DE-AGRARIANISATION AND RURAL EMPLOYMENT NETWORK

Afrika-Studiecentrum, Leiden

Sub-Saharan Africa Betwixt and Between: Rural Livelihood Practices and Policies

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Preface

This working paper provides research findings emanating from the De-Agrarianisation and Rural Employment (DARE) Research Programme funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and coordinated by the Afrika-Studiecentrum in collaboration with the Organization of Social Science Research for Eastern Africa (OSSREA), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; the Centre for Research and Documentation (CRD), Kano, Nigeria; the Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA), University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. We wish to acknowledge the encouragement of Hans Slot of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the editorial skills of Ann Reeves for providing vital back-up for the work of the programme's research teams.

Despite Sub-Saharan Africa's agrarian image, the rural peasant population is diminishing in relative size and significance. From a multi-disciplinary perspective, the DARE programme has sought to dissect the process of change, drawing attention to the new labour patterns and unfolding rural-urban relations now taking place. The programme research theme consists of four sub-themes: economic dynamics, spatial mobility and settlement patterns, social identity adaptations and gender transformations.

The objectives of the DARE programme have been to:

1) compare and contrast the process of de-agrarianisation in various rural areas of Africa in terms of a economic activity reorientation, occupational adjustment, social identification, and spatial relocation of rural dwellers away from strictly peasant modes of livelihood.
2) examine how risks on rural household production and exchange influence the extent and nature of non-agricultural activities in rural economies.
3) explore the inter-relationship between agriculture and the service sector in African economies; and
4) publish and disseminate the research findings to policy makers and scholars in Africa and elsewhere.

The Afrika-Studiecentrum's role has been to facilitate the formulation of country case study research in various rural African localities by African researchers, provide a discussion forum for work-in-progress, and assist in the publication and dissemination of completed analyses of research findings.

The following report provides a summary of research findings originating from the work of the DARE network of researchers engaged in local livelihood studies. The researchers listed in alphabetical order are: Ethiopia: Mulat Demeke, Yohannes Habtu; Congo-Brazzaville: Patricia Paravano; Nigeria: Barth Chukwuezi, M.A. Iliya, Kate Meagher, Abdul Raufu Mustapha, Mohammed-Bello Yunusa; Tanzania: George Jambiya, Ndalahwa Madulu, Claude Mung'ong'o, Davis Mwamfupe; Malawi: Nina Tellegen; Zimbabwe: Ronald Berkvens; South Africa: Leslie Bank, Wele Manona, and Pat McAllister.

The overall findings from the DARE programme are intended to provide insight into the processes of change which are moulding the livelihood prospects of African rural and urban dwellers of the next century. It is hoped that the knowledge gained may be useful for formulating more effective developmental policies to assist in short-circuiting Sub-Saharan Africa's current economic and political vulnerabilities.

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Sub-Saharan Africa Betwixt and Between: Rural Livelihood Practices and Policies*

The last two decades of the 20th century stand out as a period of momentous change for Sub-Saharan African economies. Amidst high levels of material uncertainty and risk, rural populations have become more occupationally flexible and spatially mobile. Published macro-economic statistics largely fail to capture the centrifugal forces associated with occupational experimentation. The wider social and political implications of these labour tendencies are not clear. The attitudes of African rural dwellers towards their actions are highly mixed. In the course of shaping their new livelihood tactics, they often profess occupational or locational identities that are more pertinent to the past than the present. Some live with high expectations of material returns on the basis of an ever-shifting livelihood base. The phrase 'betwixt and between' suggests this uncertainty about current positions and future directions as Sub-Saharan Africa enters the 21st century.

Drawing on the research findings of the De-Agrarianisation and Rural Employment (DARE) programme,[1] my paper compares changing economic and social patterns in a wide variety of rural settlements. Recently emerged or refashioned income diversification tendencies are highlighted and linked to the blurring of strong rural-urban contrasts. The paper moves from an identification of general tendencies to the question of policy, both retrospectively in terms of how policy has deliberately or inadvertently spurred these changes, as well as how it can address today's pressing developmental and welfare concerns.

Section I begins with a schematic consideration of continental trends as a prelude to Section II's more detailed examination of rural livelihood patterns revealed in the DARE programme research findings.[2] Section III teases out some of the major tensions embedded in the broad-based reorientation of rural livelihoods, leading to a discussion of how effective current government and donor policies are in addressing this rural transformation. The conclusion returns to the issue of Sub-Saharan Africa's

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* An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Workshop on 'Between Town and Country: Livelihoods, Settlement and Identity Formation in Sub-Saharan Africa', Institute of Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University, East London Campus, South Africa, 27-30 June1999. I am grateful to Ann Reeves for her copy-editing work and to the conference participants and DARE researchers for their comments and criticisms.

[1] The DARE programme is made up of a network of researchers engaged in local-level studies of livelihood practices funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I have served as the coordinator based at the Afrika-Studiecentrum, Leiden collaborating with the following agencies: the Organization of Social Science Research for Eastern Africa (OSSREA), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; the Centre for Research and Documentation (CRD), Kano, Nigeria; the Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA), University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. In addition, other Netherlands-based researchers, not funded by the programme, have contributed to the working paper series and publications of the DARE programme. The programme participants in alphabetical order are: ETHIOPIA: Mulat Demeke, Yohannes Habtu; CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE: Patricia Paravano; NIGERIA: Barth Chukwuezi, M.A. Iliya, Kate Meagher, Abdul Raufu Mustapha, Mohammed-Bello Yunusa; TANZANIA: George Jambiya, Ndalahwa Madulu, Claude Mung'ong'o, Davis Mwamfupe; MALAWI: Nina Tellegen; ZIMBABWE: Ronald Berkvens; SOUTH AFRICA: Leslie Bank, Wele Manona, and Pat McAllister.

[2] It must be stressed that any reference to DARE research findings in this paper reflects my overview perspective which may or may not concur with the interpretation of individual authors who have direct knowledge of the local study area and often interpret their findings within the context of local and national discourses and policy concerns. The value of a comparative research programme is not only the identification of similarities and differences in case-study findings, but also the varying interpretations of findings between different case studies and between local, national and continental interpretative perspectives.

'betwixt-and-between' status, arguing that the uncertainty could be alleviated with a more directional policy approach.

I. Demise of the Peasant Developmental Context

Ethiopia, Congo-Brazzaville, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa, the seven 'focus countries' that form the areal coverage of the DARE programme, represent a striking range of variation in: population size (Figure 1), levels of urbanisation (Figure 2), and agriculture's contribution to the national economy (Figures 3 and 4). Nonetheless, this paper takes as its starting point the position that these countries share common trajectories. All are undergoing 'de-agrarianisation' and, more specifically, 'depeasantisation'.

De-agrarianisation is defined as a long-term process of occupational adjustment, income-earning reorientation, social identification and spatial relocation of rural dwellers away from strictly agricultural-based modes of livelihood (Bryceson 1996). This is a global process prompted by the industrial revolution of the early 19th century that accelerated in the 20th century but has been characterised by enormous geographical unevenness. Now less than half of the world's population lives in rural areas, and most are peasants. Somewhat paradoxically, de-agrarianisation of Europe and North America was accompanied by peasant formation in many parts of the non-industrialised world colonised by the early industrial nation-states.

The European colonial intrusion in Sub-Saharan Africa engendered processes of peasantisation that facilitated the colonial governments' agricultural commodity export aims. Spurred by colonial taxation, African agrarian producers increasingly produced agricultural commodities in conjunction with their subsistence production, or alternatively exported male labour on the basis of circular migration. Following World War II, as African nationalism and the 'Third World' gained ascendancy, African countries were generally identified as primarily agrarian countries, with large peasantries, that were 'developing' towards a more 'modernised', 'industrial' production base. In this context, African post-colonial governments and the international donor community pursued policies aimed at extending, capitalising and modernising peasant production to raise peasant productivity and living standards as a foundation for their industrialisation efforts (Raikes 1989, Bryceson, Kay and Mooij 1999).

Now, however, depeasantisation is occurring in the wake of over a century of colonial and post-colonial peasant formation. 'Depeasantisation' represents a specific form of de-agrarianisation in which peasantries lose their economic capacity and social coherence, and shrink in size. They literally unravel as communities. But to define depeasantisation, it is necessary first to define peasants. 'Peasants' constitute a distinct type of agrarian producer having the following four main characteristics (*ffcc)*, namely:

- ***farm*** – the pursuit of an agricultural livelihood combining subsistence and commodity production;
- ***family*** – internal social organisation based on the family as the primary unit of production, consumption, reproduction, socialisation, welfare and risk-spreading;

- ***class*** – external subordination to state authorities and regional or international markets which involve surplus extraction and class differentiation; and
- ***community*** – village settlement and traditional conformist attitudinal outlook (adapted from Shanin 1976).

A peasant livelihood involves a changing agrarian labour process that is responsive to internal differences like climate, local resource variation, and demography, as well as to external stimuli such as markets, taxation, and other forms of state intervention. Thus, 'peasantries' are best understood as societies moving towards or away from these four characteristics. Depeasantisation can be traced with respect to any one of these characteristics, but a peasantry's disappearance is only complete when all four characteristics are no longer in evidence.

At the risk of being labelled over-functionalist, it is nonetheless necessary to stress the importance of government policies in 'making or breaking peasantries'. Peasantries by definition represent a subjugated class, producing commodities in the context of external markets and states. Government policies are vital for fostering peasant commodity production and conversely are instrumental in their undermining through the alteration of peasant access to essential means of production, be it land, labour or capital. The impact of layered local, regional and national-level policies has created a proliferation of production conditions throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, some of which favoured the formation of local peasantries. Conversely, there are policy amalgams that could be called 'turning-point' policies that serve to undermine the existence of peasantries. Such policies mark the launch of the depeasantisation process, chipping away at peasantries' economic viability, social coherence and class position. Naturally, such 'turning-point' policies, be they intentional or unintentional with respect to their destructive impact on peasants, do not eliminate peasantries with a single blow. Far from it, peasantries, as historically rooted societies, are part and parcel of an on-going malleable labour process that is adapting to changing external conditions. Peasants' enigmatic status as subsistence and commodity producers provides 'staying power'. Their commodity production may be continually eroding while elements of their subsistence production linger on.

The countries highlighted in this paper have all been subject to 'turning-point policies' that have initiated the process of depeasantisation. Each country, indeed each peasantry within a country, warrants careful examination to trace the process. However, in a paper of this scope my argument remains schematic for purposes of illustration rather than detailed documentation.

South Africa's peasantries have been subjected to depeasantisation for almost a century. In 1913 their access to land was decisively restricted when 80 per cent of the national population was corralled into thirteen per cent of the country's land area. Peasant commodity production was largely nipped in the bud and the South African government ordained its African rural population to the functional role of a labour reserve.

In Congo-Brazzaville and Nigeria, turning-point policies came in the early to mid-1970s when the oil boom led to neglect of peasant commodity production and a massive exodus of rural dwellers to urban centres (Figure 2, Mustapha 1999). Essentially, the sudden loss of rural labour to urban areas

caused severe disorientation of the peasant productive effort. The value of agricultural exports as a percentage of total exports in Nigeria and Congo declined precipitously.

Finally, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Malawi and Zimbabwe have experienced a much more recent turning point. The imposition of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s has amounted to a drastic undermining of most peasants' capitalised production through the removal of subsidies on improved inputs like fertilisers, seeds and pesticides. Each of these countries experienced SAP to a different degree, but the broad masses of middle and poorer peasants involved in commodity production found the removal of subsidies and fluctuating, often declining producer prices threatened the viability of their market-oriented production.

From 1980 to 1995, the widespread enforcement of neo-liberal policies throughout most of Sub-Saharan Africa marked an open-door policy not only to market forces but to the forces of global de-agrarianisation implicit in the market's search for optimised returns on investment. Peasant agriculture, with its subsistence orientation and relatively low yielding, unstandardised agriculture and high transport costs, was the antithesis of the growing dominance of agro-industrial production in the world's agricultural commodity trade circuits (Goodman and Watts 1997). This period marked the convergence of global de-agrarianisation and African depeasantisation, reflected in the steady decline of African agricultural exports as a share of the world's agricultural trade as well as two dramatic surges of agricultural imports, notably food, into the continent (Figure 5).

A growing body of literature has examined the economic impact of structural adjustment and market liberalisation on African peasant agriculture (e.g. Sarris and Shams 1991, Bigsten and Kayizzi-Mugerula 1995, Mihevc 1995, Ponte 1997, Barrett 1998). My concern in this paper goes beyond this to consider their impact on African peasantries *per se*. Certainly, the importance of the non-economic sphere has not been lost on policy-makers. International financial institutions (IFIs) and donors have turned their programme efforts to 'democratisation' and 'good governance', and the institutional dynamics of an 'enabling environment'. Most recently, they have directed enquiry into 'social capital' networks. Nonetheless, there has been a reluctance to consider how neo-liberal policies impact on African rural social structures. Rather the tendency has been to see African social institutions, especially those associated with rural peasant societies, as 'constraints' on the implementation of economic policies inferring that vested interests and traditional conservatism cannot rise to the market challenge. The following section argues the opposite – African peasant societies have been extremely responsive to neo-liberalism with far-reaching and as yet unclear implications for the social and economic fabric of African countries.

II. Features of Rural Restructuring: De-agrarianisation as an Indeterminant Outcome

The DARE research programme used the concept of de-agrarianisation as a general starting point for tracing rural restructuring over the past decade. While the researchers involved in the programme were encouraged to focus on the key indicators of de-agrarianisation, namely occupation, income generation, residence and social identity, to ensure that they shared common subject matter, they deployed the concept within their own national and local context unconstrained by theoretical blueprints. All the

commissioned case studies focused on rural areas, but encouragement was given to tracing the de-agrarianisation process beyond the chosen case-study sites to urban or other rural locations.

This section summarises some of the main rural trends reported in the DARE Working Papers and publications.[3] It should be noted that variation within the focus countries was sometimes as striking as that between countries. Nonetheless, this paper is primarily an exercise in identifying converging patterns and tendencies rather than in stressing differences.

Peasants' Deteriorating Commercial Agriculture

The previous section has already outlined the nature of changing terms of trade in rural areas associated with African countries' declining barter terms of trade (Figure 6). However, it is important to bear in mind that not all seven countries were equally affected by the enforcement of SAP and market liberalisation whose implementation varied in degree and timing. For example, Malawi was one of the first countries to implement SAP in 1981, while Zimbabwe, a late starter, joined the fold in 1991. Furthermore, each country represented a different 'vulnerability' in terms of the degree to which its African peasantries were involved in agricultural commodity production. South African rural dwellers were perhaps the least affected. Very few actually produced agricultural commodities for domestic let alone export markets. Congo-Brazzaville's small size, recent history of political instability, and high rate of urbanisation that predated SAP severely compressed the peasant commercial sector. Ethiopia, racked by recurrent famine and war, had a restricted peasant export sector, and a peasantry made wary by grain requisitioning under successive imperial and military governments. Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi and Zimbabwe, on the other hand, had significant levels of peasant commodity production which were adversely affected by agricultural subsidy cutbacks.

SAP policies largely dismantled African marketing boards and parastatals that had serviced peasants' input requirements, enforced commodity standards, and provided single-channel marketing facilities and controlled prices. The private traders, who replaced them, varied in their performance through time and space, but mounting evidence points to the fact that they have not lived up to the hopes vested in them by the IFIs. Farmers were faced with a more uncertain market environment, producer prices were subject to wide fluctuations, input prices skyrocketed and supply became tenuous as most traders did not have the rural outreach of the parastatals they replaced (e.g. Jambiya 1998, Mung'ong'o 1998, Madulu 1998, Meagher 1999). Traders avoided farmers in areas off the main road where transport costs were too high and many did not enforce sufficient quality control checks. African export crops lost further market share as importers came to expect below-standard products and Asia's highly modernised plantations started to export traditional African export crops like cocoa and palm oil (Figure 5, Raikes and Gibbon 2000).

Peasant farmers' reduced access to agrarian capital in the form of subsidies as well as the increased uncertainty of the market generated a switch to crops with quick or more regular year-round returns

[3] See the Afrika-Studiecentrum DARE Working Papers reporting field research findings: ETHIOPIA: Mulat Demeke 1997; CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE: Paravano 1997, NIGERIA: Chukwuezi 1999, Iliya 1999, Meagher 1999, Mustapha 1999, Yunusa 1999; TANZANIA: Jambiya 1998, Madulu 1998, Mung'ong'o 1998, and Mwamfupe 1998; ZIMBABWE: Berkvens 1997; SOUTH AFRICA: Bank 1999, Manona 1999, McAllister 1999 as well as the book published by Tellegen 1997 on MALAWI.

compared with those harvested only once or twice a year. Preference was given to crops with lower fertiliser demands (Yunusa 1999). Horticultural crops like tomatoes were favoured food crops (Ponte 1998) whereas export crops like cocoa, bananas or Irish potatoes that are harvestable year-round were adopted in areas that had hitherto not produced them (Mung'ong'o 1998, Mwamfupe 1998). The tendency was for larger-scale peasant farmers to become more prominent in the production of the more traditional commercial crops that smaller-scale farmers found hard to finance (Berkvens 1997, Iliya and Swindell 1997, Meagher 1999). In some areas, smaller-scale farmers attempted to carry on with production with or without much reduced inputs, but their yields became disappointingly low. Some reverted to traditional varieties of staple food crops rather than the high-yielding improved varieties requiring expensive inputs (Mung'ong'o 1998, Yunusa 1999). Agricultural income dropped. Mung'ong'o (1998) cites a decline of 71 per cent in annual mean household income from agriculture between 1979 and 1992. Not surprisingly, he also notes land being taken out of cultivation and problems of soil deterioration.

Curiously, the Nigerian government departed from standard SAP package prescriptions with its ban on staple food imports in the early stages of SAP implementation and again more recently. This provided a window of opportunity for peasant producers, primarily larger-scale farmers who produced for Nigeria's huge urban market without the threat of being undercut by cheaper foreign imports (Meagher 1999). SAP also held out promise of revitalising agriculture in rural areas facing a closing land frontier. Even smaller peasants stood to gain in the short run by selling or renting out their land to bigger farmers and engaging in wage labour on the bigger farmers' newly consolidated larger holdings (Iliya 1999). In stark contrast, farmers in areas of central Tanzania that had become the grain heartland of the country under the modernising post-colonial state's policy of pan-territorial pricing and input subsidies, experienced the decimation of their market. Private traders ignored their existence off the main road (Mung'ong'o 1998, Bryceson 1999).

South Africa represented the only country in the DARE study where rural incomes experienced an undoubted upturn. The country's political transformation in the wake of apartheid's demise led to the removal of racial imbalance in pension payments. The scaling-up of African rural pensions to parity with whites markedly boosted rural disposable income for the elderly. Since the elderly constitute a sizeable portion of the rural population, this has had a general effect on rural purchasing power and investment (Bank and Qambata 1999, Manona 1999, McAllister 1999). There is little evidence that this inflow has reversed the decades-long trend to ever more subsistence-based African agriculture. All three study sites witnessed a decline in field agriculture and a concentration on smaller residential 'garden' plots whose output was oriented to domestic production and gift-giving rather than commercial sale. Thus acreages declined markedly over the years. Bank and Qambata (1999) note that male-dominated agro-pastoral cattle-keeping largely disappeared and the older female population who dominated village settlements were involved in pig-keeping on a smaller but noticeable scale. Lack of labour rather than pasture and the fact that pigs were considered 'women's animals' brought about this transition. Pig and chicken production proved to be economically viable for a few women's groups who received extension advice. In the more remote South African case-study area, McAllister (1999) found farming households

achieving remarkably good maize yields, and taking pride in their farming efforts, although they had no infrastructural support to produce for the market.

There were signs that the 'greying of the countryside' is not restricted to South Africa. In various case-study areas, the older generation were found remarking about youths' lack of interest in commercial farming (Jambiya 1998, Mwamfupe 1998, Mung'ong'o 1998). Yunusa (1999) notes that agricultural production in his Nigerian Middle Belt village was concentrated among an older cohort of people between 46 and 65 years of age. Mustapha (1999) records very advanced ages for farming heads of households and the tendency for youth to be engaged in activities outside agriculture.

Evidence suggests that peasant adjustments prompted by increasing capital costs were leading to a reallocation of land and labour away from commercial agriculture. A broad spectrum of poor and middle peasants, particularly youthful peasants, were deterred by the lack of economic returns from growing Africa's traditional export crops. These crops were subject to deteriorating world prices, reflected in their countries' declining net barter terms of trade (Figure 6), external competition in staple food crop production, and private traders' patchy marketing services. IFIs, such as the World Bank, call for export diversification into non-traditional crops, especially horticulture, which has a promising world market. Horticultural products have highly demanding production and marketing requirements, that widely geographically-dispersed, under-capitalised African peasants are even less likely to be able to produce on a sustained basis. African peasant agricultural commodity production is increasingly losing its place in the world division of labour (Figure 5).

Rising Cash Needs

At the same time as returns from peasants' commercial agriculture became less certain, daily cash requirements were increasing under the economic stringency of SAP. In addition to the removal of agricultural subsidies, bankrupt African governments removed subsidies on educational and health services. School fees and 'user fees' at health centres became a high priority in peasant household budgets. Price inflation reached rural consumers through rising import costs of agricultural inputs and enticing consumer goods that private traders were bringing to village markets. Market liberalisation, from the perspective of the rural consumer, tended to expand choice but at arm's length, for much of the tantalising merchandise came with unaffordable prices. Meanwhile, peasants continued to shoulder the normal expenses of living in their agrarian communities. Such costs, depending on local circumstances, included: equipment associated with more capital-intensive farming, community-centred gift-giving, and food purchases. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

In those areas where ploughs or mechanised, as opposed to hoe, agriculture is practised, there are heavy annual capital costs associated with the purchase and maintenance of equipment, or alternatively equipment rental and labour costs. The timeliness of annual expenditure on these items is a strong determinant of crop output.

Expenses also arise from social gift-giving and ceremonial life. As argued by Wolf (1966), the ceremonial side of peasant life gives vital meaning to agrarian work and reaffirms the sense of community needed for sustaining relations of mutual help. Bank and Qambata (1999) see older rural women's quite substantial expenditure on ceremonies as the means through which they try to shape a

sense of the agrarian social community as its more material aspects slip away. Manona (1999) notes animal stocks are more for ceremonial use than sale. By contrast, the Nigerian case studies (Iliya 1999, Meagher 1999) record a tendency for decline in expenditure in gift-giving because people are being forced to forego such expenditure in favour of more immediate consumption needs. The moral economy of gift-giving is under pressure.

In many case studies, the largest expenditure was on staple food purchases. In rural areas of Nigeria, food prices rose astronomically in the late 1980s and 1990s causing hardship for food-deficit rural households (Yunusa 1999). Sixty-five per cent of the Ethiopian households sampled were net buyers of grain (Mulat Demeke 1997) (Table 1). The Zimbabwean and Ethiopian study areas were sites not only of increasing food purchase but also food aid dependence (Berkvens 1997, Mulat Demeke 1997). Serious recurrent food shortages were associated with harvest failures in a semi-arid climate, declining yields, and growing distress of the poorer sections of the rural community.

The Nigerian case studies refer to many households cutting back on consumption of basic food items. In Northern Nigeria and Ethiopia, poorer peasants were disposing of productive assets, notably land, as a way of keeping up with their necessary expenditures.

Over the past two decades, rural households have increasingly faced agricultural bottlenecks due to the rising costs of farm inputs and many have found it difficult to cover critical expenditures like school fees, or have become increasingly reliant on basic staple food purchase. Agricultural income was generally characterised by lump-sum payments after harvests. The proliferation and frequent escalation of costs that peasants of all economic strata faced gave rise to far more continuous, year-round cash expenditure requirements. Peasants had to find ways and means of meeting these year-round costs, exacerbated by the declining level of income derived from their flagging commercial agricultural production.

Increasing Incidences of Non-agricultural Income Diversification

When and Why?

It seems more than coincidental that the survey findings of all the DARE studies, barring those from South Africa, report a surge in non-agricultural income sources over the past fifteen years of SAP implementation.[4] This is a rather perverse outcome for a set of policies that was originally implemented in the name of correcting urban bias and 'getting the prices right' for Africa's peasant farmers. To come to grips with this unpredicted twist, it is useful to contextualise it within traditional African farming systems and their more recent forms.

The existence of a wide array of non-agricultural activities in African farming systems is readily apparent in the accounts of 19th century explorers. Most likely, their range and incidence was far greater in pre-colonial times, prior to the introduction of time-consuming production of export crops and the out-migration of labour from villages. Non-agricultural activities became concentrated in the post-

[4] For example, 67 per cent of household dependants' involvement in non-farm activity in Doma, Nigeria, was initiated during the last 15 years. Forty-three per cent had no previous economic activity before setting up then (Yunusa 1999) In Madulu's (1998) Mwanza region study in Tanzania, over 50 per cent of existing non-agricultural activity started in 1990 or thereafter and another third in the 1980s with only 16 per cent of respondents involved in non-agricultural activity in the past. In Jambiya's (1998) study of Tanga region, Tanzania, the urge for starting up non-agricultural activities came in the 1980s.

harvest dry season when agricultural work was at a low ebb. In the process, craft skills were lost due to a lack of time to perform such activities combined with the replacement of various traditional consumption items by imported manufactures. The loss of traditional skills was less profound in those societies where rural African elites were prominent and demanded such articles or where there was some slack in the agricultural system affording women or other social categories time to carry on with non-agricultural pastimes.

In addition to the issue of labour time availability, there is the agrarian risk factor most acutely experienced in Sahelian farming systems. Higher probabilities of harvest failure have historically encouraged Sahelian farmers to seek compensating, non-farm income sources. Drought-prone Sahelian and Sudanese rural economies have strong traditions of trade and labour migration (Grawert 1998). The growing body of African income-diversification literature has strong affinity to studies of 'survival strategies' in drought-prone rural areas (e.g. Campbell 1987, Bruijn and van Dijk 1994). In the era of structural adjustment, the concept of 'household coping strategies' was used to apply to economic as well as climatic shocks (e.g. Bangura 1994) and income diversification began to be strongly associated with agricultural producers' risk-aversity beyond the realm of climatic hazard.

Ellis (1997) asserts that 'the prime motive and consequence of successful diversification is to reduce vulnerability', but insists on distinguishing rational risk-management from default coping strategies. 'Risk management' is perceived to be voluntary decision-making that avoids production failure by varying income sources and spreading them over time to reduce 'co-variate risk' and to ensure 'consumption smoothing', i.e. the continuous realisation of the household's basic purchased needs year-round. 'Coping strategies', on the other hand, are defined as an 'involuntary response to disaster or unanticipated failure in major sources of survival' (Ellis 1997:15-18). Whereas 'coping' is associated with 'trying to preserve existing livelihoods in the face of disaster', 'adaptation' refers to the more rational response of 'making permanent changes to the livelihood mix in the face of changing circumstances' (Ellis 1997:18). While these distinctions are analytically clarifying, they are difficult to disentangle in the field given researchers' reliance on retrospective interviewing. Rather than being qualitatively different approaches to risk, they can form a sequential trial-and-error learning curve in which rural farmers are thrown into 'coping' in the first year or two of a 'disaster', after which they 'manage the risk' and in so doing, they eventually 'adapt'.

Peasant farmers' responses to sustained change in liberalised rural commodity markets would be likely to unfold in this manner, as opposed to more knee-jerk survival strategies in the wake of sudden, natural disaster. Imprecision in understanding risk management seems to arise from the failure to distinguish climatic risk from market risk in the income-diversification literature that has surfaced in the 1990s. The surge in African rural households' income-diversification tendencies over the last 15 years cannot be correlated with a flush of 'bad weather' on the continent. While 'market imperfections' are often cited as a cause of small-holders' risk-averse behaviour, the literature largely ignores ubiquitous evidence of SAP and market liberalisation's profound risk-enhancing effect on African peasants' agricultural commodity markets.

Berkvens' (1997) study of a Zimbabwean Communal Area views drought-proneness as a significant contextual aspect, stressing that attempts to modernise agricultural production have led to some crop

yield increase, but continuing exposure to harvest failure due to climatic risk. However, he attributes the 5 per cent per annum growth of non-agricultural activities to the impact of SAP and market liberalisation, specifically: the contraction of the urban formal job market and presence of returned migrants in rural areas; and the economic unviability of using improved input packages in peasant commercial agriculture due to their rising price. Mounting population pressure and the general low value that the population places on agricultural work predispose the population to seek non-agricultural incomes. Madulu (1998) cites the collapse of public services at village level associated with SAP cutbacks as many people's motivation for entering non-farm activities. Countries that had restrictions on informal sector activities have reversed their policies under market liberalisation. The impact of this tends to be most felt in urban areas where the enforcement of informal sector bans was far more pronounced.

Rural contextual features militating for non-agricultural involvement emerge from several of the case studies. Parts of Nigeria (Chukwuezi 1999, Iliya 1999) and Ethiopia (Mulat Demeke 1997, Yohannes Habtu 1997) have reached acute levels of land shortage, propelling those affected into non-agricultural work. Certainly there are many forces influencing peasants' selection of income-diversifying activities, but it is nonetheless important to ask *why* such searches are *now* so generalised across the various agro-ecological zones of Sub-Saharan Africa. As long as income diversification remains coloured by neo-liberal hype about the benefits of market liberalisation to peasants' agricultural production, the analysis of peasants' labour allocative behaviour and risk-aversion will have an air of unreality to it.

Rural Household Involvement in Non-agricultural Activities and Income Sources

'Non-agricultural activities' are defined as any work that does not directly involve plant or animal husbandry. Income diversification in Africa encompasses agricultural diversification, as previously mentioned, but its non-agricultural component is more prominent. 'Non-farm activity' is a term that many equate with non-agricultural activities (e.g. Ellis 1997), but in the DARE surveys it encompasses agricultural waged labour on farms not belonging to the individual producer or his/her household, in other words, 'off-farm' work (Mulat Demeke 1997, Iliya 1999, Meagher 1999, Yunusa 1999). Increasing non-farm work represents a change in labour form, i.e. movement away from household labour, rather than a movement away from agricultural labour *per se*. Nonetheless, like non-agricultural labour, it provides an additional source of income to that of own-farm output.

Table 1 summarises the DARE village survey data relating to the incidence of non-agricultural cash income. Column 4 lists household participation rates in non-agricultural activities. Comparison between survey sites is not strictly possible since different categorisations of non-agricultural activities were used. However, close examination of each survey reveals that the vast majority of households have one or more non-agricultural income sources, be it active participation in trade, service provisioning or craft work, or more passive receipt of a transfer payment in the form of a state pension or remittances from relations.

The range of non-agricultural activities varies markedly from place to place. Most of the DARE researchers devised typologies to accommodate what would otherwise be long lists of assorted

activities. They included activities contrasted on the basis of being: modern or traditional, high or low income-earning, and formal or informal sector work. Before exploring the nature of these activities in greater detail it is useful to identify three basic non-agricultural income-source complexes that denote differences in dominant sources of non-agricultural earnings and agrarian bases related to specific regional agro-economic zones:

> ***Complex A - Local Services*** (Ethiopia, Malawi)
> Characteristically, these areas were remote and not heavily involved in agricultural commodity production. Their non-agricultural activities were primarily of a service nature, as well as some handicraft activities, catering to a restricted local market. Labour-intensive traditional non-agricultural products were still being consumed by villagers. Beer-brewing stood out as the single most important activity in terms of numbers of producers and consumers (Tellegen 1997). With very poor transport connections to urban areas, these areas retained a strong subsistence component to their farming system (Mulat Demeke 1997).

With remote and low income-earning populations, these areas have highly restricted local markets. On the other hand, these same characteristics put tight limitations on the importation of urban-produced goods and services. Thus, certain essential services and the production of highly perishable or 'inferior' goods do find a market here. The size of settlement and proximity to roads will strongly influence both the range and income-generating potential of non-agricultural activities in these areas (Tellegen 1997, Mulat Demeke 1997).

> ***Complex B - Trade*** (Nigeria, Tanzania, Zimbabwe)
> These study sites had histories of active participation in labour migration and/or agricultural commodity production. They were market responsive, with reasonably mobile local populations that were aware of job opportunities and consumer demand beyond their immediate locality, often facilitated by historical links with urban areas. The Nigerian, and Zimbabwean case studies to greater or lesser degrees are represented here. Trade was the single most dominant activity.

The rise in importance of trading has been most dramatic in Tanzania. Prior to the implementation of SAP, the country's socialist ideology and commitment to parastatal marketing had prohibited most forms of private trading. Now, trade has become the main vent for non-agricultural activities, a move that local governments now actively encourage. A local village leader was quoted by Jambiya (1998:8) as saying: 'Everybody in this village wants to do *biashara* (trading) of whatever sort, and many households are engaged in this one way or another. I know this because this is where I get the village's

In Nigeria where private trading has an extremely long legacy, trading is both a source of diversified income in rural areas generally as well as a specialisation for particular ethnic groups, notably the Igbo. Igboland has reached population densities approaching those of Rwanda and Burundi. Thirty-five per

cent of non-agricultural income is derived from *in situ* trade and another 25 per cent from remittances from family members involved in long-distance trading businesses (Chukwuezi 1999). Nigerian rural areas without a strong mercantile orientation nonetheless displayed notable entrepreneurial acumen. In Nigeria's south-western cocoa-producing region, people in the lower income strata are moving into trade (Mustapha 1999). Meagher (1999) documents a mini-boom in village jaggery production from locally grown sugar cane as a replacement for the preferred imported white sugar. This exemplifies rural market response to urban demand for locally-made 'inferior goods' at the height of SAP stringency when many urban dwellers could not afford the more expensive, foreign imports.

> ***Complex C - Transfer Payments*** (Zimbabwe, South Africa)
> These were areas that had been historically dominated by rural labour out-migration and the absence of peasant agricultural commodity production. Populations were extremely mobile, characterised by geographical movement between town and countryside at specific stages of their life cycle. The South Africa case studies were the prime example of this type, whereas Zimbabwe represents a gradation between Types B and C. Rural non-agricultural earnings were passive in nature. Most of the earnings derived from transfer payments, either pensions or remittances from non-resident relations.

The value of pensions was considerable in the South African case study and negligible in Zimbabwe due to price inflation (Berkvens 1997). Remittances in kind constituted 42 per cent of non-agricultural earnings of Zimbabwean rural households, hence the importance that rural dwellers placed on the frequency of visits from their urban-based relations. By contrast, Bank and Qambata (1999) document how rural-urban extended family ties have waxed and waned over the years as urban employment opportunities fluctuated and South Africa's tumultuous politics differentially impacted on older rural and younger urban populations. Now gender rather than generational differences between rural and urban populations are coming to the fore. Older women prefer to draw their pensions in tranquil rural home areas visited more frequently by their daughters than their sons, while older men tend to remain urban exiles long after their working lives have ended.

Both South African and Zimbabwean rural areas have experienced recent expansions of local-level bureaucracies which have offered some formal employment opportunities. Berkvens (1997) identified rural formal incomes as having the highest positive effect on per capita income and also the best insurance against risk.

The above typology does not infer exclusive distinctions between the three categories nor does it offer exhaustive coverage of the inter-relationship between different agrarian patterns and non-agricultural activities. On the contrary, most areas show a great deal of overlap in terms of the kinds of non-agricultural activities taking place. This can be illustrated by examining the various classifications employed by the DARE researchers.

Many distinguish both goods and services in terms of being either traditional or modern. Traditional activities refer to the use of age-old production techniques and local materials to make products or

provide services that are usually destined for the immediate local market or a craft market. Mwamfupe (1998) observes that in southern Tanzania traditional services such as midwifery and medical treatments that had previously been offered as unpaid community services are now being commoditised by their practitioners. Generally, however, the lists of traditional goods and services, many of which have modern counterparts in the same village (e.g. Iliya 1999) are neither as numerous nor as remunerative as the modern non-agricultural activities. Surprisingly, this is even the case in the Ethiopian case study where craft traditions in weaving, pottery, leather tanning and metal-working have survived to the present. However only 7 per cent of households participate in commercial handicraft production. These products are not considered as practical or as durable as their modern substitutes. For example, imported light-weight plastic containers are preferred to the traditional pots weighing several kilos that women strapped to their backs and foreheads. Furthermore, traditional craftsmen often face acute shortages of the local materials they require. Increasing population pressure restricts the areas like mountains or swamps where people collect the natural inputs for their products (Jambiya 1998).

By contrast there are certain modern activities that have taken off beyond anyone's wildest expectations. This is often the case for an activity requiring a medium-sized investment that allows a significant improvement in the investors' mobility or capability. The best examples of this come in the field of transport. Bicycles in Mbeya and Mwanza regions of Tanzania have become an important part of a trader's tool kit. Traders can take on heavier loads and longer distances than were ever possible with head or small-cart loading. The same phenomenon is noted in Nigeria, but at a higher level of technology. The rapid expansion of Okada motor-bike ownership is also linked to trading capability (Chukwuezi 1998).

Low-income and high-income activities either refer to the potential earning power or the capital needed to start up the activity, which are usually synonymous. Activities that have large starting capital requirements are pursued by relatively few people but yield lucrative returns. By contrast, practitioners of activities with low starting capital like petty trade and beer brewing that are heavily over-subscribed find it difficult to break even let alone make a profit (Tellegen 1997).

Contrary to expectations, the most educated do not always monopolise high income-earning activities. The Nigerian case studies show non-farm activity operator's western education does not open doors to high earnings (Meagher 1999, Chukwuezi 1999). Igbo traders tend to regard higher levels of education as a waste of time (Chukwuezi 1999). They value starting their trading careers early rather than seeking academic credentials. The post-independence diploma fever rapidly abated as the purchasing power of white-collar employees' formal sector earnings declined over the past two decades.

However, in Malawi and Ethiopia, there is a positive correlation between non-agricultural earnings and education level. Educational opportunities in the rural areas of both of these countries are poor. A lack of basic numeracy and literacy, and an awareness of the commercial world beyond the village undoubtedly pose obstacles in the pursuit of non-farm activities. Households engaged in farming and wage labour have a lower educational level than those who venture into non-agricultural activities in the Malawian case study. Furthermore, earned income correlates with educational level and the number of adult household members. Education is a key factor of success both at individual and household level (Tellegen 1997).

‘Formal’ and ‘informal sector’ classifications are used in some of the case studies. Since the 1970s when the terms were first coined, they have been plagued by a great deal of imprecision in their usage. In some places the dichotomy refers to waged and/or legally taxed employment whereas in other settings it is used to refer to low-paid, unregistered self-employment as opposed to higher-paid, waged employment. It can be argued that the distinction between the ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ sector has been greatly blurred under SAP as urban-based formal sector jobs became unremunerative and employees in this sector began entering the ‘informal’ sector to diversify their income sources.

Nonetheless, it appears that the distinction still holds validity in Southern Africa where formal sector salary levels are unlikely to have eroded to the same degree as in many other countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, it is here that there is a noticeable sprinkling of formal sector workers in rural areas connected with social service provisioning and local government bureaucracy. Berkvens (1997) notes that those few people who hold formal sector jobs in rural areas have the most secure income for ‘consumption smoothing’ year-round. He hints at the possibility of a rural ‘educated elite’ perpetuating itself by virtue of the fact that the relatively educated holding formal sector jobs do not default on the payment of their children’s school fees, giving their children the opportunity of uninterrupted school attendance.

In summary, DARE survey findings suggest that rural households that rely solely on agriculture for their livelihood are in a minority in Sub-Saharan Africa. There is an enormous range of non-agricultural income sources and a great deal of overlap in activities between survey sites. Nonetheless, there are discernible patterns of reliance on differing income sources giving rise to the identification of three dominant non-agricultural income-source complexes. Each corresponds to distinct agrarian histories and levels of *in situ* peasant agricultural commodity production. Finally, in most cases, the pursuit of non-agricultural activities is a year-round phenomenon, subject primarily to fluctuations in local purchasing power rather than seasonal lulls in the agricultural work calendar.

Significance of Household Cash Earning from Non-agricultural Activities: Do Non-agricultural Activities Provide Risk-Aversion and Consumption Smoothing?

Previous survey reviews found in the income-diversification literature converge on an estimate of roughly 40 per cent of African rural household income on average being derived from non-farm sources (Haggblade, Hazell and Brown 1989, Bagachwa 1997, Reardon 1997, Ellis 1998). By contrast, DARE survey results are remarkable in finding much higher levels of between 60 to 80 per cent (Table 1, Column 6).

Comparing widely different survey findings is by its very nature a rough-and-ready exercise. It would be necessary to delve into the minutiae of categorisation and measurement to make definitive statements on why there is such a large gap. On the other hand, such a large gap is hardly likely to result merely from methodological differences. Most of the surveys upon which these 40 per cent estimates are based were conducted during the 1980s or early 1990s. It is probable that the on-going tendency for declining agricultural commodity production combined with expanding participation in non-agricultural activities is proceeding apace. Mustapha (1999) has the benefit of time series data for his Nigerian cocoa-producing area study site showing a remarkable rise in household participation in non-farm activities from an average of 33 per cent in the mid-1980s to 57 per cent in 1997 at the time of the DARE survey. When broken down by income group, there are striking differences: the low-income group's participation increases dramatically from 35 per cent to 80 per cent while that of the upper income group declines slightly from 33 per cent to 25 per cent. The middle income group jumps from 30 to 50 per cent over the same period.

DARE findings suggest that non-agricultural earnings account for the majority of rural household cash income presently. Such quantitative change may be leading to significant qualitative change in the nature of rural household production. Certainly, this is a possibility that will be explored in detail in the sections to come.

In the light of rural households' increasing reliance on non-agricultural income, it is useful to consider whether or not such earnings are alleviating risk and achieving consumption smoothing and what costs are borne by households in taking this route. In Mwanza region in Tanzania and Sokoto State in Nigeria, respondents mentioned that first involvement in such activities is considered as a somewhat shameful admission of a household's failure to adequately provision household needs within the gamut of agricultural production. Failure of the state to no longer adequately provision necessary infrastructural support for agriculture was also cited as a reason for initiating non-agricultural activities (Madulu 1998, Iliya 1999). Most case studies, however, are documenting a general rural process already well advanced that is now considered normal, not unusual, and certainly not shameful.

Several authors cite welfare benefits to those households most actively involved in non-agricultural production. In Malawi, households involved in non-agricultural activities averaged 225 per cent more annual cash income as opposed to those without (Tellegen 1997:152). In Zimbabwe, households with incomes from more than one kind of employment, especially if they have formal employment, are less likely to apply for food aid (Berkvens 1997:12).

In other cases, non-agricultural income sources have become rural households' staff of life. Interestingly, this is apparent in all three non-agricultural complexes. In Ethiopia, asset poor people,

usually those without sufficient land or draught power, rely heavily on non-agricultural income sources of a rural service nature in the absence of means of pursuing agriculture. In Igboland, high population densities, small plot size, and degraded land make trade central to livelihood strategies. In South Africa, transfer payments have long been the central support for rural households.

Proliferation of Income Earners within the Rural Household

Non-agricultural income diversification not only refers to the fact that households are diversifying into non-agricultural activities but that they are often pursuing more than one, sometimes several, different non-agricultural activities simultaneously or at different points throughout the year. It is impossible to generalise about temporal patterns. Most of the activities are highly opportunistic in nature, involving quick responses to market demand and supply. However, changing labour force participation patterns are more readily apparent. As is logically inferable from the process of income diversification, more and more household members are entering non-agricultural production and the male household head's dominant role as family cash-earner - an ideologically ingrained feature of African peasant commodity production – is eroding.

In some areas, the male household head is retaining his role as agrarian patriarch as village life changes around him. Yunusa (1999) documents how rural families in the Middle Belt have traditionally been very large, numbering up to 18 household members. Now family size is declining somewhat, but male heads of household are remaining true to their traditional agricultural base, only 22 per cent of male household heads derived income from non-agricultural activities compared to 89 per cent for their wives and 48 per cent for their dependants (Table 1, Column 5). This is in contrast to other parts of Nigeria. To the south in Igboland, Chukwuezi (1999) found barely any difference between the percentage of total income women derived from non-agriculture (79 per cent) and that of men (81 per cent). In Zimbabwe, households in the prime of their life cycle, with economically-active-aged household heads and children, are found to be especially dependent on non-agricultural incomes (Berkvens 1997).

African rural women's lack of involvement in cash-earning was generally assumed by donor agencies throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Boserup 1970, Rogers 1980, Bryceson 1995). Income diversification's pervasive expansion has overturned this assumption. Rural women are earning cash, although it is generally less remunerative work compared to that of men because they remain largely restricted to income-earning activities that are based on their home-making skills. Sales of prepared snacks, beer, hair plaiting, petty retailing, prostitution, knitting, tailoring, and soap making, are a few of the many services that they now sell. In non-Muslim study sites, beer brewing and sales of prepared food were usually women's major income earner, especially for female heads of households who faced major labour constraints due to the relatively small size of their household and lack of male assistance for various tasks (Berkvens 1997, Mulat Demeke 1997, Tellegen 1997, Mung'ong'o 1998). In Malawi, the sale of food snacks and beer brewing accounted for 76 per cent of female heads of households' non-agricultural activities. Most of these women were older and relatively uneducated.

In Tanzania, village women often referred to their new income-earning role in terms of it having been thrust upon them by worsening economic circumstances (Bryceson 1999). What is apparent is that rural men have generally accepted that their wives and daughters can and in fact have to work outside

the home to earn money. This change in male attitudes appears to have taken place quite rapidly and under duress. In Lushoto district, Sender and Smith (1990) observed that male interests were directed at 'protecting' women from having to work outside the home during the mid-1980s. Little more than 10 years later, women interviewed were emphatic that their menfolk were actively encouraging them to earn income (Jambiya 1998).

Amongst women in the Middle Belt and northern parts of Nigeria, the combined influence of plough agriculture and Islam has historically limited their involvement in agriculture, although in the drier parts of the area women do farm and have a more public presence.[5] Yunusa (1999) found only 12 per cent of the sampled women farmed, the rest were engaged in non-agricultural activities. Well before SAP, women in these areas were active in food vending and petty retail trade. Actively engaged in producing the product, they tend to rely on the labour of their children to retail their merchandise, so as to conform to *purdah* restrictions. Starting capital has been their major constraint. Women can only start non-agricultural activities with the permission of their fathers or husbands, who are most likely to grant them the starting capital they need (Meagher 1999, Yunusa 1999). The starting capital for petty trade is low, hence its popularity as a major avenue for women's income-earning. The strong attraction for women is that the earnings they generate from non-agricultural activities are theirs as opposed to earnings from farming which belong to the family.

Iliya (1999), writing about semi-arid Sokoto State, offers other rationales for women's participation in non-agricultural activities that relate to the prevailing polygamous family structure, namely: polygamous wives felt that their husbands could no longer support all their wives; there was economic rivalry between wives; and women strove to give reciprocal gifts to one another as a form of mutual support and future investment. Although women were allowed to farm in this area, the very small size of their agricultural plots and the high capital costs of agricultural input purchases led them to prefer non-agricultural activities. This was borne out by the exceptionally large range of non-agricultural activities they pursued. Iliya counted 89 different female-operated non-agricultural activities compared with 79 for men. Their presence was overly weighted in the low and medium-earning activities (63 per cent of the female total). Their representation in medium and higher income levels was facilitated by government targeting of rural development loans to women to encourage female economic participation. Twenty-three per cent of all the sampled women had received such loans.

The strongest female presence in non-agriculture income diversification, in fact virtual monopolisation, is recorded by Manona (1999) and Bank and Qambata (1999). This results from selective demographic processes in which older women, are numerically dominant in these Eastern Cape rural study sites. A large percentage of them are widows in the enviable position of receiving pensions and/or remittances. In the face of traditional Xhosa patriarchal values and social structures, they have acted as a magnetic force drawing their urban-based relations and the local rural community into ceremonial rituals that invert Xhosa gender roles. Even social occasions like 'beer drinks' have been feminised in a quiet but no less powerful expression of female economic and demographic presence. Manona (1999) observes that patriarchal barriers to women's asset ownership have been largely

[5] This phenomenon is related to the lower water table that necessitates women's domestic water collection outside their household compound (Meagher 1999).

removed. Women in his study site did not experience gender discrimination in the allocation of land and some were found actively involved in local politics. They constituted two-thirds of those engaged in non-agricultural activities. This new-found activism was linked to the removal of the traditional chiefly Tribal Authority with the dissolution of the Ciskei bantustan. The residents' associations that replaced it were founded on democratic principles that benefited women. By contrast, chiefly leadership prevailed in the more remote South African research site where female economic initiative and autonomy were less in evidence (McAllister 1999).

This South African case-study site and the Ethiopian study area stand out as testimonies to the strength of agrarian-based male patriarchy. Their stronger adherence to traditional hierarchical order within the community influences women's economic and social spheres - women are primarily part of an agrarian family work effort. However, the other case studies are not dissimilar with respect to agricultural work. While women are increasingly involved in the more autonomous sphere of non-agricultural income diversification, they have not relinquished their more traditional role in household domestic labour and subsistence agriculture. In Igboland, although the gender division of labour in farming is blurred, women are more likely to farm than men (Chukwuezi 1999), a situation not unlike that observed in South Africa by Bank and Qambata (1999) and Manona (1999). It is only in Islamic areas that women are not key producers of the family's subsistence food needs.

Like women, youth have been actively seeking non-agricultural activity involvement. 'Youth' are defined here as teenagers and young, unmarried adults. Their presence is especially noted in trade. In Tanzania, the rush into trade has been remarkable. Madulu (1998) notes that in Mwanza region youth are specialising in medium and long-distance trade, taking advantage of the freedom of movement associated with being unmarried and unencumbered by family responsibilities. In Mbeya region, given the proximity of two international borders (Malawi and Zambia), the East African rift zone's wide variation in complementary agro-ecological zones and the influence of economic liberalisation, trading has become a youthful passion (Mwamfupe 1998). Youth's absence at a farm demonstration lecture during my visit to the village was ruefully explained by middle-aged farmers as young people's unwillingness to be involved in anything that would take time away from trading and instant cash-earning pursuits (Bryceson 1999). In Nigeria's Middle Belt, Yunusa (1999) states that youth dominate non-farm activities, citing an 18 per cent increase in family and child non-agricultural activity since 1992. Similarly, in Nigeria's south-western cocoa-producing area youth of all income strata are far less attracted to farming than their parents and are diversifying into a number of trading and service activities (Mustapha 1999).

The youthful wave of non-agricultural practitioners has early recruits. Several researchers note the growing incidence of child non-agricultural labour, often at the expense of school attendance (Madulu 1998, Iliya 1999). Mwamfupe (1998:14) quotes a village elder in Mbeya region Tanzania: 'school children used to assist in farm work after school hours, but today they dislike agriculture and are increasingly drawn into trading activities'.

One of the defining characteristics of peasantries is the strength of family ties. Extended family structures dominate, as they are compatible with labour demands of agrarian production (Wolf 1966). Colonial and post-colonial policies shaped agrarian systems that integrated family subsistence production

and commodity production. The formation of patriarchal family structures in which senior males as heads of households were accorded the role of liaising with government and co-opted into cash-crop production was encouraged. The male cash crop/female subsistence spheres date from this period.

Declining African agricultural commodity production of the last 20 years has differentially impacted on men and women. Men's labour time and economic returns from cashcropping have diminished and undermined their role as family provisioners. The decline has been so rapid and forceful that virtually all able-bodied adults as well as many children have sought to earn incomes to stave off material deprivation. The individualisation of economic activity and the increasing tendency to engage in non-agricultural income earning have had a dissolving effect on long-standing agrarian divisions of labour as well as economic rights and responsibilities within peasant households (see also Francis 1998 on Kenya). Pooling of income within the domestic unit is weakening as categories of people who formerly were not expected to earn income assert a moral right to determine how their income is spent. This assertion is given added emphasis because they experience a decline, if not cessation, in income and material goods distribution from the domestic units' erstwhile 'primary earners', male heads of households.

Decreasing Rural Isolation

The linkage between physical mobility and social change is extremely under-researched in the social sciences. Urban migration rates are the best indicators of physical mobility we have but they are a one-sided and inadequate basis for understanding the impact of peasants' mobility on rural communities, and the nature of town-country links.

Levels of peasant mobility vary enormously between countries and even between communities within a single country. The Gera Medir Ethiopian case study is at one end of the continuum, a remote famine-prone mountain community of primarily subsistence-farming peasants whose non-agricultural activities are characterised by local services. Formerly, there were part-time village traders who made long journeys to buy consumer items like salt, pepper, spices, coffee and clothes that they brought back to the village on heavily-laden horses and mules. Mengistu's military government restricted their movements. Now, full-time urban-based traders using motor vehicles have displaced the village traders (Mulat Demeke 1997).

Melani in South Africa is at the opposite end of the spectrum, served by daily minibus connections to the nearest town, such that it is possible to become a 'suburban commuter' working in a nearby urban area and residing in the village. The mobility of South African rural dwellers has been dramatically enhanced by the expansion of privately owned, fiercely competitive minibus services during the 1980s (Bank 1990).

Between these two extremes there is wide variation in rural dwellers' mobility and accessibility to urban areas and services beyond the village. The past 15 years of SAP and market liberalisation have tended to reduce the barriers of physical distance. The resumption of aid flows and removal of many foreign exchange barriers has facilitated the importation of motor vehicles and spare parts. Many Sub-Saharan African countries have been recipients to major donor programmes to rehabilitate dilapidated trunk road systems. Economic liberalisation and privatisation has increased urban-urban transport links in many African countries. On the other hand, liberalisation has tended to increase the transport service

gap between on-road and off-road villages. On-road village transport services have markedly improved while off-road services have declined as the private traders and transporters that replaced parastatal operations restrict their services to the bigger settlements on the road which have bigger markets and lower wear-and-tear costs for their vehicles.

Rural income diversification has had a profound effect on peasant mobility patterns, both rural-rural and rural-urban, as the DARE case study material illustrates. In Tanzania, peasants, particularly mobile unmarried youth, have sought productive activities that take them out of their increasingly remote villages. For example in Ngonga village, Mbeya region, far from the main road on the shores of Lake Malawi, medium-distance trade using bicycle transport has surfaced as the village's new economic lifeline. Young men crossed the border into Malawi by canoe and returned with 90 kg bags of smuggled[6] sugar to the nearby district town in Tanzania where the sugar was sold at a good profit. In turn, they purchased imported second-hand clothing, Pakistani cloth, and Chinese-manufactured hair care products, cosmetics, and jewellery in town destined for sale in Ngonga village's weekly market which catered almost solely for a Malawian clientele who crossed the border to purchase these enticing goods that were unavailable in their own country (Mwamfupe 1998).

In Mwanza region, male youth gravitated to small-scale diamond mining sites (Madulu 1998). Mabuki village was one of these sites. A 1992 register of miners showed that in a village of 5,148 people, there were 1,043 miners, 213 local, 173 from other villages in the district, and the rest hailing from outside the district, but mostly from within the region. Interestingly, this new orientation reversed the traditional outward pattern of migration from the district in search of new farmland. Kwimba district, considered the heartland of the proud Sukuma agrarian tradition, was being environmentally ravaged by diamond diggers at these sites. Once mined, the diamond digging sites would take decades to recover. It was a cost that local farmers shouldered. They struck 'sharemining' deals with the migrants in which the migrants did all the digging on their land and the two parties shared the profits of the diamond sales. Small-scale mining in Tanzania is not peculiar to Sukumaland. It is estimated that over half a million people are now engaged in it (Chachage, Ericsson and Gibbon 1993).

In the other two regional village sites there were fewer locational assets to capitalise on. Off-road sites in particular were economically depressed. In Iringa region, the off-road village had once been a model *ujamaa* village based on maize monocropping. Now, disillusioned with poor returns from maize sales, they had few local cash-earning alternatives. With virtually no purchasing power in the area to support local small-scale industries, youth reverted to the labour migration practices that had ceased forty years ago at the time of national independence. Young men journeyed to large privately owned tea estates for wage labour or produced rice on a sharecropping basis at Usangu some 100 km away. Young women boarded buses to the capital in search of jobs as domestic servants. A similar pattern was observed in Kweminyasa, a seriously over-populated off-road village site in Tanga region. One family had embarked on specialised handicraft production of mats and baskets for the urban and tourist market, whereas the others were reluctant tea growers, complaining about the inadequacies of private traders' marketing services and declining yields. Increasingly parents were encouraging their sons and daughters to migrate to urban areas. Boys were destined for petty trade and girls hoped to find domestic service

[6] The trade was illegal in Malawi.

work, but with many having ultimately to settle for being a barmaid or prostitute. In the space of a decade, parents' attitudes towards the migration of their children has switched from taunting their offspring for craving city life (*tamaa ya kwenda mjini*) to goading them to seek their fortune there (*kwenda kutafuta riziki/maisha*) (Jambiya 1998). Twenty-three per cent of households had male children who had migrated out, and 17 per cent had female children who migrated.

In Nigeria, the higher level of urban migration dating from the 1970s and the country's economic 'boom and bust' history has created some complicated rural-urban patterns. The outward-directed trading impulse of the Igbo was highlighted in a previous section. This outward orientation has a strong circular component: 65 per cent of the Osumenyi households sampled had migrants living outside the locality; 20 per cent had male return migrants; 15 per cent had female return migrants; and 25 per cent of the households received remittances. Return migration contributes to the range and level of local skills. Auto mechanics, electrical suppliers and plumbers can be found in the village. This is indicative of a relatively high standard of living where people aspire to car and television ownership. Long-distance migration has now been thoroughly integrated into Igbo values of achievement. Returning home to invest in the construction of conspicuous public buildings is a mark of having succeeded in the business world. Parents encourage their offspring to migrate, anticipating receipt of remittances and visits. The migrants themselves generally hope to retire to the village (Chukwuezi 1999).

Igbo migratory movements are indicative of business opportunities throughout the country. Their early migration to Nigeria's large cities in response to acute land shortages in their home area gave them an edge in trade. In the depressed economy of recent years, their numbers have spilled out into smaller rural settlements and villages where they have opened retail shops, pharmacies, and other higher income earning non-agricultural activities usually from fixed premises.

Both Yunusa (1999) and Meagher (1999) record business movements from town to villages. Connections to urban areas were readily in evidence: 16 per cent of the non-farm activity operators in the Middle Belt site had previously received some form of occupational training in urban areas (e.g. auto mechanics, photography, welding: 8 per cent had had businesses in towns before coming to the village; 30 per cent obtained inputs from town; and 14 per cent wanted to move to urban areas but did not have sufficient capital to do so. Yunusa (1999:25,36) concludes that rural non-farm activities can be 'a conduit through which rural capital is mobilised and moved to towns and cities…There is a tendency for urban-trained NFA [non-farm activity] operators to establish or relocate businesses to rural areas and move back to urban areas when they have gathered enough capital to cope with the competition in urban areas'. Meagher (1999) detected a similar process in Kaduna State. Certain migrants to the village, who had been unable to get a foothold in the increasingly competitive urban informal sector, had established themselves in the village as non-farm activity operators, displacing local women provision traders in the process. The local population was reasonably mobile: 25 per cent of the households had out-migrants, and 25 per cent had return migrants who were retreating from 'collapsed opportunities' (Meagher 1999). The majority of them were uneducated and untrained and they were absorbed back into their households' agricultural labour force.

Family structures and village livelihood strategies in the South African and Zimbabwean sites have been moulded by decades of circular migration patterns. In Zimbabwe, this legacy ordains that men are

the ‘breadwinners’ who seek employment outside the area while women warm the hearth, being responsible for household labour, subsistence agricultural tasks, minor cash supplementation, and overseeing the children’s education. This gender duality has been disrupted by the severe contraction of urban job opportunities (Potts 1995, Berkvens 1997). Return male migration has caused tension as there are not enough agrarian or non-agrarian opportunities to absorb the returnees. There is a surplus of school-leavers who do not have the practical skills to start a trade. Agricultural work, associated more with women than men, is low status. A few of the returnees have set about making a success of commercial agriculture. Some had in fact returned to secure land rights in the communal area, but they quickly have to face the combined high risks of unpredictable rainfall of the semi-arid climate and investment in expensive agricultural inputs. Rural dwellers still harboured the unlikely ideal of the male urban-based breadwinner. Even women preferred this option, despite the risk of losing their husbands to the temptations of other women in the city (Berkvens 1997). This residential split in households was encouraged by the uncertainty of future land tenure policy in communal areas (Potts 1999). Households wished to maintain their claims to land, and a wife’s presence in the rural areas facilitated this.

The welfare of the South African rural study sites, more than any of the other sites, was inextricably linked to urban areas. This took different forms. In the most agrarian-based community, McAllister (1999) argues that the persistence of agrarian cultural values and food production objectives as well as cooperative working relations amongst villagers facilitated a considerable out-migration of people. The sense of belonging to a local agricultural community is enhanced by out-migration that enables a core of committed village farmers to carry on with adequate land resources. The labour lost from the disappearance of kin is replaced by neighbours operating in an atmosphere of mutual support.

In the other two sites, a sense of local rural neighbourhood was also present, but not necessarily directed so pointedly at subsistence agriculture. These were areas where there were dense rural-urban networks. In Melani, people could even physically straddle rural and urban areas. In both there were complicated patterns of inter-generational exchange with the tendency for rural out-migration to be people in their economically active prime, and rural residents to consist of young children and guardian grandparents, most specifically grandmothers. The preference of older women to return to villages for security and cultural reasons, as well as the higher male mortality rate, means that these sites are dominated by widows. Migrants from the village are both male and female but there is a tendency for women to retain closer links with their mothers who provide vital help with childcare. Distances between town and village are relatively small, further facilitated by the wide availability of motorised public transport (Manona 1999).

The Malawi and Ethiopian study sites provide marked contrast. Rural-urban links were minimal, but both countries had been subject to dramatic rural-rural migratory movement. In Ethiopia, over half a million men were demobilised from the army in the early 1990s after the end of the civil war. Many had been taken from their villages as youth, and a proportion of them gained skills useful for non-agrarian pursuits. It is estimated that about half of them returned to the rural areas. Dercon (1998) traced the reintegration of ex-soldiers and found that they ‘successfully reintegrated’ into the rural economy. Their welfare was largely at parity with other male villagers their age that meant that they were unable to capitalise on their superior education and any skills that they may have acquired in the army. It was

concluded that the poor agrarian environment was over-determining and their reinsertion meant sharing poverty with the rest of the rural population (Dercon 1998). A related phenomenon took place when Malawi opened its doors to over a million refugees from Mozambique in the early 1990s. Here again the refugees shared Malawi's rural poverty (Tellegen 1999).

In overviewing all the case studies it is apparent that in spite of the economic imperative of migration, there is considerable wariness about the migration process and scepticism about its benefit/cost ratio, especially on the part of the older generation or 'women left behind'. In Tanzania, Mung'ong'o (1998) notes that there is considerable disillusionment with the level of remittances received from family migrants. The rapid spread of AIDS, particularly in urban areas, has led to one group of women in Igosi village taking a stand and refusing to allow husbands to migrate for fear of contracting AIDS. Jambiya (1998) reports similar worries in Lukozi village whose men are involved in intense trade-oriented circular migration to the capital city.

Gone are the days when urban and rural areas present strong dualistic contrasts. It is abundantly clear that migration brings the city to the village and *vice versa*. Nonetheless, today's rural dwellers harbour hopes. These are opportunities that are worth the risk of relocating. Meanwhile urban migrants, particularly older migrants, cast their sights back to rural areas that they equate with physical security, cultural consensus and tranquillity. These contrasting attitudes are spawned by people 'betwixt and between' who yearn for the other place, knowing, but not admitting, that reality rarely lives up to one's yearnings.

This sub-section has provided schematic migration profiles of the different case-study sites. It is apparent that non-agricultural income diversification has spawned both close and long-range migratory movement, often to urban areas. Directly or indirectly, such movement has given rural peasants an intensified sense of locational relativity and personal choice. They are well aware of livelihood conditions outside the village, and some choose to act on that knowledge.

Increasing Rural Class Differentiation and the Role of Non-agricultural Income Diversification

It has been argued earlier that the decline of peasant agricultural commodity production has been differentially experienced by peasant farmers. Broadly speaking, larger-scale farmers and those located in areas close to centres of food demand have managed to retain or even expand agricultural production whilst others have struggled. Economic liberalisation has militated for the spatial contraction of production to those areas that afford higher yields due to favourable agro-climatic conditions or low transport costs (Poulton, Kydd and Dorward 1999). Within these areas, it is the better-off farmers producing with economies of scale who can purchase the input packages and maintain their yield levels.

In many areas, these forces have engendered a process of land consolidation. Peasant farmers with very small acreages are increasingly selling or renting their land out to larger-scale farmers and turning to agricultural wage labour or non-farm activities (e.g. Mulat Demeke 1997, Iliya 1999). The formation of landless agrarian classes is underway in many areas, especially those with high population densities, where farmers are cultivating small, fragmented plots. For example, Jambiya measured population densities in some settlements of the Usambara mountains of Tanzania at 900 people/km^2. Households with 7 members averaged 1.8 ha of land.

Before actual landlessness appears, poor families experience difficulties in mobilising resources to farm their small economically unviable plots. This is especially apparent in areas utilising plough agriculture, where poor families do not have ready access to the necessary equipment and draught power. The Ethiopian, Zimbabwean and South African case studies illustrate this dilemma. Poor farmers rent these resources from well-to-do farmers or sharecrop, but invariably they do so at sub-optimal times, since the equipment-holding farmers are using the equipment in their own fields during peak times. Thus equipment-renting peasants and sharecroppers tend to get smaller yields. In South Africa, demoralisation can set in when such farmers decide that the capital costs of farming are incommensurate with output, and they let their fields lay fallow (Bank and Qambata 1999, Manona 1999).

For a number of years the non-farm literature has been posing the question of whether non-agricultural activities fuel or alleviate rural poverty. The Sub-Saharan African and Asian literatures are often juxtaposed. The Asian case-study material tends to suggest that rural non-agricultural activities lessen class differentiation by providing alternative economic livelihoods for the rural poor with limited or no access to land (Saith 1992). Conversely, the African case-study material presents a more ambiguous picture. Non-agricultural income diversification can reinforce class stratification as the well-to-do can redirect portions of their agricultural capital to more lucrative non-agricultural activities. These activities have high levels of starting capital that preclude the entry of farmers of more modest means (Berkvens 1997, Iliya 1999, Meagher 1999, Mustapha 1999). Tellegen (1997) argues that non-agricultural activity provides the ‘road to rural wealth’. The proportion of total household income derived from non-agricultural sources steadily rose with income, from 21 per cent in the poorest to 60 per cent in the second highest income group, declining slightly to 55 per cent in the wealthiest group where agriculture resurfaces as an important household income source.

Table 1 Column 5 gives the average percentage of household income derived from non-agricultural sources by strata for four case studies; the one just cited in Malawi and three in Nigeria. All but one show the highest income group receiving proportionately less of its total income from non-agriculture than middle income and sometimes low income groups. This would suggest that there are agrarian elites capable of making a success of combined commercial farming and non-agricultural pursuits, with a greater reliance on commercial agriculture than any other group. In the cocoa-producing area of south-western Nigeria, 100 per cent of upper income heads of households listed their main occupation as farming as opposed to only 89 and 62 per cent in the middle and lower strata (Mustapha 1999). However, these high-income farming heads of households were earning 2.5 times more than middle-income heads and 10 times more than lower-income heads from non-farm activities.

On the other hand, these data show that middle and low-income groups who are not able to pursue the highest non-agricultural income-earning activities are nonetheless vitally dependent on non-agricultural sources for their livelihood. This is especially true for heavily populated areas experiencing land scarcity. The Ethiopian and northern Nigerian Sahelian (Sokoto State) study sites both exhibited these characteristics (Mulat Demeke 1997). In Sokoto State, low-income people were the most heavily reliant on non-agricultural income (Iliya 1999). In the Nigerian Middle Belt, household earnings were inversely correlated with landholdings, with non-agricultural earnings forming 74 per cent of the earnings of the landless as opposed to 20 per cent for households holding the most abundant land

resources (Yunusa 1999). All of these case studies reflected areas of growing land constraints and even landlessness, similar conditions to those of rural Asia. So too, these are areas with pronounced wage labour markets. Iliya (1999) and Jambiya (1998) record extensive local casual wage labour markets. In Sokoto State, labour is replacing dependence on family labour (Iliya 1999). These case studies suggest that as rural populations expand and land availability contracts in Sub-Saharan Africa, non-agricultural activities will become increasingly important to rural poverty alleviation. Even in areas which have not experienced generalised land shortage such as in Njombe, Tanzania, young households with restricted land access have become more dependent on non-agricultural economic activities or resort to migrant labour (Mung'ong'o 1998).

The DARE research findings hold one more important clue to the question of non-agricultural activities' effect on rural class differentiation and rural welfare. The South African studies as well as the Nigerian Igbo case study reflect another type of rural dynamic, one in which the availability of land for agriculture is no longer decisive in class stratification. Both represent areas where shortages of agricultural land were acutely felt in the past, but now primary reliance is placed on non-agricultural income sources. This has led to land no longer being a demarcator of wealth in Osumenyi, Nigeria and field agriculture largely falling into abeyance in the South African case studies. Land is still desired and contested, but its commercial agricultural value has faded. Landlessness in these instances is not necessarily synonymous with poverty. Wealth and poverty are now measurable in access to non-agrarian resources and consumption goods. Table 2 schematically relates non-agriculture/agriculture income sources to wealth differentiation and agricultural land availability in a simple typology.

III. Coping with Uncertainty: Tensions within African Peasantries

The previous section outlined trends towards the declining coherence of peasantries with respect to their commercial farm production, family structures, class position and rural communities. It must be stressed that these tendencies are experienced as tensions that peasant households and individuals within the household continually confront that generate degrees of change in a number of ways rather than strictly dichotomous either-or outcomes. In other words, peasants persist, part and parcel of an on-going and highly contentious labour process. The following section examines four opposing tensions in closer detail, namely:

- non-agricultural market experimentation versus reliance on an agricultural subsistence fallback in the quest for economic survival;
- household solidarity versus individual autonomy in the course of mobilising resources and social networks;
- social identity conflict arising from agrarian community conservatism as opposed to individual scepticism; and
- the strengthening or weakening economic foundation of rural livelihoods related to linkages between agricultural and non-agricultural activities.

Securing Economic Survival: Market Experimentation vs Subsistence Fallback

African peasantries are currently embarked on a dual strategy to experiment with non-agricultural income earning while retaining the security of an agricultural subsistence fallback. It can be argued that the two are complementary, reducing the likelihood of total production failure. On the other hand, the two demand very different skills and ways of thinking that are revealed in tracing notions of appropriate cultural behaviour and patterns of economic success and failure.

Hopes and Hazards of Non-agricultural Experimentation

One of the paradoxes of the current mass movement towards non-agricultural involvement is that the movement has been triggered in part by capital constraints in commercial agriculture, while success in non-agricultural activities is itself largely determined by access to capital. The challenge is to source sufficient starting capital and avoid the ever-present danger of running down one's working capital by using it for necessary consumption rather than business operations. On both counts, income diversifiers face many difficulties. For most, their priority is simply that of securing a livelihood, realising their basic needs. As Grawert (1998) has documented in the case of Sudan, complicated work portfolios arise from the fact that neither subsistence production nor agricultural commodity production nor non-agricultural activities in and of themselves provide security of livelihood. The search for the right balance of activities becomes incessant.

Yunusa (1999) observes a constant shift between activities depending on profit rates in Nigeria's Middle Belt. Fifty-five per cent of his interviewees reported abandoning one or more non-farm activities. They are engaged in a process of trial and error. Rather than giving up, their daily time input into non-agricultural activities has increased marginally over the past five years. In Sokoto State the same dynamics are at work. Between 1980 and 1995, many respondents abandoned one or more non-farm activities, usually due to the small profit realised (47 per cent) or not having enough capital to continue (37 per cent). Iliya (1999) suggests that over the course of these experimental trials, the majority may have been scaling their activities down rather than up due to declining investment capital. On the other hand, the fact that most abandoned activities are not the interviewees' main non-farm activity, but rather additional secondary or tertiary activities, indicates that business consolidation is underway. Revealingly, the highest percentage of abandoned activities were pursued within and around the village (70 per cent), as opposed to those that took place further afield in other parts of Nigeria (25 per cent) and abroad (5 per cent). The former are mostly low-level capital investments, whereas the latter outside the local area are high-level capital investments yielding better incomes. A majority (54 per cent) of these non-farm operators reported their economic activities are performing better now than in 1990 as opposed to over 70 per cent in the lower income category who felt that business was worse.

Similarly in southern Tanzania, Mwamfupe (1998) saw a high rate of turnover of activities because of the rundown of working capital, competition, and change of residence. The latter is often a positive move in which the entrepreneur uses the village as a stepping stone to a more profitable trade. Here as elsewhere, the use of hired labour is very restricted because of lack of sufficient capital to cover the wage bill. There are however some services where labour was hired, notably in maize mills and tea rooms as well as in carpentry shops.

Tellegen's (1997:163) in-depth study of non-agricultural activities in Malawi revealed that successful diversifying households are not only engaged in more highly rewarding activities but also in a larger number of activities over a longer period of time. Furthermore, people involved in year-round non-agricultural activities are better placed in income-earning than those who sporadically engage in non-agricultural activities. Labour access is key. Small households with a shortage of adult labourers are not in a position to farm and pursue non-agricultural activities throughout the year as well.

Then there are areas where *in situ* non-agricultural activities are highly restricted and non-agricultural experimentation seems virtually self-defeating due to the relative absence of local purchasing power. Mung'ong'o's case study of Iringa region (1998) demonstrates how the sudden collapse of the maize market caused widespread demoralisation. Commercial maize farmers' surplus maize was channelled into local beer brewing enterprises rather than being disposed of on the national market. This generated income for female beer brewers. Interestingly, even men started brewing beer commercially for the first time. However, the underlying demoralisation and low economic returns combined with superabundant beer supplies generated a menacing beer brawl atmosphere, much to the consternation of the village chairman who had years before presided over the village when it was an award-winning model village.

The Subsistence Agricultural Fallback

The preceding sections have amply illustrated the wide variation in types of non-agricultural income sources in Sub-Saharan Africa and their attendant social implications. This can be contrasted with the ubiquitous presence of a subsistence agricultural fallback in all the rural case studies cited. Material reliance on own-farm agricultural produce and espousal of moral values associated with agricultural production provides the common denominator linking the case studies to one another, no matter how urban-oriented or non-agriculturally dependent they are.

Even in Igboland Nigeria, where viable non-agrarian livelihoods have been rooted for more than two decades, a high moral value is still placed on farming. Fifty-two per cent of respondents felt agriculture should be combined with non-agricultural activities and only 26 per cent saw non-agriculture as their primary occupation (Chukwuezi 1999). In the Middle Belt, the feeling was stronger with 66 per cent of respondents stating their preference to only pursue farming whereas the rest were eager to combine farm and non-farm activities (Yunusa 1999). There was little verbalised acknowledgement that the structure of the economy and incomes were on a gradual drift from chiefly agriculture to a combination of agriculture and other non-farm activities. Iliya (1999:43) questions this avowed devotion to farming: 'The contention of many rural households, particularly the smaller ones, that farming is their main occupation needs to be considered. They more often than not see wage labour on other people's farm and from the processing of farm produce for wages as farming.'

In Mwanza region in Tanzania, Madulu (1998) recorded that 58 per cent prefer farming only, and just 31 per cent out of choice pursue both farming and non-farm activities. Agrarian values run very deep here, even though the region is experiencing a recent boom in small-scale diamond and gold mining. In Mabuki village 80 per cent of those engaged in non-agricultural activities also farmed. Miners attempt to grow their own food when they have sufficient land to do so at hand. When older people were asked which of their offspring was the most 'successful', 75 per cent of the sons and 60 per cent of the daughters named were farmers. Only a few named grown children who were engaged in business. People consider farming to be a vital adjunct to engaging in business as one respondent explained:

> It is impossible for a person to live in the village without being a farmer…In my case, farming was not necessary in the past because I was doing business. But when it failed, I realised that farming is the only way out. Similarly, my kiosk business was very necessary to me in the past, enabling me to survive. But it failed and now, I don't think of it because I couldn't raise sufficient capital to start it up again (Madulu 1998:29).

Farming is seen as essential for survival - 80 per cent said they could not survive without farming - and it is an unquestionable part of people's occupational identity. Madulu (1998) stresses that social status is traditionally derived from having large harvests and large families. In Mbeya region, Tanzania, farming is not such a strong cultural imperative (Mwamfupe 1998). Only 31 per cent wanted to restrict themselves to farming, which they see as the most secure way of managing life and achieving food security. On the other hand 99 per cent listed farming as their main occupation. Similarly across the border in Malawi, 93 per cent of all the interviewed rural dwellers farmed, regardless of their level of earnings from non-agricultural activities (Tellegen 1997).

The case studies reveal an intricate psychological interdependence between agriculture and non-agriculture that rests on material insecurity. In Southern Africa, where actual reliance on own agricultural production is less pronounced, rural dwellers have complicated attitudes towards farming. Berkvens (1997:14-26) observed that farming in Zimbabwe's communal areas was considered to be 'a cultural way of life' and 'a domestic task more than a professional occupation' with people's main ambitions in the non-agricultural sector. Historically, peasant farming in southern Africa's labour reserve zone has gradually become a fairly low status activity left for women or retirees. Nonetheless, current interest in securing rights to rural land have recharged peasant farming values. Berkvens (1997), Bank and Qambata (1999) and Manona (1999) all refer to the importance placed on establishing and/or retaining land claims often in contested situations in which 'firstcomers' communal usufruct rights of 'free land' are pitted against historically evolved sharecroppers' usufruct claims. The lack of clear title under prevailing communal usufruct land tenure can result in land/labour imbalances and underutilisation of coveted agricultural land. Those with stronger indigenous claims to the land secure the land, but often have insufficient labour to work it due to the geographical dispersal of family members away from their rural home areas during the prime of their economic life. Meanwhile households with sufficient labour cannot be given access to land through rental or sharecropping because the usufruct holder fears that this may compromise his/her land claim.

The monopolisation of land by 'firstcomers' and the consequent lack of flexibility in land usage and constraints on farm production in Southern African tend to adversely affect or preclude commercial output whereas subsistence agricultural production continues to prevail. In Zimbabwe, a high value is placed on own-farm subsistence food production in light of rising food costs and urban price inflation (Berkvens 1997). Subsistence agriculture is seen as the means by which one can circumvent the relentless treadmill of having to earn cash to provision one's basic needs (Potts 1998). Beyond that, grain stores and cattle are cultural symbols and functionally they may serve as savings banks (Berkvens 1997, McAllister 1999). In South Africa, subsistence farming as a way of life is strongly associated with community level cooperation, mutual support and the physical security of living and working with people holding similar values and objectives. McAllister (1999) stresses how important this is to rural community coherence and agrarian identity. There is a demographic concentration of older women in the rural areas, who are well aware of the world beyond. The rural areas provide a nostalgic return to the past and an escape from the pressures of the competitive urban environment. But this is a dynamic rural world that has been radically overhauled socially and economically. Ideologically it is being refashioned by these women's efforts to ceremoniously weave communal agrarian values into the reality of the rural-urban continuum of their extended families' lives (Bank 1999).

In summary, the DARE research findings suggest that the majority of African rural dwellers who rely on non-agricultural income sources to reduce risk are nonetheless exposed to a great deal of risk inherent in the pursuit of non-agricultural activities. This pertains to transfer payment recipients as well as those whose income is subject to inflationary incursions. Evidence suggests that while a stratum of people do achieve financial success in their non-agricultural activities, the vast majority are simply aiming for just a viable non-agricultural enterprise which will meet their day-to-day expenditure. Often, their non-agricultural experimentation is capital-degenerating in nature. Under the circumstances,

continued reliance on own-farm subsistence production represents a vital safety net. Subsistence farming provides some degree of food security and affirms community-held agrarian values.

Returning to the argument of this paper's introduction, a process of depeasantisation is underway in Sub-Saharan Africa. While peasants' agricultural commodity production has been declining rapidly over the past two decades, the depeasantisation process is far from complete as indicated by the strong persistence of peasant subsistence farming. It is useful to compare this situation with recent experiences of depeasantisation elsewhere. Elson (1997), in his book entitled *The End of the Peasantry in Southeast Asia,* argues:

> Although the face of Southeast Asia even today remains superficially rural, the trajectory of peasant disappearance is fixed. The progeny of the late-nineteenth-century peasantry still live in the countryside, but not with the permanence, rural focus and sense of local identity their forebears had. They still grow rice, but they grow it more quickly, more often, and according to the template of modern agricultural science, and they grow a great variety of other cultigens as well. They sell the great bulk of what they produce, they produce it to sell, and they purchase the great bulk of what they use. They live in villages, but those villages are administrative creations which look upward and outward, not inwardly oriented local communities. They work outside the village, in a great range of specific and enduring occupations, in rhythms dissociated from those of rural production and at extremes of distance that would both frustrate and bewilder their predecessors. They move about with a facility and alacrity their forebears might both fear and envy. Their culture is not just that of the village but of the nation and the world, relayed to them through schools, newspapers, magazines, CDs, and the electronic media (Elson 1997: xxii).

Sub-Saharan Africa's reliance on an agricultural subsistence fallback is in stark contrast to South-east Asia's highly commoditised agricultural and non-agricultural trajectory that has carried it further and further away from subsistence production. This is not the place to analyse why there are such striking differences. The significant point to note is that depeasantisation in this era of global de-agrarianisation can be experienced as a materially beneficial or as an impoverishing process. Developmental policies of national governments and international agencies play a decisive role in influencing the depeasantisation process and its welfare outcomes.

Marshalling Resources and Social Networks: Household Solidarity vs Individual Autonomy

As stressed at the beginning of this paper, peasants' relations within the family and in the rural community dominate their social life. Land, labour and capital tend to be mobilised within these units. In Sub-Saharan Africa, rural family units as well as the communities they are a part of vary in structure and form. Nonetheless, peasant families are readily distinguished from those of non-agrarian hunting and gathering as well as industrial societies, by their more corporate, hierarchical form that discourages individual autonomy. Wolf (1966) observed:

> …cross-cultural studies of socialization techniques lend statistical support to the hypothesis that societies rating comparatively high in their ability to accumulate food resources – such as peasant

> societies – are more likely to favor socialization techniques which render their members dependent on the socializing group, because dependence training will favor the routine execution of routine tasks. In contrast, societies with low abilities to accumulate food resources – such as hunting and gathering societies – are more likely to favour socialization techniques, productive of self-reliance and drives towards individual achievement, which presumably would favor the control of an impermanent and erratic food supply. More precisely still, there appears to be a tendency on the part of extended families to emphasize the dependence of members on the domestic group by indulging their children with oral gratifications for prolonged periods of time. This practice rewards the continued seeking of economic support from the family unit, and makes the family unit the main agent in meeting such needs (Wolf 1966: 69).

The stability of the peasant family rests largely on its ability to provision its members not only in terms of basic needs like food, but also through the transmission of agrarian resources generationally. Land inheritance patterns are an integral part of lineage structures. Both matrilineal and patrilineal structures are found in rural Africa, their specific form being heavily influenced by land availability. With the population expansion of the last century, many rural areas have reached critical population densities, which exert pressure on the capability of family units to bequeath land in the traditional manner to the next generation.

Jambiya (1998) notes that in the densely populated Usambara mountains of Tanzania, an increasing number of male offspring are not receiving any inheritance. 'Their fathers feel that they are losing an important bond and that loss is amplified by the sons obtaining incomes from other sources...[yet]…the rural households are becoming increasingly dependent on the remitted incomes over which they have no control…The effects of this gradual erosion of the authority of the rural patriarchs and the social implications are unknown but likely to be profound in terms of traditional social control (Jambiya 1998:17). In Iringa region, Tanzania, Mung'ong'o (1998) documents that youth have sought sharecropping arrangements to access land which again breaks ranks with traditional land/labour exchange relations within the family.

Besides the gradual build-up of population pressure, the sudden realignment of local terms of trade and agricultural prices associated with SAP and economic liberalisation policies has often destabilised the delicate balance between family provisioning of basic needs and resources in return for labour inputs by family members. As the returns from peasant agricultural production deteriorate, land/labour exchange on the basis of age and gender within household units has had to adjust. The provisioning capacity of household units has suffered and the financial dependence of youth and wives on male patriarchs has been soft-pedalled. In the process, peasant family units are being restructured and the nature of internal exchange relations are being transformed, producing ambiguity and tension about individual members' rights and responsibilities within the household. The boundaries between household solidarity and individual autonomy are becoming blurred.

There are four major tendencies evident in the current social restructuring, namely: 1) resort to 'incomplete' family units, i.e. locational separation of the reproductive couple for the sake of income-earning; 2) reduction in the size of large extended families in the direction of nuclearisation; 3)

weakening of dependency ties on gender and age lines within family units; and 4) women's efforts to use matrilineal ties to further their material security.

Many parts of rural Sub-Saharan Africa, especially in Southern and East Africa, have been historically subject to manipulation of family structure and size through colonial male labour migration systems. In Zimbabwe, male out-migration from rural areas is no longer enforced but it continues to be one of the main coping strategies for rural households. Berkvens (1997) encountered strong ambivalence on the part of the women left behind. They see their husbands' urban employment as vital to the rural family's economic well-being at the same time as they worry that their husbands may be spending money on women in the city, or be tempted to leave them in preference to their urban rivals. The level of remittance payments and the frequency of home visits on the part of migrant men are the acid test of their commitment to their rural families.

Undoubtedly the most complex patterns of change in family structure and dependency relationships have occurred in South Africa. Here the former government's apartheid policies were premised on the separation of reproductive couples and manipulation of family ideology to suit the state's notion of optimal African labour usage. Female urban migration was heavily discouraged in the 1960s and 1970s. Women were expected to raise their families in rural areas with male inputs largely restricted to fathers' cash remittances for maintenance and elderly male social control at the level of the rural tribal authority. Over the years, the agrarian foundations of these rural households were undermined. Bank and Qambata (1999) document how this strategy largely backfired in Mooiplaas, Eastern Cape, during the late 1970s and 1980s when rural youth in collaboration with urban youth rebelled against local and national authority and community and male familial support had to be increasingly replaced with state transfers to rural female-headed households. These tendencies contributed to the downfall of the apartheid state but they have also taken a heavy toll on the coherence of rural communities and households.

Fifty per cent of the households interviewed by Bank and Qambata (1999) consisted of three generations. They tend to be matri-centred, with a very noted absence of men in the second and third generations. The tendency for household's increasing dependence on the state has culminated in the award of pensions at parity with whites. Due to the lack of men in Mooiplaas, the benefits of these pensions are awarded to widows. Their economic resources are the central axis of the three-generational households. The current situation has generated an almost complete inversion of rural power relations. Largely in the absence of agricultural commodity production, older women's pensions and subsistence agriculture have become the rural societies economic mainstay. In the process, these women have garnered political and ritual power. Their daughters have forged family membership ties on the basis of economic need as well as childcare assistance, whereas their sons are more mobile and less willing to commit themselves to family membership in terms of their physical presence except in the face of unemployment. In effect these are three-generational families of a highly mobile, opportunistic character.

South African rural circumstances are quite distinct. More generally, in the rest of the continent there is a tendency for movement away from three-generational households towards 'extended family downsizing', strangely mirroring western industrial societies' zeal for corporate downsizing. Madulu (1998) records a continuing process of disintegration of the Sukuma's three-generational family structure that began during the Tanzanian government's villagisation campaign in the 1970s. Now an

In Nigeria's Middle Belt, Yunusa (1999) notes that family size, ranging from household membership of 15 people down to only 5, is correlated with the success of household farming. Here too, a nuclearisation of family units is evident. The desire to obtain non-agricultural training makes families concentrate their assets on paying for schooling for their offspring. Families tend to operate with a rough diversification schema in mind in which certain family members are encouraged to set up non-agricultural activities, while others go to school, and the remainder continue to farm. The family agricultural labour effort is being atomised, with 68 per cent of household members interviewed reporting that they work more on their own farms rather than on the household farm. Farming has become primarily the preserve of male heads of households. Due to land pressure, youth do not have direct access to land and tend to engage in agricultural wage labour. Women have even poorer land access and seek non-agricultural activities to earn a personal income.

Mustapha (1999) records a similar tendency in the patriarchal Yoruba households of Nigeria's cocoa belt. Soon after the introduction of SAP in the early 1990s, cocoa production rebounded and female and child agricultural labour was heavily co-opted into the family production effort. More recently, as cocoa prices and productive infrastructure have declined, there has been a striking increase in women's own account farming and male patriarchs are having to resort to hired labour.

Amidst the process of extended family downsizing, there is a counter tendency on the part of women to seek wider spheres of economic and social support, particularly from natal kin. Matrilineal and patrilineal descent systems in rural Africa are not mutually exclusive, and lineage affiliation, rights, responsibilities and claims on lineage resources, are all negotiable (Bryceson 1995). As Ekejiuba (1995) argues, women in patrilineal households still have strong resort to natal support systems, their matrilineage, especially in times of duress. Meagher (1999) demonstrates how the tendency for labour autonomy within Hausa patrilineal households has left women highly vulnerable. As they are forced to

assume more and more direct provisioning of their needs and those of their children, their access to land, labour and capital within their own household units has remained static or declined. Many have turned to their natal kin. Paradoxically, over the last decade as economic circumstances have deteriorated, women have increased their expenditure on gift-giving to other women. Rather than seeing this as a frivolous use of scarce cash, great store is placed on its necessity. Through gift-giving, women are cementing exchange relations with their natal kin, as security against extreme adversity. In effect, the gifts represent insurance premium payments.

Paravano's (1997) Congolese case study of urban Brazzaville provides an interesting contrast. Here, matrilineal family structures dominate. Sisters have claims on their brothers' wealth. Elite urban women detest the calls on their husbands' income made by sisters of the rural extended family. The elite women erect all sorts of ideological and material barricades to try to prevent matrilineal encroachment on their husbands' income. Appealing to the husbands' status-consciousness and desire to raise well-educated children, they sometimes succeed in blocking extended family demands. Failing that, these Congolese urban elite women resort to income diversification strategies and income autonomy, much along the lines of their rural peasant sisters and sisters-in-law.

An Unacknowledged Identity Crisis: Agrarian Conservatism vs Sceptic Otherness

The tension between old and new ways, agrarian and non-agrarian perspectives, is nowhere more evident than in the variety of identities villagers are adopting, and the fact that one's stated occupational identity does not always conform with the reality of one's work life. For many, non-agricultural activities have imperceptibly snowballed from 'filler' cash-earning tasks, to year-round activities providing ready cash. For still others, especially youth, non-agricultural activities dominate their work lives in terms of labour time and cash-earnings. However, there is often a lag between people's actions and their acknowledgement of the implications for their occupational status. For example, in the Malawi case study, farming generates the lowest average incomes, almost 2.5 times less than the incomes generated by non-agricultural activities, nonetheless, the villagers saw themselves as 'farmers first and foremost' (Tellegen 1998: 150). This is similarly so in the Nigerian savannah village studied by Meagher (1999). The moral order of villages rests on agrarian values which people do not wish to publicly question or appear to be transgressing. To do so may risk social legitimacy. Thus, the growing importance of non-agricultural activities so salient in individual and household economic strategies is hardly recognised in notions of status and propriety upheld by the community.

In some places, this disjuncture between economic reality and social status serves as a wedge between the generations. The older generation becomes defensive and the youth dismissive about the prevailing agrarian moral order. This is the case in Sukumaland, Tanzania, where youth are spurning traditional social status goals such as livestock accumulation and are investing instead in trade and better housing (Madulu 1998). One middle-aged woman encapsulated the older generation's views: 'Farming is the backbone of everything. We managed to buy seven cows from farming. I can't allow any of my children to live without farming. What will they eat? I have to be strict. They are going to be married. If they are lazy, nobody will propose marriage and that will bring shame to me' (quoted in Madulu 1998: 21).

Similar defensiveness about rural values surfaced in the Transkei village of Shixini (McAllister 1999). Despite a long history of labour out-migration, agrarian conservatism had been safeguarded by the persistence of a tribal identity. The *amaqaba*, 'those who wear read ochre' stood for a timeless agrarian order of the Xhosa people. Migrant labour was seen as the necessary evil enabling one to build a rural homestead, a process synonymous with farming. Although the other two South African study sites in the DARE programme were more proximate to urban areas and had ousted their tribal authorities in preference to elected local councils, here too the older generation actively participated in rituals associated with the still revered values of Xhosa agrarian communities with one major difference as described by Bank and Qambata (1999):

> …we discovered that a ritual of some kind was performed almost every weekend…In the 100 households interviewed…no fewer than 33 had performed a ritual of some kind during the past year…In the villages of Mooiplaas in the late 1990s women were emerging as the new custodians of isiXhosa tradition. They are the ones who organise and planned rituals and social events, that appear immaculately attired in traditional dress at these events and they dominate these social performances. Local men tended to take these occasions far less seriously. They arrive late and disappear early to continue their drinking at local *shebeens*. To be sure, men still preside over ceremonial matters. They attend to the formalities and deliver the main speeches. But for all intents and purposes, these occasions belong to the women…it was not so much the invention of new rituals that symbolised the increasing power and authority of, especially older, women than the way in which they were able to appropriate and re-invigorate older cultural forms…The continuous process of organising and supporting ritual activities is an attempt by women to ensure that the social links between town and country remain well lubricated and that those who have left the village – however temporarily – are conscious of their responsibilities at 'home (Bank and Qambata 1999: 74-80).

In contrast to older South African women's efforts to instil a rural agrarian identity amongst their urban-based kin, Tanzanian village leaders were concerned to try to keep urban influences out of village life. In Lukozi, the village chairman noted the high rate of out-migration arising from landlessness and the undesired social imports it brought in its wake:

> I would say that at least one in four households has a father, mother, son or daughter away from the village seeking an income, usually in the larger towns in the region…some do return eventually, but now we have a serious problem of crime, and our local court is very busy. Magistrates have to come in daily from Mlalo and Lushoto. The main problems are land disputes, fights and theft. The last one is new and increasingly common and disturbing crime. You ask why? There is no more land and we are many now in this village. If you do not have enough or good land, agriculture alone does not pay nowadays. Everyone must *bangaiza* (struggle to scratch an income from whatever possible sources). There is also so much begging now, all these are bad signs. Yes, of course part of this is due to the food shortage, but this did not begin today. My colleagues here who have been around longer will verify that it is nearly ten years since this phenomenon became evident (Jambiya 1998: 8).

In Iringa, Tanzania, similar tendencies have also surfaced. Theft of public property has become common and heavy out-migration of youth has led to a full 94 per cent of the interviewed older respondents holding the view that most young people in the village would not be farmers in the future (Mung'ong'o 1998).

The Zimbabwe case study material provides the most ambiguous attitudes to agrarian ways of life. Hardly any of the male or female interviewees stated that they were farmers by occupation because 'communal farming is not regarded as a job. It is valued as a residual kind of work…hard work with low and insecure returns' (Berkvens 1997: 26-27). Men were more likely to state that they were unemployed instead of admitting to being a farmer, whereas older farming respondents classified themselves as 'retirees'. There was a tendency for wives of more prosperous men to avoid farm work as far as possible. Transitional labels are apposite, such as the term 'worker-peasants' coined in Zimbabwe by Cousins *et al*. (1992). What farming that does take place is strictly for food security. On the other hand, great value is set on ancestral ties with family land, being buried 'at home' and living proximate to one's relations in old age to be ensured of adequate care. And such age-old agrarian status symbols as cattle ownership and bulging food stores are still appreciated as status symbols (Berkvens 1997). These are people 'betwixt and between' value systems and modes of livelihood.

Strengthening or Weakening the Economic Foundation of Rural Livelihoods? Linkages between Non-agricultural Activities and Agriculture

During the 1970s and 1980s, the agricultural economics literature analysed non-agricultural activities in rural areas in the context of small-scale industrial development, in which forward and backward linkages between agriculture and 'industry' were highlighted. Economic assumptions regarding the superior productivity of industry over agriculture and the multiplier effects of non-farm investment suggested that there was considerable potential to raise the rural population's purchasing power and productivity (Chuta and Liedholm 1979, Chuta and Sethuraman 1984, Liedholm and Mead 1986, Haggblade, Hazell and Brown 1989).

Since then, non-agricultural activities have developed far more strongly with respect to trade rather than rural industry. The technical synergy of forward and backward linkages between agriculture and rural industry witnessed in the Asian Green Revolution has not been replicated in Africa to anywhere near the same degree. Interactive agricultural mechanisation has not been given much of a kick-start. Meagher's study of a Nigerian savannah village did exemplify the recently revived local rural sugar-cane processing industry's backward linkage to agriculture, but the machinery used was of 1930s vintage and there was a fear that the need for irreplaceable spare parts could call a halt to the activity (Meagher 1999).

Nonetheless, the case study evidence indicates that forward and backward linkages between agricultural and non-agricultural activity spheres are present with respect to lubricating investment and purchasing power. The two sectors are mutually reinforcing; declining agricultural earnings can seriously undermine the rural population's purchasing power for non-agricultural items.

The linkage debate is especially strong with reference to the role of non-agricultural migrant labour (remittances/pensions). In Shixini, South Africa, pensions and remittances serve as a major source of local agricultural investment (McAllister 1999). Bank and Qambata (1999) identify a periodisation related to the declining incidence of men's work remittances and the growing importance of widows' pensions which coincides with a gradual switch from investment in male-herded cattle to female-tended pigs.

With respect to the communal areas of Zimbabwe, Berkvens (1997) suggests that migrant labourers' cash investments in agriculture may not provide an adequate substitute for the loss of labour incurred by their absence. Households with absentee migrant heads use remittances to purchase relatively modern inputs. 'However their farm productivity measured in kgs of maize per acre is quite low' (Berkvens 1997: 23). In fact, household heads engaged in other forms of non-agricultural work *in situ* in the rural areas were more likely to be innovative and investment-conscious with regard to farming. With relatively low modern-input use, they had the highest productivity and were the most market-oriented for food grains. Older *de jure* female-headed households (all widows in this survey), without the benefit of remittances, had the highest productivity (Berkvens 1997: 23). Older male-headed households also attained high yields. Berkvens concludes that the household head's personal commitment to farming (regardless of gender) and accumulated farming investment, as well as calls on younger household members' labour time generate higher levels of household farm output. The substitution of expensive agricultural inputs for a male migrant head's labour was ineffective.

The lack of agricultural investment response is no doubt related to the fact that the improved input packages currently available in the communal areas of Zimbabwe are not necessarily well suited to the area's semi-arid, marginal farming zones. This is mirrored in the Ethiopian case study findings that showed that household investment in improved inputs in Northern Shoa's degraded farmland had little positive influence on yields (Mulat Demeke 1997). The case represents a seriously degenerate farming system with no fallow, declining livestock numbers, and manure used for fuel. Improved inputs cannot substitute for the degraded animal and plant husbandry practices. Even in this case there are linkage possibilities. Cheese and butter production, which provide only a minor source of income at present could be developed into a small-scale industry to benefit the local population.

A virtuous cycle of cross-investment between agriculture and non-agriculture is underway in Sukumaland, Tanzania, with some technical spin-offs. Madulu (1998) demonstrates that farmers' quests to own ox-carts and bicycles have increased mobility and productivity in agriculture as well as providing an important incentive for agricultural work. In turn 40 per cent of entrepreneurs received their starting capital from agriculture.

A pattern of cross-investment between non-agriculture and agricultural activities was pronounced in many study sites. In Tanzania's Usambara mountains, 75 per cent of the respondents invested money earned in agriculture in enterprises, whereas the counterflow was even stronger with 84 per cent deriving some of their agricultural capital from non-agriculture (Jambiya 1998). Similarly in Nigeria's cocoa-producing zone, cross-investment flows both ways (Mustapha 1999). In north-west Nigeria, 85 per cent of household heads derived their start-up capital from agriculture or livestock keeping (Iliya 1999). However, only very large households with high incomes are investing part of their non-farm

income in agriculture. Most use these earnings for purchase of daily needs. The bifurcation of investment strategies on the part of rich and poor households is also evident in the Nigerian savannah village of Nasarawan Doya. Fifty-six per cent of higher income households and 16 per cent of income households respectively derived their start-up capital for non-farm activities from agriculture (Meagher 1999). In Nigeria's Middle Belt there was relatively low cross-investment. Only 10 per cent of the non-farm entrepreneurs used their earnings to fund agriculture. The agricultural investment cycle is largely internal to the farming process (Yunusa 1999). Nonetheless, Yunusa stresses that the rural non-farm sector vitally depends on the purchasing power emanating from agricultural proceeds.

In the Malawian case-study villages, the dominance of beer brewing highlights the linkages between agriculture and non-agriculture, since maize is the main input for brewing. Some of the entrepreneurs reported cross-investment from non-agricultural earnings into farming, but many non-agricultural activities had extremely low levels of starting capital and equally low earnings which precluded significant flows between the two. Sectoral labour allocation is quite seasonal. During the rainy season when planting takes place much of the non-agricultural activity ceases because of competing labour demands as well as the fact that pre-harvest purchasing power in the community is very low. Overall low purchasing power is identified as the major brake on the expansion of non-agricultural activities: 'Because of the low demand for rural goods and services provided by rural entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs cannot fully depend on their business for the provision of household needs. They have to be involved in other activities such as farming, leaving them little time during certain months of the year to run their business' (Tellegen 1998: 94).

Finally, it is revealing to examine the Nigerian Igbo case study where there were negligible linkages between agriculture and non-agriculture. The lack of strong forward and backward linkages is attributed to the effect of extremely outward-directed and trade-oriented migration from the area (Chukwuezi 1999). The constrained availability of farming land and the existence of other far more lucrative urban-directed investment outlets results in people's non-interest in agricultural investment. In effect, this is a society which is rural in form but not content.

In overviewing the linkages between agriculture and non-agriculture, it is obvious that the mutuality between the two exists, especially with regard to cash flows. Villagers are becoming highly responsive to a wide range of investment opportunities and allocate cash accordingly. This is generating new dynamism in terms of labour experimentation. On the other hand, the productivity and purchasing power benefits that the early linkage literature projected have yet to materialise in any substantial way. Leaps in productivity arising from technical innovations in agriculture and non-agriculture are not strongly in evidence, although they are hinted at in the field of transport where bicycles and some motorised vehicles are becoming more widespread. This lack of measurable[7] increased productivity is no doubt related to the strong trade and service-sector bias of non-agricultural activities at present. Overall, it is apparent that the sectoral linkages that are taking place within households and villages between agriculture and non-agriculture are characterised largely by the net flow of cash and labour out of

[7] See Pedersen 1999 for a critique of the inadequacies of current conceptions of the role of the service economy in economic development and the difficulties of measuring service-sector productivity.

agriculture and into more service-oriented rural economies whose forms and economic viability are still congealing.

IV. Policy Responses: Sustainable Rural Livelihoods and Social Capital Approaches

During the last two decades, SAP and economic liberalisation policies instigated by the World Bank and other international donors have spurred depeasantisation throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, reversing African government measures to foster peasant economies in the preceding two decades. This radical policy turn-about was underlined by a neo-liberal philosophy that gave pride of place to market forces, denigrating and marginalising the developmental role of African states. Now however the Washington consensus is losing some ground. A strong environmental lobby has pressurised the World Bank to take account of environmental costs hitherto ignored in IFI investment (Fox and Brown 1998). Coalitions of northern and southern NGOs have manoeuvred to effect a new social consciousness in the World Bank and other multilateral and bilateral agencies. Women and development concerns have long been on the agenda, but now more attention is being paid to the participatory decision-making of aid recipients within projects. Increasingly, the advisory services of social scientists other than economists are being sought. Finally, and most importantly, there are cracks in the neo-liberal belief in market supremacy. An acknowledgement of the significance of a long secular decline in the net barter terms of trade for primary commodity-producing nation has crept into some World Bank documents (Sapsford and Singer 1998) and the facilitating role of the state in economic development is being slowly 'reinstated' (see World Bank 1997, Fine 1999).

Throughout the SAP era, there was running criticism of the poverty-generating side-effects of neo-liberal policies (Cornia, Jolly and Stewart 1987, Stewart 1995, Hanmer, Pyatt and White 1997, Killick 1999). Meanwhile, the international policy environment was being reconfigured by declining aid flows and the growing importance of the NGO sector with its more restricted financial resources and emphasis on networking (Riddell 1999). In the process, sensitivity to rural poverty alleviation has been heightened within multilateral and bilateral donor agencies.

A number of donor agencies have now adopted a 'sustainable rural livelihoods' approach, which stresses rural risk management aimed at: '[r]educing vulnerability – helping people to develop resilience to external shocks and increase the overall sustainability of their livelihoods' (Carney 1999:3). The approach endeavours to be participatory and holistic by taking non-agricultural income-diversifying activities into account, and emphasising the social and environmental as well as economic dimensions of rural life. The target population consists of 'rural', rather than 'peasant' or 'agricultural' households. Reference to farmers' means of production, notably land, labour, and capital has been replaced with a focus on rural dwellers' investment in 'capital assets' defined widely to embrace natural, physical, financial, human, and social forms of capital (Carney 1998).

Interestingly, the most nebulous of these capitals, 'social capital', has been accorded the most attention. There are many interpretations of its meaning (see Harris and De Renzio 1997), with donor agencies like the World Bank relying heavily on Putnam's (1993) normative interpretation of true 'social *horizontal* cultural norms of identity, trust and reciprocity. Thus, neither the emotional ties of family nor vertical authoritarian or patronage networks of trust or

reciprocity count as social capital. This distinction is linked to donors' promotion of 'good governance' and 'democratisation'. Horizontal associational ties of trust within the community, i.e. 'civil society', provide the basic trust upon which the 'transaction costs' of everyday economic exchange can be minimised.

Community harmony on the micro-scale is linked to macro-scale civic order and democratic politics. The trust embedded in social capital is considered to be cumulative and path-dependent, bringing about a virtuous cycle of citizens' relationships to the state and market. This is in contrast to the opposite path of a vertically-channelled, exclusionary, clientelist supply of goods and services generating widespread societal distrust and economic and political corruption (Durston 1998). The 'thickening of social capital' is believed to generate improved civic leadership, better information flows within and between networks, and more democratic interaction and efficient local economies. Thus, investment in social capital within the rural community is seen as a way of individual actors improving their resource access at the same time as they are paving the way for a 'sustainable' 'enabling environment' for their communities.

Can the sustainable rural livelihoods (SRL) and social capital approaches achieve these ambitious aims? In the wake of more than a decade of neo-liberal policy implementation, can a bottom-up perspective and concessions to non-economic disciplinary approaches through the use of participatory techniques and a focus on the social and political dynamics of the locality improve the life chances of rural dwellers today?

The concept of 'social capital' has provided a multi-disciplinary meeting ground for social scientists consciously fostered by the World Bank, but its analytical clarity has suffered from being too widely and variously defined (Fox 1997, Harriss and De Renzio 1997). There seems to be a general consensus that 'social capital' refers to the realm of informal institutions, but there is little agreement on what is included in the informal realm. Often 'civil society' is used to embrace this amorphous realm, laden with a number of implicit conservative assumptions in line with the anti-statist bias of Putnam (1993). To date, the concepts of social capital and civil society largely ignore the state's role in creating enabling conditions for social trust to function, while according the family a central role in nurturing such trust (Putzel 1997).

In considering the applicability of the concept of social capital to African peasant societies, there is a need for more analytical precision. Social capital's horizontal associational ties cannot be assumed to exist or to be necessarily desirable. Internal organisational features of peasant society have tended to be based on hierarchical and ascriptive relations embedded in differences in age, gender and genealogical descent. While many of these vertical organisational features are eroding, they have been doing so at varying rates within different peasantries. To assess how far this process has come and what potential it gives to the development of social capital, it would be helpful to get beyond the vagueness of the term 'civil society', to examine individual agents' and peasant family units' actions their 'community' or 'communities'. The 'community' refers to localities with dense concentrations of interpersonal relations and commonly-held behavioural norms based on a shared identity, associational ties and mutual support. As peasant mobility and exposure to outside value systems expand, the likelihood of being entangled in inter-community conflictual norms increases. Quite apart from the effects of enhanced mobility, the intensified interaction of peasant households and communities vis-à-vis

wider state and market processes can engender such conflictual norms that could serve to undermine rather than promote social trust within the community. Externally-instigated projects may serve to dismantle rather than build local social capital by introducing new highly coveted resources that devalue existing resources, thereby narrowing the peasant community's resource base and generating intensified resource competition. Preliminary findings of a recent survey to measure 'social capital' cast doubt on the relevance of the concept to the social and institutional dynamics of rural Africa (Widner and Mundt 1998).

SRL marks a vast improvement over neo-liberal oversight. Its capital asset approach provides a common analytical framework for economists, political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists with respect to understanding peasant populations. It offers a future-oriented investment perspective in place of past emphasis on production. However, the SRL approach has analytical blind spots and internal inconsistencies that could undermine its good intentions. One of the more salient is the fact that the 'rural' nature of SRL cannot be taken for granted. The rural-urban continuum in which many 'rural dwellers' conduct their livelihood strategies can render a primarily rural-based approach off-target. While the rural livelihoods approach recognises that individual and group aims of villagers may not be directed at agricultural investment, there is still the implicit assumption that there is a willingness to invest in the rural locality – this may be an unrealistic assumption.

Localised in focus, the SRL approach is liable to be criticised for not confronting the incompatibility between its stated local sustainable rural livelihood objectives and the priority IFIs place on the global market's labour allocative function. Furthermore, its emphasis on enhancing access to social capital could be interpreted as simply tinkering with the symptoms of peasant labour displacement without acknowledging or facing the challenge it poses.

If poverty alleviation is the main objective of the SRL approach, then the issue of rural labour displacement with all its occupational and spatial implications cannot be avoided. The rural poor of Latin America, Africa and Asia are being progressively marginalised from commercial agricultural production while trying to maintain food self-provisioning and rural subsistence fallbacks. The neo-liberal era has been a critical turning point for them. Agricultural development efforts to raise their standard of living will no longer suffice.

Enhancing the employment chances of the enormous pool of ever more marginalised rural peasant farmers is an enormous developmental task that requires clearly specifying target groups, activities and timing. At the moment the SRL's open-ended participatory approach and 'sustainable' rather than 'strategic' planning objectives could merely amount to time-consuming discussions and activities at the local level which fail to mobilise sufficient levels of decision-making power and are incapable of generating the sense of direction needed to advance the economic prospects of the rural people involved. Finally, emphasis on building 'social capital' may be counter-productive, representing donors' attempts at making-do with declining physical resource transfers, rather than reflective of the actual needs of rural dwellers. The build-up of ***human capital*** rather than social capital is what is fundamentally at issue in view of the labour redundancy that the world's peasantries are currently experiencing.

V. Confronting Uncertainty with Capability

The future of African rural dwellers lies increasingly in labour force participation outside rural agriculture. They need literacy, numeracy, knowledge of the national language, and various occupational and computer skills that will give them the means to command sufficient income for themselves and their families, as well as to raise the overall level of labour productivity in their respective countries. Capability enhancement through human capital investment is vital (Sen 1997).

This paper will end with a schematic policy proposal for peasant transition that takes account of peasants' current coping strategies and their poor competitive position in the world market. The strategy has two main aims: 1) to facilitate provisioning of rural households and communities local-level, daily needs; and 2) to strengthen public policy, training facilities and infrastructure for future occupational diversification and specialisation. To highlight its simple, schematic nature, I refer to the 'ABCDs' of the policy strategy as follows:

'A' is for Agriculture

The DARE research findings suggest that African rural dwellers throughout Sub-Saharan Africa deeply value the pursuit of farming activities. While the centrality of their export commodity production is slipping away, food self-provisioning is gaining in importance against a backdrop of food price inflation and proliferating cash needs.

It is generally recognised that future prices and demand prospects for Africa's traditional export are not encouraging (Morrissey and McGillivray 1999). The effects of the Uruguay Round of the World Trade Organisation have yet to be fully revealed, but it is already apparent that international staple food prices are rising and will continue to do so as the farmer subsidies of the world's major grain-producing countries are removed. Sub-Saharan African countries, as net importers of staple food, stand to lose (Mukherjee and Harris 1999). The expansion of domestic staple food production is in the interest of African national governments since they need food security policies capable of ensuring rural welfare and preventing reliance on expensive food imports or food aid. The Nigerian government's recent ban on grain imports to protect local production was a positive measure that other African governments might consider (Meagher 1999).

A 'food first' agricultural policy is advisable with respect to prevailing world market prices and international terms of trade determination more generally. W.A. Lewis (1978) stressed that the combination of surplus rural labour and low agricultural productivity, particularly the productivity of staple food production, determines the factoral terms of trade for poor countries. Low food output puts a brake on a nation's general standard of living.

> A farmer in Nigeria might tend his peanuts with as much diligence and skill as a farmer in Australia tended his sheep, but the return would be very different. The just price, to use the medieval term, would have rewarded equal competence with equal earnings. But the market price gave the Nigerian for his peanuts a 700-lbs-of-grain-per-acre level of living, and the Australian for his wool a 1600-lbs.-per-acre level of living, not because of differences in competence, nor because of marginal utilities or productivities in peanuts or wool, but because these were the respective amounts of food

> that their cousins could produce on the family farms…the factoral terms of trade are based on the market forces of opportunity cost ... (Lewis 1978, 19)

A Green Revolution has yet to take hold in Sub-Saharan Africa. The use of improved input packages is in fact on the decline. Effective input packages have not been developed for the drier African environments and the packages that do exist for the higher rainfall areas need to be supplemented with expansion of intermediate technology to increase the returns to labour (Berkvens 1999). There should be a renewed seriousness about addressing Sub-Saharan Africa's growing food deficit. This begs the question of what role peasants can play in increasing food output. Without some reinstatement of input subsidies, larger-scale farmers will by default be the major commercial staple food producers.

'B' is for Betwixt and Between

The DARE programme has documented peasants' increasing reliance on non-agricultural activities and income sources to generate a continuous cash flow to meet immediate purchase needs. There has been a great deal of 'learning-while-doing', but the process of trial-and-error can be costly in time and money. It would be useful for more detailed data to be collected about household and individual work portfolios, how they have evolved over time, and documentation of 'best practice'. Participatory techniques of data collection could facilitate a process of self-discovery on the part of the rural participants, helping them to become more analytical about what they are doing, and how to improve.

Donor interventions directed at non-agricultural activities raise questions and dilemmas. Every villager has a different work portfolio that is intricately suited to the individual's needs. Whatever activity is targeted, the intervention is likely to affect other activities in the portfolio, usually by diverting the labour of the portfolio-holder. Assisting villagers with their portfolios would entail attention to short-term labour time management, and longer-term capital investment and career planning. Time management is not just about dovetailing daily or seasonal activities. A sense of direction is vital for optimising portfolio-holders' labour providing the needed focus that the SRL approach largely circumvents, that of rural dwellers' long-term agrarian prospects.

To assist people's non-agricultural activities, programmes could be devised to assist in 'critical input supply'. Often rural people have to forsake an economically viable activity suddenly or permanently because the supply of a critical input dries up. This may be an imported good, or in the case of traditional crafts, it may be a natural product that has been over-harvested. In the latter case, extension services may be able to suggest ways of cultivating such natural inputs, thereby expanding income-earning possibilities. In both cases programmes could help to establish reliable lines of supply of the critical input.

Some of the DARE studies confirm the utility of rotating credit schemes (e.g. Bank and Qambata 1999). Efforts could be made to expand these schemes and to introduce technical skills, administrative or accountancy training into the rotating credit groups.

One of the major sticking points of village-based non-agricultural activities is the lack of *in situ* purchasing power. Local programmes could be set up that enhanced local purchasing power through

public works schemes or community work exchange and voucher system schemes (see examples in GAPP 1997).

Rural poverty-alleviation projects must become aware of new signs of poverty based on non-agrarian rather than agrarian asset-holdings. Many development agencies tend to target the poor on the basis of the size of their land holdings, and command over agrarian capital-stock or wage labour. Reliance on these discrete easily-defined criteria may now be a misleading basis for identifying the poor. Small land holdings no longer necessarily pinpoint the poorest of the rural community (Chukwuezi 1999). Unless external intervention agencies have intimate knowledge of the local community they are likely to misread the ostensive wealth indicators. For this reason, and given the increasing economically heterogeneous nature of rural communities, it is often better for project interventions to avoid rigid income-group targeting and, either target age-groups or activities which are self-selecting in terms of villagers' interest and time availability.

'C' and 'D' are for Certainty of Direction

Global de-agrarianisation and African depeasantisation are inexorable tendencies leading far into the 21st century. Depeasantisation raises many pressing challenges and threats to economic welfare and political stability, but it can be harnessed to good effect with the right policies. This requires a positive, future-oriented strategy that lays the foundation for occupational diversification *and* specialisation.

The first and most pressing need is to establish a strong foundation for rural skills base improvement. This entails resuscitating primary education that has slumped in much of Sub-Saharan Africa during the budgetary cutbacks and economic stringency of the SAP era (Watkins 1999). Besides formal educational opportunities, rural children need extra-curricular clubs and learning programmes that can expand their informal education, giving them a firmer grasp of practical skills, mathematics, basic science and reading, to take into their adult lives. Secondary school places also need to be expanded. For those who do not receive a secondary education as well as those seeking post-secondary technical training, innovative on-the-job training schemes are required.

In this period of extremely rapid change, there is a need to abandon the fixation on adult target groups, in preference to youth and children. Participatory discussions that centre on realistic assessments of villagers' agrarian/non-agrarian prospects local and national markets are vital. Such discussions could be more focused and useful if they involved groups distinguished on the basis of gender and age cohorts. The prospects of young women aged 15-20 would be very different from that of their mothers or even boys their age, while efforts were made to steer away from gender stereotyping which could prejudice the welfare of either sex. On the basis of such discussions, village non-agricultural specialisations could be identified. The already formed discussion groups could provide a platform for mobilising skills training, marketing, and providing infrastructure for villagers' economic activities.

Governments at national, regional and local levels need to engage people in assessments of their geographical comparative advantage in the search for local specialisations. By examining regional resource bases and the complementarity of different forms of production within the regional unit, economic opportunities become apparent. Consortia of government, NGOs, private businesses and local people could become involved in a common vision of regional potential that would facilitate

infrastructure building. On-road/off-road accessibility should also be addressed. Can access be improved for off-road locations or can viable employment activities be found that balance their locational disadvantage?

Rural land tenure policy is a very vital issue that is linked to the question of geographical comparative advantage. Many rural areas languish in uncertainty about land tenure. Communal tenure arrangements are often reaching the limits of their utility as traditional rural leaderships disappear, rural populations become far more ethnically and economically diverse, and women gain some degree of economic power but remain constrained by male-biased traditional land inheritance and allocative practices. Rural land tenure policy is fraught with historically-ingrained equity issues that have to be carefully weighed against productivity concerns. Support to non-agricultural activities should be seen as a way of deflecting from land tenure quagmires. As rural labour is absorbed into non-agricultural pursuits, political demands for land access may ease.

Bringing the town to the countryside is a practical rather than impossible aim. Provisioning village water supply systems, good road access and electrification need not be so expensive if they are carried out with labour-intensive techniques. One of the main obstacles blocking such efforts is the entrenched bias towards capital-intensive construction methods of western-trained engineers (Howe and Bantje 1995). Local infrastructural building through public works programmes, as already mentioned, can increase local purchasing power, and can provide vital building and maintenance skills to local people, in addition to providing them with better physical amenities (Bryceson and Howe 1997). In the field of transport, much can be done to improve local-level means of transport. The introduction of appropriate transport technology can expand local employment as well as markedly improving rural people's mobility (Howe and Barwell 1987).

VI. Conclusion

SAP policies have triggered a huge, unplanned income diversification response in African rural areas. At the moment, peasants are poised between an active search for viable income sources, while retaining the security of their peasant subsistence fallback – however meagre that may be. It is a double act that can be maintained for a very long time, as indicated by the South African case studies. Quasi-peasant communities have retained a social coherence for decades despite political onslaughts by the apartheid state. Nonetheless, slowly over time, the productive output of the subsistence fallback is bound to slip, through population pressure, and under-resourcing. External supplementation becomes vital, as illustrated by the importance of state pensions and remittances to South African rural communities while out-migration is an important pressure valve (McAllister 1999).

The forces of depeasantisation acting on peasantries in the other African country case studies cited in this paper demonstrate the effectiveness of peasant 'holding operations' against great odds. Again youthful out-migration paradoxically provides a means of sustaining agrarian community coherence and conserving its values. However, cracks are beginning to show, and signs of social anomie, associated with urban areas, are surfacing in the villages. Internal patriarchal authority within peasant households is challenged by youth as well as by women. Local community leadership may be questioned. Petty crime associated with poverty becomes more prevalent. Nonetheless, a fundamental rural-urban dichotomy

remains in rural dwellers' minds: rural areas represent security in the form of self-provisioned food, family exchange relationships, and relative physical tranquillity whereas urban areas represent opportunities and high risk; 'cash and cares', that many, especially older people, would prefer to avoid.

Each case study represents a delicate balancing act as people succeed to varying extents to cobble together their livelihoods somewhere in the spectrum between farm and non-farm, family and individual, and rural and urban contrasts. The DARE researchers have in fact been examining 'success stories'. Rural populations in many other areas of Sub-Saharan Africa have not managed to achieve a balance. More than a third of Sub-Saharan African nation-states are afflicted by civil disorder or war, most of which can be traced to the pressures of peasant agrarian transition. Poverty alleviation of rural target groups in select donor project areas is not enough – the whole continent is undergoing tumultuous change. 'Betwixt and between' - the balancing act of African rural dwellers cannot be maintained indefinitely. Sensible directional policies that confront the daily dilemmas of depeasantisation are imperative.

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Table 1: Household Incidence of Non-Agricultural (Non-Ag) Cash Income*

(1) Villages *Region* **COUNTRY**	(2) Researcher Year of survey	(3) No. of survey HHs	(4) % of HHs engaged in non-agricultural activities	(5) Average % of HH income from non-agric. activities	(6) Average no. of income sources/HH	(7) % of total labour time devoted to non-farm activities	(8) % of HH depend't on staple food purchase	(9) Degree of staple food crop commer-cialisation
Debre Berhan, Ankober, Gera Medir, *North Shoa* **ETHIOPIA (1)**	Mulat Demeke 1995	268	61% other[1] 28% wage income[2] 25% brewing 7% handicrafts 5% trade	59%[3]	Not specified	Not specified	65% net food purchasers 6% Food-for-Work	very low
Osumenyi, *Nnewi South* **NIGERIA (2)**	Chukwuczi 1996-97	100	35% trade 25% remittances 11% other[4]	*By strata:*[3] 75% - upper 92% - medium 78% - low 80% - average *By gender:*[3] 79% - men 81% - women	Not specified	56%	Not specified	Not specified
Alade Yorubaland Southwestern **NIGERIA (3)**	Mustapha 1996-97	100	*By strata & HH Member:HHH/ Wife/Dependant* 25/67/67 – upper 50/51/87 – medium 80/57/80 - low	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Doma, *Middle Belt* **NIGERIA (4)**	Yunusa 1996-97	100	64% of wives in trade[3] HHs not specified	89% - wives[3] 48% -dependants[3] 22% - husbands[3]	Not specified	32% -MHH[5] Women & youth higher %	Not specified	76%
Nawarawan Doya *Kaduna State* **NIGERIA (5)**	Meagher 1996-97	100	88%[3]	*By strata:*[3] 70% - upper 74% - lower 71% - average	Not specified	46% - men 53% - MHH[5] 28% - women	18%	50%
Gigane, *Sokoto State* **NIGERIA (6)**	Iliya 1996-97	100	75% of HH heads[3] approx. 87% of adult population[3]	*By strata:*[3] 39% - upper 63% - middle 69% - low	men: 2 women: 3	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

(1) Villages *Region* **COUNTRY**	(2) Researcher Year of survey	(3) No. of survey HHs	(4) % of HHs engaged in non-agricultural activities	(5) Average % of HH income from non-agric. activities	(6) Average no. of income sources/HH	(7) % of total labour time devoted to non-farm activities	(8) % of HH depend't on staple food purchase	(9) Degree of staple food crop commer-cialisation
Lukozi (on-road) Mwankulwe (off) *Tanga Region* **TANZANIA** **(7)**	Jambiya 1996	851 persons	*% of Individuals:*[6] 19% full-time NFA 45% initiated NFA 1980-96	Not specified	Not specified	Majority of current NFA participants engaged on full-time basis	Not specified	Not specified
Mabuki (on road) Mwankulwe (off) *Mwanza Region* **TANZANIA** **(8)**	Madulu 1995	1598 persons	*% of Individuals:* 19% - both villages 31% - on-road 7% - off-road	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Mtwango (on-rd) Igosi (off-road) *Iringa Region* **TANZANIA** **(9)**	Mung'ong'o 1995	1167 persons	*% of Individuals:* 30% - on-road 35% - off-road	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Kyimo (on-road) Ngonga (off-road) *Mbeya Region* **TANZANIA** **(10)**	Mwamfupe 1995	1320 persons	*% of individuals NFA is main occupation:* 12% on-road 0.5% off-road	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Ndala Village *Tabora Region* **TANZANIA** **(11)**	Van Vuuren 1994	120 HH 582 persons	82%	85%	2.8	Not specified	80%	Negligible - Only 2 HHs sold maize
Mchinji District *Salima District* **MALAWI (12)**	Tellegen 1993-94	276	69%	56% non-ag 12% wage income *By strata:* 21% - lowest 55% - highest	75% HH at least 2 sources	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Mutoko Communal Area, **ZIMBABWE** **(13)**	Berkvens 1994-95	108	85%	55%	2.81	Not specified	90% received food aid in 1995	53%

(1) Villages *Region* **COUNTRY**	(2) Researcher Year of survey	(3) No. of survey HHs	(4) % of HHs engaged in non-agricultural activities	(5) Average % of HH income from non-agric. activities	(6) Average no. of income sources/HH	(7) % of total labour time devoted to non-farm activities	(8) % of HH depend't on staple food purchase	(9) Degree of staple food crop commer-cialisation
Melani, Former Ciskei *Eastern Cape* **S. AFRICA** **(14)**	Manona 1996-97	100	29% informal economic activities	43% wages 38% pensions 13% remittances 6% informal econ activities[7]	Not specified	Not specified	100%	Negligible only 4% of HHs sold maize
Shixini Former Transkei *Eastern Cape* **S. AFRICA** **(15)**	McAllister 1996-97	194	<10% business 80% remittances & pensions	Not specified	Not Specified	Not specified	Not specified	Negligible
Nxingxolo, Mooiplaas *Eastern Cape* **S. AFRICA** **(16)**	Bank & Qambata 1996-97	197	33% business[8] 75% regular cash income	Main income: 56% pensions 27% remittances	Not Specified	Not Specified	Not specified	Negligible

Sources: Bank 1999, Berkvens 1997, Chukwuezei 1999, Iliya 1999, Jambiya 1998, Madulu 1998, Manona 1999, McAllister 1999, Meagher 1999, Mulat Demeke 1997, Mung'ong'o 1998, Mustapha 1999, Mwamfupe 1998, Tellegen 1997, Van Vuuren forthcoming, Yunusa 1999

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* The following data has been generated in surveys of widely differing design and many of the measures are not strictly comparative. Nonetheless, the intention of listing findings in this form is to provide an indication of the significance of non-agricultural sources of income in rural households. The statistics are subject to verification by the individual researchers listed. In a few cases the data was drawn from research reports that were still in draft form, as indicated in the bibliography.

[1] Includes sale of animal dung and wood as fuel, rotating savings associations, sale of home-made wool yarn, sale of hay and other animal feed and loans.

[2] Defined as participation in food-for-work infrastructural-building programmes as well as agricultural wage labour on private farms.

[3] Includes 'non-farm' agricultural wage labour.

[4] 'Other' includes: wild produce gatherers, herbalists, food and crop processors, tailors, carpenters, building contractors, radio/TV repairer, formal sector employees, and teachers.

[5] MHH – Male household heads

[6] It should be noted that household participation rates would generally be 2-2.5 times that of individual participation rates.

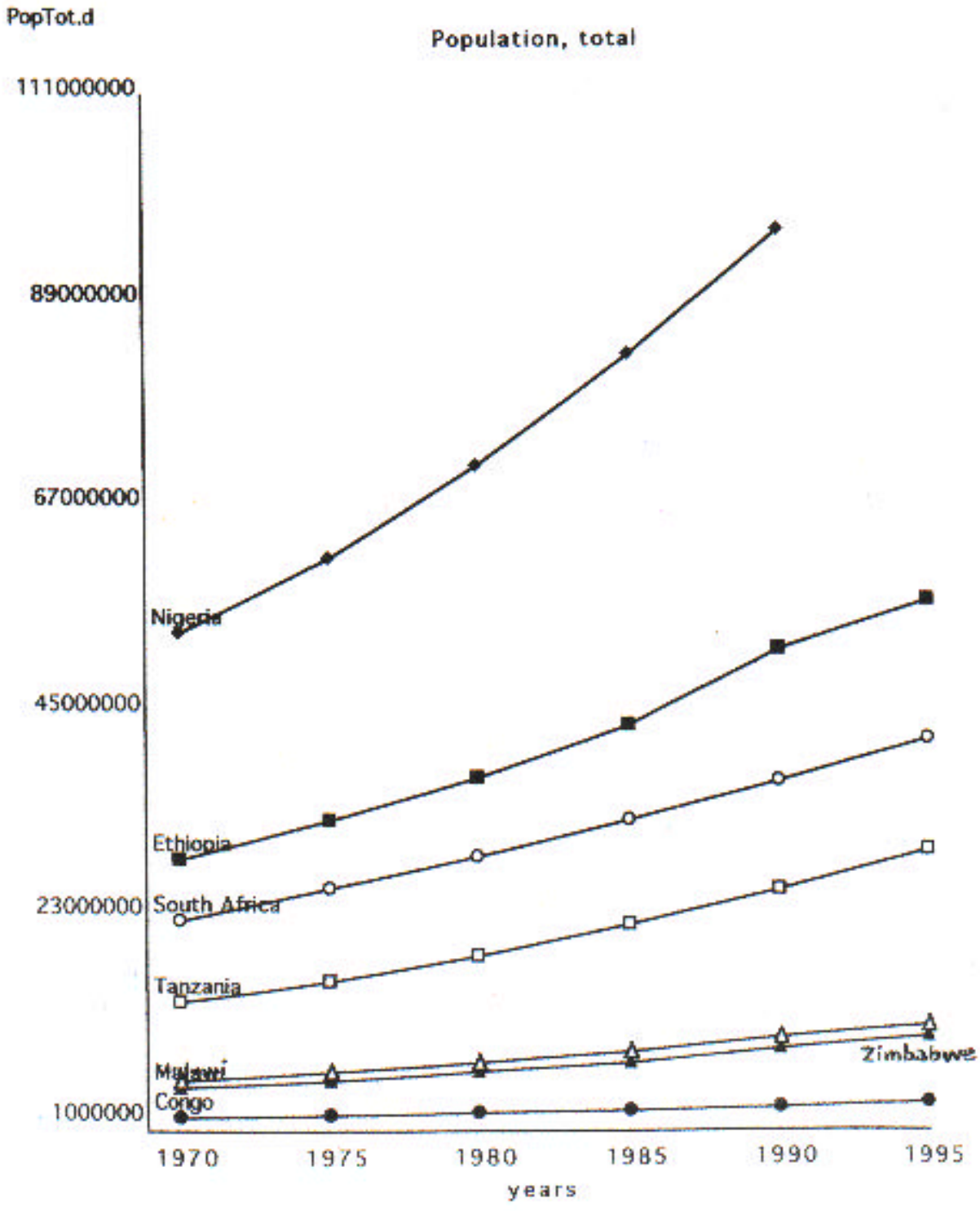
[7] 'Informal economic activities' include: petty trading in fruit, vegetables, groceries, liquor, meat and fuel, carpentry, building houses, fencing, mechanics, sewing and knitting, carting water and other goods, domestic service, divining, brickmaking, hairdressing, selling wood, and lending money.

[8] 'Business' includes amongst other activities: beadwork, making traditional garments, and participation in various savings clubs.

Table 2: Typology of Agricultural/Non-agricultural Bases for Wealth Enhancement and Poverty Alleviation

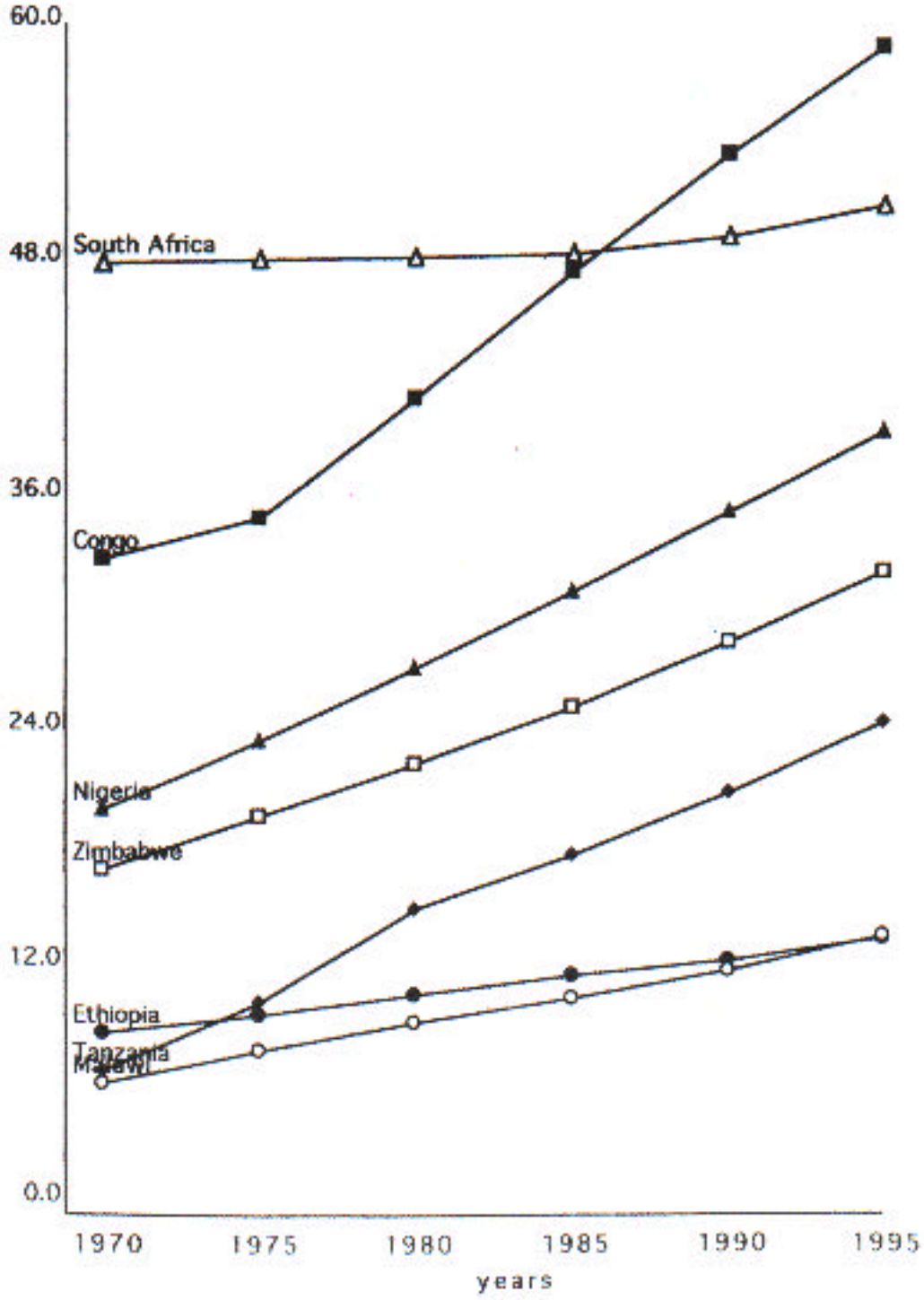
Type	Agricultural land availability	*Basis for* Wealth enhancement	*Basis for* Poverty alleviation	Relevant case studies
I. Agricultural foundation	Reasonable to good	Commercial agriculture + Non-agricultural enterprise	Subsistence agriculture + Non-agricultural activities	3-SW Nigeria 4-Middle Belt, Nigeria 5-Kaduna State, Nigeria 8-Mwanza Region, Tanzania 9-Iringa Region, Tanzania 10-Mbeya Region, Tanzania 11-Malawi 12-Zimbabwe
II. Transitional	Poor	Commercial agriculture + Non-agricultural enterprise	Non-agricultural activities (loss of agricultural subsistence through landlessness)	1-Ethiopia 6-Sokoto State, Nigeria 7-Tanga Region, Tanzania
III. Non-agricultural foundation	Poor but not critical	Local and external non-agricultural income sources	Local and external non-agricultural income sources	2-Igboland, Nigeria 12-Zimbabwe 13-Former Ciskei, S.Africa 14-Former Transkei, S.Africa 15-Mooiplaas, S.Africa

Figure 1: Total National Population



Source: World Bank, 'World Development Indicators', CD-ROM, 1997

Figure 2: Urban Population as Percentage of Total National Population



Source: World Bank, 'World Development Indicators', CD-ROM, 1997

Figure 3: Percentage of Total Labour Force in Agriculture

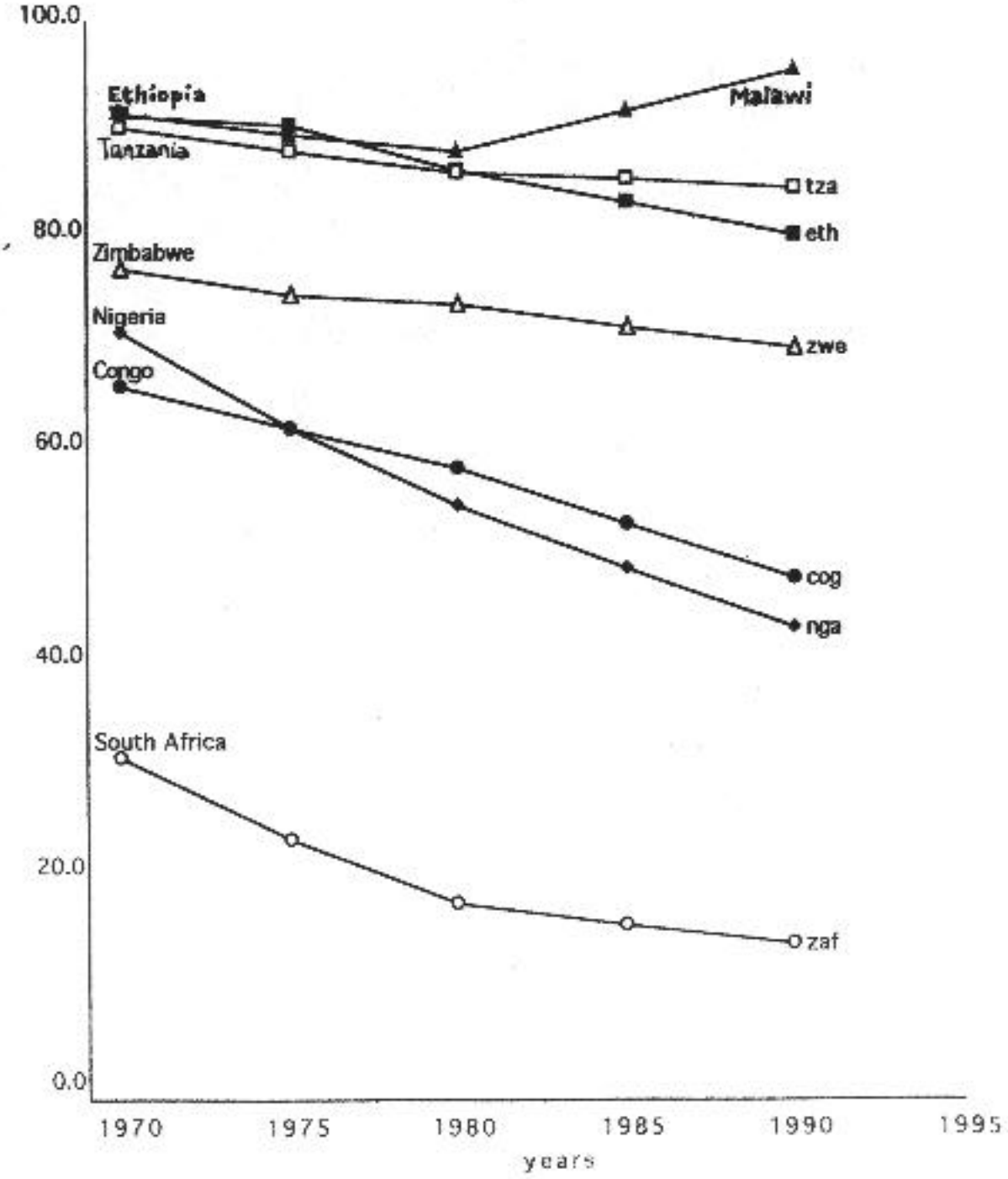


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Figure 4: Agriculture as a Percentage of Total GDP

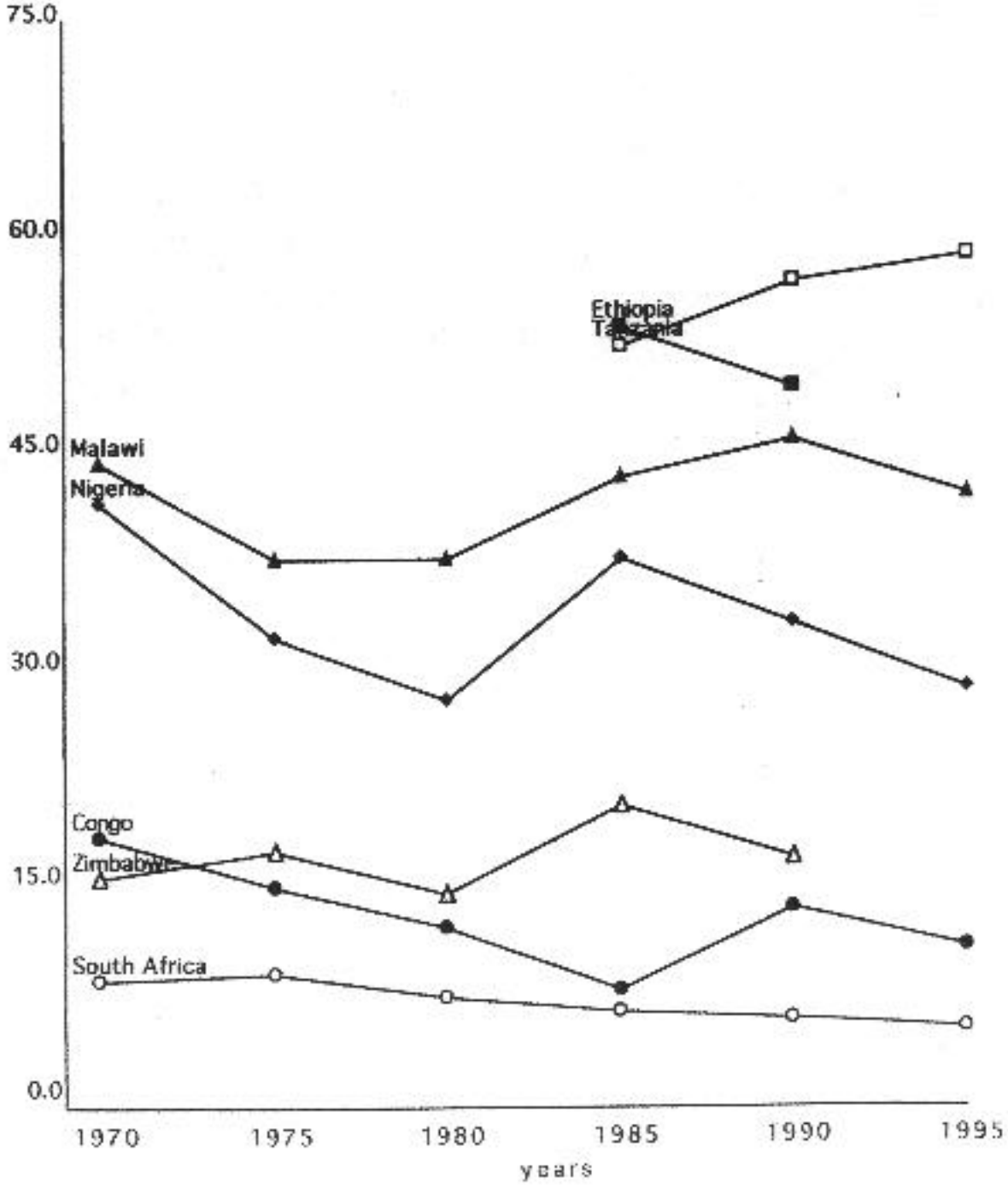

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Figure 5: African Share of World Agricultural Trade.

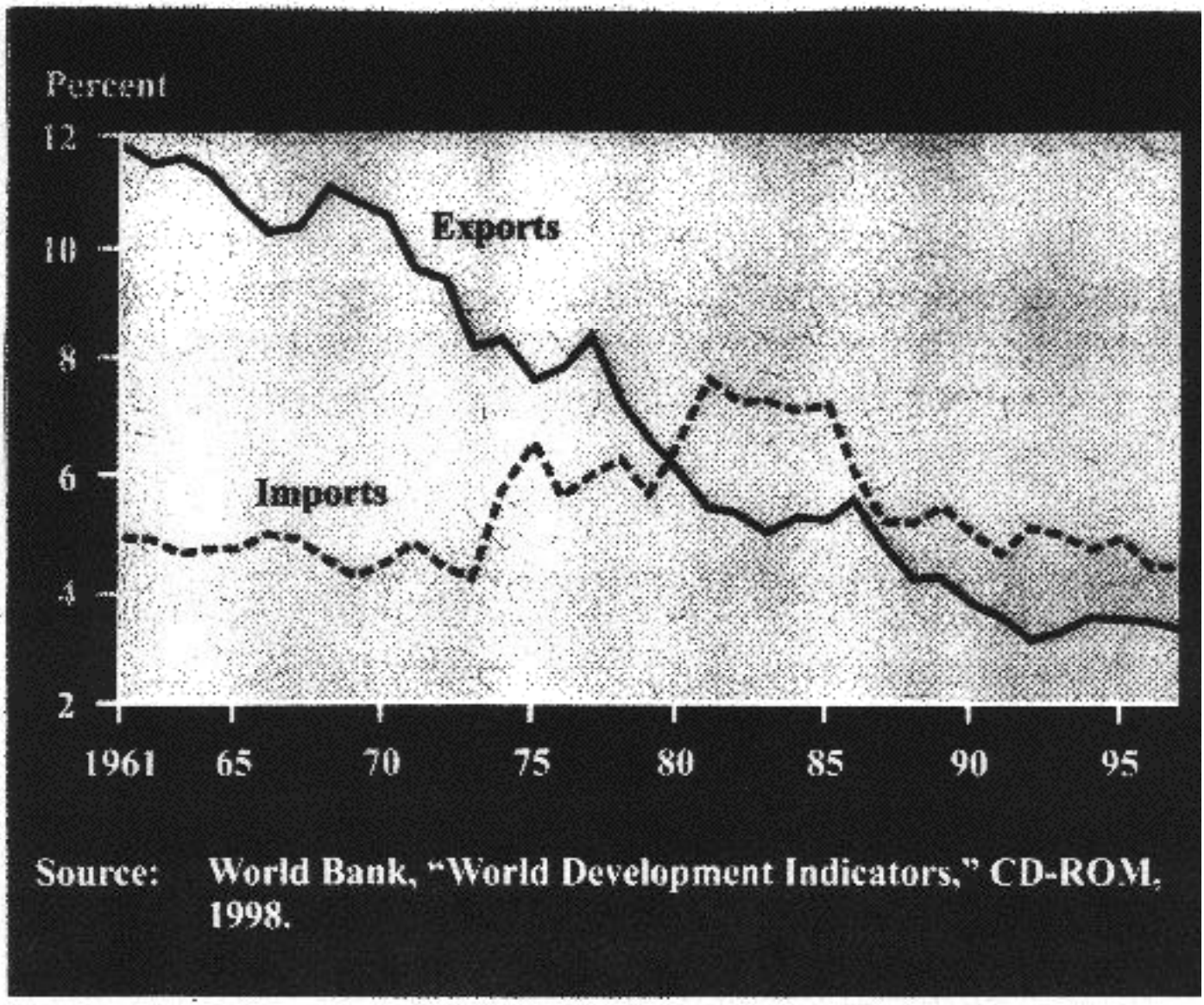

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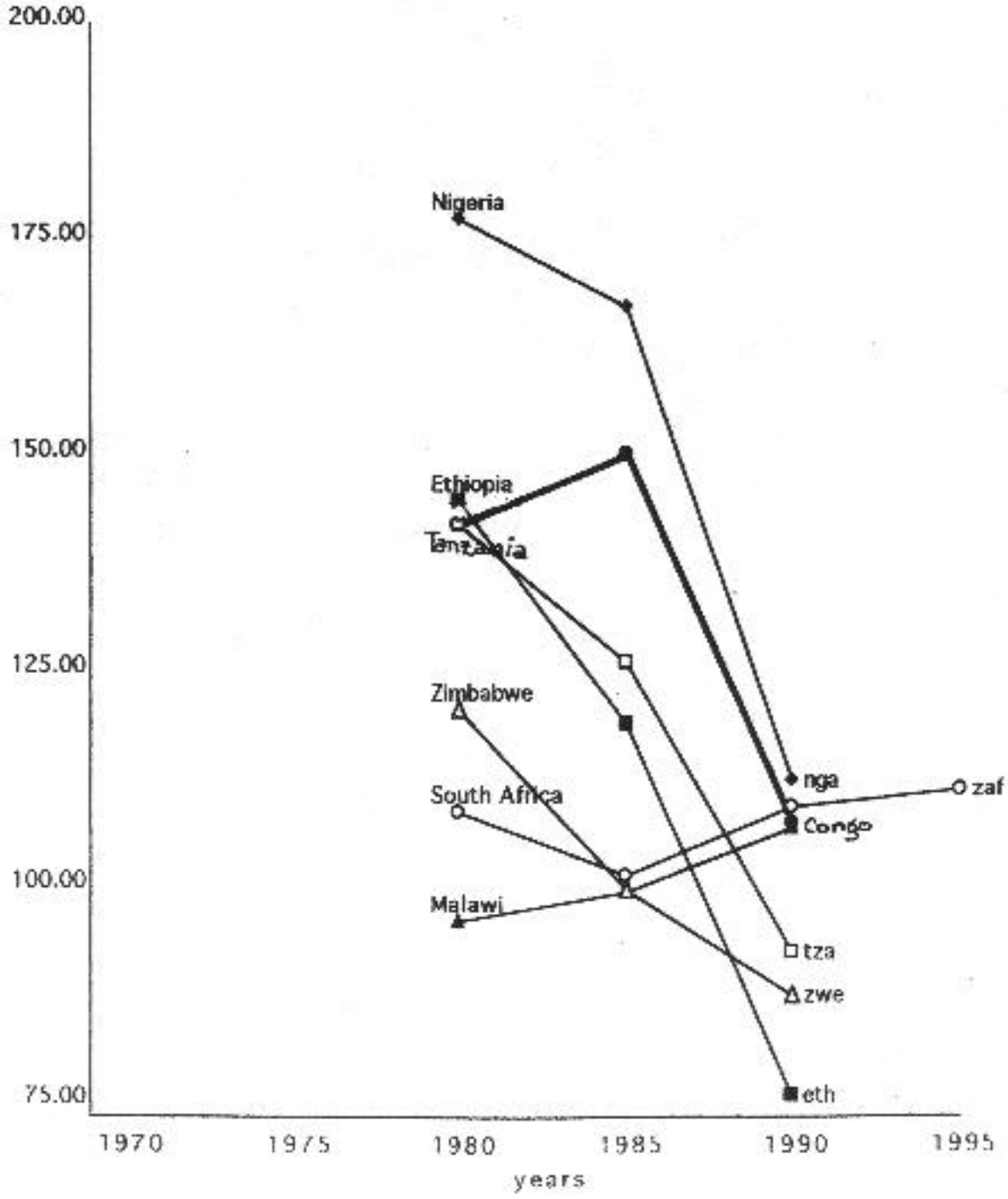
Figure 6: Net Barter Terms of Trade (1987 = 100)



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