



UNIVERSITY OF NATAL DURBAN

**BLACK LIFE-STYLES
IN
WHITE AGRICULTURE**

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DEVELOPMENT STUDIES UNIT

Centre for Applied Social Sciences

WORKING PAPER NO. 14

BLACK LIFE-STYLES IN WHITE AGRICULTURE

**A socio-economic study of black workers in commercial
agriculture in two areas of Natal**

by

Elisabeth Ardington

Working Paper No. 14

Development Studies Unit
University of Natal
Durban

1985

DEVELOPMENT STUDIES UNIT

The Development Studies Unit is a multi-disciplinary unit within the Centre for Applied Social Sciences at the University of Natal in Durban. The Development Studies Unit was established at the beginning of 1982 with the purpose of providing a focus for research into the problems of developing areas, with a view to assisting the University to play a meaningful role in the upgrading of the quality of life in the poorer areas surrounding it.

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ISBN 0-86980-477-4

The research for this paper was conducted as part of the Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in South Africa.

"MULTICOPY" Durban

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This paper deals with the findings of one of a group of three studies of rural areas in Natal/KwaZulu. Each paper investigates a very different environment and it is intended that if read together they would describe the situation of a large percentage of blacks in rural Natal/KwaZulu. The first area was chosen to represent a traditional rural area,¹ the second a rural area in which industrial development had taken place² and the third commercial farms. Where reference is made to data obtained in the two earlier studies they are referred to as (1) or (2) respectively and the relevant page is cited.

This study which refers to commercial farms is based on data collected from farms on the north coast and in the midlands of Natal. It was decided that because conditions differ significantly between the coastal areas, where most farms are sugar-based, and the midlands, where mixed farming (which however does not include sugar) predominates, data should be collected in both areas in order to obtain a more representative picture of the conditions on commercial farms. Time constraints prevented any investigations being undertaken in

-
1. The area chosen was in the magisterial district of Nkandla and the results of the survey are contained in the paper "Poverty and Development in Rural KwaZulu".
 2. The area studied was Sundumbili - the dormitory area for the Isithebe Industrial area. The study is reported in "Decentralized Industry, Poverty and Development."

northern Natal, where, however, studies have been undertaken by other researchers. Where the data obtained from the two different farming areas surveyed indicates significant differences between them, statistics etc. are given separately for the two areas. Elsewhere the reference will be to the total sample.

2.0 Method of Survey

The majority of the data referred in this survey was obtained from the answers received in response to structured questionnaires administered to 138¹ farm workers in the two areas surveyed (98 on the coast and 40 in the midlands). The questions related not only to the farm workers themselves but also to all members of their households. Thus information relating to 612 individuals on 30 farms was obtained.

It must be pointed out that the sample was not scientifically selected. Although attempts were made to include respondents from farms of different sizes, farms conducting different operations, farms which had been in the same hands for many years and farms that had not, farms where the owner was financially secure and farms where he was not, in the final analysis one could only interview persons on those farms where the farmer permitted the survey to be conducted. With regard to the selection of farm workers to be interviewed, attempts were made to secure a representative cross section of the labour force with regard to sex, age, job description, salary, length of service, etc.. In retrospect it is clear that women were under-represented in

1. 114 were males and 24 were females.

the sample, with only seventeen percent of the respondents being women, whereas 34 percent of wage employees about whom information was obtained were women. However a significant number of the latter were domestic servants so that as a sample of agricultural labour women are not as under-represented as might initially appear to be the case. The farmers stated that approximately one third of their labour force was female.

The intention was to interview 5 workers on each farm - however in some cases there was insufficient time to complete all five interviews and some questionnaires were rejected as being incomplete or incomprehensible. As a result an average of 4.6 interviews per farm were conducted. On some farms interviewees were randomly selected, however in general the farmer suggested individuals so that some bias is present even if the person interviewed was one of the particular category of employee requested. On most farms representatives of the highest and lowest paid workers were interviewed but those in between were possibly weighted in various directions. At best, therefore, the data in this survey should be viewed as indicators rather than a comprehensive representation of conditions. Nevertheless it is interesting that the salaries of the 136 workers who were actually interviewed were very similar to those of the 238 employed persons about whom information was obtained in the survey. The average salary of the women interviewed was 7 per cent higher than the average for the total female sample and that of the men 9 per cent higher than the average for the total male sample.

In addition to interviewing the farm workers, the owner or manager of

each farm where interviews took place was also interviewed and asked questions similar to those put to the workers. The number of such interviews conducted was too small to be statistically significant but it was considered that it would nevertheless be worthwhile to collect a number of statements on working conditions from a management viewpoint against which those of the workers could be compared.

It was hoped that the Natal Agricultural Union would give its official support to this survey but it declined to do so. It is unfortunate that the NAU was not able to support an investigation into the quality of life of Blacks on farms conducted by one of the universities of its province. Access to farmers would no doubt have been easier with NAU introductions and the findings of the survey would have found greater acceptability if the survey had been approved by the NAU. Accurate information on the conditions of farm workers and their dependents is generally unavailable and if serious and successful planning is to be undertaken to improve the conditions of these people such information is essential. It can only be in the farmers' interest for the facts to be known and for the position of farm workers to be understood. Similarly it can only be in the farmers' interest for his own position as employer, as compared with other types of employer, to be known and understood. Currently the government does not accept responsibility for the provision of facilities for farm workers and their dependents on the same basis as it does for other workers. There are two possible outcomes of this policy - either farm workers' access to the social amenities normally supplied by government will be worse than that of any other group of persons, or, because the burden for the

provision of any facilities that may be provided falls upon the farmer, his costs will be greatly increased, which in turn will lead either to increased food costs or a cut back in employment. Quite apart from any subsidies which might lead to increased employment on farms, a simple reduction in the costs of employment (through government acceptance of the responsibility for providing health, educational, recreational and training facilities, and the basic amenities of water, roads, transport, housing and electricity on the same basis as for any other class of citizen) would ensure that agricultural employment did not continue its dramatic decline and might even rise.

Unless and until comprehensive information on the conditions on farms is available, such causes cannot be effectively advanced.

It should be pointed out that at present it is generally not possible for farm labourers themselves to take any steps towards the provision of facilities either on or near the farms on which they work. Even where the farm is close to a village where facilities such as schools, churches, shops, sports fields and even housing could be provided for all farm labourers in the district, this is usually not possible as most such villages are reserved for occupation by whites only. Although in all rural areas blacks constitute the majority of the population access to property whether urban or rural is limited to those who own the farms who are of course almost always white.

The opening of existing farm villages to all the local population, or

the development of new ones where none exist,¹ would enable the government to provide facilities for blacks in these villages on the same basis as they do elsewhere in the country. It would enable blacks to develop facilities for themselves; to obtain housing which was not tied to a particular employer (which would greatly increase their job mobility and provide security for their old age) and to create employment opportunities for themselves and their families through the supplying of services and the development of small businesses.

As long as farmworkers remain without political or economic rights they will be unable to influence the legislature or their employers to effect any changes which might improve their position. Currently the white parliament alone has legislative powers in this area. It is unlikely that the average white voter or even individual farmers would motivate any changes in the law as it relates to farm labour. It is possible however that organised agriculture might, as a consequence of a re-evaluation of the interests of farmers, in the future put pressure upon the government to take farm labour out of its special category and to protect and provide for farm workers and their dependents, as far as is possible, in the same way as they do for all other persons. It is in rural areas that the "group areas" philosophy is seen at its most illogical. Here where the population is 95 percent black, land and public facilities are restricted to use by whites. Apart from the inherent inequality and immorality of such a policy the information gathered by this survey clearly documents its practical deficiencies.

1. Monica Wilson: Villages for farm workers? Farm Labour in South Africa

CHAPTER TWO

DEMOGRAPHY

One hundred and thirty eight farm workers were interviewed and answered questions from a structured questionnaire which related to themselves and all other members of their household on the farm. Questions were also asked concerning the number and nature of their dependents who were resident elsewhere. In this way information on 612 individuals who had 449 dependents elsewhere was collected.

1.0 Origins and Stability of the Farm Workers

Of those interviewed, 14,5 percent were born on the farm on which they were then working. This was true of far more midland (30 percent) than coastal (8,2 percent) workers. Of those not born on the farm the vast majority had been born in a nearby part of KwaZulu or on another farm. However 21,4 percent of coastal workers were born in the Transkei.

Just as many more midland than coastal workers were born where they were currently working, so the rate of turnover in the midlands was far lower than that on the coast. We found that in the midlands only 10 percent of workers had been in their current job for 2 years or less, whereas this was true of 29 percent of those on the coast.

Thirty percent of all interviewed had been living and working where they were currently for 10 years or more and adding these to those born on the farm, we found that 43 percent (or 60 percent of the midlands workforce and 37,8 percent of the coastal workforce) had been in the same job for 10 years. A third of those interviewed had never worked anywhere else. The future stability of the workforce was indicated by the fact that 29 percent said they intended staying on the farm on which they were currently living forever (50 percent of those in the midlands) and 31 percent said they would stay there until retirement. Thus 60 percent had no intention of interrupting their service.

One third of respondents claimed that the house in which they were living was their real and only home - three times as many midlands as coastal workers made this claim. Where workers had another home, it tended to be in a nearby area of KwaZulu, with the exception of the 23.5 percent of coastal workers whose other home was in the Transkei.

Most (77 percent) of those who said they had another home were not the head of that other home and only half the other houses had land and one third cattle attached to them. Thus all of those who claimed another home may not have been free to choose to live there on a permanent basis and certainly the opportunities for making a living there would have been very restricted.

The number of visits paid annually to this other home and the regularity with which money was remitted there are some indication of

the workers relationship with that other home. Of those claiming another home approximately a third returned there monthly, a third between 2 and 6 times per annum and a third only once a year. The length of time spent at the other home varied tremendously, with one third of those who returned home spending less than 21 days in a year (or what might be considered annual leave) at their other home. Conversely, 43 percent spent more than 31 days (the longest annual leave any worker was likely to receive) at their other home and were therefore in the habit of breaking their service for longer or shorter periods while they returned to their "other home".

Eighty three percent of those with another home remitted money there. Over half remitted money monthly.

Despite their personal records of stability, very few respondents (9,4 percent) thought their children would work on farms. Sixty percent thought they would live and work in urban areas. Reality was in fact rather different, as was indicated by the fact that one third of the children of respondents who had already left home were working on farms and another third in service industries, chiefly as domestics in rural areas.

The apparent stability of the labour force is not of course entirely voluntary. Those who have "other homes" in a homeland are most probably restricted to a choice of returning to that homeland or finding another job in agriculture and those who have no other home in reality probably have no choice at all unless they have a particular skill which might result in another farmer's offering them a job plus

equivalent or better perks (housing, schooling etc.) than they currently receive. Influx control regulations prevent all such workers from looking for employment anywhere other than in agriculture and those who are on contract cannot legally look for alternate employment, even in agriculture, during the life of the contract. On the termination of the contract they would of course have no right to be in the area any longer and would be required to return to the labour office in their "homeland" to request permission to seek work. When and where such permission is granted is at the discretion of the labour officer.

2.0 Household Structure

2.1 General Structure

Three quarters of those interviewed lived in a family situation on the farm on which they worked, 23 percent lived on their own and 2 percent commuted daily from their family home onto the farm. In the midlands 88 percent lived as a family and there were no commuters.

Thirty nine percent of all the individuals surveyed were married, widowed or separated and the balance single. There were 119 married men whose ages ranged from 19 to 79. They represented 82 percent of the men over 19 years of age. A similar percentage (81 percent) of women of this age were married.

Thirteen percent of married persons were parties to polygamous unions.

The incidence of polygamy was however far higher (19 percent)¹ on the coast than in the midlands (4 percent).

Only 20 percent of respondents who had husbands, wives or children did not have at least some of their nuclear family living with them on the farm. Factors determining the presence or absence of the nuclear family were, firstly, whether in fact the respondent had another home where the family could live and, secondly, whether there was a need to leave some family at that other home to care for it. Only 6 percent of respondents said their nuclear family was not with them because housing was not provided or because the local schools were inadequate. However, only half of those interviewed had their entire nuclear family with them and 89 percent had dependents elsewhere.

No persons unrelated to the head of the household in which they were resident were enumerated and only 18 percent of households had a member who was not part of the nuclear family.

A commonly expressed view is that urban parents frequently "dump" their children, particularly those born out of wedlock, with grandparents resident on farms. Fifteen percent of the children surveyed had parents who were not married and lived in a home from which one or both of their parents was permanently absent. Ten percent of all households surveyed contained such children. Some of

1. Coastal polygamy is possibly overstated in that some of the "second wives" encountered in the survey were probably not wives in the true sense but women who only intended staying with the man while he was working on a particular farm.

these children's parents intended marrying at a later date and they, therefore, should not be considered illegitimate. The data however does not confirm the practice of dumping such children on farm grandparents as similar surveys conducted in Nkandla and Sundumbili¹ show a far higher evidence of households containing such children - 57 and 45 percent respectively.

We have seen that a quarter of those interviewed did not live in a household on the farm either because they were unmarried, because they commuted or because although married their families had not accompanied them to the farm. Almost all (96 percent) of the households, were headed by married men. As is to be expected in a situation where male labour is more highly prized than female labour, there were very few female headed households. With one exception all household heads were employed.

Generally the farm households were smaller and their structure simpler than the usual extended family found in either a rural or an urban Zulu household.

Sixty-four percent of those interviewed had dependents (persons under the age of 15 or over the age of 60) living with them - an average of 3,1 per household. In addition 30 percent of women between the ages of 15 and 60 were solely involved in domestic duties and were therefore dependent on their spouses for support. If one adds to the membership of these relatively simple and small households the dependents that 89 percent of the respondents claimed to have elsewhere, the number of

1. ((1: page 14; 2: page 22))

dependents per household rises to 4,8. (The 612 persons surveyed had 449 dependents elsewhere.)

It is important to bear this in mind as these people are not distant relations with some weak claim upon the farm worker. 43 percent of respondents had dependent children elsewhere and 23 percent wives. Despite the relative stability of the agricultural labour force and despite the general availability of accommodation etc., these significant numbers have chosen not to, or have not been allowed to, have these members of their nuclear families on the farm with them. These people should not be forgotten when consideration is given to the social requirements (schooling, health, etc.) of agricultural labour and their families. Because of the prevalence (89 percent) of dependents elsewhere and because so many (60 percent on the coast and 45 percent in the midlands) send money to these dependents, household size cannot be considered a reflection of family size and nor can it be used to calculate the number of dependents per worker.

2.2 Household Size

The average household surveyed contained 4,4 persons. Midlands households averaged 6,9 persons - more than twice the size of coastal households (3,4). This we have seen is not a reflection of family size as midlands households averaged only 2,1 dependents elsewhere, and 42,5 percent of them contained members who were not part of the nuclear family.

Table 1
Household Size

Size	Relative Frequency (PCT)			Cumulative Frequency (PCT)		
	Total	Coastal	Midlands	Total	Coastal	Midlands
1	24,6	29,6	12,5	24,6	29,6	12,5
2	11,6	12,2	10,0	36,2	41,8	22,5
3	12,3	16,3	2,5	48,5	58,2	25,0
4	9,4	10,2	7,5	57,9	68,4	32,5
5	13,0	15,3	7,5	70,9	83,7	40,0
6	6,5	5,1	10,0	77,4	88,8	50,0
7	5,8	4,1	10,0	83,2	92,9	60,0
8	5,8	4,1	10,0	89,0	96,9	70,0
9	4,3	2,0	10,0	93,3	99,0	80,0
12	2,2	1,0	5,0	95,5	100,0	85,0
13	,7		2,5	96,2		87,5
14	,7		2,5	96,9		90,0
15	,7		2,5	97,6		92,5
16	2,2		7,5	100,0		100,0
N =	138	98	40	138	98	40

2.3 Age and Sex

Despite the high numbers of absent dependents and the unusually structured and small households, the ages and sexes of those surveyed were remarkably similar to those of the total Zulu population.

The average age of the 612 individuals for whom data was collected was 23 and 53,6 percent were under the age of 20. 52,4 percent were female and 47,6 percent male.

Table 2

Age and Sex Compared with that of total¹ Zulu Population²

	All Zulus	Survey
Male/Female Ratio	48,5 : 51,5	47,6 : 52,4
Percentage Population under 20	54,8	53,6

A comparison of age and sex breakdowns for the coast and the midlands reflects the greater prevalence of complete families in the midlands compared with the coast, where many workers are accompanied by none or only some of their nuclear families. Thus on the coast 48,3 percent were under the age of 20 whereas 59,6 percent of those in the midlands were. On the coast only 25 percent of those over the age of 44 were female whereas in the midlands 54 percent were. (According to the 1980 Census 56,75 percent of Zulus over the age of 54 were female). Whether this was because women over the age of 44 are not offered employment on farms or because older wives and widows tend to stay "at the other home", was not established.

1. Includes Zulus in RSA and KwaZulu.
2. Figures obtained from 1980 Census.

Table 3
Age and Sex

	Percentage in Category	Cumulative Percentage	Female Percentage of Age Group
0 - 4	14,4	14,4	55,7
5 - 9	16,2	30,6	49,0
10 - 14	11,9	42,5	57,5
15 - 19	11,1	53,6	60,3
20 - 24	8,3	61,9	53,8
25 - 29	6,2	68,1	60,5
30 - 34	5,6	73,7	60,0
35 - 39	6,5	80,2	52,5
40 - 49	9,9	90,1	42,6
50 - 59	5,6	95,7	38,2
60+	4,3	100,00	37,0
N = 616			52,4

With the exception of the age categories 25-29 and 30-34, there were not sufficient numbers of out-migrants among those surveyed for their absence to affect the sex ratios in any age group significantly.

As would be expected, a lower percentage of persons on the farms are in the older age groups than is the case nationally, and the position is very different from that of the remote rural areas to which (at the end of their working lives) many old people both from farms and urban areas, either choose to return or are forced to do so by law. Thus in Nkandla¹ 8,8 percent of the population was 60 or older whereas on the farms only 4,4 percent of the population was. Again there were proportionately more old people in the midlands (5,8 percent) than on the coast (3,3 percent)

1. (1: page 18)

2.4 Occupational Breakdown

Table 4
Occupations of Surveyed Population

	Midlands	Coastal	Total
Pre-school	18,8	19,8	19,3
Scholars	33,8	14,7	23,4
7-16 not at school	1,1	6,2	3,9
Employed	32,5	42,9	38,1
Self-employed		,3	,2
Casual employment	4,0	2,7	3,2
Domestic duties	5,8	11,0	8,6
Unemployed	,4	,3	,3
Not working	,4	1,5	1,2
Retired	3,2	,6	1,8
N =	277	335	612

Table 4 above places all individuals surveyed into an occupational category. By separating those surveyed on the coast from those in the midlands, the differences between the household structures in the two areas are made apparent. There were more than five times as many retired people in the midlands as on the coast (We will see later that there were 7 times as many people of pensionable age). Although a similar percentage of the population in both areas was of pre-school age, twice as large a percentage was at school in the midlands as on the coast. There were far larger numbers on the coast of schoolgoing age¹ who were not at school but even taking this into account, the

1. Persons of "school-going age" are considered to be those between the ages of 7 and 16 as black schools do not normally admit pupils under the age of 7 and few persons of 17 are still at school. In this survey 82 percent of scholars fell into this age group.

percentage of the population between the ages of 7 and 16 is unusually low, which most probably indicates that household members in this age group have left the farms in order to get an education elsewhere or, had never accompanied their migrant worker parent(s) onto the farm. (Nationally 29,0 percent of the Zulu population is between the ages of 5 and 14 whereas on the coast only 24,7 percent are. 32,1 percent of those surveyed in the midlands were between that ages of 5 and 14.) The percentage of those surveyed who were employed was high, as would be expected where people live "on the job" and where very often employment for the worker's spouse is also available. For the same reasons, very few of those surveyed were unemployed, not working or retired.

The occupations given in Table 4 are all full time occupations - there were those who got casual employment from time to time and those who ran small businesses on a part time basis - but in each case only 2 percent of the population participated in these activities.

2.5 Employment

Only one of the households included in the survey had no one in employment. That household consisted of two pensioners who obtained casual employment from time to time but had no regular income apart from their pensions. Households averaged 1,7 persons in employment. In addition to those in regular wage employment 11 percent of the households contained persons who obtained casual employment and 9 percent persons who were employed elsewhere as out-migrants. Unemployment levels were very low - 0,3 percent of those surveyed described themselves as unemployed and 1,0 percent as not working at

the time of survey. A consequence of high levels of employment and the virtual absence of unemployment was a low level of small business activity. Few persons resorted to this type of activity to supplement their incomes. This is of course also a consequence of the scattered settlement patterns which don't lend themselves to informal sector activity. The most common small business activity was the sale of cattle by some of those workers who were allowed to keep them. A few persons sold vegetables or handcraft.

2.6 Migrancy

Twenty members of the households surveyed (3,2 percent of the surveyed population) migrated off the farms to find employment. The percentage in the midlands (4,0 percent) was higher than on the coast (2,7 percent) which is no doubt a consequence of the more stable and complete family situation in the midlands where grown up children, unable or unwilling to find employment on the farm, migrate from it.

The average age of those who migrated off the farms from the surveyed households was 26 and their ages ranged from 18 to 39. Fifty percent were under 23 years of age. The vast majority (85 percent) were males although there were more females (56,7 percent) than males surveyed between the ages of 18 and 39. On the whole they were slightly better educated than all surveyed in that age group. Only 30 percent, as opposed to 39,7 percent, had had no education and on average they had spent 3,9 years at school whereas the average for the entire 18 - 39 age group surveyed was 3,0 years. It is interesting that those with

little or no education tended to remit the largest amounts to their families at home.

Thirty five percent of the migrants were married and one was head of his household.

Half the migrants were employed in agriculture so that migrancy is not necessarily a means of escape from the agricultural sector or even a route to better employment opportunities as evidenced by the fact that over 50 percent of migrants were in unskilled jobs.

There were three people who daily left the farm on which they were living to work elsewhere.

2.7 Pensions

Another reflection of the difference in household structure between the midlands and the coast is provided by the number of pensioners present in the two areas.

Table 5
Pensioners

	Midlands	Coast	Total
Percentage Household with pensioner	27,5	2,0	9,4
Percentage population pensionable	5,0	,9	2,8
Percentage population with pension	4,3	,6	2,3

Neither numerically nor in terms of contribution to household income were pensioners a significant group. The percentage of the surveyed community which was pensionable (2,8 percent) was significantly lower than that of KwaZulu¹ (4,85 percent) and also lower than that of Natal's black population (3,77 percent) so that clearly some ex-workers of pensionable age have left the farms and are living elsewhere. Less than 20 percent of those interviewed considered they would retire on the farm on which they were working - the majority stating that they would return "home" or to their family, or that if they had no home they would build one to which to retire.

Respondents appeared very uncertain about the age at which they would retire. Although over 90 percent stated they would receive some sort of pension (mostly a government pension), 38 percent had no idea when they would retire and 25 percent gave an age older than that at which they would become eligible for a government pension. (Respondents in a similar survey conducted amongst industrial workers had a clear concept of retirement age, which was closely linked to becoming pensionable).¹

Pensions at the time of survey were R55 per month. A few respondents complained of the difficulties associated with establishing a pension applicant's age and others of difficulties resulting from the distances to be travelled to the pension office, but apart from these no problems were reported.

1. 1980 Census.

Most pensioners had to travel considerable distances to collect their pensions - over two thirds of those interviewed were more than one and a half hours walk from the nearest collection point. A quarter of the respondents reported that employers provided transport on pension day but the balance had to find their own way by bus, taxi, private car or foot. Some employers also provided transport to the magistrate's court for the purpose of making an application. Generally, where the employer was prepared to assist both with transport and advice, few problems with either the application for, or receipt of, a pension were experienced.

Black pensioners resident on farms in the Republic of South Africa should receive their pensions from Pretoria. However as in many cases such pensioners are closer to pension paypoints in KwaZulu than they are to the office (or any of the paypoints) of the commissioner of the district in which the farm is situated, and indeed in some magisterial districts in the Republic of South Africa there is no commissioner at all, they frequently collect their pensions in KwaZulu, despite the fact that this is illegal and the fact that KwaZulu is not provided by Pretoria with the funds with which to pay them. Where there is no commissioner's office but a KwaZulu paypoint is nearby this is a practical solution but it is also a good illustration of the general absence of public amenities for black farm workers. Where they legally live and work there may be nowhere for them to register births and deaths, attend school, obtain medical attention, receive a pension etc.

1. (2: page 24)

CHAPTER THREE

ADULT OCCUPATIONS

1.0 Introduction

Throughout this section, which deals with the occupations of all the adults surveyed, we refer only to persons between the ages of 14 and 60. 8,2 percent of this group are in fact scholars but as some are employed as young as 11 and some scholars are as old as 19, a degree of overlap between scholars and others is inevitable.

Table 6 below gives a breakdown of occupations for the 15 - 59 age groups by sex and area.

The occupations referred to below are full time occupations. In addition 4 percent obtained casual employment from time to time and 4 percent were involved in small business activities on a part-time basis.

Table 6
Occupations of 15 - 59 Age Group

Occupation	Total	Midlands	Coastal	All Males	All Females
Scholar	8,2	14,5	4,1	6,5	9,8
Not at school	,6		1,0	,6	,6
Domestic duties	15,9	12,2	18,3		30,0
Employed	66,5	64,1	68,0	90,4	45,0
Small Business	,3		,5		,6
Casual Earnings	5,5	6,9	4,6	,6	9,8
On Holiday	,3		,5	,6	
Unemployed	,6	,8	,5		1,2
Not working	1,8	,8	2,5	1,3	2,4
Retired	,3	,8			,6
N =	328	131	197	155	173

2.0 Occupations of the Elderly

Of those aged 60 or older, 55,6 were still employed and 7,4 percent obtained casual employment from time to time.

3.0 Small Business Activity

Levels of small business activity were very low. Only one person was involved in such an activity on a full-time basis and 4,3 percent of the adult population on a part-time basis. One third of such activity consisted of the occasional sale of an animal which only 17 percent of respondents were allowed to keep. Two factors contribute to the low levels of informal sector activity - the relatively plentiful opportunities for wage employment of males and females and the scattered nature of the population which restricts opportunities for small business activity. It is interesting that the most common small business activity should be cattle sales, when the incidence of cattle holding is so much lower than that in the two areas¹ where similar surveys were conducted and where cattle sales were negligible or non-existent.

Most farmers who allow their employees to keep cattle place a limit upon the number of cattle an employee may hold. Most employees' cattle are kept, fed, dipped and inoculated with the employer's cattle. They also generally have access to the employer's bull. As a result

1. (1: page 94; 2: page 62)

fertility rates tend to be higher than in black rural areas. Where there is a limit on the number of cattle an employee may keep, in order to keep within his limit he will be forced to sell or slaughter cattle as fast as calves are born. A number of employers acted as agents for their employees and sold animals on their behalf. Over the years a practice of cattle selling has developed so that today a turnover far in excess of that in black rural areas is achieved. Employees have been forced to become sellers and in time have come to rely upon cattle sales for some of their income. Although this is a significant source of income to a few individuals, overall it is not, as few are allowed cattle and fewer still actually have them. There is moreover a trend on the part of employers, to restrict the numbers a worker may hold even further and in many cases to bar cattleholding altogether.

4.0 Casual Earnings

Opportunities for casual employment exist on most farms. Wives and scholars are usually the people who avail themselves of these opportunities. However as full time employment levels are high casual earnings are not as significant as might be expected. See Table 6.

5.0 Unemployment

Unemployment levels were very low - there were in fact no unemployed men. Clearly where the head of the house was unemployed or even

between jobs the family would be unlikely to be on the farm. 0,6 percent of those between the ages of 14 and 60 were unemployed and even if one includes all those "not working" only 2,5 percent of males and females of these ages could be termed "unemployed".

When asked whether all members of their family could find employment on the farm 75 percent of coastal workers replied in the affirmative (with an additional 11 percent saying 'sometimes') as did 37,5 percent of midlands workers (with an additional 12,5 percent 'sometimes').

Although the recorded levels of unemployment were low a number of farmers expressed concern about their ability to employ all their employees' children and for this reason were concerned that these children should get an education that would enable them to obtain employment in towns. There is, of course, no guarantee that if they were to obtain such employment, they would be granted permission to work in town.

6.0 Wage employment

6.1 Wage earners

Two hundred and thirty six people or 66,6 percent of the adults surveyed (90,4 percent of the men and 45,0 percent of the women) were in wage employment. Ten percent of these were migrants working elsewhere than on the surveyed farms. Figure 3, giving sources of income, shows wages as providing 64,5 percent of total household income. To this figure a further 24,7 percent representing wages in

kind should be added in order to get a more accurate representation of the value of employment to the people surveyed. Migrants' remittances constitute 3,6 percent of household income.

Eighty eight percent of those employed were in the agricultural sector. 7 percent were in domestic service. There were a few migrants in the mining, industrial, construction, commerce and professional sectors but 42 percent of migrants were employed in agriculture elsewhere.

Seventy percent of all those employed were unskilled. There was one professional, one artisan and one foreman among those interviewed.

The average age of those employed was 37 and workers' ages ranged from 11 to 75. 57 percent were under 40 and 93 under 60 years of age. Two thirds were males and one third female. On average those in employment had had two years of education but 56,3 percent had had no education. None had gone beyond standard 8 and only 9,8 percent had gone beyond standard 4.

Comparing the migrants with all the wage earners, one finds that the migrants were much younger (average age 26), better educated (only 30 percent had no education and on average they had spent 3,9 years at school) and more predominantly male (85 percent). Unfortunately there was inadequate information to allow for a comparison of migrants' and homebased employees' salaries.

6.2 Skills

29 percent of agricultural workers had some skill - whether as tractor driver (13 percent), induna (7 percent), welder, mechanic, bricklayer, milking machine operator, artificial inseminator, etc. In general workers seemed ignorant of the possibilities for improving their position through training and equally ignorant of how to obtain such training. 13 per cent, who were aware of such opportunities, said they could not afford the training. 21 per cent of those interviewed had been taught some skill - ranging from driving to artificially inseminating.

6.3 Salaries

The average annual cash salary earned by all those in employment was R984,90, whereas that of all those in agriculture was R1011,36 - clearly the presence of domestic workers in the overall group has the effect of lowering salaries.

Within agricultural employment, the average annual unskilled cash wage was R767,33 and the average skilled cash wage R1 563.10. The variation in salaries was enormous with monthly salaries varying from R20 to R380. Salaries appeared to vary little between the coast and the midlands.

Table 7

Agricultural Annual Salaries (cash only)

R Range	Percentage in category	Cumulative Percentage
210- 394	16,0	16,0
420- 600	17,5	33,5
617- 888	17,0	50,5
906-1170	15,5	66,0
1200-1490	18,5	84,5
1500-2364	11,2	95,7
2440-4860	4,3	100,0

N = 196

There is no real correlation between age and the salary earned as Figure I below indicates. Salaries remain remarkably constant between the ages of 20 and 65. Likewise there appears to be no real correlation between education and salaries. (Figure 2).

Sex, however, is an important determinant of salary with average annual male earnings (R1 246,70) being two and a half times that of females. (R505)

Figure 1: Salaries and Age

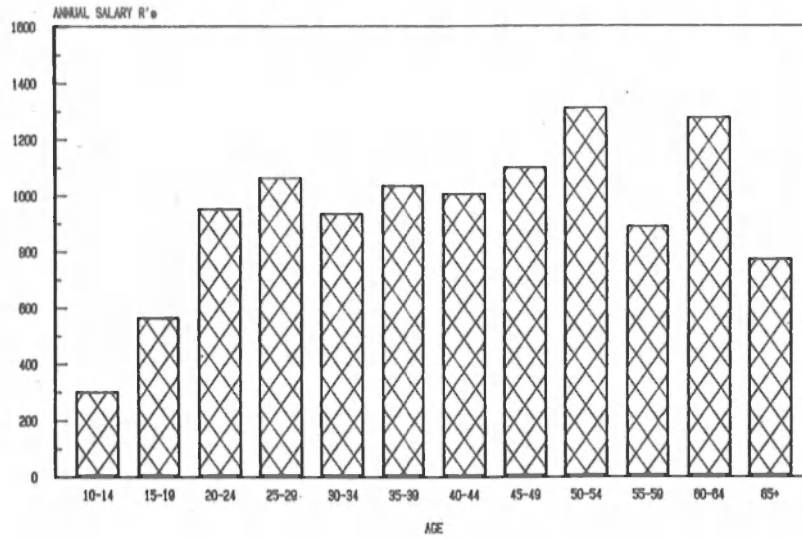
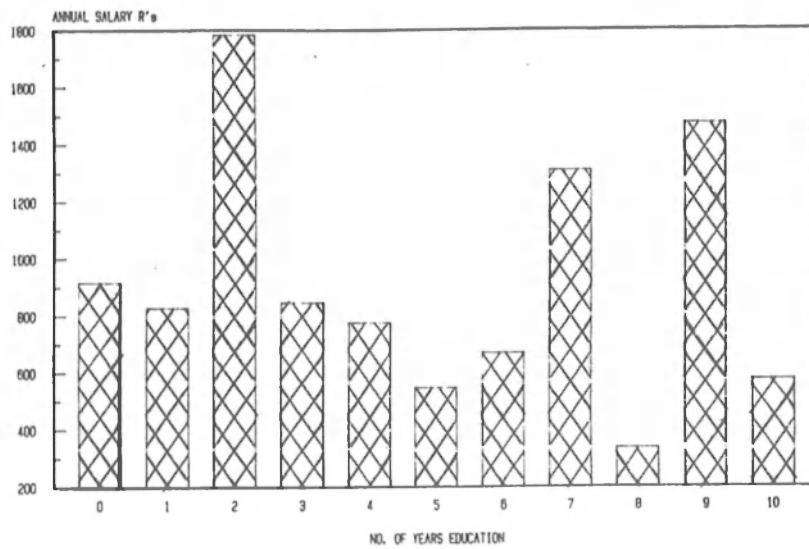


Figure 2: Salaries and Education



Respondents were asked to give, in addition to their current salaries, those that they received three and ten years ago. Whereas the average current monthly salary was R91,16, that for three years ago was R67,65 and ten years ago R40,15. Adjusting these figures by using the Consumer Price Index (with 1975 as the base year) it is apparent that real salaries have fallen significantly over the last 10 years.

Table 8(a)

Monthly Salaries in 1975 Terms (Workers)

	Today	3 Years Ago	10 Years Ago
Median Salary	29,28	30,84	38,02
Mean Salary	33,36	38,28	50,88

The farmers were asked to give the average salary paid to a skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled worker today and to give equivalent salaries for three and ten years ago. If one similarly relates the figures they gave to the consumer price index with 1975 as the base year, it appears that salaries have improved slightly over the ten year period. Whereas all farmers gave information concerning current salaries, only 50 percent gave information concerning the salaries they paid ten years ago. The majority of farmers who supplied figures from 10 years ago did so by reference to wage books so that these figures are reasonably accurate for the farmers concerned.

Table 8(b)
Monthly Salaries (Farmers)

		Skilled		Semi-Skilled		Unskilled	
		Actual	1975 Terms	Actual	1975 Terms	Actual	1975 Terms
Today	Mean	160,48	58,74	111,13	41,40	48,96	17,92
	Median	140,00	51,24	110,00	40,26	47,00	17,20
10 Years Ago	Mean	41,00	51,96	26,00	32,95	13,00	16,47
	Median	40,00	50,69	25,00	31,68	12,00	15,20

The information on salary movements over the last ten years supplied by the farmworkers and that supplied by the farmers reflect unacceptably large discrepancies although the information supplied by both parties on current wages corresponds fairly closely. It is possible that the information supplied by labour on wage conditions 10 years ago is not as reliable as that obtained from the farmers who took their information from written records. However those farmers (50 percent) who provided information on salaries 10 years ago tended to be the more progressive farmers who one would naturally expect to be those who would have attempted to ensure that their salaries kept pace with inflation.

The truth therefore probably lies somewhere between the two sets of information given which means that farm labourers' incomes have fallen slightly in real terms over the last ten years.

6.4 Employment Benefits

Respondents were asked what benefits they received other than cash wages. They were given the opportunity to provide a spontaneous answer and thereafter were questioned about the provision of a list of specific benefits.

70,35 percent of respondents spontaneously mentioned rations, 39,1 percent the provision of water and 33,3 percent the provision of medical attention. The provision of housing, fuel, sewerage, clothing, transport and land and permission to keep small stock were mentioned by less than a quarter of the respondents and the provision of schooling, and the right to have cattle by less than 10 percent.

Certain differences were observed between the responses of those in the midlands and those on the coast and these spontaneous mentions to a large extent reflect the levels at which the benefits were provided. Thus whereas 32,5 percent of those in the midlands mentioned access to land, only 9,2 percent on the coast did, and 17,5 percent in the midlands referred to the right to hold cattle, whereas none on the coast did. Conversely 46,9 percent of coastal workers referred to the provision of water while only 20 percent of midlands workers did. 27,6 percent on the coast referred to houses while only 15 percent in the midlands did. Only 5 percent of midlands referred to sewerage whereas 27,6 percent on the coast did.

6.4.1 Housing

Almost all workers were supplied with housing. The type and quality varied greatly. Although 10 percent of farmers said they provided no housing and others said they only housed some of their labour - overall only 6,7 percent of the labour said they were unhoused. There were no doubt employees who had moved into houses built by previous employees who said they were housed, although in fact the employer himself had not provided anything. 12,5 percent of midlands workers said they were unhoused and 5 percent that they were only supplied with some building material. 21,4 percent of coastal workers said they were supplied with "large" houses.

6.4.2 Water

As reflected in the spontaneous answers the access to water was uneven. More than twice as many coastal as midlands workers mentioned the provision of water as an employment benefit. While approximately a quarter of respondents had water laid in their houses in both areas in the midlands 27.5 percent (as opposed to 8 percent on the coast) said no water was supplied. The balance of respondents obtained water from communal taps or tanks.

6.4.3 Fuel

While 42 percent of respondents (15 percent in midlands) had electric lighting supplied, only 5 percent had access to electricity for cooking purposes. Four percent of those interviewed received cooked

food and therefore did not require fuel for cooking purposes; 22 percent were supplied with wood, 5 percent with paraffin, coal or gas, while the majority collected their own firewood and a few bought their own paraffin. (39 percent on the coast collected their own firewood as opposed to 65 percent in the midlands).

6.4.4 Rations

Only 10 percent of those interviewed did not receive rations. Rations varied greatly from milk alone, to meat, maize, milk, beer, beans sugar, bread, salt, vegetables, etc.. Rations tended to be far more comprehensive on the coast. Meat was seldom a regular part of the rations in the midlands. On one farm, a decision had been taken to do away with rations and increase salaries accordingly. Coastal workers on the whole were more satisfied with their rations than midlands workers. Overall over three quarters of respondents said they preferred receiving rations to cash in lieu thereof. This contradicts much accepted doctrine on the subject and is particularly interesting in that all the farms covered by the survey were fairly close to shops where workers could have bought their own food.

6.4.5 Clothing

Clothing was supplied to 66 percent of those interviewed (85 percent in the midlands, and 65 percent on the coast). The clothing varied according to the task performed by the respondent.

6.4.6 Medical Attention

Medical attention was provided to three quarters of coastal workers and half the midlands workers.

6.4.7 Transport

The only occasion on which farmers regularly provide transport for their workers is to take them to receive medical attention. Some transport to connect with public transport is also provided.

6.4.8 Cattle Holding

Three percent of coastal workers and 52,5 percent of midlands workers were allowed to keep cattle. Where workers were allowed cattle, the farmers provided a wide range of services for the cattle. Cattle grazed free and received whatever licks and supplements the farmer's cattle received, were dipped and inoculated with the farmer's cattle and had access to bulls if desired. One third of those allowed cattle were allowed as many as they liked, while the rest were restricted to between 3 and 10 head.

6.4.9 Small Stock

Eighty seven percent of respondents (100 percent in the midlands) were allowed to keep small stock. Occasionally, where the farmer had poultry himself, he didn't allow any other poultry on the farm for disease reasons.

6.4.10 Access to Land

All midlands labour and half that on the coast had access to land. Half of those on the coast who had access to land and one third in the midlands only had vegetable gardens and the balance had fields of varying size with a significant number in the midlands saying that they could use as much land as they could. Midlands farmers tended to offer far more assistance to their employees with regard to ploughing, providing seed and fertilizer etc., whereas very few on the coast got any assistance from their employers.

6.5 Terms of Employment

6.5.1: Hours

Respondents worked long days with 46 percent of those interviewed working 10 or more hours a day. In the midlands (where most of the surveyed farms had a dairy) 80 percent reported working 10 or more hours per day though fewer midlands workers (80 percent as opposed to 95 percent on the coast) worked a six day week.

6.5.2 Requirements placed upon family members

In the midlands 50 percent of respondents stated that all adults (and sometimes children during school vacations) were required to work at least at certain times of the year. Farmers agreed stating that they

expected the women to turn out if required unless they were ill or had a small baby. On the coast 18 percent of respondents replied that adult members of their families were expected to work on the farm.

6.5.3 Overtime

Although more overtime was required in the midlands than on the coast nowhere was it required of more than 50 percent of workers. Almost all those required to work overtime said they received additional pay for overtime work.

6.5.4 Leave

Although most workers said they were allowed sick leave where they were daily paid they were generally not paid when sick.

Thirty percent of those interviewed stated they got no paid leave. Seven percent got one month's paid leave, 18 per cent 3 weeks or more and 40 percent 2 weeks or more. The balance received less than 2 weeks paid leave per annum. Significantly more (36.7 percent) coastal than midlands workers (2.5 percent) got no paid leave. 53.6 percent of respondents stated that 10 years ago they obtained no paid leave.

6.6 Employment Trends and Attitudes

The general decline in the numbers in agricultural employment was reflected on the farms surveyed. The fact that at the same time as labour numbers were decreasing production was increasing might be

thought to imply that the decline was due to mechanization. Farmers however denied this and attributed the decline almost entirely to the increased productivity of labour resulting from improved management and the introduction of new production techniques - some of which involve a degree of mechanization.

Although the average tractor holding on the farms surveyed had risen from 4.2 to 4.8 during the 10 years preceeding the survey farmers related the increase to more extensive production not increased mechanization. The only significant changes in production techniques encountered were the introduction of automated milking parlours and weed control by weedicide.

Farmers mentioned a number of factors which had influenced them to make increasing efforts to improve productivity and limit labour but chief amongst these were rising wages ¹ and the spiralling costs of providing amenities of an acceptable standard for workers and their families. The general availability of electricity throughout the countryside and the growing awareness of the need for protected water supplies in addition to government regulations relating to the housing of farm labour have all served to make farmers more aware of the costs of employing labour.

The increased costs and responsibilities incurred by the employer of a married man who has his family with him also lead some farmers to

1. Although farmers stated that wages had risen considerably Tables 8(a) and (b) indicate that in real terms this is not necessarily true.

employ migrant "bachelors" or women on a temporary or casual basis despite the expressed preference of all farmers interviewed for permanent married employees.

"Bachelor" workers themselves explained the absence of their families as being due to the combined effects of inadequate housing, inadequate schooling, lack of security (particularly in old age) and the need to maintain an interest in the only area where there was security - the homeland.

Farmers did not attribute the decline in numbers to labour shortages. Only skilled labour was not considered readily available. They stated that not only was labour generally available but that turnover (at least of the basic labour force) was minimal. Very few (10 percent) found any need to use recruiting agencies and those that did generally found the experience unsatisfactory. Farm workers themselves were usually able to introduce additional workers to fill the few vacancies which occur. Farmers considered the labour bureaux of no value - they provided neither labour nor any assistance in labour matters

Factors considered by farmers to affect labour availability were farm situation - particularly access to schools and shops, family accomodation and permission to keep cattle. Farmers returned repeatedly to the cost of housing as a factor influencing labour availability and determining the type of labour employed despite preferences for stable family men.

Some of the attitudes of the workers themselves to their jobs may be

gauged from their answers to the question as to the source of their greatest happiness. Forty five percent referred to their working environment, 20 percent to their family and home life and 17 percent to their salary. Almost twice as many workers in the midlands referred to their family and home life (many specifically mentioning the presence of cattle at their house) as did those on the coast.

Conversely when asked what caused them greatest unhappiness, 43 percent referred to their low salaries and when asked how their lives could be improved the most common answer (given by 40 percent of respondents) was a salary increase.

CHAPTER FOUR

Income Levels, Distribution and Sources

1.0 Introduction

Obtaining estimates of income levels is always problematic. Non-wage incomes and those of extended families pose particular difficulties. On commercial farms an unusually large part of incomes is non-wage. Apart from difficulties of evaluating non-wage income there is the additional difficulty posed by evaluating a benefit which the beneficiary does not necessarily desire. How should the provision of a R10,000 house which the beneficiary would under no circumstance have contemplated providing for himself be evaluated? If it is valued in terms of what it cost its monthly value would in many cases exceed the beneficiary's wage. Building societies consider it an unsound practice to grant bonds at a level which require repayments which represent more than 17 percent of the bond holder's income. Public authorities reinforce this attitude by charging rentals for sub-economic houses which bear no relation to the cost of the house but are, presumably, considered to be as much as a person in a particular income bracket can afford to spend on housing.

With regard to rations, water, electricity, schooling, recreation, etc. the same difficulties are encountered i.e. there is no possibility of giving them their real monetary value and there is always the difficulty posed by the fact that the beneficiary is not

free to accept or reject the particular form of income. Other problems may arise where benefits are erratically provided or unilaterally withdrawn.

With respect to the extended family the difficulties arise from the fact that the person or people actually interviewed may not be fully informed as to the financial situation of all members of the household.

Consequently one must treat the estimates presented in this section with caution as they fall into the category of 'soft estimates' rather than 'hard data'. The estimates of incomes obtained from the sample survey show that living levels were low. Incomes per capita were considerably higher than those in black rural areas⁽¹⁾ but, bearing in mind the high levels of employment among the adults surveyed and that a large percentage of them did not have their complete nuclear family with them at their workplace, they were low - lower than average industrial incomes where there are higher levels of unemployment and where there are probably as many members of the nuclear family present.⁽²⁾

2.0 Method of Income Calculation

In order to calculate incomes all incomes received by any member of the household were included regardless of whether they were received as salaries, bonuses, pensions, grants, gifts, income from small business operations, casual earnings or whatever. In addition values

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were placed upon some of the employment benefits the respondents received. Where the actual value of the benefit was known this was the value placed upon it but elsewhere an arbitrary figure was used as an assessment of the value of the benefit. Thus where the cash value of the rations supplied to the respondent could be established this figure was added to his income whereas an arbitrary amount of R7 per month was added to the income of a respondent for whom housing was provided. The methods used to evaluate employment benefits are discussed in Chapter V where the benefits are discussed in greater detail. However, to summarize, the following amounts were added to the incomes of the respondents who received the particular benefit.

1. Rations. Details of rations supplied were obtained from the farmer. The value of rations ranged from R60 to R600 per annum and each respondent was credited with the rations he actually received.
2. Housing. R7 per month was added to the income of respondents who were provided with housing regardless of the type of housing supplied. Where water was supplied an additional R2 per month was added if water was drawn from a communal supply and R4 where there was water supplied to each house. Between R1 and R3 was added to a respondents' income where electricity was supplied depending upon the extent of the electrification.
3. Medicare. The value placed on medical services depended upon the service supplied and ranged from R2 to R18 per annum.
4. Cattleholding. Where respondents were allowed to keep cattle and did in fact do so R5 per head per month was added to their income.

5. Clothing. Where the respondent was supplied with working clothes R10 per annum was added to his income.

No value was placed upon the educational or recreational facilities supplied by the employer.

Although two thirds of respondents said they had another home they were not questioned as to whether this 'other home' was the source of any income. It is unlikely to have been the case. Of those who had another home only 23 percent were the head of that home, and only half had land and a third cattle attached to that home. Eighty five percent had dependents at that home most of whom were unable to support themselves solely from that source and who in fact relied on remittances from the agricultural worker.

Of those who had dependents elsewhere, 94 percent remitted money to those dependents and only one respondent who had members of his nuclear family at his other home did not remit money to them. It is interesting that the percentage of salary remitted by these people was significantly higher than the average amount remitted by migrant workers in industrial or urban areas. There have been numerous studies of the remittance patterns of migrants. The percentage of their salaries which migrants remit has been found seldom to move out of the 20 - 25 percent range. However in this survey it was found that the average percent of the cash wage remitted was 37. This is hardly surprising as, as we will see, most farm workers received benefits other than cash wages which sometimes were equal in value to their salary. If these benefits were to be added to their salaries

and then remittances analysed as a percentage of the sum of these two amounts the percentage would probably not be dissimilar from those remitted by migrants elsewhere.

3.0 Household Income

Household income levels, their range and distribution are given in Table 9 below. Household incomes ranged from a low of R424 per annum to a high of R8 392 which suggests that there is a significant degree of both poverty and income inequality in the area. Half of all the households surveyed earned less than R1 800 per annum. The wealthiest 10 percent earned more than R2 978 and the poorest 10 percent less than R859 per annum.

Table 9

Household Incomes

Decile	Annual Income Rands	Percent of Households in category or below	Percent of Total Income	Cumulative Share of community Income
1	424- 858	9.9	3.4	3.4
2	859-1106	19.8	4.7	8.1
3	1107-1432	30.5	6.0	14.1
4	1433-1618	39.7	7.8	21.9
5	1619-1792	49.6	8.7	30.6
6	1793-2004	59.5	9.0	39.6
7	2005-2269	70.2	9.9	49.5
8	2270-2684	80.2	12.8	62.3
9	2685-2978	90.1	14.4	76.7
10	2979-8392	100.0	23.3	100.0

N = 131

Median Household Income R1818

Mean Household Income R2018.20

More than 23 percent of the total income earned accrued to the wealthiest 10 percent of the households whilst at the other end of

the scale the poorest 30 percent of households received only 14 percent of the total income.

4.0 Per Capita Incomes

In order to obtain some idea of the differences in the living standards enjoyed by members of the household, household incomes have to be adjusted to take account of the size and age distribution of the household itself. Because it was impossible to estimate 'adult equivalents' for the children in the survey, due to a total lack of information relating to household expenditure patterns on the different age groups, we have adjusted household incomes in terms of household size only. Table 10 shows the distribution of households by household per capita incomes that was obtained from this adjustment.

Per capita incomes were established by adding together all types of income, deducting all amounts remitted to dependents elsewhere and dividing the balance amongst those actually resident in the household i.e. migrants were not included when determining the number of persons dependent upon the income of the household.

The calculation of incomes on a per capita basis shows them to be even more unequally distributed than appeared from the Table on household incomes and confirms the view that real poverty does exist. Household per capita incomes ranged from a low of R106 per annum to a high of R3444 per annum - an income differential between the wealthiest and poorest households of 1:32. Although this is a significant

differential it is nowhere near as great as that found in the other two areas surveyed where the differentials were 1:53 and 1:56.¹ This is probably predictable in communities which have not developed spontaneously but have emerged in response to a demand for labour.

Table 10
Household Annual Per Capita Incomes

Decile	Annual Per Capita Income (Rands)	Percentage of total income	Cumulative Percentage
1	106- 243	2.3	2.3
2	244- 313	4.1	6.4
3	314- 386	5.1	11.5
4	387- 436	6.0	17.5
5	437- 507	7.0	24.5
6	508- 664	8.4	32.9
7	665- 794	10.5	43.4
8	795- 938	12.7	56.1
9	939-1260	15.7	71.8
10	1261-3444	28.2	100.0

Median Income per Capita R507
Mean Income per Capita 681
N = 131

Members of half the households surveyed had yearly per capita incomes of less than R507 and 84 percent less than R1000. Only the wealthiest 2 percent had incomes of R2000 per annum or more. The wealthiest 5 percent received 18,2 percent of the total income and the wealthiest 2 percent 8,85 percent.

The median household annual income per capita (R507) when related to those found in Sundumbili (R600) and Nkandla (R144) indicates that

1. (1:page 38) (2:page 44)

although those living on commercial farms do not achieve the incomes of people in a decentralised area they are very much better off than those in a black rural area. Not only was the median household per capita income three and a half times higher than in Nkandla but there also appeared to be less abject poverty. Whereas no one living on a commercial farm had an annual income of less than R100 and only 10 percent of less than R250, 30 percent of the households surveyed in Nkandla had per capita incomes of below R100, 81 percent of below R250 and 97 percent incomes of below R450.

A number of factors affected the relative incomes per capita of those interviewed. The relevance of some of these factors is shown in the tables and data below.

4.1 Household Size

As Table 11 below indicates there is a clear correlation between household size and per capita incomes. The top 9,2 percent of incomes were all earned by single persons and the average size of the households achieving the top 20 percent of incomes was 1,6 as opposed to 4,5 for the entire sample. The average size of the households earning the bottom 10 percent of incomes was 7,8. It should be pointed out that household size cannot be equated with number of dependents and that in fact the single member households who achieved by far the highest incomes did so not because they came from small households but because they worked and lived away from their households and remitted only a small part of their incomes to their dependents there.

Table 11
Incomes and Household Size

n	Household Size	Mean Annual Household p.c. income	Median Annual Household p.c. Income
31	1	1293.53	980.00
17	2	874.44	801.50
16	3	603.75	558.50
14	4	514.57	469.50
20	5	416.74	391.00
7	6	494.33	438.00
9	7	292.37	285.50
8	8	261.75	259.00
6	9	316.40	313.00
2	11	365.00	365.00
1	12	469.00	469.00
3	13	141.00	137.00
1	14	193.00	193.00
2	15	440.00	440.00
1	16	unknown	unknown

4.2 Location

Incomes on the coast were significantly higher than those in the midlands. It is however difficult to determine how important location was as a factor determining income because of the close correlation between location and household size - another fact which we have seen has an important influence upon incomes.

Table 12
Incomes and Location

	Total Survey	Coast	Midlands
Mean household income p.c. pa	681.33	727.37	576.30
Median Household income p.c. pa	507.00	580.50	404.50
Household size	4.50	3.60	6.60
n	138	98	40

4.3 "Only Home"

Per capita incomes of those respondents who had a home other than the one in which they were living on the farm were almost double those who had no other home. Those who had another home no doubt achieved their high incomes because they either lived alone on the farm or were only accompanied by some of their dependents. Although most remitted money to their dependents at their other home they remitted on average only 37 percent of their salaries and of course none of the employment benefits received.

Table 13
Incomes and Permanent Residence

	N	Mean Annual Household per Capita Income	Median Annual Household Per Capita Income
Have another home	92	803.23	692.50
No other home	46	448.38	390.57

4.4 Household Structure

Household structure was perhaps the chief factor determining levels of income. Among those interviewed there were single males and females and males who although married were living alone on the farm. There were married men who were accompanied by some of their nuclear family and those who had their entire family with them. There were also single men and women who had dependents living with them on the farm. Table 14 below shows that those who lived alone (regardless of the number of their dependents elsewhere) achieved the highest incomes and that as the family became more extended or complete so incomes fell.

Table 14
Incomes and Household Structure

	N	Mean Annual H/hold p.c. Income	Median Annual H/hold p.c. Income
Single member households	31	1145.16	968.00
Incomplete families	35	531.61	452.00
Complete families	72	470.22	404.00

It should be pointed out that within the single member households there was a wide range of incomes but regardless of how these households are grouped all incomes are well above average as the following break down indicates.

Table 15
Incomes of Single Member Households

	Mean Annual H/Hold Per Capita Income	Mean Annual H/Hold Per Capita Income	N
Married Men	1627.00	1581.00	12
Single men	989.20	946.00	11
Widows	920.00	920.00	1
Single females	737.71	814.00	7

It is difficult to separate the affects of household size, structure, location etc upon income or to determine their relative influences and the Tables 11 to 14 should be read together.

4.5 Household Head

Female headed households were amongst those with the lowest incomes but where the woman was independent either because she was unmarried or widowed she achieved an above average income. Thus female headed households with dependents achieved an average annual income per capita of R244, whereas single women had an average annual income of R737 and the sole widow interviewed an annual income of R920. The levels of income achieved by male heads depended upon the proximity of their dependents. The lowest incomes (R278 pcpa) were achieved by those who commuted to work and returned to their families each day

whereas the highest incomes were achieved by the married men who lived alone on the farm (R1799 p.c.p.a). Men who had some of their families with them averaged annual incomes of R584 and those who had all their family with them R485 p.c.p.a.

4.6 Employment

We have pointed out that unemployment levels on the farms were very low and that in general wives and adult children were able to find employment where the head of the household worked. Overall there were 1,7 people in wage employment in each household. Although the relatively plentiful employment opportunities may have reduced unemployment levels they do not appear to have had as beneficial an effect upon household incomes as might be expected. In order to assess the impact of a second worker on household incomes we have excluded all single member households (which we have seen achieved the highest incomes) and grouped households according to the number of employed in the household. Incomes do not appear to be strongly correlated to the number employed. Neither are incomes significantly higher where the additional workers are home based which appears to confirm the low salaries of additional home based workers bearing in mind that migrants seldom remit more than a quarter of their salaries. We have seen that a large part of a farm worker's income may consist of benefits. However it is not usual for a household where there is more than one person in employment to receive more benefits than one in which only one person is employed. The practice of providing significant benefits thus often results in the second worker in a

household being relatively underrecompensed for his labour. Furthermore the second worker will in most cases be a woman who we have seen will on average be paid only 40 per cent of what the average male is paid.

Table 16
Incomes and Employment

Number Employed	N		Mean Income per Capita per Annum		Median Income per Capita per Annum	
	Excluding Migrants	Including Migrants	Excluding Migrants	Including Migrants	Excluding Migrants	Including Migrants
1	53	52	466,07	468,01	405,00	404,50
2	38	32	577,00	537,36	466,00	456,50
3	8	12	340,71	452,00	339,00	391,00
4	6	3	398,80	384,00	391,00	384,00
5		4		435,00		430,00
6		1		294,00		294,00
7	1	2	missing	missing	missing	missing
	106	106		499,49		429,00

4.7 Migrancy

Table 17 below relates household income per capita to the number of out-migrants in a household. The figures suggest no real correlation between income levels and the need to migrate nor do they reflect any significant impact by migrant remittances upon household incomes. Here again all single member households have been excluded from the table.

Table 17
Incomes and Migrancy

	N	Mean Household Income Per Capita Per Annum.	Median Household Income Per Capita Per Annum.
No migrants	91	491,47	435,00
Migrants	15	559,00	391,00
Total	106	499,49	429,00

4.8 Pensions

Pensions overall make only a small contribution to household incomes and the households with pensioners achieved below average incomes. Even within the households where there are pensioners the percentage of income coming from this source is not as crucial as it was, for example, in Nkandla. Thirteen households or 9 percent of the sample were in receipt of pensions and the mean and median incomes per capita in these households were R510.46 and R411 respectively. The value of the pension to these households can be estimated by deducting the value of the pension and then recalculating the incomes per capita. When this is done the mean household income per capita per annum falls to R317.38 and the median to R319.20. Although this fall is significant (22 percent of median income) it is not as important as that (63 percent) which resulted from a similar calculation being made in Nkandla where pensions constituted 25 percent of the entire community's cash income.

5.0 Contributions to Household Income

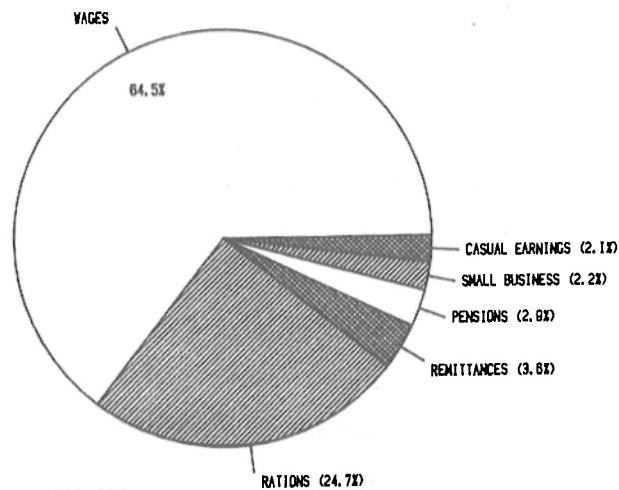
Figure 3 and Table 18 below which indicate the relative importance of

the various sources of income show the overwhelming importance of locally earned wages as a source of income. Although rations are shown separately, they should be viewed as a part of wage income. They are certainly looked upon as part of the wage by the employer even if the employee doesn't always see them in this light. Together wages and rations constitute 89.2 percent of the incomes of those surveyed. Remittances from migrants constitute 3.6 percent of income and pensions only 2.9 percent. Income from small business and casual earnings is extremely limited - respectively 2.1 percent and 2.2 percent of total household income.

Table 18
Sources of Income

Source	Number of Contributors	Percentage Community Contributing to this source	Mean Contribution (R)	Total Contribution from Source (R)	Percentage Total Income from Source
Pensions	17	2.8	558	9480	2.9
Migrant remittances	20	3.2	589	11780	3.6
Casual Earnings	34	5.5	203	6895	2.1
Small business	16	2.6	460	7357	2.2*
Employment	215	35.1	1365	293565	89.2*
* This figure includes rations. Wages alone show:					
Employment	215	35.1	986	212112	64.5

Figure 3
Sources of Income



Total Income R329 077

5.1 Contributors

282 persons or 54.4 percent of the population made some cash contribution to household income.

5.1.1 Age and Contributors

Table 19 below indicates the percentage of the various age groups making a contribution to household income. It is interesting to note that whereas 100 percent of males make a contribution for almost their entire adult life women only achieve this when pensionable. Most women are shown to make their contribution relatively late in life. Where women have to migrate in order to obtain wage employment they

Table 19
Contributions to Household Income and Age

Age	Number in Age Group			Number and Percentage Contributing in each Age Group					
	Total	Male	Female	Total N	%	Male N	%	Female N	%
0- 4*	88	39	49	1	1.1	1	2.6	-	-
5- 9*	99	51	48	2	2.0	1	2.0	1	2.1
10-14	73	31	42	2	2.7	2	6.5	-	-
15-19	68	27	41	37	54.4	18	66.6	19	46.3
20-24	51	23	28	39	76.5	23	100.0	16	57.1
25-29	38	15	23	31	81.6	15	100.0	16	69.6
30-34	34	13	21	28	82.4	13	100.0	15	71.4
35-39	40	19	21	32	80.0	19	100.0	13	61.9
40-44	33	16	17	30	90.1	16	100.0	14	82.3
45-49	27	19	8	26	96.3	19	100.0	7	87.5
50-54	21	17	4	20	95.2	17	100.0	3	75.0
55-59	13	4	9	8	61.5	4	100.0	4	44.4
60-64	11	9	2	10	90.9	8	88.9	2	100.0
65+	11	8	8	16	100.0	8	100.0	8	100.0
Total	612	291	321	282	46.1	164	56.4	118	36.7

* Contributions by infants and children are chiefly maintenance grants made by their fathers.

tend to do this before they marry and have children. "Living on the job" clearly enables women who are married and have children to participate in wage employment.

5.1.2 Sex of Contributors

One hundred and sixty four males and 118 females made a contribution to household incomes. They represent 96.5 percent and 64.8 percent respectively of the males and females over the age of 14.

5.1.3 Occupation of Contributors

Table 20 below gives the occupation of contributors and their average cash contributions to household income. The overwhelming importance of wage employment is again clearly demonstrated. Although small

Table 20
Occupation and Mean Cash Contributions of Contributors

Occupation	N	Percentage of Contributors	Mean Cash Contributions (Rands)
Pre-school	1	.4	60.00
Scholar	8	2.8	66.75
Domestic/Agricultural	8	2.8	168.63
Wage employment	234	83.0	933.27
Small business	1	.4	400.00
Casual earnings	20	7.0	333.90
On holiday	1	.4	missing
Retired	9	3.2	660.00
Total	282	100.0	827.50

businessmen and pensioners are shown as significant contributors their numbers are so small as to make them insignificant overall.

5.2 Levels of Contribution

5.2.1 Average Levels

The average cash contribution per head of all surveyed was R393 per annum and of those actually contributing R827.50. Fifty percent of contributors contributed R720 or less and 90 percent R1780 or less.

5.2.2 Levels and Sex

All males included in the survey contributed an average of R626 per annum and females R159 per annum. Those actually contributing contributed an average of R1111 and R433 respectively.

5.2.3 Levels and Migrancy

Migrants constituted 3.2 percent of the community surveyed and contributed 3.6 percent of income received. They were neither a numerically nor financially significant group. The average contribution of migrants was R589. All migrants remitted and generally the contact between migrants and their families on the farm seemed more regular than is often the case. The migrants in this survey also tended to work closer to "home" than is usually the case.

5.2.4 Levels and Age

As can be seen from Table 21 below the level of contribution started to rise dramatically from the 15 - 19 age group but levelled off from the 25 - 29 age group and thereafter remained fairly static before falling dramatically in the 55 - 59 age group, probably because the female contribution falls in this age cohort which is heavily dominated by women. Women of this age do not or cannot find agricultural employment but do not yet qualify for a pension. Women's average contribution rises to an all time peak once they become

pensionable. Although women resident on commercial farms find it

Table 21
Age and Level of Cash Contribution to Household Income
(Contributors Only)

Age	Total		Males		Females	
	N	Mean Contribution	N	Mean Contribution	N	Mean Contribution
0- 4	1	60.00	1			
5- 9	2	130.00	1	60.00	1	200.00
10-14	2	300.00	2	300.00		
15-19	37	336.00	18	365.89	19	307.68
20-24	39	633.85	23	885.78	16	271.69
25-29	31	864.00	15	1260.00	16	492.75
30-34	28	808.96	13	1270.61	15	408.87
35-39	32	934.12	19	1181.74	13	572.23
40-44	30	954.40	16	1444.69	14	394.07
45-49	26	1049.00	19	1269.47	7	450.57
50-54	20	1229.10	17	1347.18	3	560.00
55-59	8	955.25	4	1452.00	4	458.50
60-64	10	1392.20	8	1575.25	2	660.00
65+	16	869.00	8	1018.00	8	720.00
Total	282	827.5	164	111.23	118	433.17

comparatively easy to find wage employment they, like their counterparts in black rural areas who generally never find wage employment, make their greatest cash contribution to the household as pensioners. The fact that persons of pensionable age make average contributions well above the level of a pension indicates that many continue working beyond pensionable age.

5.2.5 Levels of Contribution of Heads of Household

The average contribution of household heads was R1203.44. One would expect an above average contribution in these circumstances as household heads on commercial farms are so pre-dominantly (96 percent)

male and employed (99.3 percent).

5.2.6 Levels and Small Business

The opportunities and need for small business activity were extremely limited and only 2.5 percent of those surveyed participated in such activity. 1.9 percent of household income came from this source. Table 22 below indicates the nature of the small business activities encountered and the various incomes achieved from them. The importance of garden produce as a source of income is exaggerated in that 92 percent of that income was contributed by one person. Considering the limited numbers allowed to hold cattle, the sale of cattle was indeed the only significant small business activity encountered.

Table 22
Small Business

Nature of Activity	No Persons Involved	Percentage in particular activity	Income from Activity (Rands)	Percentage Income from Activity
Garden produce	3	19.0	2620	35.6
Handcraft produce	3	19.0	740	10.0
Small Stock produce	1	6.0	60	.8
Resale	2	12.5	900	12.2
Inyangas (Herbalists)	2	12.5	1038	14.1
Cattle Sale	5	31.0	1999	27.2
Total	16	100.0	7357	100.0

Mean Income R460 pa. Median Income R308.
Range R60 - R2400

5.2.7 Levels of Contributions from Casual Earnings

The average contribution to household income of those obtaining employment from time to time was R203 per annum. 20 people obtained such employment regularly and 14 others (half of whom were housewives and half scholars) on the odd occasion. Thus 5.5 percent of those surveyed participated in casual employment activities and contributed 2.1 percent of the household income from this source.

6.0 Conclusion

Overwhelmingly the chief source of income for those living on commercial farms is their wages which include all the benefits associated with employment - such as housing, rations etc. The opportunities for increasing incomes through informal sector activity or casual earnings are extremely limited and the small numbers of migrants make remittances an insignificant source of income.

Levels of income therefore depend almost exclusively on wage levels and the size and structure of the household. The number of wage earners in a household is not positively correlated to incomes and indeed it appears that second wage earners, particularly if female, are unfairly discriminated against and thus prevented from making as great a contribution to household income as they ought.

Unemployment is almost non-existent. Apart from illustrating how efficient the removal from commercial farms to black areas of all those not actively employed on the farms has been this fact greatly

decreases the burden of dependency on the agricultural wage earner. His "felt" dependency burden is further decreased by the absence of those family members who have had to leave in order to obtain education and those who are left behind to secure the workers' "other home".

In Chapter V we will see that black communities on commercial farms in the final analysis are dependent upon their employers for the provision of almost all social amenities. This makes the fact that the employer is almost exclusively responsible for levels of income all the more significant.

CHAPTER FIVE

QUALITY OF LIFE

1.0 ACCESS TO BASIC AMENITIES

This chapter is concerned with the access of the surveyed population to basic amenities.

2.0 EDUCATION

2.1 Problems of rural education

The provision of education in rural areas is problematic worldwide. Scattered, low density populations, undeveloped transport systems, an absence of qualified staff and adults who have no need to leave the farms on a regular basis pose tremendous logistical problems for those who would educate the children of such adults, and make their education more expensive than that of urban based children. In South Africa the problems are magnified manifold by racial attitudes and linguistic differences. It is unlikely that there is a commercial farm in South Africa which, for the education of its youth, could, by law, make use of only one school. All facilities have to be replicated for each racial group necessitating drawing children from a far wider area than would be the case if all rural children were educated together. Thus the costs are greatly increased as are the distances to be travelled.

Costs are further increased by the requirement for racially separate transport systems to travel those distances. In fact the problems are so many and so large that generally one finds that where a school is not within walking distance black children on commercial farms don't attend school. Only in the rare case is transport provided by private enterprise or do children happen to live on a bus route which they can afford to use. There is no subsidized school transport for blacks. Boarding schools, which are beyond the financial means of most farm labourers - are few and far between. In Natal there is one boarding school for the children of the black employees of its approximately 7 500 commercial farms.

2.2 Farm Schools for Blacks

Throughout South Africa education is provided for each racial group by separate authorities on different bases. As far as blacks are concerned, not only are there differences between the various homeland (whether independent or not) education departments and the Department of Education and Training (the department responsible for the education of blacks in so called white South Africa) but there are also differences between the education provided for blacks by the Department of Education and Training on farms and that provided for them elsewhere in South Africa.

Outside of farms (and mines and hospitals) the Department takes the initiative for the provision of education - it assesses needs and within its budget sets about providing education where necessary.

There is however no system for educating blacks on farms - there is merely a method for subsidizing education which farmers may choose to provide.

Where a farmer wishes to provide education for the children of his black employees, he must first obtain permission from the Department of Education and Training. Having obtained permission to build a school and approval of the site on which it is to be built, he may proceed to build a school according to specifications laid down by the Department of Education and Training. Once the school is completed and operational, he may apply for a subsidy. The amount he may receive has recently been significantly increased but is unlikely to cover more than 50 percent of the building costs. There is no subsidy for housing teachers, supplying water, electricity or access roads, maintenance, etc. and all these costs have to be borne by the farmer. He is also responsible for the payment of the teaching staff until such time as their posts are approved - which in practice usually means accepting responsibility for the payment of their salaries for the first term of the new school's operation.

Where he has received a subsidy, a farmer is required to keep the school open for a minimum of ten years otherwise he is liable to repay a proportion of the subsidy depending upon how long the school has been operational. Where, however, he has not taken a subsidy, or where the school has been in existence for more than ten years, the farmer is free to close the school at any time.

A farmer may only accept children from neighbouring farms where he has

the permission of the owner of the neighbouring farm. He has to obtain written permission from all farmers whose land may be crossed by children walking to school.

A school manager has to be appointed to act as an agent of the Department, to employ staff, to control staff, and to collect and distribute to staff their monthly salaries.

It is entirely up to the farmer to take the initiative in all these matters and indeed he requires a certain amount of perseverance to overcome all the bureaucratic hurdles - initially at least.

Apart from the fact that a farmer cannot be forced to provide education for his employees' children, and from the fact that it is for a number of reasons undesirable that it should be left to the employer,¹ rather than the parent or the government, to provide schooling, the system inevitably means that the farmer who accepts this responsibility on behalf of his own employees accepts it on behalf of a number of other farmers' employees at the same time. At some of the farm schools surveyed, 90 percent of the pupils came from farms other than that on which the school was situated. The relationship between these children and their parents and the farmer is if anything more difficult than that between the farmer and his own employees and the problems can only be exacerbated by the open gates

1. Bill Nasson, in Carnegie Conference Paper No. 97 Bitter Harvest: Farm Schooling for Black South Africans, deals at some length with this particular difficulty, as well as many others arising from the current system for the provision of education on farms.

and stolen produce which are the inevitable consequences of large numbers of children crossing farm lands.

Where the farmer does not (for whatever reason) choose to provide a school, the Department does not and cannot take any steps to provide education for the Black children of farm workers.

The education that the farmer may provide tends to be restricted to primary education and indeed until very recently it was impossible to get permission for a farm school to go beyond standard 5.¹ Today a few "special" farm schools have standards 6 and 7.

There is only one high school in the whole of Natal which caters for black children from commercial farms. Few are able to afford the boarding fees and few are prepared to send their children so far away. The result is that children of high school level either drop out of school or attend school in nearby KwaZulu. To attend school in KwaZulu is a very practical solution to the problem. It does, however, impose an unfair financial burden upon KwaZulu and, in view of the inadequacy of school places in KwaZulu, results in yet another KwaZulu child being denied an education. Any attempt to solve the problem by building separate boarding schools for farm children would waste severely strained educational resources, apart from introducing unnecessary social stresses into the farm workers' families. Scholars should be able to attend the closest school and where possible live at home. School transport should be opened to children of all races so

1. 82,6 percent of the scholars surveyed were in Standard 3 or below.

that it can be provided on as economic a basis as possible. Where the result of the policy of attending the school closest to your home is that children off white farms attend school in KwaZulu, KwaZulu should be financially compensated - something that will cost the South African taxpayer a fraction of what it would cost to provide special boarding schools for farm workers' children.

2.3 Access to Schools

Educational facilities varied significantly between the coast and the midlands. In the midlands there were many more schools on the farms but on the other hand people were further from areas of KwaZulu where there might be schools they could attend where there were none on the farm. This is particularly significant at high school level as there are no high schools on farms. On the coastal farms, many pupils could daily walk into KwaZulu to a school. Thus one finds that in the midlands (where there were many farm schools) the median walking time to Junior School was 10 minutes whereas on the coast (where there were few farm schools but where respondents tended to be closer to areas of KwaZulu) the median time was 30 minutes. On the coast 14,3 percent of respondents were more than one and a half hours walking time from school whereas this was only the case for 2,5 percent of midlands respondents.

The position was reversed when it came to high schools. Fifty five percent of those on the coast reported a high school (in KwaZulu) within one hour's walk whereas none of the respondents in the midlands

were this close to a high school. Overall 50 percent of respondents were more than one and a half hours walk from a high school.

Respondents were asked who was responsible for the provision of education for their children and the answers they gave indicated their awareness of the differing conditions in the midlands and on the coast as Table 23 below indicates.

Table 23
Respondents Answers re Educational Responsibility

Body	Percentage Responsible	
	Midlands	Coast
No one	2,5	6,3
Employer	79,5	13,7
Someone else's employer	10,3	20,0
Pretoria	7,7	14,8
KwaZulu		33,7
Parents		2,1
Don't know		9,4

The farmers were questioned as to who actually provided the schools their employees' children attended and their answers are given in Table 24.

Table 24
Farmers Answers re Educational Responsibility

Body	Percentages Responsible	
	Midlands	Coastal
Employer	70,0	35,7
Pretoria	2,5	19,4
KwaZulu		12,2
Parents	12,5	15,3
Other	15,0	17,4

Thirty percent of the farmers interviewed had their own schools. On 40 percent of the farms covered by the survey, those children who went to school did so in KwaZulu - that is, they did not go to a school supplied by the Department of Education and Training which is responsible for educating black children in white areas.

Currently education is nowhere near being available to all blacks on commercial farms and what education there is seldom goes beyond standard 2 level.

There were in Natal in 1984 approximately 700 farm schools and 7 500 farms. It is clear that every third farm, as was the case in the survey, does not have its own school. The facts as reflected in the survey paint an educational picture rosier than the truth, and this fact should not be forgotten.

2:4 Levels of Education

The absence of a system for the provision of education for blacks on farms inevitably leads to an unevenness in the availability of education which is reflected in levels of education. Attitudes to education no doubt play some part in determining if and for how long parents send their children to school but evidence of a general desire for education is provided by school attendance levels which appear to be directly related to the availability of schooling. Thus of those surveyed, 33,9 percent in the midlands were currently at school but this was only true of 14,7 percent of those on the coast. Similarly 58 percent of midlands respondents as opposed to 20 percent of coastal respondents had school-going children living with them on the farm. Another reflection of the relative availability of schooling in the two areas is the percentage of children of schoolgoing age who were not at school at the time of the survey. Whereas 30 percent of those between the ages of 7 and 16¹ were not at school on the coast, only 3,5 percent of that age group in the midlands were not at school. Once people have had the opportunity of a local education, it seems that they are prepared to make a greater effort to continue their education. We found that 4,3 percent of those surveyed in the midlands were away at school whereas only 0,6 percent of those on the coast were.

Availability of schooling is also reflected in educational levels. Just as the number of schools is continually increasing, so are levels

1. 82,5% of scholars surveyed were between the ages of 7 and 16.

of education. Whereas 51,6 percent of all surveyed had had no education, this was true of 87,5 percent of those aged 65 or more but only 12,3 percent of those in the 10 - 14 age group. There were also differences between the two areas surveyed: 61,1 percent of those on the coast and 40,1 percent of those in the midlands had had no education. Easier access to primary schools in the midlands as well as a more stable community no doubt explain why 33 percent of those between the ages of 10 and 20 on the coast were without any education whereas no one in that age group in the midlands was in that position.

It is impossible to estimate how much worse conditions on the coast might have been were it not for the fact that those who live on farms without schools often are able to attend school in a nearby area of KwaZulu.

Only 9,6 percent of those surveyed had gone beyond standard four and could therefore be said to be in a position to retain literacy. This situation is unlikely to improve in the near future as 82,6 percent of the scholars surveyed were in standard 3 or below and only 18,8 percent were older than 14 years of age.

No significant differences between the educational levels of males and females were noted.

The need to obtain employment did not appear to be an important factor in determining whether a person of schoolgoing age was at school. Only 4,7 percent of those between the ages of 7 and 16 were employed, while 16 percent were not at school.

2.5 Conclusion

There is no doubt that black children on commercial farms are educational Cinderellas. They come from homes which historically are educationally deprived, homes in which although employment levels are high, salaries are low and in which there are unlikely to be the resources, either financial or mental, to cope with travelling long distances to boarding school and yet to achieve an education they are required to overcome these hurdles.

There is little hope that the farms on which these children live will be able to absorb them all into their workforce and yet their residence on the farms frequently denies them the education that would enable them to get employment elsewhere. On the farms themselves farmers reported a more than adequate supply of unskilled labour. What they could not obtain was skilled labour.

The attitude of farmers to the education of the children of their labour force naturally varies from farmer to farmer. It has never been suggested nationally that all employers or even only all agricultural employers should accept responsibility (albeit subsidized) for the education of their labour's children and individual's attitudes are coloured by their personal perceptions. A number of those surveyed showed their appreciation of the importance of education to their employees in statements attributing their ability to attract and keep labour to the presence of a school on their or their neighbour's farm.

Many commented on the inadequacy of the education available and some stated they had lost employees who had gone to work somewhere where their children could obtain a high school education. Farmers seemed particularly aware that a primary school education alone was inadequate. They commented that few workers contemplated sending their children to Natal's sole boarding school for black farm children, both because of the expense and the social upheaval involved. Two farmers interviewed were busy adding higher classes to their farm schools to avoid the social upheaval of boarding and to improve the pupil's chance of getting into a Technikon and thus increasing his employment opportunities. Another farmer, who had no school but lived reasonably close to schools in KwaZulu schools, helped pupils who proved themselves academically with bus fares - R38 per child per annum, and yet others paid the boarding fees of those who obtained a place in high school. The fact that all these schemes are inadequate is reflected in the high number of dependent children the respondents reported to be living elsewhere. Farmers stated that the children of their employees were forced to stay with people in Howick or Pietermaritzburg in order to obtain a high school education. (This, they stated, was not without its advantages as such children obtained an urban address which might enable them to bypass influx control registration when the time came to look for employment.)

To point out farmers who build schools, add higher classes to existing schools or provide bursary schemes to cover boarding expenses at the only boarding school is no answer to those who complain of the inadequacy of educational facilities for blacks on farms. Currently the position is hopelessly inadequate and there is no possibility of a

general improvement while there is no system for educating these children. The absence of an educational programme for the black children who legally reside in an area constituting roughly three quarters of White South Africa cannot be justified.

To explain the absence of a system for the provision of education on the grounds that the farm population is not a permanent one is to fly in the face of facts. We have seen that of those surveyed 30 percent said the farm on which they worked was their real and only home, 60 percent had no intention of changing jobs and 29 percent said they intended staying on the farm they were on forever. One third of those who had another home only visited it once a year and could hardly have looked to that area for the provision of education for their children. Finally, half of those surveyed were under the age of 18 and were in the area not because they were farm labourers but because they were the dependents of workers living permanently on the farms.

3.0 HOUSING

Ninety eight percent of those interviewed lived on the farms on which they worked and thus required accommodation there.

Attitudes to housing farm labour and the actual physical facilities provided varied tremendously. On some farms we found houses costing over R10 000 which were rent free and on others labourers who lived off the farm and yet received no compensation in lieu of housing; we found houses with internal hot and cold water and households whose

water was fetched from a stream; we found farms where households were supplied with electricity and cooking fuel free of charge and others where employees were expected to supply all their own; we found houses with internal waterborne sewerage but also farms on which there was no provision of toilet facilities at all. On some farms there was a variety of accommodation provided - bachelor quarters or compounds, small semi-detached cottages and larger individual houses and on others there was only family accommodation or only 'bachelor' accommodation. In the coastal area all farmers interviewed provided some sort of housing for those resident on their farms, although not all their labour lived on the farm. In the midlands the range of housing was more varied and on many farms a considerable percentage, if not all, of the labour force was left to house themselves on the farm. The provision of housing is a relatively recent phenomenon in the midlands and tends to give rise to more problems than housing on the coast as there are very few farm labourers without families there and the families are significantly larger than those of coastal labourers (6.9 as opposed to 3.4 members).

Workers who are required to house themselves may or may not be supplied with building materials. A certain amount of materials was available free on every farm (poles, thatch, etc.) but some farmers supplied doors, windows, corrugated iron, etc. Workers who house themselves are almost all more spaciouly housed than those housed by the farmer and in some cases the accommodation could not be considered inferior. It is unlikely that a farmer would consider it economically justifiable to build a house large enough to accommodate more than 6 people in order to obtain one worker. Where, therefore, a worker's

family consists of more than 6 persons, he is virtually forced into accepting the responsibility of providing his own accommodation. The prevalence of large families in the midlands has probably discouraged many farmers from providing more housing for their labour.

We have seen that the labour force in the midlands is more settled than that on the coast. Thirty percent of those interviewed were born on the farm on which they were working and sixty percent had been on the farm for a minimum of ten years. Another sixty percent had no intention of changing jobs in the future. Such workers are far more likely to be prepared to build their own houses than a worker who only spends a couple of years on a farm as is often the case on the coast.

Sixty two and a half percent of midlands respondents said they had no other home whereas the majority of those on the coast either had another home in some homeland or intended building one there in the future. The fact that a worker had no alternate accommodation or likelihood of obtaining any would also make him more amenable to building a home for himself on the farm on which he was employed.

Despite the fact that farm workers in the midlands may expect to and be prepared to build their own houses, it seems iniquitous that having done so they might be dismissed and evicted from the farm without any compensation. The fact that they probably have no alternative and/or that evictions under these circumstances occur relatively seldom are the only possible explanation for the acceptance of this condition by labour.

Many farmers, particularly those on the coast, saw housing as their most important asset when it came to attracting labour. A typical comment was "If I could afford to build the houses I need, I could have an ideal and stable labour force". Generally the farmers appeared more concerned about labour housing than the people who lived in the houses, who seldom, if ever, made any reference to them. Other factors (mostly wages) loomed far larger in their lives and when they spontaneously mentioned acquiring or improving a home, it was their home "elsewhere" that they were referring to.

Although 10 percent of the farmers interviewed said they provided no housing, only 6,7 percent of the workers said that they were unhoused. There may well have been those who moved into houses built by previous employees who said they were housed, although the employer himself had not supplied anything. 12,5 percent of midlands workers said they were unhoused and 5 percent that they were supplied with some materials only. 21,4 percent of coastal workers said they were supplied with "large houses".

The cost of providing housing varied enormously and the age of the different houses needs to be taken into account if one wishes to establish an average cost in today's terms. The inclusion of plumbing and electricity greatly increases the cost of housing. Few of the older houses had plumbing or electricity and in fact many of the farms were only recently electrified. The determining factor in the provision of running water and sewerage was often the scarcity of water rather than cost. Water is obtained from dams, boreholes and

streams and except in the odd case where water is supplied by gravity, it requires pumping either by fuel or electricity. No farmer interviewed was able to put a cost on the supply of water, electricity or sewerage and the costs referred to below refer solely to the provision of housing.

Houses provided for labour varied in cost from R1 200 to R10 000 rand and varied in age from 7 years to 1 year. The average cost was R4 000 which of course takes no account of inflation or the age of the house.

The average unit was between 25 and 30 square metres and would today probably cost R100 per sq metre to replace without plumbing or electricity and R150 per sq metre with plumbing and electricity. The Land Bank evaluates farm housing at R80 per square metre unless it is a mere hut in which case it is evaluated at R50 per sq metre.

It would be impossible today to build anything other than the simplest shelter for less than R4 000 and where internal sewerage, water and electricity are required the minimum cost would be closer to R6 000.

Difficult as it may be to cost the housing for farmers, it is more difficult to put a value on it for the labour themselves. Any attempt to calculate an economic rental based on the cost of the house would put such accommodation way beyond the reach of the labourer. It is incomprehensible that someone earning a farm labourer's wage would be prepared to pay R60 per month for accommodation. Similarly, although the labour could accommodate themselves without any cash

outlay provided all the materials required were available locally, it would be unreasonable to place no value on housing which is supplied free of charge by the farmer.

Much of the housing supplied is very similar to that supplied by the government in townships. The current rental for such houses in Isithebe¹ is R14,40 per month. The rental includes a levy for garbage removal, road maintenance, school building etc. and thus only half or approximately R7 is rental for the house. Although this figure is in no way related to the cost of the housing and does not accurately reflect the input of the farmer, we have decided to add R7 per month to the income of farm labour where housing was supplied so that fairer comparison with incomes in the other two surveys in this study could be made. This of course makes no allowance for the great variation in housing supplied - from a simple core house consisting of foundation, water and roof to a fully electrified 6 roomed house - or for the fact that some farmers provided, in addition to a house, recreation halls with TV, sports fields, etc.

Few farmers seemed aware that there were regulations which laid down the standard of housing they were required to provide for their labour. Many of those who were aware of the regulations did not observe them. In view of prevailing conditions on farms, the fact that farmers find the financial burden of providing housing extremely heavy and the fact that none of the farmers interviewed mentioned having been able to obtain a loan to assist with housing, the

1. (2: page 92)

authorities and their regulations seem totally out of touch with reality and as a consequence have little influence. The only farmer who had actually had his housing condemned by Administration Board Officials was the one who overall undoubtedly provided the best accommodation surveyed! At the same time that he was being harrassed by the Administration Board officials for not complying with the letter of the law, he was being featured in two agricultural magazines as a paragon for supplying generally superior housing with internal water and electricity and beautifully maintained surrounds.

In agriculture, as in all other sectors of the economy, housing is inadequate and unsatisfactory. There are no public authorities responsible for supplying the infrastructure (e.g. water, electricity, roads) which increases the cost to the farmer considerably. It is clearly desirable that certain standards should be maintained but there is a need for these to be realistic and for funds to be made more readily available to those who wish to provide housing for agricultural labour. An alternate to relying solely on the farm owner to supply housing for all farmworkers would be to set aside conveniently placed areas where the farm workers themselves, the government, or indeed any interested party, could provide housing.¹

4.0 WATER AND SEWERAGE

Access to water varied from farm to farm and differences were reflected in the spontaneous answers respondents gave when asked what

1. See Chapter VI

employment benefits they received. 46.9 percent of coastal workers mentioned water as opposed to only 20 percent in the midlands. In the midlands 27.5 percent of respondents had no access to piped or stored water whereas this was true of only 8 percent on the coast. Overall 57 percent had access to communal taps and 23 percent had water laid on in their houses.

The provision of sewerage was very uneven. On the coast, while 35 percent had access to waterborne sewerage (0,1 percent in their houses), 27,6 percent had no sewerage facilities provided at all. Although only 5 percent in the midlands had waterborne sewerage, only 5 percent had no sewerage. The majority of toilets were pit latrines (85 percent in the midlands, 35 percent on the coast). The availability of adequate water is, apart from ingrained attitudes, a major constraint upon the provision of toilets.

Where respondents had access to communal water taps, we have added R2 to their monthly incomes and where they had an internal water supply, R4.

5.0 FUEL

While 42 percent of respondents (15 percent in the midlands) had electric lighting supplied only 5 percent had access to electricity for cooking purposes. 4 percent received cooked food, 22 percent were supplied with wood, 5 percent with coal or paraffin, while the majority collected their own firewood and a few bought paraffin. Sometimes the farmer supplied a tractor and trailer for those who were

gathering wood. Where electricity was supplied, it was sometimes free, sometimes subsidized and sometimes charged for in full.

We have added from R1 to R3 per month to the incomes of those who lived on farms where the houses were electrified depending upon the extent of the electrification.

6.0 RATIONS

Rations in one form or another were supplied by all farmers. The content however varied enormously and rations were not supplied to all employees. Rations were generally only supplied to permanent employees and then only to one member of a family regardless of how many members were in fact working on the farm. Where an employee was not accompanied by his family and lived in 'bachelor quarters' he generally was supplied with cooked food rather than rations. Wives, casual labourers or both tended to receive no rations at all. As the value of rations is in some cases equal to that of a salary, the variation in rations given and the selection of who is to receive rations have a significant effect on the true wage of the various employees. It is ironical that those who get no rations are usually the same people who are not housed, who get no paid leave and are paid least!

As the content and value of the ration pack varied greatly from farm to farm we have added to each respondent employee's income the cost of the rations supplied by his particular employer.

Where milk was supplied as part of the rations, we have valued the milk at 32c a litre - the price the farmer would have received for it had he sold it rather than supplied it as rations. If the worker had bought the milk he would have had to pay 64c for it, but as he would have probably not done so if he'd had his choice or at least bought a smaller quantity, it was considered more realistic to value it at the wholesale price.

The average ration supplied was valued at R411 per annum. On the coast the rations supplied differed little in content from farm to farm although the value ranged from R60 to R600. Most farmers supplied dry rations, meat and beer. One farmer provided only the excess vegetables he produced.

In the midlands the average ration pack was valued at R464 p.a. However a large part of this was milk which by choice the labour might not have purchased, particularly where they had their own cattle. The value of the ration pack decreases by R10 or R20 per month according to whether 1 or 2 litres of milk per day was supplied. On no midlands farm was meat a regular part of the rations. It was sometimes supplied when bull calves were slaughtered, as a reward for good work or for a 'Christmas treat' but labour could not rely on the farmer for a regular supply of meat. In most cases rations consisted of mealie meal and milk alone.

One farmer after consultation with his labour had done away with rations (apart from milk) and increased salaries accordingly. He

reported that the dire predictions of neighbours that all the additional income would be spent on alcohol while wives and children starved had not been fulfilled. Nevertheless most farmers, when asked whether they thought their labour appreciated the benefits they received or would rather receive cash in lieu thereof, replied that whatever the labour felt it was undoubtedly to the labourers' benefit to supply rations rather than money. Fifty percent reported that their labour had actually chosen benefits. Fourteen percent predicted that if salaries were increased in lieu of rations the money would simply be spent on alcohol.

The issue of rations versus cash is not as simple as it initially appears to be. Clearly it is paternalistic to unilaterally opt to spend a certain percentage of a man's income without consulting him, even if it is 'to his advantage'. Practically, however, by buying in bulk the farmer is able to obtain far better prices than his worker would on his own, particularly where the choice of shops is limited. Furthermore, in many cases the nearest store is some distance away and transport difficult to obtain and expensive. It is simply not feasible for the labourer to do all his own shopping, particularly when he has no refrigeration and storage of perishables is therefore impossible. A mobile store visited the farm where rations had been done away with three times a week and this fact may have influenced the workers' decision there. A further possible reason for farm labour preferring rations to cash is the fact that they are paid monthly and have very limited saving facilities. Many farm workers save with their employers, who are not prepared to cater for daily or

weekly withdrawals to suit the housewife. People with low incomes are unlikely to be able to budget successfully on a monthly basis - their lifestyle is far more suited to weekly budgetting. However, farmers (who are not selected for their ability or liking for bookwork) are unlikely to agree to pay their labour weekly.

Until wages increase and transport and storage improve or wages are paid weekly, rations are likely to remain a part of the wage structure on farms.

The respondents on the whole seemed happy with the situation - provided the rations were of a good quality and provided regularly. Over 75 percent said they preferred to receive rations rather than their cash equivalent. It was, however, considered unacceptable for the content of the rations to vary (except of course where farm produced vegetables etc. are included) or for the regularity of their provision to vary. Dissatisfaction was made clear where workers were uncertain when they would receive their rations.

Although a party to celebrate a good crop would no doubt be appreciated by labour, they resented it and felt they were being treated like animals when it was made clear to them that a particular ration (e.g. meat) was only provided when work was satisfactory, and not by right. The farmers made their own attitudes to such practices clear depending on whether they reported such a practice as constituting part of the rations or not.

7.0 MEDICAL CARE

The nature of medical attention available to farm labour depends largely upon the facilities available in the area in which the farm is situated. Where farms adjoin a town in which there is a provincial hospital, comprehensive services may be available for a minimal charge. On the other hand the farm may be situated many miles from any hospital or clinic and the only medical attention available may be from a private practitioner.

Provincial hospitals are of course few and far between and generally not available to farm workers except in emergencies. A farm worker may have access to a clinic but the supply of clinics in rural areas is totally erratic. There is no State policy which places clinics in rural areas. Where clinics are established by private bodies the State accepts a certain responsibility for salaries etc. but there is no attempt by the State to place clinics within a reasonable distance of all people. Farmworkers may benefit from the services of the KwaZulu Department of Health where the farm on which they live is close to an area of KwaZulu in which there is a clinic. As in the case of farmworkers using educational facilities in KwaZulu, although this is the logical and economic thing to do, it places a burden upon KwaZulu for which KwaZulu receives no compensation from Pretoria.

The availability of private practitioners is not something over which the farm worker or indeed anyone has any control. Where they are present in a district, their services will presumably be available to farm workers if they or their employers are able to meet the cost.

As is often the case in rural areas, the difficulties of getting to the nearest medical facilities often overshadow the costs or the inadequacies of the medical facilities themselves. Although farm workers are probably as badly off as anyone else when it comes to distance from medical facilities and availability of public transport to those facilities, they do have the great advantage of being able to call on their employer for transport, at least in emergencies. Indeed, a number of the farmers interviewed stated that they paid for no medical services for their employees but simply provided or subsidized transport to the nearest facilities. The employees themselves experienced a relief and security in relation to medical needs out of proportion to the minimal cost to the farmer.

As we have said, distances from the various facilities varied from farm to farm, but few had ready access. Eighty two percent of respondents were more than one and a half hour's walking time from a hospital and clearly would have needed transport in order to obtain attention. In the midlands only 10 percent were within one hour's walking time from a doctor. A higher percentage (44 percent) were this distance or closer to a doctor on the coast but only 10 percent were within 20 minutes walking time from a doctor. Clinics were the medical facility most readily available to farm workers - 50 percent of respondents were within 50 minutes of a clinic and 20 percent within 10 minutes (the clinic referred to in this case would have been a mobile clinic which would have visited the particular point once a month). Despite the distances only 15 percent of respondents

complained that the facilities were far way and that they had transport problems. Approximately half the respondents were taken to the doctor or hospital by the farmer and a third to the clinic. One third claimed they walked and the balance went by bus or taxi.

All farmers claimed to provide some assistance with medical expenses. The form this assistance took ranged from merely paying the compulsory Workmens' Compensation premium, through providing free transport to full medical coverage for the worker and his family. The costs varied accordingly and were naturally lower where the farmer had access to a conveniently situated hospital or clinic rather than a private practitioner. Where farmers gave medical costs, they averaged R13.88 per employee per annum. This figure does not include the cost of transport. Where full medical cover was provided by the farmer we have added R18 per annum to the employee's income. Where his medical costs were merely subsidized, we have added R12. Where transport alone was provided, R4 was added; where transport and hospital costs were provided, R8, and where clinic fees were provided, R2.

One third of respondents reported that the farmer paid their doctor's bills, one quarter that they paid their hospital bills and one fifth the clinic fees.

Seventy percent of respondents stated that the medical facilities in their area were good. The availability of high quality medical attention twenty four hours a day, through transport and credit supplied by the employer, results in a sense of security in the farm worker which is not significantly undermined even where the worker

knows that in the end he will have to pay for the attention. The relatively insignificant costs incurred by the farmer result in the removal of a fear - how to reach and pay for medical attention when required - which obsesses many rural people. Medical expenses are not something that can easily be budgetted for and emergencies require that the money be produced at short notice. Subsidization or credit supplied by the farmer mean the worker can be assured that he and his family will receive attention when required.

This relative security experienced by farm workers is, however, no excuse for the government to neglect to provide facilities for this section of the community, which is known to include many of the poorest members of society.

Despite their distances from areas of significant black settlement, just over one third of respondents stated that they consulted inyangas from time to time.

8. CATTLE HOLDING

None of the coastal farmers and only half of the midlands farmers reported that their employees were allowed to keep cattle. According to the employees themselves 3 percent of coastal workers and 52.5 percent of midlands workers were allowed cattle. One third of those allowed cattle were allowed as many as they liked while the rest were restricted to between 3 and 10 head. There was no charge for the privilege of cattle holding.

It is difficult to place a value on the right to keep cattle at ones place of employment. Not only does one need to place a value on the grazing and other facilities supplied by the farmer but one has to remember that where labour are allowed cattle their wages tend to be lower to compensate for this privilege and yet on no farm where cattle were allowed did all the labour have cattle. Permitting cattle holding certainly costs the farmer money but many reported great gains in labour availability and stability as a result.

No farmers on the coast allowed their labours to keep cattle and it is becoming decreasingly common in the midlands. Where the farmer has his own cattle there are two problems associated with labour keeping their own cattle. Firstly the carrying capacity of his farm (as far as the farmer is concerned) is reduced by the number of cattle his labour own. Secondly when a farmer has taken pains to obtain a disease-free herd his efforts will be in vain if his labour can bring their own untested animals onto his farm. No plan to keep the labour's cattle separate is ever 100 percent successful and moreover it would be uneconomic to do so. Farmers have come up with two solutions to his problem. Either they have taken away the right of their labour to own cattle or they have said they may have cattle but that their cattle must be drawn from the farmers herd and that no strange cattle may be brought onto the farm whether received as a result of a lobola transaction or purchase.

In almost all cases where cattle were allowed they ran with the farmers herd - they grazed the same veld or pasture, received the same

supplements, were dipped and inoculated with the farmers animals and when necessary received veterinary attention. When asked to put a price or the value of cattle holding, one farmer put it at R40 per animal per month and another at R2 per month. Both figures are unrealistic and where labour were allowed cattle we have added R5 per head per month to the income regardless of the assistance the farmer may or may not have offered in addition to permitting cattleholding.

As in most cases there was a limit on the number of cattle any labourer might have on the farm there was more pressure on the labourer to sell his cattle that is normally found in Zulu society. As a result the cattle held by farm labour are of greater value as a source of cash income to the labourer than to the average farmer in KwaZulu. Where a respondent sold cattle during the 12 months prior to the survey the price realized was added to his income.

On one farm the farmer had pointed out to his labour that although they were all allowed cattle in fact only some of them actually did have cattle and that therefore only part of the labour force benefitted in this way. He went on to point out that by allowing his labour to have cattle he was reducing the number of cattle his farm could support. He suggested that if the labour got rid of their cattle he could increase his herd and therefore his milk production by 10 percent. This would increase his income by 10 percent and he proposed therefore to increase everyone's wages 10 percent in lieu of the right to have cattle. The advantage he felt was that all the labour force would benefit equally whereas at present only some held

cattle. Despite the fact that everyone on the farm agreed to the proposal interviews with the labour on his farm produced the comment that the only way their lives could be improved would be by having their right to own cattle returned. Clearly the farmers who see the right to hold cattle as a means of attracting and keeping labour are not underestimating its importance. One farmer stated that he had to allow his labour to keep cattle because he couldn't afford to pay high wages.

9. SMALL STOCK

Eighty seven percent of respondents (100 percent in the midlands) were allowed to keep small stock.

10. ACCESS TO LAND

All midlands labour and half that on the coast had access to land. Half of those on the coast who had access to land and one third of those in the midlands only had vegetable gardens and the balance had fields of varying size with a significant number in the midlands saying that they could use as much land as they could. The midlands farmers tended to offer assistance to their employees with regard to ploughing, providing seed and fertilizer etc., whereas very few employees on the coast got any assistance from their employers.

11. CLOTHING

Clothing was supplied to 66 percent of those interviewed (85 percent

in the midlands and 65 percent on the coast). Ninety three percent of the farmers interviewed said they provided some clothing for some of their employees. In many cases clothing was only supplied for semi-skilled employees such as tractor drivers, dairy workers etc. but on other farms all workers were supplied with clothing. The clothing varied according to the task performed by the respondent and included cane smocks, overalls, trousers and jackets, boots etc. Hardhats, gloves, boots, waterproof trousers and jackets were supplied only when necessitated by the type of job being undertaken - weedicide spraying etc.

The cost of such clothing seldom exceeded R15 per worker per annum. The provision of work clothes does save the worker's own clothes and where clothing was supplied we have added R10 per annum to the worker's income.

12. SOCIAL SECURITY, CREDIT AND SAVINGS

Very different support systems from those operating in the homelands and townships were found to operate on the farms. When asked what they would do if they urgently needed cash, 90 percent of respondents stated they would borrow money from their employer. Only 4.3 percent said they'd approach a relative and 1.4 percent a fellow worker. 80 percent said they would approach their employer when asked what they'd do if they had no money or food.

Further evidence of reliance on the employer is seen in answer to the

question whether the respondent had credit facilities and with whom. Eighty five percent had credit facilities and 55 percent of those having access to credit obtained it from their employer. Almost all the balance obtained their credit from shops. Only one respondent obtained credit from the bank. Conversely of those who had savings 50 percent kept their savings in the bank. There were however significant differences between coastal and midlands farm labourers as far as credit is concerned. Twice as many midlands workers (80 percent) obtained credit from their employer as coastal workers did (44 percent). Most coastal workers obtained credit at the local store. With regard to savings, three quarters of midlands workers kept their savings in the bank and none with the farmer. On the coast savings were equally divided between the post office, the bank and the employer.

13 TRANSPORT

Transport does not play the significant role in the life of farm workers that it does in the life of rural or township dwellers. The worker does not require transport to work; as rations are usually supplied, he does not often require transport to the shop; educational facilities tend to be within walking distance or unavailable and finally the farmer frequently provides transport to medical facilities. (Migrant farm workers will of course need to make use of transport when returning home.) The result was that 84 percent of respondents used transport once a month or less. Three quarters of respondents used buses when they needed transport. 11.6 percent used trains and the balance taxis and private vehicles. The most common

reason for using transport was to go shopping (67.4 percent) and then to return home (13.0 percent). Although farm workers are not regular users of transport the availability of transport will affect the degree of isolation the farm worker may experience. We have seen that farmers felt that labour availability depended to some extent on access to shops, schools etc. The more isolated the farm the more difficult it is to obtain labour. The existence of regular transport services will go a long way to counter the effects of isolation.

14. SHOPS

Shops were surprisingly accessible to the farm workers interviewed. Eighty percent were within 30 minutes walking time of a shop and a similar number claimed to go to the shops once a week. Almost all (92 percent) respondents walked to the shops. The shops they referred to were in many cases 'tea rooms' or stores with an extremely limited range of stocks. This however was not as significant as it might have been had most workers not been supplied with rations.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The picture emerging from this survey is one of a number of separate and isolated communities. On each farm the workers and their dependents constitute a community which accords almost perfectly with the description of a "total institution" in which the dominant authority exercises a total regulation of inmates daily lives. In this sense the farm community is similar to that found on a mine where the employer orders the total lifestyle of the worker and his family and not only his working conditions. Bill Nasson in his Carnegie Conference Paper No. 97 : Bitter Harvest: Farm Schooling for Black South Africans deals at some length with the nature and effects of such institutions. Farm workers are dependent upon farmers not only for their jobs, but also for their housing and for any other amenities that may be available to them. Their mobility, both occupational and spatial, is virtually non-existent and life in the "total institution" induces in them a "crippling dependency" and tends to isolate them from competing claims. "Access to any palpable measure of autonomy, to any other identity, to any alternate definition of the social situation, is severely limited if not blocked off totally".¹ Even the influence of the state is barely felt in such communities. Legislation affecting employment on farms is extremely limited and the state takes no initiative in providing schooling, health care or any other facility. Even where the farm worker has a legal right - such as to a pension - the state often takes no active steps to ensure he

1. Nasson: Carnegie Conference Paper No. 97

can enforce this right.

The facts which distinguish the findings of this study from those of its two companion studies are not the degree of the farm workers' poverty or their limited access to basic amenities but their encapsulation in that poverty and their limited ability to influence their situation.

The study showed that the employer or dominant authority was the sole supplier of wage employment; that opportunities for generating income from any other source were extremely limited and might be prohibited; that the employer was the sole supplier of housing which remained his and therefore constituted no security to the farm worker; that the employer supplied the school, if any, and recreational facilities if any; and that the provision of other facilities, such as medical, transport and commercial ones were out of the hands of employer and employee alike.

Even in the work situation itself the farm worker is in an exceptionally weak position to exert any influence. Nicholas Haysom and Clive Thompson in their Carnegie Conference Paper No. 84 entitled "Farm labour and the law", set out the position clearly. They point out that recognising that an employment contract is anything but an "agreement between two equals" the state has "in the case of industrial workers historically intervened in recognition of the inequality of the employees' bargaining position and has acted to encroach the rights of employers and to prevent employees from accepting detrimental terms". By and large however farm workers have

been excluded from the protection of such legislation. Even with regard to the few rights they do have farm workers tend neither to have the means nor the knowledge to enforce them. Haysom and Thompson further point out that farm workers are unlikely to develop or acquire the powers of industrial trade unions in the near future. Farm work they explain tends to involve "small scale enterprises, feudal dependency relationships, lack of competitive education and training, and dispersed locations".

Apart from having little ability to influence their situation farm workers were seen to have very limited spatial or occupational mobility. Influx control prevents their movement into urban areas, labour legislation makes it difficult for them to obtain anything other than agricultural employment and their employment contracts make it illegal for them to seek alternate employment before the contract terminates when, in any case, they will have to return to their homeland to obtain permission to seek work. Reliance upon the current employer for housing for the worker and his dependents and possibly schooling etc also has a severely restrictive impact upon the workers' mobility.

There is a possible strategy which might simultaneously deal with a number of different problems associated with farm employment. The development of conveniently placed farm villages where farm workers could own or rent their own houses and in which basic amenities could be provided for the villagers would:

1. provide security to farm workers both during their working lives and retirement and allow them to build their own homes to their own requirements;
2. enable the state to provide schools, medical facilities, recreational facilities, water and electricity for the village inhabitants on the same basis as it does for other citizens;
3. create alternate opportunities for income creation for villagers which would be independent of the employer;
4. give farm workers a mobility and independence not available to those whose house is provided by their employer, and remove them from a situation in which the "total institution" invites dependence and demotivates people;
5. remove from farmers the responsibility for the "total care" of their employees which both increases the cost of food and leads to a tendency to reduce employment opportunities;
6. better enable farm workers to protect their rights as the village lifestyle and its independence would enable them to organize and protect their rights more easily. An accompanying relaxation of influx control regulations would enable all agricultural workers to be so by choice;
7. lead to a greater equality in incomes among farm workers. The survey showed that generally those who achieved high incomes on

the farms were those who left their dependents (or some of them) in the "homelands" or at their "other home". The creation of farm villages would lead to more dependents accompanying the worker to the work place which in turn would ensure a more equitable distribution of income within the family.

Who could be expected to motivate such a strategy? Farm workers themselves are voteless and cannot bring pressure to bear upon the legislature, nor do they have the "economic muscle" necessary to pressure their employers to motivate such a change. In the past farmers may have cherished their total power over and responsibility for their workforce. Today there is a tendency to see things somewhat differently and many farmers are unwilling and economically unable to bear this responsibility. It is unlikely however that naturally conservative farmers would individually initiate or motivate such a fundamental change. It might on the other hand constitute a challenge to organized agriculture to weigh up the costs and morality of the current system and then make recommendations.

The creation of farm villages would make possible the transfer of responsibility for the provision of amenities for farm workers from the farmer to the state. To date the state has been able to claim that it has no land in rural areas on which to provide such facilities or allow such development. It should be pointed out that this has never prevented the state from supplying facilities or allowing the development of freehold villages for whites in remote mining or agricultural communities. It has been the failure to declare group

areas in white rural areas for any other race groups that has prevented the development of facilities for other races. Although the white agricultural community alone could not change the existing situation it would seem that they alone could motivate the necessary political decision.

There will always be farm workers who have to (e.g. stockmen) or wish to live on the farms. Where there is an independent community of agricultural employees whose lifestyles can be used as a standard those who remain on the farms will have a yardstick by which to measure the adequacy of their own.

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