

SECOND CARNEGIE INQUIRY INTO POVERTY
AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The Politics of Production and
Community Development in Rural
South Africa

by

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THE POLITICS OF PRODUCTION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL SOUTH AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

The research findings on which many conclusions in this paper are based relate to 10 months research (1981-1983) in the Siphondweni district of the Makathini Flats, Northern Natal.¹ While some conclusions are specific to the research area, in a general way they have validity for most Black rural populations in South Africa. The research specifically concerned constraints on making a living in rural areas and the types of dependency and interdependency that develop out of the struggle for survival. The marginality of the rural economy was especially highlighted by the low agricultural yields achieved during the drought of 1982/83. The general reliance on migrant remittances and State pensions during the drought emphasized the extremely narrow range of entrepreneurial activities in rural areas. The lack of diversity in rural economies contributes significantly to their marginality and inability to recover from a crisis such as the drought. And it is within the context of the drought and the inadequate State infrastructure to cope with its devastating effects that development planning for rural areas in South Africa must now take place.

This paper focusses attention on some factors that militate against an increased productivity in the rural areas. In particular the paper argues that in explanations of rural community development "failures" too much emphasis is placed on local social and cultural obstacles rather than wider political, economic and planning constraints to development.

Rural development planning in South Africa today is ostensibly oriented towards the alleviation of rural poverty in its various guises, providing rural populations with alternative income opportunities to that of urban employment in the belief that this coupled with influx control legislation will check citiward migration.² The success of such development objectives ultimately rests on the recognition of existing avenues for, and constraints upon, making a living in rural areas, rural aspirations, the causes of rural poverty, and national and local strategies to cope with the human suffering and social dislocation usually associated with conditions of extreme poverty.

It is pertinent to suggest that much community development in South Africa has not fulfilled its planning objectives³ and to suggest further that planners have not always understood the communities for which they plan for, more importantly, the nature of rural poverty.

Essentially there are two broad theoretical perspectives that attempt to explain the root cause of poverty. Either one believes, as in modernization theory, that the poor are poor because they cannot take advantage of existing opportunities for self-advancement because of social values and attitudes that derive either from their cultural heritage⁴ or from their persistent poverty;⁵ or, conversely one believes that the poor remain persistently poor because too few opportunities exist for them to improve their lot and that avenues for self-advancement are historically linked to the advancement of the more privileged sector of society at the expense of the underprivileged,⁶ i.e. the cause of poverty is structural rather than cultural. Both these perspectives on poverty result in different strategies for community development. A modernization perspective, exemplified in South African planning by the Thorrington-Smith, Rosenberg and McCrystal report, thus seeks the solution to constraints on development in terms of educating the poor out of their socio-cultural attitudes.

"Just as their [the Zulu] social attitudes are a bar to agricultural progress, so too are they a bar to the rise of an entrepreneurial class, and therefore to the spontaneous emergence of non-agricultural activities, in the tribal context..... Economic growth cannot be sustained by traditional Zulu society in its pure form". 7

and

"Efforts have been made for over 40 years to improve the methods of individual farmers with barely encouraging results in the vast majority of cases. Because this is based on practices which are contrary to tribal norms, it can in fact run into considerable social resistance, including the intimidation of the individual farmer who is trying to better himself. Such efforts at individual advancement are seen by tribal society as being anti-social and therefore unacceptable". 8

Such cultural planning is, of course, part of our political socialization. Not only does it provide an erroneous basis for understanding social phenomena, it also throws up conservative, albeit perhaps well-intentioned, planners.

Culture is never static and planners should never ignore the historical context which gave rise to values which are always in the process of transformation. Thus, for example, Thorrington-Smith et al, see the current attitudes to land in KwaZulu as a traditional value that militates against economic development in KwaZulu. Essentially they associate attachment to land with strong family ties - especially between rural and urban populations - which are expressed in the ancestor cult and which result in small, fragmented estates which are unsuited to commercial farming. While there undoubtedly is a strong attachment to land and this can impede economic development, as Derman has pointed out "far from being intractably traditional, this condition is a response to the labour market and race discrimination system peculiar to South Africa. Historically, unskilled labour is retrenched during periods of economic recession. In South Africa, retrenched Black labour and the pensionless aged, who do not have urban rights, are thrown back on the land. The lack of security created in the urban areas encourages that safe-guards be found for well-defined rights in the rural areas. It is not the right to land but the exercise of the right that results in land/estate fragmentation, and the degree of fragmentation can be linked to relative insecurity in urban areas." ⁹

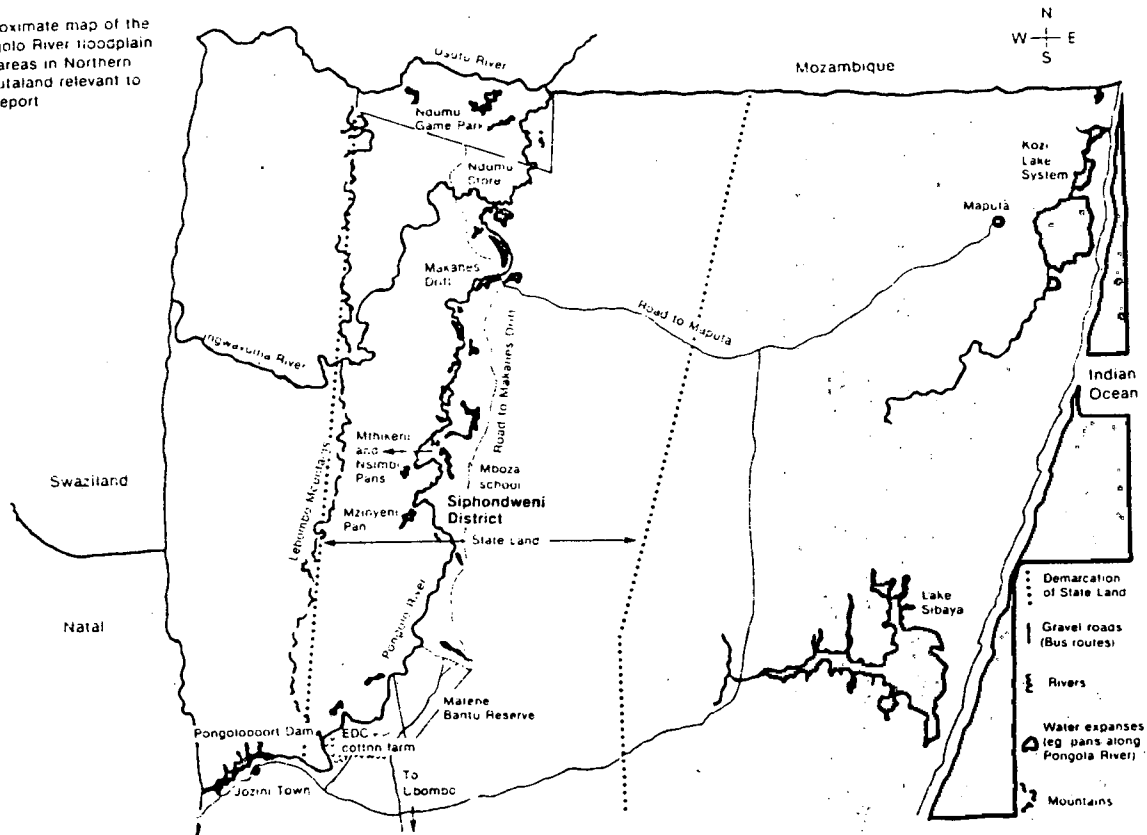
This insecurity is created by state legislation such as influx control and the Group Areas Act which forces people from different racial groups to reside in segregated areas. Certainly there is nothing specifically ethnic about the attitude of Black people to land in rural areas. To seek the solution to land fragmentation only at the attitudinal level, therefore, is to treat the symptom while ignoring the cause, and this of course is poor planning strategy. Certainly it begs the question of who is resisting whom and what is the basis for such resistance. In South Africa there is a very real need in development planning to move away from ahistorical models of society that encourage a perspective of normative value systems that stimulate or impede rural development. It is pertinent to suggest that in South Africa the nature of contact between White and Black peoples and the nature of political and economic domination have been instrumental in developing the so-called traditional value system we find today. Furthermore, while rural populations in South Africa experience much in common (e.g. poverty, malnutrition, fear of resettlement, labour migration and its associated social problems) they are by no means homogeneous. Variable levels in education, "wealth" and life experience all contribute to an increasingly heterogeneous population with disparate ideologies. In as much as poverty and opportunities for self-advancement are not equally felt nor similarly cognized, it cannot find a single solution.

Differential advantage will be taken of development inputs, and care must be taken to ensure that such inputs do not result in the uplifting of a few at the expense of the many.

It is clear, therefore, that planners should opt for a historical perspective that explains how the wider politico-economic system has shaped, and continues to shape, rural poverty and its concomitant socio-cultural responses, and ^{has} constrained avenues for making a living in rural areas. Strategies to alleviate poverty should appreciate the historical factors that contribute to the current situation of rural underdevelopment. Meaningful development in South Africa must anticipate a restructuring of society to facilitate more evenly distributed opportunities. However, the peaceful fulfilment of such an objective is not always clear. In urban industrial society trade unions are often seen as one mechanism for arbitration in redressing the balance of opportunity and securing for its members a more equitable redistribution of wealth. However, in the rural areas a similar line of action would be impossible for rural poverty does not necessarily stem from, and therefore cannot readily seek its solution in, the work situation. The question, then as to how rural populations can challenge the status quo, at least peacefully, is a perplexing one.

We now turn our attention to an analysis of factors that both constrain and promote alternative ways of making a living in rural areas of which the Siphondweni district of Northern Natal provides a specific example. In this we hope to provide some appreciation of the social and economic costs to Blacks of living in rural areas and to suggest that given the constraints on making a living in rural areas, migrant earnings are an essential feature in rural survival, innovation and enterprise. This is not to deny the thesis that migration is a selective process that removes crucial labour and managerial skills from rural areas and in this way contributes to the underdevelopment of these areas. Certainly strategies to alleviate rural poverty should not be founded on dualist economy models. In South Africa an urban/rural dichotomy is neither a social nor an economic reality. While historically labour offtake contributed to the underdevelopment of rural areas, today migrant earning coupled with urban experience are essential features of rural survival and economic self-advancement. ¹⁰ Indeed it is pertinent to note that in the Siphondweni district it is usually the case that the more economically successful entrepreneurs and people involved in self-help organizations live in a rural environment to escape the human degradation of face to face apartheid in South African cities.

Approximate map of the Pongolo River floodplain and areas in Northern Maputaland relevant to the report



While the Siphondweni district is in many ways typical of other Black rural areas in South Africa, it is atypical in three important ways.

(i) The Zulu Land Commission 1902-4 certified the area to be Crown land despite the fact that it had been inhabited by local people for several generations. As State land today, people have lived in fear of resettlement for 80 years. (ii) The soil is still relatively fertile and people have not yet subjectively experienced land scarcity. (iii) The Pongola River and its associated flood-pans provide an invaluable diet supplement to agricultural produce, and floodplain communities do not usually experience the hunger months or malnutrition levels found in other rural areas of South Africa. 11

COST OF LIVING IN SIPHONDWENI

Siphondweni district is linked to the urban centres of Ubombo, Jozini and Mkuze by a dirt road. The road is maintained with pick and shovel by the tribal authorities and this, in part, contributes to its poor condition especially during the summer rainy season. The condition of the road results in high vehicle operating costs (V.O.C.) The few privately-owned vehicles in the district are all associated with trading stores (both licensed and unlicensed) and V.O.C. are passed on to local consumers. Consequently the cost of living calculated in food and non-food essentials in Siphondweni is significantly higher than in neighbouring urban centres, and this does create a cash shortage within the community which militates against investment in capital projects. Thus, in licensed trading stores the average price differential over urban shops (e.g. Mkuze) range from 6% to 31% on staple foods such as maize (12.5kg) and sugar (2,5kg) respectively to 24% and 68% on non-food essentials such as washing powder and radio batteries respectively. Even postage stamps are marked up by 50% on their official value. The high mark up in rural shops is influenced by the lack of competition experienced by licensed store-owners. Licensing laws restrict legal store establishments to a 9km radius in rural areas and even so are reluctantly issued. The protection thus given to the trader entrepreneur is usually to the detriment of the community at large. Further it creates the need for, and dependency on, illegal (unlicensed) stores and vendors. The operating costs of illegal stores and vendors are higher than those of their legal counterparts. Not only do they store smaller stocks and have limited access to wholesalers, but they also run the risk of being raided and charged by the police. Such raids result in the confiscation of stocks and a fine in the magistrate's court. These costs are passed on to local consumers making shopping more expensive in illegal than in legal stores. For example, the price of brown bread is 13% - 17% higher in illegal stores than legal stores. However the risk involved in operating an unlicensed store discourages local entrepreneurs from investing in such establishments in sufficient number to meet the needs of a relatively scattered and economically differentiated population. This situation gives rise to monoprodukt entrepreneurs e.g. bread merchants, who hawk their product to more remote areas, and bi-weekly market traders who specialise in selling goods in smaller quantities than are usually sold in trading stores. Such vendors epitomize the plight of the more impoverished rural consumer for it is on the sale of very small quantities that the rural consumer is so disadvantageously placed relative to his

urban counterpart. For example, 85gm packets of sugar are marked up by 133% on the average rural price paid for 2,5kg of sugar which, as noted, is marked up by 31% on an urban price. We must clear here that the real cause of the high price paid for consumer goods in rural areas is the legal entitlements which restrict a person's access to such goods. The high cost of travel, partly attributed to the poor road condition and high V.O.C., precludes that rural people shop regularly in cheaper urban centres. In many ways therefore the trader entrepreneur in rural areas has a captive market and this market is further secured by licensing laws and, of course, influx control legislation. Thus a large percentage of the very poor do not receive the full benefit of a State subsidy on bread and maize even though the system was designed to meet this need.

However, the high cost of living in Siphondweni district is not confined to consumer goods. Families are obliged to contribute towards community buildings such as schools. In the rural areas of South Africa not only do parents contribute a significant proportion (usually 50%) towards the material costs of such buildings but they are under political pressure from local authorities to volunteer their unpaid labour as well. Furthermore, the cost of education and health in rural areas is extremely high. The lack of schooling facilities often requires that parents pay boarding fees to allow their children to attend schools. Unless a child boards with a kinsman such fees are out of all proportion to family incomes and this explains why families usually cannot afford to educate all their children equally - a situation that contributes to the vicious circle of unskilled labour, restricted wage-earning opportunities, low wages, and unequal access to education. Unequal access to education in rural areas should be seen in the wider context of State expenditure on education. In South Africa expenditure on education, like all aspects of South African society, is determined according to race. Thus the Buthelezi Commission reports :

"Different conditions apply to attendance at school for the different population groups. White South Africans obtain free compulsory education to age 16. Indian South Africans to 15 and coloured South African to 12. For Black South Africans there is no general system of compulsory free education". 14

Although the per capita ratio of State expenditure on education has closed in the past decade from 18 (White) to 1 (Black) in 1970/71 to 6.5 (White) to 1 (Black) in 1980/81,¹⁵ such statistics can be misleading in that White education no longer requires substantial capital expenditure on educational infrastructure (e.g. school, university, technical college buildings and equipment).

Furthermore, rural children do not receive a similar quality of education to their urban counterparts, both Black and White. Black rural schools and homes are not electrified. Not only does this usually restrict lesson preparation and study to daylight hours, but scholars are required to gain a knowledge of concepts/^{associated} with western industrial society of which they have no first-hand experience. Equally rural teaching and living conditions militate against attracting well-qualified teachers and preclude that even dedicated teachers maintain a high standard in lesson preparation.¹⁶ Since teachers are generally poorly qualified they cannot demand high salaries. Consequently they cannot afford servants and must therefore spend after school hours in domestic chores. This necessarily detracts from their teaching effort and from their involvement in community and even school affairs. Thus it is only schools that can attract teachers on a vocational basis i.e. through religious affiliation, that secure a staff both qualified and motivated to meet the demands of matric education.¹⁷ This point is well demonstrated by the 1982 matric performance of schools in Ubombo circuit of which Siphondweni district is a part. Star of the Sea, a mission school, restricted its matric intake in 1982 to 15. Fourteen (93.3%) passed (of which 11 obtained school leaving certificates and 3 gained university entrances). On the other hand Ingwavuma (51 students) and Mangwazana (107 students) achieved only 21,6% and 20,6% matric pass rates respectively, none of the matric passes gaining a university entrance.

Another factor that influences performance in rural schools is that end-of-year examinations coincide with peak labour periods in the agricultural cycle. School children are often removed from school at this crucial stage to work in family fields. Certainly it is pertinent to suggest that administrators consider replanning school terms for rural areas to accommodate agricultural endeavour and simultaneously improve the performance of rural scholars. It is clear, then, that rural scholars are a disadvantaged category. These inequalities are reflected in the type of employment and post school training opportunities open to rural scholars. Despite the facts that merely to pass matric for a Black rural scholar is a meritorious achievement that indicates a learning ability 70% of his/her classmates, the rural scholar is expected to rise above his learning conditions to achieve a pass parity with privileged scholars to compete for a place in post school training institutions. Consequently not only must parents pay exorbitantly to educate their children, but children are unlikely to find employment that is sufficiently secure and remunerative to recoup the cost of their education.

A similar case could be made concerning the cost of health in rural areas. However, such calculations should not be made simply in terms of clinic or hospital fees.¹⁸ Access to health care is associated with high transportation costs. This is particularly true in cases of emergency. Thus in Siphondweni district in 1981 the charge for transporting a sick person to the nearest hospital was approximately R50; and in cases of hospital deaths the fee for transporting the corpse home was standardised at R140, or a cow. These charges are influenced by demand and whether the journey is undertaken during daylight hours or at night. During the cholera epidemic of 1983 vehicle hire charges rose dramatically, and in one case of a night-time emergency a charge of 5 goats (approximately R200) was levied for transporting a patient to the nearest clinic some 20km away. Such exorbitant costs result in many sick people delaying hospital or clinic visits. This affects the homestead economy adversely by increasing the ratio of dependent consumers to effective production.

Clearly, then, the high costs of store-bought goods, education, and health care are all factors which create a ready cash shortage within the rural community. There is thus limited cashable assets to invest in capital projects. This partly explains why one encounters a very small range of entrepreneurial activity in rural areas and why the most successful entrepreneurs come from outside the communities from which they make their living.

MAKING AND NOT MAKING A LIVING IN SIPHONDWENI

Under present conditions very few people in Siphondweni can make a living out of a single enterprise. If families are to survive, labour must be deployed on more than one front. This usually involves migrant remittances (or State pensions) coupled with subsistence agriculture or small surplus agriculture coupled with some form of entrepreneurial activity. Consequently large families that have a favourable balance of producers to consumers are better able to deploy their labour more effectively than are small families who are inevitably being drawn into a deeper cycle of poverty. It is the larger families which are able to utilize migrant earnings to establish themselves in small scale entrepreneurial activities.¹⁹ However, generally the community has not as yet realised its full agricultural potential for a number of reasons.²⁰ (i) Other than for cattle offtake there is no State subsidised market infrastructure. Since many people

cultivate the same crops the local market is incapable of absorbing all the surplus produce. (ii) Farmers have no ready access to correct farming methods, improved seed, fertilizer, or insecticide. Yields are consequently low in terms of labour input. (iii) Existing farming technology is extremely intensive and this precludes the vast majority of farmers from working their holdings to their full extent. Thus while farms might objectively be too small to be commercially viable for certain crops, this is not subjectively felt by Siphondweni farmers. Thus a survey to monitor land utilization of 130 fields belonging to 25 homesteads showed that only one homestead worked their field allocation to its fullest extent in the summer of 1981. An important consideration in this regard is a general lack of draft animals. Some 77,5% of families are obliged to hire ploughing. The scarcity of draft animals is compounded by a cattle offtake via government organized stock auctions.²¹ Such auctions are the only serious state infrastructure into agricultural 'development' in the Siphondweni district. The lack of State aid to Black farmers contributes significantly to the marginality of their livelihood. The Black farmer's livelihood, at best always marginal, is today even more at risk because of the drought. Black farmers, unlike their White counterparts, do not receive any drought relief loans or any other government handout to sustain production into the next season. Even if good rains ended the drought it would be impossible for Black farmers to continue farming without considerable financial and technical aid. Oxen have been weakened by inadequate grazing and farmers could not take advantage of early rains. Further, many farmers were forced by the economic situation to sell oxen. Consequently less well-off farmers will experience even greater difficulty in hiring ploughing i.e. if they could afford ploughing fees in the first place. Even if farmers do succeed in ploughing their fields, fields will be planted with seed purchased from local trading stores and there is no guarantee that such seed will germinate. Such a situation would, of course contribute to an already critical state of poverty, hunger and ill-health.

The narrow range of entrepreneurial activity (trade, beer-brewing, religion, farming) in Siphondweni is not explained by reference to economics alone. An important explanatory factor here is local perceptions and life experience. This should not be misinterpreted as cultural conservatism. All people interviewed indicated a willingness to accept development inputs, although many experienced difficulty in articulating possible solutions to their situation. In an earlier study Derman and Poultney (1983) report that the high cost of travel effectively limits the mobility of community members and this necessarily restricts the diffusion of new ideas and world knowledge

into and within the community. This is particularly true of women and children who generally lack the urban experience associated with male labour migration. It is little wonder therefore that a small electrified (and therefore visible at night) centre like Jozini with one general dealer, a butchery, a bakery, and a filling station is dubbed 'little Johannesburg' by local women. Other than in the field of religion, beer drinking or monoprodukt trading it is always men who are engaged in entrepreneurial activities. A follow-up study of perceptions of wealth and development indicated that while the crude distinction on the basis of sex and migrancy still held true, it could none-the-less be refined. Generally women's perception of wealth did not go beyond the ability to buy consumer goods such as bags of maize, tinned food and clothing. Even when they stated they would invest new-found wealth in livestock, it was clear that such investment was directed not towards animal husbandry but that stock could be consumed in times of need. Thus 82% of the women surveyed (sample II) identified wealth only with consumer goods. Of the 18% who correlated wealth and production, all but one saw production in terms other than agriculture or sewing. The one exception said she would like to build a store but she had no idea what she would trade in. While these perceptions are undoubtedly related to domestic roles in the sexual division of labour, it is important to analyse local labour roles and perceptions thereof within the wider context of South Africa's market economy. Further, while women usually identified a major community need as water, their solution to water problems did not extend to making water more easily available only more plentiful i.e. more water in the river even though some homesteads are located 8 km from the river. On the other hand 77% of the men surveyed in sample II identified wealth primarily with production e.g. the ability to invest in farming equipment, stores, taxi services etc. However, certain migrant conditions were found to be more conducive than others in identifying areas for possible capital investment and community development. Thus, for example, migrants working and living in towns were much more forthcoming with ideas than were migrants who worked on farms or lived in hostels. Further, in general, school education when experienced only in rural schools was insufficient in itself to generate new ideas about capital investment and community development. The limitations of a rural school education is also reflected in the narrow range of career choice among more senior students.²² One factor involved in a sex and life experience correspondence in rural areas is the labour market in South Africa which clearly favours men. Further when women leave rural areas to seek work in urban centres this often results in emigration from the rural area. A correlation between

perceptions and life experience has serious implications for any future development of the more remote rural areas. This is particularly the case if a development emphasis is given to community self-help projects. In this vein Derman has noted for Swaziland that : "Difficulty in motivating peasant communities towards change usually results in a positive and perhaps over-zealous administrative response to self-help or community motivated development projects. Although one must be careful not to overstate the case, it must be emphasized that self-help projects develop from a community's world-knowledge and out of a history of what projects might be expected to gain government support. Both these factors place definite limitations of scope on self-help projects and this suggests that the motivation, energy and capital expenditure involved in self-help projects could be employed more fruitfully." 23

CONCLUSION

It must be stressed that rural areas in South Africa today are in a state of crisis. The depth of this crisis can perhaps be gauged by the fact that a pensioner with a pension of R31 per month payable every second month is considered relatively well off and a target for loans in rural areas. This was particularly evidenced during the drought of 1983, when many homesteads actively attempted to recruit pensioners into their ranks. Given the tremendous dependency on pensions it is worth noting that it is common cause that in rural areas neither local authorities nor magistrates work zealously to register pensions for all entitled to one. And the economic misery of rural populations is worsening. Without harvests they are obliged to buy staple foods at local stores where prices are high relative to urban store prices. Further, the drought has not only affected rural production and consumption, it has made serious inroads into community health and, as has been established, health in rural areas is a costly commodity. Today such costs can only be met by pensions or migrant remittances. Thus the economic effects of the drought have been further exaggerated by the economic recession in South Africa. Rural communities in South Africa have shown a remarkable ability to survive despite limited outside aid. However, rural survival strategies, imaginative as they are, are restricted by the marginality of the rural economy even in good years. And this is the real issue. Relief programmes must necessarily be coupled with more positive rural development planning. Rural areas should not be regarded as holding areas securing a Black population in

subsistence agriculture. If rural areas in South Africa are to be developed, development planning must be redirected. Current development thought in South Africa, caught up as it is in cultural planning, subsistence agriculture and providing for minimum basic needs through appropriate technology, does not address itself to the real issues that concern making a living within the constraints of apartheid society. State spending in rural areas is grossly inadequate and misdirected. State spending and the way budgets are apportioned do suggest that there is little interest in the transformation of rural society and rural life. The major thrust appears to be towards a holding operation, stemming the tide to urban centres, and this can hardly be construed as development.

The question that must now be posed is can rural areas in South Africa be developed or has their under-development reached a stage of no return. It seems clear to us that if development thinking occurs within a dual economy framework, then indeed the rural crisis in South Africa will deepen.

However, if planners accept that most rural families survive only because of migrant remittances, then attention must be given towards developing the human potential of rural populations to allow people to compete more effectively on the South African labour market and thus break away from the vicious poverty cycle of unskilled labour, low wages, limited education opportunity and ill-health. Clearly a priority in rural planning must concern the upgrading of educational facilities and skills in rural areas.

This challenge can only be met if there is a more equitable distribution of energy within South Africa. Rural schools represent large concentrations of people. It is difficult, therefore, to make a case other than one based upon blatant racial discrimination and a conscious desire to keep rural populations as a pool of unskilled cheap labour, that such large population concentrations should not receive electricity. It is perhaps typical of State values that finances are made available to resettle, involuntarily, the inhabitants of an area 30 km N.E. of Siphondweni that has recently been proclaimed a nature reserve and to protect its small herd of elephant with and electrified fence despite no electrification in Black rural schools.

Further, positive rural development must allow for the learning of new skills to stimulate entrepreneurial activity and thus lessen the dependency of rural communities on urban centres. At present little cash circulates within the community. Rural communities are dependent on urban goods and skills. These are expensive relative to rural income and this creates

a cash drain from rural areas into urban centres and into the hands of prosperous traders. However, in setting up such enterprises care must be taken to reconcile an entrepreneurial role with community development. It is clear that in the Siphondweni district entrepreneurs do not always act in the best interests of the community within which they make their living. A further consideration in setting up business enterprises in rural areas is the fact that local entrepreneurs are likely to be middle-aged semi-literate and have limited skills. Consequently small enterprises such as carpentry, sheet-metal works, welding, sewing etc. would soon saturate local markets unless there was an inflow of new ideas and skills into the business. This can be met by setting up such enterprises as training centres. This would allow members to receive further training without necessarily jeopardising the flow of goods from such centres. It would also allow school leavers who do not yet have the responsibilities associated with parenthood to receive training which would expand local markets through higher skills. In this way rural communities would not be captive to the entrepreneur, they would gradually become less dependent on urban manufactured goods and skills, cash would circulate more freely within the community, and skilled individuals would have the choice of remaining in a rural area or seeking secure, better-paid employment in urban cities.

Finally, having identified a need for increasing the world-knowledge of rural communities, it is imperative that development strategies be aimed in this direction. This would necessarily entail expanding the mobility opportunities for community members and establishing learning centres for the dissemination of ideas among the less mobile sectors within the community. Increased mobility is also important in identifying boundaries and perceiving exploitation. While many community problems stem from the way rural communities were historically articulated into the wider economic and political system, our research suggests that rural people identify their difficulties and lack of development with administrative personalities and not the State, with Afrikaners as an ethnic group stereotype and not capitalism. Perceptions of boundaries and exploitation do affect a community's response toward remedying their situation, of challenging the status quo in South Africa and receiving a greater share of its economic cake.

FOOTNOTES

1. Research was funded by the Human Sciences Research Council. One of the authors, Poultney, C. has been engaged in regular research in and around the Makathini Flats since 1978. The statistical data provided here is based on two samples. Sample I is a 10% random sample of the 842 homesteads within the Siphondweni district. Sample II concerns 65 homestead case studies selected for their proximity to natural resources. These case studies have been monitored from 1978-1983. The research into Siphondweni is ongoing.
2. Essentially influx control in South Africa, through the Black Urban Areas Consolidation Act of 1945, restricts urban residential entitlement to Blacks who qualify under one of the following conditions. (i) birth in a prescribed urban area. (ii) working for one employer for 10 years (iii) legal residence in a prescribed urban area for 15 years or (iv) being the wife or unmarried dependant of a man who has urban rights. For a detailed account of influx control see Nicholson, J. Pass Laws and the Policy of Influx Control in South Africa with Special Reference to Work-seekers. South African Institute of Race Relations, Natal Coastal Region, Information Sheet. No. 4/81. N. D.
3. Conversely one could argue that within the South African context the under-development of rural communities to provide a cheap unskilled labour pool was an early planning objective. See, for example, Wolpe, H. The theory of internal colonialism : the South African case in Oxaal, I, Barnett, T. and Booth, D. (eds) Beyond the Sociology of Development. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1975.
4. See for example, Foster, G.M. : Peasant society the "Image of Limited Good" American Anthropologist Vol. 67, 1965; Foster, G.M. : A second Look at Limited Good. Anthropological Quarterly, Vol 45, 1972 and Rogers, E. Modernization Among Peasants. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969.
5. c.f. Concept of a 'culture of poverty' as exemplified in the work of Lewis O.
6. See, for example, Acheson, J.M. Limited good or limited goods? Responses to economic opportunity in a Tarascan Pueblo. American Anthropologist, Vol. 74, 1972; Bundy, C. The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry. Heineman, London 1979. and Hutton, C. and Cohen, R. African peasants and resistance to change; a reconsideration of sociological approaches, in Oxaal, J. et al. (eds) 1975 op. cit.
7. Thorrington-Smith, Rosenberg and McCrystal, Toward a Plan for KwaZulu: A Preliminary Development Plan. KwaZulu Government 1978 p. 92
8. *ibid.* p 96. Anti-social behaviour is usually associated with the prevailing witchcraft belief system. However, as Derman, P.J. has shown anthropological research suggests that witchcraft beliefs impede rural innovation and entrepreneurial activities only in situations of relative deprivation when the belief system provides a measure of security against intra-community exploitation in the competition for scarce resources. Small-holding farming : objectives and issues. Transkei Development Review Vol 1 1981 p. 21 The community response to the entrepreneur is

influenced by the way he or she accumulates and redistributes wealth and employs labour. This is succinctly argued by Hart, K: Swindler or Public Benefactor - the Entrepreneur in his Community, in Goody, J. (ed) Changing Social Structure in Ghana : Essays in the Comparative Sociology of a New State and an Old Tradition. International African Institute, London 1975.

9. op. cit. p. 20. Walker, C. estimates that in Natal alone 450,500 people have been relocated into KwaZulu under the apartheid regime. Walker, C. A Process of Dispossession : An Overview of Relocation in Natal. AFRA Special Report No. 3. 1982. Pietermaritzburg.
10. Migrancy in the research area increased during the drought from 55% in 1978/79 to 84% in 1983. (Sample II) Migrancy in 1981 (Sample I) was 56%.
11. For a more detailed account of the ecosystem and its importance in local diet see Bruton, M.N. and Cooper, K.H. (eds) Studies on the Ecology of Maputaland. Rhodes University, Grahamstown and Natal Branch of the Wildlife Society, Cape and Transvaal Printers.
Felgate, W. : The Tembe Thonga of Natal and Mozambique : an Ecological Approach. Department of African Studies, University of Natal, 1982.
Poultney, C. : Man and the Pongola Floodplain. Part 2 : Subsistence and the Utilization of Resources by the Inhabitants of the Mthikeni/Nsambi Pans Region of the Pongola Floodplain. Human Science Research Council 1982 (Report S-N- 196).
12. Mkuze is a small town approximately 70km from Siphondweni. It consists of a garage, wholesaler, hotel, general dealer, hardware shop, bottlestore, butchery, bank and post office. All stores are White-owned and depend on Black custom. With the exception of the garage all stores are owned by the same family.
13. Because the job market in South Africa favours males, girls are not always educated through high school. Indeed they come under considerable pressure to get married so that families can avoid having to make the unpleasant decision of removing a keen student from school because they cannot afford the cost of her education.
14. The Buthelezi Commission Vol. 1 p. 73 H and H Publications, Durban. 1982.
15. Schlemmer, L. Analysing Change in South Africa. Indicator South Africa: Political Monitor. Vol 1 No. 1 pp 3-6.
16. Only 4 of the 11 teachers at Mboza Higher Primary and Lower Secondary school (approximately 700 pupils) had any formal teaching qualification.
17. Matric is the final year of school in South Africa.
18. Clinic costs are high relative to local wages. Thus people employed as casual labourers by more affluent local farmers receive a daily wage of approximately R1 (1984). A clinic consultation costs R2 while admittance to hospital costs R10. One Rand (R1) is approximately equal to one American dollar.
19. See Poultney op. cit.

20. See Derman, P.J. and Poultney, C : The Social Dynamics of Smallhold Farming in the Siphondweni District of the Makathini Flats, Human Sciences Research Council (Report S-92) Pretoria.
21. Derived from Sample I. Sample II showed that only 21,5% of the homesteads surveyed had sufficient cattle to make up a team of oxen. Further 67% of the farmers who owned oxen (Sample I) also sold cattle at auctions.
22. See Derman and Poultney (op. cit).
23. 1981 op. cit. P.21.

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