

We don't have to go to bed on *phuthu*¹ alone: a case of transformation in Colenso

ELEANOR WINT AND THEMBI NGCOBO

ABSTRACT

Transformation in the South African discourse refers to a process of transition from exclusion to inclusion in all spheres of daily life. This paper identifies inclusion as bringing wide-ranging changes in the lives of women farmers traditionally relegated to small-scale gardening at subsistence level. Although concerned with the historical issue of separate development particularly in gender and access terms, the paper focuses on an ongoing development project initiated with a small rural community in Colenso and monitored by the Farmer Support Group and the Centre for Adult and Community Education at the University of Natal, Durban. It discusses the Participatory Learning method applied and attempts to understand two critical factors. These are, firstly, how notions of equity, social justice and non-discrimination are understood and manifested through government policy and community experience. Secondly, the importance of the woman and her rural household in the practical interpretation of sustainable livelihoods and cultural practices which will lead to socio-economic transformation.

The underlying assumption of all those involved in the project is that the participatory learning method is the method best able to facilitate and measure the process of transition without dramatically alienating and distorting cultural traditions.

Introduction: Understanding land reform

THE PAST TELLS of the systematic organization of a society into the privileged and the deprived, a practice formalized through

¹ Maize meal porridge

legislative acts (such as land acts, influx control and separate development) which ruthlessly separated black Africans from immigrant whites.² Today the new South African government is set on social and economic development through a process of transformation. Transformation in South African discourse speaks to African nationalism. It speaks to a transition from the exclusionary paradigms enforced under apartheid and the Two Nation society to a society of inclusion based on notions of equity, social justice and non-discrimination. To be sector-specific, the case for the government's land reform policy is four-fold: "To redress the injustices of apartheid, to foster national reconciliation and stability, to underpin economic growth and to improve household welfare and alleviate poverty". (White Paper on South African Land Policy 1997:1).

It is anticipated that the transformation to conditions of stability and certainty should lead to sustainable development at both national and household levels. The implementation of the land reform programmes is a mammoth task which is affected both by the historical and political factors mentioned above bearing in mind that the behaviour of any client population, are directly determined by the cultural interpretations of their roles as they relate to gender and socio-economic position. Thus, for example, although policy-makers might give priority to the poor (who are predominantly women), a decision around land title registration must balance notions of gender equity in registration of land assets with the existing cultural deference towards the (usually) male head of household.

Similarly, there is the physical reality of quality of land. "It is well known that until 1994, occupation of land in South Africa was highly skewed in the ratio of 86 to 14, white to black... it is estimated that only 12.4 percent [of both black and white lands] is of average to high potential" (de Villiers 1996:3).

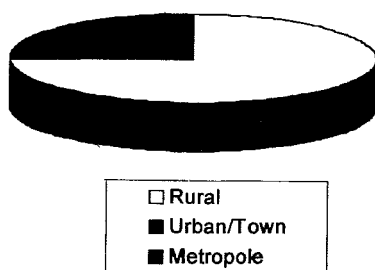
² See May (1998) for explanation of these Acts which under apartheid were designed to restrict the growth and voluntary movement of Africans and lead to severe impoverishment.

Tenure and the poor

THE LAND REFORM programme targets, in the first instance, the land needs of the poorest South Africans. To meet these needs, questions around alternative and diverse forms of tenure are addressed in the White Paper on South African Land Policy. These tenure reforms acknowledge the existence of three alternative practices:

- Communities currently holding land under some form of communal tenure;
- Communities without the authority to convert all or part of their communal systems to other forms of tenure;

**FIGURE 1: POVERTY ACROSS
SETTLEMENT TYPES
(WORLD BANK 1994:11)**



- Communal tenure historically determined by practices, which may deny constitutional or human rights (particularly those relating to equality, due process and participation).

The resolution of these issues needs to be delicately yet determinedly addressed as it is widely agreed that "some 40–50 percent of people in South Africa can be categorized as being poor, whatever the measure which is employed" (May 1998:2). Examining poverty across

³ "Metropole" refers to those persons living in the urban environs of the major cities. The term is used especially in developing countries to reflect the growing sprawl being experienced in these cities.

settlement types points to gross inequalities (Figure 1) with rural households being most severely affected.

As Figure 1 shows, the huge poverty share being experienced by the rural areas is significant. These measures of poverty (May *et al.* 1995) would include having to rely on unprotected sources of water, wood and other energy sources and lack of sanitation facilities. Particularly for rural households in South Africa, any progressive change that hopes to be sustainable needs to first of all create the political and personal will across ethnic and socio-economic groupings. Change will then affect daily ways of maintaining social and economic livelihoods and therefore be sustained across generations.

Thus, the countrywide land development policy must cater for a wide variety of needs and circumstances, for villages and rural, urban or peri-urban townships and settlements. For example, the most common type of land rights "used in the former homelands is trust tenure, whereby title rests with the state, while property rights are controlled by the local (homeland) government. Within this framework, the tribal authorities have the right to allocate, transfer or withdraw the land rights of their subjects" (de Villiers 1996: 7). As it is estimated that roughly 26% of the Republic of South Africa is state land, the resident is caught between trust tenure and homeland government, neither of which have been particularly sympathetic to requests of native Africans.

De Villiers (1996: 14) supports the view that "land reform should be viewed as part of a comprehensive programme of economic restructuring and should ... be undertaken in tandem with rural development, the provision of infrastructures and services". This emphasis is a realistic one as over the years the country has faced problems associated with communal tenure and environmental degradation. These problems have been further compounded by the fact that those relegated to eking out an existence in rural homelands are usually female or ageing. Many of them see their partners as absent landlords away from home, working as long-distance migrant workers or commuting from urban centres within the region. Their choice of activity at the community level is therefore influenced by

the historical weaknesses of communal and co-operative ventures, the procedures favoured in community decision-making (for example in according grazing rights) and power relationships in the community. For these women, the implementation of both national and local infrastructural changes, which bring immediate relief to entire rural communities rather than single individuals, is clearly the first critical step in tackling the problem of rural poverty.

The focus of the paper

THE PAPER WILL reflect on the process of social and economic transformation in a small rural community in Colenso. To speak about transformation is to emphasize a process of transition towards a society, which affirms equity, social justice and non-discrimination. For this particular community, these ideals are represented through their efforts to implement the post 1994 land reform policy. The paper therefore reports on an early stage in the process of transition, and reflects on the findings of an on-going evaluation and monitoring as carried out by the Farmer Support Group (FSG) and the Centre for Adult and Community Education at the University of Natal, Durban.

It will begin by putting the experience in historical and geographical context, move on to discuss the method of measurement and then reflect on the findings, particularly as they assist us with understanding two critical factors:

- How notions of equity, social justice and non-discrimination are understood and manifested through government policy and community experience
- The importance of the woman and her rural household in the struggle to find practical and culturally acceptable interpretations of sustainable livelihoods, which will lead to socio-economic transformation.

The paper supports the use of the participatory learning method as the methodology, which is best able to facilitate and measure the process of transition without dramatically alienating and distorting cultural traditions.

The Gannahoek community

THE GANNAHOEK farming community is located some 15 kilometres from the town of Colenso in the midland region of Kwa Zulu-Natal. It is a community of some 20 families within the Kwa Shameni tribal authority under Inkosi Mthembu. The farm was originally owned by the McFie family from 1894-1990 and was then sold to a company, the Performance Farming Enterprises (PFE) in 1990. This company rejected the community's claim to the farm and planned to establish a game reserve. Between 1990 and 1998 there was a critical period of representation on behalf of the farmers by the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA). The result was that Mr. McFie bought back the land from PFE on behalf of the farmers and negotiated an easy repayment plan in partnership with the government's land redistribution programme. The cost was approximately US \$42 000, the money being raised by the community by selling their 74 head of cattle.

The Gannahoek community is a community of history, tradition and belonging that holds fast to its Zulu culture. Evidence of traditional ways of practicing such events as dressing, eating, mourning those that have passed, abound. For women to establish their own individual vegetable plots was a realization of traditional gender roles. In addition, it showed a strong sense of initiative, re-enforced by their feelings of pride of ownership.

Each woman's plot is approximately six metres square and most of them work more than one plot. They tend to concentrate on growing vegetables. As in many traditional polygamous communities, the men are always regarded as the head of household. This means that he moves between huts and communities depending on where his wives live, creating and maintaining these households as best his income can. Women who care for the huts and yards, which accommodate herself and her children, share their full day's work with their children. This responsibility includes domestic chores as well as tending small livestock and vegetable gardens. Large communal plots of maize or potatoes and rearing cows and pigs are the domain of the males who share this responsibility with other men.

The method of measurement

BAWDEN, (1997:12) in examining community learning, identifies some key aspects of "social learning". He suggests that a community is said to have learnt from its experiences when it "has achieved a sense of its own coherence and integrity" and "is clear about its purpose and the influence of this on the boundary of its concerns and indeed its structure".

These two criteria help us to understand the usefulness of a methodology, which by design, builds on the power and resources which the people themselves hold in the community. This community of Colenso is high on social learning understanding exactly what it is trying to accomplish. Further, it demonstrates the characteristics, which Finn (1994) sees as critical for the effective application of the participatory method that is, people, power and praxis. In fact the choice of the use of the participatory methodology in the study builds on years of work in the region (A Handbook for Practitioners, 1993), Lipton, de Klerk and Lipton (1996)), in which all agree on the usefulness of the method both as a data-gathering tool and as an empowerment strategy. The Farmer Support Group's involvement in Gannahoek no doubt derives from the Group's continued efforts to close the gap between extension services for white commercial farmers and black small farmers. Further, as they put it, the Farmer Support Group strives to play a liberating role in the people's learning processes by promoting the development of a critical understanding of social problems, their structural causes and possibilities for overcoming them.

In selecting the Participatory Rural Appraisal methodology (PRA), the concern was to achieve joint analysis and action. Details of how it was used follow:

1. We began with introductory community meetings during which we carried out area mapping and mind mapping sessions. In these sessions the groups established roles, relationships and potential achievements
2. The second step was to carry out a participatory needs assessment which was accompanied by vision building and communal planning

3. Step three was the consolidation of plans and mapping out of responsibilities
4. In later sessions there was training in specific techniques (including animal husbandry and disease control, organic insect control, vegetable production)
5. The community group finally engaged in institutional building; that is, the establishing of committees and training of personnel on committee skills, planning and basic bookkeeping.

From the first stage of initial discussions men and women in the sessions were encouraged to identify any potential value they hoped to gain from engaging in a developmental project. As it is not customary for men and women to be together in the same forum, women had to be encouraged to participate and list possible activities that they felt would bring about development. "Vision building" used techniques that facilitated participation by all involved and led to a relaxing of tensions. The projection for the future, identified during the evaluation feedback sessions, focused on the setting up of the gardens to be managed by the women. The importance of this decision to the women hinged on their seeing the garden as a secure source of food that would contribute to both variety and nutritional levels of their households.

Participatory Programme Management (PPM), another PRA technique that allows participants to chart their own management strategies, was also used. Here the aim was to allow the women to chart the project direction. This was crucial in determining the sustainability of the project as the women needed to own the decisions being made. In other words, decisions as to ensuring that there were crops in the garden all year round, how to see to the watering and how to control insects and pests, maintenance of the fence and seeing to the purchasing of seeds and other inputs, were all decision which had to be made by the women themselves rather than being imposed by the FSG and the University. This technique used in PPM is a strategy which helps to secure sustainability of the activity in a manner, decided upon by the participants themselves and thus reducing, over time, the need for FSG presence.

Measurement of transformation: the use of sustainable livelihood

IN EXAMINING the life of the rural poor the concept of a sustainable livelihood is particularly relevant as it creates the opportunity for estimates of need based on international criteria of sufficiency. In addition, it allows for inclusion of country-based decisions as to the widely different ways that householders generate an income. The Programme for Meeting the Needs of the Poor in Kwa Zulu-Natal offers three elements that are relevant to an understanding of how local people understand the notion of "livelihood". These are:

- Asset transfer, (meaning the acquisition of household-based assets)
- The promotion of a sustainable livelihood in the non-farm sector
- Support for small-scale farming

Specifically, using this concept one is able to understand how different people generate incomes. Usually we tend to think only of cash-based economies and employment in the formal labour sector. Using the concept of sustainable livelihood, the study recognizes the socio-economic situation with which rural people are faced. The Kwa Zulu-Natal province is estimated to have the third highest incidence of poverty in South Africa, with approximately 60 percent of all individuals receiving an income below the poverty line (74 percent of the rural population fall below the poverty line). Furthermore, across the country, rural African households are found to have alarmingly limited access to assets and highly constrained options for the use of those assets and, in most cases, they generate poor returns for those activities in which they are engaged (Cabinet Paper 1996).

The use of sustainable livelihood (Lippert *et al.* 1996) therefore gave us the opportunity to examine the multiplicity of ways that the rural household generates income and employment as mainstream definitions of employment and labour have been found wanting. As has been found, work for the African peoples has multiple meanings, meanings that change with time and benefits. The United Nations Development Programme report (Lawrence 1996) proposes an inclusive concept of sustainable livelihood that can be applied to "any

form of making a living". In this way work which is sustained over a period of time and brings a benefit to the worker/community without marked environmental degradation is therefore regarded as a sustainable livelihood. This definition includes the domestic sphere that belongs to the woman.

As we are concerned with understanding the transformation of rural folk from a situation of exclusion to inclusion in the modern society, sustainable livelihood allows us to include a wide range of earning opportunities which have always been available to these women but have not been recognized or promoted. It includes the traditional practices which take up a great deal of the woman's working hours, but perhaps go unrecognized. It gives the extension officer and community developer the chance to design innovative ways of lessening the workload and perhaps modernizing without cultural dislocation. This emphasis on provision for future generations is also in harmony with the social and economic projections for the Republic of South Africa.

Findings

ON PURCHASING THE land the Gannahoek Land Trust was established. This Trust consisted of five men and one woman. The Trust represented the community in all external forums and is the main decision-making body deciding on apportioning land between families and other land-related development issues. The Trust has acquired assistance to provide additional water sources for the community and the soliciting of external development funding. To date twenty-five women are involved in the community garden, only one of whom works part-time outside of the immediate community.

There are twenty families (approximately 280 persons) living in Gannahoek. They live in huts within a 5 km radius. The median number of persons per hut is eight persons. The huts are traditionally built of wattle and daub with thatch roofing. There is no electricity. The community shares one centrally placed water-tap but they prefer to use water from a nearby dam. The problem is that the animals also use this water source. There is a properly stone-surfaced road, which

serves to link the community to Colenso (approximately 15 km. away). Houses are connected by means of footpaths.

The families of Gannahoek are traditional polygamous rural entities with women making domestic decisions for themselves and their children as the father is usually away plying his trade. Major decisions, however, are not taken until he returns. Only two women have gone beyond a primary level education and children are all encouraged to attend the nearby, run-down primary school. There is a secondary school in Colenso which the children can attend only when the family has R5 for daily transport.

The community is effectively cut off from Colenso as there is only one car which leaves between seven and eight in the morning, returning between five and six in the evening. None of the households has a steady source of income and no one has cash on hand. The estimated domestic expenditure of between R150–200 per week is in reality based on those times when the father or eldest son actually earns. The health of the community is suspect as not only is their water contaminated but water for daily bathing is also limited. There is a mobile clinic, which visits once per month. The constant coughing of the women farmers is noticeable.

History of the garden

THE WOMEN OF Gannahoek were given assistance by FSG. In 1996 when the Trust, (through the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA)), identified the need for skilled intervention in extension farming methods. While working with FSG the women established the Zamani Community Garden with its own executive body and a highly participatory system of community decision-making. Having raised the money for purchasing of seedlings, their first planting was in 1997. Since then they have planted three more times. In each instance, the harvest has been good but they have noticed a decline due to porcupines, ants, locusts and significantly less rainfall. Their produce (cabbages, onions, brinjal [aubergine], tomatoes and potatoes) is, however, still enough to feed their own households almost all year round. It is not yet enough to share outside of the immediate households.

Each woman has her own square. The purchase of seedlings and planting equipment is done as a group. Commercial fertilizers and sprays are not used. The women do not all plant at the same time so, although there are major reaping periods, the squares develop at slightly different rates. Figure 2 below indicates how the women see their use of essential elements across the years.

**FIGURE 2: THE USE OF ELEMENTS
1996 TO THE PRESENT**

(Numbers represent relative use. Stones were used and counted)

YEAR	WATER	SOIL	FERTILIZER (GOAT DROPPINGS)
1996	5	2	4
1997	12	13	12
1998	1	2	4
1999	3	5	3

It is evident that soil fertility has deteriorated as women use less goat droppings and kraal manure to fertilize. Rainfall has also been poor with the levels in 1998 being near disastrously low. Since 1999 the water level in the adjacent dam has already fallen to historically low levels as there has been poor rainfall.

To date the Zamani Community Garden has lodged R1820 in their newly established savings account. A monthly contribution of R10 is made for buying seedlings, compost and pest control measures. Continuing their capacity-building, two women also attended a workshop in Durban on understanding the new not-for-profit legislation, which directly affects the status of the Garden association.

Decision-making and the role of the Trust

THE TRUST HAS the authority to decide where new water sources will be put. Since 1998 the women had been negotiating for a new dam to be placed near the gardens. The Trust would have preferred it to be near the herds. The issue has been only decided

after six months of negotiation, during which period the women confessed to feeling the strain of carrying water long distances. They also articulated the wish to expand the gardens into viable commercial entities. During discussions it became evident that the placement of the new dam depended on the Trust realizing the potential growth of the gardens.

This negotiation followed the pattern of decision-making where the major decisions were made by the men. The only decisions made by the women were around domestic matters. These included, what are we going to cook, when to get water and wood, who will gather the soil to plaster the house, when to wash and do the garden, the best time to cement the outside of the hut, collecting goats and buying food from Colenso. All these decisions were made without consultation with her husband.

As was pointed out, some of these decisions can be quite challenging, for example if one has no food to cook, or is experiencing diminishing strength due to natural ageing. Often women therefore find themselves turning to their children for help (mainly the girls). All other decisions would therefore be left to the father.

Sustainability of the garden

IT WAS GENERALLY felt that the garden has been the most significant event in the lives of these families since formal acquisition of the land. The formation of the Trust served to give them the authority with which to address their problems associated with lack of income. During evaluative PRA exercises, women constantly reiterated their wish to continue with the gardens in a more structured fashion, using their newly acquired competencies in agriculture towards a more commercial venture. It was also hoped that the university would be able to help them to identify new sources of assistance which might address such concerns as a clinic, better equipped schools, improved cooking facilities and perhaps add weight to their request to the Trust for a new adjacent dam.

For the women, the advent of the garden had seen :

- Women now having vegetables to cook along with maize meal (*phuthu*) and to make children's sandwiches for school

- A vegetable supply for the family during at least ten months of the year
- More variety of meals (cabbage can be alternated or mixed with spinach, potatoes, meat, chicken or bean-and-samp mix)
- Less money being spent on food

Discussion

HOW DO THE women of Gannahoek operationalize transformation?

OVERCOMING *ÉLITE domination: notions of equity, social justice and non-discrimination*

The data supports Posel's (1997) discussion on "who gets what in which households?" where she argues that "there is a gendered division of work that assigns women primary responsibility for the unpaid labour of household production and the care of household members (1996: 54)". Studies have generally supported the view that this unpaid work is particularly labour intensive, taking up a large percentage of the day with little or no time left for leisure. In reference to work done by Goldschmidt-Clermont and Pagnossin-Aligisakis (1995) and others, Posel (1997) points out that women spend just under an average of six hours every week collecting wood and over an hour and a half every day collecting water. If we include over two hours each day in the garden as well as preparation of food for storage and eating as well as washing and preparation of clothes, it would seem that the discriminatory view that the woman and her household are an insignificant contributor to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) needs to be reviewed. On the other hand, it becomes evident that the family in this instance is extremely vulnerable in terms of its ability to maintain a relatively stable position, relying as it does on the strength of women. The rural household is also at risk to the extent that it is able to produce assets and/or income to carry them through vulnerable periods of job retrenchments, dry weather or changing male favours.

The findings bring out a concern that the women express which is a need for a nearby clinic. If the government is to satisfy concerns around equity, then provision of more accessible clinics must become an urgent issue. These women live with the fear of either themselves

or their children becoming ill and their not being able to access a clinic due to distance or lack of funds. It is the same with schooling beyond primary school level. It would seem that policy statements on integrated rural development need to move into implementation which realizes a place for bodies such as the Trust at the municipal level rather than relying only on tribal authorities. Non-discriminatory decentralization, as envisioned in the developmental local government documentation, calls for use of local non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), community based organizations (CBOs) and local associations which already have the organizational capacity to administer funds on behalf of their immediate communities. In this case, land reform policy on redistribution and resettlement need to be accompanied by huge inputs in extension services and community development. As the study shows quite clearly, without the assistance of FSG and AFRA, Gannahoeke would have remained unable to operationalize such statements as "The objective of the Settlement Planning Grant is to assist poor communities to plan for their settlement needs in terms of the acquisition, use and development of the land(1996: 55).

CREATING NEW avenues for respected discourse: the importance of the woman and her rural household

The data was unable to generate reliable information on certain household characteristics, namely age of children. This information will come with time as we continue the process of transformation and have more opportunities to interact with more household members. It is, however, an important issue as regional studies support the view that not only is there a gendered difference in nutritional intake in African households but the size of transfers between individuals in the households is skewed towards the males (Posel 1997; Boucher *et al* 1996; Sharp & Spiegel 1990). The preliminary data collected from Colenso suggests that understanding rural life concerns from the point of view of the female respondents calls for a sensitive appraisal of particular findings. Here we point to the fact that:

- There does not seem to be any forthcoming discussion amongst

researchers on the need to change certain poverty indicators which external researchers might deem important. For example, is building a modern pit latrine as important as modernizing the cooking facilities inside her hut?

- It is the researcher's position that maintaining a polygamous relationship is culturally correct and certainly does not mean that there will always be inharmonious relationships between female partners
- The reality of the women farmers having complete control over their vegetable gardens brings a number of positives, not least of which is the potential increase in hard cash which can increase asset building and encourage an alternative livelihood

It would seem that in the same way that small farmers have been cut off from the technological developments of the last 30–40 years, so has their input into the national discourse on their future. Participation means more than representational input and those who experience the tediousness of rural living need to be brought into the decision-making process. It is realized however, that one of the factors negatively impacting on their inclusion is their low level of education as the use of participatory discourse adds to the cost of transcription due to the need for translation and innovative feedback measures.

Respected discourse should be practiced at home and in public. For policy implementation, “popularly-based” national development strategies need to be just that, as “decentralized decision-making can be a misleading solution for poverty-alleviation if local power structures are controlled by elites who are highly influential at a national level” (Barraclough 1997: 123). A traditional community like Gannahoek is but one more community showing its willingness to become a part of the process⁴ of policy building for the future.

*C*HANGING THE quality of life as part of rural mobilization:
sustainable livelihood in a transitional community

⁴ See Meer (1997) for discussion of other communities.

Every community is built from households. These are the bonding agents in peoples' lives. These primary units are the main source of income for its members. In many instances its members practice subsistence farming which has untold potential for feeding the population (Ottaway 1996). In identifying redistribution, restitution and tenure as the planks of the Land Reform Policy, the household is made the logical unit of subsidy where both the beneficiaries and the agents must derive benefits from the community. In the programmatic drive towards equity and security in ownership of land (called *Izwe Lethu*, *Ilizwe Lethu*, *Shango Lashu*, Our Land), the acquisition of new skills, new organizational and management styles, the creation of new networks and resource provision, will develop only if an atmosphere of partnership develops, ensuring that both the government and community members benefit.

In selecting the village for this study, the researchers were conscious of two issues. The second issue of appropriate methodology has already been discussed in the paper. The first issue derives from the draft Policy for Women's Empowerment (1994: 7), which speaks of access to land as being "crucial for women's exercise of their rights in respect of agriculture, management and usage of natural resources". The government has now recommended that land reform assistance should be targeted at growers, particularly women, who have relatively small holdings and who would benefit most from an expansion in their production base. The women of Gannahoeck have established communal gardens that provide them with considerable household and food security. Their daily existence revolves around these gardens as they see the enormous potential for this type of subsistence farming. As one guardedly reflects on the possibilities for achieving a sustainable livelihood, we need to bear in mind that "A conflation of community and nation with 'family' automatically blurs women's role in the world with the roles women are accorded in the family – a 'natural' unit in which women have 'natural' responsibilities (Lewis 1999: 41)". It is this never-to-be changed cultural definition of role, which is comfortably adjusted when both the man and the woman deem it necessary. Changing their quality of life is obviously a wish for all of these women. How the lives are changed does not

include urban criteria for modernization of their surroundings. In fact the alternative has to come from the women themselves and not from outside.

Conclusion

BY USING THE PRA method the community was given the opportunity to share, enhance and analyze its own knowledge of life and conditions in order to plan, and act to change that quality of life. PRA is not simply a research tool but can also be used in planning, implementing plans drawn up, monitoring and evaluating goals achieved. It should be seen as a methodology which transforms development from being an imposition to one which derives from the rich experience of outsiders and community members. It required the FSG staff to accept the mystery of the lives of the people of Gannahoek while raising in a participatory manner the people's awareness and capacities, equipping them with new skills for analysis and problem solving. The PRA method was also used in the evaluation and monitoring stage. The participatory nature of this intervention through the use of PRA has facilitated the community's understanding and willingness to participate, as well as their ability to manage their own development programmes.

The ongoing study and intervention sees the rural community organization, together with the farming community of Gannahoek, challenging elite conceptions of equity, social justice and non-discrimination. These people are asking deferentially for recognition of the wealth of knowledge, patience and determination that they are able to bring to both discussions of policy and methodologies of implementation. Integration of the female farmer into a vital land reform programme is not only important but also inevitable as the rural woman and her household remain a structural anchor for cultural traditions and newly emerging social identities. The community and its households hold the key to understanding ways for encouraging sustainable living. Creation of community-based structures need to be encouraged and recognized as sustainable and capable of managing community-based development.

Data drawn from the study as well as work done by Ottaway (1996) and Lipton *et al.* (1996), lend strength to the argument for the

development of a peasantry, which will focus on modernized small farming. As Lipton *et al* (1996: x) put it "more labour-intensive small scale farming has the potential to contribute to one of South Africa's hardest tasks; the consensual reduction of the world's most severe (and most racialised) inequality". As the women put it, "we don't have to go to bed on *phuthu* alone". This reflects a simple yet potentially effective affirmation of a socio-economic transition that is beginning to design ways of practically implementing national policies, which strive for equity, social justice and non-discrimination.

REFERENCES.

- A Handbook for Practitioners: Toward Partnership in Development.* 1993. Based on a Participatory Rural Appraisal Training Workshop, Natal, Bulwer
- Agenda: Empowering women for gender equity.* 1999. Monograph: *Translating Commitment into Policy and Practice.* Durban
- Barraclough, S. 1997. Food and poverty in the Americas: institutional and policy obstacles to efficiency in food aid. *Development in Practice* 7, 2, 117-129
- Bawden, R. 1997. *The Community Challenge: The Learning Response.* Paper presented at 29th Annual International meeting of the Community Development Society. Athens: Georgia
- Boucher, S.M., Carter, D., Posel, D. 1996. Preference heterogeneity and income pooling: evidence from South Africa. In D. Posel 1997. Counting the poor: who gets what in which household *Agenda: The Poverty Issue* 33
- Department of Land Affairs. 1996. *Green Paper on South African Land Policy*
- de Villiers, A. 1996. *Land Reform Options for the Northern Province.* Occasional Papers No.2. Dept of Development Studies. Petersberg, University of the North
- Draft Policy for Women's Empowerment, 1994. Pretoria

- Goldschmidt-Clermont, L., Pagnossin-Aligisakis, A. 1995. Measures of unrecorded economic activities in fourteen countries. In Posel, D. 1997. Counting the Poor: Who gets what in which household. *Agenda: The Poverty Issue*, 33
- Lawrence, J., Singh, N. 1996. *Sustainable Livelihoods and Employment: How are these Concepts Related*. Opinion Papers: UNDP
- Lewis, D. 1999. Gender myths and citizenship in two autobiographies by South African women. *Agenda* 40
- Lipton, M., de Klerk, M., (eds.) 1996. *Land Labour and Livelihoods in Rural South Africa* Durban, Indicator Press
- May, Julian 1998. *Experience and Perceptions of Poverty in South Africa, Final Report*, Durban: Praxis Publishing
- May, J., Carter, M., Posel, D. 1995 *The Composition and Persistence of Poverty in Rural South Africa*. Washington D.C. World Bank Research Paper
- Meer, S. (ed.) 1997 *Women Land and Authority : Perspectives from South Africa*. London, Oxfam
- Ottaway, M. 1996 Development without a peasantry: a forgotten aspect of the land issue in South Africa. *Development in Practice*, 6, 2, 129-39
- Posel, D. 1997. Counting the poor: who gets what in which household. *Agenda: The Poverty Issue*, 33
- Reducing Poverty in South Africa: Options for Equitable and Sustainable Growth*. 1994. Washington DC. World Bank
- Sharp, J. and Spiegel, A. 1990. Women and wages: gender and the control of income in farm and Bantustan households. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 16, 3
- The Provincial Growth and Development Strategy for Kwa Zulu-Natal*. 1996. KZN Provincial Cabinet Paper