

Female Headed Household's Rural Livelihood Trajectories in Post-apartheid former Bantustans of South Africa: Emerging Evidence from the Eastern Cape

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Abstract: *Since the inception of apartheid South Africa, the rural livelihoods of female headed households have been multiple in order to maintain household economic well-being. The paper examines the contemporary livelihood trajectories of female headed households in Cala communal areas of post-apartheid South Africa. In order to get to the core, the paper examines how female heads earn a survival amidst under developed rural economy. Three life histories in form of 'vignettes' are explored, this implies the qualitative nature of the study. The major findings of the paper are firstly; female headed households are largely agrarian-land based, natural capital continues to give life to female heads amidst deagrarianisation. Secondly, remittances still play a crucial role in households where there is rural-urban nexus (this does not apply to all the female heads). Thirdly, female heads rely largely on state transfers described as predictable and constant. Furthermore, the study unfolds that female heads in Cala are not homogeneous but rather varied. The social differentiation of female heads in Cala is largely configured by productive assets among the thriving households, surviving households and struggling households. It is this social differentiation that divides the 'have and have not's' of the rural areas. The paper concludes that, despite the 'little' derived from livelihood activities, female heads continue to manoeuvre their way out and at times rise above their circumstances.*

Keywords: livelihoods, rural livelihoods, state transfer, social differentiation, agrarian, deagrarianisation

Introduction

Rural livelihoods particularly of female headed households are important to be understood as they face different kinds of vulnerabilities. South Africa inherited a highly skewed economic system which disapproved rural economies. Livelihoods in former Bantustans of post-apartheid South Africa remain precarious and female headed households are at the brink of collapse. The paper draws from livelihood enquiry to examine how female headed households are earning their living amidst prevailing socio-economic and political conditions. The paper anticipates that the livelihoods of female heads are widely varied as the households exist in different circumstances. The rural underdevelopment suggests that social differentiation of female heads is largely shaped, continue to be shaped and reinforced by poverty (despite the roll-out of the state transfers in form of grants).

The paper is structured as follows. In the first instance, the historical continuities of segregation and apartheid are explored. This detailed and yet nuanced discussion uncovers the social, political economy of South Africa during apartheid. Secondly, Redistributive and Neo-Liberal Programmes and impoverished rural livelihoods are explored. The section unfolds the economic policies that the democratic government since 1994 implemented to address the historical imbalances between the minority and the majority of South Africa. It also focuses on the livelihoods which rural citizenry employ

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to earn a living. Following this, is the significance of the study and the methods and techniques used to gather evidence of this study. Following that, is a presentation of the empirical data collected, the discussion should be read in terms of the thriving, surviving and struggling households. Last section speaks to the social differentiation of the female heads.

Historical continuities of segregation and apartheid

Segregation and later apartheid South Africa is well-remarked for its racial discriminatory tendencies in all spheres of life (this includes the social, economic and political). Apartheid South Africa is regularly understood as involving petty apartheid and grand apartheid (Christopher 1994), with the former relating to segregation and discrimination in the social sphere. Grand apartheid involved separation and domination within the political and economic spheres, including the denial of political rights of citizenship for blacks in the (white) nation-state and the consolidation of (ethnic) homelands or Bantustans (the earlier 'reserves') where blacks were expected to pursue their political aspirations (Davenport 1991).

During segregation and apartheid, the South African economy grew at the expense of the socio-economic and political rights of the black majority, rural citizens in the former bantustans more specifically.

With the formation of the union, the Natives Land Act of 1913 was promulgated and effectively divided the union geographically into white areas (including the cities) and Native reserves, with the latter occupying a small percentage of the total land mass of the union and often in areas with low agricultural potential. The 1970s and the 1980s in South Africa were characterised by a deepening economic and political crisis. On the economic front, the seeming advantages of the apartheid economy resulted in deepening contradictions and tensions within the national economy, such that 'financial indicators showed that both a fiscal and monetary crisis was imminent' (Gumede 2007:425; Chili 2000). From 1974 to 1987, the annual average Gross Domestic Product rate was only 1.8 percent while, before this, the average rate over an extended period was 4.9 percent (Levy 1999:4). The declining international gold price hit the economy particularly hard given South Africa's historical dependence upon minerals for exports and foreign currency generation, and thus had knock-on effects for the apartheid state's fiscus (which already entailed deficit budgeting). As well, using black workers as primarily an unskilled labour force resulted in growing skills shortages in the manufacturing industry, particularly at a time when manufacturers sought to capitalise their operations through technological innovation. And despite significant economic growth until the end of the 1950s, urban unemployment amongst the black township population became endemic and indeed structural (Nattrass 1995). International sanctions against the apartheid regime, although regularly subverted, also impacted negatively on the economy in terms of capital withdrawal. The implications of all this for urban blacks, in terms of deepening levels of poverty, became very clear in the 1980s (McGrath and Whitefords 1994). By the late 1980s, the South African state and nation was captured in a deep structural crisis and, in this light, the National Party-led apartheid government pursued a negotiated settlement which was eventually finalised with the first democratic elections in 1994.

Redistributive and Neo-Liberal Programmes and impoverished rural livelihoods

Since the dawn of freedom in 1994, the South African government led by the African National Congress sought to redress the racial inequalities instigated initially by segregation and later apartheid in 1958. The redressal has been through the introduction of economic policies and programmes primarily focusing on redistribution (including land distribution). However, it is disturbing that continuities of segregation and apartheid are still evident particularly in the former reserves/bantustans since 1994. The historical preconditions are still manifesting in post-apartheid South Africa as the rural inhabitants are treated as second class citizens on their own land. The actual story of South Africa's socio-economic restructuring since then is riddled with tension. The ANC government was faced with a dilemma in 1994: on the one hand, to address the massive inequalities of the past through redistribution and, on the other, to maximise economic growth as the basis for development. The dilemma related to the possibility of doing both simultaneously, and the tension existed because it seemed that pursuing both in practice was contradictory. This tension, in the 1990s, is highlighted by Lesufi (2002:286) who distinguishes between 'growth through redistribution' (based on a Keynesian-style development programme) as reflected in the original post-apartheid government economic policy called the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), and 'redistribution through growth' as a more market-driven neo-liberal approach embodied in the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) programme adopted in 1996. Subsequent to GEAR, emerged the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA) in 2005 and, more recently, the National Development Plan (NDP). To talk of radical economic transformation in South Africa remains a utopia. Helliker and Vale (2011) are correct in saying that it is highly problematic to talk of a full-blown and unadulterated neo-liberal state in South Africa. It is clear that these policies and programmes have uncontroversial failings and perhaps the failings are more clearly shown in the 'subjective' situation, namely, in and through the ongoing rural and urban-based struggles, harrowing poverty, unemployment people's movements, movements calling for President Zuma to step-down and fractured tripartite relations between ANC, Congress for South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and South African Communist Party (SACP). This raise questions about the living conditions of the rural citizens in the former bantustans (including the Eastern Cape) as they rely partly on urban-rural based linkages. The living conditions of female headed households are miserable; this is compounded by the persisting patriarchy in the former reserves. In that regard, the four state strategies have failed to question the gender in a meaningful way.

Rural livelihoods in South Africa today are characterised by the continuities of apartheid, more than two decades after the dawn of democracy. Colonialism, segregation and recently apartheid have contributed to the decline of the subsistence farming in the former reserves. The racialized land dispossession has created a labour deficit in the former reserves in order for industrial capitalism to flourish particularly in towns and cities of South Africa. Poverty is rampant among the black majority particularly in the communal areas; over 25 million South Africans were poor in 2000, with a proportion of the poor being rural people (Leibbrandt et al 2010). Whereas poverty rates are extremely lower among the Indian and coloured South Africans. The inequality rate has broadened even further after the dawn of democracy, this 'intra-African inequality and poverty trends increasingly dominate

aggregate inequality and poverty in South Africa' (Leibbrandt et al 2010:4). By the year 2000, 72% of the poor were living in the rural areas (Nobel and Wright 2012) of Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu Natal. Perhaps, the political crisis in South Africa since the reign of President Zuma has seen more migration from rural areas to urban areas proliferating the informal settlement locally known as 'umkhukhu'. A real chance of broad-based rural development in these areas has been undermined consistently by neo-liberal restructuring. Rural livelihoods hence continue to be characterised by significant levels of poverty with 'the overwhelming number of rural women being 'poor or very poor' (Walker 1998:4). Though (former) Bantustan households continue to engage in some form of agriculture as well as consumption of (and trade in) natural resources, cash transfers (such as social grants and remittances) are extremely important for household well-being and food security (Adams et al. 2000, Shackleton et al. 2001).

Studies continue to highlight the relevance of land and agriculture for rural livelihoods. This may entail income through engaging in market sales of agricultural products or natural resource products, or the direct use value of land-based livelihood activities (through own consumption) including small livestock, garden and field produce, wild foods and other natural products. Moreover, these direct use values arising from land-based livelihoods act as a safety net for rural households in times of stress (Ashley and LaFranchi 1997, Shackleton et al 2000). This safety net cushions shocks that are as a result of for example loss of employment or death of a household breadwinner. There is voluminous evidence in the former Bantustans, and particularly in the case of remote and deep rural households, that dependence upon natural resources is increasing. Shackleton et al. (2005) claim that natural resources contribute an average of 22% of total household income and consumption in the rural areas of Bushbuckridge (part of the former homelands of Gazankulu and Lebowa, and now in Mpumalanga Province). And the significance of natural resources is typically greater in particular for poorer rural households (Thondhlana et al. 2012). A study by Vetter (2013) comments on the numerous benefits (both cash and non-cash), that rural households get from livestock, mainly in contributing to livelihood diversification and resultant resilience. Often, though, poor rural households tend to rely to a greater extent on their smaller numbers of livestock compared to wealthier households with larger herds, in part because they do not have regular forms of employment (Sallu et al. 2010).

Overall, the majority of all livestock owners derive little, if any, regular cash from livestock sales (Vetter 2013) and the direct-use values of products such as milk and meat exceed that of cash sales (Shackleton et al. 2005). Mutenje et al. (2010) rightfully claim that the role of livestock as a form of savings and insurance and hence as a safety net should not be overlooked, though livestock is not simply treated as an asset to be disposed of in times of crisis (Mapiye et al. 2009). A range of other livelihood benefits are derived from livestock such as access to organic manure, oxen for ploughing (including for others) and bride wealth payment (lobola). Compared to the presence of livestock in the former Bantustans, there is clear evidence of declining commitment to crop production though its ongoing relevance should not be dismissed. Rural households engage in social networking and social reciprocity on a regular though not necessarily formal basis. As such, networks (including kinship, friends and neighbours) are particularly important as forms of mutual exchange and assistance in rural

areas, or as possibly informal means of social protection (Bracking and Sachikonye 2006). Neves and du Toit (2013:107) note that 'these practices underpin both inter- and intra-household transfers, and animate urban-rural linkages and household livelihood activities'. These circuits of mutual assistance are prevalent throughout the communal areas because of the significant exposure of households to poverty perennially.

The Present Study

After two decades of democracy, former reserve inhabitants continue to face abject poverty amidst state capture by senior African National Congress members. The post-apartheid regime has created a 'black bourgeoisie' class at the expense of other black people particularly the vulnerable cohorts of children, disabled and the females. Although the state support has increased through the social welfare grants, kinship ties and employment opportunities have diminished significantly, female headed households are at the brink of collapse. Coupled with the economic crisis is the 'never ending political crisis', ordinary people had to use their own resources at disposable, and develop their own livelihood strategies to sustain households. Few studies have examined the conditions of female headed households in South Africa, for instance Schartz, Madhavan and William (2011). The study primarily focused on how female headed households contended with HIV/AIDS in rural South Africa- the study dates back to 2011. This paper examines the contemporary trajectories of female headed household rural livelihoods in former Bantustan's of Eastern Cape specifically Cala communal areas near Queenstown. It does so by looking into three differing rural livelihood trajectories in form of 'vignettes' (including thriving households, surviving households and struggling households). The paper is important for a number of reasons. It fills an empirical lacuna in the study of Cala communal areas specifically, thereby by generating fresh and current literature. It does so by offering a gendered examination precisely looking at female headed households in Cala communal areas as not passive victims of the socio-economic and political crisis of post-apartheid South Africa but ground-breaking agents seeking to safe-guard family economic well-being. This study uses an explorative approach in its quest to understand the various differentiated female headed households.

Materials and Methods

All the research is informed by particular ontological and epistemological commitments. Research methodologies and methods tend to derive from ontological and epistemological claims and clearly the claims are open to considerable variation and contestation. This section has no intention of getting bogged down in philosophical arguments about ontology and epistemology, but it is important to set out briefly the papers philosophical position. Indeed, the main objective of the thesis shows sensitivity to both understanding and explanation. The paper is mainly informed by a qualitative method (based often on constructivism) which is more concerned about deep understandings of the social meanings inherent in the world and that they regularly eschew any notion of causality. The paper stresses the importance of inter-subjective meanings as animating the social world, it would argue that the social world has a reality independent of such meanings and that differing everyday interpretations are in fact interpretations of this 'outside' structured world (Roth and Mehta 2002). Three life histories were utilized

to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences and livelihoods of female heads in the Cala case study but to do so in a manner which captured the socially-structured context of their existence. Life histories provide a wealth of evidence about people and their experiences rather than mere aggregated classifications, categories and characteristics (Kothari and Hulme 2004). A purposive sampling was employed for selecting the three heads (from amongst the 5 heads), there was a subjective evaluation of the contribution that the female heads would likely make to an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. According to Kothari and Hulme (2004) claim that life histories enable a complex and nuanced understanding of social realities while simultaneously revealing common themes and trends which reflect wider social characteristics and processes. They also provide an understanding of the ways in which the past informs and shapes present realities (in this case, the rural realities of female heads). Thus are able to track changes and therefore, in this study, life histories enabled me to trace changes in female heads' livelihoods and to understand why such changes would lead to coping strategies adopted at a particular time. In terms of analysis, the qualitative data collected was analysed through identifying themes in the evidence and the various relationships between the themes. In doing so, I tried to ensure that the themes speak directly to the main of the study. Overall, it is important to outline that the names used in this study are pseudo names for ethical considerations.

Understanding Livelihood Trajectories

From the data elicited, it is evident that livelihood portfolios of Cala female-headed households differ considerably and therefore the challenges they face vary depending on the specific livelihood activities pursued. In fact, it became very clear during the in-depth interviews that the female heads in Cala communal areas cannot be viewed as homogenous or undifferentiated. They can be disaggregated in order to understand the different kinds of lives and livelihoods existing in Cala. Female heads (*de jure* and *de facto*) pursue diverse and different livelihood strategies which often vary over time in terms of intensification of a particular strategy or diversification into alternative strategies. Their livelihoods are not necessarily static and, in the context of threats, risks and shocks, they move in and out of poverty as they seek to respond to crises (Wabwire 1997). However, it is possible to categorise female-headed households in Cala broadly speaking, and are distinguished between *struggling*, *surviving* and *thriving* households. These categories are not based on purely more qualitative evidence. A more longitudinal study would be needed to ascertain if particular households move in and out of poverty over time or during the course of a year.

Case study vignettes

The vignettes presented below are specific and particular. The analysis below does not make any statement to generalisability of the all-female headed households in former bantustans of South Africa. Instead, the vignettes presented here are an entry point into understanding the heterogeneous nature of female headed households, their existence and livelihoods.

Thriving Households – Case of Sifiso

The thriving households are mainly less vulnerable, and have comparatively more assets and resources. Data collected in Cala communal area reveals that a small number of female heads (either *de jure* or *de facto*) were relatively better off and were better able to cope with (or even avoid) the risks, threats and shocks experienced locally in Cala. The thriving households possessed significant financial capital. Due to the availability of this, they had the capacity for instance of hiring labour to work in the homestead gardens and the arable fields (either permanently or periodically). They were also able to hire a tractor to plough the homestead garden and arable land despite the exorbitant prices charged for hiring. In turn, this contributed to high agricultural yields. Thriving households owned a significant number of livestock (more than five cattle and more than ten small livestock such as goats and sheep); had access to clean and affordable energy and proper sanitation; and possessed a well-constructed homestead. Of importance to note is the fact that these households received remittances regularly (i.e. every month) and approximately more than R4000 from children working in different towns. A member of such households normally was a recipient as well of an old age pension.

The thriving households at some point are able to accumulate assets and savings, even when there is worsening poverty in Cala communal areas more widely. In fact, these households seemed to take advantage of poverty in Cala and somehow ‘exploited’ the vulnerability of other households by buying assets (particularly livestock) at very low rates from the surviving and struggling households during difficult and desperate periods. In that way, they increased their household assets and resource base. The following is the story of sixty-eight year old Sifiso and her thriving *de jure* household composed also of grandchildren:

In 1997, I was in Bloemfontein and working as a till operator for a BP garage and my husband was working for Transnet in Bloemfontein. While in Bloemfontein we did not forget our roots [referring to the village]; we established our village house here in Mnxe and during the festive holidays especially Christmas we would come with our children for holidays after closing school. In 2003 my husband was retrenched at Transnet and I had provided for the house even if he was given his retrenchment package and was receiving a monthly income [pension]. After five months of retrenchment he was diagnosed with diabetes and he died while asleep on the 23/05/2003. Life became hard as I had to rely on one income to provide for my five children, sending them to school and so on...The pension for my husband I invested into my children's education. Fortunately, Tshepiso[her child] was awarded a bursary at Fort Hare to study her social work...I relocated to Mnxe because I could no longer afford rent in town because we were staying in the company house...I am not poor because I receive money from my three children, two in Gauteng and one in Cape Town. On top of that I also receive child support grants for my grandchildren. Because I am getting old I now hire labour (especially for weeding) to work in my garden where I produce vegetables – carrots, spinach, onions, cabbages, maize. I sell most of the crops that I grow but because people do not pay what they owe...cash only...No nono credit; I have done that in the past years but I end up losing money for nothing. I also sew traditional garments because while in Bloemfontein I attended a course for knitting and sewing and I used to get a lot of time but now because I have grandchildren most of my time is spent in making sure that they have eaten. I have saved my money and I have bought sheep, goats and pigs [she hires someone to take care of the livestock] and at times sell the livestock to local butcheries...presently I have 12 goats, 15 sheep and 20 pigs. Life is difficult in the village but my house is managing because my children take care of me through sending the money and I also make sure that I do not rely on them because they have their own needs too (Life history, Mnxe Village, November 2015).

Sifiso's case is a clear illustration of a thriving household. Evidence from the fieldwork reveals that most of the thriving households derive their income from multiple livelihood activities and are financially stable

and better off because of this. If one activity for any reason goes under or becomes erratic, the household can normally rely on the other activities to see them through any hard times.

Surviving Households – Case of Thandiwe

Broadly speaking, these are households meeting their basic needs but are not capable of moving out of poverty or improving their life condition. These households tend to mainly survive, as their main source of income, on child support grants as well as casual labour and at times old age pensions (in a case where a grandmother is present). Farming is on a very small scale and only for consumption (particularly 50m x 50m), with only slight surpluses infrequently supplement household income. Generally speaking, the surviving households do not have the capacity to invest money in assets given their limited finances. They own very few livestock (for instance, one to three cattle) and some other small livestock. And they often exchange their labour in return for income. But these households engaged in livelihoods aimed at minimising risk and uncertainty by pursuing a range of limited livelihood activities spread across space and time, and generally on an ad hoc basis. At times they had to sell off assets to meet basic household consumption needs to allow them to 'hang on'. They also sought to minimise expenditures by for example resorting to the use of traditional energy sources (particularly fuel wood) in food processing because they could not afford electricity regularly.

Thandiwe's *de jure* household has most features of such households:

I live with my five children and among them no one is employed because there are no jobs here in Cala. Life is difficult in this village because we are struggling day in, day out. I used to be employed at Shoprite in Queenstown and I retired from working in 2005 due to my health...from 2011 life became difficult because I was the breadwinner since the day we divorced [referring to her former husband]...He never paid maintenance for the children...I am raising the children alone without his help and one this that angers me is him claiming that he is the one taking care of the children yet he doesn't do anything. My life is not easy...at times I became very stressful not knowing what will I feed my children with the next day...God has been faithful to me since the time of my divorce. The only source of income that I get is the child support grant for my two children; my first born used to be employed by the EPWP but his contract was never renewed. He once had argument with the ward councillor who has an influence in the contract of EPWP and since that time he has never returned to work From time to time my children have to look for part time work to bring food onto the table and this has helped the family to cope under difficult times. Thabiso[her son] normally collects firewood and water for Nonhlanhla[a villager] for approximately R650...from time to time. There is a time where we get money and sometimes we do not have money and can go for the whole month without money until child support grants are out or unless my son gets some part time work to raise money. He has saved this money to buy sheep and up to now we now have three [sheep]. Life is not easy in this village, but I sometimes get help in the form of groceries and money from my brother working for North West Municipality to supplement what we get from our small garden. It has been very helpful for my family because we cut costs. Me and my household we are just surviving...taking each day as it comes (Life history, Lupapasi Village, November 2015).

The case of Thandiwe aptly illustrates a household that is surviving. For instance her household is unable to accumulate productive assets (such as cattle) due to limited and irregular income. Somehow, under such desperate conditions, these surviving households are able to 'get by' on a monthly basis in meeting their basic needs. But any shock of significance might turn them into a struggling household.

Struggling Household – Case of Karabo

Data collected from the fieldwork uncovered that Cala communal is marked by a large number of struggling female-headed households which are deep in poverty and very poor. The struggling

households do not have access to any meaningful income from employment or even state grants (be it an old age pension or a child support grant). They have no livestock and they have small gardens and fields that are never utilised or are severely underutilised. They engage in labour intensive activities for instance working part-time in gardens and mostly for 'thriving' households, or being involved in public works programmes when operational. These households have few or limited livelihood sources to fall back on in the context of possible shocks and stresses. This concurs with the findings of Bennett (1992) about why some female-headed households exist in pronounced conditions of poverty.

Karabo is a 58 year-old widow who migrated from the Dwesa (in Transkei) in 1986 together with her late husband and their four children to settle in Sifonondile village. Mayee (2003:21) maintains that 'when a female loses her husband she discovers herself in a world of problems – the difficulty to earn an income topping the list... [N]ot accustomed to doing works outside her home, it becomes a huge task'. Karabo has this to say.

Life is very difficult in the village especially when my health is deteriorating... My husband died and no one provides for the family. I can't do anything anymore, and I have to rely on my children and grandchildren. My children have been looking for work in different provinces and what they get is part time and is not sustainable. Kasebo [her son] was working in a farm in Elliot [a town located east of Cala] and after harvesting he has no job for the whole year. Other families have children who get the child support grant but for me I do not get anything...but for me NO NONO. We struggle year in year out, we are living under a difficult situation...I hope one of the days my children will get work and support their mother and siblings. My crops always fail due to lack of rainfall, in cases where the water is coming from the tap we are not allowed to use the water for garden purposes. My children end up walking long distances to fetch water in order to water the crops for our benefit since we get our food from the garden...It's a problem again because the tractor is expensive and I end up ploughing a small place. My grandchildren have moved to live in with my sister in Elliot because I have not enough food to give them and I have now lost household labour since I do not have cattle for draught power...The ANC is doing nothing to help poor people...we are poor very poor...they only come here when it's time to vote and give us empty promises. They preach employment but none has come along to our children...we are struggling... we are a poor family. My father was poor. I am poor. If things don't change, my children will probably be poor (Life history, Sifonondile Village, November 2014).

Karabo's case is a story of desperation and of no light at the end of the tunnel. Broadly speaking, the struggling households fail to accumulate any assets and to diversify livelihoods, and they have a tendency of selling their physical assets for immediate household needs such that their asset base becomes depleted. Karabo's problems are compounded by her health status and the reduction of family labour because she had to send her grandchildren to her sister in Elliot. Though Ferguson (1999) claims that it may be possible to celebrate the coping abilities of poor rural people and acknowledge their innovative means of compensating for the 'impossibility of their everyday lives (Hecht and Simon 1994, cited in Ferguson 1999:165), it is also important to recognise that many people are not managing to cope at all and their lives on a downward spiral. Another female head in Cala thus spoke about her circumstances in the following words:

My life is very difficult and I borrow money for medication and food from my neighbours ...My future is uncertain because I do not have enough food and my health is deteriorating. I do not even know how I will survive for the next day, weeks, or months (In-depth interview Lupapasi Village, November 2014).

Undeniably, the overwhelming majority of female-headed households in Cala are living under very extreme conditions of poverty – they are certainly not ‘thriving’. In fact, combined, the surviving and struggle households’ amount to over 80% of the female-headed households surveyed. Table 4.4 seeks to show the ways in which the three categories of households can be differentiated along specific variables, many of which I have discussed above. As highlighted, there is always the possibility that a particular female-headed household moves between categories over time, depending on shocks arising or opportunities becoming available. But, overall, there are few prospects that most Cala female-headed households would ever become thriving households unless there are fundamental shifts in the political economy of contemporary South Africa.

The evidence collected for this study is inconclusive pertaining to whether *de facto* female heads are better off than *de jure* female heads or vice versa. Perhaps the most suitable conclusion is that female heads that derive their livelihoods from a number of sources of income (including from employment income, government grants, remittances and many more) are better off regardless of either being located in a *de facto* or *de jure* household. To conclude that *de facto* female heads would necessarily be better off because the husband is working elsewhere as a migrant labourer would be misleading given that the evidence collected confirmed that many male migrants do not remit back home to their families.

Rural female headed household’s livelihoods complexity and dynamism

The discussion herein is based on the above three vignettes. The discussion focuses primarily on the different livelihoods employed by the female heads in Cala communal area.

Agrarian Livelihoods

Rural livelihoods in the former Bantustans of Eastern Cape particularly Cala communal areas are locales of agrarian activities. Although deagrarianisation animates most of the former reserves, a number of communal areas inhabitants are still practicing agriculture. Deagrarianisation is not a common characteristic of post-apartheid South Africa but during apartheid the communal areas were deprived of land which belonged to them. The selection of vignettes represents the rural locale as a place where agriculture activities still persist despite the loss of active workers through urban migration. Agriculture is practiced on two levels that is the arable lands and homestead gardening. The thriving households are completely managing to sustain through the ploughing of the arable land because of their ability to source labour. Surplus is sold to gain extra income whereas in the case of the struggling and surviving households, surplus is seldom sold to gain extra income. The cases of struggling and surviving households present a mode ‘of survivalist improvisation’ (Davis 2006), whereby all means necessary anything that brings income is practiced including commodification of labour. The findings of this study are in line with Shackleton, Shackleton & Cousins (2009) who argue that land-based strategies also form part of a rural safety net. In communal areas it through this commodification of labour to gain a living that has managed to sustain subsistence agriculture. Despite the ‘dying’ of agriculture activities particularly in the struggling households, agriculture activities continue to save as

a safety net for rural female heads. Despite the land reform in communal areas, land tillage remains very low and precarious, but it remains a 'long standing livelihood for female heads'.

Livestock rearing has proved to be very important in Cala communal areas. Thriving households own a large head of livestock. The livestock serve a number of purposes namely providing draught power, supplying meat and milk. It is although seldom that livestock like cows are slaughtered for the purpose of getting meat unless it is a ritual or a funeral. However, the availability of milk presents in itself the ability of households to substitute meat with the readily available milk (locally known as *ubisi*). During summer communal areas prefer to have *umuphokoqo* (milk mixed with crumbled mealie meal). This is a very common meal among the poor rural female heads and the general rural populace because of its affordability and readily availability. Livestock availability among the female heads represents a sign of wealth. The poor households have used the available livestock to accumulate income to send their children to school. Such an opportunity has made the thriving households to accumulate more cattle (as is the case of Sifiso). In that light, the surviving and struggling households of Thandiwe and Karabo are kept in perennial poverty as they seek to provide for their families, they at times afford basic commodities but they are not able to move out of poverty. In general, the asset holdings of the surviving and struggling households are very low and prevent female's heads to engage in processes that bring 'humanely life'. The rural poverty

Remittances

The linkages of urban and rural areas are not only through rural-urban migration but resource flow. It is prudent to say that remittances play a significant role in rural livelihoods particularly in Cala communal areas. The case of Sifiso is an example of how remittances help female heads are able to subsist. The remittances are in form of cash and in-kind gifts namely the groceries. In that light, remittances provide a safety net particularly to female heads whose relatives and children remit back home. In Cala communal areas there is evidence pointing to the fact that remittances are declining as a result of the dying economic opportunities. Despite such dearth of employment opportunities, the case of Sifiso is testimonial to remittance existence in Cala communal areas. The availability of remittances adds to a number of other myriad sources of income.

Social Welfare

Female heads in Cala rural areas are recipients of South Africa's system of means-tested state cash transfers. This is in form of child support grant, old pension grant, foster care grant and disability grant. In all the vignettes presented above, social welfare grants are a common source of income particularly in the surviving and struggling households. The grants are the most predictable and stable form of income to poor female heads. The value of the grants is in their predictability and consistence. Has it not been these grants, the female heads in both surviving and struggling households would not be subsisting at the level they are. The case of Karabo is a difficult one as she is not a receipt of old pension grant (because of her age) and child support grant. Aside from Karabo's case, Thandiwe's case present's grants as mechanism to lift the surviving households out of poverty for at least half a month;

this is because the money is not adequate enough to cater for family basic needs for the whole month. However, if used wisely the grants have the capacity of improving nutritional status, reducing morbidity and stunting (Devereux 2001), and elevating educational enrolment and outcomes (Case et al. 2005; Budlender and Woolard 2006). In case of Thandiwe and Sifiso the social grants increase the 'buying power of female heads'. It is evidenced among female headed household that grants are often shared with non-beneficiaries thereby reducing the effect of the grant.

Female headed household's differentiation

This final section presents female headed household differentiation. Female heads in Cala communal areas and the entire communal areas of post-apartheid South Africa's life circumstances cannot be treated as homogenous. This is primarily because circumstances shaping their lives are varying considerably hence their livelihoods too. Poverty and vulnerability animates rural lives but the levels of poverty and vulnerability is differentiated. Treating the female heads in Cala communal areas as homogenous is unfair. Female headed households in Cala communal areas have access to different assets namely; land-based endowments, remittances, livestock, physical capital, grants and commodified labour. The access and ownership to these assets determine the configurations of vulnerability and differentiation therefore evolving. As presented above in the cases of Sifiso, Thandiwe and Karabo, the access to different assets differ, this configure and differentiate between what have been termed as 'thriving, surviving and struggling'. Significant to note is that the conditions prevailing in the communal areas serve as enhancers and perpetuators of decent livelihoods or inhumane livelihood (such as that of Karabo).

Furthermore, the vignettes discussed above are writ-large in the sense that they differentiate between the thriving household, surviving households and the struggling households which are marginalised from the rural economy. As such, this shows how rural economies produce differentiated households and maintain the differentiation. Access and ownership of productive assets therefore determine the 'village social hierarchy'. The continued marginalisations of female heads in post-apartheid continue treat women (particularly female heads) as 'second class citizens' despite the attainment of democracy two decades ago. The state and status of the female heads particularly those surviving and struggling households is somewhat linked to historical trajectories of the rural economies dating back inception of apartheid in 1958. Furthermore, what is exasperating is the fact that over two years of democracy, female heads in Cala communal areas still bear the brunt of apartheid; rural development has remained stagnant while the elite black bourgeoisie continue to enrich themselves at the expense of rural citizenry (in particular female heads).

Despite the access to state monthly transfer which are referred to as predictable and constant, other livelihood income sources are critical in ensuring that if one source of income depletes, households are able to pick on other sources. This is not the case with struggling households whose sources of income are limited, or garner very little income. Another important source of livelihood as evidenced by Sifiso and Thandiwe is the ownership of livestock. The ownership of livestock in Cala communal areas is

linked to rural elite who have multiple means of income and therefore survival. The direct and in-direct use value of livestock cannot be underestimated. This largely differentiates rural households in Cala communal areas. Access and ownership of livestock is directly linked to utilisation of the arable and homestead land as represented by the cases of thriving and surviving households.

Table 1: Summarising social differentiation households

Household trajectory	Household roofing type	Flooring type	Land areas cultivated	Livestock ownership	Labour utilization	Comment
Thriving	asbestos	Cement/tiles	+ 1 hectare	1.+5 cattle 2.+ 10 goats & sheep 3. Plenty chickens	1.hire labour and have permanent helper (gardener or house maid)	1. have very strong social networks 2. does not depend on anyone for income, but rather remittances come as supplementary to available income 3. diversify livelihoods and income is stable 4. income per month is more than R5000 5. old pension grant and child support grant
Surviving	Asbestos/zinc sheets	Cement	-1 hectare	1.+ 2 cattle 2.+ 5 goats & sheep 3.limited livestock	1.at times hire and hire out labour.	1. limited social capital 2. depends on child support grants and old pension in case of an old person living in
Struggling	Thatch/zinc	Cow dung/mud	50m X 50m Some do not cultivate	1. no livestock at all	1.hire out labour	1. no social networking 2. does not receive any grants 3. household size is big 4. inadequate or limited income

Source: Life Histories, November 2014.

Conclusion

This paper examined the contemporary trajectories of female headed household rural livelihoods in former Bantustan's of Eastern Cape specifically Cala communal areas. That was accomplished by looking into three varied rural livelihood trajectories in form of 'vignettes' namely; thriving households, surviving households and struggling households. The communal areas of Cala remain deep pockets of poverty and underdevelopment. The legacy of apartheid regime still manifest in the communal areas, this is evidenced by the deagrarianisation-a common characteristic of apartheid after the passing of the Land Native Act. Livelihoods among the three varying households include agrarian based activities, social welfare, informality, remittances and other income livelihoods. Of importance is that the livelihoods are not highly compartmentalised but are interconnected. Natural capital in form of collecting firewood for selling is transformed to financial capital (money) to purchase basic commodities. Although, female heads engage into myriad income sources, seldom much is garnered implying that poverty remains perennial; of course this is not the case of all households. The access and ownership of different productive assets determines the social differentiation of the households in this case, the thriving, surviving and struggling households. Female heads in the communal areas continue to face patriarchal inequalities. This further perpetuates their circumstance's including access to productive land. Female-headed households, bear the burden and brunt of the failures of post-apartheid economic and political restructuring. While some of the empirical findings of this thesis are not novel, my study contributes new empirical data on female-headed household livelihoods in contemporary rural South Africa and specifically in former bantustans. These findings have important implications for policy makers, in particular those involved in policy for rural economies development. It is peremptory that there is need for greater support for the agricultural sector if South Africa is to achieve the goals set out in the country's National Development Plan.

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Knowledge, Beliefs and Sources of Information of HIV among Students of a Tertiary Institution in Nigeria

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Abstract: This study investigated the knowledge, beliefs and sources of information of HIV among students of a tertiary institution in Nigeria. The study was conducted among students of University of Ilorin residing in Oke-Odo community, a student community located near the school. The objective of the study is to know if the students are adequately informed of HIV. A total of 292 students selected through a two-stage sampling method were involved in the study. Information was gathered through questionnaire administration which contained closed and open ended questions. (84.2%) of the participants know that, a healthy looking person can have HIV, (88.7%) know that HIV virus weakens the immune system of an infected person and (82.2%) know that HIV can be transmitted through unprotected vagina sex. Also, (81.2%) identified fever as the symptom of HIV while (77.7%) identified avoiding unprotected sex as preventive measure towards contacting HIV. The highest source of information of HIV among the participants is health talk accounting for (68.2%) which was followed closely by the school (66.4%). Although (63.7%) of the participants strongly disagree that HIV is a myth and does not exist, (36.6%) of the participants also strongly believe that HIV can be cured with prayers. The study showed a statistical significant relationship between knowledge of HIV and age of participants $p= 0.001$ while no statistical significant relationship was found between knowledge of HIV and sex $p= 0.055$, marital status $p=0.051$, religion $p= 0.359$ and tribe $p=0.170$. The study concluded that although the participants had a good knowledge of HIV, various misconceptions are held by participants on the belief held about the disease. Dissemination of adequate knowledge on HIV among students in the institution is strongly recommended.

Keywords: HIV, good knowledge, misconception, unprotected vagina sex, health talk.

Introduction

Nigeria, with a population of over 120 million people, is estimated to have one of the highest numbers of persons living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa (Ssengonzi, Schlegel, Anyamele&Olson, 2004). Ever since the index case was recorded in the country in 1986, the infection has spread to become a generalized epidemic affecting all population groups and sparing no geographical area in the country (NACA, 2012). The initial stage of the disease is usually asymptomatic WHO (2015) but as the infection progresses, the immune system is gradually attacked, giving room for common infections like tuberculosis and other opportunistic infections as well tumors which rarely affect people with a functional or working immune system (WHO, 2015). However, late symptoms of infection are known as AIDS which is usually characterized by loss of body weight (Center for Disease Control, 2015).

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