-intuitive, considering the general trends towards the abandonment of communal planting fields (De la Hey and Beinart, 2016) and a commensurate 'intensification' in the cultivation of home-stead plots (Andrews and Fox, 2004), and presumed importance of horticulture (viz. vegetables) for own consumption³. Analysis of census data (Table 30) shows that of the 26 714 households involved in agriculture, the largest numbers are involved in poultry production (17 768), followed by livestock (16 618) and vegetable production (12 007)⁴.

The demography of households engaged in agriculture in the focal research site warrants careful attention. Much larger (approximately 50% more) proportions of women rather than men engage in agriculture (16 260 women versus 10 454 men, by household headship) (Table 31), although this reveals little of the scale of their production. Moreover, households that engage in agriculture are 'older' in terms of the age of the household head. In absolute terms the single largest group of households that are engaged in agriculture are those that have a household head over 65

years of age (7 510 households) (Table 32). This is significant finding, suggesting the extent to which pensioners, or pensioner-headed households, engage in agricultural production. It is part of a larger pattern, where the largest numbers of 'agricultural households' are those with household heads above 45 years of age (Table 32).

The case study material serves to deepen and contextualise the above findings. They suggest that the most successful of agriculture-engaged households are not the poorest. Instead, they are those that have other resources and complementary assets, including remittances or savings from formal labour markets. The exemplar of this is the case study of Wilfred. Palmer and Sender (2006) similarly find that households engaged in agriculture are statistically not the poorest. For even when the rural poor have access to land, a shortage of inputs and household labour can see them unable to leverage it into agricultural production (Heron, 1991; Scoones 1998, Carter and May 1999). Not only do the most destitute of households lack the resources to purchase agricultural inputs, they are often also too risk averse for the contingencies inherent in agricultural production (Puttergill et al., 2011).

The interaction between agriculture and social stratification is starkly evident in relation to cattle. Cattle are not only characterised by a prominent place in African culture, what Ferguson terms the 'bovine mystique' (1990), they are comparatively high value (nominally in the region of R10 000 a head). The data shows only approximately a third of all agricultural households own cattle (viz. 8 638) (Table 33). Of these, the vast majority of cattle-owning households (7 405) own fewer than ten head.

In contrast, a minority of households (1 232) own over ten head of cattle (Table 33). This group makes up 4.6% of all agricultural households, or 14.3% of all cattle-owning households. Within this group only 21 households own more than 100 head, a number less than a single per cent of all cattle-owning households. This distribution reflects the fact that cattle ownership in the former homelands has become increasingly unequal (Cousins, 1996) and concentrated amongst the local

³ This seeming anomaly might perhaps be attributable to definitional or measurement issues (viz. horticultural crops are grown in fields, etc.).

⁴ Categories are not mutually exclusive; households can, and routinely do, engage in multiple agricultural activities.

elite. Ownership of larger herds of cattle is, therefore, an important marker of social differentiation. This skewed ownership is all the more significant when it is considered that an estimated 1.4 million households in all of the former homelands own no livestock (apart from fowls) (Aliber, 2003).

Within the case studies, many of the most prominent examples of agricultural production are attributable to households headed by older men, who invest in agriculture (especially livestock) while formally employed, and

continue to busy themselves with it in their retirement. Examples include Siyanda and Kwanele. Kitchen garden cultivation and the keeping of smaller livestock and fowls are more commonly found amongst women, evident in the case of Mamzoli. Consistent with the literature, the most impoverished of rural households in the sample (e.g. Nobuhle, Chuma) engage in none of these activities. As Nobuhle wryly replied in an interview, they were so poor that their livestock amounted to a single dog.

II. Rural livelihoods and social differentiation

Rural households in the former homelands are shaped by their relative access to resources derived from the four domains of livelihood described in the preceding section. Variance in these patterns shapes the differences between households and determines which households are vulnerable and which are not. In other words, they underpin processes of the social differentiation. The typology of households presented in what follows draws on this, to segment and differentiate rural households.

Previous efforts to segment rural households include the work of Francis (2002, 2006), Van Averbek and Hebinck (2007) and Slater (2002). Francis' (2006) typology of rural households in the North West province sought to capture rural household trajectories over time, in categories essentially defined by income. Her four-part typology includes: the richest households, who benefited from 'substantial income growth since the 1970s, or which have accumulated land, access to land and/or developed businesses' (Francis, 2006, p.12); a second-tier group of 'above average' households that receive 'a regular income, in the form of more than one pension, comparably-sized remittances or trading incomes' (Ibid.); a third-tier group that are poor, with a regular but often 'small source of income from a pension or small remittance' (Ibid.); and a fourth-tier, poorest group, households without a regular source of income. Francis' income-centric typology is well attuned to the realities of monetisation and social grant receipt in South Africa.

Van Averbek and Hebinck's (2007) typology of rural households was developed in the rural Eastern Cape, and delineates a range of potential resources flows into households. These feed into four schematic types of rural households, namely 'wage earners', 'petty entrepreneurs', 'farmer homesteaders', and, finally, 'diversifiers' who straddle multiple categories (Van Averbek and Hebinck, 2007). The typology is useful for the fact that it is not narrowly money-centric; instead it encapsulates a multiplicity of livelihood-making modalities, even if the dynamic qualities of livelihood making are not necessarily very prominent within it.

However the typology of rural livelihoods presented here is indebted to Dorward et al. (2009) and Scoones et al. (2012). Their work is useful for the extent to which it takes livelihood diversification seriously, and links rural livelihood strategies to opportunities and constraints that prevail in a given context. The primary weakness of their typology, which thwarts a simple application of it to the South African context, is that the categories remain normatively defined in relation to agriculture.

The typology proposed below (Table 2) distinguishes livelihoods in terms of the extent to which they facilitate material 'accumulation' over time. The typology ranks the households relative to each other, in terms of one of four categories, which are indicated on the left. On the right-hand side, Dorward (2009; Dorward et al., 2009) and Scoones et al.'s (2012) roughly corresponding categories are listed. These are explicated further later.

Table 2: A typology of rural households

Proposed typology		Dorward (2009); Scoones et al. (2012)
Proposed livelihood category	Participatory wealth ranking category	
‘Moving out’ Rich local elite, with formal labour market links. Diversified and often involved in agriculture. Approximately 5% of households.	Wealthy or rich; good job or jobs; diversified, strong external links, accumulation.	‘Stepping out’ Diversifying away from agriculture locally, or through migration.
‘Inching up’ Incrementally inching up. Some diversification and accumulation. More than one state pension (or comparable income). Approximately a quarter to third of households.	Above average or comfortable, but not in elite category.	‘Stepping up’ Accumulating locally; multiple activities, including agriculture.
‘Hanging on’ Poor. One pension, or equivalent small wage, remittance, etc. Diversification for survival. Maybe petty agricultural production. As many as half of households.	Below average/poor.	‘Hanging in’ Surviving but poor; diversification for survival.
‘Dropping down’ Precarious. No pension or equivalent income. Vanishingly small or no agriculture. An estimated 10 to 15% of households.	Very poor.	‘Dropping out’ Destitute, exiting.

In what follows, the above typology of rural livelihoods is discussed with reference to the case study material.

‘Moving out’

The first category, ‘Moving out’ is comprised of the most affluent and least vulnerable households that typically constitute the village economic and social elite. This category largely corresponds with the ‘Stepping out’ category of Dorward (2009) and Scoones et al. (2012), namely households that are better off and no longer narrowly dependent on local agrarian activities for their livelihoods. Within the present study, this group is not particularly well represented, as the bulk of the qualitative cases were surveyed from the lowest quartile of a previous poverty survey.

The exception, and exemplar of this category in the case studies, is of that of Wilfred.

Within the typology presented here, the distinguishing feature of those in the ‘Moving out’ tier is the strength of their links to the formal labour market. At least one household member is employed in (or has been employed in) better-paid formal sector employment. They typically occupy at least skilled or semi-professional occupations and are frequently permanently employed. They may work for the state (locally resident nurses, teachers, etc.) or private sector. Highly remunerative informal sector work, such as owning multiple minibus taxis, would potentially fall into this category but was not reflected amongst the case studies. In income distribution terms, these households are likely have a household

member earning more than R12 801 per month (in 2011 values). Census derived data reveals that only 37 individuals across the three villages fall into this category (Table 34) in other words less than a single per cent of the population (Table 35). Only 2% of households fall into the category of reporting household incomes above R12 801 per month within the focal villages (Table 36). If a threshold of all households with incomes over R6 366 per month is taken, the proportion of households rises to 4.1%. Within the focal villages, and comparable impoverished areas of the former homeland communal areas, higher-earning households are unlikely to constitute many more than 5% of all households.

In addition to formal labour market links, the 'Moving out' category households typically have diversified portfolios of other livelihood-supporting interests, including informal economic activity and agriculture. Indeed, a strong part of the rationale for their retaining of local residency may include that it enables them to engage in these activities. Furthermore, where these households have diversified, it is invariably into higher-value informal economic activities, such as running a local shop, or rural taxi, or larger-scale and higher-learning agriculture. They have the capacity to engage in the latter, and are invariably the kinds of households that can own a more substantive herd of cattle (i.e. more than ten head). In terms of the wider literature concerning the middle class in South Africa, whether defined in terms of 'capacities', or 'vulnerability' (Zizzamia et al., 2016) they share many of the broad characteristics of these, including access to basic goods and services, buying power, labour market earnings, and per capita expenditure above the SALDRU poverty line (R1 283, in 2016 values) (Zizzamia et al., 2016).

The participatory wealth ranking exercise saw attributes, such as the ownership of better quality homesteads, higher-value consumer durables (new furniture, appliances, etc.) and newer, expensive or bank-financed vehicles attributed to this group. So, too, was the reported inclination (and ability) to send children to schools outside the focal village area, and onto tertiary education.

'Inching up'

The second group of households are distinguished by evidence of incrementally 'Inching up', albeit even modestly. They represent a comparatively large number of households, estimated at approximately a quarter to a third of all households within the focal research context. They are distinguishable both from the elite 5% of the preceding 'Moving out' group, but are also doing better than the 'Holding steady' group below them. Statistically this category includes the 27.8% of all households that reported annual household incomes over R19 600 (R1 633 per month) (Table 36) during the 2011 census⁵.

They are most comparable to those in Dorward (2009) and Scoones et al.'s (2012) 'Stepping up' category, which (narrowly) refers to successful farmer households that are diversifying and accumulating through local agricultural production, within strong local networks and linkages. However, the agriculture-centric nature of Dorward (2009) and Scoones et al.'s (2012) typology makes this an approximate rather than precise fit. In the context of the former homelands, many 'Inching up' households display less evidence of accumulation. However they often demonstrate modest (and uneven) evidence of reinvestment in productive activities, crucially expanding the capacity for social reproduction and making (often) slow, inching improvements in household subsistence. Within the case studies the examples are Kwanele, Siyanda and Mamzoli.

The 'Inching up' category is often marked by household linkages to urban and formal employment, combined with activities within the focal rural site (i.e. either sequential or simultaneous straddling of labour markets). However, jobs (including semi-skilled or elementary occupations) are not as secure or remunerative as in the case of the above elite 'Moving out' group. While comfortable rural homesteads may have been built over periods of urban employ, the 'Inching up' group has limited capacity for significant reinvestment and asset acquisition. The qualitative case studies showed that, while these households acquired consumer durables (refrigerators, small TVs, solar panels), they seldom have the material accoutrements associated with village elites. For instance, in the unlikely event

⁵ At the time of the October 2011 census the higher value (disability, old age) social grant were valued at R1 140–R1 160.

of an 'Inching up' household owning a vehicle, it would invariably be an older, rudimentary, and non-bank financed one (*vis-à-vis* the 'Moving up' group). Discussion in the participatory wealth ranking exercise also surfaced the difficulties in 'reading off' the status of the household simply by the quality of their homestead, which may reflect erstwhile fortunes rather than present status.

Rural households in the 'Inching up' category engage in diversification of livelihood making and forays into remunerative informal employment (such as local vending). While the members of these households may undertake activities requiring physically strenuous labour (firewood, water gathering, mud-brick making, etc.) for their own household, they never appear to do so remuneratively for others. Furthermore, while many of the case studies show these households engaging in some measure of agricultural production, they did not surpass the ten head of cattle threshold.

While these 'Inching up' households seek to synergistically leverage livelihood-enabling activities, their ability to do so is influenced not only by their resources but also the availability of surplus household labour (older children or able-bodied adults). Finally, social grant receipt is widespread amongst these households, and many receive varying combinations of grants, depending on the demography of their household members.

The case studies suggest that for the 'Inching up' households an important strategy is to invest in education; schooling is often sought outside of the village (in town, or distant cities – but not former 'Model C' or expensive private schools). Entry into post-secondary or tertiary education is also not unknown. In these cases, the household social compact was that educated children would in future remit to the household. The obligation of educated and employed children was ubiquitous and particularly evident in the cases of Kwanele, Mamzoli, Siyanda and Bulelani.

Finally, when receiving regular remittances from urban kin, this group (like the preceding elite 'Moving out' group) may be local employers. Apart from hiring piecemeal agricultural labour, some members of this group either regularly employ livestock herders (always adult men, e.g. Kwanele and

Simpiwe), and in some cases, domestic 'helpers' (female domestic workers, e.g. Mamzoli). In the villages closest to the Lesotho border, employees were, in several cases, Basotho and commanded low wages (R500–R1 000 per month, in 2016).

'Hanging on'

The third of the four groups, dubbed 'Hanging on', were readily described by research participants as poor. In contradistinction to the preceding ('Inching up') group, household wellbeing and livelihoods exhibited little improvement over time. The ability of these households to reproduce or sustain themselves was often highly constrained, although it was not quite marked by the precipitous plunges into immiseration and crisis associated with the fourth and final group ('Dropping down') discussed below. A large number – approximately half – of households fell into this category. Within the focal research context, the 44% of households that reported monthly incomes higher than R400 but lower than R1 633 in 2011 would doubtlessly be included in this category (Table 36). Within the case studies, examples of this category of household include Nobuhle and Abongile.

This group corresponds approximately with those in Dorward (2009) and Scoones et al.'s (2012) typology that are 'Hanging in', or surviving with little diversification. A paucity of labour market linkages is evident in the 'Hanging on' group. In several cases, if a household member was working, their foothold in the labour market was precarious (informal, low waged) or in the distant past. Where this group exhibits some measure of livelihood diversification, it would be into rudimentary and low-earning activities. They would engage in little agricultural production, apart from a homestead garden, and own no or few livestock. Cattle ownership is often either unknown or marginal (e.g. one or two head of cattle, perhaps received as bridewealth but unable to be multiplied into a herd). Not only do these households lack the resources to procure agricultural inputs, they could not fund a stake (or 'co-contribution') in state-driven projects, such as the Massive Food Production Programme (maize). If they engage in informal sector activities, these are typically the low barrier-to-entry, drudgery intensive and low-yield variants.

‘Dropping down’

The final ‘Dropping down’ category represents the most impoverished and vulnerable rural households. It matches Dorward (2009) and Scoones et al.’s (2012) ‘Dropping out’ category of the destitute that are exiting from agriculture. Many households in this category sit precariously close to the edge of dissolution, such as the households of Nothando (and her male kin, following her death) or Chuma.

Households in this category are few in number (approximately 10–15%)⁶ and widely understood to be amongst the poorest within the participatory wealth ranking exercise, even in a village context marked by high levels of poverty. They are amongst the 28.2% of households that self-reported monthly incomes of less than R400 (i.e. R4 800 per annum) (Table 36). Unlike the preceding categories, the size of the ‘Dropping down’ group is difficult to quantify from the income data. Their homesteads are frequently rudimentary (one or two single-roomed huts). Furniture and household durables are similarly sparse, with a dearth of beds, chairs and tables.

The defining feature of their vulnerability is their estrangement from any formal labour market earnings. They have lost, or never had, entitlements to resources derived from the urban or formal labour market. This consequently means their prospects for local livelihood diversification are constrained by the absence of capital, as in Chuma’s situation. They are typically uninvolved in own-account agriculture, have no large livestock (cattle), and no or few small livestock and fowls. Typically, they do not even receive a higher value social grant (old age or disability grant). Instead, they survive through one or more lower-value CSGs and informal work in the village. The participatory ranking exercise saw these households described as getting ‘in kind’ donations of food from others in the village, but they are un-creditworthy and could not borrow money. Descriptions of them (translated from the vernacular Xhosa) included them as being ‘too poor to even own a cat’, or were summarised as preparing an evening pot of boiling water, and then wondering what to put in it.

⁶ Unlike the preceding groups, this group is difficult to distinguish from the income data.

12. Summary: Rural diversification and social differentiation

This section draws on the domains of livelihood making and typology of rural households previously presented, in order to synthesise the preceding analysis and 'frame' the broader implications for rural development policy. These are then explicated in the concluding policy recommendations section at the culmination of the report.

Livelihood diversification and social differentiation

Amidst high levels of monetisation, wage dependency and social grant receipt there is ample evidence of livelihood diversification on the part of rural households in the former homelands. These processes of diversification serve to leverage existing resource flows, positional and locational advantage, household assets and even 'surplus' household labour capacity into livelihood-supporting activities. They also have significant consequences for social differentiation.

Diversification is intertwined with processes of social differentiation, because households are marked by highly disparate abilities to diversify their livelihoods. Not only are households that are better off (viz. less poor and vulnerable) most able to diversify, they invariably do so into higher-value activities. For the very top tier of rural households (viz. 'Moving out' category), this entails patterns of productive reinvestment and accumulation, including their insertion into networks of mutuality and patronage with other local social and economic elites. Although patterns of accumulation are more muted amongst the second-tier (viz. 'Inching up'), households, they characteristically engage in diverse activities to strengthen and expand household reproduction. Amongst the lower two tiers of the four-part typology ('Hanging on' and 'Dropping down'), diversification is successively more limited, lower yielding and less lucrative.

Finally, there is a mutually reinforcing quality at play between diversification and rural social differentiation. As better-off households are more likely to diversify, and do so into higher-yielding activities; this, in turn makes them better off. Social differentiation is, therefore, both a constitutive condition and '...a consequence that can recursively generate the conditions of its own perpetuation' (Neves and Du Toit, 2013). The implications of the recursive nature of diversification and social differentiation are significant for policy.

The present analysis underscores the need for policy interventions attuned to questions of social differentiation; in other words, policy that asks: which or what rural households have the capacity to diversify and strengthen their livelihoods? What do these activities entail? And which households get 'left behind'? These implications for rural development are clearer when rural livelihoods are further disaggregated and discussed below.

Urban and formal labour market linkages

Amidst the plurality of livelihood-enabling activities that rural households engage in, labour market linkages (especially into urban and/or formal employment) are central. The extent and nature of employment is a major determinant not only of a household's vulnerability, but also of a household's prospects for accumulation, and their relative position in relation to other households (as manifest in their position in the livelihood typology). Strong labour market linkages are associated with the top two categories in the typology of rural livelihoods ('Moving out', and to a lesser extent 'Inching up'). The inverse equally applies: a paucity of linkages – particularly to formal or urban labour markets – is a correlate of poverty, vulnerability and scant opportuni-

ties for accumulation. The latter are qualities that mark households in the lower categories (viz. 'Hanging on' and 'Dropping down').

Employment hence remains a crucial factor associated with better-off and less vulnerable households. In addition, the quality of employment is defined by not only income, but also the regularity of earnings, and relative security of employment. Finally, the impact of employment on a given household is patterned by the extent to which earnings are shared or pooled among household members. These intra-household allocations are, in turn, nested in a complex set of dynamics surrounding interpersonal relations, entitlements, and household level decision-making (Seekings, 2008). Hence, fundamentally social and relational factors come to mediate the likelihood of employment elevating the welfare (and reducing the vulnerability) of a given rural household. Employment is, therefore, a necessary but, in itself, insufficient condition for reducing household vulnerability.

However, the primacy of labour market linkages to rural households and livelihoods has significant implications for thinking about public policy generally. Firstly, it suggests that reductions in vulnerability and improvements in the welfare of rural households – and rural development more generally – are crucially mediated by factors beyond the spatial parameters of the rural areas or former homelands. Instead, external markets and distant urban centres are key determinants of local material conditions. Secondly, the importance, often even pre-eminence, of labour markets to rural households suggests the need to focus on domains and sectors beyond the customary confines of the 'agriculture' or 'informal' sectors, and rather pay attention to the larger structural and macro-economic context. Thirdly, the primacy of (especially urban and formal) labour markets, suggests the utility of a focus on the availability of employment, and the factors that enable access to employment, as key sites of policy focus and intervention. These are expanded on in the concluding section on policy recommendations.

Informal economic activity

The analysis suggests that diversification into informal economic activities is a varied, but often significant, source of rural household

livelihood making. (Agricultural production can be subsumed within informal economic activity, but is discussed separately below.) Informal economic activity is frequently small-scale, survivalist and improvisational, and at village level it is female-dominated. Livelihood diversification through informal economic activity conforms to the already-suggested patterns that exemplify rural diversification more generally; namely, higher yielding activities are more likely to be undertaken by better-off and less vulnerable households. They are often underpinned by the synergies between formal employment and informal economic activity.

The impetus for informal economic activity can be thought of in terms of 'push' versus 'pull' factors. The former include the 'pull' of opportunities proactively accessed by better-resourced households (viz. 'Moving out', and to a lesser extent, 'Inching up' households) in contrast with the poverty and deprivation that 'push' vulnerable households into the informal sector activities. Such are the regularities in the repertoires of informal sector work that particular activities align with the characteristics of those that undertake them. Hence, higher value, higher barrier-to-entry (e.g. capital, skills, networks) activities are the preserve of better-off households. In contradistinction, low yielding, low barrier-to-entry, drudgery, time and labour intensive activities are only undertaken on a remunerative basis by the poorest and most vulnerable of households.

The broad implications for public policy of these patterns of informal economic activity are as follows. The first concerns the need to acknowledge the reality of the marginal and beleaguered nature of much informal employment in South Africa, and the marked deficits (of capital, skills and access to local markets) that typify those who work within the sector. In addition, clear-eyed assessment is needed of the larger economic context, including the concentrated, formal South African economy, and its extractive penetration of impoverished and rural markets. This not only 'crowds out' opportunities for emergent entrepreneurs and enterprises, it inhibits local multiplier effects and economic linkages. Summed up in general terms, the policy challenge for informal economic activity in relation to rural development is broadly

twofold. Firstly, policy ought to understand, support and build on existing enterprise, initiatives and opportunities. Secondly, it needs to facilitate and leverage unrealised local potential and capacities into novel employment and enterprise. Within these two goals, 'on-farm' primary production agriculture is likely to be only a part of the solution. As the sectoral analysis of existing employment indicates, other key sites of intervention ought to include the agro-food system more broadly (including processing and especially retail), the burgeoning construction sector, and the ubiquitous homeland 'care economy'.

Agriculture and agrarian activities

Communal area agriculture is subject to many of the dynamics that mark how households engage with the informal sector more generally. These include the patterns of diversification that shape social differentiation. Accordingly, better-off households are more likely to diversify into, especially, higher yielding agricultural production. And the high levels of diversification and returns are commensurately found amongst 'Moving out' households, and successively less among the 'Inching up' households. In relation to the rural livelihoods typology, 'Hanging in' households own few livestock and exhibit a low ability to engage in agricultural production at any scale, with 'Dropping down' households unlikely to engage in any discernible agriculture at all.

Charting the policy implications of agriculture and agriculture-based interventions for rural development is a task confounded by the variability and contingency of small-scale agriculture. However, against this backdrop, and the larger realities of de-agrarianisation, the analysis reveals the differential ability of households to engage with agriculture, and the predominance of women and the elderly (or elderly-headed households) in it. In this context, established policy questions concerning the appropriate forms of, extent of, and beneficiary or target groups for agricultural support, remain relevant; even if these pragmatic questions are nested in a set of more fundamental dilemmas concerning the extent to which agriculture ought to be the sole, or even primary, focus of rural development policy in the South African context.

The suggestion for policy is, therefore, that agriculture ought not be the primary or default focus of rural development, and that agriculture-based interventions need to be located within a larger suite of rural development policies. They need to be informed by an understanding of the agro-ecological, social or market variations that characterise rural contexts, and the diverse nature of the producers and production systems that exist. Hence, these require a clear understanding of existing practices and proclivities of small-scale farmers, and finally realistic assessment of opportunities and constraints on agriculture.

Social protection and reciprocity

Social protection, in the form of social grants, is an important contributor to rural livelihoods, particularly for all of those beneath the uppermost 'Moving out' category in the typology. The value and welfare impacts of social grants are magnified by the regularity and consistency of their receipt, an important quality in an impoverished context often marked by contingency and the ever-present threat of livelihood shocks.

The analysis shows how social grants constitute a large absolute and relative proportion of incomes in the former homelands, but also map to social differentiation. Although social grants are generally not received by core members of the 'Moving up' households, grant receipt is a significant source of income for the second-tier ('Inching up') and third-tier ('Hanging on') households. So significant are the effects of grant receipt that they often serve to raise households out of the lowermost 'Dropping down' tier.

For the households in the 'Dropping down' tier, their vulnerability is frequently a consequence of their non-receipt (often their ineligibility) for a higher-value pension or disability grant. The absence of these virtually consigns a rural household with poor labour market linkages to the nethermost 'Dropping down' category. Even if such a household receives four or more CSGs, they are seldom instrumentally equivalent to a single higher-value grant, because the former entail a higher burden of dependents. Moreover, as social grants are often channelled into (albeit often

small) forms of productive investment, these households lack the resources to diversify into higher-value activities.

Social welfare is not conventionally regarded as central to rural development policy. Ignored by the 'production-orientated' and agriculture-centric nature of much rural development, it is also unheeded because of the discrepant disciplinary origins, bureaucracy practices and governance structures (line departments) responsible for welfare. Yet, despite this, there is a need to consider the complementarity of social protection to development, and especially rural devel-

opment. Apart from promoting welfare by elevating household consumption, social protection potentially generates modest, but in aggregate terms important, livelihood promoting and even socially transformative effects (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux, 2008). Hence there is a need to continue to strengthen social protection as part of the policy responses to the challenge of persistent rural underdevelopment. Some of this also entails clearly conceptualising and resourcing the linkages between social protection with other interventions, such as forms of public employment, and practices, such as carework.

13. Policy implications

The policy implications of the research are now presented, and ordered in terms of six overarching injunctions.

Put a livelihood focus at centre of rural development

A firm livelihoods focus ought to inform rural development policy and interventions. So doing enables the plurality and multiplicity of rural lives to be appropriately understood, thereby facilitating interventions sensitive to context and the multi-sectoral linkages that typically characterise rural households. Furthermore, in the livelihood analysis contained in this report, a livelihood approach was augmented with a political economy focus that foregrounded issues of household heterogeneity and social differentiation. This focus on social differentiation is of policy utility because it draws attention to the often highly uneven ability of households to engage with, and be reached by, rural development interventions. These points translate into two specific policy recommendations.

- i. There is a need for a clear, empirically informed, common typology of rural households. Clear segmentation of rural household types will facilitate the planning, targeting and delivery of interventions. Consideration, therefore, ought to be given to the development of a shared typology of rural households, especially in light of the fact that the diverse programmes and agencies involved in rural development frequently conceptualise rural households (as the targets of infrastructure provision, agricultural support, welfare, etc.) in disparate and even incommensurate ways.
- ii. Clear segmentation of rural households facilitates understanding of their varied ability to engage with rural development interventions. Hence, there is also a need for attention to be given to the especially vulnerable, marginalised, often resource and 'labour poor' of rural

households, who have a limited capacity to engage with many conventional 'productivist' income generation, or agricultural rural development projects and interventions.

Strengthen the external 'connectedness' on which rural livelihoods depend

The research suggests how rural livelihoods within the former homelands are intertwined with external markets, opportunities and resources. They are fundamentally shaped by patterns of economic growth within the larger national and global context. This external connectedness plays a crucial role in mediating local poverty, vulnerability and underdevelopment. The corollary of this reality is that efforts to address rural underdevelopment require attentiveness to, and intervention in, the larger economy. Although there is scope for local interventions within the communal areas, the creation of opportunities for inclusive growth and employment within the wider economy remain crucial. In the absence of these, attempts to address rural underdevelopment are likely to remain constrained and fundamentally ameliorative. The importance of external connectedness to rural livelihoods leads to the following five policy proposals.

- i. There is a need for advocacy in support of effective inclusive growth policies at a national level. This engagement necessarily needs to be directed beyond the confines of the former homelands, the largely rural provinces that contain them, and even the traditional policy parameters of 'rural development'. It implicitly suggests that an important part of rural development policy is to acknowledge the limits of parochial and insular efforts to effect rural development.
- ii. Following on from the preceding point, public policy interventions intended to address rural underdevelopment ought to focus on the range of sectors and

domains that shape the prospect for broad-based inclusive growth. These include (but are not limited to) aspects of fiscal, monetary, employment, agricultural, trade and industrial policy. While delineating the specificities of these policies is beyond the ambit of the present discussion, they essentially comprise the gamut of those specificities orientated to inclusive and labour-absorbing growth. In essence, these policy interventions need to extend to effective interventions for human development (especially educational and health), support for labour intensive agricultural and industrial development (reversing longstanding biases towards capital intensive and jobless growth), and the advancement of expansionary fiscal policy, along with a monetary policy that moderates the effects of a volatile and overvalued currency. Unfortunately, there is little scope for optimism concerning the ability of the state to effect these changes in the current conjuncture, but that does not alter the fact that the fate of rural areas and livelihoods are inextricably bound up with the success of these efforts.

- iii. Externally directed efforts to engender pro-poor inclusive growth ought not to be exclusively nationally focused. At provincial and district levels, there is scope to consider judicious support for employment intensive industrial and agricultural activities. Particularly at a provincial level, these would require improved policy co-ordination and support for enterprise and development through appropriate land use, infrastructure and even fiscal concessions.
- iv. There is scope for improved labour market activation and access strategies. These range expansively, from support for education and training to interventions to overcome high job 'search' costs and informational deficits that systematically disadvantage potential work seekers. They also extend to including specific interventions, such as employment schemes and wage subsidies for young entrants to the labour market.
- v. Finally, attention to the larger fiscal context poses questions concerning the

extent to which existing systems of fiscal transfers to provinces adequately take the high levels of deprivation into account, especially within largely rural provinces.

Build the rural non-farm economy

Rural development policy needs to support rural livelihoods by building on existing capacities, activities and potentials. While some of these involve agriculture, rural development ought not to be conflated with agriculture. Strengthening rural livelihoods requires support for activities beyond primary production, 'on-farm' agriculture. Some of this backing for the rural non-farm economy (RNFE) entails strategic support for enterprise and employment elsewhere in the agro-food chain, such as food retail or vending. However, much of the RNFE includes sectors unrelated to food, such as construction, community and personal services (especially the 'carework' economy) and the retail sector more generally. The policy implications that flow from the imperative to support the RNFE include the following four.

- i. There is the need for contextually informed appraisal and harnessing of the place-based attributes of rural locales. These potentially suggest a range of interventions to support enterprise and employment, such as tourism, forms of basic agricultural processing, and natural resource extraction. These examples point to the co-ordination required and the difficult trade-offs involved between activities, yet the first principle of implementation remains the need for attentiveness to the comparative advantage of any given rural context.
- ii. It is crucial to take advantage not only of existing endowments, but also of local demand and markets. These include the relatively resilient and inelastic local demand for food (much of which will not even be produced locally). Facilitating market responses to local demand offers the potential to facilitate local economic development, support economic multipliers and sustain the local circulation of money.

- iii. There is a need to encourage more locally inclusive forms of economic growth, and local participation in local food markets, processing and retail. This relies on a two-fold set of actions. The first is backing for local ownership, employment and investment in food retail and vending. The second entails checking the impulses of concentrated, frequently anti-competitive, corporate retailers, through a diverse range of potential policy instruments that include retail regulation, licensing, partnership and local land use planning.
 - iv. Leverage and support the care economy. There is a need to examine how judicious state provisioning (towards facilities, training and personal costs, etc.) can be used to strengthen existing, extensive systems of 'carework' (e.g. of preschool children, the ill or disabled, the elderly.). Much of this work is already undertaken and has clear synergies with larger societal human development objectives. The policy challenge is to consider how its impacts would be magnified with the judicious application of additional resources.
- ii. Support for small-scale agriculture ought to go to strengthening the provision of basic production support, such as fencing, agricultural extension, animal health interventions, and, where, appropriate, irrigation.
 - iii. There is a need to recognise some of the existing weaknesses in current systems of state-provided agricultural support, including a bias towards larger scale, commercial production and producers. Hence, there is a need to temper the antipathy to small-scale, informal market orientated or subsistence forms of production. There is a corresponding need to recognise that in many cases, informal and local food markets, or even household food security is a valid objective of agricultural production and worthy of policy support.
 - iv. Where commercial agricultural production is undertaken in the former homelands, in many cases it is best directed at local and informal markets. This is of relevance because efforts to support agriculture ought not to fixate on often 'tight' formal agro-food value chains that are difficult to access (due to standards, accreditation and volumes) but should rather focus on local, loose chains.

Provide focused support for small scale agriculture

There is a need for rural development policy to build on existing capacities and activities, some of which entail agriculture and other land-based activities, although care ought to be taken to avoid the conflation of rural development with agriculture, or even imagine that agriculture is necessarily a 'leading sector' for rural development. Support for agriculture, particularly in the former homelands, requires attention to the often neglected and misunderstood realm of small-scale agriculture.

- i. Support for small-scale agriculture needs to be attuned to the wide variations in the potential for agricultural development, patterned by agro-ecology, infrastructure, local institutions and access to markets. Support for agriculture also requires attention to the larger resource 'envelope', such as irrigation. Cumulatively these suggest the need for atten-

Recognise the contribution of social welfare

In the former homelands social grants represent substantial resource transfers to rural households. Apart from their direct welfare effects through elevating consumption, social grant receipt is often complimentary to other practices of livelihood making, including (albeit modest) informal economic activity and out-migration by working-age adults. Hence, there is a need to acknowledge the place of social grants as an important adjunct to conventional rural development interventions, and to consider how they can be strengthened. Five policy suggestions in relation to social protection are as follows.

- i. There is a need to not only acknowledge that that state social grants are an important component of impoverished rural livelihoods, but that concerns over grant misuse, perverse incentives and even working-age adult dependency are largely misplaced and unsupported by the evidence.
- ii. It is imperative to strengthen and deepen the developmental impacts and gains already associated with social grants. These include efforts to ensure high take-up rates and support for current policy proposals to incrementally expand age eligibility of the CSG into young adulthood. In addition, the developmental gains robustly associated with social grants need to be secured, by protecting them against being diverted or captured by commercial interests.
- iii. In light of the fact that able-bodied, working-age adults are effectively excluded from prevailing systems of social welfare, there is a need to support interventions targeting this demographic group, including through, for instance, public employment schemes.
- iv. Echoing the preceding point, and in light of the reality of chronic structural unemployment, there is a need to consider the potential of a universal income grant. The proposal for a universal income grant was touted a decade ago in South Africa, under more propitious fiscal conditions, but stalled. Yet is it a notion that is enjoying a resurgence of global policy interest, and one potentially well suited to South Africa with its progressive taxation system, financial infrastructure, solid precedent for extensive social transfers, and intractable problems of poverty and underemployment.
- v. There is a need to safeguard the contribution of social grants to local multipliers within impoverished rural areas. In this respect, the administrative impetus to electronic payment channels (e.g. in store ATMs, bank accounts, etc.) may well sap cash liquidity from the former homeland areas, where markets are thin, and local multipliers scant. This is not to

suggest that grant recipients ought to be denied access to these electronic payment modalities, just that they ought not to be unduly imposed on them.

Make rural development interventions more effective

There is a need to focus and strengthen existing rural development interventions. Several of these points have been alluded to and advanced in evaluations (including of the flagship CRDP). However, four specific recommendations are recounted below.

- i. There is a need to meaningfully initiate forms of proactive, participatory community-based planning and implementation. This will serve to curb longstanding impulses to impose top-down interventions and serve to better incorporate consideration of local and contextual factors into rural development. While participatory planning and implementation is not a panacea for inappropriately conceived or executed policy, it is essential to secure local buy in and make interventions optimally effective.
- ii. There is a need to address enduring uncertainties around rural governance. There is ample evidence to suggest that the ambiguous place of traditional authorities and ongoing political attempts to reanimate the institution contribute to uncertainty in rural areas, especially around resource allocation and land administration. Although politically contentious and unnameable to a simple administrative fix, this requires resolution and political will because it detracts from efforts to facilitate rural development.
- iii. There is a need to improve governance and intergovernmental co-ordination, in support of rural development. These include efforts to clarify and develop clearer institutional mandates between departments, to resolve manifold administrative bottlenecks, to harmonise legislation and to make other legislative changes (such as integration of rural development into local government spatial development plans). In sum, there is a need to resolve the weaknesses in gov-

ernance and intergovernmental relations that currently detract from the effectiveness of the state and its efforts to drive rural development.

- iv. There is a need to recognise the manner in which rural development is an adjunct to ancillary policy domains of land reform and agrarian transformation. Despite the obvious synergies between these policy

domains, they are, in effect, disconnected from efforts to effect rural development in the former homeland communal areas.

In conclusion, efforts to systematically engage with these actions and domains offer the prospects of improving the state's ability to facilitate rural development in the former homeland communal areas.

14. References

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Appendix I: Tables

Tables that do not appear in this appendix are included in the in the main body of the text.

Table 3: Geographical area transition matrix from NIDS for working-aged (15–64 years old) population 2008–2012

2008 (%)	2012 (%)				Observations	Weight	Share
	Rural formal	Tribal authority	Urban formal	Urban informal			
Rural formal	88	5	6	1	2 087	3 048 252	7%
Tribal authority areas	1	92	5	2	10 316	15 961 661	34%
Urban formal	1	3	95	1	8 479	22 149 638	48%
Urban informal	1	3	13	83	1 437	5 445 845	12%

(Source: Daniels et al., 2013)

Table 4: Proportion of income for individuals who received state cash transfers in both 2008 and 2012, from NIDS data

Number of cases	Rural: 3 427	Urban: 2 260
Mean social grant share in household income	Rural	Urban
2008	50%	34%
2012	53%	38%
Change in mean	3%	4%
Individuals with increasing share of social grants	61%	62%

(Adapted from Daniels et al., 2013)

Table 5: Mean household size by geotype, from NIDS

	Wave 1 (2008)	Wave 2 (2011)	Wave 3 (2013)
Rural formal	3.8	4.0	3.9
Tribal authority	5.2	5.5	5.0
Urban formal	3.7	3.8	3.4
Urban informal	4.4	4.5	4.0
Total average	4.2	4.4	4.0

(Adapted from Daniels et al., 2013)

Table 6: Percentage of people of each sex, and sex of household heads, for various scales, from Census 2011 data

	Females	Males	Female Headed households	Male Headed Households
Mt Frere villages	53,7	46,3	58,4	41,6
Umzimvubu municipality	54,1	45,9	58,7	41,3
Eastern Cape	52,9	47,1	49,6	50,4
South Africa	51,3	48,7	41,2	58,8

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 7: Total numbers of individuals at each education level for the focal Mount Frere villages, and across Umzimvubu municipality, the Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole

	No schooling	Some primary	Completed primary	Some secondary	Grade 12/ Std 10	Higher	Unspecified	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere villages	232	2 664	530	2 086	386	125	3	906	6 932
Umzimvubu municipality	8 660	68 009	13 328	54 491	13 789	6 009	184	27 141	191 611
Eastern Cape	432 166	1 945 075	384 856	1 850 102	757 594	314 902	8 989	867 832	6 561 516
South Africa	3 157 926	11 755 688	2 460 215	14 571 682	9 398 503	3 802 120	116 136	6 473 855	51 736 125

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 8: Percentage of individuals at each education level for the focal Mount Frere villages, and across Umzimvubu municipality, the Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole

	No schooling	Some primary	Completed primary	Some secondary	Grade 12/ Std 10	Higher	Unspecified	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere villages	3,3	38,4	7,6	30,1	5,6	1,8	0,0	13,1	100
Umzimvubu municipality	4,5	35,5	7,0	28,4	7,2	3,1	0,1	14,2	100
Eastern Cape	6,6	29,6	5,9	28,2	11,5	4,8	0,1	13,2	100
South Africa	6,1	22,7	4,8	28,2	18,2	7,3	0,2	12,5	100

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 9: Number of each dwelling type for the focal Mount Frere villages, and across Umzimvubu municipality, Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole

	House or brick/concrete block structure on a separate stand or yard or on a farm	Traditional dwelling/hut/structure made of traditional materials	Flat or apartment in a block of flats	Cluster house in complex	Townhouse (semi-detached house in a complex)	Semi-detached house	House/flat/room in backyard	Informal dwelling (shack; in backyard)	Informal dwelling (shack; not in an informal/squatter settlement or on a farm)	Room / flatlet on a property or larger dwelling/servants quarters / granny flat	Caravan/ tent	Other	Total
Mt Frere villages	168	1 489	21	2	0	26	5	0	0	0	0	4	1 715
Umzimvubu municipality	11 635	27 927	2 274	85	88	281	2 741	223	484	524	51	527	46 840
Eastern Cape	880 553	476 258	76 723	5 999	11 882	28 210	54 275	34 224	95 824	7 335	1 697	13 011	1 685 991
South Africa	9 376 587	1 139 524	719 523	145 247	210 125	213 141	422 384	712 501	1 249 345	118 693	14 216	113 381	14 434 667

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 10. Percentage of each dwelling type for Mount Frere villages, and across Umzimvubu municipality, the Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole.

	House or brick/concrete block structure on a separate stand or yard or on a farm	Traditional dwelling/hut/structure made of traditional materials	Flat or apartment in a block of flats	Cluster house in complex	Townhouse (semi-detached house in a complex)	Semi-detached house	House/flat/room in backyard	Informal dwelling (shack; in backyard)	Informal dwelling (shack; not in an informal/squatter settlement or on a farm)	Room/flatlet on a property or larger dwelling/servants quarters/granny flat	Caravan/ tent	Other	Total
Mt Frere villages	9.8	86.8	1.2	0.1	0.0	1.5	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	100
Umzimvubu municipality	24.8	59.6	4.9	0.2	0.2	0.6	5.9	0.5	1.0	1.1	0.1	1.1	100
Eastern Cape	52.2	28.2	4.6	0.4	0.7	1.7	3.2	2.0	5.7	0.4	0.1	0.8	100
South Africa	65.0	7.9	5.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	2.9	4.9	8.7	0.8	0.1	0.8	100

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 11: Access to water source type summarised by numbers of households, from focal Mount Frere villages, across Umzimvubu municipality, Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole

	Regional/local water scheme (operated by municipality or other water services provider)	Borehole	Spring	Rain water tank	Dam/ pool/ stagnant water	River/ stream	Water vendor	Water tanker	Other	Total
Mt Frere villages	259	399	105	119	11	688	5	26	100	1 712
Umzimvubu municipality	14 360	3 360	5 631	2 373	2 075	15 195	621	2 162	1 062	46 839
Eastern Cape	1 050 143	67 310	57 375	80 558	42 322	295 831	11 914	47 062	33 304	1 685 819
South Africa	11 507 699	880 921	178 364	140 826	224 635	650 899	175 812	375 810	299 264	14 434 230

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 12: Access to water source type summarised by percentage of households, from focal Mount Frere villages, across Umzimvubu municipality, Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole

	Regional/local water scheme (operated by municipality or other water services provider)	Borehole	Spring	Rain water tank	Dam/ pool/ stagnant water	River/ stream	Water vendor	Water tanker	Other	Total
Mt Frere villages	15.1	23.3	6.1	7.0	0.6	40.2	0.3	1.5	5.8	100
Umzimvubu municipality	30.7	7.2	12.0	5.1	4.4	32.4	1.3	4.6	2.3	100
Eastern Cape	62.3	4.0	3.4	4.8	2.5	17.5	0.7	2.8	2.0	100
South Africa	79.7	6.1	1.2	1.0	1.6	4.5	1.2	2.6	2.1	100

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 13: Type of access to sanitation summarised by number of households, from focal Mount Frere villages, to Umzimvubu municipality, Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole

	None	Flush toilet (connected to sewerage system)	Flush toilet (with septic tank)	Chemical toilet	Pit toilet with ventilation (VIP)	Pit toilet without ventilation	Bucket toilet	Other	Total
Mt Frere villages	311	3	4	14	539	673	5	164	1 713
Umzimvubu municipality	5 128	2 470	710	3 859	12 758	19 904	149	1 865	46 843
Eastern Cape	214 277	681 809	42 758	51 162	233 734	340 303	38 697	83 363	1 686 103
South Africa	748 195	8 231 123	441 817	360 238	1 265 666	2 785 699	297 397	304 925	14 435 060

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 14: Type of access to sanitation summarised by percentage of households, from Mount Frere villages, to Umzimvubu municipality, Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole

	None	Flush toilet (connected to sewerage system)	Flush toilet (with septic tank)	Chemical toilet	Pit toilet with ventilation (VIP)	Pit toilet without ventilation	Bucket toilet	Other	Total
Mt Frere villages	18.2	0.2	0.2	0.8	31.5	39.3	0.3	9.6	100
Umzimvubu municipality	10.9	5.3	1.5	8.2	27.2	42.5	0.3	4.0	100
Eastern Cape	12.7	40.4	2.5	3.0	13.9	20.2	2.3	4.9	100
South Africa	5.2	57.0	3.1	2.5	8.8	19.3	2.1	2.1	100

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 15: Employment status by number of people, from focal Mount Frere villages and across various geographical units, from Census 2011 sub-place data

	Employed	Unemployed	Discouraged work-seeker	Other not economically active	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere villages	353	436	367	2 616	3 161	6 933
Umzimvubu municipality	18 401	15 638	10 977	60 335	86 260	191 611
Eastern Cape	1 028 907	615 778	306 273	2 001 795	2 609 108	6 561 861
South Africa	13 161 532	5 593 074	1 834 760	13 290 111	17 857 281	51 736 758

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 16: Employment status by percentage of people, from focal Mount Frere villages and across various geographical units from Census 2011 sub-place data

	Employed	Unemployed	Discouraged work-seeker	Other not economically active	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere villages	5.1	6.3	5.3	37.7	45.6	100
Umzimvubu municipality	9.6	8.2	5.7	31.5	45.0	100
Eastern Cape	15.7	9.4	4.7	30.5	39.8	100
South Africa	25.4	10.8	3.5	25.7	34.5	100

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 17: Fuel for lighting summarised by numbers of households, from Mount Frere villages, to Umzimvubu municipality, Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole

	Electricity	Gas	Paraffin	Candles	Solar	None	Total
Mt Frere villages	341	7	153	1 187	18	8	1 714
Umzimvubu municipality	21 196	176	3 247	21 769	175	295	46 858
Eastern Cape	1 265 713	4 881	172 375	230 638	7 602	5 184	1 686 393
South Africa	12 230 674	33 769	425 684	1 648 779	50 885	46 023	14 435 814

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 18: Fuel for lighting summarised by percentage of households, from Mount Frere villages, to Umzimvubu municipality, Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole

	Electricity	Gas	Paraffin	Candles	Solar	None	Total
Mt Frere villages	19.9	0.4	8.9	69.3	1.1	0.5	100
Umzimvubu municipality	45.2	0.4	6.9	46.5	0.4	0.6	100
Eastern Cape	75.1	0.3	10.2	13.7	0.5	0.3	100
South Africa	84.7	0.2	2.9	11.4	0.4	0.3	100

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 19: Cross tabulation of gender and employment status, from Mount Frere across various geographical units, using Census 2011 ward-level data

		Employed	Unemployed	Discouraged work-seeker	Other not economically active	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere wards	Male	814	942	809	4 164	6 292	13 021
	Female	1 022	1 043	984	5 190	7 085	15 324
	Total	1 836	1 985	1 793	9 354	13 377	28 345
Umzimvubu municipality	Male	8 235	7 265	4 741	26 558	41 144	87 943
	Female	10 178	8 366	6 239	33 771	45 114	103 668
	Total	18 413	15 631	10 980	60 329	86 258	191 611
Eastern Cape	Male	530 024	286 882	134 119	876 769	1 261 906	3 089 700
	Female	498 940	328 967	172 257	1 125 009	1 347 179	3 472 352
	Total	1 028 964	615 849	306 376	2 001 778	2 609 085	6 562 052
South Africa	Male	7 412 283	2 548 875	769 370	5 784 656	8 673 606	25 188 790
	Female	5 767 792	3 045 182	1 065 722	7 510 599	9 192 473	26 581 768
	Total	13 180 075	5 594 057	1 835 092	13 295 255	17 866 079	51 770 558

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 20: QLFS and NIDS derived employment shares (by percentage), for all regularly employed working-age adults within South Africa (i.e. urban and rural)

	QLFS annual average			NIDS employment shares		
	2008	2010	2012	2008	2010	2012
Agriculture	6.1	5.2	5.3	7.9	5.5	6.1
Mining	2.9	2.8	3.0	5.1	4.3	5.2
Manufacturing	15.1	13.9	13.2	15.9	11.1	9.8
Utilities	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.5
Construction	7.7	7.18	6.5	6.0	6.8	4.4
Trade	18.3	17.9	17.5	14.7	19.1	19.9
Transport	5.6	5.8	6.0	4.9	6.0	7.0
Finance and business services	12.8	13.5	13.9	12.2	10.5	11.1
Community and social services	20.3	22.3	23.6	23.4	28.9	26.9
Private households	10.5	10.6	10.1	9.0	6.8	8.1
Other sector	0.0	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.0	0.0

(Adapted from Daniels et al., 2013)

Table 21: QLFS and NIDS derived employment shares (by percentage), for all regularly employed working-age adults within rural formal areas

	QLFS annual average			NIDS employment shares		
	2008	2010	2010	2008	2010	2012
Agriculture	51.8	49.4	53.6	43.6	38.1	28.6
Mining	4.9	4.4	4.6	3.0	3.6	4.0
Manufacturing	5.1	5.2	6.1	17.5	9.3	11.9
Utilities	1.2	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.6	2.1
Construction	3.8	5.5	2.7	3.7	5.8	3.7
Trade	8.8	7.2	7.8	8.9	8.6	16.0
Transport	1.6	1.8	1.6	3.5	2.8	6.4
Finance and business services	2.6	3.9	3.4	2.2	3.2	6.3
Community and social services	7.0	8.1	6.6	4.4	15.4	10.9
Private households	13.4	13.7	13.0	12.5	11.7	10.7
Other sector	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

(Adapted from Daniels et al., 2013)

Table 22: QLFS and NIDS derived employment shares (by percentage), for all regularly employed working-age adults within tribal authority (viz. former homeland, communal) areas

	QLFS annual average			NIDS employment shares		
	2008	2010	2010	2008	2010	2012
Agriculture	7.4	6.9	6.6	7.8	6.4	7.6
Mining	4.7	5.6	5.7	9.1	7.1	12.0
Manufacturing	9.6	8.3	7.5	10.2	5.1	4.7
Utilities	0.63	0.63	0.8	0.3	1.4	0.7
Construction	9.9	9.5	9.6	8.3	9.8	7.8
Trade	16.8	16.4	16.4	12.8	13.8	14.0
Transport	4.8	5.3	4.8	4.1	4.2	6.3
Finance and business services	7.5	7.2	7.8	6.5	6.1	6.3
Community and social services	24.6	25.8	27.2	29.5	34.7	30.2
Private households	14.1	14.2	13.7	11.5	11.3	10.7
Other sector	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

(Adapted from Daniels et al., 2013)

Table 23: Transition matrix for rural households' receipt of a social grant, from NIDS data

		2012 (%)				
2008		Yes	No	Observations	Weight	Share
	Yes	84	16	4 314	671 0835	69%
	No	47	53	1 604	295 8832	31%

(Adapted from Daniels et al., 2013)

Table 24: Transition matrix for urban households receipt of a social grant, from NIDS data

		2012 (%)				
2008		Yes	No	Observations	Weight	Share
	Yes	72	28	3 224	7 812 299	44%
	No	25	75	2 713	9 984 375	56%

(Adapted from Daniels et al., 2013)

Table 25: Mean household income derived from social grants, by geotype from NIDS (deflated to December 2012 prices)

	Wave 1 (2008)	Wave 2 (2011)	Wave 3 (2013)
Rural formal	1 262	1 131	1 265
Tribal authority	1 260	1 432	1 468
Urban formal	1 016	1 247	1 234
Urban informal	1 030	1 220	1 163
Total average	1 133	1 314	1 317

(Adapted from Daniels et al., 2013)

Table 26: Employment sector by number of individuals, from focal Mount Frere villages and across various geographical units, from Census 2011 sub-place data:

	In the formal sector	In the informal sector	Private household	Do not know	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere villages	263	57	43	3	6 568	6 934
Umzimvubu municipality	13 272	3 437	1 801	444	172 631	191 585
Eastern Cape	753 755	151 626	124 039	23 737	5 508 020	6 561 177
South Africa	9 941 010	1 638 982	1 532 439	317 413	38 305 632	51 735 476

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 27: Employment sector by percentage of individuals, from focal Mount Frere villages and across various geographical units, from Census 2011 sub-place data

	In the formal sector	In the informal sector	Private household	Do not know	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere villages	3.8	0.8	0.6	0.0	94.7	100
Umzimvubu municipality	6.9	1.8	0.9	0.2	90.1	100
Eastern Cape	11.5	2.3	1.9	0.4	83.9	100
South Africa	19.2	3.2	3.0	0.6	74.0	100

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 28: Cross tabulation of gender and employment sector from Mount Frere villages and across various geographical units, using Census 2011 ward-level data

		In the formal sector	In the informal sector	Private household	Do not know	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere wards	Male	578	143	88	45	12 169	13 023
	Female	732	180	123	33	14 258	15 326
	Total	1 310	323	211	78	26 427	28 349
Umzimvubu municipality	Male	5 575	1 783	836	236	79 515	87 945
	Female	7 707	1 662	979	211	93 115	103 674
	Total	13 282	3 445	1 815	447	172 630	191 619
Eastern Cape	Male	382 264	85 706	60 558	14 088	2 547 085	3 089 701
	Female	371 567	66 179	63 775	9 888	2 960 944	3 472 353
	Total	753 831	151 885	124 333	23 976	5 508 029	6 562 054
South Africa	Male	5 589 404	993 336	780 422	198 094	17 627 536	25 188 792
	Female	4 367 030	647 567	754 423	120 350	20 692 400	26 581 770
	Total	9 956 434	1 640 903	1 534 845	318 444	38 319 936	51 770 562

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 29: Number of households engaged in agricultural activities, from Census 2011 data

Local municipality	Households involved in agricultural activities	Households not involved in agricultural activities
Umzimvubu	26 714	20 176
Province	596 574	1 090 805

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 30: Number of agricultural households involved in each specific agricultural activity, from Census 2011 data

Local municipality	Livestock production	Poultry production	Vegetable production	Production of other crop	Fodder grazing	Other
Umzimvubu	16 618	17 768	12 007	6 348	852	1 068
Province	330 354	334 665	246 413	99 052	24 335	33 493

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 31: Number of agricultural households by gender of household head, from Census 2011 data

Local municipality	Male	Female
Umzimvubu	10 454	16 260
Province	271 401	325 173

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 32: Number of agricultural households by age group of household head, from Census 2011 data

Local municipality	Less than 15 years	15–34 years	35–45 years	46–55 years	56–64 years	over 65 years
Umzimvubu	77	4 056	4 512	5 418	5 140	7 510
Province	2 135	78 885	99 243	127 845	114 542	173 924

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 33: Number of agricultural households owning cattle (per number of cattle), from Census 2011 data

Local municipality	1–10 head of cattle	11–100 head of cattle	100+ head of cattle	Total
Umzimvubu	7 405	1 211	21	8 638
Province	172 507	25 909	2 123	200 538

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 34: Monthly individual incomes summarised by numbers of people per income bracket, from focal Mount Frere villages and across various geographical units, from Census 2011 data

	No income	R 1– R 400	R 401– R 800	R 801– R1 600	R 1 601– R3 200	R 3 201– R6 400	R 6 401– R 12 800	R 12 801– R 25 600	R 25 601– R 51 200	R 51 201– R 102 400	R 102 401– R 204 800	R 204 801 or more	Unspecified	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere villages	2 808	2 233	279	982	43	48	38	24	11	1	1	0	464	0	6 932
Umzimvubu municipality	76 241	58 514	9 807	24 196	3 515	2 211	2 789	1 491	291	34	52	52	10 260	2 091	191 544
Eastern Cape	2 714 716	1 544 725	254 008	872 343	217 240	155 376	156 222	100 916	29 114	6 363	3 828	2 913	398 267	103 728	6 559 759
South Africa	21 027 179	8 960 266	1 669 776	5 857 524	3 015 818	2 246 557	1 904 963	1 382 781	564 569	170 917	63 710	43 706	4 015 929	808 387	51 732 082

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 35: Monthly individual incomes summarised by percentage of people per income bracket, from focal Mount Frere villages and across various geographical units, from Census 2011 data

	No income	R 1– R 400	R 401– R 800	R 801– R1 600	R 1 601– R3 200	R 3 201– R6 400	R 6 401– R 12 800	R 12 801– R 25 600	R 25 601– R 51 200	R 51 201– R 102 400	R 102 401– R 204 800	R 204 801 or more	Unspecified	Not applicable	Total
Mt Frere villages	40.5	32.2	4.0	14.2	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	0.0	100
Umzimvubu municipality	39.8	30.5	5.1	12.6	1.8	1.2	1.5	0.8	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.4	1.1	100
Eastern Cape	41.4	23.5	3.9	13.3	3.3	2.4	2.4	1.5	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.0	6.1	1.6	100
South Africa	40.6	17.3	3.2	11.3	5.8	4.3	3.7	2.7	1.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	7.8	1.6	100

(Source: Own analysis)

Table 36: Annual household income summarised by percentage of households per income bracket, from Census 2011 data

	No income	R 1- R 4 800	R 4 801- R 9 600	R 9 601- R 19 600	R 19 601 -R 38 200	R 38 201- R 76 400	R 76 401- R 153 800	R 153 801- R 307 600	R 307 601- R 614 400	R 614 001- R 1 228 800	R 1 228 801- R 2 457 600	R 2 457 601 or more	Total
Mt Frere villages	18.0	10.2	13.9	30.1	18.7	5.0	2.1	1.2	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.0	100
Umzimvubu municipality	16.1	7.2	14.0	25.8	21.2	6.9	4.7	2.8	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	100
Eastern Cape	15.7	5.8	9.8	22.8	20.4	9.8	6.7	5.1	2.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	100
South Africa	15.1	4.5	7.4	17.1	19.0	13.0	9.2	7.2	4.7	1.8	0.5	0.3	100

(Source: Own analysis)

Appendix 2: Household case studies

Case study 1: Siyanda M.

Fifty-six-year-old Siyanda and his family live in the distant rural village of Phuzayo. Their comfortable homestead consists of several sturdy mud-brick structures, and is furnished with store-bought furniture.

In the 1970s, Siyanda left the village and worked in a Gauteng gold mine for almost two decades. He married in the early 1980s, remitting money, while his wife built the homestead. His employment ended in 1989, when an industrial accident cost him a leg. After convalescing for two years in Johannesburg, he returned to the village in 1992, reportedly with a workplace payout of R12 000 and a small pension. The payout was used to complete building the homestead, acquire some livestock and educate children.

In 2005, the family household consisted of Siyanda, his wife and five children. The oldest son lived in Gauteng, three teenagers schooled in an adjacent town during the week, while the youngest child (a five-year-old nephew) lived permanently at home.

The family's income consisted of Siyanda's state disability grant, a small mine pension (R400) a 'care dependency grant' for his 15-year-old daughter, and a single CSG for the five-year-old nephew. Siyanda and his wife augmented this income by cultivating a field and homestead garden, and in the best years produced sufficient vegetables for much of the year, and some maize. Despite Siyanda's disability (he wore a prosthetic leg) he tended his fields and five head of cattle. He relied on a hired tractor for heavy ploughing, but pooled two of his oxen with four of his neighbour's for light harrowing, etc., or to draw a sledge to collect firewood. The household had close and co-operative relationships with neighbours and number of extended kin in the village.

The household also had synergies with other households. In 2005, Siyanda's (oldest) 22-year-old son lived with kin in Gauteng and was repeating matric. In the absence of funds for tertiary education, he aspired to obtain his truck driver's license. Siyanda and his wife sent R400 to their son, monthly.

The three locally resident teenagers lived predominantly with their maternal aunt (a hospital clerk) and attended school in Mount Frere, a two-hour bus ride away. The older of Siyanda and his wife's two teenagers was a 20-year-old son in Grade 10. He returned home for weekends, travelling without paying the fare by helping load the roof of the bus. (Siyanda's family was distantly related to the bus owner.) His two sisters (aged 12 and 15) who resided in town were less mobile. The 15-year-old had sensory and physical impairments, and received a state 'care dependency grant'. Her aunt, with whom they lived, assisted by taking her to Mthatha to get spectacles, etc. Siyanda's wife, in turn, maintained her family's home in the village. She also looked after the infant son of her niece, who lived with them.

Return visits to the household from 2005 onwards confirmed the extent to which it was embedded in these relationships of mutuality with others, including kin (such as the maternal aunt), and the bus- and cattle-owning neighbours. A decade later (in 2015), the household consisted of the familiar core of Siyanda and his wife, but the nephew had left and co-resident children were now their grandchildren. Ranging in age from infancy to toddlerhood, Siyanda's two daughters and a niece each had a locally resident child.

Siyanda continued to receive his state disability grant, and the small mine pension which had incrementally been raised to R1 000 monthly, while the two grandchild-

dren received child support grants. Siyanda's household continued to cultivate, but harvested little in 2014, with poor rains. They did not participate in the state-run larger Massive Food Production Programme, because after the first season it scaled up the requisite 'co-payment' to a prohibitive R1 000. Siyanda and his wife indicated that they would probably have joined it if they had had the money, although they are glad they did not, as the crop had failed with the failure of the season's rains. They owned modest (and slightly declining) livestock numbers, three cows, four goats and some chickens. In 2015 their three cattle were being tended elsewhere ('in the mountains') as part of a larger, pooled herd, by a Basotho herder to whom they contributed R200, monthly.

With regards to their now adult children, the situation was as follows. The eldest son (in Johannesburg since 2005), never became a professional driver, but was permanently employed in a Johannesburg hotel kitchen. He had lived in Soweto with his sister and brother (two of the teenagers who had been resident in the village in 2005) for much of the decade. But in 2016 he married and relocated to Cape Town where he worked as a security guard. Significantly, Siyanda and his wife had saved up and given him the R5 000 required for lobola (bridewealth) payment, reflecting the son's poor economic capacity. Although a considerable sum for Siyanda and his wife, it assured their son of a respectable, socially recognised marriage, and the inclusion of any subsequent grandchildren within the patrilineal line.

Of the two now adult daughters, the unmarried, mildly disabled daughter (now 25 years old) held low-waged, but secure work in a Johannesburg supermarket. Her 11-month-old infant resided with Siyanda and his wife at their village homestead. The second adult daughter had moved to Cape Town in search of work.

The fourth sibling (who had also been 20 years old in 2005 and in 2015 was now 30), shared a Soweto house with his mildly disabled sister. He had left school in Grade 11, had subsequently failed a course at a FET college, and was now selling phones in the informal sector.

To sum up, Siyanda and his wife described the decade-long changes that had marked their home with co-resident children replaced by grandchildren. They recognised the mine pension to be important, and suggested that without it (and if they had to rely largely on the disability grant) they would struggle far more than they did. Part of their success was their continued, close relationship with others: the bus-owning family, and their sister in Mount Frere with a solid public sector job and a home in town, were important sources of support. Finally, their case study also revealed the multiple complementary activities and resources Siyanda and his wife drew on in order to survive, including modest agricultural production.

Case study 2: Mamzoli M.

A 2002 survey placed Mamzoli M's household in the lowest income quintile in the village of Phuzayo, with 'no paid work', paltry transfers from wages and a single state old age grant. Yet despite this, research in 2005 revealed the household to have several head of livestock, and the uncommon asset of a gas-powered freezer. Elderly, obese and mobility constrained, Mamzoli was effectively the household head and presided over a large homestead, with a complex set of livelihood-supporting activities.

Key to the ability to engage in these activities were resources from her adult children, working in various urban centres, particularly those from her bakery manager son, Simpiwe. He not only remitted cash monthly, he also supplied, in the late 1990s, the freezer Mamzoli used for years to sell beer and meat. This augmented her old age grant income and enabled her to support half-a-dozen co-resident grandchildren. Significantly, Mamzoli's early-teenage grandsons assisted with the beer retail (buying, fetching stock and serving patrons), and the small tavern generated a tidy R600 monthly profit (in 2005). Mamzoli's state old age grant provided cash liquidity to run the tavern, but was also used to buy the inputs for the plot cultivated by her grandsons and hired labourers. Cumulatively, these diverse livelihood-supporting activities saw Mamzoli more than double her old age grant income in the mid-2000s.

Researchers returned to Mamzoli in 2009, where good rains saw a harvest of 11 bags of maize and expansion of agricultural production. Mamzoli's adult children (including Simpiwe and his family) reportedly returned annually (especially on holidays) to help with harvesting. Although the imputed costs of inputs were close to the value of the harvest, Mamzoli asserted maize cultivation was 'tradition'. Significantly, too, she explained, it kept her teenage grandsons engaged and she asserted generational authority over them. It also enabled her to deflect fellow villagers' requests for assistance into offers of low-paid agricultural employment.

Support from Mamzoli's five urban resident adult children remained significant to various livelihood activities over a decade of intermittent research visits. A key benefactor remained her son, Simpiwe, who secured an even better job, and was able to sustain support for his mother and make regular visits, with gifts and stock to resell.

However, later, Simpiwe's younger sister also began contributing to the household. She studied longer, but after the hiatus of marriage and childbearing, she secured a skilled public sector job. By 2009, she became a significant source of support to her mother's household (funding a rainwater tank, and the construction of a large, multi-roomed concrete block house for Mamzoli). Her contribution came to exceed that of her older brother.

Already characterised by ill health in the mid-2000s, Mamzoli became frailer over the decade and her absent adult children employed a young female (a Lesotho national) caregiver. By 2013, Mamzoli had given up the running of the tavern, become disinclined to supervise agricultural production and even abandoned her 'kitchen garden', which she had long used to augment her food security. Mamzoli's portfolio of activities was undercut by her declining health but also the dearth of surplus labour formerly provided by co-resident grandchildren. Although these teenagers and young adults still cycled through the household, their presence was less consistent. For instance, a research visit over Christmas in 2015 saw all of them holidaying with kin in Durban, while the ailing Mamzoli remained at home with her caregiver (a different Baso-

tho woman; Mamzoli lamented the unreliability of the previous youth).

Significantly, greater resources within the larger kinship network meant that the young adults now variously pursued tertiary education (such as FET college), and were making better-rewarded forays into urban labour markets. They also had the resources to busy themselves with more lucrative forms of local informal and self-employment. For example, now in his mid-twenties, the conscientious teenage grandson that had been central to the agricultural production and running of the tavern a decade earlier was by 2015 being paid to drive a rural pick-up taxi owned by Simpiwe's wife. This was a more capital intensive and skilled undertaking, but commensurately higher yielding.

Despite her frailty, incapacity and fewer bid-dable grandchildren consistently at the homestead, Mamzoli continued to take an interest in wider livelihood generating activities. So by 2015, her urban-resident son Simpiwe, who had built a home in the village, still kept his livestock (14 cattle) at her household. He paid a herder to tend them, and Mamzoli could see them returned to the kraal (cattle byre) from her veranda. In addition, now ubiquitous cell phone ownership, and the expansion of the local network, meant Mamzoli could readily keep in touch with her adult children.

Amidst these developments, Mamzoli proudly recounted the success of her adult children, all of whom had jobs (several in solid middle class professions) and 'none of them are scarce' (i.e. absent or inattentive to her). She continued to receive the state old age grant, but explained it was used for funeral insurance, toiletries, and smaller grocery items throughout the month. She clarified, 'Band-incedise ngezinto ezincinci' ('it helps with the smaller things').

Case study 3: Simpiwe M.

Simpiwe M. is the son of Mamzoli M. (described in Case study 2.). While Mamzoli's shifting livelihood activities, engaged in over more than a decade, are described above, Simpiwe was a key actor in the family's networks of social reciprocity and livelihood diversification.

The researcher's first interview with Simpiwe was in 2006, at the supermarket in which he was a bakery manager. He proffered a history of how he and his siblings were raised in abject poverty by their rural grandparents, while their single mother (viz. Mamzoli) worked as a domestic worker in distant Durban.

Simpiwe joined his mother in Durban in the late 1980s, living with her and securing a job as a cleaner in a supermarket. He began working as a bakery assistant but his vocational prospects were inhibited by his incomplete secondary education. As Mamzoli aged, he encouraged her to return to the village. Thereafter, Simpiwe supported her with modest remittances, and bought her a gas-powered chest freezer that became central to Mamzoli's informal self-employment in the village. The freezer was a scarce resource in a village with no electricity. It generated an income from selling cold beer and pre-packaged meat, sourced from urban supermarkets. The chest freezer also enabled Mamzoli to store perishables for other villagers, a considerable and ongoing source of goodwill in a village where refrigeration was rare.

When Mamzoli started receiving a state old age pension (around 1993) the pressure on both her and Simpiwe eased. She became less reliant on selling meat and alcohol, and Simpiwe scaled back his remittance to her. He consequently reduced his working hours in the supermarket to evenings and weekends. During the day he returned to school and completed his schooling. Once he had completed his matric (secondary education) he became eligible to access workplace training. In less than a decade (by the mid-2000s) he had been promoted to manager of the supermarket bakery, and then changed jobs several times, managing larger and larger bakeries.

A larger salary improved Simpiwe's ability to better support his wider kinship network. For instance, Simpiwe buoyed his retrenched brother, and funded the education of a succession of nephews and nieces. Simpiwe also paid for the education of his brother's wife (i.e. his sister-in-law), who showed proficiency at school. She eventually trained and found employment as an adult basic education instructor. Simpiwe similarly bankrolled his younger sister's agricultural college training. (She subsequently entered the civil ser-

vice.) Simpiwe also 'pushed' (his own words) his own wife, who completed an ambulance attendant course and got her driver's license. Her employment experience and ability to drive saw her quickly find better employment, with more regular hours, with the state's social grant pay out contractor.

Over the years, these 'investments' by Simpiwe in his kin's education not only benefited each one directly, but also indirectly reduced the pressure on Simpiwe himself. His sister's public sector employment ultimately saw her fund their mother's new homestead. (Despite the fact that she was married, her independent income enabled her to do this.) Similarly, despite the subsequent death of his ex-mineworker brother, Simpiwe's sister-in-law (working as an adult basic education instructor) was readily able to support herself and her children. Even the regular salary of Simpiwe's wife translated into her ultimate ownership of a rural taxi (which employed a nephew as a driver).

Simpiwe subsequently left the supermarket and by 2008 was employed as a mid-level manager in a listed food service supply firm. Although mainly resident in a distant city (where he owned a home), he was able to build his own rural homestead (overseen by an otherwise unemployed nephew) and accumulate cattle (tended by a paid herder). In these ways his access to a regular salary and the labour of assorted un- and underemployed village-based kin has enabled him to further leverage his resources. This includes, through the proxy of his locally resident nephews, Simpiwe's large 'co-payment' or investment in a local state-run Massive Food Production Programme, for which he was rewarded with a bumper harvest (over 200 bags) in 2013.

Case study 4: Kwanele N.

Tall and imposing fifty-five-year-old Kwanele had recently returned to his rural homestead in Phuzayo in 2005, when first interviewed by the research team. Despite his limited education ('Standard 6'), he had ascended occupationally, culminating in employment as a skilled machine operator. This had enabled him to invest in his comfortable rural homestead, and pay for the schooling of his four eldest sons at various major urban centres. However, by 2005, he had been recently

retrenched from his industrial job in Gauteng, and was now a permanent resident of the isolated village.

In 2005 Kwanele was engaging in spirited agricultural production, but was essentially supporting 13 dependents from his accrued retirement savings and retrenchment package. They included his wife, two adult brothers (one mentally ill, the other with a substance abuse problem), five children (including a granddaughter born to an unmarried daughter), and the four sons at distant urban centres. Kwanele busied himself producing vegetables for local sale, and planned to improve his small herd of seven cattle, even though he was frustrated by the local ethos of communalism and villagers' reluctance to pay for his vegetables. Articulate, authoritative and religious, Kwanele was equally critical of his unemployed brothers, even though he grudgingly resigned himself to supporting them.

Of Kwanele's non-resident sons, in 2005, two were enrolled in matric, one in the regional centre of Maratha, and the other in the distant Gauteng township of Sebokeng (where Kwanele had worked). A third son had recently completed an advanced (N6) technical certificate from a tertiary institution and obtained his heavy vehicle driver's license, and was looking for a job in Gauteng, while the fourth son, in Pretoria, was repeating a failed course, towards a commerce diploma. Drawing down the fixed income of his retrenchment package, Kwanele made monthly transfers totalling R1 650 (in 2005) to his four sons for living expenses (this excluded tuition and books). Kwanele and his wife explicitly justified the rapid drawing down of their finite savings on the basis of their sons' improved employment prospects.

By 2008 Kwanele was continuing his cultivation and animal husbandry, and was opportunistically running a small spaza shop from his homestead after a larger local store had closed. However, he and his wife's earlier certainty of their sons' employment prospects was being tested. They despaired of their sons' succession of low prospect and wage jobs, and the failure of their commerce-studying son to complete his expensive course. They were also rapidly exhausting Kwanele's

workplace derived funds.

By 2009 their fortunes had turned. One son was accepted into an artisan training programme at a large petrochemical firm, and soon thereafter secured a similar position for his brother. Although the sons were not yet remitting to the household, Kwanele and his wife were overjoyed at their sons' improved prospects. By now, Kwanele had abandoned his spaza shop, as a Pakistani immigrant had reopened the larger local store. Yet Kwanele was far from idle. Partially funded by small local donations and his rapidly dissipating savings, Kwanele built a rudimentary church hall on his plot, and was proselytising to a small congregation. By 2009, Kwanele confided that his retrenchment package (over a hundred thousand rand, or approximately nine times the annual value of the state old age grant at that time) was exhausted. But he was anticipating receipt of a state old age grant in the near future.

Within three years (*viz.* 2009 to 2011) the working sons had completed their training and consolidated their place in the labour market. Solidly employed, they bought homes in distant towns, and began families or married. These employed sons did not build their own homesteads in the village, but regularly remitted to Kwanele's household. They also funded the construction of a new, socially prestigious 'reception' room and consumer durables (furniture, etc.), and supported their younger siblings in their schooling. For instance, their contributions, and Kwanele's sale of four cows, enabled one of his daughters to enrol at North West University. Thereafter, successive years of NSFAS (state-funded loans) saw her being the first in the family to complete a degree, in 2014. Within the extended kin network, the homes of the two employed brothers became urban 'footholds', including for the secondary or tertiary schooling of the teenage siblings, and for later visits to urban health facilities, including by Kwanele.

Apart from the two sons employed in the formal sector, the half-a-dozen other adult children, with less academic aptitude or qualifications, fanned out across several provinces (Western Cape, Free State, Gauteng) to pursue more precarious forms of employment. The vacillating repertoires of often informal

or temporary employment, and shifting residential locales of these adult children eluded even the ability of the normally precise and loquacious Kwanele to keep accurate track of them (especially of those adult children who pursued job opportunities in their friendship, rather than kin-based circuits, and in geographical sites other than the familiar towns where the other kin were). Furthermore, despite these successes, at least three non-resident adult children (all sons) continued to be a source of parental concern for various, often interlinked reasons. These included: their chronic un- or underemployment, heavy drinking, stalled education (especially the failed commerce-studying son) or long periods (months) of silence and non-communication with their parents.

By 2015, Kwanele had been receiving a state old age grant for five years. The regularity of this income and his declining health (a serious taxi accident left him with chronic back pain since 2011) saw him scale back on his cultivation. However, he maintained livestock production, reporting nine cows, ten goats and thirty sheep (he sold R5 000 of wool in 2014). One of his formally employed sons reportedly remitted R750 a month (to which Kwanele added R250), to pay a Basotho cattle herder. Just prior to Christmas 2015 the household was preparing for a visit by one of these sons, in his newly acquired car.

Case study 5: Chuma K.

In 2005, Chuma, K. was a woman in her thirties, living with three young children in a dilapidated homestead in Akulinywa. Even by village standards, her two small, unfurnished mud huts (one for cooking, the other for sleeping) pointed to abject poverty. Located in a barren part of the village, alongside the huts were the ruins of another structure and an abandoned kraal (byre). Chuma was amongst the poorest and most marginalised of all households encountered during the research. Between 2005 and 2006 her sole source of regular income was a single state CSG, which she augmented with laborious low-paid work in the village. This work consisted primarily of making sundried mud blocks, and plastering self-built structures with a mud and animal dung mixture. While all three of her children were entitled to a CSG, only one received

it. The others lacked the requisite birth certificates. Amidst high take-up rates, Chuma's failure to access the CSG pointed to extraordinary marginality or incapacity. Her household neither had livestock nor cultivated any crop.

Even by local standards, the composition of Chuma's household had changed substantially over time. When the household was first surveyed in 2002, Chuma was absent, living in a distant city, while the locally resident household members consisted of Chuma's three-year-old daughter, 15-year-old nephew and 69-year-old grandmother. But shortly after the survey, in late 2002, the grandmother died and the nephew relocated to Cape Town. Chuma's ailing stepmother briefly occupied the homestead, but her subsequent death in 2004 catalysed the return of Chuma and her two older children. Between 2002 and 2005 the sole continuous member of the household was Chuma's then preschool daughter.

Interviewing Chuma proved difficult. Although she was not shy, and would utter the occasional mordant or mischievous aside, she remained guarded and reticent. Furthermore, an air of resistance and passivity hung over her. For instance, when a tractor damaged one of her huts in the mid-2000s, she obstinately waited for the tractor owner to repair the damage, although she could have repaired it herself. In the meantime, livestock entered the structure and consumed her modest maize store, which had been donated by a local development project. Similarly, she eschewed the customary December painting and sprucing up of homesteads, in anticipation of returning urban kin. However her passivity and resistance became comprehensible when understood in the light of the relational dynamics within her kin network.

Chuma's return to the village in 2004 had been the product of a fiat by her three half-brothers during a family meeting in the Western Cape. Having reluctantly returned, Chuma readily described village life as arduous and monotonous. However, with three young children to care for, slim prospects for marriage or urban employment, and weak urban entitlements, she had little other choice. She was dispatched to tend to their rural homestead, while her half-brothers were to remit money.

Over the course of several interviews with Chuma, and several ancillary sources (other village-based benefactors), two basic facts emerged. The first was that her half-brothers were more accurately cousins; the second had to do with the paucity of the remittances they sent. (These two facts may well have been connected.) However, the situation effectively left Chuma marooned in the rural Eastern Cape, in a perpetually precarious existence. Chuma continued to occupy the homestead (in a context where property rights are bound up with communal recognition, occupation and use) as a proxy for her kin, but remained marginal within her family network and unable to exact much reciprocation from them. Intermittent visits in the intervening decade saw this basic fact change little.

In response to her predicament, Chuma sustained herself through erratic and poorly paid menial work for others (mud-brick making, plastering, firewood fetching, washing, domestic work and beer brewing). She essentially relied on the patronage of a number of older women, many of them with longstanding links to her household and kin (specifically her deceased grandmother). Many of these arrangements were embedded within practices of non-monetised exchange, such as the benefactor in whose house Chuma gave birth to her younger children, or Chuma's unpaid work at traditional ceremonies. These elderly women also explained Chuma's family had always been particularly poor, even by village standards (her late grandmother was widowed young). Furthermore, their household was one of the last to move to the current village in the 1960's under the forced resettlement of 'betterment', which implied fewer resources to move, and a less favourable choice of plot. Another benefactor ascribed Chuma's reluctance to repair her damaged hut in 2005 to the fact that her 'half-brothers' would have had first claim to it anyway. She reportedly long encouraged Chuma to build her own hut to improve her and her children's security of tenure, to little avail. However, over a decade the deaths or reduced material circumstances of these elderly benefactors eroded their capacity to continue to employ or support Chuma.

In 2015, the research team returned, to find an unattended toddler and pre-schooler at

Chuma's hut, while she was out for the morning. Chuma was, therefore, still a mother to young children (they had different fathers, who paid no maintenance). At least one of her young children enumerated in 2005 had died. Chuma's 20-year-old daughter was living elsewhere in the village (with a distantly related grandmother) but had dropped out of school in 'Standard two' (i.e. after four years of schooling). Chuma's teenage son (in school, doing Grade nine) was occupying and looking after the house in the village of Chuma's now recently deceased (2014) 'half-brother'. However he regularly ate at Chuma's homestead with her and his younger siblings.

In 2015, Chuma and her children effectively subsisted on the resources of a single CSG, and R420 a month she earned from domestic work. She worked for three days a week, cooking and cleaning for a lone, pension-receiving elderly man in the village. Her youngest child, a toddler, did not receive a CSG, which Chuma attributed to difficulties securing a birth certificate and the transport money to town. But, unlike the frequently beseeching narratives of frustrated would-be recipients, directed at researchers, Chuma was curiously nonchalant about this. She, furthermore, shrugged off her failure to secure a CSG during one of the periodic registration drives in the village, explaining it coincided with one of her intermittent visits to her father's family elsewhere in the Eastern Cape.

Case study 6: Nobuhle M.

In 2005, when they were first interviewed, Nobuhle's household consisted of four women: middle-aged Nobuhle, her daughter in her thirties and pre-teen granddaughter, along with Nobuhle's elderly mother (in her eighties). The four generations of women lived together in two small mud block huts in a deep rural village.

The women's collective life stories pointed to the household's long-term marginality and vulnerability. The three adult women had, in succession, supported the household through domestic work in distant cities. The women's responses to the research team partially revealed how they had survived; Nobuhle and her kin were unfailingly hospitable and affable research informants. Socially confi-

dent (from decades of working for middle-class urban employers) and chatty, they never appeared to tire of talking to the researchers.

In addition, although the household was poor with few assets or income, it had a rich associational life within the village. In the mid-2000s Nobuhle was prominent in a local agricultural development project and her daughter an active member. Her elderly mother was a source of local knowledge on traditional rituals and history. The women were regarded as dignified, and commanded local respect from other village residents.

Amongst the most noteworthy aspects of the household was the manner in which they successfully leveraged their paltry income. In 2005, their reported income consisted of R780 from the state old age pension, some petty informal trading (using residual grocery money), and a CSG received for Nobuhle's granddaughter (although it subsequently ended abruptly and was not reinstated). In addition, they received low and erratic remittances from Nobuhle's son and sometimes her married sisters (on average, about R150 per month). Monthly income was, therefore, typically below R1 000 a month. They did not cultivate their own plot (having no fence), and their livestock amounted to two pigs.

The household's survival had, therefore, long relied on careful stewardship of resources. Prior to Nobuhle's mother's (viz. the great-grandmother) receiving a state old age grant, each woman had undertaken domestic work in distant Durban. The women favoured 'live-in' positions, to facilitate maximum remittances, with Nobuhle recounting sending as much as R450 out of her R500 monthly salary in the 1990s. This careful management of money enabled them to maintain their homestead and provide for health expenses. For instance, the rebuilding of a hut in the mid-2000s cost approximately R3 000 in building materials (corrugated iron roofing, rafters, doors and windows), which were obtained with a small deposit. Credit was extended to the respectable Nobuhle, against the security of her mother's pension.

The household also saved approximately R100–R150 each month, for the potential health expenses of Nobuhle's frail mother. (The local government clinic was considered

sub-standard, and serious ailments would entail travelling to town.) Therefore, despite being poor, and the household of four subsisting on little more than single state old age grant, they made modest provision for health care and maintaining their home.

The reasons for the household's poverty and vulnerability, even by the standards of an impoverished village, were intertwined with their history. Middle-aged Nobuhle's father had 'absconded' when she and her siblings were still very young, she had 'divorced' decades ago, and Nobuhle's daughter had borne her own daughter (viz. Nobuhle's granddaughter) out of wedlock. Hence, the household had long been without co-resident male partners, and, crucially, the formal sector employment derived remittances that had historically been the preserve of men.

Many of the vulnerabilities that had thrown the women together, mutually dependent on a state old age grant, were revealed by the story of Nobuhle's daughter. Born in Durban in 1970s, she grew up in the village. She suffered from ill health, and then left school when she fell pregnant in the early 1990s. Her attempts to complete her schooling were frustrated by recurrent headaches, and the fact that her grandmother (Nobuhle's mother) was too frail to care for the newborn baby.

The situation changed in 1998, when Nobuhle's granddaughter reached school-going age, and the family decided Nobuhle and her daughter would effectively swap places. Nobuhle returned to the village, while her daughter took over her domestic worker job with a valued Durban-based employer. The reordering of responsibilities between the two generations of women allowed the household to retain its link to the employer, as middle-aged Nobuhle returned to the village to care for her increasingly frail mother.

Nobuhle's daughter worked for the employers for two years, until divorce dissolved their household, and ended her employment. She reportedly secured the offer of another job but was faced with a two-week-long hiatus in employment, and lack of accommodation in Durban. After becoming stranded in the city, sleeping at a railway station and unhappily considering commercial sex work, she sold her sole asset (a cell phone) and returned to the

village. Incipient health problems (indeterminate, perhaps mental health issues described as 'stress' and 'nerves'), alongside her experiences in Durban made Nobuhle's daughter reluctant to return to the city. She worked in a domestic worker position in Gauteng for less than two years, before the incapacitating headaches forced her rural return.

In 2008, Nobuhle's daughter had fallen acutely ill; she was treated for TB and diagnosed as HIV positive. She subsequently regained some of her physical health, but until the present (2016) has remained stricken by cognitive impairments and psychiatric symptoms. Impassive, cognitively blunted and prone to occasional outbursts, she is quite incapable of work or even independent living.

Nobuhle's daughter's ill health not only derailed the household's generational cycle of external urban employment, it imposed another care burden on it. The household was left largely reliant on the state old age grant of Nobuhle's elderly mother, until 2010, when Nobuhle herself turned 60 years of age and secured a state old age grant. The household then subsisted on two state old age grants, with erratic remittances from Nobuhle's married urban-based sister. The household was thrilled when Nobuhle's teenage granddaughter completed her secondary schooling (albeit with poor marks) in 2012, but 2013 proved to be a tumultuous year.

In mid-2013, Nobuhle's elderly mother died at home. Meanwhile Nobuhle's granddaughter gave birth to a daughter (i.e. a great granddaughter to Nobuhle) at the end of 2013. With the household reduced to receiving a single state old age grant after the death of Nobuhle's mother, Nobuhle tended her incapacitated adult daughter and young great-granddaughter. Fortunately, the father of the infant was a local teacher, who made a useful monthly contribution of R650 towards the child's upkeep.

In terms of efforts to access the job market, the only person able to work was Nobuhle's granddaughter. In 2013 she, now in her early twenties, attended a private college in East London (including while she was pregnant), but her policing-related course proved to be unaccredited and of little vocational value. The next year (2014) she signed up for a state-

funded, weekly, six-month-long computer course in Mount Frere. Despite her young age and unsuccessful efforts to secure work, Nobuhle's granddaughter contributed significantly to the household. She presided over the resources of a CSG and contribution from the father of her child. But she also routinely accompanied the older women on health visits. This saw her grandmother Nobuhle explain 'she is like a mother to us'. Nobuhle's granddaughter played this role largely because the prime working-age adult in the household (her mother, viz. Nobuhle's now middle-aged daughter) was incapable of doing so.

By early 2016, the household's long battle (over five years) to secure a disability grant for Nobuhle's incapacitated middle-aged daughter succeeded. The windfall of the first month's grant (approximately R2 700 with back pay) was spent on shoes, clothes and better quality food, and, crucially, funeral insurance for its designated beneficiary. The sum was also spent on a cheap cell phone to be used by Nobuhle's itinerant granddaughter, who continued to scour opportunities for jobs and training, and tend to the variously elderly, incapacitated and infant members of her household.

Case study 7: Bulelani P.

Bulelani P. and his family occupied a comfortable homestead comprised of a cluster of structures. In 2005, the household consisted of six adults, including Bulelani and his wife, his adult son and daughter and two daughters-in-law. Each daughter-in-law had a young child resident at the homestead. The two young sons of a daughter (who was ill with HIV in Cape Town) raised the final tally of household members to eleven. Three child support grants were received for grandchildren at the household.

In addition, several of Bulelani's adult children and grandchildren lived in various urban centres (Gauteng, Cape Town and Mthatha), and two teenage grandsons were resident with their paternal grandmother in the North West Province.

Bulelani's comfortable compound, with its well-built structures furnished with store-bought furniture attested to past formal sector employment. Bulelani had left the village

in the 1960s, and secured a job at state-owned steelmaker Iscor, through his kin. Initial contracts made way for permanent employment, and steady income that enabled Bulelani to marry. He remitted to his wife, who, like many women, literally built the homestead herself with sun-dried mud-bricks.

Bulelani worked a total of 34 years, until he was retrenched in 1996. His retrenchment package (approximately R105 000) was spent on furniture, educating three children to matric, paying lobola (bridewealth) for his son and acquiring some livestock (three cows and five goats). By 2005, the household was down to ownership of single cow and three goats, and small quantities of cultivated maize (five 50kg bags), vegetables and dried beans. Bulelani explained his retrenchment package was on the cusp of being exhausted. There were few other sources of income; Bulelani was occasionally paid to fix a fence, and three urban-based adult children sent monthly remittances, cumulatively totalling approximately R600, in the mid-2000s.

A less clear source of household income were the profits earned by Bulelani's daughter from selling second-hand clothes. Travelling to Durban via two busses, she bought R1 000–R1 500 worth of new and used clothes, and resold them in the village. Although collecting debt was a perpetual problem, she made an irregular income. (She was given the capital by her boyfriend, and father of her child, in lieu of child support.) Although she was reticent to divulge her profits and the extent to which they were pooled with the household, her monthly contribution of R100 to an *umcalelo* (rotating savings society), pointed to a gain of a few hundred rand a month.

In contrast, Bulelani's adult son did agricultural 'piece jobs' in the village. He retained all of the resultant income, which his parents could not even quantify. Like many men his age, Bulelani's son was elusive and reluctant to engage with the researchers. Unlike Bulelani's generation, the 'join' (formal labour recruitment) no longer exists for young men, such as his son. With the disappearance of even menial formal employment has gone the opportunity to build a homestead. Bulelani's adult son was, therefore, not unusual in living with his wife and child at his parent's compound. The son's constrained opportu-

nities for independent household formation were reflected in Bulelani paying his R5 000 lobola (bridewealth). Even the agricultural labour Bulelani's son routinely engaged in might traditionally have been regarded as the preserve of women and retired men. The prospect of establishing a homestead of his own was a distant and unrealisable ambition, in many respects the new face of migration and employment – increasingly, informal, improvisational and female – was represented by his wily sister.

A decade later, by 2015, Bulelani's formerly itinerant clothes-selling daughter lived in Durban and had, surprisingly, married. (Marriages are rare amongst older women with several children.) She still worked a variety of temporary jobs and engaged in vending, but her husband had a comparatively solid job as a truck driver, and they had recently received the windfall of their own 'RDP' (viz. subsidised) house. Her eldest children, the now 19-year-old twin boys, who had been resident in the North West province a decade earlier, had been schooled in the Eastern Cape village, but matriculated and joined their mother in Durban.

In contrast, Bulelani's locally resident adult son remained hard to pin down and interview. He was estranged ('divorced') from his (ex) wife, who lived in an adjacent village. She still received the CSG and passed most of it onto Bulelani's household, where the children continued to reside. Their relationship was reportedly fractious, and Bulelani's household appeared reluctant to press claims for full value of the CSG from her. Bulelani's son, now in his early forties was effectively the liege of his father's house, but was elusive and apparently only 'slept' at the homestead. At the time of the interview, in 2015, he was working on a public employment programme, twice weekly for a R600 monthly stipend. He retained this sum for his own use.

Bulelani's health had steadily declined since 2008–2009, but he and his wife were both collecting state old age grants that remained crucial to the household. Co-resident household members consisted of adult son, the son's three children (viz. Bulelani's grandchildren), and a foster care grant-receiving grandchild (her mother died).

Of Bulelani's five remaining adult children, two who had previously resided in urban areas had returned to the village. They occupied their own homesteads and survived on paltry social grants and some accumulated employment-related savings and benefits (retrenchment package, etc.). However, in both cases, they were the net beneficiaries of support (especially meals) from Bulelani's household. Rural returnee adults, such as these, with modest accrued resources, appeared to favour making a bid for some measure of independence and asset accumulation by building or buying their own homestead, even if they would then subsequently be thrown on social grant receipt or support from kin.

Finally, Bulelani's extended household still consisted of three sets of adult children living in major urban areas. They were discernibly better off than their rurally resident siblings. Some married, but they lived in households with solid jobs and one grandchild completed a university degree – the first in the family. Two of these urban adults were a notable source of support to Bulelani's household, including a regular monthly remittance of R1 000.

Case study 8: Wilfred X.

Interviewed by the research team over a decade ago, the household of Wilfred T. represented one of the wealthiest rural households in Kufutshana. In 2005, Wilfred and his wife were teachers (the latter subsequently became principal) at a local school. Their education and secure and comparatively large income (by local standards) placed them firmly amongst the village elite. Their homestead was amongst the very largest, most well built and comfortably furnished in the village. Moreover, several village informants identified this household as a noteworthy source of local support and assistance. The case study of Wilfred's household reveals what a relatively better-off village household looks like.

In 2015, Wilfred's (younger) wife was still working as the principal of a local primary school, but Wilfred had retired three years earlier in 2012, and was receiving his state employee pension (several multiples of a monthly state old age grant – for which he was ineligible).

Wilfred and his wife were relatively conscientious local benefactors, and described by others as a reliable source of help with reading or writing bureaucratic documents (legal and official texts, etc.). Within the household Wilfred's wife, through a likely combination of her own income, assertiveness and her husband's support (or, at least, acquiescence), was generously supporting the household of her own elderly mother. (A woman's support for her pre-marriage home can be a point of contestation, especially to the poor or the traditionally minded.) This support extended to paying a 'herd boy' (viz. adult male herder).

In 2015, the household consisted of Wilfred and his wife, along with eleven additional co-resident members (i.e. a total of 13 people). These eleven co-resident members included five grandchildren (ranging in age from infancy to primary school-aged), from three of their adult daughters. The mother of two of the grandchildren was deceased. In addition to grandchildren, a single niece and two nephews (all from the paternal line, and in their mid- to late teens) were also resident at the sprawling homestead. Finally, three paid (viz. non-kin) employees lived at the homestead. Although reluctantly described as employees, these remunerated individuals included the driver of Wilfred's pick-up truck, the young male livestock herder or 'shepherd', and a female 'helper' (viz. domestic worker and child-minder) who lived in the structure with two of the youngest (infant) grandchildren.

Less consistently present (and not enumerated in the above tally of 13 individuals) were various members of the extended household. These included a 16-year-old daughter schooling in the nearby Mount Frere, and a 19-year-old son completing matric (secondary school) in Gauteng. In addition, three of Wilfred's adult children had diverse places of primary residence. They included a daughter in her second year of studying teaching in distant Mpumalanga, and a 25-year-old daughter formally employed in a large financial services company in Cape Town. The eldest daughter (and fifth in this tally of non-resident household members) ran a small spaza shop and tavern close to Wilfred's homestead. The seed capital for her modest informal enterprise had been provided by her two employed par-

ents. Although she had her own children, and nominally her own home, she frequently visited and ate at her parent's home.

At the time of the research team's 2015 return, there was clear evidence of new construction at the homestead by paid builders. In addition, the household owned a number of livestock (reportedly 20 cattle, 30 sheep, a dozen goats and 10 pigs – numbers marginally up on those reported a decade earlier). In the last planting season (despite very poor rains) they had harvested 10 bags of maize, and successfully grown vegetables for the household for approximately a quarter of the year. However, informally employed agricultural labourers (rather than kin or the household's resident employees) were key to these efforts. Wilfred was clear he did not involve himself directly in cultivating or tending livestock. A combination of his relative affluence, local status and personal proclivities appeared to set Wilfred apart from the many of the other male household heads. Unlike them, he neither donned working attire (overall pants, gumboots, etc.) nor got too involved in agriculture.

Apart from labour market earnings (salary and pension), and some agricultural production, the household's third income stream was its newly acquired vehicle. Wilfred had purchased a neat, six-year-old, one-ton 'bakkie' (pick-up truck) with a fiberglass canopy, with part of his retirement savings two years earlier (2013). The vehicle was used to transport ten scholars daily for a monthly fee. Wilfred explained the economics: their parents or guardians cumulatively paid R6 000 monthly, from which Wilfred deducted R2 000 for diesel and R1 800 for the driver's wages (possibly overstated), making for a R2 000 profit before maintenance. The vehicle was new and maintenance costs were reportedly low. Significantly, neither Wilfred nor his wife had previously owned a vehicle, nor could either of them drive. (Wilfred also disavowed any ambition of learning to drive). Although the driver could drive Wilfred or his family members to town at their leisure, the vehicle was essentially intended as income generation, rather than a lifestyle asset. Like many unfinanced vehicles in the village (indeed in South Africa), it was uninsured.

Ownership of a reliable vehicle not only served to cement Wilfred's long accrued status in the impoverished village, it also helped generate income during his post-retirement years.

Case study 9: Abongile G.

Abongile G.'s modest compound stands in close proximity to the entrance of the village of Kufutshana. In 2005, she was particularly eager to be interviewed by the researchers. She quickly launched into a narrative, explaining her estranged husband had demolished the collapsed hut in her front yard. Her narrative (told in 2005) was as follows.

Then late-middle-aged Abongile had met her husband about twenty years earlier in Johannesburg in the 1980s, where he had worked in a semi-skilled but secure municipal job. She was Sotho (not a local Xhosa), and became his second wife and moved to the village. She bore five children and reportedly got on well with his first wife. However, her relationship with her husband deteriorated at the end of the 1990s, when, newly ordained as a lay preacher, the first wife joined him in Johannesburg. It was at this point that his crucial remittance to Abongile and their children waned, threatening them with starvation.

In her 2005 narrative, Abongile explained how she sought to press her entitlement against her husband in the early 2000s. Inspired by her sister (who had successfully claimed maintenance in court) and perhaps a sojourn in Johannesburg, Abongile took her claim against her husband to the local magistrates' court. Representing herself, she secured a monthly maintenance order of R800 against him. However, her husband responded with a complaint before the Ntabankulu tribal court. The hand-written counterclaim (which the research team had sight of) literally accused her of 'misbehaviour', including 'selling her husband's cows, 'inviting witchdoctors to their house' (verbatim) and 'going around thereby demonstrating that she is having an affair' (sic). The document called her to answer the complaint, stating that if she failed to do so, the union would be dissolved and the dowry forfeited. Having successfully secured mainte-

nance in the magistrates' court, Abongile was subject to counter-attack via customary law or institutions.

In an unusual act for a largely unschooled woman, Abongile consulted a legal NGO, and engaged a lawyer who appeared before the tribal court and contested their authority to dissolve the marriage. (There was documentary evidence for this episode, too). The matter was referred to the 'larger court' (presumably High Court), although the tribal court seemed to proceed to dissolve the union anyway. From this point it became unclear, and contested, as to whether Abongile was formally divorced or not. What was unambiguous was the mounting spiral of conflict that unfolded.

Abongile's estranged husband proceeded to strip the household of its most sizeable assets – namely its livestock: 17 goats and ten head of cattle. Abongile consulted her lawyer once again, and the sheriff of the court reclaimed the livestock, only to repeatedly have them stolen back by some of the husband's family. The sheriff moved the livestock to an alternate site, from which most of the cattle were subsequently stolen, anyway. (Abongile saw the hand of her husband in this final dispossession.) Of her diminished livestock, Abongile paid the lawyer, the sheriff and the keeper of the cows with a beast each. The sole remaining cow she sold for cash.

At this point (2003–2004) Abongile feared for her safety and moved closer to the road to occupy her hexagonal ('six corner') hut, within earshot of the neighbours. Further incidents of harassment by her abusive husband occurred (he contaminated the water tank, etc.) but she refused to leave the homestead or bow to his threats. Soon thereafter, while she was out, her husband and several of his male kin demolished the hexagonal hut and damaged the 'flat' (rectangular dwelling), breaking the doors and discarding the household contents. Summoned by her children, Abongile was restrained by fellow villagers who feared the enraged husband would harm her if confronted. The police were summoned and arrived the following day, long after her husband had fled in his car. His kin appeared before a magistrate, who reportedly dismissed the case.

Abongile repaired the damaged 'flat', but not the demolished hexagonal hut. However her husband's actions appear to have divided even his own family. One of his brothers, sympathetic to Abongile, allowed her and her children to reside at his homestead, while the 'flat' was being repaired. And for a decade subsequent to this conflict, several members of her husband's family have included Abongile and her children in their traditional ceremonies, whereas the faction who sided with the estranged ex-husband reportedly conduct their own ceremonies.

A return of the research team in 2015 revealed the extent to which Abongile's household had descended into further poverty and vulnerability. Abongile continued to occupy the 'flat' with two older children and three grandchildren. The household essentially subsisted on her state old age grant and three CSGs. However, the household has not managed to retain the three head of cattle, received as lobola (bridewealth) from marrying daughters over the years. And at least one set of animals has been returned, following conflict and a failed marriage.

Of Abongile's resident children, a teen daughter was schooling, but Abongile's eldest son had drop out of school in Grade 9, reportedly for the want of a uniform. He appeared to have descended into depression-like symptoms and substance abuse. Of the three co-resident grandchildren, two were from a daughter who subsequently married and was living in the platinum belt of Rustenburg. But unusually, the third resident grandchild was born to a married daughter (and should, by custom, live with the parents, or alternatively, the paternal grandparents). However, this grandchild was locally resident, because his married mother was caring for a severely disabled sibling, which had compelled her to send the grandchild who was easier to care for back to Abongile.

Prior to receiving her current state old age grant, Abongile received a disability grant, as she had gone blind in the intervening decade. She reportedly had accessed the public health system to address her deteriorating sight for seven years, with little effect. For eighteen months (between 2011–2012) she had made a

last-ditch effort to preserve her sight, by consulting a private doctor in Kokstad. However, the high costs involved: R400 travel costs for her and a sighted helper, a R550 consultation fee, and monthly mediation costing R480 proved ineffective and unsustainably costly from her meagre income. She gave up on the medication after three months.

The final account of one of Abongile's Johannesburg-based daughters illustrated the household's precariousness and vulnerability. Early in 2015, Abongile's daughter fell acutely ill in Johannesburg, and was unable to return to the village on public transport. Abongile sold one of her last cows (R9 500) and paid a private car owner to collect her daughter (for R6 500), who was taken directly to the Mount Frere hospital. A brief reunion with Abongile at the hospital preceded the daughter's death, a day later. Compounding the tragedy was that the daughter had aged beyond the threshold for inclusion on Abongile's funeral policy, and was so incapacitated as not to have her own funeral insurance (a contingency even the poorest normally try to avoid). Exacerbating this shock was that fact that Abongile's still estranged ex-husband (the father of the deceased daughter) refused to 'sign' (viz. pay for) the funeral. This catch-22 would generate mounting bills to store the body, or perhaps the unimaginable ignominiousness of an anonymous pauper's burial. Abongile and a contingent of the daughters and uncles (including some of the husband's brothers) reportedly appealed to a magistrate who instructed (or perhaps asked, implored, etc.) the ex-husband to 'sign' for the funeral.

However, even the modest funeral arrangements were contested. The husband informed the headman of the arrangements but communicated none of these to Abongile. Further conflict was reanimated by the husband's protestation that he could not enter her homestead, as Abongile's (domestic violence) 'protection order' against him was still in force. This whole episode – Abongile's daughter's illness, the costly and futile return to the Eastern Cape, and the subsequently contested funeral arrangements – simply served to underscore the scale of Abongile's vulnerability. Although the household is in receipt of multiple social grants, the impact of Abongile's serious disability (blindness), the unfavourable vocational and marital tra-

jectories of her adult children, the dearth of a household member with a foothold in the formal labour market, and legacy of domestic disunity and conflict has considerably amplified her vulnerability and marginality.

Case study 10: Nothando N.

In 2005, 53-year-old Nothando's neatly white-washed hut in Akulinywa was filled with objects that pointed to her diverse livelihood-making activities. These included a high-visibility vest and orange traffic cone from her employment in a public works project, along with her sangoma (traditional healer) cow tail whisk and white bead necklaces. In the mid-2000s Nothando occupied the homestead with her 16-year-old son and eight-year-old grandson. She also had three adult daughters and a son, one resident elsewhere in the village, the others in Cape Town or Johannesburg.

In terms of her history, Nothando married, but her husband was chronically ill and unemployed, and she was compelled to work as a domestic worker in Port Elizabeth from the late 1970s. In later life, she was 'called by the ancestors' and became a sangoma. She worked as a crafter and sangoma at a tourist facility in the former Bophuthatswana (present day North West province) from the 1980s. After her husband died in the early 1990s, her household became solely reliant on her work. It was, therefore, a blow when her employer closed his doors in 1996 and she was forced to return home. With the household reportedly going hungry, Nothando's then 23-year-old daughter abandoned matric and migrated to Johannesburg to find a job. She soon married, and although her jealous husband forbade her from working, they steadily remitted to Nothando. Their regular remittances only stopped in 2004, when Nothando successfully secured a disability grant (for her arthritis).

A second major source of support (including in-kind contributions of food, etc.) by the mid-2000s was the third of Nothando's married daughters, locally resident in the village. After her husband (viz. Nothando's son-in-law) died in 2001, this support waned, but resumed when Nothando's daughter became romantically involved with a minor local politician. It was soon after, and possibly a consequence of this union that impoverished

Nothando was selected into a public works crew, earning R300 for working twice a week.

This income augmented Nothando's disability grant, but her household had long been extremely poor and vulnerable. Amongst her adult children, schooling was seldom completed and employment invariably precarious. At one point, a 12-year-old granddaughter had been 'married' to a man in Johannesburg. While illegal, Nothando's hesitant explication of this event, located it in the pervasive poverty of her adult daughter's inability to feed her children (viz. Nothando's grandchildren).

However, it is the 2012 death of Nothando, and subsequent trajectory of the rural household's members that is a key focus here. Much of the subsequent narrative was obtained from interviews with others, including Nothando's sister-in-law, Veronica. (Nothando and Veronica were the wives of two brothers, now deceased.)

Nothando fell seriously ill with cancer at the end of 2011, and after brief stints in hospital was discharged to return home with a poor prognosis. Although one of Nothando's adult daughters remitted money for her to continue to visit the doctor, neither she nor her siblings returned to the village to care for their mother. Instead, as Nothando ailed, Veronica moved into the house to tend to her (cooking, bathing her, and doing her laundry). As Veronica had two grandchildren of her own (aged two and ten years), all three moved into Nothando's home for four months (February to May 2012). Nothando was reportedly reluctant to have her adult children nurse her, and Veronica also made (an unclear) reference to a cultural prohibition against children looking after their terminally ill parents.

Since Nothando's death in May 2012, the trajectory of her household has been as follows. Of the son and grandson living with Nothando a decade earlier, her youngest son (now 26 years old) migrated to Johannesburg, where he has been engaging in erratic, casual work. The sole continuous member of the household, therefore, was the 18-year-old grandson

(eight years old when Nothando was interviewed in 2005). His 39-year-old brother, who returned to the village after a long sojourn in Johannesburg, joined him at Nothando's rural homestead.

The 39-year-old had, for approximately nine years (since 2003), lived with an uncle in Johannesburg. His return to the village soon after Nothando's death was precipitated by the uncle's death, and the dissolution of the Johannesburg household. The returnee is unmarried, and (unusually) has no children of his own (Veronica jested that no women has yet accused him of paternity). The two unattached men, an uncle and his nephew, therefore represent the only locally remaining members of the late Nothando's reconstituted household. In the absence of eligibility for any social grant, they essentially survive on three distinct resource streams.

The first are small remittances from their married sister (viz. Nothando's daughter) in Johannesburg, who had previously supported Nothando. The second is erratic casual employment in the village undertaken by the 39-year-old, most recently for a local contractor installing electricity poles. The third is in-kind contributions through their relationship with Veronica, who receives a state old age grant. The men routinely eat lunch at Veronica's home, where there are three co-resident young grandchildren, but no adult male members. In response to detailed questioning, Veronica explained that Nothando's sons never share their rare cash windfalls with her – and neither does she even strongly expect them to. Instead, if she presses them, they dutifully reciprocate by doing chores for her (fencing, cleaning her yard, etc.). Veronica clarified, with an air of resignation that the two men sometimes drank too much. But she qualified this by pointing out that they are fundamentally helpful and 'well behaved' (her term). She gave a clear impression that her continued sense of obligation to them, and the circuits of social reciprocity, flowed from her long allegiance to the now deceased Nothando.



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