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**TITLE**

**Women and their role in economic growth and development in the Cabhane area in Port Shepstone, South Africa**

**By**

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**SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE  
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## **Declaration**

I declare that, “women and their role in economic growth and development in the Cabhane area in Port Shepstone, South Africa” is my own work and that all the sources I have utilised or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....

Signature

(Mr Meshack Khanyisani Mtheke)

.....

Date

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

To Professor Hamilton Siphon Simelane, my supervisor; I extend my great appreciation. I am indebted to him for accepting to supervise my dissertation and has since remained a constant and stimulating guide, provided sympathetic consideration and valuable assistance. I am extremely thankful to him for sparing his precious time for me, and his esteemed guidance to overcome the difficulties.

I am also indebted to Umzumbe local municipality, and all women organizations and other participants for sacrificing their time and energy. Without them, this study would not have been possible.

*In addition, this work is dedicated*

*to Mrs Myende*

*my high school teacher (late), my father (Mr Ziphilele Mtheku) and My mother  
(Mrs Baxolile Mtheku)*

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

1. CASP: Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme
2. CTA: Technical Centre for Tropical Agriculture.
3. DoA: Department of Agriculture
4. DLA: Department of Land Affairs
5. FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization
6. LRAD: Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
7. NDA: National Department of Agriculture
8. NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations
9. OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- 10.RDP: The Reconstruction and Development Programme
- 11.SLAG: Settlement Land/ Acquisition Grant (SLAG) Programme
- 12.SOFA: the State of Food and Agriculture
- 13.UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
- 14.USAID: United States Agency for International Development
- 15.WARD: Women in Agriculture and Rural Development

## **ABSTRACT**

Women's contribution to agriculture is seldom recognized in spite of their active involvement in the agriculture. This study was designed to probe into the extent to which women participate in agricultural and household activities in the Cabhane area in Port Shepstone. Both purposive and snowballing sampling techniques were used for the selection of study respondents. Out of the whole Cabhane, three valleys, namely, Mabhikili, Malukhakha and Velumemeze were purposively selected. From each of the selected valleys, 30 women were selected both from small and medium size families who were actively engaged in farm as well as household activities. The data was collected with the help of a validated interview schedule or questionnaire.

The study revealed that women's participation in agricultural activities such as crop production, banana plantation and livestock, was very high. In the livestock activities, women participation is highest in cleaning of animal sheds. The study revealed that participation in agriculture was mainly for providing households with economic security. The study also revealed that although the majority of Cabhane women are actively involved in agriculture and development some pressing problems still impinge on their participation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	i
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	ii
<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	iii
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	iv
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	ix
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	x

### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

Introduction.....	1
Statement of problem.....	4
Objectives of the study.....	5
Ethical issues.....	5
Organization of the study.....	11

**CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY**

Introduction.....14

Methodology.....14

Sampling procedures.....15

Procedures for data collection.....18

Interviews.....18

Data analysis.....20

Conclusion.....20

### **CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE STUDY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Introduction.....	17
Literature.....	17
Theoretical framework.....	21
Feminist theory.....	23
Socialist feminist theory.....	23
Conclusion.....	25

### **CHAPTER 4: SOUTH AFRICA'S AGRICULTURAL POLICY FRAMEWORK AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE**

Introduction.....	24
Brief analysis of land reform policies or programs in the post 1994 South Africa.....	25
The Land Tenure Reform and Land Redistribution Programs.....	26
Policies related to agricultural research, extension, education and training.....	31
Conclusion.....	32

### **CHAPTER 5: EXTENT OF WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN AGRICULTURE IN CABHANE**

Introduction.....	34
Gender analysis in agricultural and rural economic growth and development.....	34
Women's access to land.....	40
Women's access to training, technological inputs and extension services.....	41
Women's access to labour.....	43
Women's time constraints.....	44
Conclusion.....	45



**CHAPTER 6: THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN AGRICULTURE IN PORT SHEPSTONE**

Introduction.....47  
The effect of women involvement in agriculture in Port Shepstone..... 48  
Examples of women investment in rural economy of Cabhane.....52  
Gender differences, decision-making and control over and use of income..... 56  
Conclusion.....66

**CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION..... 67**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY.....72**

**Annexure A.....79**

**List of Tables**

Table 5.1: Impact of women income on education of children

## **List of figures**

Figure 3.1: Cabhane woman in the production of maize

Figure 5.1: Cabhane women in crop production

Figure 5.2: Social capital and women in co-operatives

Figure 5.3: Women for Zimele developing community self-reliance project celebrating fruits and vegetables production after a harvest



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In past years, policy-makers and development policies did not regard women as important pillars of agriculture and economic growth. The important role of women in agriculture in many parts of the world calls for urgent attention to gender-specific constraints in agricultural production. “Women play a major but largely unrecognized, role in agriculture in most countries of the world. Failure to recognize their roles is costly. It results in misguided policies and programs. Forgone agricultural production output and associated income flows, higher levels of poverty and food and nutrition insecurity” (Buthelezi, 2009: 20).

As is the case in other rural areas, anecdotal evidence indicates that the involvement of women in agriculture and other economic activities in the Cabhane area in Port Shepstone is also widespread, ranging from the formal to the informal. Cabhane women perform a lot of “invisible” activities that are sometimes considered as not contributing to the national economic accounting system. However, women participation in the formal sector of the economy has improved with access to education and therefore as more women get educated and acquire the requisite skills, they are increasingly engaged in the formal sector with a few of them in managerial positions (Booyesen-Wolthers, 2007). It is however important to note that research evidence has shown that African women have been forced to break barriers to their integration into the economic mainstream either as drivers of economic enterprises or as wage-laborers.

Over the years, there has been an increase in the participation of women in economic activities in South Africa. However, there are still many women with little or no means of economic survival. It is therefore crucial for women and

broadly, gender issues to be mainstreamed into the economic processes of the country for meaningful and inclusive economic development. Again, circumstantial evidence indicates that (as it is the case in other rural communities in South Africa and other developing countries) women in Port Shepstone are major contributors in crop production and animal husbandry.

Most of them are involved and manage subsistence farms or small-scale (family) farms. They produce crops for the survival of their families, as they sell some of their produce in local markets of Thulini areas as well as in semi-urban areas nearer to Cabhane such as Hibberdene, Port Shepstone, and Umzinto. Due to the improvement of their education and entrepreneurial skills, some of them are involved in different agricultural development projects and own agricultural businesses. Through those agricultural businesses or projects, they have contributed a lot to the region's economic growth and development. For example, a number of people are employed in the agricultural economic enterprises (although these agricultural projects come in the form of seasonal employment) run by women in Cabhane area and other Port Shepstone zones. In addition, women of Cabhane also provide their labour in other agricultural productions such sugarcane farms in an area.

However, there are similarities between women of Cabhane and those of other parts of the world in terms of contributing to economic development. Rural women in different parts of the world, especially in developing countries, are also engaged in agricultural activities for survival, as they are involved in small family farms or subsistence agriculture. For example, in Ghana; "women are also found in agricultural activities, including fishing and forestry, as the majority is found in farming (agriculture, fish processing, animal husbandry and forestry) (Amu, 2005: 11). On the other hand, Bangladesh is another example of a country where

women's economic activities, including agricultural activities such as farming, had a visible contribution to a country's economic growth or development. Findings from the research conducted by Hamid (1996) found that the average woman in Bangladesh contributes 4,765 takas (US\$133.141) annually to the economy through her unpaid work, such as subsistence farming or production.

The recognition of the role women play in agriculture and rural society is therefore fundamental to economic growth and rural economic development in South Africa. More importantly, recognizing and supporting this role is crucial for the development of women and the fulfilment of their economic potential.

The focus of this thesis is a small area called Cabhane in Port Shepstone, under Thulini traditional authority, KwaZulu-Natal (south coast), along the Indian Ocean approximately 50 kilometres of Durban city. The area can be viewed from the N2 freeway connecting Durban with the rest of KwaZulu-Natal South Coast. Like many other rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal, Cabhane consists of an African, predominantly Zulu speaking community. Judging from the appearance of low cost and traditional homes and the way residents live, this community has a poor socio-economic background. Subsistence farming is the dominant economic activity while parts of their surroundings are utilized for commercial agriculture, specifically, sugarcane plantations. Therefore, in a community like Cabhane in which there is a poor socio-economic standard of living, farming is an important activity. In other seasons, in which there is no sufficient rain and no good soil, they utilize sized vegetable gardens. Most of them possess cattle, goats and chickens.

Despite the fact that Cabhane covers such a small portion of Thulini's land area, a significant percentage of a region's small-scale farmers are women. As hinted above, agriculture in Cabhane is extremely diverse and relates to the patterns of its

topography. However, limited development discourses, which include agriculture, have been documented about women in an area, although their contribution is visible.

### **Statement of Problem**

Rural women are engaged in subsistence agriculture for the reproduction and sustenance of their families, after their husbands have migrated to semi-urban or urban areas in search for paid work. However, evidence shows that the work women perform in the form of agriculture is taken for granted since it comes in the form of subsistence agriculture or small-scale agriculture.

Again, through their involvement in subsistence agriculture, women promote agricultural development and economic growth as a whole. If government and other corporations provide assistance, for example, in the form of new technology, credit and access to more arable land in support of these agricultural development projects, women are not given an opportunity to hold planning and managerial positions due to gender related stereotypes.

Therefore, this thesis interrogates the involvement of women in agricultural activities in Cabhane area. It is through such participation that they contribute to the economic growth and development of the area, and by extension that of South Africa. This research is motivated by the fact that different researches in other parts of the world have shown that economic growth for women has an important multiplier effect, but very few researchers have shown interest in the study of such nature in KwaZulu-Natal. Due to gender stereotypes, the contribution of women to economic activity and growth (through agriculture) in Cabhane and other rural communities in KwaZulu-Natal has been ignored.

## **Objectives of the study**

The primary objective of this study is to explore women's engagement in agricultural activities and their contribution to economic growth and economic development in rural community of Cabhane. In achieving this, four other objectives were useful for the purpose of this study, and those objectives were:

- ✓ To identify factors that hinder economic participation of women in Cabhane.
- ✓ To investigate how women affect and are affected by policies, programs and projects that are instituted by the government.
- ✓ To investigate if the government, through its policies, helps women play a key role in the economic growth and development.

## **Ethical issues**

As Strydom (2002:62) averred, it is important for the researcher to possess an ample knowledge about appropriate and inappropriate conducts. Human beings are the important objects utilized in the human sciences researches, and "this means that the researcher should be bound in these conducts" (Dastile, 2004:149). Therefore, the researcher made sure that informed consent was obtained, and it was thoroughly explained to each participant. According to the informed consent, participation in the research was voluntary and potential participants were fully informed of the aims and processes of the research. Secondly, the researcher assured that there was no deception of research participants. According to Strydom (2002):

Qualitative researchers fail to avoid deception as they sometimes provide wrong information concerning the objectives and goals of



the study. This is mainly done to hide what the research participants will experience when they participate in the study. Lastly, violation of privacy or confidentiality should be ensured. Privacy implies an element of personal privacy whereas confidentiality means that the information will be handled confidentially. The privacy of the participants could be violated if the researcher utilizes tape recorders or cameras without the consent of the participants.

Therefore, participants' right was respected. The aim and the objective of this study were clearly explained to research participants, and before the beginning of interviews, the researcher sought out permission with participants to record the interview and take some pictures. After the researcher had given a thorough explanation to the research participants, he was granted a permission to utilize tape record and take photos where necessary; and the researcher informed the research participants that the recorded information would be destroyed at the end of the study and that if they wanted, they could have access to tapes.

## **Organization of the study**

This thesis consists of seven chapters, and they are as follows:

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The first chapter is an introductory chapter and provides an introduction and the main issues to be discussed in this thesis. These include statement of problem; the primary objective of the study; ethical issues as well as existing literature in relation to the current study.

## **Chapter 2: Methodology**

Amongst other things, this chapter discusses research methods used in accumulating data. Furthermore, it also explained the usefulness of using qualitative research methodology in the field of social science.

## **Chapter 3: Literature study and theoretical framework**

This chapter reviews other literatures, which are related to the current study. Furthermore, it also highlights theory utilized in the study.

## **Chapter 4: South Africa's agricultural policy framework and the involvement of women in agriculture**

This chapter discusses the most important policies, frameworks, and acts, which assist rural women, like Cabhane women, participate in agriculture. It also explains how these policies were formulated. Most importantly, it also discusses the era in which these policies were formulated or put into place. Additionally, the chapter also provides an assessment to these policies or framework in order to analyze the failures and success of Cabhane women.

## **Chapter 5: Extent of women involvement in agriculture in Cabhane**

This chapter encompasses crucial perspectives, and analyses the extent or manner in which Cabhane women are involved in agriculture and economic growth and development.

**Chapter 6:** The socio-economic impact of women involvement in agriculture in Port Shepstone. Here, this chapter provides an insight on how Cabhane women contribute both socially and economically. In simplest terms, the main aim of this

chapter is analyze the impact women have in a community through their agricultural work.

### **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

This is the last chapter of the thesis, and it provides findings and conclusion of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Introduction**

In any study, the researcher is accountable for his or her starting point, methods, findings and applications. The definitive value of his/ her research is reliant on methods, procedures and techniques utilized. This chapter is an elucidation of the steps undertaken in order to achieve the several aims of this study. Due consideration was therefore, given to the research model used, sampling in respect of women involved in agricultural activities in Cabhane, and data gathering tools, such as questionnaires and interview schedules.

#### **Methodology**

Hegan (2000:14) suggests that methodology entails the philosophy of the research process that includes assumptions and values that serve as a rationale for research. For the purpose of this study, a qualitative research methodology was adopted as this type of research required in-depth knowledge about the socio-economic conditions of Cabhane women. Dastile (2004:135) pointed out that “in a qualitative study different techniques and data collection methods are used in order to describe, observe, make sense of or interpret the phenomenon under investigation from the perspective of the subjects”.

On the other hand, Marshall and Rossman (1989:79), Streubert and Carpenter (2002:79) and Fouche and Delport (2002:79) acknowledge the importance of in-depth interviews in the study operating under qualitative research. According to them, in-depth interviews enable researchers to comprehend the context of what is

being researched. Thus, the researcher is an important instrument in this type of research, and is essential for the respondent's experiences to be reported from the perspective of the people who have lived them. In addition, there are measuring instruments that are very useful in qualitative research methodology, and these instruments were also utilized for the purpose of the present study.

### **Sampling procedures**

The objective of this study was to explore women's engagement in agricultural activities and their contribution to economic growth and economic development with a specific focus on women in a Port Shepstone rural neighborhood. Investigating rural women in the whole of Port Shepstone would be beyond the capacity of one individual study, thus it was decided to focus on one specific area in detail. This selected area was the Cabhane in Thulini Traditional Authority in Southern KwaZulu-Natal. The study area was chosen because it is typical of rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal, and production in an area mainly depends on agriculture or farming. Women lead most of agricultural projects in the area. The researcher had to determine what type of sampling frame would be best suitable for the research. The researcher also had to establish the kind and number of people for sampling. This meant determining the size of the population and the sample to be derived from the population.

According to Kitchin and Tate (2000: 53), population is the key in any research. In a population, a researcher chooses the most suitable people who meet the criteria or display the characteristic the researcher interested in. The sample is therefore, studied in an effort to understand the population from which it was drawn (Gopaul, 2006: 88). Furthermore, it was also important to decide on the best sampling method for the research. However, there are many sampling methods available for

the collection of data, of which the researcher chose two non-probability sampling techniques, for the purpose of this study.

In this study, purposive sampling is one of the two non-probability sampling techniques chosen. Purposive sampling was very useful for situations where the researcher needed to reach a targeted sample quickly and where sampling for proportionality and/ representativeness was not the primary concern. Therefore, with a purposive sample, opinions of the targeted population were easily obtained.

The Umzumbe municipality (2011) provided statistics obtained from census data, according to which there are 1090 households and a population of 11 700 persons in Cabhane rural area. Therefore, an estimated population 1090 could yield a sample of 90 respondents. It was therefore decided that a sample of 90 households from Cabhane would be sufficient to undertake the research. Mabhikili, Velumemeze and Malukhakha, which all form ward 16 in Cabhane were the targeted valleys for the study. Out of the 90 selected women, 75 of them were involved in agricultural production.

The study of women's involvement in agriculture and their needs, their contribution to decision-making, for effective participation in agriculture and economic development, was of central concern here. In order to implement this, gaining entry into the tribal authority system, a municipality and Umzumbe department of agriculture, a key rural community leadership structures, was critical. First, it was critical to obtain permission of the tribal leadership, and identifying community leadership process. Secondly, it was important to develop an understanding of the socio-cultural context of women's lives from key informants to define theories and concepts to guide the study of the rural women.

In identifying and selecting participants, including community leaders and community development issues (such as agriculture) around which economic participation took place in the rural neighborhood, the initial question asked was; who are the key informants and how will they be sampled? Key informants are defined as persons having direct contact with individuals experiencing problems in living (Neuber, 1988:16). In this study, the key informants were women, traditional leader, a municipality and department of agriculture. They provided information on the following: (i) factors that hinder economic participation of women in an area (ii) how women affect and are affected by policies, programs and projects that are instituted by the government (iii) and explain if the government, through its policies, helps women play a key role in the economic growth and development. This selection of this sample was also useful in comparing women's incomes involved in agriculture and for those who are not.

In addition to purposive sampling, another form of non-probability sampling, known as snowballing was applied in this study. Snowballing sampling was very useful in this study since it also assisted the researcher to accumulate more and useful data. The process of snowballing sampling is, therefore, much like asking your subjects to nominate another person with the same trait as your next subject. In this study for example, the nominated subjects were observed and continued in the same way until a sufficient number of subjects was obtained.

### **Procedures for data collection**

Formal literature was obtained in the library, the internet and selected development agencies including local government. The search was for theory and previous

search in books, journals and for documents with non-statistical records. The following topics that were surveyed and analyzed in detail in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5, are as follows:

- (i) Methodology (chapter 2)
- (ii) South Africa's agricultural policy framework and the involvement of women in agriculture (chapter 4)
- (iii) Extent of women involvement in agriculture in Cabhane (chapter 5)
- (iv) The socio-economic impact of women involvement in agriculture in Port Shepstone (chapter 6)

## **Interviews**

Hagan (2000:174) describes an interview as a face-to-face situation in which the researcher orally engage with the respondent and seeks responses. In addition, Berg (1998:57) defines an interview as a conversation with a purpose. This could range from in-depth interviews, lengthy interviews with one subject to structured surveys of large groups. For the purpose of this study, in-depth interviews was adopted, and its adoption and application was crucial as the researcher wanted to access in-depth information about the role of women in economic growth and development as well as the nature of their participation/ and involvement in agricultural activities. In-depth interviewing is widely used in social research, and can provide a rich insight into an individual's attitudes, worldviews, and also emphasize validity and meaning.

A researcher, therefore, utilized this approach as prepare a set of open-ended questions were prepared, which were carefully worded and arranged for the purpose of minimizing variation in the questions posed to the interviewee.



According to Gall, Gall and Borg (2003), the standardized open-ended interview is extremely structured in terms of the wording of questions, and participants are always asked identical questions, but the wording enable responses to be open-ended. This open-endedness allows the researcher to ask probing questions as a means of follow-up.

However, open-ended interviewing has its own limitations, and the difficulty to code data is one of them (Cresswell, 2007). Since open-ended interviews in composition call for participants to fully express their responses in much detail as desired, it can be quite difficult for a researcher to extract similar themes or codes from the interview transcripts as they would with less open-ended responses. Although informants provide deep, ample and qualitative data, it can be more burdensome process for the researcher to examine through narrative responses in order to fully and accurately reflect an overall perspective of all interview through coding process. However, Gall, Gall and Borg (2003) also mentioned that this reduces researcher biases within the study, particularly when the interviewing process involves many participants.

Thus, since interviews contained open-ended questions and discussions developed in unanticipated directions, it was necessarily best to tape-record interviews and later transcribe these tapes for analysis. This allowed the interviewer to focus on interacting with the participant and follow the discussion. This was an important task to perform as focusing on jotting notes only to capture respondents' answers would be difficult, and would result in poor notes and also detract from the development of rapport between interviewer and interviewee.

The interview schedules were translated into Zulu. They were then retranslated back to English. Discrepancies with the original questionnaire were corrected

## **Data analysis**

All data collected through field notes and tapes was systematically selected, simplified, and formulated into themes. All themes were transcribed to give meaning to the findings of the study. In analyzing data, a method known as *content analysis* was used. This method is one common qualitative analysis method. The researcher did not have a system for precoding data like quantitative researchers do. The researcher read the text repeatedly and also listened to the tape until the relevant or interesting points emerged. Then recordings were transcribed into written form so that they could be studied in detail, linked with analytic notes.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter therefore discussed research methodology as well as theoretical framework. The first part of the chapter discussed methodology, which was utilized for the benefit of the study. It discussed the form of research methodology the researcher used, and analyzed how the research applied that form of methodology. As it was discussed above, qualitative research methodology was chosen as the best methodology for the current study. Strauss and Corbin (1990) claimed that qualitative methods could be used for better understanding about which little is yet known. In-depth, open-ended interviews are some of data collection methods adopted under qualitative methodology.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **LITERATURE STUDY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **Introduction**

The paper is based on the argument that, although the promotion of women's agricultural work, especially in small-scale farming is at the heart of poverty-focused macroeconomic policy in South Africa, in practice, agricultural policy and research tends to marginalize the contribution of rural women in agriculture. The World Bank (2012) indicates that rural women in South Africa and in most other African countries spend up to 60% of their time on agricultural work. Kotane (2009) and Ncube (2009) show that in most rural areas of South Africa, women are the major subsistence farmers, providing the basis of household and community sustainable livelihood. The majority of these women depend on their local community-based agricultural knowledge and innovation systems for agricultural production. The paper argues that, African rural women of South Africa play a critical role in ensuring household food security, although some hindrances impinge their participation in agriculture.

Women represent a large percentage of the workforce all over the Third world. According to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (2011), African small-scale farmers are predominantly women, however, limited resources such as capital, lack of market knowledge, education and technology impinge women on their participation in economic growth and development. FAO (2011) further noted that although women play a multi-faceted role in agriculture, agricultural productivity is however low in most South African rural areas as a result of a multiplicity of factors, some of which include limited application of

science and technology, dependency on the weather and inadequate governmental support in terms of access to credit. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and World Bank (2009) also supported the view that women are twice as much affected by these challenges that confront the agricultural sector, especially because of their responsibility for security in the home. The implications this has for nutritional health of the household and to children in particular, and policy makers need to focus on gender and rural development in order to be aware of these challenges that affect women in their attempt to participate in agricultural activities for economic growth and development enhancement.

Additionally, gender stereotypes also have a negative effect and lessen the capacity of an economy to grow. As Bahramitash (2000) further noted, initiating and encouraging programs that enhance women's economic participation boost and promote women's economic gain, households, communities and an economy at a national level. Promoting full participation of women and men in economic growth and development and bringing full understanding of issues, such as hindrances women encounter in their attempt to participate in economic activities are key activities of gender equity and women's empowerment.

According to Mehra (1997), in developing countries, existing programs and policies tend not to regard women as vital or integral to the process of economic growth and development. Although women's reproductive roles reflect higher investment, very little emphasis is given to economically and productive work and income they generate. The economic history of developing countries has ample evidence of women involved in agriculture, informal businesses that generate incomes, and increasingly in formal enterprises. However, evidence from previous studies shows that earnings are generally low.

Often such programs and projects have not succeeded because they are not motivated by development concerns, but welfare. For example, these are short-term development programs, which only allow women to participate temporarily and most of them provide women provisional and part-time employment in traditional feminine skills, which have limited markets. However, some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been very successful in augmenting women's economic status because they have regarded and began with the premise that women are central to economic development process (Boserup, 1970).

Mehra (1997) continues to argue that African women are vital pillars and/ economic players to their households. For example, estimations from studies that have been conducted across the globe show that 96 percent of women in rural areas engage in farm-work and only 40 percent of small farms are under women's management. Anecdotal evidence indicates that in some landless households in Cabhane, for instance, women are the main or even the sole income earners in their households. As Mehra (1997) continued, women, through their incomes or earnings contribute directly towards families' basics such as food and children's education, especially in developing countries. But much of work women do, such as subsistence farming, is not recorded to national economic accounting system because it takes place in rural areas and in informal sector.

However, United States Agency for International Development (2005) has noted that women are prominent and important economic entrepreneurial force whose contributions have impacted very significantly to both local and international economies. Amongst other things, women are found in the production and consumption processes, businesses, and household management and in the

provision of a range of businesses and workers' services. Additionally, 80 percent of food consumed in Sub-Saharan Africa is produced by women.

Data provided by WISTAT (2000) shows that women are over 33 percent of the officially calculated workforce in Africa. Women can be found in agri-businesses and other emerging sectors such as the production, consumer goods marketing, etc. As Jalbert (2000) mentioned, through their engagement in small-medium enterprises, women provide local and international (e.g. transnational and multinational) corporations with lucrative ideas and other business services. The activities are crucial as developing economies transition from chiefly agricultural to industrial production and become more urbanized.

CTA (1999) has noted that women role in rural economy is delimited by alarming amount of myth, stereotypes and misunderstanding. Therefore, without proper, convincing and effective policy and program strategies, the role and contribution of women to economic growth and development, such as in agriculture will remain unrecognizable and denied. This failure to recognize women's in these economic activities, such as agriculture, and "to integrate the reality of women's situation into development theories, policies and programs" is persistent in rural areas and impact negatively on the South African economic development.

Bahramitash (2000:03) has highlighted the fact that:

Women also perform reproductive and fundamental work as caregivers. This is not simply a matter of reproducing the future labour pool even though the role of reproducing the labour force is certainly of great effect. People do not enter the labour market simply as units of labour time, rather they participate as social being, which means that their early formation on the cultural, social and educational planes has a direct impact on their potential contribution to economic growth and development. What is not so well recognized is that when women are involved and contribute significantly to (unpaid) domestic

activities at home, that crucial contribution is always neglected in national economic accounting system. This aspect of women's work will have considerable positive impact on the future health and productivity of the labour force.

Women's role as economic agents therefore supplements their role as primary caregivers both in a family and in a community setting.

On the other hand, the impact of development on women in South Africa, especially in KZN, is quite different for both urban and rural women. Meer (1998) also supports that rural women's work is overlooked in the development process. Evidence shows that even if development policies and programs are formulated, they fail to accommodate or fully involve rural women in many African countries in the development process (Hunger Project, 2000). According to Olopoenia (1983), Pradip (1984), Seer (1981) and Gwanya (1980), development should not be isolated from people. All levels, from bottom to higher rate of levels are important in the process of development, and women should also be given an opportunity to participate since development "is a process by which people are awakened to opportunities within their reach". This is the reason, according to these authors, why rural women should be involved in on-going development initiatives. They are the most marginalized group in terms of their needs, while being the people that contribute significantly to food production in Africa as research conducted by Hunger Project (1999) showed that almost 80 percent of the food consumed in most of Africa are from rural areas.

However, it should be emphasized that the majority of rural women utilize agriculture to feed their families, communities and a nation as a whole. Therefore, literature on women and agricultural development was also prepared (utilizing empirical evidence from other African and developing countries since not much has been written about women and agricultural development in the study area) as it

is important in the study of such nature. In other words, agriculture is utilized as an example of an economic activity utilized by rural women of Cabhane and women through this economic activity contribute significantly to rural economic growth and development.

Fabiyi, Danladi, Akande and Mahmood (2007:678) support the view that many rural women are engaged in (subsistence) agriculture for further rural economic growth and development. They further pointed out that rural women's contribution to food security and development, through agriculture, continues to be in conventional agricultural and economic analyses and policies.

Therefore, a lot of women's economic activities, such as rural agriculture, which are lucrative in the economy or which contribute to economic growth or development have been neglected and many of these activities are not counted in national accounting systems due to the above mentioned factors such as the unavailability of proper policies in favor of women. In addition, most of the economic activities performed by women are mainly domestic ones such as small scale agriculture, hawking, caregiving, etc. As it is discussed in the above paragraphs of this literature review, the characteristics of women in Port Shepstone, like other South African rural communities and that of other countries (especially in developing countries) are the same. Based on literatures, political independence has contributed to women's participation in different regions of the world, although anecdotal evidence indicates that this has not yet been fully achieved.

Therefore, for this study, which aims at investigating the involvement of women in economic activities for purposes of economic growth and development, the literature reviewed above is both relevant and pertinent. Additionally, the study of



women and their role in economic growth and development began with an examination of women's tasks in agricultural production in Cabhane area as agriculture is taken as an engine for growth and development, as it is also the case in other rural areas of South Africa.

### **Theoretical study**

In any research, a study's core theories and concepts are defined through theoretical framework, which is the research from previous studies or literatures. For example, in social science research, previous research plays a key role in future research. In other words, it forms a basis for researches still to be conducted.

According to Maxwell (2005), theoretical framework serves two purposes. Firstly, it shows how one's research fits into what is already known, i.e. relationship to existing theory and research; and also informs one's research questions and methodology, and helps a researcher justify his or her research problem, i.e. shows why his or her research is important. The search for a theoretical framework, therefore, narrows the research question and helps researchers create hypotheses. With the initial research question in mind, social scientists or researchers read all of the existing literature on the topic. While reading, researchers highlight different definitions of the same terms and the varying methodologies to find answers to key questions, and in addition, develop a consistent definition for each concept and find the theories upon which their study seeks to build.

Mertens (1998: 03) also provided a useful definition of theoretical framework. As he pointed out, "the theoretical framework of a research relates to the philosophical basis on which the research takes place, and forms the link between the theoretical aspects and practical components of the investigation undertaken. Therefore, it has

implications for every decision made in the research process”, and serves as a basis for conducting research.

Theories used to explain the research object represent the vision under which we approach such an object and somehow the ways we should take in doing so. For example, in this study, feminist theory, in relation to economic development, was utilized to serve this purpose. Again, in this study, feminist theory is a blueprint, or a guide for modelling a structure. A blueprint depicts the elements of a structure and the relation of each element to the other, just as each theory depicts the concepts, which compose it and the relation of concepts with each other. The theory used, is located on the ladder of abstraction relative to its scope. Again, an often-useful label in women and economic growth and development *is* feminist theory, which suggest a broad scope, covering major areas of importance to the discipline.

### **Feminist theory**

Feminist theory, in relation to economic development is the critical theory attempting to overcome pervasive androcentric (male and patriarchal) biases. It focuses more on relevant topics to women, such as unpaid and domestic work at home or segregation, e.g. exclusion of women and minorities from obtaining certain resources. It also deals with deficiencies of economic models, such as disregarding intra-household bargaining; new forms of data collection and measurement such as the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), and more gender-aware theories such as the capabilities approach (Beneria, May and Strassmann, 2009).

## **Socialist feminist theory**

However, feminist theory is divided into several branches, and socialist feminist theory was applied in this study. According to Lorber (2010):

Socialist feminist theory is a branch of feminism that focuses upon both the public and private spheres of a woman's life and argues that liberation can only be achieved by working to end both the economic and cultural sources of women's oppression. This form of feminism is a two-pronged theory that broadens Marxist feminism's argument for the role of capitalism in the oppression of women and radical feminism's theory of the role of gender and the patriarchy.

This form of feminist theory was useful in this study since socialist feminists believe that the home is not just a place of consumption, but of production as well.

In this study, it challenged economic analyses that treat women as invisible, or that serve to reinforce situations oppressive to women. Women's work within the home, such as subsistence agriculture is productive both at a household level and also contributes to economic growth and development of a region or entire economy. In this regard, socialist feminist theory is applied as the study also investigate how the economic accounting system does not adequately measure unpaid labour predominantly performed by women, such as household agricultural production and other domestic services.

Socialist feminist theory in relation to gender and economic growth, therefore, presents a cogent argument that the reproduction, domestic labour of women and other activities, performed by women, form the foundation of economic survival; although, unremunerated and not included in South African economic accounting system. Briefly, it can be pointed out that socialist feminist theory is the type of feminist theory that calls attention to the importance of the so-called "non-market

activities” performed by women, such as subsistence agriculture and domestic work, to economic development. According to Nelson (1996):

This stands in sharp contrast to neoclassical economics where those forms of labour are unaccounted for as “non-economic” phenomena. Including such labour in economic accounts removes substantial gender bias because women disproportionately perform those tasks. When that labour is unaccounted for in economic models, much work done by women is ignored, literally devaluing their effort.

In addition, socialist feminist theory is also relevant in analyzing the omission of power relations. Power relations exist within the economy, and therefore, must be assessed in economic models in ways that they previously have been overlooked. For example, in neoclassical texts, the sale of labour is viewed as a mutually beneficial exchange that benefits both parties. No mention is made of the power inequities in the exchange that tend to give the employer power over the employee. These power relations often favor men and there is never any mention made of the particular difficulties that confront women in the workplace. Consequently, understanding power and patriarchy helps us to analyze how male-dominated economic institutions actually function and why women are often at a disadvantage in the workplace.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter therefore covered the important literatures to the study and further discussed a crucial theory to the study, which helped structure a response to how this study complements what has already been done in this area of research.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SOUTH AFRICA'S AGRICULTURAL POLICY FRAMEWORK AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

#### Introduction

After 1994, the Department of Agriculture in South Africa, working with other departments such as the Department of land affairs, introduced policies, accompanied by acts and programs, aimed at making agriculture in South Africa more robust. Most importantly, these policies also intended to eliminate racial and gender barriers, which existed in South African agriculture. Therefore, crucial to these policies was to promote a balance between farmers, for example, in terms of accessing agricultural resources such as land, modern technology (e.g. biotechnology), etc. However, researchers and professionals around the globe have critically analyzed the implementation of South African agricultural policies after 1994.

Although other professionals and academics' writings have supported the existence and effectiveness of these policies, most of the researches in this field show that the agricultural policy framework in South Africa still needs further attention. For example, critics argue that "there is an evident shift away from supporting the poor and more vulnerable farmers, especially female farmers, towards an overwhelming focus of the better resourced and more commercially-oriented black farmers" (Hall *et al.*, 2003) and (Hart, 2008-11). Therefore, this chapter discusses and analyzes the agricultural policy framework in South Africa, in response to the needs of women in agriculture. This therefore means that the discussion of existing policies will be used as an instrument of assessing or determining if women, through these

policies, are getting necessary assistance. Thus, this will assist in analyzing successes and failures of women in agriculture in Cabhane area.

### **Brief analysis of land reform policies or programs in the post 1994 South Africa**

The democratic government of South Africa proclaimed its commitment to adjusting past injustices, in relation to land, by means of new constitution. This led to the establishment of a developed Ministry for Agriculture and Land Affairs whose main task was to administer the Land Reform Program. This meant establishing programs to bring back land to previous occupants and enhance women's participation in agriculture by providing them with necessary and key agricultural resources such as erable land (FAO, 2002).

Therefore, the National Department of Agriculture adopted land reform program in its attempts to initiate or establish agricultural policies that would enable to assist small-scale and subsistence farmers, in which the majority of them were women, to develop. In this regard, the department of land affairs, working together with the department of agriculture, developed three sub-programs; which are, Land Restitution Program, whose objective was to restore land by means of compensation to the victims of forced removals, the Land Tenure Reform Program and the Land Redistribution Program (Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development, 2001).

## **The Land Tenure Reform and Land Redistribution Programmes**

Land Tenure Reform refers to a planned change in terms and conditions on which land is held, used and transacted (Adams, Cousins and Manona, 1999: 10). As is the case in Cabhane, land tenure insecurity is identified as a challenge facing small-scale women farmers in most rural areas in South Africa. Although they have occupied and lived in the area for a long period, landholding based on the authorizations to occupy system does not provide them with legally secure title equivalent to freehold title. According to Mutangadura (2005:03), the major problem facing women in owning and controlling land in South Africa includes customary law and legal clauses that do not allow joint ownership of land by married couples under the statutory tenure as well as the non-synchronization of the inheritance and marriage with the land law.

In addition, South Africa also has the Communal Land Rights Act, which it established in 2004, to combine customary land tenure practices and tilling by vesting ownership of land in a large group that lives under the authority of a Traditional Council. The Act allows individual community members to own secondary right to land. Committees administer land rights according to the administrative powers conferred on the committee by the rules of the community (Cousins, 2012).

While the Act specifically prohibits authorities from making decisions that discriminate against women, it nevertheless bestows authority on people and institutions that have historically held deeply conservative views regarding the place of women in controlling and holding property (Kachika, 2009). The main argument here is that, since women are already marginalized and discriminated against under customary law, strengthening traditional leaders and customary law

risks negative consequences on women, especially widows, divorcees and unmarried women. Because of such laws, women are discriminated against (FAO, 2005:06). The legal and policy environment in South Africa, therefore, shows that while land laws and policies are critical to the promotion of women's land rights, other relevant laws such as those related to inheritance, marriage, divorce, and domestic violence are equally critical.

Despite some gains that have been made, women's land rights in South Africa continue being violated because the state is not taking concrete action to review gender insensitive laws and policies, or effectively implement gender sensitive laws and policies, where they exist (Kachika, 2009). Some of these women are also not aware of some legislative laws that offer them opportunities to acquire land; or the procedures that they should follow in order to get land. Women in the village are not aware of the existence of laws in the country, which are meant to protect them against traditional laws and social norms. Furthermore, the majority of these women are old and some of them have not progressed to higher education, one of the places where they can be exposed to such laws and policies. The laws they are aware of are those, which are imposed on them by society and culture and those are laws they are obliged to abide by.

The presence of these statutory laws that affect women does not make sense if they are not known and utilized by those they are meant for, like the women of the village, hence, the implementation or rather introduction of such laws is necessary for the rural women. In addition, the Department of Land Affairs together with the Department of Agriculture established the following sub-programmes, namely, the Settlement Land Acquisition Grant, the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development, and the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme and



Women in Agriculture and Rural Development, in order to accomplish the constitutional mandate (OECD, 2006).

To redress the former imbalances of land ownership the Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs developed the Settlement Land Acquisition Grant in 1995, which was based on a flat grant per household, and was meant for the acquisition of land and start-up capital (Aliber, 2003: 6). The beneficiaries were, therefore, the unemployed historically disadvantaged individuals such as rural women farmers, in this context. However, Didiza (2006: 15) claims that the Department of Land Affairs lacked advisory support and monitoring due to staff shortages and lack of skills, and the grant was insufficient. Therefore, due to these factors, the program did not meet its objectives.

In June 1999, a minister called for the far-reaching of Settlement Land Acquisition Grant, and this led to the establishment of the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development, which was inaugurated August 2001, and was built by making adjustments on the previous existing grant (Ministry of Agriculture, 2001). As a result, Land Redistribution for Agriculture and Development was designed to provide grants to black South African citizens to access land specifically for agricultural purposes. Therefore, one of the main objectives of this program is to expand opportunities for women and young people who stay in rural areas, and grant them land for agriculture purposes. According to Jacobs (2005:07), the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) Program does little to address needs of poverty reduction, job creation and household food security.

Furthermore, the previous use of the household as the primary unit of redistribution was criticized as reinforcing existing biases against women's independent rights to land. However, the strategic objectives of the sub-program included contributing to

the redistribution of the country's agricultural land over 15 years (Mapadimeng, 2003), improving nutrition and incomes of the rural poor who want to farm on any scale, decongesting over-crowded former homeland areas, and expanding opportunities for rural women and young people in rural areas. It is important to note that the implementation of Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development requires that women be placed in an ill-defined group of the disabled, youth, labor tenants and farm workers. There is, however, no official target set for women's participation, no budget reserves stated and no measures in place to ensure that this group participates and benefits from Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development grants (Jacobs, Lahiff and Hall, 2003).

However, World Bank (2007: 109-110) has a different view. It maintains that "land redistribution reforms and land titling and registration programs have, in many cases, either maintained the status quo or weakened women's rights in that when women are given the right to access land, they frequently have less secure tenure rights". It should be noted that one of the challenges faced by small-scale women farmers is a shortage of arable land. The Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs' mandate is to expropriate land from where it is in high concentration to the landless people of South Africa. The Land Reform program was established to address this problem amongst others.

Alongside Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development is the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program, which is the core program within the department of agriculture, designed to complement Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development by providing support to beneficiaries (DOA, 2005). The main priority areas for Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programs include information and knowledge, business development, etc. Like the other above-mentioned programs, the targeted groups for Comprehensive Agricultural Support

Program are the hungry and vulnerable, subsistence and household food producers, farmers, and agricultural macro-system within the consumer environment (Didiza, 2006: 18). However, the CASP model has other hindrances, and amongst others are, its difficulty/ and inability to implement urgent priorities in the communal areas and malfunctioning of most projects due to socio-economic factors such as poor infrastructure or resources. The majority of beneficiaries are also illiterate, and it is difficult for the department to hire service providers for the land reform beneficiaries due to high expenses.

In addition to the above mentioned programs, a national initiative called ‘Women in Agriculture and Rural Development’ was introduced. This is a national initiative from the Department of Agriculture in attempting to recognize the historic role of women in agricultural development and to bring them to the mainstream of economic activities and agrarian reforms. According to Xingwana (2007), “It is an effort to liberate women in rural areas from the shackles of patriarchy and to make a reality the one third quota for women in all land reform programs”.

Women in Agriculture and Rural Development was, therefore, established out of a realization that rural women are not organized and this would be problematic for their own development. The main objective of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development is to create a platform where rural women can share ideas regarding issues of land ownership, access to land and financial resources, participation in agricultural development and generally to empower women to participate on an equal footing with their male counterparts (Sibanda, 2001).

Amongst other objectives, it was aimed at enhancing participation of women in agriculture, organizing rural communities in groups or cooperatives to enjoy

associated benefits, establishing practical focused sustainable projects and programmes that improve the quality of life of rural communities.

### **Policies related to agricultural research, extension, education and training**

In terms of the Constitution, agriculture is a provincial competency, to be carried out within the framework of national policies set by the National Department of Agriculture (Vink and Van Rooyen, 2009). Amongst other things, the provision of information and training, as well as farmer support services are, therefore, one of the salient functions of the departments of agriculture.

In this regard, the most significant policy shift was to focus on developing subsistence or small-scale agriculture, dominated by black rural farmers, by introducing programmes such as agricultural research, extension, education and training (AET) systems. As a result, “the critical policy shift in AET provisioning was the need to move from the almost exclusive focus on commercial agriculture to a more rural development and poverty eradication orientation” (South Africa’s Department of Agriculture evaluation paper, 2008). Therefore, policies in relation to agricultural education and training were then introduced to address the destructive impact and results of dualistic (i.e. commercial agriculture, which is dominated by white/ or resourceful farmers; and subsistence/ small-scale agriculture which is mainly dominated by black female farmers) agriculture.

However, findings from the research prepared by the South African National Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the National Strategy Formulation Team and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2003) found that:

Previously disadvantaged communities and in particular women and the disabled continue to have poor access to quality agricultural education and training. This is because of various barriers, including affordability, admission requirements, physical distance from training centres, literacy and numeracy, language of instruction and scant resources available to those charged with the responsibility of providing agricultural education and training to these communities.

This clearly indicates that although South African policy framework regarding agricultural research, extension, education and training has been introduced and encouraged, a lot still need to be done as the majority of people, primarily rural and uneducated women and the disabled still experience difficulties in accessing education and training.

## **Conclusion**

Women are engaged in agriculture in the Cabhane area in Port Shepstone and other rural areas of South Africa. Evidence shows that these women are also enthusiastic to enhance their agricultural skills and grow to big commercial farmers, but they are trapped by different challenges. This chapter began with an overview of South Africa's policy framework in relation to women involvement in agriculture. Policy fragment which was discussed above consisted of different policies, which are useful in addressing any of these challenges. Policies, frameworks and acts that came after 1994 South African up until now were taken into account. These policies or frameworks showed that the Post-1994 South African government made concerted efforts to develop or enhance women's participation in agriculture

stronger, although commentators or critics still believe that a lot still need to be done in making South Africa's agricultural sector stronger, robust and more gender-balanced. For example, in Cabhane rural area, the majority of women still face challenges in terms of accessing important agricultural facilities (Results from the study).

In order for new technologies to work, farmers need access not only to land, but also to education, technologies that suit their farming needs and appropriate agricultural extension support. Gender dynamics inherent in agricultural production need to be taken into account if women farmers are not to continue being marginalized members of the rural development community. Lastly, the information presented above was also utilized to assess the failure and success of women in Cabhane who are engaged in agricultural activities.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **EXTENT OF WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN AGRICULTURE IN CABHANE**

#### **Introduction**

Researchers and policy makers have expressed their views on the manner in which rural women are involved in economic growth and development, through their participation in agriculture. Evidence from Southern African history research shows that from centuries ago, women have been important players in agriculture through their homestead agricultural-based production. For example, the majority of South African rural women are actively involved in crop production in the field. Most importantly, women also play a crucial role in agricultural decision-making, though they still face some hindrances, mainly in enhancing or improving their agricultural production. This chapter therefore focuses on the extent in which Cabhane women are involved in agriculture and rural economic growth and development.

#### **Gender analysis in agricultural and rural economic growth and development**

Research evidence from the current study shows that rural women increasingly manage agriculture in Cabhane area in the absence of men for paid employment in urban areas. During in-depth interviews, almost all 30 participants involved in agriculture pointed out that agriculture food production is primarily a women's work in an area. For example; Mrs Sibiya, Ms. Hlophe and Mrs Dlamini, on behalf of three agricultural co-operatives in an area, mentioned that:

We have been playing (and still play) a crucial role as food producers and managers. We are women-led organizations, and responsible for a number of agricultural activities, including, post-harvest activities such as food storage processing, preparation, preservation and marketing. Even those who have not entered commercial agriculture, play a tremendous role in agricultural production as they perform wide range of agricultural and other domestic activities carried in the household, such as plant preparation, weeding, hoeing, planting, fertilizer application, harvesting, transportation to market centres and marketing of the produce<sup>1</sup>.

This, therefore, highlight the involvement of women in agriculture, rural economic growth and development. Mrs Sibongile Dlamini further mentioned that “in times past women in agriculture in an area were largely considered as farmers’ wives and their contribution to the sector were to a considerable extent neglected. But we are now recognized as more than just wives of farmers but as farmers and food producers’’<sup>2</sup>.

For this reason, women’s roles in rural communities, such as Cabhane, should be recognized, their activities and the division of labour, as well as access to, control and distribution of the available resources. This is crucial as women’s contribution to agriculture reflect the essential and positive impact to economic growth and development in their capacity as farm owners, farm partners, co-operatives and farm labourers. They have an important contribution to economic growth and development through their agricultural and household production and this role should be recognized.

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<sup>1</sup> During open-ended, focus group interviews organized by a researcher with women agricultural co-operatives, the above-mentioned participants voiced out the important role they play in agriculture and development. They also unequivocally mentioned that, the majority of women in the area are pillars of agriculture, although the majority of them are subsistence agricultural producers. These focus group interviews were organized in Sibongimfundo High School, in one of valleys of Cabhane.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs Sibongile Dlamini’s further elucidated during in-depth interview.



Again, the majority of women in the study averred that women's contribution to the production of fruits and vegetables in the homestead is, however, often underrated even though homestead production contributes a substantial share to total family incomes and the economic development of an area as a whole. For example, Gog' Mtshali, a producer of banana, carrots and cabbage added that women's agricultural work in the homestead is invisible. According to her, "the extent of our (women) participation in agricultural activities depend on factors such as the level of adoption of improved cultivation practices by the family and the presence of an institutional mechanism through which we can group together and get access to technical information, credit and good quality seeds"<sup>3</sup>.

Therefore, this proves that women, who are from villages with a low rate of adoption of improved cultivation practices are less involved, compared to women from land owning classes living in areas with better rate of adoption of the improved cultivation practices. Furthermore, women organized by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or under government programs are more interested in intensifying homestead production than women not organized in

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<sup>3</sup> Gog' Mtshali's response on the question which looked for factors that hinder their participation, as women in an area. Her response was therefore based on what she has already experienced as a subsistence producer, and as a woman living with other women in an area.

groups.



**Figure 3.1:** Maize farmer: Cabhane women with the production of maize after harvest. She has already sold some of her produce, and used some for subsistence consumption. She is now left with seed for future farming.

In addition to crop production, research evidence showed that women's roles as livestock owners, keepers and managers are also pronounced. Mrs Nokulunga Khawula, for instance, mentioned that:

Although I do not involve myself in any of agricultural activity and do not own or manage livestock due to time constraints, women's roles in these activities in an area is more pronounced, even in the ownership of cattle, goats and chickens. The majority of women who own and manage livestock in Cabhane are those who from

female-headed households, where their husbands have deceased or migrated for paid employment in other commercial farmers or in cities nearer Cabhane such as Hibberdene and Port Shepstone. These women also play major roles in managing livestock, other than managing it, and even to those male-headed households, women assist in managing or taking care of livestock<sup>4</sup>.

Furthermore, evidence also showed that Cabhane women own livestock, in the homestead, to supplement their families' diets and to earn extra incomes. For example, Gog' Mtshali added that "as a head of small landholder household, I earn income by raising livestock; milking cows and caring for the young stock and any sick animals, and I am more likely to spend it for food in the household"<sup>5</sup>.

The feminization of agriculture has, therefore, seen women also owning and managing livestock, which was previously a men and boys' business. In addition, livestock play an important role in supporting women and improving their financial situations, and other women share responsibility with men and children. In doing this, women sacrifice their time in their households. According to Mrs. Sibiya narrated:

I took over in the business of cropping and livestock in 1970, when my husband and my only two sons, who were very young at that time, migrated for paid employment. My husband went to Gauteng for a very long time, in searching for opportunities in mines, and my sons at a very early age went to Sezela, in local sugarcane plantations. Therefore, like most of women in an area, I have a long history of owning and managing indigenous cattle and goats, and I have a strong influence in the production of eggs and milk for home

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<sup>4</sup> Researcher also searched for views of those women who are not involving themselves in agricultural activities. Like Mrs Khawula, all of them mentioned that although they do not participate in agriculture due to different reasons (of which the majority of them mentioned the issue of time), they appreciate the job which is done by their women fellows.

<sup>5</sup> Gog' Mtshali, during an interview also highlighted the importance of livestock in the homestead.

consumption. I have control over marketing and income from these products<sup>6</sup>.

For this reason, small-scale livestock and dairy projects have been popular investment for development projects aiming to improve rural women in Cabhane. However, women, particularly in female-headed households, further mentioned a number of ramifications in agriculture. For instance, Mrs. Ngcobo, like other participants, averred that:

Although the majority of us are successful as male-headed households in generating income from animals, we tend to own smaller numbers of animals, because of labour constraints. Additionally, ownership of livestock is particularly attractive to us, though we are living in a society where access to land is restricted to men. However, we are playing a prominent role in meeting the needs of our rural consumers through small-scale farming systems. This, therefore, helps in lessening hunger and poverty, which usually conquer our community members; and promote food security and poverty alleviation, which are important components of economic development<sup>7</sup>.

Conclusively, women's involvement and their contribution in agricultural development, through participation in crop cultivation and livestock ownership and/ management has often been underestimated or ignored, or rarely considered "economically important" in a rural economy. This means that agricultural related activities, which are not regarded as commercial in nature, such as livestock management and fertilizer application in fruits and vegetable gardens, are sometimes not considered as contributing to economic growth and development. Therefore, hindrances such as access to land; training, technological inputs and extension services; labour and time constraints are

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<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Sibiya, is a 75 year old granny (as she was free to divulge her age), who can still plough and look after her cattle, goats and chickens. According to her, she still survive with farming and/ old-age pension.

<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Ngcobo shared similar view with other participants that women, either in female-headed or male-headed households, play a prominent role in livestock production.

important to look when dealing with the manner in which women are involved in agricultural production.

### **Women's access to land**

Land has many ramifications for women farmers. In other words, from gender analysis, land has demonstrated to be another challenge, affecting women in rural areas. As Ms. Mkhize, a young farmer and political activist in an area argued, “women in Malukhakha valley in Cabhane account for about three out of four agricultural labourers and nine out of ten food-producing labourers, yet they own only a fraction of land”<sup>8</sup>. This, therefore, proves that in Cabhane, land is still not traditionally a female asset. Friedman (1994), also supported the view with his previous study as he added that women under communal tenure system in rural South Africa “were not able to have independent rights to land and were only eligible for allocation through men, either husbands or sons.

According to Ms. Nokubonga Dlodlu:

What I have observed and experienced is that, if we are unable to produce for the markets, we are not legally recognized as producers in our own rights, and find it difficult to gain membership of food organizations, without land. In most cases, law has, therefore, a major contribution to women's unequal access to land. Although legal protection is there in a democratic South Africa, it only exists theoretically, especially in rural areas. Additionally, when access to land is also hampered by cultural and economic constraints, our participation in economic activity is impaired and thus reduces our own efforts at improving ourselves economically and socially. The

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<sup>8</sup> Ms. Mkhize is also a resident of Cabhane, residing in Malukhakha valley in Ward 15. She is also one of the promising young farmers, although she still own small-scale banana farm.

majority of us end up as farm labourers or become workers on our husbands' land, and therefore economically dependent on them<sup>9</sup>.

In general, the resource tenure systems in place are complex and do not work to women's advantage. Furthermore, women often secure indirect rights to land, i.e. use it, through their husbands and wider family relationships. As pointed out above, women's actual access to land is negotiated within each family, and is a product of existing power relations in which women have to least bargaining power.

### **Women's access to training, technological inputs and extension services**

The majority of women in many rural communities, such as Cabhane, also lack business and marketing skills that may allow them to put together viable business proposals. Women have less access to formal channels that provide comprehensive skills and training because they are mostly unaware of the existence of such programmes and even when they are aware, their time constraints may limit their access to such programmes. Moreover, some of them lack the needed basic educational qualification for such skills and training and therefore becomes difficult for them to benefit from such programmes, where they exist. The following are women' voices in relation to their access to necessary training, technological inputs and extension services.

According to Mrs. Sokhela, who has been farming and utilizing traditional ways of farming for more than twenty-five years:

Like the majority of women in an area, although I still farm and participate heavily in agriculture, my production is very low as I

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<sup>9</sup> Ms. Dlodlu is also amongst rural women of Cabhane who voiced out her feelings about land in relation to challenges they face in agricultural production, during in-depth interviews.

still apply a very old-fashioned methods of farming. Although we might look old and residing in rural areas, we need education and training in agriculture. Different government organizations, such as the Municipality and Department of Agriculture in Umzumbe, have pledged for several times to provide us with agricultural education and training, nothing has been achieved since democratic government<sup>10</sup>.

Although women in Cabhane are enthusiastic to participate in commercial agriculture, they are constrained by their educational background, which disallow them to learn new forms of farming such as biotechnology. This means women's access to training and re-orientation, which involves education, is an important tool, and can enhance their economic activities, such as crop cultivation. Therefore, it is paramount that efforts be enhanced by all stakeholders, government agencies, and civil society groups to promote training for women at all levels and in all spheres of endeavor.

Mr. Sikhosana, on behalf of the Umzumbe Department of Agriculture admitted that women need thorough training in agriculture in order to increase their production. As he argued:

Women are potential producers of the homestead agricultural products and participate immensely in homestead production. However, due to lack of knowledge and utilization of proper technology and manageable practice, the production remains below the accepted level; and this is due to the lack of communication and understanding between them and agents. Therefore, it is crucial need to know the gap between existing beliefs and performances of our rural women regarding homestead, agricultural activities. In addition, it is still a challenge to reach all these women, as some of

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<sup>10</sup> According Mrs. Sokhela, agricultural education is also important to them, though people might think that it is not suitable for them since they look so old and utilise old traditional methods of farming.

them are not interested in gatherings where we usually discuss development issues<sup>11</sup>.

On the other hand, Mrs. Ngongo responded differently. As she pointed out, “we are tired of empty promises. These so-called governmental agencies have been lying to, and we have been waiting, but nothing has changed. All we experience all useless speeches, which they use for political reasons”<sup>12</sup>.

This, therefore, means that despite women central role in agriculture, especially in food production, there is serious under-investment in their output and thus they continue to use hand-held farm tools, which tend to make their work laborious and time-consuming. This also limits their productive capacity and their ability to cultivate large tracts of land.

### **Women’s access to labour**

Access to labour also counts as an important challenge in agriculture in many women farmers in rural areas, with no exception of Cabhane. Whether their business in agriculture, industry or services, women need extra labour beside their own, to carry out effectively their economic activities.

Based on her experience, Mrs. Nzama unequivocally mentioned that access to labour has limit her to progress into large commercial farming. As she pointed out, “the immediate supply of labour came from my husband and children. Yet, there have been shortfalls recently in family labour because of migration of older sons and daughters into urban areas. This has left me with no choice, but

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<sup>11</sup> As the researcher also wanted to the department’s view, Mr. Sikhosana was available as a respondent, on behalf of the department of agriculture.

<sup>12</sup> Mrs Ngongo blamed government agencies, such as the municipal representatives for feeding them empty promises.



increasingly resort hired labour, which has become expensive as a result of the supply shortages”<sup>13</sup>.

For this problem, most rural women farmers join mutual labour supply associations where the group work together to help clear crop and harvest each member’s farm. Women, if they are not engaged in this form of togetherness, will have to save money for hiring, and this could eventually put them to financial constraints.

### **Women’s time constraints**

Women’s time constraints phenomenon is in no way limited to the African woman. Women generally have longer hours of labour and, therefore, far less hours for leisure than men do in their households. However, evidence shows that although women work longer hours of work, they receive much small incomes than their male counterparts probably because women work are not specialized and may need no skill training or because of it is traditionally considered as part of women’s chores and thus, it is not considered as a paid work.

Mahlengi Mngoma, on one hand supports the view that women are constrained by time constraints. According to her, “in addition to agricultural work, I also perform other domestic activities, which are crucial to the homestead, like looking after children, cleaning the house, cooking, washing, etc. This, therefore, limit full participation in agriculture”<sup>14</sup>. Other than education, evidence therefore shows that women’s full participation in economic activities

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<sup>13</sup> This was Mrs. Nzama’s responses to the issue of labour.

<sup>14</sup> Ms. Mngoma argued that Cabhane women are faced with time constraints.

are impeded by cultural and legal constraints, which limit women's participation by women's relative lack of time and mobility due to their workloads and multiple roles. In addition, women often devote more time and their participation is notably higher in food storage and processing than men are. As a result, they carry out these tasks in addition to their normal household activities.

## **Conclusion**

Most female farmers in rural Cabhane operate at the subsistence, smallholder level in an extensive agricultural system; hence in their hands lie the country's food security and agricultural development. Particularly striking, however, is the fact that Cabhane women, more than their male counterparts, take the lead in agricultural activities, contributing more to labour force. It is ironical that their contributions to agriculture and rural development are seldom noticed. For example, their contribution to food production is not converted into economic value.

Furthermore, women have either no or minimal part in the decision-making process regarding agricultural development. Gender inequality is therefore dominant in the sector and this constitutes a bottleneck to development, calling for a review of government policies on agriculture to all the elements that place rural women farmers at a disadvantage. Other programs that promote the integration of women in development also need to be employed. For example, the women-in-agriculture programmes therefore, need to be implemented or practiced in order to enhance women participation in agriculture and economic growth or development, as a whole.

Therefore, research evidence showed that rural women in Cabhane, still need to be empowered, and these women should be given a voice and effectively championed. In essence, rural women farmers deserve better recognition and greater appreciation of their tangible contributions to agriculture and rural development and food security. Other themes (e.g. constraints that women face in participating to agriculture and development, such as social capital and access to labour) that relates to women and their engagement in agricultural activities were also reviewed in this chapter.

## CHAPTER SIX

### **SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN AGRICULTURE IN PORT SHEPSTONE (CABHANE)**

#### **Introduction**

Women have been playing (and still play) a pivotal role in agriculture and rural economic growth and development in Cabhane. Through agriculture, women in Cabhane and other parts of South Africa feed their families and other community members. As a result, their contribution has been crucial and impact significantly on socio-economic changes in the area. It should be noted that many rural communities in South Africa and other developing countries are badly affected by high rates of unemployment, resulting in poor standards of living and food insecurity. Evidence from several studies related to women's contribution to economic development and growth have therefore shown that women utilize their farming and/ agricultural strength and skills to combat hunger and starvation. As a result, their agricultural work promotes social and economic enhancement.

This chapter analyses the socio-economic impact of women involvement in agriculture, in Cabhane. The chapter argues that women's involvement in agricultural production has a positive effect on socio-economic conditions in the area. Changes begin at a household level, where women, through agriculture, are able to cater for their families. Even FAO and the World Bank (2009) express the view that rural women have been feeding their families and communities for years through subsistence agriculture. Some of them are commercial farmers, producing and selling large quantities of agricultural commodities. However, the majority of women in Cabhane are small-scale subsistence farmers who sell their produce near or in local towns such as Port Shepstone, Umzinto and Hibberdene.

## **The effect of women involvement in agriculture in Port Shepstone (Cabhane area)**

Rural women's participation in the development process has been the focus of many organizations and studies in recent years. According to UNIFEM (2000), each country should promote women's economic independence. Such promotion should include the creation of employment, improve access to resources and credit, the eradication of persistent and increasing burden of poverty, improvement in malnutrition, poor health and illiteracy among women. Although such declarations have been able to increase awareness and understanding problems facing women and their needs, they have not yet resulted in significant development priorities for rural women. As it was argued in chapter four, rural women (specifically in Cabhane) are constrained by unequal access to productive resources and services. The limitations women face in turn impose huge socio-economic and environmental costs on society as a whole and rural economic development in particular, including lags in agricultural productivity.

Women are however responsible for half of all of the world's food production (USAID, 2005). Women also continue to bear most of the responsibilities at home, from caring for children to providing meals. Hence, the need for development intervention focused on women is necessarily required. The development or improvement of women has a positive effect on the household and other dependents. This then leads to community development, which also has a positive ripple effect on the development of a region or country as well.

Therefore, since women play crucial roles in both subsistence and market food production in Africa, there are good reasons to focus on, and to emphasize their involvement in development. Not only are women the majority in Africa, but they

are responsible for more than 50% of all productive activities, even in those household where men are present (Burkey, 1993).

In Cabhane, the involvement of women in agriculture and other farming activities such as herding livestock has been found to have a positive impact on their incomes. For example, women who participate in agricultural businesses or projects earn fruitful incomes on a regular basis compared to non-participants. According to Mrs Nzuza (an old female citizen and a member of agricultural co-operative in an area):

Through agriculture, we are able to sell some of our produce in local markets. Again, we do not have to buy food because we already have produced ours. We normally sell what is left (produce) to those who do not engage themselves in agricultural production. Some of us have managed to extend their farms, and hired some of the unemployed community members to work on farms; and this, at least create employment to those who needed it, and at least they get something rather than getting nothing. Again, since we do not have (enough) primary agricultural inputs, we use some of our incomes earned from trading our produce to purchase required and useful agricultural materials<sup>15</sup>.

Women, through agriculture in Cabhane, do not only benefit or develop themselves and their families, but also contribute to a social and economic change of an area. Amongst other participants in the study, Nomusa Khoza has created jobs opportunity by employing 5 residents, who grow chillies in her farm, which are dried for seasoning. According to M.Z. Luthuli, a Ward councilor in an area, “Ms. Khoza’s business is committed to the development of an area by providing employment, business and farming skills”. Several agriculture projects/ and programs have been initiated by women in an area, and as it has been pointed out, these projects and agri-businesses are the ones which have a huge impact

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<sup>15</sup> These words were from Mrs Nzuza (2015) during interviews. She is one of the old female citizen, and a farmer who is also involved in one of agricultural co-operatives in Cabhane area.

in economic growth and development of an area. Mrs. Ngcobo, with other group of women in Cabhane started a livestock business in 2013, where members had to contribute R 50 every month, and later grouped themselves to become co-operative. They enhanced their business by also entering a banana business, which employed 20 people to work in fields. According to Mrs. Skhakhane, one of the members of co-operative and partner in a business, “we are also working together with other organizations and projects such as Thanda”. Thanda is a non-governmental organization, which assist those who do not have enough food to eat. “So, we sell bananas and other veggies to them which they use to support the poorer”.

### **Examples of women investment in rural economy of Cabhane**

Out of 90 women interviewed in the study (of 60 of them were from female-headed households and 30 women from male-headed households), 75 women were involved in agricultural production. Additionally, another group of women, consisting of 15 members, were involved in commercial farming, as a co-operative known as Zenzele farming co-operative. 20 women estimated that in the last year’s harvest, they sold 50 sacks (20 kg) of maize, altogether, of which they made a profit of R6000; whereas 8 women sold 20 sacks and made a profit of R2400 (20 sacks of maize \*R120); 4 women sold 15 sacks at a profit of R1800; 2 women made R1200 with 10 sacks and 1 woman mentioned that in the last year’s harvest an estimated profit of R960 with 8 sacks of maize was made. N.B: (market prize of 20 kg maize in an area or local markets is R120).

This, therefore, implies that although these women’s produces could not make much profit like the commercial farmers, they contribute immensely on households and rural economies. Some women also mentioned that they have benefited from a number of crops, such as ‘amadumbe’. As they pointed out, 20 kg sack of

amadumbe is usually sold for R150 in an area, and 50 women interviewed showed that they sold more than 200 sacks, altogether, which makes an income of more than R30 000. Banana is also a profitable crop, according some participants in the study. For example, a researcher found out 35 women interviewed and involved in banana produce sold 233 sacks and gained an amount of money estimated to R23 300.

As hinted above, Zenzele co-operative is the only commercial farm. Women of Zenzele co-operative usually sell their production in combos, and supply for local markets, schools, and other community related functions. Due to the uncertainty of data, only the produce of mealies, madumbes and bananas were included in this section, and this co-operative sells these crops in different sizes. It was difficult to make estimations, as sales are not always the same. However, some members of the co-operation mentioned that they usually sell something close to 150 weekly if they have enough supply, and the cash prize for their combos ranges from R250 to R300. They therefore estimated that they make an amount of income close 40000, weekly.

In poultry business, it was estimated that plus or minus R5000 was made monthly. Women also pointed out that they could make more profit if they had more resources required for the business. When asking women about estimated investment on food, housing and other family articles, a lot of them mentioned that they also invest their incomes on food which is not huge amount of money because they sell after they have enough for their families' consumption. Again, others mentioned that they invest their incomes on agricultural inputs since they lack sponsors. For example, Zenzele co-operative estimated an amount more than R40 000 for water irrigations, seeds and biotechnology.



Estimated amount invested in job creation: 20 workers employed in banana plantation of Zenzele co-operation; and 30 employed in maize production, 20 in madumbe and 10 people in poultry business. In banana produce, workers earn R500 each, after two weeks and R550 in poultry business.

During the focus groups interview, Mrs. Hlongwa, another co-operative member, mentioned that:

The co-operative combined two passions, i.e. empowering women and farming. We started the project on a hectare of land as a cooperative of eight members. Just three years later the farm produces tons of bananas, beans, spinach and tomatoes, which is sold to local markets and school feeding schemes around Cabhane and other Thulini areas nearer study area such as Velumemeze, Malukhakha, and Mabhikili. Some of the produce is donated to hospices. The produce is healthy and environmentally sound because it is grown without the aid of chemicals, which can strip the soil of its nutrients. Instead, the farmers use fertilizers that are found naturally, such as chicken manure. This forms part of the co-operative's commitment to maintaining agricultural systems that are similar to those found in natural ecosystems. We also aim to supply retailers that sell organic produce, such as Woolworths. Our mission is to become commercial farmers; create more job opportunities because there are many jobless people, not only in Thulini areas, but also other rural areas in Port Shepstone and train women and young people to become food producers<sup>16</sup>.

Therefore, these women have had a huge impact not only to the lives of the workers who have worked for them, but also on the community as a whole. By women earning from agricultural production, they are able to create employment for other women and other unemployed residents, hence, enabling them uplift and enhance their socio-economic standards of living. In addition, the increased incomes enable women acquire assets such as farming inputs (e.g. irrigation pumps, livestock, etc.).

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<sup>16</sup> During focus group interviews, Mrs. Hlongwa was more vocal about the usefulness of co-operatives in developing and emerging entrepreneurs.

All the above-mentioned significances empower women by giving them a chance to be decision-makers since they bring money to the households, thus, encouraging economic growth and development in an area. However, findings showed that participants did not share similar opinions regarding decision-making, regarding the control over and use of income.

### **Gender differences, decision-making and control over and use of income**

Findings of the study indicate that rural Cabhane, as many other rural areas in South Africa, has a degree of asymmetry between women's decision-making on the use of the income generated from agriculture. This is most noticeable in agriculture, which is the main source of income for the majority of households. There are what are considered to be traditional 'men's' crops such sugarcane and 'women's' crops such as fruits and vegetables. For example, Ms. Bhengu, another female citizen who reside in Velumemeze (other part of Cabhane) also mentioned that "women control items intended primarily for home consumption, particularly those produced or cared for on their own plots, such as vegetables, pigs and chickens. If they sell some of these items to generate cash, they can decide what to do with that cash"<sup>17</sup>.

Female co-operative leaders, such as Mrs.Nzuza, Mrs. Ngcobo, and other women consulted for the study agreed that:

Women tend to spend most of their income on both basic household and agricultural needs. By contrast, men tend to retain more of the income they control for their personal use. When women control additional income, they spend more of it than men do on household

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<sup>17</sup>Ms Bhengu is an old unmarried woman who also reside in Cabhane, specifically in Velumemeze. These are her words which were recorded during face-to-face interviews. Other women also provided similar responses as hers.

essentials, such as food, health, clothing and education for their children and primary agricultural inputs<sup>18</sup>.

This has positive implications for immediate well-being, long-run human capital formation and economic growth through improved health, nutrition and education outcomes. Other participants in the study, such as Mrs. Ngcobo, who is a female Chief Councillor and an agricultural co-operative member, added that other women's incomes are mainly invested in farm inputs (such as seed, tools, and hired labour), animals, etc<sup>19</sup>.

The general nature of women's control over and use of income is fairly well recognized by development projects. What is less well understood or taken into account, is how such control can change, and in fact be changed by the project itself. This can occur, for instance, when the project results in a major increase in profitability of in crop production.

In many African societies, the power to make decisions is traditionally vested in the hands of men. Although women and men have equal rights and opportunities constitutionally, women are under-represented in the decision-making process, specifically, in the household. It was also revealed that decision-making at household level continues to be male dominated in many economic activities, even those in which women contribute most of the labour. Some women expressed the desire for by-laws that would prevent men from risking household food security by selling food reserves. However, in other parts of Cabhane, such as in Mabhikili, women who participated in the study mentioned that the decision-making powers

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<sup>18</sup> When an interviewer, during a co-operative meeting (which consisted of both men and women) ask questions related to the usage of income derived from agriculture, they agreed that women invest more on basics and agricultural needs.

<sup>19</sup> Mrs Ngcobo (2015), mentioned this during focus group interviews which were not organized by an interviewer. These focus group interviews happened as there was a meeting held in Velumemeze primary school, between a councillor and farmers (of which the majority of them were women. Therefore, questions were posed and discussed and answers were later addressed by Mrs Ngcobo on behalf of them.

were vested more in the hands of women<sup>20</sup>, who were responsible for deciding on the use of farm produce. Discussions revealed that men and women decided together if proceeds from the farms should be sold, while the money from the sale of the proceeds was counted as family property.

During focus groups, women of Zenzele Community Project, of which some of them are from men-headed households, reported that for decisions about the use of income from major cash crops, major agricultural and household expenditures, and major asset sales, their participation is often nominal or consultative, rather than equal. Within households, men are more likely to control the income regardless of whether it was earned by men or women. And while it is more straightforward to measure amount or proportion of income earned by men, women and jointly by household members, the measurement of who controls that income is much more complex. As expected, women's control of income, assets, and expenditures is higher in female-headed households than in male-headed households. However, other women expressed doubts about their ability to make good decisions especially decisions related to marketing.

Women therefore had provided different experiences in this subject. Others had a full control of their resources, regardless of whether they reside in a male-headed households or not, and others depends on their husbands for decisions. For example, Mrs Ngcobo, a participant, female farmer and a traditional councillor of Ward 4, mentioned that she does not have to consult her husband all the time if she wants to spend income she made from her farm or any decision related to agriculture or farming. But she also mentioned that that does not make her a head

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<sup>20</sup> N.B: Out of 15 women selected and interviewed in Mabhikili, which is other section of Cabhane, only two women, of which one of them called herself "gog' Sibbo", mentioned that decision-making powers were vested on their husbands.

of the family; but she only decided with income she earned from her farm (as she is one of those women who live under male-headed households, but own farm).

As she noted:

It gives me strength to own and decide how and what to farm and sell from my farm. However, that does not make me a dictator in my household, because as an African woman I respect my husband; he is still important head of the family. Although I am able to decide what best for my farm, I still consult and ask advice from him where it is required<sup>21</sup>.

Additionally, increasing incomes in the hands of poor women through agriculture is associated with improvement of women's health and other essentials, as well as their families and community as a whole. Consequently, women's involvement in agriculture in Cabhane considerably improved the nutrition of their families and local residents in an area (see a picture below).



**Figure 5.1:** These are two different pictures with different crop productions (spinach and cabbages). These pictures consist of women that were interviewed in the study. They are also from an organization, called 'Zimele Developing Community Self-Reliance project' interviews some of them mentioned that: "they are very happy and excited about their produce because they

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<sup>21</sup> Mrs. Ngcobo responded that although she has a major share in agricultural production at home, she still respects her husband's role in the household.

will be able to feed their families, and overcome food insecurity and also create employment because many community members are rooted in poverty.

In most African countries, household and community food security is primarily the responsibility of women. Therefore, raising the productivity of women in agriculture, absolutely and relatively to their potential, is bound to contribute to better family nutrition, especially for women's children, in addition to increasing (household) income (World Bank, 2004).

The testimony of the women who were interviewed also indicated that some of the income generated from agriculture was invested in children's education. However, this does not include higher contribution to education. For instance, this only include amount for school fees, which is much lower in a rural area like Cabhane; contribution to purchase school stationery and/ uniforms (Gog' Mpungose is an example of old woman participant, who mentioned the importance of farming as it subsidizes her especially in taking care of her grand-children primary education). This means that the increase in incomes as a result of women involvement in agriculture and/ other farming activities also has had a positive impact on their children's education, although not at a tertiary level as they do not (or have not yet made) make huge profits on agriculture.

**Table 5.1**

**Impact of income on education**

Income invested on children's education on a household level:	
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School uniforms	Between R100 to R300
Stationeries (including library fees, if necessary)	Between R200-R300
School fees	Between R100 to R500
Bus fare	Between R300 to R600 monthly
Income invested on children's education on a community level:	
Women also spend their incomes on other agricultural projects in schools within the community, e.g. garden plots projects.	Depending on how they embark the project
Estimated total	

Thus, the increase in agricultural production in an area, as a result of women involvement in agriculture, means the enhancement in socio-economic standard of

living of an area. The majority of women in Port Shepstone, particularly, in Cabhane rural area, therefore, have improved their social and economic interaction due to their increased income, and this has enabled them succeed in affording costs of some of their needs.

Amongst other things, their participation in agriculture also promotes social capital or social cohesion. Through agriculture, women of rural Cabhane are able to unite and develop strategies that are useful in overcoming challenges or hindrances of farming activities (Maragelo, 2008); and these strategies include: the sharing of information, labour provision, as well as the development of social ties among women farmers and the community as a whole. As it was pointed out, rural women farmers prefer to work in groups with the same aim of fulfilling the livelihoods of their families and of communities at large.



**Figure 5.2:** A small group of Cabhane women- these women usually work together as a unit (promotion of social capital) to enhance their farming skills. Far wright are two happy women standing and looking at their crop production.

Therefore, during difficult periods, women farmers work in (social) groups in the provision of labour for farming activities such as weeding and harvesting. According to Ongwen and Wright (2007) and Maragelo (2008), it is also through these interactions that the social impact of women's involvement in agriculture and



social development is visible. In this regard, the impact of women's engagement in (small-scale) agriculture is also visible and contributes to economic development of many economies of developing regions.

Women revealed the importance of social capital and its benefits to them as local women. According to Mrs Ngubo, Gog' Khoza, Mam' Khumalo, who are all members of agricultural co-operative, "social capital meant working together as small and developing farmers. For them it also meant sharing similar goals and vision of developing and assisting each other<sup>22</sup>". They distinguished social capital into three dimensions, i.e. bonding, bridging and linking. According to Gog' Mkhithi, a participant, and one of facilitators for local women farmers in Velumemeze, bonding social capital has been useful for to them (and is still useful) as they see themselves as homogenous groups of community women; and through bonding social capital they have managed to build social cohesion needed for everyday living. During focus group, women agreed upon that working together benefitted them through mechanisms of social support or information sharing across. For instance, "women, through social gatherings, came up with an idea of raising funds in order to enter goats business, where they would buy and sell them. According to Gog' Mkhithi, on behalf of other women, "starting this business jointly would be not possible without the sharing ideas and information".

For them, social capital played a role in facilitating joint decision making by empowering more women to participate in making decisions over land, keeping money, going to market, deciding on what to sell, borrowing money and use of money. In contrast, in households with low social capital more men and women made decisions independently. This indicates that enhanced social capital creates a

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<sup>22</sup> According to gog' Ngubo, gog' Khoza and Mam' Khumalo, social capital means working together and assisting each other as developing farmers.

condition of reduced tension, increased trust and confidence among household members.



**Figure 5.3:** These two women are amongst other women who specialize in farming fruit and vegetables, under Zimele Developing Community Self-Reliance project). They are the local women of Velumemeze (Cabhane). They possess the spirit of togetherness, and enjoy working together.

Many developing economies depend on agriculture, with the majority of people residing in rural areas. To support this statement, research conducted by Kirsten and van Zyl (1998) and Altieri (1995) indicates that approximately 70% of the food produced in developing countries is from a small-scale agriculture, of which the majority of producers are rural women. Consequently, the engagement of women in agriculture (although it comes in form of small-scale production) has

crucial ramifications for poverty alleviation. This is also the case in Cabhane, as women's involvement in small-scale agriculture is more pronounced and has a positive impact and plays a fundamental role in the economy of an area.

Therefore, it should be noted that agricultural production in Cabhane is more pronounced, due to women's involvement. Although an exact and accurate data cannot be presented, the contribution of Cabhane women, through their participation in agricultural activities, contributes and improves both social and economic standards of the people, increasing the chances of achieving economic development and growth (enabling to avoid food insecurity). For instance, women in Cabhane produce a number of cash crops mainly bananas, beans, cabbage, maize, etc.

Most farmers have small individual plots and depend largely on family labour to carry out farming activities. Therefore, the contribution of small-scale farmers or farming is significant, contributing to a region's agricultural development, as output for home consumption in crops such as maize and beans is visible. Hence, while smallholder farming plays an important role, the majority of these farmers are women who produce food crops mainly for subsistence and sell surpluses in order to meet other capital-demanding responsibilities, thus playing a significant role in upholding the household economy.

Nevertheless, critics or commentators see the contribution of agricultural produce in the context of smallholder farmers, and view produce as insignificant, largely because small-scale farming or rural farming is still perceived as backward, unproductive, non-commercial and largely associated with African female farmers. Moreover, the majority of these female farmers produce from small pieces of land of not more than two hectares around their homestead, depending largely on available local resources with limited applications of external inputs.

## **Conclusion**

Women continue to utilize agriculture as a strategy for bringing socio-economic development and growth, while reducing food insecurity, starvation and malnutrition. Through agriculture and other allied activities, women promote both social and economic growth. As a result, their participation or involvement in agriculture (including agricultural projects) therefore, has a positive social and economic impact on their wellbeing and the wellbeing of their families; and that their households had improved due to this, as discussed in the previous section. Therefore, rural women should be encouraged and enabled to participate in agricultural projects in order to improve their lives and those of their families and this would improve the development of rural areas in the long-run.

Nevertheless, this chapter discussed the positive relationship between social and economic development, amongst other things. Although this study is interested in economic forces of women and agriculture, but social forces as well cannot be left out as a positive development could lead to positive and robust social development. For instance, women through agriculture and farming could create employment which has an economic benefit since it brings monetary value or benefit, and money or income earned could be used to take care of social matters such as health, education, etc. (as mentioned above).

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **CONCLUSION**

The study explored women's engagement in agricultural activities and their contribution to economic growth and development in the rural community of Cabhane. Amongst other things, factors that hinder economic participation of women, as well as agricultural policies and programs, how women affect and/ are affected by policies/ how these policies help women play key role in economic growth and development, were also identified and unpacked.

The study indicated that factors that influence women's capacity to develop income-generating activities are broad in scope and are rooted in inter-linked cultural, social and economic values that define the pattern of constraints and opportunities. As a result, this pattern determines the institutional perception of women and their role in economic growth and development (through their participation in agricultural activities), their legal status as individuals and in relationship to men, their access to production inputs such as land, technology and the relationship between sustenance and income-generating activity.

However, regardless of socio-economic and legal status of Cabhane women, their participation in agriculture and farm related activities, is visible and crucial for economic growth and development. This was supported by literature provided in chapter three of the thesis as it analysed and evaluated women's engagement in agricultural activities. As is the case with many other rural women in Republic of South Africa, most women in Cabhane are involved in smallholding agriculture (where they farm or prepare for farming fruits and vegetables). As it was also

discussed in chapter three, women also look, manage and tender livestock such as cattle, goats, pigs, etc.

Additionally, most of them are also engaged in small rural agricultural production, where they, for instance, sell some of their produce to supplement family incomes. However, women are faced with many hindrances in farming or agriculture, and these hindrances were also analysed and elucidated in chapter three. For example, women's lack of independent land rights rules out one of the main fall back positions for women seeking sustainable livelihood, in the face of rising poverty. While there is enormous variation from one communal tenure system to another, women do not usually qualify to hold land independently from men. Rules of access and inheritance generally tend to favour men over women, and women with children over those without.

The study also found that factors that constrain women in acquiring land rights as in other developing countries include: Firstly, the application of the customary law of patriarchy, which discriminates against women; secondly, the lack of women representatives in community land committees and participation in traditional community decision-making structures. Although women are now allowed to attend and participate or actively speak at public meetings, the study noted that women bear the legacy of entrenched traditional values that make it difficult for them to speak freely in the presence of men. Lastly, but not least, there is widespread ignorance among women of their rights to land from the provisions of constitution due to factors such as illiteracy and lack of dissemination of the legislation to the grassroots level.

Therefore, it should be pointed out that politics of land and production ownership, inside or outside homestead, was more pronounced or noticeable in the study area.

For instance, in male-headed households, cash cropping in most cases, was a male occupation while women were limited to subsistence production or working on husbands' cash crops, usually with no compensation.

This was more pronounced or visible in Cabhane, as the study revealed. When the women do not have land, they tend to have marginal and remote land. This is particularly acute in the cases of single women who are household beneficiaries in their own right. In many cases, the land is less fertile to be utilised for other crops and further away from water resources such as river. This result in women's labour productivity being reduced since the land quality is low and access to primary inputs are lower.

The study also found that there is a positive correlation between education, financial resources and farming or agriculture. Most women farmers in the study area have not pursued their education and also lack financial resources. As a result, they are not exposed to ever revolving agricultural techniques and cannot afford them. Most of the women are still making use of techniques that were used by their fore-bearers. Therefore, it can be concluded that educated or more exposed or rather more enlightened farmers produce better crops than those who are not. The study also noticed a poor decision-making by women. Conclusively, farmwomen are actively involved in agricultural operations, but their involvement in decision-making in agriculture is very poor. Low self-confidence, lack of knowledge, belief that women are subordinate to male counterparts, illiteracy, poor access to farm operation are the major constraints perceived by farm women in decision-making process. Additionally, the study discovered that age, family income, landholding, education, are the major factors that influenced the involvement of farmwomen in decision-making process in agriculture.

Furthermore, chapter three of the study concluded that policy framework, in relation to the Republic of South African agriculture, is crucial for the development agriculture and rural economy. The study further indicated that policies, programme agendas produced by development agencies/ and government agencies strongly influence the position and status of women. This, according to the literature, shows that the thinking behind development approaches, especially with regard to women and their role to economic growth and development, has gone through significant changes in the Republic of South Africa over the past years.

Although Cabhane women are not consciously thought of as commercial farmers, they, however, participate heavily in agricultural activities and contribute significantly towards food security at both household and community levels. They are the key players in agriculture and allied fields. They play key role by working with full passion in production of crops, right from the soil preparation until post-harvest activities. Their activities typically include producing agricultural crops, tending animals, processing and preparing food, working for wages in agricultural or other rural enterprises, collecting fuel, water, caring for family members and maintaining their incomes. Despite women's crucial contribution to the family income and community through productive activities, no recognition is given to them as an important contributor and their contribution is not recorded. They are still remained invisible workers. Over the years, women cultivators are typically and wrongly characterised as economically inactive and women cultivators play only a supportive role in agriculture as farmers' wives (Samantha, 1994).

Yet, most women rarely referred themselves as 'farmers', rather most of them identified themselves as 'housewives'. It is worth noting that this gender identity does not necessarily translate to women viewing 'housework' as being more important than agricultural related work. In addition, gender stereotyping accords



the role of a farmer, engaging in agricultural production for income and/ status. Additionally, policies and development interventions are likely to ignore women 'farmer'. This is directly linked to their official invisibility as well as the fact that women's reluctance to identify themselves as farmers might be interpreted as devaluation by women of their agricultural role. They often see themselves as part-time (unpaid) helpers on their husbands' farms or subsistence producers on their garden plots. The perceptions pertaining to identities and roles result in men's roles being valued and given a higher status while that of women are undervalued.

Social and economic impacts of women involvement in agriculture was also unpacked in the study, and this was covered in chapter five of the thesis. Rural women utilised agriculture as a tool for rural economic growth and development. For example, the study showed that women have been able to generate income through their smallholding subsistence farming. These impacts are visible both inside and outside household levels. At a household level, for instance, they are able to alleviate poverty, hunger or food insecurity; and simultaneously create local employment to poor and unemployed community members.

In essence, rural economic growth and development cannot be achieved without women; and men alone cannot achieve success in farming without women. Therefore, there is the need to encourage female farmers, by making available all that is necessary for successful farming. The contribution of women to agricultural and rural economic growth and development should be maximized by implementing solutions to the specific problems they encounter as economic and social stakeholders.

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**Gog' Khoza**, she was also asked about the importance of social capital and agricultural education amongst them, **Malukhakha**, 11 August 2015.

**Gog'Mtshali**, the researcher asked gog'Mtshali what caused or led to an increased women participation in agriculture, and she mentioned male out-migration for paid employment as a reason, **Velumemeze (Cabhane)**, 21 March 2016.

**Gog' Sibongile**, was asked about decision-making and she mentioned that decision-making powers were vested on her husband at home, **Mabhikili**, 05 August 2015.

**Mahlengi Mngoma**, she was also asked to if there are any hindrances she face as a young female farmer, and her answer was definitely "yes" as she further elucidated on an issue of time constraints, **Velumemeze**, 11 August 2015.

**Mr. M.Z. Luthuli**, he is a councillor, and during an interview he was asked whether he regard women involvement in agriculture an economic boost in an area. In his response, he mentioned the important contribution of one of the youth farmers in agricultural development in an area, **Velumemeze**, 05 June 2014.

**Mrs. Hlongwa**, she was asked how they encourage and empower other women and the poorer in the community through agriculture and her responses included socio-economic development such as feeding schemes initiatives in schools, as a result of produce from agriculture, **Mabhikili**, 05 May 2014.

**Mrs. Khawula**, as she mentioned that she does not participate in agriculture at all due to some constraints, the researcher wanted to know if she appreciates and perceive women participation in agriculture important for economic growth and development of an area, **Malukhakha**, 14 August 2015

**Mrs. Mtshali**, an interview involved questions posed to Mrs. Mtshali, which looked for historical information about the division of labour in the household in

Cabhane. She also responded to the question which looked for factors that hinder their participation in agriculture, **Malukhakha**, 25 March 2016.

**Mrs. Ngcobo**, she was asked about strategies they use as women farmers in an area to enhance agricultural skills and production and according to her social capital is what keeps them running. She also provided an overview of the usefulness of women participation in agriculture, either as commercial or subsistence farmers, **Velumemeze**, 11 August 2015.

**Mrs. Ngongo**, also blamed government agencies, such as the municipal representatives for feeding them empty promises, **Mabhikili**, 08 August 2015.

**Mrs Ngubo, Gog' Khoza, and Mam' Khumalo**, as they were asked about strategies they use to enhance their agricultural skills, they mentioned the importance of togetherness, and social capital as a tool, **Mabhikili**, 03 August 2015.

**Mrs. Nzama**, the researcher wanted to know if she has experienced (or still experience) difficulties in farming and inavailability of labour was amongst factors that hinder her participation, **Malukhakha**, 12 August 2015.

**Mrs. Nzuzza**, the researcher asked Mrs. Nzuzza whether she knows any members of the community that have benefited from women agricultural co-operatives. Her responses also included the creation of jobs in farms and fruits and vegetables local markets, **Velumemeze**, 04 June 2014.

**Mrs. Sibiya, Ms. Hlophe and Mrs. Dlamini**, the three women responded on behalf of their agricultural co-operative to a question, which ask them to explain about the role they play in an economic change of an area, **Mabhikili (Cabhane)**, 20 March 2016.

**Mrs. Sikhakhane**, a researcher wanted to know how women participation contributes to an enhancement of an area and wanted to know if they collaborate with other stakeholders such as NGOs, **Malukhakha**, 05 June 2014.

**Mrs. Sokhela**, in response to the question of challenges she faces in agriculture, she responded that she wishes to produce more, but could not, because the municipality and the department (agriculture) have not provided them with enough resources they need in agriculture, **Mabhikili**, 09 August 2015.

**Ms. Bhengu**, was asked how she control her agricultural produce, (if she does) under gender stereotypes (if they exist in her household or community), and she

mentioned that she control items intended primarily for home consumption, particularly those produced or cared for on their own plots, **Velumemeze**, 07 August 2015.

**Ms. Mkhize**, as a young farmer and political activist in an area she was asked about the situation of women farmers in Cabhane, and she responded that women in Malukhakha valley in Cabhane account for about three out of four agricultural labourers and nine out of ten food-producing labourers, yet they own only a fraction of land, **Malukhakha**, 10 August 2015.

**Ms. Nokubonga Dludlu**, in relation to the question of availability of land, she is also amongst other rural women of Cabhane who voiced out her feelings about difficulty to acquire land for agricultural purposes, **Malukhakha**, 11 August 2015.

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**Annexure A: Interview Schedule: Interviews with Cabhane women, the Umzumbe department of agriculture, traditional authority and Umzumbe municipality**

1. To what extent do you participate in agricultural activities in an area?

.....  
.....

2. How do women participation in agricultural activities help the community achieving better economic life or robust economic growth and development in your area? Does their participation matters to you?

.....  
.....

3. How has this participation contributed to economic change in the area?

.....  
.....

4. What about household production? Is there any impact of participation in agriculture to household production?

.....  
.....

5. Have you seen women participating in any economic activity (other than agriculture) in your area? If yes, what are those economic activities?

.....  
.....

6. Does the government, through its policies, help you, as women; play a key role in economic growth and development?

.....  
.....

7. Can you identify factors that hinder your participation in an area?

.....  
.....

8. As women of this area, how have you responded to those factors; in other words, what steps have you taken to overcoming those hindrances?

.....  
.....

9. As a community leader, how have you responded to those factors? In other words, what steps have you taken to assist women overcoming those challenges?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

10. What are the needs and characteristics of both home-based enterprises and enterprises based outside the home?

.....  
.....

11. How has the municipality attempted to/ or already designed strategies for addressing women's concerns about the high cost of credit, access to collateral and high interest rates, such as by increasing their access to information about credit and lending processes?

.....  
.....

12. What are training outreach specifically targeted to the groups of women active in agricultural business developed by the municipality, in collaboration with Umzumbe agriculture department?

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.....

13. As a traditional leader, what is your view about women's engagement in agricultural activities or women's role in economic development?

.....  
.....

14. Have you attempted to promote other training programs on reducing stereotyping for both men and women?

- If yes, how far have you gone with that process?

.....  
.....

15. What is the present condition of women regarding education and employment?

.....  
.....

16. To what extent and at what level did women participate in economic development/  
growth in Cabhane?

.....  
.....

17. How did that participation of women contribute to relative success of economic  
development and growth efforts in the region?

.....  
.....

18. How education and employment among can be popularized?

.....  
.....

19. How do women, distinct from men, participate in and contribute positively to an ongoing  
process of economic development or growth?

