

SECOND CARNEGIE INQUIRY INTO POVERTY
AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The nutritional status of adults
in parts of KwaZulu and Natal

by
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It has now been realised that there is shortage of data on the nutritional status of adults in South Africa. When food is scarce, most adults put children first and go without food.

Unlike children, whose growth charts are a valuable index, adults come in all shapes and sizes, making the assessment of nutritional status difficult. In this survey, of part of rural Kwazulu, the author has used the following parameters:

- (a) Weight for height
- (b) Arm circumference
- (c) Tricept Skinfold Thickness
- (d) Arm muscle area
- (e) Dietary Informantion.

Some of the parameters are more sensitive than others; however, it is clear that there are varying degrees of malnutrition in the rural areas of Kwazulu and Natal. The situation is worse among pensioners, a great percentage of whom are very undernourished. There are a few individuals who were exhibiting overt signs of malnutrition in the form of a pellagrous skin rash.

On the other side of the scale, obesity among women is very prevalent. The author recalls at least five women who could not even be weighed on account of extreme obesity.

PERCENTAGES OF EXPECTED WEIGHTS FOR HEIGHTS.

| LESS THAN | 60% OF STD. | 60-70 OF STD. | 70-80 OF STD. | 80-90 OF STD. | 90-110 OF STD. |
|------------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| KWA-MBONAMBI | 1 | 1 | 4 | 12 | 27 |
| ETETE | 1 | 1 | 2 | 20 | 27 |
| ESHOWE | 2 | 1 | 3 | 12 | 30 |
| EMPANGENI | 2 | 1 | 6 | 19 | 56 |
| STANGER - LOWER TUGELA | 0 | 4 | 11 | 23 | 59 |
| MATUBA | 1 | 1 | 1 | 20 | 46 |
| MATUBA RIVERVIEW | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 23 |
| MTUNZINI | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | 19 |
| MTUNZINI PENSIONERS | 3 | 6 | 22 | 39 | 74 |
| PONGOLA | 3 | 1 | 4 | 14 | 40 |
| PONGOLA PENSIONERS | 1 | 3 | 18 | 19 | 35 |
| PONGOLA SECONDARY SCHOOL. | - | - | - | 8 | 45 |
| TOTALS | 15 | 20 | 73 | 195 | 481. |

TOTAL : 1187

PERCENTAGES OF EXPECTED WEIGHTS FOR HEIGHTS.

| | NOS. | % OF TOTAL POPULATION |
|---------------|------|-----------------------|
| LESS THAN 60% | 15 | 1,3 |
| 60 - 70 | 20 | 1,7 |
| 70 - 80 | 73 | 6,1 |
| 80 - 90 | 195 | 16,4 |
| 90 - 110 | 481 | 40,5 |

COMPARISON OF PENSIONERS WITH THE LOCAL GENERAL ADULT POPULATION.

| GROUP / POPULATION N. | 80% WT/HT | % | 80 - 90 | % |
|-------------------------|-----------|----|---------|------|
| MTUNZINI 48 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| MTUNZINI PENSIONERS 225 | 31 | 14 | 39 | 17 |
| PONGOLO/UBOMBO 169 | 8 | 7 | 14 | 12,8 |
| PONGOLA PENSIONERS 93 | 22 | 24 | 19 | 17 |

OBESSE - (GREATER THAN 140% OF EXPECTED WEIGHT)

| | 20 - 40% OVERWEIGHT | N. | 40% | OVERWEIGHT. |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----|-----|-------------|
| KWA-MBONAMBI | 7 = 10% | 69 | 4 | = 8% |
| EFETE | 8 = 11% | 72 | 6 | = 8% |
| ESHOWE | 18 = 18% | 99 | 13 | = 13% |
| EMPANGENI | 12 = 10% | 117 | 11 | = 9% |
| LOWER TUGELA | 8 = 6,5% | 122 | 9 | = 5% |
| MATUBA | 17 = 16% | 107 | 9 | = 8% |
| MATUBA - RIVERVIEW. | 12 = 22% | 55 | 6 | = 19% |
| MTUNZINI. | 10 = 21% | 48 | 4 | = 8% |
| MTUNZINI PENSIONERS | 39 = 17% | 225 | 20 | = 8% |
| PONGOLA | 14 = 13% | 109 | 13 | = 12% |
| PONGOLA PENSIONERS | 9 = 10% | 93 | - | - |
| PONGOLA SECONDA- RY SCHOOL | 6 = 8% | 71 | 3 | = 4% |
| <u>GRAND TOTAL</u> | = 1187 | | | |
| TOTAL | = 20 - 40% OVERWEIGHT | = | | 13% |
| | 160 | = | | 8% |
| GREATER THAN 40% OVERWEIGHT | = 98 | = | | 8% |
| TOTAL OVERWEIGHT | = 160 + 98 = 258 | = | | 22% |

TSF (TRICEPS SKIPOLD)

| PLACE | PERCENTAGE OF STANDARD | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----|-----|
| | 75% | 80% | 90% |
| KWAMBONAMBI | 36 | 3 | 6 |
| EMPANGENI | 67 | 17 | 13 |
| ETETE | 39 | 23 | 3 |
| ESHOWE | 18 | 24 | 15 |
| MATUBATUBA | 33 | 19 | 27 |
| MATUBA RIVERVIEW | 6 | 14 | 8 |
| LOWER TUGELA | 61 | 31 | 16 |
| MTUNZINI | 21 | 12 | 4 |
| MTUNZINI PENSIONERS | 117 | 41 | 26 |
| PONGOLA/UBOMBO | 39 | 26 | 26 |
| PONGOLA PENSIONERS | 61 | 18 | 5 |
| PONGOLA SEC SCHOOL | 45 | 10 | 12 |
| TOTALS | 543 | 238 | 161 |

AS PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL SAMPLE :

N = 1187

LESS THAN 75% OF STANDARD 543 : 45,7%

LESS THAN 80% OF STANDARD 238 : 20,0%

LESS THAN 90% OF STANDARD 161 : 13,6%

COMPARISON OF PENSIONERS WITH THE GENERAL ADULT POPULATION

| POPULATION | N | PERCENTAGE OF STANDARD. | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----|-------------------------|----|----|----|----|------|
| | | 75 | % | 80 | % | 90 | % |
| MTUNZINI | 48 | 21 | 44 | 12 | 25 | 4 | 8 |
| MTUNZINI PENSIONERS | 225 | 117 | 52 | 41 | 18 | 26 | 11,5 |
| PONGOLA/UBOMBO | 109 | 39 | 36 | 26 | 24 | 26 | 24 |
| PONGOLA PENSIONERS | 93 | 61 | 66 | 18 | 19 | 5 | 5 |

ARM MUSCLE AREA (A M A) CM³.

| STANDARD | MEN | WOMEN |
|----------|-----|-------|
| | | 56 |

RESULTS:

| AREA | 75% | 80% | 90% OF STANDARD |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-----------------|
| KWA MBONAMBI | 32 | 11 | 16 |
| ETEYE | 39 | 23 | 3 |
| ESHOWE | 18 | 24 | 15 |
| EIPANGENI | 67 | 17 | 13 |
| LOWER TUGELA | 61 | 31 | 16 |
| MATUBATUBA | 33 | 19 | 27 |
| MATUBATUBA RIVERVIEW | 6 | 14 | 14 |
| MTUNZINI | 21 | 12 | 4 |
| MTUNZINI PENSIONERS | 117 | 41 | 26 |
| PONGOLA | 39 | 26 | 26 |
| PONGOLA PENSIONERS | 61 | 18 | 5 |
| PONGOLA SEC SCHOOL | 45 | 10 | 12 |
| | 540 | 246 | 117 |

MID - ARM CIRCUMFERENCE.

PERCENTAGE OF STANDARD.

| PLACE | ≤ 75% | ≤ 80% | ≤ 90% |
|----------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| KWA-MBONAMBI | 12 | 4 | 23 |
| ETETE | 15 | 5 | 28 |
| ESHOWE | 9 | 3 | 36 |
| LOWER TUGELA | 22 | 14 | 40 |
| MATUBATUBA | 19 | 8 | 43 |
| MATUBATUBA RIVERVIEW | 2 | - | 18 |
| MTUNZINI | 2 | 3 | 12 |
| MTUNZINI PENSIONERS | 10 | 40 | 80 |
| PONGOLA/UBOMBO | 2 | 21 | 36 |
| PONGOLA PENSIONERS | 9 | 34 | 26 |
| PONGOLA SEC SCHOOL | 4 | 3 | 46 |
| <u>TOTALS</u> | <u>106</u> | <u>135</u> | <u>388</u> |

AS PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL SAMPLE :

N. = 1187

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|---|-----|
| LESS THAN 75% OF STANDARD | 106 | : | 9% |
| LESS THAN 80% OF STANDARD | 135 | : | 11% |
| LESS THAN 90% OF STANDARD | 388 | : | 33% |

COMPARISON OF PENSIONERS WITH THE LOCAL ADULT POPULATION..

| POPULATION | N. | PERCENTAGE OF STANDARD. | | | | | |
|----------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|------|------|------|----|
| | | ≤ 75 | % | ≤ 80 | % | ≤ 90 | % |
| MTUNZINI | 48 | 2 | 4,1 | 3 | 6,1 | 12 | 25 |
| MTUNZINI PEN' | 225 | 10 | 4,4 | 40 | 17,7 | 80 | 35 |
| PONGOLA/UBOMBO | 109 | 2 | 1,8 | 21 | 20,2 | 36 | 33 |
| PONGOLA PEN' | 93 | 9 | 9,6 | 34 | 36,5 | 26 | 28 |

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ARM MUSCLE AREA IN CM³

| STANDARD | MALE | | 56 | |
|---------------------|--------|------|------|-------------------|
| | FEMALE | | 50 | |
| POPULATION | TOTAL | ≤75% | ≤80% | ≤90% OF STANDARD. |
| KWA-MBONAMBI | 69 | 32 | 11 | 16 |
| ETEFE | 72 | 39 | 23 | 3 |
| ESHOWE | 99 | 18 | 24 | 15 |
| EMPANGENI | 117 | 67 | 17 | 13 |
| LOWER TUGELA | 122 | 61 | 31 | 16 |
| MTUBATUBA | 48 | 33 | 19 | 27 |
| MTUBATUBA RIVERVIEW | 55 | 6 | 14 | 14 |
| MTUNZINI | 48 | 21 | 12 | 4 |
| MTUNZINI PENSIONERS | 225 | 117 | 41 | 26 |
| PONGOLA/UBOMBO | 109 | 39 | 26 | 26 |
| PONGOLA PENSIONERS | 93 | 61 | 18 | 5 |
| PONGOLA SEC SCHOOL | 71 | 45 | 10 | 12 |
| TOTALS : | 1187 | 540 | 246 | 177 |
| | 100% | 45% | 20% | 15% |

DIETARY INFORMATIONCONSUMPTION OF MEAT AND EGGS

MPTUNZINI N= 48

| | MEAT | % | EGGS | % |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| NOT BOUGHT | I | 2,0 | 13 | 27 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 10 | 20,8 | 2 | 4 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 13 | 27 | 8 | 16,6 |
| EIGHT TIMES A MONTH OR MORE | 8 | 16,6 | 9 | 18 |

LOMET TUGELA N= 122

| | MEAT | % | EGGS | % |
|------------------------|------|-----|------|------|
| NOT BOUGHT | I | 0,8 | 20 | 16 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 12 | 9,8 | 3 | 2,4 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 26 | 21 | 19 | 15,5 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 18 | 15 | 20 | 16 |

PONGOLA N= 109

| | MEAT | % | EGGS | % |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| NOT BOUGHT | I | 0,9 | 19 | 17 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 25 | 23 | 18 | 16,5 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 17 | 12,8 | 13 | 12 |
| EIGHT OR MORE TIMES | 12 | 11 | 3 | 2 |

MEAT AND EGGS

| | COUNTS | % | COUNTS | % |
|------------------------|--------|-----|--------|----|
| NOT BOUGHT | 24 | 8,0 | 105 | 37 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 87 | 31 | 55 | 19 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 93 | 33 | 80 | 31 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 75 | 28 | 41 | 18 |

MAAS AND FISH

| MPUHZINI N=48 | MAAS COUNTS | % | FISH COUNTS | % |
|------------------------|-------------|----|-------------|------|
| NOT BOUGHT | 15 | 31 | 8 | 16,6 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 4 | 8 | 4 | 8 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 5 | 10 | 7 | 14,5 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 3 | 6 | 12 | 25 |

LOWER TUGELA N- 122

| | MAAS COUNTS | % | FISH COUNTS | % |
|------------------------|-------------|------|-------------|----|
| NOT BOUGHT | 33 | 27 | 6 | 5 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 13 | 10,6 | 21 | 17 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 10 | 8 | 30 | 24 |

PONGOLA N- 109

| | MAAS COUNTS | % | FISH COUNTS | % |
|------------------------|-------------|-----|-------------|------|
| NOT BOUGHT | 26 | 24 | 12 | 11 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 16 | 15 | 9 | 8 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 10 | 9 | 18 | 16,5 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 3 | 2,7 | 16 | 14,6 |

II

EMPANGENI N= 117

| | MEAT | | AND EGGS | |
|------------------------|--------|-----|----------|------|
| | COUNTS | % | COUNTS | % |
| NOT BOUGHT | 8 | 6,8 | 15 | 12,8 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 14 | 12 | 7 | 6 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 11 | 9 | 9 | 7,9 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 1 | 0,9 | 3 | 2,5 |

KWA-MBONAMBI N=69

| | MEAT | | AND EGGS | |
|------------------------|--------|------|----------|----|
| | COUNTS | % | COUNTS | % |
| NOT BOUGHT | 13 | 18,8 | 20 | 29 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 11 | 16 | 3 | 4 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 5 | 7,2 | 7 | 10 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |

MTUBATUBA N= 162

| | MEAT | | AND EGGS | |
|------------------------|--------|---|----------|----|
| | COUNTS | % | COUNTS | % |
| NOT BOUGHT | 0 | - | 20 | 29 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 10 | 6 | 10 | 6 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 7 | 4 | 11 | 7 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 15 | 9 | 5 | 3 |

ESHOWE N= 99

| | MEAT | | AND EGGS | |
|------------------------|--------|----|----------|----|
| | COUNTS | % | COUNTS | % |
| NOT BOUGHT | 0 | - | 9 | 9 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 5 | 5 | 12 | 12 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 17 | 17 | 13 | 13 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 20 | 20 | 8 | 8 |

EMPANGEN. N-II7

| | MAAS | COUNTS | % | FISH | COUNTS | % |
|------------------------|------|--------|---|------|--------|-----|
| NOT BOUGHT | 6 | | 5 | 14 | | 12 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 11 | | 9 | 3 | | 2,5 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 11 | | 9 | 3 | | 2,5 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 6 | | 5 | 14 | | 12 |

BINA- MEGANABI II- 69

| | MAAS | COUNTS | % | FISH | COUNTS | % |
|------------------------|------|--------|------|------|--------|-----|
| NOT BOUGHT | 13 | | 18,8 | 3 | | 4 |
| ONCE A MONTH | - | | - | 2 | | 2,5 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 5 | | 7 | 2 | | 2,5 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 7 | | 10 | 23 | | 33 |

MTUBATUBA N- 162

| | MAAS | COUNTS | % | FISH | COUNTS | % |
|------------------------|------|--------|-----|------|--------|-----|
| NOT BOUGHT | 11 | | 6,7 | 7 | | 4,3 |
| ONCE A MONTH | 9 | | 5,5 | 3 | | 1,9 |
| FOUR TIMES A MONTH | 6 | | 3,7 | 11 | | 6,8 |
| EIGHT TIMES OR MORE | 8 | | 4,9 | 13 | | 8,0 |

MEALIE MEAL.

| PLACE | N. | PERCENTAGE OF USAGE | | | |
|--------------|-----|---------------------|------------|-------------|--------------------|
| | | NOT DAILY | ONCE A DAY | TWICE A DAY | THREE TIMES A DAY. |
| MTUNZINI | 48 | - | 4 | 54 | 3 |
| LOWER TUGELA | 122 | 5 | 22 | 23 | - |
| PONGOLA | 109 | 1 | 3,6 | 41 | 4,5 |
| KWA-MBONAMBI | 69 | 2 | 10 | 28 | 3 |
| EMPAINGENI | 117 | - | 6 | 27 | - |
| MTUBATUBA | 162 | 1 | 9 | 12 | 2 |
| ESHOWE | 99 | - | 5 | 42 | 2 |

N = 1187.

MILK USAGE

| PLACE | N | MILK TYPES AND PERCENTAGES OF USERS. | | | |
|---------------|-----|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | FRESH | POWDERED | LONG LIFE | CONDENSED |
| MPUNZINI | 48 | 4 | 24 | 6 | 18,7 |
| LOWER TUGELA | 122 | 9 | 18,8 | 2 | 12 |
| PONGOLA | 109 | 8 | 21 | 4 | 11 |
| EMPANGENI | 117 | 7,6 | 10 | - | 6,8 |
| KWA-MBONALELI | 69 | - | 13 | - | 17 |
| IFUBATUBA | 162 | 4 | 10 | 18 | 4 |
| ESHOWE | 99 | 6 | 16 | 3 | 8 |

BREAD USAGE

N = 378

| | | |
|-------------------|---|-----|
| NOT EATEN DAILY | = | 32 |
| EATEN ONCE A DAY | = | 324 |
| EATEN TWICE A DAY | = | 22 |

BREAD TYPE

N = 296

| | | |
|-------------|---|-----|
| BROWN BREAD | = | 287 |
| WHITE BREAD | = | 9 |

MONTHLY INCOME.

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KWA-MBONAMBI

N = 69

| INCOME IN RANDS PER MONTH. | COUNTS | PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| IRREGULAR/NO INCOME | 39 | 57% |
| 0 - 99 | 16 | 23% |
| 100- 149 | 2 | 2,8% |
| 150- 199 | 3 | 4 % |
| 200- 299 | 4 | 6 % |
| 300 AND OVER | 5 | 7 % |

ESHOWE

N = 99

| INCOME IN RANDS PER MONTH. | COUNTS | PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| IRREGULAR/NO INCOME | 56 | 57% |
| 0 - 99 | 9 | 9 % |
| 100 - 149 | 12 | 12 % |
| 150 - 199 | 6 | 6 % |
| 200 - 299 | 6 | 6 % |
| 300 - AND OVER | 10 | 10% |

LOWER TUGELA

N = 122

| INCOME IN RANDS PER MONTH. | COUNTS | PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| IRREGULAR/NO INCOME | 60 | 50% |
| 0 - 99 | 24 | 20% |
| 100 - 149 | 16 | 13% |
| 150 - 199 | 9 | 7 % |
| 200 - 299 | 11 | 9 % |
| 300 AND OVER | 2 | 1 |

EMPANGENI

N - 117

| INCOME IN RANDB PER MONTH. | COUNTS | PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| NO INCOME/IRREGULAR | 83 | 72 |
| 0 - 99 | 6 | 5 |
| 100- 149 | 6 | 5 |
| 150- 199 | 9 | 7 |
| 200- 299 | 8 | 7 |
| 300- AND | 5 | 4 |

MATJUBATUBA

N - 162

| INCOME IN RANDB PER MONTH. | COUNTS | PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| NO INCOME/IRREGULAR | 127 | 78 |
| 0 - 99 | 8 | 4,9 |
| 100- 149 | 5 | 3 |
| 150- 199 | 4 | 2,4 |
| 200- 299 | 8 | 4,9 |
| 300- 499 | 8 | 4,9 |
| 500 AND OVER | 2 | 1,2 |

MFUNZINI

N - 48

| INCOME IN RANDB PER MONTH. | COUNTS | PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| NO INCOME/IRREGULAR | 16 | 33 |
| 0 - 99 | 7 | 14,5 |
| 100- 149 | 6 | 12,5 |
| 150- 199 | 8 | 14,6 |
| 200- 299 | 5 | 10 |
| 300 AND OVER | 6 | 12,5 |

PONGOLA

N - 109

| INCOME IN RANDS PER MONTH. | COUNTS | PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| NO INCOME/IRREGULAR | 54 | 49 |
| 0 - 99 | 22 | 20 |
| 100 - 149 | 5 | 4 |
| 150 - 199 | 6 | 5,5 |
| 200 - 299 | 10 | 9 |
| 300 - AND OVER | 12 | 11 |

GRAND TOTAL = 1187.

| INCOME IN RANDS PER MONTH. | COUNTS | PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| IRREGULAR/NO INCOME | 435 | 36 |
| 0 - 99 | 72 | 6 |
| 100 - 149 | 52 | 4 |
| 150 - 199 | 45 | 3,8 |
| 200 - 299 | 52 | 4 |
| 300 AND OVER | 48 | 3,8 |
| OVER 500 | 2 | 0,1 |

Nutritional status is determined more by socio-economic factors as well as by culture.

Most people in Kwazulu eat maize on average twice per day in the form of mealie meal, samp and mealie rice. Brown bread enjoys second place in popularity; thanks to the subsidy because it provides a valuable source of protein. People tend to eat foods they can afford.

The long drought affected crops, thus pushing prices up. It is not known how much the drought contributed to the extent of malnutrition in Kwazulu.

There is a positive correlation between income and the consumption of commodities like meat, maas, eggs, etc. Unfortunately the consumption of these protein-rich foods is largely culturally determined as well. A young wife, living with her husband and parents-in-law is not allowed to eat maas, milk produced by family cows, fish, eggs and chicken, until certain family rituals have been performed. She may remain on a low protein diet throughout her child-bearing period.

There is urgent need for nutrition and health education, provision of employment and encouragement of gardening. People tend to plant more of high carbohydrate foods like maize, sweet potatoes and madumbes. This is quite in order since families are large and these food commodities are easily stored. Protein-rich foods like beans, peas, soya beans, even mushrooms ought to be promoted.

Even obesity is due partly to the fact that people subsist on a high bulk high carbohydrate diet.

These papers constitute the preliminary findings of the Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in Southern Africa, and were prepared for presentation at a Conference at the University of Cape Town from 13-19 April, 1984.

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