

**ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNAL LAND RIGHTS FOR SMALLHOLDER FARMERS ACCESS TO  
MARKETS IN SOUTH AFRICA: IMPLICATIONS ON GENDER**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Most African countries have embarked on improving agriculture, food security and reducing hunger through the support and involvement of smallholder farmers in the food production. Smallholder farmers have been key custodians of most African nations food and nutrition security, yet they are challenged by several factors including lack of access to land, access to credit and access to formal markets. Women smallholder farmers are the most affected due to the patrilineal nature of communal land allocation in most rural societies. Smallholder agriculture can provide a route out of poverty only if it is productive, commercially oriented and well linked to formal markets. Women have over the years relied on land based activities for their livelihoods and survival and food security however, they have always been marginalised in the allocation, control and command over land as a property. Several studies indicate that women perform most of the agricultural activities mainly for their households' food security and may produce a meagre surplus for sale in the informal markets. Market access for rural smallholder farmers has been actively promoted to catalyse sustainable rural livelihood development. However, without addressing the land access and gender specific issues that rural smallholder women farmers face in accessing markets, most initiatives aimed at improving smallholder farmer livelihoods and their food security may fail to achieve their sole purpose. Culturally stipulated roles of women's in the household and in smallholder agriculture have adverse effects on household food security due to the resultant workload burden and reduced market participation by smallholder farmers. Smallholder women farmers have to travel long distances with their meagre produce to access markets.

This study assessed the relationship between gender and communal land access and how they collectively impact smallholder farmers' access to markets. The specific objectives of the study were to determine relationships between gender and communal land access, to identify the factors affecting smallholder farmers to access agriculture markets and to determine how land access enhances smallholder farmers' access to markets. A purposive sample of 135 households was selected in Appelsbosch, KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa. The mixed methods approach of research made up of structured questionnaires, together with focus group discussions and observation was employed. Qualitative data from the focus group discussions and open-ended questions was analysed for common themes using content analysis. The data was then subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS.

Statistically significant differences were observed between gender and access to land, access of land and the owner of the land ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results further indicated that women land rights were mostly secondary and land access was closely linked to the existence of a relationship with male relatives, largely through marital ties. The study concluded that smallholder farmers faced numerous challenges in terms of accessing land and markets. From these results, the study recommends more equitable measures for secure land rights for women farmers as individuals based on need, improvement in extension services and creation of stable markets and market access support for smallholder farmers to ensure sustainable livelihoods and food security.

**Key terms:** Gender, land access, communal land rights, market access, smallholder farming, food security

## DECLARATION

I **Thapelo Mothae** hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for the Master of Agriculture Food Security at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is my original work and has not been previously submitted in partial or entirety to any other institution of higher education. I further declare that all the sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references.

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## **CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING**

### **1.1: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Agriculture has been the main activity in most African nations that contributed to their GDP (WorldBank, 2009). The major livelihood activity in rural areas has been smallholder semi-subsistence farming, which is practiced by a greater majority of native people (FAO, 2012). The agricultural sector is the main source of livelihood for 86% of rural households in developing countries and 75% of the world's poor people reside in rural areas and obtain the major part of their income from the agricultural or other related activities (Dethier and Effenberger, 2012). For most rural areas, agriculture is performed largely by females than males (Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). Traditionally women obtain land use rights by virtue of being married or granted permission by their families under customary law and this has provided them with restricted access and control over their land (Murugani et al., 2013). A study by the World Bank (2012) revealed that smallholder farmers continued to provide for their household food security and nutrition despite major challenges they faced. Agricultural activities continue to be the basis of rural people 's livelihood assets (Murugani et al., 2014), considerably women who are the main providers of household food security as most men seek better jobs in cities (FAO, 2012; IFAD, 2011).

Most African communities depend on natural resources for livelihood generation (FAO, 2013; FAO, 2012). Women encounter a range of barriers to acquiring and holding land rights equal to those of men (FAO, 2011). The limitation in women's property rights is the source of their low status, economic vulnerability and poor representation in decision making and management of land (FAO, 2012; IFAD, 2011). FAO studies reveal that women could increase farm productivity by up to 30% if given equal resources with men. The WorldBank (2010) study found that productivity on women's farms in six African countries was significantly lower per hectare compared to men, ranging from 13 % in Uganda to 25 % in Malawi. There is a causal relation between more equal gender relations in the household/community and better agricultural and development outcomes (Peterman et al., 2011).

### **1.2: RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Several African countries have embarked on improving agriculture, food security and reducing hunger through the involvement of smallholder farmers in the food production. Smallholder farmers have been key custodians of most African nations food and nutrition security, however they are

challenged by several factors including lack of land, access to credit and access to formal markets. Women smallholder farmers are the most affected due to the patrilineal nature of communal land allocation in most rural societies. However, women smallholder farmers continue to produce food for their households and earn income for their livelihoods (Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). The majority of women smallholder farmers reside in rural areas and are characterised by low education levels, lack of control and access over productive resources, lack of access to markets and credit, they also have to balance the productive and reproductive chores in the household (Magingxa et al., 2009, Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). There is a need for farmers to overcome their constraints and improve their production. This study assesses the relationship between gender and communal land access and how they collectively impact on smallholder farmers' ability to participate in markets.

### **1.3.0: OBJECTIVES**

#### **1.3.1: MAIN OBJECTIVE**

The purpose of the study was to find how gender influenced communal land access and its impacts on how smallholder farmers access agricultural markets for sustainable livelihoods.

#### **1.3.2: SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

- To determine the relationship between gender and communal land access
- To identify factors affecting smallholder farmers' accessing land and their effects on market access and how land access enhances smallholder farmers' access to markets
- To identify the factors affecting smallholder farmers to access agricultural markets

### **1.4: HYPOTHESIS**

Gender has an influence on communal land access (the basis of the livelihoods & Food Security) by and impacts access to agricultural markets for smallholder farmers

### **1.5: STUDY LIMITATION**

The study was limited to a group of smallholder farmers in the study area and those groups were not an exact representation of the entire population. The research could not be able to cover all parts of the study area because of time and the availability of resources. The sample selected may not be

representative of the entire population but it was large enough for some generalizations to be made with reasonable conviction.

## **1.6: DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

**Smallholder farmer:** definitions vary in both political and academic circles in different countries. In both South Africa and Lesotho, Smallholder farmers are defined as those farmers who own small pieces of land on which they grow subsistence crops and very few cash crops relying entirely on family labour (DAFF, 2012). PLAAS (2012), stated that in South Africa the terms “smallholder farmers”, “communal farmers”, “emerging farmers” and “black farmers” are treated as synonymous. Smallholder farmers differ in individual characteristics, farm size, resource distribution between food and cash crops, livestock and off-farm activities, their use of external inputs and hired labour, the proportion of food crops sold and household expenditure patterns (DAFF, 2012).

**Market access:** The opportunity, ability and capacity of smallholder farmers to engage with sellers and buyers, it also includes the ability to obtain inputs, opportunities and marketing channels. The increase in market participation of smallholder farmers indicates the transition from subsistence farming to a market oriented mode which enables them to exchange products and services on a higher scale (Amrouk et al., 2013).

**Communal Land Rights and access:** While communal land means land which is, or is to be, occupied or used by members of a community subject to the rules or custom of that community (CLaRA, 2004); Communal land rights are laws created by governments in regard to how individuals can control and benefit from land for their livelihood purposes. It involves the allocation of rights in the land, the delimitation of boundaries of parcels for which the rights are allocated; the transfer from one party to another through sale, lease, loan, gift or inheritance; and the adjudication of doubts and disputes regarding rights and parcel boundaries (FAO, 2002). The term access in this study refers to awarded user rights by the custodian of land rights being the chief in his/her Traditional Authority (TA).

**Gender:** the economic, social, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being man or woman (WorldBank, 2007). It is normally accompanied by gender equality, which means equal access to the “opportunities that allow people to pursue a life of their own choosing and to avoid extreme deprivations in outcomes,” highlighting gender equality in rights, resources, and voice (WorldBank, 2009)

**Assumptions:** The study assumed (1) that the respondents would be willing to respond to interview questions very well and truthfully; (2) land was used for agriculture and was allocated by the chief, to sustain their livelihoods and maintenance of their food security; (3) agricultural produce was sold in markets (4) The questions and answers would be translated accurately by a translator, as the researcher is not a native speaker of the local language.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1.0: INTRODUCTION**

Smallholder farmers have been key custodians of most African nations food and nutrition security, yet they are challenged by several factors including lack of access to land, access to credit and access to formal markets. Women smallholder farmers are the most affected due to the patrilineal nature of communal land allocation in most rural societies. Smallholder agriculture can provide a route out of poverty only if it is productive, commercially oriented and well linked to formal markets. Women have over the years relied on land based activities for their livelihoods and survival and food security however, they have always been marginalised in the allocation, control and command over land as a property. Several studies indicate that women perform most of the agricultural activities mainly for their households' food security and may produce a meagre surplus for sale in the informal markets. Market access for rural smallholder farmers has been actively promoted to catalyse sustainable rural livelihood development. However, without addressing the land access and gender specific issues that rural smallholder women farmers face in accessing markets, most initiatives aimed at improving smallholder farmer livelihoods and their food security may fail to achieve their sole purpose. The culturally stipulated roles of women's agriculture have adverse effects on household food security due to reduced market participation by smallholder farmers. Smallholder women farmers have to travel long distances with their meagre produce to access markets.

### **2.1.1: GENDER ROLES AND DIVISION OF LABOUR**

Gender equality can be promoted by women's access and control over land, which is not only a productive asset but also a source of social security, status and recognition (WorldBank, 2010). Land is an asset of great importance for multitudes of people living in the rural areas of developing countries (Zziwa, 2011, Zziwa, 2012). (Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014) explained that women take up more agricultural work compared to the men, this was further emphasised by (Alemu, 2015, Baiphethi and Jacobs, 2009, DAFF, 2012) that the majority of women do the agricultural work. Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, relationships and learned behaviours of male and female (Curran and Saguy, 2013). The World Bank defined gender equality in terms of rights, resources and voices; equality under the law, equality of opportunities and equality of rewards for work and equality of voice (WorldBank, 2010). However, equality between males and females has been compromised by various factors such as the male migrant labourers leaving home for better jobs

thereby increasing the burden of women (Okali, 2011), women lack the secure access to land and are unable to provide the collateral that would secure access to credit for their choice of crops to produce (Okali, 2011).

Gender roles in rural households differ with men in control of property and capital resources while women do most of the domestic and farming work (Murugani et al., 2014). There is a huge difference in division of labour in households; men can totally focus on their productive tasks and carry out their other activities at a given time, women are often indebted to carry out numerous tasks, especially reproductive tasks, simultaneously and dispersed over the day (Kapungu, 2013, Thamaga-Chitja, 2012). Women's productive time and flexibility are much more restricted compared to men, often leading to compromises between their non-productive and productive roles where women have been empowered through access of land and are given leadership roles both in the households and community (UNEP, 2011). In most African countries, women are more involved in activities such as planting, weeding, watering, harvesting, transportation of crops from farm to home, processing and marketing of small farm produce whereas men are only involved in the initial stages of tilling the land or clearing and the marketing of larger amounts of produce (Kapungu, 2013, Murage, 2011, Muzari, 2013). IFAD (2011) Reported that when women get proper access to land, water and capital resources, they become highly motivated, have enhanced creativity and become more productive in their farming thus improving the food security status of their households and community.

Apart from their heavy daily workload, most African women are bound by tradition to help their husbands in the farming activities, this increases their workload and limits their time for their own farming (Duncan, 2010). Women are traditionally responsible for the preparation of food, fetching water and cooking food using firewood they collect from forests; their activities are centred on the household; maintaining the hygiene, nutrition and food security status of the family (PLAAS, 2012, Tanwir and Safdar, 2013, Thamaga-Chitja, 2012). They also ensure that their children are in good health, those of their family members as well as their education and food security (Kapungu, 2013, Tanwir and Safdar, 2013). Duncan (2010) Observed that women usually produce food crops unlike men who farm cash crops and can market and sell them at ease. Men have access to credit facilities and can use their land as collateral for getting loans for large scale production of cash crops, but women due to the fact that they are usually landless cannot get loans and thus cannot expand their food production (Santos, 2014). Tanwir and Safdar (2013) further elaborated that due to their inability to own land and lack of access to financial resources, most African women could not take

advantage of new market opportunities or increase their productivity, however; men on the other side had access to capital resources through the land they own, property or their migrant labour abilities (Doss et al., 2014, IFAD, 2011).

### **2.1.2: GENDER AND EMPOWERMENT FOR SMALLHOLDER WOMEN FARMERS' ACCESS TO MARKETS**

The gender gap in the access and control of property is the single most critical contributor to the gender gap in economic well-being, social status, and empowerment (Agarwal, 1994). Empowerment is a process which enhances the ability of powerless individuals or groups to challenge and change existing power relationships that put them in inferior socio-economic and political positions (Kato and Kratzer, 2013). Agarwal (2015) Defined empowerment as the expansion of people's ability to make strategic life choices, especially in situations to which they had been denied previously. Moreover, Krenz et al. (2014) defined empowerment as a process that expands women's ability to make choices about their lives and their environment. Empowerment comprises the resources, the element of action and the outcome. Empowerment is a process that enhances the ability of disadvantaged individuals or groups to challenge and change existing power relationships that place them in subordinate economic, social and political positions.

From various studies of empowerment, which is also said to have no single definition applicable to all contexts, women are agreed to experience empowerment as they gain the ability to make choices in areas where they were previously denied agency (Kato and Kratzer, 2013, Krenz et al., 2014). Access of a resource contributes to the empowerment of women, however, their ability to generate income in the agricultural sector is mostly hindered by their limited use, access, and control of productive land (IFAD, 2011, Kapungu, 2013). Women, unlike men are more disadvantaged since assets especially land are accessed mainly through marriage ties in most rural communities under Traditional Authority, thereby single or widowed women may not access them on their own (Kapungu, 2013).

World Bank defines empowerment as the expansion of freedom of choice and actions and increasing one's authority and control over the resources and decisions that affects one's life (WorldBank, 2010). Similarly, Mensah and Yankson (2013) saw women's empowerment as a process through which women gain the ability to take ownership and control of their lives. (Sharaunga et al., 2016) elaborated that empowerment has sources which are the assets and tools that women possess and



can use to improve on their influence, confidence or security hence improving their household bargaining power, stability and maintaining food security.

Land access should act as a source of empowerment as it increases women's security and control over household decisions (Agarwal, 2003). Alemu (2015) contended that ownership of a resource contributes to empowerment, whereby those with resources have more purchasing power than those without resources or assets. Although women account for 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries (FAO, 2011) a great gender bias exists in the agricultural production sector, in terms of both quantities of assets, agricultural inputs and resources that women control and own (DAFF, 2012, Dethier and Effenberger, 2012, Doss et al., 2014). The role of women in agriculture production is commonly unappreciated (Doss et al., 2014), despite their efforts and long hours they spend working on the agricultural land that they do not own (FAO, 2011). Most rural women around the world contribute to agricultural production in numerous ways using different livelihood strategies to out lift their families out of poverty and food insecurity (Hill, 2011). However, they often have limited decision making power and control over how to use the land or its outputs (SIRCAR and PAL, 2014b).

FAO (2011) reported that around the world most women work as unpaid, on own account or self-employed labourers in agro-industries or as traders, entrepreneurs and providers of services. Hill (2011) further explained that women migration from rural areas to urban areas for permanent, daily or seasonal work has been on the increase. The rural women are hindered by unequal access to productive resources and land from producing more for their families (IFAD, 2011, Kapungu, 2013, Murugani et al., 2014, PLAAS, 2012, UNEP, 2011) and these limitations bring forth huge socio-economic and environmental costs on rural development especially in agricultural productivity. Gender disparities as outlined by CEDAW article 14 limit women from enjoying their economic rights. Moreover, rural women tend to be engaged in their activities for long hours and usually their activities are classified as "non-economic employment" (FAO, 2011). This calls for efforts and the need for women to be empowered for they also form part of the labour on their family farms either producing for household consumption or for commercial purposes.

The economic empowerment of smallholder women farmers is a major requirement for sustainable development and growth. Gender equality and women empowered through access to productive resources speed up their human development and stabilises their livelihood. Women when provided

with resources usually invest a higher amount of their earnings in their families and communities than men (DAFF, 2012, Doss et al., 2014). Their natural ability to tend and care for their families can further be translated into considerable amount of development if they are provided with the means to access markets. Markets for smallholder farmers provide a permanent relief from poverty and food insecurity (Sircar and Pal, 2014, Thamaga-Chitja, 2012). From very little pieces of land they farm smallholder farmers who are usually women have managed to provide for their families and communities over the years despite their constant challenges such as land access, access to capital and improved inputs. Kabeer (2012) reported that the total agricultural output could rise by 20% if women farmers could be provided with equal access to agricultural inputs similarly to men's.

Women face unique barriers to participating in markets and these limit their capacity to invest in profitable agricultural developmental initiatives (Kapungu, 2013, Kato and Kratzer, 2013). Their lower access of productive assets, unequal access to productive resources and unequally distributed responsibilities for unpaid household chores limit them from accessing profitable markets. It is therefore vital to promote and empower smallholder women farmers for the benefit of families and communities and to achieve gender equality in distribution or access to productive resources.

### **2.1.3: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND LAND ACCESS**

Land is an important natural resource essential for the maintenance of a good food security status per household (FAO, 2010, IFAD, 2011, WorldBank, 2010). Over the years several international bodies have considered the issues concerning land access, distribution patterns and land rights. FAO, the World Bank and IFAD have all recognized the value and importance of women's land rights and the inability of land administration programs to protect them. The WorldBank (2009) realised that past initiatives failed to determine how control of assets, particularly land was assigned within household members. Bayisenge et al. (2015) argued that the strengthening of women rights was important for both agricultural productivity, human capital investments, household food security and nutrition.

FAO was mandated by the UN to provide technical assistance for mainstreaming gender in agricultural policy and planning through the development of strategic policy documentation together with relevant ministries and those responsible for gender issues (IFAD, 2011). Moreover, IFAD (2011) aimed at attaining the expansion of women's access to and control of fundamental assets including land, capital and technologies, decision making and access to basic rural services and infrastructure.

FAO (1979) recommended the abolishment of gender discriminatory laws with respect to the rights in inheritance, access and control over productive resources.

Women in Sub-Saharan Africa make up much of people living in rural areas, they provide most the agricultural labour required especially in food production which is mostly done at a subsistence level (Tanwir and Safdar, 2013, Thamaga-Chitja, 2012). (UNEP, 2011) indicated that over 60% of the active populations in Sub-Saharan Africa depend on land for livelihood. Women play a major role in agricultural productivity and they are usually restricted by customary land rights which mainly favour male than females (Murugani et al., 2014, PLAAS, 2012, Budlender, 2011). Women's inability to own land compromises the household food security and development because women are restricted from essential services such as credit facilities, proper healthcare, education and productive skills since they own no assets of their own they cannot be provided with loans for the improvement of their farms (Sharaunga et al., 2016).

The relationship of land access and gender requires a review of systems used in the allocation and distribution of land. Patriarchy is the common system used in the distribution and control of land and property (Arisunta, 2010). Patriarchy as explained by Hartman (1980), is a system in which the father or male considered to be the head of a household in owns and controls all the property resources, makes main decisions and controls all members of the household (Alcoff, 1990). Arisunta (2010) maintains that the patriarchal system identifies the man as the head of the household and this enhances male dominance over women regarding access of property in the society. The patriarchal structures apart from limiting women from accessing land, they also deny women the opportunity to pursue their interests such as basic skills training, education, fertility and right to better employment (Alemu, 2015). Women are also barred from partaking in public activities such as leadership or paid work in most African states (Bayisenge et al., 2015, Doss et al., 2014), however, regardless of the women not permitted to seek proper paid work and bound to undertake household chores and farming, they are not given a chance to own the land. The patriarchal system can either be public or private whereby men; under the private patriarchal system control the household labour activities, own the property, and regulate reproduction but in the private patriarchal system women are more independent and can control their fertility as well as get employed without having to submit prior to the man (Asantemungu, 2011).

Gender relations are structured mainly by the property status of household and the woman's participation in paid labour (Agarwal, 1994). Agarwal (1994) further explains that property owning families have hierarchical gender relations in which women do not go out seeking employment but are economically dependent on their male counterparts but, the households without property have egalitarian relations whereby women are active members of the labour force.

#### **2.1.4: THE BARRIERS TO EQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF LAND**

Land is a vital resource for livelihood, but the rights of women and girls are prominently undermined, especially in cases where traditions and customs are favoured more than formal laws (Fombe *et al*, 2013). Poverty reduction and community development can be achieved through empowering women by strengthening their land rights (Fombe *et al*, 2013). Secured land rights help women increase crop production; access credit, develop self-esteem, and enable them to develop their own skills (Mantobhang, 2011). Empowerment enables the poor to exercise their rights which are their fundamental human rights which give them some freedom and thus they can concentrate on their agro-production to maintain their household's food security (Galie *et al*., 2015).

In most African nations, land is owned by males rather than females mainly due to the belief that land has to be preserved for several generations; therefore, only sons can guarantee such protection (Fombe *et al*, 2013). This unequal distribution of land deprives women of their right to inherit land and puts them in a compromised socio- economic and political position (Fombe *et al*, 2013). Women experience discrimination in property throughout their lives including before, during, and after marriage, but mostly at the death of a spouse (Chitja *et al*., 2016). This discrimination exists in part due to current customary laws, but the government's legislative measures have also failed to uphold women's rights to property and in some cases, have made the discrimination worse (Weinberg, 2013). While most African countries' population keep growing rapidly, the pressure on land allocation and access increases tremendously and this affects security of tenure of the customary users (Budlender *et al*, 2011, Fombe *et al*, 2013). Even though this pressure on land affects the automatic access of land, women remain landless due to the customary laws that deny them the opportunity to own land especially when they are widowed or divorced (Fombe *et al*, 2013).

The wellbeing and survival of poor households depends on the productive and reproductive contributions of their female members (FAO, 2012). Also, an increasing number of poor households are headed or maintained by women (FAO, 2013), but they have no say in what happens to the

property on which they live (Budlender et al., 2011). This reduces the women's ability to control disposition of the land as a property or the income gained from it (FIDA-Kenya, 2008). Women's ability to own land, inherit and control land and property is totally essential for their ability to access resources and participate in the economy (World Bank, 2013). Many women do not have the legal access rights to the land they plough and till; this intensifies their dependence on husbands and male land owning relatives and reduces their ability to acquire credit and productive inputs (Budlender et al., 2011).

The World Bank (2013) found that the constitutional protection of women's rights is extensive in the entire world but laws continue to restrict women's rights in fundamental ways. Girls and women do not enjoy equal rights as compared to their brothers in relation to access and control of property (World Bank, 2013; FAO, 2009). Women may appear to have rights to family resources, but the women's ability to exercise those rights is often limited by culture and context (Burra et al., 2005). Women are said to be disempowered by the cultural norms that bind them only to the caring and rearing of children while being assistants to their husbands not equals (Burra et al., 2005). Women in most African countries are obliged, by tradition, to assist their husbands in their farming activities and these activities are often carried out in addition to their own farming activities, which are either performed on their husbands' plots or on separate plots of land that have been allocated to them (Duncan, 2004).

Women may be less aware of their rights, they may have limited access to information about land-related programs, they may have to face officers who are gender biased and they may be affected by cultural, community or family dynamics that discriminate against women as land owners (RIGHTS AND WOMEN, 2013). Women also face a problem if they wish to expand their tiny plots due to the constrained access to financial services, policy and legal barriers as well as cultural and traditional practices that prevent women from keeping bank accounts or entering contracts without the consent of their husbands or another man (FAO, 2011c). RIGHTS AND WOMEN (2013) outlined seven possible barriers affecting women's ability to own land as: lack of legal knowledge, gendered norms and attitudes about land access, authorities' recognition of women's right to own land, gender biases in how families and individuals acquire land, lack of formal documentation, interaction with government officials, and vulnerability to changes in their families. It is important to study the different constraints to equal land access by both men and women, how this inequality affects

household food security and this will bring forth learned recommendations and better solutions for maintenance of food security.

#### **2.1.5: THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNAL LAND HISTORY**

The 1913 Natives land act of South Africa was one of the first of several discriminatory laws that reinforced the massive dispossessions of land from original black holders. This act together with other colonial policies paved way for freehold rights for the whites whilst the blacks were subjected to communal land access and other user rights. The colonial masters took control of enormous chunks of land, forced black communities into small and confined areas (homelands) and made the land tenure systems to suit their needs (Cousins, 2013). The idea of the formation of homelands or Bantustans was to keep black people in their own self-governing homelands rather than South Africa itself (Bennet, 2008) but keeping them close enough to serve as an inexpensive source of labour for white farmers (Weinberg, 2015). The superior colonial masters created “reserves” commonly known as Bantustans or Homelands within their farms as a strategy to curb resistance to dispossession and as reservoirs of inexpensive labour. The former Bantustans or homelands refer to the ten areas of land designated by the apartheid government in the 1950s as separate ‘ethnic’ zones where black people would live (Weinberg, 2015). Tenure security was reduced through regulations which prescribed conditions on which natives could hire, purchase or occupy land (Cousins, 2008)

The 1994 democratic government of South Africa aimed to distribute 30 percent of commercial agriculture land into black access, to address gross racial inequalities in land access inherited from the past and to curb the ever-increasing rural poverty and food insecurity (Cousins, 2013). Little has been done regarding land redistribution 20 years into democracy and this has seen numerous adjustments of total targeted land redistribution and shifts in policies governing the land allocation (Cousins, 2013).

With unclear timelines of new laws on land expropriation and numerous policy shifts result in insecurity of tenure for most rural people in communal areas and on redistributed land. Moreover, the new laws have been put in place to promote security of tenure for farm dwellers and labour tenants but there is no legislation beyond the Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act (IPILRA) to secure land rights for people living in the former homelands or Bantustans (Weinberg, 2015). The concept of communal land tenure was interpreted to be a system of collective land access (Cousins,

2007) and land was interpreted to exclusively be controlled by the chief as the representative of the community (Bennet 2008).

Several scholars have had numerous debates on communal land tenure, Cousins (2008) defined land tenure as “socially embedded” and inclusive meaning that individuals and their families have relative rights to residential or agricultural land. Land distribution for individuals or families is negotiated by committees of men in the interests of the whole community. However, women also pressured to become part of the committees that make decisions on land and this ensured that women were also allocated land (Bennet et al, 2012). Weinberg (2015) further argued that communal land allocations as decided by community leadership groups are approved by traditional leaders but this does not make the chiefs the only people making decisions about land. Communal land tenure has a broad definition and has over the years been thinly defined. It involves a lot of historical baggage which when well defined could enable the recognition of the rights of millions of people living in the former homelands (Alcock and Hornby, 2004).

Several analysts have argued that the state has paid overblown prices for land restitution. In the perspective of severe land shortages and insecure land rights, women are often increasingly excluded from access to land (Bennet et al, 2012; Weinberg, 2015). The unequal distribution of land between blacks and whites is a problem of its own making even though the state failed to recognise it. It however opted to address land scarcity and congestion by excluding women from access to land in the reserves, based on a biased version of customary law (Walker, 2002). Magistrates and Bantu Affairs Commissioners progressively articulated to complainants that women could not inherit or manage land in their own right because it was not ‘customary’ to do so (Weinberg, 2015). Instead, they alleged that the household head whom they believed would always be male, had all the power to make decisions about land for the benefit of the family vested in him (PLAAS, 2012).

Smallholder farmers living in the former homelands have access to small pieces of land administered by traditional leaders. Traditional leaders are thought to possess complete and total authority over land allocation and usually use this to cement their positions (Bennett et al., 2012). They allocate land based on cultural norms which favour men to have more land use and control rights over women who may only obtain land through marriage ties (Larson et al., 2015, Murugani et al., 2014, OXFAM, 2011, Sakane et al., 2014, Sitko et al., 2014). Land allocation remain highly patriarchal despite the fact that women farmers are the main workers of the soil (FAO, 2002, Galiè et al., 2015, Hendriks, 2014, IFAD, 2011, Kapungu, 2013, PLAAS, 2012). There is a need to assess the gender inequalities in

communal land rights to gather more evidence on land allocation and distribution. Women usually gain land rights through male family members and therefore risk losing the land in cases of divorce, widowhood or husband's migration. It is also evident from the literature that in most cases women are provided with smaller pieces of lower quality land compared to men's (FAO, 2010). The South African government embarked on land reform programmes which were intended to address the critical inequalities in communal land access and the security of land rights of the people (Lahiff and Cousins, 2005, Walker, 2016).

#### **2.1.6: FOOD INSECURITY IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Food security has been defined by USDA (2015) as the access to adequate food for an active, healthy life at all times. FAO (2003) further defines food security as the economic and physical ability of people to access adequate, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary requirements and preferences for active healthy lives at all times. Food security is made up of four pillars, food availability, access to food, the utilisation and stability of food (USDA, 2015; FAO, 2003). Food availability refers to the total agricultural production of food that is available in the markets (Murugani, 2016, FAO, 2003). The access to food refers to the ability to produce one's own food or purchase it which implies accessing markets and having the purchasing power. The utilisation of food focuses on the hygiene and manufacturing practices applied in food production, harvesting and storage, food processing and distribution to retail and households. The stability of access and supply of food deals with the ability to obtain the right food amidst the variable weather patterns, economic and political factors. Food insecurity is a resultant of the absence of adequate food, food shortages, poverty and deprivation (Scanlan, 2004).

South Africa as a country is considered to be food secure because of strong commercial farming sector which have been developed over years. However, there exists a large number of households who experience food insecurity for extended periods of time. These households are mostly in the rural communities of South Africa as stated by the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF, 2014). Rural households are considered to be vulnerable to food insecurity even though they have access natural resources such as land and water which they can exploit to generate income and provide food. Factors such as poverty, poor infrastructure, poor access to markets, gender inequality in natural resource allocation, changes in climate and lack of institutional support have exposed rural populations to severe food insecurity.



Most rural populations have over the years relied on agriculture as their basis for food and income generation. The increase in agricultural challenges, poverty, low income and high input costs reduced the food security per household causing people to seek for non-agricultural income generation opportunities to stabilise their household food security status (Baiphethi and Jacobs, 2009). The ability of households to feed themselves depends on both their non- agricultural income together with their farm income (Baiphethi and Jacobs, 2009). In most rural communities, it is common for men and youth to seek for high paying employment opportunities in cities, mines or commercial farms thereby leaving women with the brunt of agricultural production. Women farmers struggle to produce efficiently on their farms due to shortages of labour and cash for quality inputs while they are also expected to undertake their reproductive responsibilities (Kapungu, 2014). These leads to low harvests which limit farmers to local markets which provide very low returns for trading their surplus produce.

Most rural communities depend on subsistence production, markets and remittances for household food. Poverty and unemployment have caused the migration of strong men and women to non-farm jobs in the cities and towns thereby reducing the agriculture labour force. Women bear the brunt of agricultural production alone in the absence of men and this has resulted in low agricultural production and a heavy dependence on markets for food (Baiphethi and Jacobs, 2009). The rural populations cannot cope entirely with the food markets system, due to high prices and this leads to household food insecurity for the majority of households without the purchasing power. Food insecure households rely heavily on government social grants for children and the elderly.

The issue of food (in) security has been critical in many parts of the world including South Africa. The right to food is enshrined in international and national law. In South Africa, the right to access to sufficient food was embedded in Section 26 and 27 of the Constitutional law of 1996 (Lahiff and Cousins, 2005). The constitution indicates that every South African citizen has a right to sufficient food and water; and social security. FAO (2008) reported that South Africa is regarded as a food secure nation which can produce enough staple crops and the capacity to import additional food to improve the nutrition of its population. However, Hart *et al* (2009) supported the argument but mentioned that South Africa is food secure at national level but rural households are usually food insecure. According to the 2004 report of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on the state of food insecurity in the world, more than 814 million people in developing countries are undernourished. Of these people, 204 million live in countries of sub-Saharan Africa, including South

Africa. In 2015 Oxfam released a study that indicates that 26% of South Africans go to bed Hungry (Oxfam, 2014). Further, over 15 Million South African are on social grants, indicating a serious poverty and household food insecurity problem in one of the most unequal societies in South Africa. The high unemployment and poverty rates are major causes of food insecurity, however, the enhancement of smallholder farming has the potential to create employment for rural people and provide food for their households. The National Development Plan of South Africa lists smallholder agriculture as central to unlocking deep poverty and that it should be supported. (National Development Plan (NPC, 2011). There are several factors which affected household food security in South Africa. To understand food insecurity, several developmental questions such as social protection, sources of income, access to land, water and inputs, access and participation in markets and education should be answered (Altman et al., 2009). The land question in South Africa is a critical one since over 9 million people in South Africa reside in the former homelands where communal land access rights are prevalent. It is critical that innovations around improving market access in these areas despite the current land right state.

## **2.2.0: WHY SMALLHOLDER FARMING IS IMPORTANT FOR RURAL HOUSEHOLDS?**

### **2.2.1: EFFICIENCY IN TERMS OF PRODUCTION PER HECTARE**

For most Sub-Saharan African families' smallholder farming is more of a livelihood survival strategy rather than an occupation. Smallholder farmers grow a number of crops on small pieces of land for consumption in their households and surplus may be sold to their local communities (Zeller, 2013, CroplifeInternational, 2011). FAO (2010) Reported that the world's two billion people depended upon 500 million smallholder farmers to provide them with adequate food. Smallholder farmers are main drivers of food security in developing countries, however they remain marginalised and lack basic support in the form of market access, access to land and water, inputs and good infrastructure. Despite their challenges, smallholder farmers continue to produce food enough for their families and communities; they also take care of their land protecting it from harsh changes in the climate.

Smallholder farmers manage their enterprises efficiently to earn a living, they consider their daily farm activities as full time occupation rather than just hours worked. This mentality enables them to produce more food from very small pieces of land (PLAAS, 2012, UNEP, 2011). They use labour intensive methods rather than capital intensive methods as a result their land and capital productivities are highly increased (OXFAM, 2011). However, smallholder farmers still need support

in decision making, adoption of new technologies, economies of scale and processing. Their productivity gains should be matched by good transport and communication networks, access to markets, credit and proper infrastructure to ensure food security and stable livelihoods.

### **2.2.2: POVERTY REDUCTION**

Smallholder farmers play a critical role in reducing poverty and hunger in most rural households of the world. The FAO (2015) report indicated that most Asian countries have managed to reduce hunger and poverty before the 2015, this was due to success of the industrious hardworking smallholder farmers supported by favourable policies and governmental support since the beginning of the Asian Green Revolution (ILO,2015, UNDP, 2010, FAO,2012). Sub-Saharan Africa remains challenged with regard to poverty reduction due to several factors such as inequality in land distribution, rapid population growth and climate change, however FAO (2015) reported that assistance to smallholder farmers who produce most of the global food production with technologies, markets and organizations will be essential for both poverty reduction and food security. When provided with sound developmental policies, advanced technologies and stable political situations smallholder farmers increase their productivity and create more jobs and by so doing they reduce poverty in their communities.

The smallholder farmers have over the years garnered more experience and knowledge on how to earn a living from the soil (OXFAM, 2011). They have honed their farming skills over time, and they know how to best deal with local challenges using indigenous knowledge and natural resource management ability. Their experience and knowledge is essential for their resilience to common shocks and hazards and these abilities can be passed on the generation chain also enabling them to adapt the climate change effects. The increased smallholder farmer support encourages more participation in farming activities, this has created more job opportunities for the youth of numerous rural communities (OXFAM, 2011). Despite having limited access to credit, smallholder farmers continue to produce food for their communities using limited resources, relying on rainfall for irrigation and little land but manage to avoid labour displacing technology and consequently create number of jobs for youth. Their produce contributes more to household food security through subsistence agriculture especially in areas with little development where communities consume locally produced food rather than purchased food (FAO, 2012, IFAD, 2011, OXFAM, 2011).

Smallholder farmers are custodians of culture and environmentally safe food production techniques; they use simple traditional tools and apply their traditional farming knowledge to produce food enough for consumption and perhaps sale of the surplus produce in local markets (Ferris et al., 2014). The empowerment of smallholder farmers at community level may ultimately translate into a food secure nation with more youth and women employed.

### **2.2.3: MARKET ACCESS PARTICIPATION**

Access to markets for agricultural produce is essential for smallholder farmers since they attain benefits in the form of employment and income generation for the sustenance of their livelihoods. In most developing nations, most smallholder farmers are characterised by weak access to produce markets which affects their livelihoods (OXFAM, 2011, Ferris et al., 2014).

Smallholder farmers in rural communities continually produce food for household consumption from very minute pieces of land, under unequal distribution of productive resources, they are linked to markets mostly informally but they remain poor (Ferris et al., 2014). Smallholder farmers' face several challenges with regard to accessing markets in the fast-developing world therefore they need assistance in acquiring access to proper markets to ensure food security for their households and economic sustainability for their communities. Smallholder farmers accessing markets have a potential to increase their yields to improve their household income, food security and nutrition (Baiphethi and Jacobs, 2009, Magingxa et al., 2009, Milligan et al., 2011, Murage, 2011). The ability to participate in markets enables smallholder farmers to earn more income through secured trade channels, value addition and the usually high standards they have to attain (FAO, 2015, Mather et al., 2013, OXFAM, 2011, Giuliani, 2012).

### **2.3.0: SMALLHOLDER FARMERS' CONSTRAINTS TO FARMING**

Most smallholder farmers in sub Saharan Africa face numerous challenges that inhibit their development and ability to provide adequate and nutritious food at all times to their households (DAFF, 2012, Musah, 2013). The constraints they have can be categorized in three levels the farmers level, market level and at supply level. These constraints hinder considerable agricultural growth for smallholder farming therefore they need to be addressed effectively to increase agricultural productivity. The main challenges to their success are poor access to land, lack of farm infrastructure, storage facilities, lack of access to finance for farm inputs, mechanisation, transport services,

extension and research services; and restricted access to high value markets (Mabuza et al., 2013, Musah, 2013, OXFAM, 2011).

Baloyi (2010) Categorised constraints affecting smallholder farmers in two groups, thus internal and external constraints. The Internal constraints are those challenges that affect smallholder farmers' capability to function efficiently regardless of the potential they may have. These include labour shortage, limited skills, lack of knowledge and education, liquidity problems and cultural issues that prevent them from access and control over productive resources such as land and water. The external constraints arise from a broader agricultural perspective and they are extremely difficult for smallholder farmers to deal with on their own without the extended support. These constraints include natural disasters affecting farming activities, poor access to credit facilities, infrastructure, farm inputs, mechanisation and poor access to markets and market information. High transaction costs as well as poor legislation and policies also form great barriers for smallholder farmers. Most smallholder farmers are women who obtain land rights through marriage ties due to the largely patriarchal distribution of productive resources (Chitja and Mabaya, 2014). Land rights and gender inequality regarding resource allocation also influences the constraints to high agricultural productivity and access to markets.

#### **2.4.0: MARKET ACCESS CONSTRAINTS FOR SMALLHOLDER FARMERS**

In most Sub-Saharan countries, the key challenges of smallholder farmers accessing lucrative markets have been outlined as poor infrastructure, lack of improved farm inputs, poor information transfer, lack of knowledge, high transaction costs, poor policies and unavailability of markets (Chitja and Mabaya, 2014). Despite several governments support initiatives for smallholder farmers, they continue to face enormous challenges when they have to physically access markets (Baloyi, 2010, Gouët and Van Paassen, 2012). Smallholder farmers lack market information, business and negotiation skills which they need in acquiring lucrative contracts with the larger players in the markets. They are usually forced to sell their produce at farm gate prices or be kicked out of the mainstream competition due to sale of lower standard produce.

Most of the smallholder farmers are women who in most cases have limited rights over land and low education levels. The smallholder farmers' illiteracy affects their ability to access beneficial information, ability to interact with formal institutions that incorporate the use of advanced technological systems (Magingxa et al., 2009). They are mostly incapacitated with the marketing and

financial skills therefore cannot afford improved inputs such as seeds and chemicals, these leads to their poor production of low standard crops which fetch meagre incomes in the market and are usually declined in the fresh produce market and food processors (IFAD, 2011; World Bank, 2002). Smallholder farmers need to work in supportive environments that enable them to access markets despite their location, the use of information technology tools enhances market participation among small scale farmers and thus boost their livelihood. Smallholder farmers who use information technology are equipped with new skills in both the production and postharvest handling of their crops. Information and knowledge transfer is evidently faster when using ICTs, their yields are higher, their crops are better packaged, new skills are learnt and lastly it has been revealed through research that farmer to farmer interactions are the most adequate for dissemination of knowledge and skills (Larson, 2015).

The World Bank (2010) report stated that smallholder farmer's benefit from the use of ICTs, they can access markets prices and other essential information through their mobile phones using SMS or broadcast over radio. The quick message transfer which normally comes at a low maintenance cost, has brought a significant change in the manner which traders and farmers interact. This has created stronger bonds and made traders to take smallholder farmers as trading partners due to improved quality of produce and better handling (Gouet and Van Paasen, 2012). The use of technology systems encourages support from banks, businesses, processing firms and government ministries due to stability of production by the farmers. These ensures better livelihoods and food security for the farmers. Despite the advances in technology, most farming families are challenged by the inequality in resources distribution and land rights due to the patriarchal nature of land allocation in most Sub-Saharan states.

The smallholder farmers can be assisted to overcome their challenges and improve their market access through the push and pull strategies (Chitja and Mabaya, 2014). The Smallholder farmers can be made to operate more formally like their commercial counterparts to address the issue of market access (Chitja and Mabaya, 2014). Microfinance institutions could be engaged to provide farmers with financial services that would enhance their ability to purchase good agricultural inputs, irrigation equipment, processing and storage facilities which would enable them to produce all year round and thus, increase their income and food security (Chitja and Mabaya, 2014). Furthermore, the farmers' existing group activity can be improved to tackle even deeper challenges such as the acquisition of farm machinery, storage facilities and also to obtain lucrative formal contracts. Chitja and Mabaya

(2014) explained that cooperative action could remedy the agricultural market failures for most countries. The improvement of agricultural extension outreach and market oriented training for smallholder farmers can enhance their participation in formal markets, through the attention to issues such as business management, value addition and food safety for farmers to access high-end markets.

Smallholder farmers market access can also be improved by using demand driven tactics that create a pull for smallholder produce in the market area. The smallholder farmers can explore alternative food networks that establish direct linkages to the consumers of their products (Chitja and Mabaya, 2014). The improvement of market information systems can also enhance smallholder farmers' participation in lucrative markets. The usage of ICTs could improve market access with the provision of real time prices, weather forecasting and products with a higher demand. Contract farming can also be used to provide a secured and sustainable income to smallholder farmers.

The enhancement of smallholder farmers access to markets by incorporating the push and pull strategies would bode well for the increase in their household income and food security. Smallholder farmers have shown a great devotion to maintain earn livelihood for their families regardless of their constant challenges. They have over the years relied on subsistence farming methods which are prone to major challenges in the wake of climate change, population increase and food insecurity. The markets have a potential to increase smallholder farmers' income and sustainability of production; they can create employment for youth and help tackle the scourge of food insecurity and poverty in numerous households.

#### **2.5.0: ACCESS TO RESOURCES**

Access to productive resources is vital for the advancement of agricultural productivity for both men and women. In most Sub Saharan nations, land allocation is largely patrilineal and in most cases women only get access to land through marriage ties yet they are the main actors in farming (IFAD, 2011, Obare, 2010, Olwande et al., 2015, OXFAM, 2011, PLAAS, 2012, Saint-Macary, 2010, Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). To produce for markets, smallholder farmers need access to and control of production resources such as land, water, labour and capital. Generally, both men and women lack adequate access to productive resources but women usually have less access than men (Murugani et al., 2014, Musah, 2013, Olwande et al., 2015, OXFAM, 2011, PLAAS, 2012). Several factors such as

poor policies, little research, discrimination, tradition and customs; and lack of sound decision making are the true causes of women farmers reduced access to land as a productive resource.

Women generally have inadequate access to land, water, extension services, technology and skills yet they have been proven to be more productive than men (David, 2015, Kamanda, 2010, Kapungu, 2013). Agricultural land for smallholder farmers in many regions in Sub Saharan Africa has been reduced due to environmental degradation, land usage for no agricultural purposes, population pressure and unequal distribution of land between large land owners and smallholder farmers (Angassa, 2012, Baloyi, 2010, Bellows, 2011, David, 2015, Diagne, 2011, Kamanda, 2010, Kapungu, 2013). Most smallholder farmers have reduced access to these resources therefore they are challenged with sustainable participation in agricultural markets due low productivity, low quantity and quality of produce. These challenges cause smallholder farmers severe inconsistencies in terms of production for markets and therefore affects their main livelihood generation and their food security.

Agriculture is the mainstay of most African economies with its substantial contribution to most nations' GDP (Baloyi, 2010, FAO, 2012). Yet its growth rate over the past decades has been dramatically low. The main contributors to Sub-Saharan Africa 's Agricultural production are Smallholder subsistence farmers who are characterised by low land sizes allocated for cereal crop production (IFAD, 2011). Despite the challenge of lack of access to adequate land, Smallholder farmers also face several constraints that hinder their productivity, growth, access to markets and ability to contribute meaningfully to national food security (DAFF, 2012). Smallholder farmers are mostly located in rural areas where lack of proper institutional and physical infrastructure reduces their productivity and expansion. The poor status of rural roads limit smallholder farmers from transporting their inputs, produce and access to the markets (ActionAid, 2011, DAFF, 2012, FAO, 2011). Information transfer and sharing is unreliable in rural areas due to remoteness from policy making bodies and legislation. Smallholder farmers usually do not have good modern assets, access to information and access to services; these impede their participation in potentially lucrative markets (ActionAid, 2011, FAO, 2011, Kapungu, 2013).

Smallholder farmers have to deal with high transaction costs which thwart their growth and this is mainly caused by poor infrastructure (FAO, 2010). Farmers are usually forced to grow their own staple crops, less perishable crops or low volumes of food for their household consumption or for sale in the local market which is relatively small in most cases (Ferris et al., 2014). The high transport



cost also affects smallholder farmers' access to quality inputs, they are therefore forced to rely on locally available inputs and this reduces the consistency in the quality of their produce (Baloyi, 2010, WorldBank, 2010). Crop life International (2010) reported that 70% of the world's poor lived in rural areas and most of them depended directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihood. Smallholder farmers generally practice subsistence farming, trapped in poverty and are unable to enter the agricultural value chain (Ferris et al., 2014, CroplifeInternational, 2011).

Smallholder farmers usually have poor post-harvest storage facilities (CroplifeInternational, 2011). UNEP (2011), reported that global food production was more sufficient to feed a healthy population, however significant amounts of food produced around the world is lost or wasted after harvesting. The loss of food at harvest and post-harvest is equivalent to losses in the inputs such as fertiliser, water, and pesticides which were embedded in the production (UNEP, 2011). Smallholder farmers also face rejection of their produce by retailers due to poor appearance or supersized packages leading to post-retail spoilage (Mboya, 2013 ). Poor storage facilities lead to spoilage due to poor handling of food, on-farm pest infestation, mycotoxin and microbial build-up which reduce the value of the farm produce resulting in low income generation and substantial loss (Mboya, 2013).

#### **2.6.0: WOMEN AND SMALLHOLDER FARMING**

In most sub-Saharan African countries there has been an increasing outward migration of people mostly men, from their rural homes to seek better employment in the cities (UNEP, 2011, FAO, 2011). The outward migration of men has resulted in tremendous shifts in rural populations and left women in a dominant role of smallholder farming (Thamaga-Chitja, 2012). Due to male migration to urban areas for better livelihood opportunities, a larger percentage of rural women act as household heads, but have less access to productive resources like land, capital and credit facilities as compared to male headed households (FAO, 2011, Kapungu, 2013). Women smallholder farmers face multiple constraints more than those of men farmers (ActionAid, 2011), they tend to be invisible to policy makers because they are not regarded as 'productive' farmers (Chitja et al., 2016). Women smallholder farmers are usually deprived access to markets, major assets such as land, basic inputs and are usually left out from decision making processes (Ivy, 2014, ActionAid, 2011). In addition to their struggles, the ActionAid (2011) study revealed that women are also challenged by poverty, hunger and less access to education and health care facilities.

Women farmers have little or no access to credit due to their inability to own land that can be provided as collateral, high interest rates and are seen as too high risk (ActionAid, 2011, Hart, 2008). Credit is essential for boosting farmer's access to inputs, improving yields and accessing lucrative markets. Women face legal and cultural customs that hinder them from accessing financial services such as owning bank accounts, land and productive resources as well as acquiring loans (Kapungu, 2013). Women have the potential to generate more income and maintain their household food security, they play a major role in agriculture yet they have limited access to land, capital and labour as productive resources (FAO, 2011, Hart, 2008, Kapungu, 2013, Mabuza et al., 2013). In most cases, women are forced to sell their produce earlier at very low prices because they have poor access to storage and credit facilities (Kapungu, 2013).

#### **2.6.0: SMALLHOLDER FARMERS: GENDER AND ACCESS TO MARKETS**

Gender dimension of smallholder agricultural farming in sub-Saharan Africa focuses on the Gender-related constraints to market oriented production (David, 2015). African women farmers are often downgraded to smallholder subsistence farming whereas the male farmers are engaged in production for the market. Their productivity is mainly affected by cultural and inability to access productive resources, markets and information thus creating a gender gap (David, 2015, FAO, 2011, Mather et al., 2013). Most African nations prefer the patriarchal land access system which usually marginalise the women access of land. Land in South African and Lesotho rural areas is communally owned and administered by a Traditional Authority (Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). It is from these communal lands that smallholder farmers derive their livelihoods, food and nutrition. However, the communal land distribution remains in favour of men than women who are responsible for the majority if not all of the productive activities in farming in the household (Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele (2014) Further stated that lack of women empowerment resulted in poverty among women and their households, they also bear the burden of domestic household chores dictated by culture and often labelled "women's job".

The culturally stipulated roles of women's agriculture have adverse effects on household food security due to reduced market participation by smallholder women farmers (Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). Smallholder women farmers have to travel long distances with their meagre produce to access markets. They commonly rely on public transport and their absence from home literally means that their traditional household chores are put on hold and thus this hold-up impedes their powerful participation in the markets (Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014, Chitja et al., 2016).

In addition to the time-competition for women, women also try to keep their productive and reproductive roles in balance while maintaining a good food security status of the household (Mather et al., 2013, Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). Smallholder women farmers are challenged by other social problems like rape and HIV which make it difficult for them to travel to the market place. This reduces their potential to expand their production and consequently result in low income from homebound sales (Kapungu, 2013, Mather et al., 2013, Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014).

Smallholder farmers require access to Market Information for them to participate in markets, know the current prices as well as trade contracts and technical matters (Ferris et al., 2014, Kapungu, 2013). The problem of smallholder farmers' access to information is vested in the rural areas lack of mass media thereby depriving them information on supply and demand as well as setting prices (Kapungu, 2013, Magingxa et al., 2009).

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND DATA COLLECTION**

### **3.1.0: INTRODUCTION**

This study sought to investigate the relationship between gender and land access for smallholder farmers in Appelsbosch and Mathuleni area in the Local uMshwathi Municipality in KwaZulu Natal. A mixed methods research approach and purposive sampling were employed to select male and female respondents for data collection from eight farmers' groups who produce with the aim of consumption and sale of surplus produce in the markets. The mixed methods approach combines the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data for analysis by providing a complete comparison of the results to existing data for the purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and justification (Creswell, 2013, Wilson et al., 2016). The complex nature of the subjects under investigation were the reason why the mixed method approach was used. This method provided a deep understanding of how gender and land rights were related and how they enhance smallholder farmers' access to markets and productivity. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods reduce the potential chances of biases resulting from using only a single method (Wilson et al., 2016). The mixed method research offers great potential for generating new ways of understanding the complexities and contexts of uniquely diverse rural communities and capacities for socio-economic characteristics and generalization (De Lisle, 2011). The use of mixed methods improves accuracy and a greater understanding of smallholder farmers' land rights and land access, and how they utilise their land to earn livelihood through participation in markets.

Data was collected through questionnaires, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Structured questionnaires were completed by 135 respondents from eight farmers' groups in the Mathuleni area and Appelsbosch. Focus Group Discussions were also conducted to classify themes and concepts and key informant interviews were held with farmers' groups' committee members and extension officers. The data were then subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and content analysis. Content analysis has been defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The data from open ended questions, the key informant interviews and the focus group discussions were coded and analysed for the occurrence of common themes. The conclusions from both sets of results were compared for similarities and were then used for discussion and conclusions obtained from the study.

### 3.2.0: SITE SELECTION AND SAMPLING

The study was conducted in Appelsbosch and Mathuleni area in the uMshwathi Local Municipality in KwaZulu Natal. uMshwathi Municipality is located on the North-East Quadrant of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality in the KwaZulu Natal Province. It is one of the seven Local Municipalities in the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. It has a population of 106 374 people according to the 2011 census (STATSA, 2012). The uMshwathi Municipality is comprised of thirteen wards representing a range of predominantly rural settlements, agricultural landscapes, industrial, semi-rural to rural residential settlements. The uMshwathi Local Municipality is ideally situated within the uMgungundlovu District Municipality immediately adjacent to Pietermaritzburg. The municipality is in an area that was largely under the control of tribal authorities (chiefs and headmen) who continue to exercise complete and sole authority over land allocation (Bennett et al., 2013) The land is mostly agricultural, although urban development is to be found in the main towns. The communities living in the underdeveloped areas have extremely limited access to basic physical and social requirements and very few economic opportunities (LGH,2011).



Figure 3.1: The map of Local municipalities of KwaZulu-Natal showing the geographical location of uMshwathi local municipality.

### **3.2.1: AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

Agricultural activity dominates all other livelihood generation activities in Appelsbosch. Most of the population depend entirely on subsistence agricultural production for survival. The place has fertile and arable soils with high yield potential when well managed. Smallholder subsistence farming is the main type of farming in this area but, through the government assistance through extension services, smallholder farmers have been engaged in farming for consumption and for sale in the markets. The prominent crop is sugar cane farmed commercially on large pieces of land with forestry and lumbering actively present in the white owned territory. However, smallholder farmers exist on their traditionally controlled land along the edges of good arable land reserved for sugarcane and forestry farming. Their land is characterised by steep hills and rugged terrains which are less suitable for farming from which they grow several crops such as maize, beans, potatoes, vegetables. Green mealies and potatoes have been the most profitable crops for the smallholder farmers because of their high marketability.

Farmers come across several challenges in advancing agricultural production from subsistence farming to higher income pathways. Most farmers producing horticulture crops in rural areas have low education levels, they are usually older retired citizens, they own very small agricultural lands and often they struggle to obtain agricultural inputs. The high cost of inputs such as fertilizers, quality seeds, machinery, pest control chemicals and herbicides are major ailments of smallholder farmers who intend to improve their production. Furthermore, the smallholder farmers are challenged by the weak market linkages, inadequate extension services and access to credit. These hinder their adequacy of production, the quality and volume of produce resulting in very low fetched profits in the markets. Women are usually the larger group of farmers in most rural areas, they perform their farming tasks, take care of their families' livelihoods while they are also expected to perform their reproductive responsibilities. The challenges affect the smallholder farmers means of livelihood generation due to low levels of production and quality less valued in the markets.

### **3.2.2: FARMERS GROUPS COLLECTIVE ACTION**

Collective action is common in most rural African communities especially the agricultural activities. Rural communities unite to solve their challenges collectively often without pay or return of favours. Smallholder farmers are no exception to this format of self-help assistance in most rural communities

in South Africa. Farmers in the study area formed groups in their respective wards to tackle the challenges they face in agricultural production because being in groups enhanced their ability to access services and inputs which could have not been accessed individually. Group members contributed money to procure inputs in bulk and enjoy the benefit of the economies of scale, their group activity also enables them to access training from extension and other institutions. Knowledge and information sharing is common in farmers' groups thereby, strengthening their capacity and ability to produce for markets.

### **3.2.3: FOOD SECURITY STATUS**

Food security determines the quality of life for rural communities of developing countries. Food insecurity is considered as a major challenge in most African countries and thus, they have developed several strategies to improve household food security and wellbeing of the people (Shisana et al 2013). South Africa has achieved national food security status but, about 26% of the population remains challenged with accessing adequate food at all times (Du Toit et al, 2011). Agricultural practices are the major source of livelihood generation in most rural communities of South Africa, therefore the improvement of agriculture was seen by government and other institutions as a gateway out of poverty for smallholder farmers. Smallholder farmers are tasked with the provision of food and nutrition security and income for their households. Therefore, they began their participation in fast growing informal markets in their areas and through the extension support of government and private institutions they have been steadily producing both for consumption and for markets. Women form a larger part of the smallholder farmers and they face several challenges in participating in the markets thus, threatening their household food security. Securing women's land access rights and degenderizing of rural agriculture has been proved to improve their household food security status, health and education of their children (Landesa, 2013).

### **3.3.0: SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

Purposive sampling, which selects respondents with predetermined characteristics was used. In this case female and male respondents involved in farming for markets and were under the traditional authority rule were selected. This sampling technique was used to select the respondents to pick desired characteristics which were useful for this study from respondents who had the best knowledge concerning the research objectives (Creswell, 2013). Even though the respondents were selected through this sampling technique for their characteristics essential for this study, the study

was not representative of all smallholder farmers in South Africa. Regardless of this the smallholder farmers who were had knowledge about the research objectives were interviewed (Cohen et al., 2013).

#### **3.4.0: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS**

Both primary and secondary data were collected to achieve the research objectives. Primary data was collected directly from the farmers in the study areas using focus group discussions and survey questionnaires. Secondary data was obtained from reviewing relevant literature from numerous authors on how gender disparities and land access rights impact smallholder farmers market access in rural communities.

#### **3.4.1: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

The study used a survey questionnaire to obtain data on the smallholder farmer demographic characteristics, their thoughts, beliefs, perceptions (Denzin, 2000) and how they conduct their farming activities with the focus on gender relations and land access in their community. The questionnaire was made to contain both open and close ended questions to give the respondents the chance to express their detailed knowledge on observations, feelings, experience, perceptions on the gender and land access issues in their community and how they impact on their ability to access formal markets. The close-ended questions were included to allow respondents to select and rank from the options provided in the questions. The questionnaire was divided into three parts including: demographic information, land access by gender and market access for smallholder farmers.

The demographic data on the questionnaire comprised of questions that determined the age, gender, level of education, marital status, occupation and food security status of the participants. The second section included questions on land access, land access documentation, land use and size as well as challenges smallholder farmers face in accessing the land. The Last section focused mainly on the issues related to smallholder farmers market access, the challenges and availability of the markets.

The questionnaire was pre-tested on five smallholder farmers who randomly selected but were not to be included in the main research. The questionnaire was administered to them to check its flaws and relevant modifications were made after the pre-testing. Enumerators were trained and familiarized with the questionnaire before the data collection process. The enumerators interviewed



and assisted the farmers to fill the questionnaires ensuring clarity and direct communication with the farmers.

### **3.4.2: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

Focus groups discussions were conducted to obtain in depth qualitative information on land acquisition, land access, land rights gender and their impacts on smallholder market access. Kruger (1990) defined focus group as a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain opinions on a well-defined area of interest in a tolerant, free and comfortable setting. A focus group discussion is a type of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their attitude towards a product, their perceptions, beliefs and perspectives to create a meaningful understanding of their situation. (Neumann, 2000). Focus group discussions generate multiple viewpoints, perspectives and answers in a short time frame than it could be provided by multiple individual interviews (De Vos et al., 2002). Furthermore, focus group discussions enhance deep thoughts and arguments from respondents thus providing a wide range of information for analysis (De Vos et al, 2002). Farmers confirmed and disagreed on matters around gender, land access and market access. The data obtained from focus group discussions together with that from the questionnaires provides more detailed answers to research questions and overcomes the weaknesses and limitations of a single approach (Cresswell, 2013).

### **3.5.0: DATA ANALYSIS**

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected for comparison and enhancement of justifiable conclusions (Creswell, 2013). Data was obtained using a structured questionnaire and focus group discussions. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) was used to analyse the descriptive statistics and the content analysis. The responses to the close ended questions were coded and subjected to descriptive analysis through the SPSS. The open-ended questions from the questionnaire and the focus group discussion were analysed for the incidences of mutual themes. Kolanisi (2005) stated that focus groups were considered as a research instrument because the group context sessions created an environment within which the participants were able to reveal their experiences and ideas. The open-ended questions from the questionnaire and focus group discussions were analysed for the occurrence of common themes.

The conclusions from the separate results were compared for similarity and were both used to explain the findings and conclusions of the study. Qualitative content analysis involves a process designed to condense raw data into categories or themes based on valid inference and interpretation, it involves inductive reasoning, by which themes and categories emerge from the data through the researcher's careful examination and constant comparison. Generating concepts or variables from theory or previous studies is also very useful for qualitative research, especially at the inception of data analysis (Berg, 2001).

**Table 3.1 provides a summary of the objectives, data collection tools, the type of data collected and the methods for data analysis.**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Data to be collected</b>	<b>Data collection tools</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>
To determine the relationship between gender and communal land access	How land is owned, gender dynamics	Semi structured questionnaire Focus groups	Descriptive Statistical Analysis, Frequencies, graphs Content analysis
To identify factors affecting smallholder farmers' accessing land and their effects on market access and how land access enhances smallholder farmers' access to markets	Age, gender, education, experience, resources, constraints to market access	Focus group discussion Questionnaire	Content analysis, Descriptive Statistical Analysis,
To identify the factors affecting smallholder farmers to access agriculture markets	Seasonal Trends, number of market actors, price data, quantity and quality of production	Focus group discussion Questionnaire	Content analysis Descriptive Stats

## **CHAPTER 4: DOES GENDER AFFECT COMMUNAL LAND ACCESS AND SUCCESS IN FARM-INCOME AND HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY? <sup>1</sup>**

### **ABSTRACT**

Smallholder farmers have been key custodians of most African nation's food and nutrition security, yet they are challenged by several factors including lack of access to land, access to credit and access to formal markets. Women smallholder farmers are the most affected due to the patrilineal nature of communal land allocation in most rural societies. However, women smallholder farmers continue to produce food for their households and earn income for their livelihoods. This study assessed the relationship between gender and communal land access and how they collectively impact on smallholder farmers' access to markets. A sample of 135 households was selected purposively in Appelsbosch, KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa. The mixed methods approach of research was used. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics in SPSS and content analysis. The results indicated that women land rights were mostly secondary and land access was closely linked to relationship with male relatives through marriage ties. The study also found that smallholder farmers faced numerous challenges in terms of accessing land and markets therefore, more equitable measures for secure land rights, improvement in extension services and creation of engendered and stable markets for smallholder farmers were recommended.

**Keywords: communal land access rights, gender, smallholder, food security**

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<sup>1</sup> This draft manuscript has been prepared for submission in an appropriate policy related journal.

#### 4.1.0: INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUALIZATION

Several Sub Saharan African countries have relied on smallholder agriculture to meet the food security and livelihood requirements of their citizens who mostly reside in rural areas. Agriculture is their major source of livelihood and income generation which ensures their food security and serves as their gateway out of poverty. In South Africa, women farmers are key in producing food for the ultra-poor for extra food (Stats SA 2012). Smallholder farmers therefore require land as a productive resource to continue producing food for their households and for sale of surplus yields in times of good harvests. The land which smallholder farmers till is facilitated by patrilineal customary laws where women usually have secondary rights as wives (Murugani *et al*, 2014). In many parts of the world, women's rights to land and property are systematically denied. Rural communities in South Africa are governed by Traditional Authorities (TA) who allocate and control land through customary laws and socially embedded practices. The land is commonly given to men by the Chief through the patriarchal land allocation system which favours men over women. Customary laws provide women with fewer or less secure rights than men, this leaves many women almost entirely dependent on the men in their lives for basic economic survival and vulnerable to violence, poverty, and food insecurity, particularly if widowed, divorced, single, or in marriages not formally recognized. (FAO, 2010). Despite the insecure land rights, women have been and continue to be the main actors in rural subsistence farming. Women, as shown by the FAO (2015) make up to 43% of agricultural workforce and they spend more hours on the farms than men and livestock combined (Murugani et al., 2014, Tadesse and Bahiigwa, 2015, Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014), Furthermore, Harun (2014) indicated that women in some African nations spend up to 60% of their time on agricultural activities and they contribute about half of the labour requirements on the farm.

Land and property rights increase women's self-sufficiency, reducing their possible dependence on men and possible entrapment in abusive relationships. This may enable greater control over sexual relations, empowering women, and improving their ability to produce food for their families and selling the surplus produce (FAO,2010). Several studies indicate that smallholder farmers with secure land and property rights have greater motivation to make productivity enhancing investments because they have greater confidence that they can recover their investments over the medium and long terms (Landesa, 2014). Secure rights also provide improved opportunities for families to access financial services, good education for children, resilience to shock due to improved savings and adequate nutritious food at all times. FAO (2014) and several studies have revealed that secure rights

to land and property for women can provide a roadway to increased agricultural productivity, food security and sustainability.

Despite the heavy presence of women in agricultural production in most rural communities, women remain deprived of the access to secure land rights. This in turn may lead to food insecurity, vulnerability to hazards and diseases, poverty and inability to create sustainable livelihoods. As a result, women may be forced to pursue alternative income generation activities apart from agriculture wherein they may be subjected to exploitation or abuse (Bayisenge et al., 2015, Doss et al., 2014). Sircar and Pal (2014a) indicated that land access can have multiplier impacts on women's socio-economic status, reduction of gender based violence, enhanced food security and increased agricultural productivity. Women's access to resources such as paid work, land, water, credit and other productive resources have a greater impact on household food security, children welfare, education and health than similar sources in men's control (Doss, 2013). Furthermore, women have been proven to be better than men at prioritizing the needs of families from the income they generate either through farming or income earned from paid work (Bayisenge et al., 2015). Most studies indicated that low income households are kept above the poverty line by women with their little income. Women's access to land has been confirmed to be of great importance for household productivity, even though they are challenged by the gender inequality constraints which prevent them from accessing credit, market incentives, additional land and paid work (Agarwal, 2015, Baiphethi and Jacobs, 2009, Deere and De Leal, 2014, Doss, 2013).

The dominant patriarchal system of land access in most rural African communities deprives women equal access and ownership of land (Arisunta, 2011). Women require secure rights for usage and control of land for their gendered role of providing and maintaining livelihoods and household food security. Most studies outline the direct relationship between gender and the accessibility of productive resources such as land or water, indicating that gender is a critical factor for women's land rights. Without land or productive resources, women fail to capitalise on developmental initiatives aimed at improving their livelihoods, they are constrained by issues such as poor infrastructure, lack of transport to markets, high cost technology or lack of labour. Women produce most of the food using simple tools and working long hours on the farms in most rural communities, yet they own a lesser percentage of the land. This may be due to because rural land administration which is under Traditional Authority (TA), is centred on customary tenure wherein traditional norms

and cultural beliefs prevail as the major determinants of decision making. Land is communally owned under customary tenure and is usually allocated to male heads of households (Arisunta,2010).

#### **4.2.0: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND DATA COLLECTION**

##### **4.2.1: METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION**

The study employed the mixed method of data collection due to the complex nature of gender and land access impacts on markets access. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from 135 smallholder farmers using semi-structured questionnaires with open and closed ended questions and focus group discussions with the aid of language interpreters. The mixed methods combine both qualitative and quantitative data for analysis by providing a complete comparison of the results to existing data for the purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration (Creswell, 2003). The farmers were mainly monolingual speaking (isiZulu) so it was important to find local translators. Focus group discussions were held and were conducted by trained facilitators acquainted the subjects of agriculture, food security, market access, gender and the local language.

Data was collected through questionnaires, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Structured questionnaires were completed by 135 respondents from eight farmers' groups in the Mathuleni area and Appelsbosch. Focus Group Discussions were also conducted to classify themes and concepts and key informant interviews were held with farmers' groups' committee members and extension officers. The data were then subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and content analysis. Content analysis has been defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The data from open ended questions, the key informant interviews and the focus group discussions were coded and analysed for the occurrence of common themes. The conclusions from both sets of results were compared for similarities and were then used for discussion and conclusions obtained from the study.

##### **4.2.2: SITE SELECTION AND SAMPLING**

Purposive sampling technique is used in selecting certain units or cases "based on a specific purpose rather than randomly" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003), it involves selecting cases that show or describe what is typical about the participants in the area of study, illustrative rather than definitive tendencies (Patton, 2002). In this case female and male smallholder farmers engaged in agricultural

production for participation in informal markets and were under the Traditional Authority (TA) administration were selected. This sampling technique was used to select the respondents to pick desired characteristics which were useful for this study from respondents who had the best knowledge concerning the research objectives (Creswell, 2013). Even though the respondents were selected through this sampling technique for their characteristics essential for this study, the study was not representative of all smallholder farmers in South Africa. However, the smallholder farmers who were knowledgeable about the market access and gender disparities in their community were interviewed (Cohen et al., 2013).

UMshwathi Municipality is located on the North-East Quadrant of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality in the KwaZulu Natal Province. It is one of the seven Local Municipalities in the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. It has a population of 106 374 people according to the 2011 census (STATSA, 2012). The uMshwathi Municipality is comprised of thirteen 13 wards representing a range of predominantly rural settlements, agricultural landscapes, industrial, semi-rural to rural residential settlements. The uMshwathi Local Municipality is ideally situated within the uMgungundlovu District Municipality immediately adjacent to Pietermaritzburg. The municipality is in an area that was largely under the control of tribal authorities until very recently.

The land is mostly agricultural, although urban development is to be found in the main towns. The communities living in the underdeveloped areas have extremely limited access to basic physical and social requirements and very few economic opportunities (LGH,2011). The prominent crop is sugar cane farmed commercially on large pieces of land with forestry and lumbering actively present in the white owned territory. However, smallholder farmers exist on their traditionally controlled land along the edges of good arable land reserved for sugarcane and forestry farming. Their land is characterised by steep hills and rugged terrains which are less suitable for farming from which they grow several crops such as maize, beans, potatoes, vegetables.

#### **4.3.0: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study sought to determine the relationship between gender and communal land access and how the two factors affect smallholder farmers' access to markets in rural KwaZulu Natal using the Mathuleni area and Appelsbosch near Tongaat as study areas.

**Table 4.1: Demographic data**

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	22	16.3
Female	113	83.7
<b>Age</b>		
<45 Yrs.	25	18.5
46-55 Yrs.	33	24.4
56-65 Yrs.	41	30.4
>65 Yrs.	36	26.7
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Never Married	33	24.4
Married	86	63.7
Divorced	3	2.2
Widowed	13	9.6
<b>Education</b>		
No Education	35	25.9
Finished Primary	60	44.4
Finished Sec Sch.	21	15.6
High Sch. & Vocational Trained	19	14.1
<b>Source of Income</b>		
Government Grants	81	60.0
Remittances	4	3.0
Wages & Casual Income	13	9.6
Farm Harvest	37	27.4
<b>Occupation</b>		
Farming	122	90.4
Self Employed	13	9.6
<b>Food Security Hunger</b>		
Rarely (1 to 2 times)	14	10.4
Sometimes (3 to 10 times)	95	70.4
Often (more than 10times)	26	19.3
<b>Farming Techniques</b>		
Hand Planting	50	37.0
Machinery Methods	21	15.6
Mixed Methods	64	47.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>(N)135</b>	<b>100.0</b>

There was a total of 135 respondents interviewed and they were members of eight farmers' groups in the study areas. The farmers in the study were mostly (83.7%) female and most of them (57.1%) were over the age of 50 years. The respondents were mostly married (63.7%), very few were divorced (3%) and the younger respondents (8.5%) were never married. The heavy presence of females in this study indicates that agriculture is their main source of livelihood and means to obtain



extra food (Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). Rural women engage in land based agricultural practices for livelihood generation and household food security (FAO, 2014, Landesa, 2015). However, food production for subsistence is still linked to the patriarchal informed role of women in most rural African households. The other reason for the predominant presence of women in agriculture is the common trend of young, strong men to seek better paying jobs in big cities and thereby leave agricultural production in the hands of women (Aliber, 2009). However, when the men lose their high paying jobs, or cannot find any, some come home and join the females in agricultural production (Maziya, 2013). However, it is concerning to explore where most of the young men remain since the groups remain female dominated.

There were more people within the age group of 56-65 years (41 %). The combination of the 56-65 years' age group with those above 65 years (36 %) yields 77.8 %, this value indicates that most the respondents were older, a common characteristic of many rural communities in Sub Saharan Africa where usually people retire from urban life and resort to farming as a means of livelihood generation (Gundu, 2009). There were few young persons in the survey as a combination of the groups of less than 25 years and 26 -35 age groups yielded only 15.6 % of the sample. This is in line with the literature which clearly indicates that youth in most cases are not directly involved in farming due to various factors (FAO, 2011a). The young people usually find agriculture to be laborious with little returns and felt it was destined for older people. Murugani et al (2014) also mentioned that the fewer numbers of youth in agriculture raises concerns about the sustainability of rural agriculture, food security and knowledge transfer. It is plausible to purport that an improvement in markets and income may improve this and change the narrative that success is not possible in smallholder agriculture. The youth usually seek for better paying jobs in cities and this may be attributed to their weak land rights and lack of farm inputs. Land is allocated to male children and thus limit the chances of young girls to seek agriculture as sustainable means of livelihood.

The marital statuses of the 135 respondents interviewed as seen in table 4.3. 7(15.58%) had never married, 33(73.33%) were married and 5(11.11%) were widowed. No respondent reported to be divorced; this reflects the strong custom and traditional setup of most rural communities whereby being single is not encouraged and marriage is regarded as a platform for family extension. The respondents who were not yet married occupied the youth age group and could be said not to have reached marriage age. Marital status is an essential factor to use in the relationship of households

with their land issues. Thamaga-Chitja *et al.* (2010)'s study showed that marriage was important in determining access to land for women. Single, divorced and unmarried women have poorer access to land compared to married women (Thamaga-Chitja, 2012). Moreover, most women emphasised through Focus Group Discussion that even though they did not have direct access to land which they obtain mostly through marriage, they had stronger control over their lands and could make major farming decisions. This is brought forth by the fact that the men and boys in the community usually migrate to urban areas seeking for better paying jobs. They further indicated that single and widowed women were allocated land by the chief if they were beyond marriage age but could take care of their families and they were custodians of their land if their husbands' died. Maziya (2013) indicated the importance of strong marriage ties regarding livelihood generation in that when men earn income in urban areas women engage in agriculture activities and care for the family. However, most studies reveal that women are usually exposed to numerous tasks in the absence of men, Kapungu (2013) mentioned that they face labour and skill shortages, whilst they are expected to perform household chores as well as reproductive responsibilities. Cultural norms also dictate dire challenges for women by coining some tasks to be largely conducted by women and seen as part of "being" a woman and others by men also part of "being" a man. With men absent, women are therefore severely burdened by the heavy farming duties in their quest for the household food security and better livelihoods. The farmers indicated that the availability of good extension services together with their cooperative action through farmers' groups enabled them to prosper using the meagre land for farming. However, their major constraint was when they needed to expand their land for more farming due to weak access to land rights and lack of support from men.

### 4.3.1: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

**Table 4.2 Focus group discussion responses to questions on gender and land access**

<b>Table 4.3.8: Focus Group Discussion responses to questions on gender and land access</b>		
<b>Theme/s</b>	<b>Concept/s</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Land access by gender	Societal perceptions and attitudes	<p>"Yes women have access to land, they are allowed to use their household land because take care of their children and husbands"</p> <p>"We have land because we are married, it is a family land so we are allowed to use it"</p> <p>"Women own land together with their husbands because they are married and they have equal rights"</p> <p>"We are now all equal, women can now go to the chief and ask for farming land"</p> <p>"Yes women have access to land because they are farmers and know how to use it"</p> <p>"Men and women have access to family land, but women are the only ones cultivating it"</p> <p>"Women have access to land but it is small for production"</p>
Gender imparity	Customary operational system	<p>"Single women are permitted to request land only when they have a boy child"</p> <p>"Land is given to men but women are allowed to use it"</p> <p>"Only boys inherit the land"</p> <p>"If you are not using you land, you can allow other farmer to use it upon agreements"</p> <p>"The chief takes back the land if it is not used and allocates it to the next farmer in need of land"</p>
Societal patrilineal land access influence	Common norms and traditional and cultural expectations	<p>"Land is allocated to boys than girls because girls are expected to be married and start their families elsewhere"</p> <p>"Women can obtain land but they must be old and responsible enough to care for their children"</p> <p>"Land used to be only for men but now we all have equal rights"</p>
Market access by gender	Societal perceptions and attitudes	<p>"Both men and women have access to markets but women are the ones active in farming and selling the harvest"</p> <p>"Women work hard to produce enough products for household consumption and markets"</p> <p>"We have independent traders call and come to our farms when the crops are ready, sometimes they buy all the crops but sometimes we do not sell"</p> <p>"We work together with men on our farms and sell the products together"</p> <p>"We do not have a central market location to sell our products"</p> <p>"We do not have means to transport our produce to the market, when traders do not call we are forced to consume our crops"</p> <p>"We do not have a place to sell our farm produce."</p> <p>"The market is far we do not have transport to take our produce"</p> <p>"The market price is too low; we not make profit but we work hard"</p> <p>"The cost of fertilizer and tractor hire is too high for us to produce efficiently, but we sell the little we get locally and to independent traders"</p>

The Table 4.2 outlines the Focus Group Discussion themes, concepts and responses obtained from the farmers.

#### **4.3.2: SMALLHOLDER FARMERS' LAND ACCESS**

The study also examined the land sizes per farmer, period of land access, land rights and proof of land ownership. The most common methods of land acquisition were through allocation by traditional authority and inheritance. Some methods such as borrowing of land, gifts of land, renting and sharecropping were also practiced though at a smaller scale. Most respondents (41.5%) reported that their household land was allocated by the resident chief, 32.6% of the surveyed farmers inherited their land from their parents or relatives, 24.4% of the farmers rented their land for farming while 1.5% of them rented their farming land. The land rental was largely a mutual verbal agreement between the land owners and the farmers. There were no formal contracts for land renting but, a socially accepted agreement whereby money or shared crops could be used for payment per growing season or until the owner of the land decided to cultivate their land. Sharecropping was a generally used method for obtaining access to additional land, it was seen by the farmers as the best method to utilise unused land as well as engage the non-farming households into the farming activity. The farmers in the areas surveyed indicated that they obtained their agricultural land from the Traditional Authority structures and inheritance. Land access according to Studies by (Chitja et al., 2016, Doss et al., 2014) is central to social identity, cultural cohesion and is the source of sustainable livelihood generation.

The gendered allocation of land was also revealed by this study whereby 90.4% of the surveyed farmers indicated that women can own land in the community while 9.6% indicated that women could not own land. Furthermore, 56% of the surveyed farmers indicated that women can obtain land access rights through marriage, 43% through allocation by the chief and 19% through inheritance from their parents while the rest showed that women can also obtain land rights through other means such as borrowing and land purchases. The allocation of land to smallholder farmers was affected by cultural and customary laws which are patriarchal in nature. Land is traditionally allocated to men and boys in the community by the chief or the parents to their sons (Chitja et al., 2016, Deere and De Leal, 2014, Joireman, 2008, Kabeer, 2010).

Women farmers rely heavily on marriage ties to get access to land (Deere and De Leal, 2014, Doss et al., 2015, Fletschner and Kenney, 2014); some women serve as custodians of the land while their sons are younger (Chitja et al., 2016, Deere and De Leal, 2014, Doss et al., 2014). Girls are usually not provided land as it is believed that they will get married and leave their homes. Some women indicated that they “owned” the land they cultivated, because they could cultivate any crop they

wished on the land without seeking for their husband's permission. Further probing established that they had inherited the land from their natal families or their deceased husbands. Chitja et al, (2016), maintained that it was important to establish how land access came about as indicated by some studies that access could be obtained in other ways such as being widowed. Women may not afford to purchase land on their own without the assistance of their male relatives, therefore, their security of tenure is based on the strength of their marital and family relations.

The farmers explained during the Focus group discussion that women could be allocated land by the resident chief but, they should be married and show the ability to cultivate the land. Men received much bigger land portions than women, they could keep livestock and easily obtain additional land if they required it, but women had to be married or be at a responsible age to be allocated land by the chief. One female farmer commented *"It is possible for women to be given more land, but they are given smaller sized land, if we do not use the land, the chief takes it back and allocates it to the next person."* Furthermore, the farmers reported that it does happen that people lose their land rights if they leave the land fallow, but, it was a rare occurrence because many households are engaged in farming for survival and income generation.

Women are said to be the first to lose land rights in cases of disputes as they possess subsidiary rights while men have main rights to land (Dancer, 2017, Tsikata, 2016). The surveyed farmers indicated that most people were aware of their land rights, they sought assistance from the chief in cases of disputes on the land. Furthermore, the FGD revealed that women with access to land were able to sustain livelihoods and play vital roles in household income generation regardless of the size of their land. When women gain access to land through marriage, their major purpose is to feed the family, they produce crops for subsistence and sell surplus produce. However, they cannot sustain their families on their crop sales alone due to the minute revenue they obtain. This as mentioned by Kurebwa (2015) and Lambrecht (2016) placed women in a position whereby they became labourers with no financial remuneration for their work. Moreover, the farmers indicated that, they obtained little from the sale of their crops thus, they could not purchase inputs for the next planting season because they use the funds for their family's household food requirements and for their children's education. Whitehead and Tsikata mentioned that in some patriarchal societies, women cannot have rights to land independently of their male relatives or husbands. The gender disparities towards land rights for women farmers contribute to their low productivity and these greatly affects their livelihood. Women face far more challenges in accessing land than men, despite strong legislative

and constitutions that recognize equal rights for both men and women (Fonjong et al., 2012, Lastarria-Cornhiel et al., 2014).

#### 4.3.3: MODES IN WHICH FEMALE FARMERS LOSE LAND RIGHTS IN THE COMMUNITY

**Table 4.3. The Modes in which female Farmers lose land right in the community**

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Divorce	59	43.7
Long Time without use	33	24.4
Family Disagreement	13	9.6
Husband Death	8	5.9
Other	22	16.3
Total	135	100.0

According to the respondents, the most common way in which women could lose land was through divorce, this was confirmed by 43.7% of the interviewed farmers. Farmers who spent long periods of time without planting their fields had their land taken back by the Traditional Authority to be distributed to other citizens who require farming land. Loss of user rights to land for women in this study could be attributed to divorce, this was highlighted by 43.7% of the respondents, furthermore 24.4% of the surveyed farmers mentioned that women lose land rights if they spent long periods of time without tilling the land usually when they leave to work in places far from home. The land is returned to the custody of the traditional authority and will be allocated to another person who needs land. The chief has the power to reclaim fallow land and may reallocate it to another farmer or use it for developmental purposes. Fallow land can be lost regardless of the farmers' gender or status however; women are the most vulnerable to losing their land due to their secondary land access rights. This customal land allocation practice gave rise to several modes of land acquisition such as sharecropping or renting. Sharecropping, largely explained as the arrangement in which the tenant pays a pre-agreed share of the harvested crops to the land owner is the mostly used method. The farmer and landowner may also choose to divide the land into two parts which will be independently managed by the landowner and the tenant (Fonjong et al., 2012, Kabeer, 2010, Lambrecht and Asare, 2015). This is done in effort to keep the land cultivated and prevent the TA

from reclaiming it when it remains fallow and to promote sustainable food production for household food security.

When marriage ends through divorce, women lose their land rights and may be forced to return to their natal homes (Doss et al., 2015, Lastarria-Cornhiel et al., 2014). Some respondents attested that women were allowed to keep the land because they were caregivers of their children. This indicates a socially accepted practice that actually results in land access in an indirect way versus a more equitable practice where women of all categories should have access to land based on need (Thamaga-Chitja, 2012, Tsikata, 2016). The focus group discussion revealed that women could own land after the death of their husbands. Female land access was achieved mainly through the marriage as well as through the absence of husbands.

#### **4.3.4: EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE SMALLHOLDER FARMERS**

The results in table 4 indicate that 25.9% of the farmers had no formal education. Primary school education was attended by only 44.4% of the farmers while 15.6% of the farmers attended only up to secondary level. Moreover, the study also revealed that 14.1% of the respondents had received High school and vocational training. Education level plays a significant role in the smallholder farmers' management of their farms. Mudhara (2013) mentioned that low education and limited access to information usually diminish the quality of management and production on smallholder farms. Low levels of education affect the smallholder farmers' adoption of new technologies that could improve their farming. Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele (2014) also mentioned that poor formal education for smallholder farmers in rural areas together with their continued practice of rain-fed agriculture lowers their agricultural productivity. Smallholder farmers depend wholly on agriculture for their livelihood therefore low agricultural produce threatens their livelihoods and food security (FAO, 2013, Sabahelkheir and Hassan (2015). Smallholder farmers depend heavily on subsistence agriculture and they consider it as their gateway out of poverty and food insecurity (FAO, 2014, Guevas and Anderson, 2016). It is through agriculture that most families could afford better education for their children (Landesa, 2014). With women farmers being the main participants in agricultural production in relation to men, it was therefore important to measure their education levels owing to the challenges they faced due to customs and cultural norms. The ability to read and write gives smallholder farmers the opportunity to learn new farming technologies, postharvest handling, pest and disease control and general farm management. Illiteracy is a major restriction for

smallholder farmer's production for it usually leads to poor access to proper agricultural support structures, extension and market access information (DAFF, 2012; Khumalo, 2013).

The low education levels for the farmers could be attributed to the apartheid system which segregated black rural communities to marginal less productive locations; homelands with little or no basic amenities such as schools and hospitals. Furthermore, low levels of education impede smallholder farmer's ability to access relevant information, improved farming methods or accessing lucrative markets. These therefore negatively affects their livelihood and food security. Maremera (2013) together with Mkeni *et al* (2010) reported that there was a high level of illiteracy among smallholder farmers in rural areas of South Africa. Lastarria-Cornhiel (2006) further articulates that women have fewer access to education and less chances to earn a skill than the men. This skills difference affects women farmers in their agricultural practices, when women farmers have no formal agricultural training they fail to benefit from the extension services which could have improved their yields (Chitja et al, 2016). Lastarria-Cornhiel (2006) and Chitja et al 2016 mentioned that women farmers with low literacy and numeracy level cannot benefit from recommendations provided in extension literature. Women farmers with low education levels are unable to benefit from formal contracts with supermarkets or government food programmes, they also fail to access formal markets and export of produce due to their low education status. With low education levels, women farmers are not able to adhere to proper use of chemicals and thus fail to meet high formal market requirements or obtain lower yields.

However, the farmers indicated through focus group discussions that they obtained several kinds of trainings from their extension officer, from independent organisations such as Potato SA, mass media and through sharing with other farmers. This shows strong social cohesion in their community which can be used for their benefit in terms of increasing agricultural output.



#### 4.3.5: LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES AND SOURCES OF INCOME

**Table 4.4** *The sources of income by smallholder farmers*

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Pensions	65	48.1
Remittances	4	3.0
Wages	9	6.7
Farm Harvest	37	27.4
Casual Income	4	3.0
Government Grants	16	11.9
Total	135	100.0

Table 4.3.4 shows the household income sources for the smallholder farmers. The main source of income was the government grants 60% followed by Farm harvests 27.4%. These indicated that farmers relied mostly on government grants and farm harvests for their household income. This could be mainly due to the dominance of old age group of the interviewed respondents. The smallholder farmers 27.4% also obtained income from the sale of their farm harvests from their small farms. The focus group discussions with the farmers revealed that despite the fact that most farmers were able to produce crops of high quality after they were trained by their extension officers and some independent organisations such as Potato South Africa, they could not rely only on farming as a source of income due to barriers of agricultural production. Farmers mentioned that their main barriers to agricultural production were access to additional land, farm inputs and access to agricultural markets. This they mitigate by employing other sources of income such as remittances, grants, pensions, wages and casual income. In this study 3% of the respondents reported that they received remittances, 9.6% received wages and casual income.

In most cases the remittances received by the farmers were sent by their children or spouses who work in paid jobs in the cities or in commercial farms away from their homes. The women farmers mentioned that they controlled their income from farming, however it was usually not enough to sustain a household needs and also be used for the acquisition of farm inputs. This was mentioned by the farmers during the focus group discussions, “We do not get enough money from the crops we sell, we rely on individual traders who visit our farms in their vans to buy our crops at low prices”.

The farmers sold their crops at predetermined farm gate prices, with every farmer given a chance to trade their crops so long as they were available. Despite the fact that each farmer was provided with a chance to trade their crops, this arrangement limited their income earnings and was highly uncertain. The independent traders had means of transportation for obtaining produce from different small farms at low farm gate prices, whereas the farmers would benefit more if they had their own mode of transport which they could collectively use to access bigger markets or higher prices.

#### 4.3.5: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND LAND ACQUISITION

**Table 4.5 Agricultural land acquisition methods for males and females in Appelsbosch**

Household Member (n=135)		HH LAND ACCESS			
		Rented	Given by Chief	Inherited	Total
Male	Count	4	11	7	22
	%	12.1%	19.0%	15.9%	16.3%
Female	Count	29	47	37	113
	%	87.9%	81.0%	84.1%	83.7%
Total	Count	33	58	44	135
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

$\chi^2 = 0.729$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p = 0.694$

The main methods of accessing land in the surveyed communities were land allocated by traditional authority, through renting or through inheritance. A comparison of these methods of agricultural land allocation for male and females was made as shown in the Table 3.4.5. This section outlines the relationship between gender and land acquisition.

Both men (45.5%) and women (40.7%) had good access to land allocated by the traditional authority, they also had access to inherited land. However, focus group discussions revealed that even though women claimed to have access to both TA given land and inherited land, they only possessed secondary rights while men had full control over the land. The patrilineal land allocation and inheritance system gives men preference over women during land allocation (Doss, 2013, Fletschner and Kenney, 2014, Thamaga-Chitja, 2012). The Chi-square analysis indicated an insignificant relationship between the gender and land access in the surveyed area ( $\chi^2 = 0.729$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $p = 0.694$ ).

This means access to land was dependent on gender in favour of the male farmer. The farmers indicated that women are mostly the custodians of their husband's land, they obtain secondary land rights through marriage or as landholder for the male child.

Land allocation by the traditional authority and inheritance contributed significantly to smallholder female farmers land access like they do for smallholder male farmers. The study found out that land allocation by traditional authority as well as land inheritance were prominent in Appelsbosch, a situation also identified in rural areas by (Fonjong et al., 2012, Kabeer, 2010, Lastarria-Cornhiel et al., 2014) in their studies on women and land rights in rural African countries. In most African communities, agricultural production plays a major role in the sustainability of rural livelihoods. Rural communities usually acquire land from Traditional Authorities who control and allocate land to citizens. However, women land rights are usually restrained due to the patriarchal nature of land allocation (Kapungu, 2013). Moreover, women despite their major role in rural agriculture continue to receive small farming plots through their male relatives (Galiè et al., 2015, Ivy, 2014, Murugani et al., 2013).

#### 4.3.6: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND LAND ACCESS

**Table 4.6 Land access for men and women in Appelsbosch**

Household Member (n= 135)		Land Access by Gender (%)			
		Man	Woman	Both	Total
Male	Count	7	1	14	22
	% of Total	5.2%	0.7%	10.4%	16.3%
Female	Count	42	26	45	113
	% of Total	31.1%	19.3%	33.3%	83.7%
Total	Count	49	27	59	135
	% of Total	36.3%	20.0%	43.7%	100.0%

$\chi^2 = 5.673$ , df = 2, p-value = 0.059

Male children were mostly favoured over the females by parents when distributing land. The survey showed that both men and women had equal access to land (33.3%), followed by men (31.1%) independently having superior land access rights compared to women (19.3%). Even though the smallholder farmers in Appelsbosch indicated dual ownership of land, the focus group discussion revealed that men owned more land and could easily acquire the land from the TA. The Chi square

test showed an insignificant relationship between gender and land access ( $X^2 = 5.673$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.059$ ). This means that land access was not dependent on gender. However even though females felt strong access of the land because they were the main workers of the land, men possessed more power and command on the land despite their regular absence on the farming activities. Women could request land from the TA but they reported that this was mostly enabled by marriage ties whereby culturally men are the ones required to request land.

A comparison between men and women 's land access and proof of land access was made as shown in Table 4.3.6. The smallholder farmers were asked about the land access rights in the household and moreover they were asked about the proof of land access and the bearer of the said document. The study found from the interviewed respondents that land was owned either by men only, both men and women or by women. From the Focus group discussion, the study found that men possessed full control and user rights on the land they owned and they could request for more land from the TA without any hassle, but women owned land by being married or having been married and they reported that it was not so easy for them to acquire land from the TA especially for unmarried women. However, most women reported having equal land access rights with their husbands and that they could make decisions on what to plant on their agricultural lands. Despite this assertion, the study observed differences between the farmers regarding the transfer of land to male and female children. Women gain full land user rights when their husbands die, they are bound by the customary law which states that women cannot inherit the matrimonial land. The widowed women usually act as trustees for their sons until they come of age and could represent themselves (Chitja et al, 2016). One of the farmers mentioned that *“Widows are allowed to retain their husbands land as long as they abide by the customs and use the land for the benefit of their children, but if they do not use the land the family can take control of the land or it can be taken by the chief.”*.

Even though it was possible for widows to lose land, the farmers reported that it was a rare occurrence due to the strong cultural and social characteristics in their community. The smallholder farmers also mentioned that the improvement in their farming methods and growing markets motivate every farmer to work on their land and earn a living. The cooperative action by their farmers' groups have made it easier for the farmers to access farm inputs they could not afford when they were alone. *“We contribute money in our farmers group to buy good seeds and fertilizer that we can plant on our land and sell in the market”*. The women 's access to land allows them to continually

produce crops for sale in local markets, they have garnered adequate confidence and belief in their agricultural prowess which they employed to sustain their livelihoods.

Men and women have different access to productive resources even though they appear to play equal roles in agricultural production in most rural communities. In most rural farming communities in South Africa, women are usually systematically denied full land and property rights through laws that give women less secure land rights than men, biased customary land allocation and practices that leave women dependent on men for land access. The reduced access to land for women reduces their capacity to produce enough food and thus leaves them vulnerable to violence, food insecurity and poverty predominantly if they are widowed, single, divorced or in unrecognized marriages (FAO,2010). Smallholder women farmers require secured land rights to maintain their household food security, prosperity, resilience to shocks for sustained market access (Landesa,2015).

#### 4.3.7: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND LAND CERTIFICATION

**Table 4.7 Land access certification of men and women**

Household Member (n= 135)		GENDER		Total
		Male	Female	
Both	Count	12	20	32
	% of Total	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%
Woman	Count	0	28	28
	% of Total	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Man	Count	10	65	75
	% of Total	13.3%	86.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	22	113	135
	% of Total	16.3%	83.7%	100.0%

$\chi^2 = 16.481$ , df = 2, p-value = 0.000

The farmers were asked about their possession of documents that served as proof of land access and whose name was written on the said document. The chi square results in table 4.3.6 indicate that there was a significant relationship between the gender of the respondents and the land certification which proved their access of land. About 86.7% of the female respondents reported that men were the sole owners of their land and they had their names written on the “chief’s letter”; a document

provided by the resident chief to serve as proof of access for the bearer. A fewer percentage of females 62.5% reported that the land belonged to both the man and woman because they were married and that both their names were borne by the land document. Land allocation had been traditionally reserved for males, who would be the only ones allowed to communicate with the chief or inherit land from their parents in most patriarchal societies. However, the changes in customary laws and inclusion of gender equality provided women with equal rights to access land and other productive resources. Some studies argue that the gender equality rights exist only on paper but not in practise whereby the majority of women remain largely marginalised (Chitja et al, 2016, Doss, 2014).

The strong land access rights were highlighted in the focus group discussions where some respondents mentioned that *“ever since we began selling our produce our children are always at school, they are healthy and we have happy families.”* this is in line with the literature which explained that, women who owned land and had secured land rights, they usually produced adequate food for their families and their children were less likely to be underweight or be sick (Landesa, 2014). Women who owned land dedicated more of their income to their children’s education while they also managed to save some money for other household requirements and for purchasing farm inputs.

Women in most rural communities devoted more hours working on the land they hardly owned (FAO,2012). They have been shown to be active players in rural agricultural production despite the common challenges they come across which include poor access to productive resources such as land and water. However, several studies often focus on women’s access to land and other productive resources but left out proof of land access by either men or women. Women in most patrilineal societies acquired land rights through marriage ties and thus had secondary rights to land. This arrangement usually reduced their security of land rights. Secure women’s land rights promote prosperity, good education, nutrition and resilience to shocks in households.

#### **4.4.0: LAND USER RIGHTS, FOOD SECURITY AND MARKET ACCESS**

The study included questions on land rights between men and women, land access and proof of land access. These were included to get in-depth views on their land user rights, the importance of land access to women, cultural and traditional influences and how decisions were made on land.

The respondents had very low education levels, most of them had only attained primary education. The common income source was government grants 63.6% among men and 59.3% for women,

followed by farm harvest income at 31.8% for men and 26.5% for women as indicated in Table 4.1. This results indicate a strong dominance of social grants in South African households, even though the respondents were regarded as farmers they did not earn enough income to sustain their livelihoods. This finding is in line with the literature on Food Security in South Africa which shows that rural populations depend heavily on social grants for their household food security and that agriculture is their main source of additional income (OXFAM, 2013). Furthermore, the land use rights distribution between men and women were unbalanced with the latter receiving weaker land access and user rights. Table 4.1 indicates that both men (81.8%) and women (68.1%) respondents experienced little moderate hunger due to lack of food per month in their households. Furthermore, about 72.7% of the male respondents reported to having experienced shortages of money for purchasing monthly food requirements for their households compared to (76.2%) of the female respondents. This finding shows the incidence of moderate food insecurity status for the respondents. This is consistent with the literature (Baiphethi and Jacobs, 2009) who mentioned prevalence of food insecurity in rural agricultural communities.

Women were in charge of agricultural production even though they had secondary land access rights. Land could be allocated to both men and women but men were preferred more than women in inheritance hierarchy. However, women reported that they had full user rights on the land, their agricultural activities on the land were not restricted despite having secondary rights on the land.” *Because we are married, we have rights to use the land to fulfil our responsibility of providing food for our families*”. Moreover, the respondents alluded that women were allowed to till the land because they are key custodians of their households’ food security and wellbeing of their families.

Women had secondary rights to land compared to men who were in most cases the direct owners or recipients of land either from their parents or from the Traditional Authority. Land use security for women was derived from maintenance of good relations with their families and thus, they largely received support from male relatives if only they adhered to the good relations within their marriages. Women land rights were dependent on their status and position in the household and the security of these rights increased with changes in their status. When they were young and unmarried, females have weaker rights compared to male siblings of the same age and when girls get married they assume stronger land rights from their marriage ties. Women who chose to be single mothers received stronger land rights but, her rights would still be weaker than those of her brothers. Women’s land rights get stronger with time in marriage and when children are born. Loss of land

rights for women is mainly caused by divorce, this tethers women to their families and reduces their independence and security of access to land.

The ability of women to maintain good relations in their marriages guaranteed their access to land which they tilled and produced food for their households and sold surplus in the markets. The household food security for rural communities depended on strengthened land rights for women who were the most active in agricultural production. The stronger the women's land access rights enhanced stability of food production and supply which increased smallholder farmers' household food security and ability to participate in the markets. The farmers had to trade part of their harvest especially those crops that could easily spoil because they did not have storage facilities. The additional income from sales of crops provided for their household food security requirements and created a buffer zone during the production seasons. The agricultural harvest income added to the household income pool made commonly by a collective of government grants, remittances and other kinds of income. A study by Landesa (2014) indicated that families, where women had secure land rights, earned up to 3.8 times more income, they devoted much of their budget to education, invested in property and they were more resilient to shocks. Agriculture remains a major livelihood activity for rural women despite the common land access challenges (Murugani, 2013). Land use security for women was determined by their status and it was strengthened if they remained married. Therefore, for rural communities to attain food security, women, who play a major role in food production need to have stronger land access rights. From this land, they can engage in market-oriented agricultural production whereby their households benefit both in terms of increased income and food security.

<b>Table 4.8: Association between gender and socio-economic characteristics</b>				
Variables		Gender		<i>X<sup>2</sup> test</i>
		Male (%) (n=22)	Female (%) (n=113)	
Income Source	Government grants	63.6	59.3	ns
	Remittances	0	3.5	
	Casual income	4.5	10.6	
	Farm Harvest	31.8	26.5	
Farming method	Hand planting	9.1	42.5	***
	Machinery	18.2	15	
	Mixed Methods	72.7	42.5	
Land Access	Rented	18.2	25.7	ns
	Allocated by Chief	50	41.6	
	Inherited	31.8	32.7	
	Rarely (1 to 2 times)	9.1	10.6	ns
	Sometimes (3 to 10 times)	81.8	68.1	



Food Security Hunger Frequency	Often (more than 10times)	9.1	21.2	
Food Security Money for Food	Rarely (1 to 2 times)	22.7	8.8	ns
	Sometimes (3 to 10 times)	72.7	76.2	
	Often (more than 10times)	4.5	15	
Land Loss	Divorce	45.5	43.4	ns
	Long time without use	40.9	21.2	
	Family Dispute	13.6	28.3	
	Husband death	0	8	
Market Access	Yes	86.4	54.9	**
	No	13.6	45.1	
Market platform	Supermarket (No)	77.3	96.5	***
	Local Traders (Yes)	72.7	58.4	ns
	Gov. contracts	90.9	92.9	ns
Produce Marketed	All produce	9.1	8	ns
	>half of the produce	68.2	79.6	
	Others	22.7	12.4	
Gendered Market Access	Man	4.5	3.5	***
	Woman	13.6	47.8	*****
	Equal Access	81.8	48.7	

**Notes:** \*\*\* and \* means significant at 1% and 10% levels of significance, respectively. ns= not statistically significant.

#### 4.5.0: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### 4.5.1: CONCLUSION

Access to land is important to rural smallholder farmers who rely on agriculture as an important part of their livelihoods. Land provides food, settlement building materials and pasture land for livestock. Land rights have been bestowed upon men through the predominant patriarchal system and cultural practices of land access. Men have superior rights to land in terms of access, usage, control and decisions on the land such as sales or allocation to sons and to male relatives. Women possess secondary rights to land access, they acquire land through marriage ties. Increasing women's access to land is crucial to fighting hunger and poverty. However, gender disparities in land access remain significant in most countries, regardless of their level of development. This study showed that most of the agriculture activities were done by women who only possessed secondary rights to land access. They acquired land through marriage due to the patriarchal structure and customary laws of land allocation in most rural areas in South Africa. Most of the women had a low level of education and had to rely on agriculture as their main source of livelihood generation and food security. Women

who needed extra land to plough indicated that they had to purchase, rent or engage in sharecropping, as the land was easily allocated to men who are regarded culturally as rightful custodians of the land even though they were not fully engaged in agricultural production.

The respondents in the survey believed that women need to be empowered for them to realise higher yields, improved household food security and active participation in markets. They felt that if women were allocated more land and provided with better farming tools they could produce more since they already manage to produce even from the smallest pieces of land of which they do not have direct access and control. Although agriculture plays a significant role in the livelihoods of rural residents, it is not enough as a source of household income regardless of their field sizes or number of fields owned, therefore households do need other alternative sources of income to supplement their farm produce income, most respondents reported to be recipients of government grants mainly old age pensions, as well as remittances, send by their migrant husbands and sons working in cities. Increasing land access and strengthening land access rights among females reduces the gender gap between males and females, this enhances women 's participation in agricultural markets, boosts livelihood generation, food security and prosperity. Households where women hold secure land rights participate in markets, they are more prosperous, more of their income is spent on their children's education, they enjoy increases in agricultural productivity, investments in property and they are able to sustain their food and nutrition security.

From this study, it was also observed the various challenges women farmers encounter with regard to land access. Women farmers are the main actors in rural farming, they spent more hours tilling and working the land in the absence of men who usually leave to high paying jobs in the cities. Women are forced by circumstances to take care of their families and children yet they have weak rights to land access. Furthermore, they have poor access to technology and implements, farm inputs, and credit access.

The evidence from focus group discussions and interviews proved that women despite holding secondary rights to land access, they had a greater degree of access to land than would be expected from the literature. The surveys and focus group discussions further revealed that single women and widowed women have weaker land access rights, single or unmarried women obtained land just because they were assumed to be vulnerable. The land was accessed mostly by the elderly, who bore the burden of raising their grandchildren under low income and food production. Most young people migrated to towns for better-paying jobs. Women farmers do access land but only tiny plots of land

which bring little unsustainable income which they are forced to supplement through remittances and government grants.

#### **4.5.2: RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study recommends that government, policy institutions and other stakeholders put more effort in the following areas to enhance land access for men and women in rural communities so that they may develop and improve smallholder agriculture.

Strengthening women's land rights: Women's land access rights can be strengthened by including their names in registration documents which also could be used in the acquisition of credit, increasing women's participation in community level decision making and ensuring women's equal rights to land inheritance and access.

Government through its structures should provide legal security of communal land access for both men and women and should structure legislative and administrative reforms to provide women with equal access to productive resources. Recognition of the significance rural women farmers in food and nutrition security and poverty alleviation. Enhancement of credit provision to smallholder farmers, improvement of the infrastructure, inputs and extension advisory services.

## **CHAPTER 5: DECOMPOSITION OF MARKET ACCESS CHALLENGES IN FEMALE DOMINATED HOUSEHOLDS OF RURAL KWA-ZULU NATAL**

### **ABSTRACT**

Smallholder farmers play a significant role in producing adequate food for their households and for sale of the surplus in informal markets. Agriculture is the basis of most rural communities with limited non-agricultural opportunities. Most farmers, who happen to be women who face numerous challenges including limited access to markets, access to land, credit for inputs and low surplus for sale into markets. The patrilineal nature of communal land allocation in most rural communities plays a major role towards the lack of access to productive resources for women. However, continue to produce food despite the myriad of challenges. under the weak land access rights. This study sought to decompose and assess the nature of the market access challenges using a matrix of push and pull factors. A purposive sample of 135 households was selected in Appelsbosch, KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa. The mixed methods approach of research made up of structured questionnaires, together with focus group discussions and observation was employed. A focus group discussion was conducted first, focusing on market access and followed by the quantification of the challenges in the structured questionnaire. Qualitative data from the focus group discussions and open-ended questions was analysed for common themes using content analysis. The data was then subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS. Statistically significant differences were observed between gender, land access and market access ( $p < 0.05$ ). The study showed that smallholder farmers had access to local and informal markets, they could not access high-end supermarkets despite their ability to produce quality farm produce. The smallholder farmers had different views towards land access. Women farmers had more control of the land in the absence of men but admitted to facing difficulty in accessing land individually from traditional authority. Market access indicators were derived from focus group discussions and they included access to agricultural inputs, cooperative action through farmers group that sets sales prices, gendered-recognition by traditional authority and local market knowledge. It can be concluded that farmers had great ability and intentions to succeed in food production and livelihood creation, however; they required strong land access rights, increased support from extension officers, improved infrastructure and market access information.

**Keywords:** Market Access, gender, communal land access, smallholder farming

### **5.1.0: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUALISATION**

Several African countries have embarked on improving agriculture, food security and reducing hunger through the involvement of smallholder farmers in the food production. Smallholder farmers have been key custodians of most African nations food and nutrition security, yet they have been challenged by several factors including lack of access to land, access to credit and access to formal markets. Agricultural markets provide a potent pathway for rural development, sustainable food production, food and nutrition security and they are considered to be important for economic growth and poverty reduction (IFAD, 2010). Smallholder rural farmers have the opportunity to access local and international markets through local and global connections (Kapungu, 2013). Due to several factors such as low education levels, lack of institutional support, poor information dissemination and majorly; land access, rural smallholder farmers may not exercise their ability to penetrate international markets. The institutional reforms and market structural changes at local, regional and international levels enhance the ability of smallholder farmers to participate in lucrative high-end markets (IFAD, 2010). On the contrary, rural smallholder farmers remain challenged by the stringent market access requirements such as high-quality standards, production volume and high entry costs. These pose a risk of marginalisation of smallholder farmers in favour of large commercial producers who are able to meet the stringent market access requirements (Kapungu, 2013; IFAD, 2010). Therefore, addressing market access matters would dearly benefit smallholder farmers.

Several studies mention the significant contribution made by smallholder women farmers to agricultural production in most African countries. The majority of farmworkers are women, they provide most of the labour requirements on their farms and can also work on other farms as paid labourers. They have acquired exceptional skills in food production such as cultivation, processing and preservation of nutritious local crop varieties (Njuki et al., 2013, Baloyi, 2010). Despite their immense contribution to agricultural production, food and nutrition security, women remain marginalised and their glorious efforts are unrecognised (Njuki et al., 2013; Kapungu, 2014). This is evidenced by their continued challenges in accessing property and output markets. Rural women face constraints such as time and labour in their unpaid care and work responsibilities, they care for their children, the elderly and at the same time, they are burdened with the food production requirements. These they perform under stringent conditions characterised by poor access to water, energy and infrastructure and their traditional roles such as water and firewood collection. These traditional norms affect women farmers' agricultural productivity which would improve their ability

to participate effectively in agricultural markets (Chitja et al 2016; Quisumbing *et al*, 2014; Murugani, 2016).

Socio-cultural norms can add more restrictions on women's decision making, power, access to productive resources and family income, thereby restraining their ability to produce adequate food and surplus for sale in markets (Lasterria-Cornhiel, 2006; Chitja and Morojele 2014). Rural women farmers provide the majority of farm labour either as less paid farm workers and processors or as custodians of their family land when men take wage work (Lasterria-Cornhiel, 2006, Thamaga-Chitja & Morojele, 2014). The ability for women to control property and land enhances their efficiency of agricultural production thus, enabling them to participate in both local and regional markets. Smallholder women farmers usually have to travel long distances to reach their customers leaving their household at times under the care of their school going children. This is challenged by the traditional and cultural norms whereby women are expected to perform household chores. Women farmers also have to balance the agricultural production and household chores with the reproductive roles in order to secure their marriage which serves as their gateway to food security, land access and empowerment (Njuki et al., 2013). The sociocultural requirements of women highly impede their production capabilities which dearly affect their participation in agricultural markets. Njuki et al., 2013 (2012) and FAO (2014) mentioned that women farmers spent more time working on the farm than a collective of men and oxen. However, their productivity is largely affected by several factors and despite their enormous time contribution to farming, women farmers remain marginalised and less supported in terms of market access.

The inequitable allocation of resources between men and women in rural communities reduces the strength of smallholder farmers' participation in lucrative markets. Markets play a pivotal role in economic growth and consequently the quick and sustainable poverty reduction (Kapungu, 2013). Despite the active participation of smallholder farmers in rural agriculture, they remain challenged by several factors which reduce their productivity and threaten their livelihoods. The South African government undertook market liberalisation reforms in the mid-1990s for smallholder farmers (Ferris et al., 2014). Smallholder farmers were characterised by several barriers to production such as poor access to market information, poor access to appropriate technology, poorly structured markets, long transactions between producers and consumers, small volumes of high variation in quality, low capital inputs, poor access roads and infrastructure. Lack of market linkages affects smallholder farmers, they incur hefty transport and transaction costs, increased postharvest losses and these

disseminates their farming as more of a social than a business activity (Lasterria-Cornhiel, 2006, FAO, 2012). The weak market linkages lead to multiple middlemen who take bigger shares from the farmers produce leaving farmers with very low farm gate earnings. These consequently reduce the smallholder farmers' productivity which implies reduced income and food insecurity.

#### **5.1.1: MARKET ACCESS CHALLENGES**

In most Sub-Saharan countries, the key challenges of smallholder farmers accessing lucrative markets have been outlined as poor infrastructure, lack of improved farm inputs, poor information transfer, lack of knowledge, high transaction costs, poor policies and unavailability of markets. Despite several governments support initiatives for smallholder farmers, they continue to face enormous challenges when they have to physically access markets (Baloyi, 2010, Gouët and Van Paassen, 2012). Smallholder farmers lack market information, business and negotiation skills which they need in acquiring lucrative contracts with the larger players in the markets. They are usually forced to sell their produce at farm gate prices or be kicked out of the mainstream competition due to the sale of lower standard produce.

Most of the smallholder farmers are women who in most cases have limited rights over land and low education levels. The smallholder farmers' illiteracy affects their ability to access beneficial information, ability to interact with formal institutions that incorporate the use of advanced technological systems. They are mostly incapacitated with the marketing and financial skills, therefore, cannot afford improved inputs such as seeds and chemicals, these leads to their poor production of low standard crops which fetch meagre incomes in the market and are usually declined in the fresh produce market and food processors (World Bank, 2002). Smallholder farmers need to work in supportive environments that enable them to access markets despite their location, the use of information technology tools enhances market participation among small-scale farmers and thus boost their livelihood. Smallholder farmers who use information technology are equipped with new skills in both the production and postharvest handling of their crops. Information and knowledge transfer is evidently faster when using ICTs, their yields are higher, their crops are better packaged, new skills are learnt and lastly it has been revealed through research that farmer to farmer interactions are the most adequate for the dissemination of knowledge and skills. The World Bank (2010) report stated that smallholder farmer's benefit from the use of ICTs, they can access markets prices and other essential information through their mobile phones using SMS or broadcast over the radio. The quick message transfer which normally comes at a low maintenance cost has brought a

significant change in the manner which traders and farmers interact. This has created stronger bonds and made traders consider smallholder farmers as trading partners due to improved quality of produce and better handling (Goudappel, 2009). The use of technology systems encourages support from banks, businesses, processing firms and government ministries due to the stability of production by the farmers. These ensure better livelihoods and food security for the farmers. Despite the advances in technology, most farming families are challenged by the inequality in resources distribution and land rights due to the patriarchal nature of land allocation in most Sub-Saharan states.

### **5.1.2: ACCESS TO RESOURCES**

Access to productive resources is vital for the advancement of agricultural productivity for both men and women. In most Sub-Saharan nations, land allocation is largely patrilineal and in most cases women only get access to land through marriage ties yet they are the main actors in farming (IFAD, 2011, Obare, 2010, Olwande et al., 2015, OXFAM, 2011, PLAAS, 2012, Saint-Macary, 2010, Thamaga-Chitja and Morojele, 2014). To produce for markets, smallholder farmers need access to and control of production resources such as land, water, labour and capital. Generally, both men and women lack adequate access to productive resources but women usually have less access than men (Murugani et al., 2014, Musah, 2013, Olwande et al., 2015, OXFAM, 2011, PLAAS, 2012). Several factors such as poor policies, weak research, discrimination, tradition and customs; and lack of sound decision making are the true causes of women farmers reduced access to land as a productive resource.

Women generally have inadequate access to land, water, extension services, technology and skills yet they have been proven to be more productive than men (David, 2015, Kamanda, 2010, Kapungu, 2013). Agricultural land for smallholder farmers in many regions in Sub-Saharan Africa has been reduced due to environmental degradation, land usage for no agricultural purposes, population pressure and unequal distribution of land between large landowners and smallholder farmers (Angassa, 2012, David, 2015, Diagne, 2011, Kamanda, 2010, Kapungu, 2013).

Most smallholder farmers have reduced access to these resources, therefore, they are challenged with sustainable participation in agricultural markets due to low productivity, low quantity and quality of produce (Baloyi, 2010, Bellows, 2011,). These challenges cause smallholder farmers severe inconsistencies in terms of production for markets and therefore affects their main livelihood generation and their food security.



Agriculture is the mainstay of most African economies with its substantial contribution to most nations' GDP. Yet its growth rate over the past decades has been dramatically low. The main contributors to Sub-Saharan Africa 's Agricultural production are Smallholder subsistence farmers who are characterised by lowland sizes allocated for cereal crop production. Despite the challenge of lack of access to adequate land, Smallholder farmers also face several constraints that hinder their productivity, growth, access to markets and ability to contribute meaningfully to national food security (DAFF, 2012, OXFAM, 2012). Smallholder farmers are mostly located in rural areas where lack of proper institutional and physical infrastructure reduces their productivity and expansion. The poor status of rural roads limit smallholder farmers from transporting their inputs, produce and access to the markets (ActionAid, 2011, DAFF, 2012, FAO, 2011). Information transfer and sharing are unreliable in rural areas due to remoteness from policy making bodies and legislation. Smallholder farmers usually do not have good modern assets, access to information and access to services; these impede their participation in potentially lucrative markets (ActionAid, 2011, FAO, 2011, Kapungu, 2013).

Smallholder farmers have to deal with high transaction costs which thwart their growth and this is mainly caused by poor infrastructure (FAO, 2010). Farmers are usually forced to grow their own staple crops, less perishable crops or low volumes of food for their household consumption or for sale in the local market which is relatively small in most cases. The high transport cost also affects smallholder farmers' access to quality inputs, they are therefore forced to rely on locally available inputs and this reduces the consistency in the quality of their produce (Baloyi, 2010, WorldBank, 2010). Crop life International (2010) reported that 70% of the world's poor lived in rural areas and most of them depended directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihood. Smallholder farmers generally practice subsistence farming, trapped in poverty and are unable to enter the agricultural value chain (Thamaga-Chitja, 2012, Murugani et al., 2013).

Smallholder farmers usually have poor post-harvest storage facilities (Mboya, 2013). UNEP (2011), reported that global food production was sufficient to feed a healthy population, however, significant amounts of food produced around the world is lost or wasted after harvesting. The loss of food at harvest and post-harvest is equivalent to losses in the inputs such as fertiliser, water, and pesticides which were embedded in the production (UNEP, 2011). Smallholder farmers also face rejection of their produce by retailers due to poor appearance or supersized packages leading to post-retail spoilage (FAO, 2010). Poor storage facilities lead to spoilage due to poor handling of food, on-farm

pest infestation, mycotoxin and microbial build-up which reduce the value of the farm produce resulting in low-income generation and substantial loss (Mboya, 2013).

### **5.1.3: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING SMALLHOLDER FARMERS' ACCESS TO MARKETS**

Efforts to link smallholder farmers to functioning markets to improve their market access have been vital for rural development and poverty reduction. Several strategies have been tried for improving smallholder farmers' market access, these include contract farming, the building of open markets, the use of mass media platforms for information dissemination and collective action. Smallholder farmers access markets as producers when selling their produce also as consumers of their immediate consumption needs. They are forced to sell their produce immediately after harvest usually to predetermined buyers. This is due to the low volume, lack of storage and cash constraints that prevent them from supplying bigger markets. Collective action has been used as a solution for smallholder farmers access to markets, through which they can participate in formal markets, earn more income, stay motivated and access better supplies of inputs due to increased buying power. When smallholder farmers work in groups, they are empowered to access credit and finance from microfinance institutions. Access to microfinance can ease some of the market access challenges thus, enabling smallholder farmers to increase production volumes, access wider transportation methods and engage in adding value to their produce (Chitja & Mabaya, 2014). Market driven extension service can boost smallholder farmers' productivity, improve food safety, value addition and business training (Chitja & Mabaya, 2014).

Alternative food networks can be employed by smallholder farmers to trade their harvests to secure access to markets, maintain rapport with their common customers. They include farm gate sales, farmers' markets, and trade fairs and buy local movements (Chitja & Mabaya, 2015). These marketing strategies enable smallholder farmers to dispose their produce and benefit profitably without relying on well-established formal markets. The ability of smallholder farmers to sell their produce effectively can be enhanced by the use of improved market information systems. Through the use of ICTs such as SMS, television & radio updates, smallholder farmers can access daily actual prices for their commodities. Moreover, contractual agreements between farmers and retailers can meaningfully boost their income generation and sustain livelihoods. Contractual agreements reduce the marketing, transportation and storage burdens from smallholder farmers as these are handled by the contractors (Chitja and Mabaya, 2014). These strategies when well disseminated to

smallholder farmers can improve their access to markets in most developing countries. An increase in market access means an improvement in income and food security for smallholder farmers.

#### **5.2.0: METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION**

The study employed the mixed method of data collection due to the complex nature of gender and land access impacts on markets access. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from 135 smallholder farmers using semi-structured questionnaires with open and closed ended questions and focus group discussions with the aid of interpreters. The mixed method combines both qualitative and quantitative data for analysis by providing a complete comparison of the results to existing data for the purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration (Creswell, 2003). The farmers were mainly monolingual speaking the isiZulu language so it was important to find local translators. Focus group discussions were held and were conducted by facilitators acquainted the subjects of agriculture, food security, market access, gender and the local language.

Data was collected through questionnaires, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Structured questionnaires were completed by 135 respondents from eight farmers' groups in the Mathuleni area and Appelsbosch. Focus Group Discussions were also conducted to classify themes and concepts and key informant interviews were held with farmers' groups' committee members and extension officers. The data were then subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and content analysis. Content analysis has been defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The data from open-ended questions, the key informant interviews and the focus group discussions were coded and analysed for the occurrence of common themes. The conclusions from both sets of results were compared for similarities and were then used for discussion and conclusions obtained from the study.

#### **5.2.1: SITE SELECTION AND SAMPLING**

Purposive sampling technique is used in selecting certain units or cases "based on a specific purpose rather than randomly" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003), it involves selecting cases that show or describe what is typical about the participants in the area of study, illustrative rather than definitive tendencies (Patton, 2002). In this case, female and male smallholder farmers engaged in agricultural production for participation in informal markets and were under the Traditional Authority rule were selected. This sampling technique was used to select the respondents to pick desired characteristics

which were useful for this study from respondents who had the best knowledge concerning the research objectives (Creswell, 2013). Even though the respondents were selected through this sampling technique for their characteristics essential for this study, the study was not representative of all smallholder farmers in South Africa. However, the smallholder farmers who were knowledgeable about the market access and gender disparities in their community were interviewed (Cohen et al., 2013).

The study was conducted in Appelsbosch and Mathuleni area in the uMshwathi Local Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal. uMshwathi Municipality is located in the North East Quadrant of the uMgungundlovu District Municipality in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. It is one of the seven Local Municipalities in the uMgungundlovu District Municipality. It has a population of 106 374 people according to the 2011 census (STATSA, 2012). *The* uMshwathi Municipality is comprised of thirteen wards representing a range of predominantly rural settlements, agricultural landscapes, industrial, semi-rural to rural residential settlements. The uMshwathi Local Municipality is ideally situated within the uMgungundlovu District Municipality immediately adjacent to Pietermaritzburg. The municipality is located in an area that was largely under the control of tribal authorities until very recently. The land is mostly agricultural, although urban development is to be found in the main towns. The communities living in the underdeveloped areas have extremely limited access to basic physical and social requirements and very few economic opportunities (LGH,2011). The prominent crop is sugar cane farmed commercially on large pieces of land with forestry and lumbering actively present in the white-owned territory. However, smallholder farmers exist on their traditionally controlled land along the edges of good arable land reserved for sugarcane and forestry farming. Their land is characterised by steep hills and rugged terrains which are less suitable for farming from which they grow several crops such as maize, beans, potatoes, vegetables.

### **5.3.0: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The aims of this study were to assess the impact of gender and communal land access on smallholder farmers access to markets, to identify factors affecting smallholder farmers' market access and to determine how land access enhances smallholder farmers access to markets in rural KwaZulu-Natal using the Mathuleni area and Appelsbosch near Tongaat as study areas.

**Table 5.1: A description of the sample**

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>Percentages</b>	<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Source of Income</b>		
Male	22	16.3	Government Grants	81	60.0
Female	113	83.7	Remittances	4	3.0
<b>Age</b>			Wages & Casual Income	13	9.6
<45 Yrs.	25	18.5	Farm Harvest	37	27.4
46-55 Yrs.	33	24.4	<b>Occupation</b>		
56-65 Yrs.	41	30.4	Farming	122	90.4
>65 Yrs.	36	26.7	Self Employed	13	9.6
<b>Marital Status</b>			<b>Food Security Hunger</b>		
Never Married	33	24.4	Rarely X (1 to 2)	14	10.4
Married	86	63.7	Sometimes X (3 to 10)	95	70.4
Divorced	3	2.2	Often (more than 10)	26	19.3
Widowed	13	9.6	<b>Farming Techniques</b>		
<b>Education</b>			Hand Planting	50	37.0
No Education	35	25.9	Machinery Methods	21	15.6
Finished Primary	60	44.4	Mixed Methods	64	47.4
Finished Sec Sch.	21	15.6			
High Sch. & Vocational Trained	19	14.1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>(N)135</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(N)135</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 5.1 summarises the demographic characteristics of the 135 smallholder farmers who participated in this study. All respondents were Black Africans and they all spoke Zulu as their first language. Many the farmers were women (83.7%) and 57.1% were above the age of 50 with 24.4% of them aged between 45 and 55 years of age. It a common occurrence in most rural communities for smallholder farmers to be older and retired citizens. In most cases, men are migrant workers employed in high paying jobs in the cities and mines whilst the women remain behind and resort to agriculture as their main livelihood strategy (FAO, 2011). The youth (25-35 years) made up only 15.6% of the sample and this is a common feature in rural communities where young people pick paid jobs rather than agriculture. FAO (2011) stipulated that the youth usually find agriculture to be painstaking with little or no pay. There is a great concern on the continuity, sustainability, food security and knowledge transfer of rural agriculture due to low youth participation (Murugani, 2014). The outward migration of men and youth leaves the burden of farming on the shoulders of women reducing their agricultural productivity due to their perceived cultural and reproductive roles.

Most respondents (73.33%) were married, 15.58% of the respondents had never been married and 11.11% were widowed. None of the respondents reported to be divorced, this can be attributed to the strong customs and traditional setup in most rural communities where marriage is strongly regarded as a platform for family extension (Thamaga-Chitja, 2012). The younger respondents were never married as they could be not at marriage age among other factors. The smallholder farmers had low education levels, with 25.9% and 44.4% having obtained no education and primary education respectively. Only 29.7% of the farmers has obtained secondary school, High School and vocational training. This is a common characteristic in most rural communities for low education levels due to the restricted education access during the apartheid era in South Africa (Chitja et al, 2016, Mthembu, 2014). Low education can be prohibitive factors for women farmers to own land and access markets. Moreover, educated women are less likely to work on farms because they can easily get off-farm jobs. The respondents also reported having experienced instances of hunger, with the majority 70.4% experiencing hunger a few times in a month, mostly towards month end when their grants and remittances have not paid out; while 19.3% experienced hunger several times per month and the rest never had hunger instances. Most of the farmers 60% received some government assistance through grants and these were mainly the old age pension.

**Table 5.2: Focus group discussion with the smallholder farmers**

<b>Focus Group Discussion responses to questions on gender; land access and Market access</b>		
<b>Theme/s</b>	<b>Concept/s</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Market access by gender	Societal perceptions and attitudes	<p>“Both men and women have access to markets but women are the ones active in farming and selling the harvest”</p> <p>“Women work hard to produce enough products for household consumption and markets”</p> <p>“We have independent traders call and come to our farms when the crops are ready, sometimes they buy all the crops but sometimes we do not sell”</p> <p>“We work together with men on our farms and sell the products together”</p> <p>“We do not have a central market location to sell our products”</p> <p>“We do not have means to transport our produce to the market, when traders do not call we are forced to consume our crops”</p> <p>“We do not have a place to sell our farm produce.”</p> <p>“The market is far we do not have transport to take our produce”</p> <p>“The market price is too low; we not make profit but we work hard”</p> <p>“The cost of fertilizer and tractor hire is too high for us to produce efficiently, but we sell the little we get locally and to independent traders”</p>
Gender inequality and market access	Customary operational system	<p>“Women are more involved in the production than men, men prefer to do other jobs than agriculture”</p> <p>“Women have to work with their children on the farms because men are absent and it is expensive to hire labour”</p> <p>“Men can easily obtain additional land but farming is an act of love, more can be produced from little land and all be sold in the market”</p> <p>“we are not able to produce enough for our customers; the cost of inputs is too high our husbands do not have enough money”</p>
Market access challenges and gender	Common barriers to market access	<p>“The cost of seeds and fertilizer is too high; we have to contribute money in our farmers group to buy them collectively”</p> <p>“Machinery hire is very expensive especially when women work alone in the production process, this limits their access to market”</p> <p>“The selling price is too low; we do not get enough profit to supplement other household income”</p> <p>“It is difficult working on the field alone when children are at school and our men are at work or tending to their livestock”</p> <p>“Men only participate in the processing stage of production and marketing. They are usually not present in the planting and weeding because they feel it is women s job”</p> <p>“Men have a voice in the family and they also use this when marketing the products”</p>

### **5.3.1: MARKET ACCESS AND SMALLHOLDER FARMERS**

Market access for smallholder farmers is an important element for rural communities to reap the benefits of their hard labour and agricultural growth. Most smallholder farmers in rural communities are women who usually have challenges in accessing productive resources as well as markets (Kapungu,2013; Murugani,2014; Baloyi,2010). Smallholder farmers in rural areas have access to informal markets, usually informal traders who buy their produce at farm gate prices. Their trade can also be limited to local consumers.

The farmers in this study were members of farmers groups in their respective areas, they generally had farm lands lower than one hectare and they produced a variety of crops such as green mealies, beans, potatoes and vegetables for consumption and for sale in local informal markets. Green mealies and potatoes were the most preferred crop by the independent traders. The farmers' group committees controlled the sales in a manner that gave every farmer a chance to sell, and if the demand was high the customer would be referred to the next farmer. The data shows that 60% of the farmers accessed various market platforms such as the local small shops, the independent traders, the local supermarkets and the school feeding programmes (table 5.3.3). The farmers in this study sold their produce mainly to independent traders who came to their farms in their vehicles, this was evidenced by 50.6% of the farmers who reported to have traded their farm produce to independent traders who sold the goods in major towns and cities. The local shops were also listed as good market points for smallholder farmers this comprised 37.7 % of the sample. The government contracts (School feeding programme) and the supermarkets received the lowest market participation by the smallholder farmers. The respondents showed in the focus group discussion that they received a good trade with the local shops which preferred crops like potatoes which they sell as fast foods to school children. Farmers also sold their produce to supermarkets even though it was not a common market area due to the stringent requirements which few of them could attain. Some farmers had had the opportunity to sell their produce to the government through school feeding programmes. Markets were accessed by both men and women farmers, they explained through the focus group discussion that the low participation of men in agricultural production did not affect their ability to access markets. However, women farmers indicated that direct access to land and water would improve their productivity.

The smallholder farmers sold their produce to the local shops, they were easier to approach due to their vicinity in the area, they did not employ complex contract forms and they used a simple and



common language which was easier for smallholder farmers to decipher. The local shops were a readymade platform for smallholder farmers to trade their products, they have a strong working relationship with the farmers and a strong rapport value that contracts and agreements would just be through word of mouth rather than complex written documents. This finding was consistent with the literature (Thamaga- Chitja and Hendricks, 2008). The supermarkets are much bigger than the local shops, they are located in major towns such as Wartburg (40 Km) and Dalton (28Km). They are more formal, require high quality and large volumes of produce and predominantly use English language in written forms which are usually complex and difficult for the lowly educated smallholder farmers to understand. The smallholder farmers have acquired experience over the years, and with additional training they have the potential to meet the high standards set by the lucrative supermarkets. However, the low education levels and higher age remain the main barriers in the process of linking smallholder farmers with formal markets.

The smallholder farmers have built experience and trust over-time with the independent traders (merchants) who visit their farms with their own vehicles. They have well established their ways of operation and information dissemination amongst themselves. The farmers have a method of informing the traders when the crops are ready, they also have a system of sharing income in such a way that all farmers get a chance to sell their produce. The surplus produce can only be sold when all other farmers have had a chance to sell their crops. This was observed to be a highly innovative system that can be enhanced and strengthened to ensure that it performs to give out maximum returns for the farmers. The farmers have created and strengthened their own market with the independent traders who currently serve as their major market as indicated in table 5.3.

The smallholder farmers also accessed the government institutions as their other marketing platform. Chitja and Mabaya (2014) explained that the government has an **AgriBEE** (Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment in the agricultural Sector) policy which stipulates that the government would purchase smallholder farmers' products for consumption by government institutions such as prisons and schools through the school feeding program. However, most smallholder farmers could not access this market opportunity as shown in table 5.3.

**Table 5.3: Market access by smallholder farmers**

Market Type	Male						Female					
	Yes		No		Total		Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Local Shop	14	23	8	10.8	22	16.3	47	77	66	89.2	113	83.7
Supermarket	5	55.6	17	13.5	22	16.3	4	44.4	109	86.5	113	83.7
Individual Traders	16	19.5	6	11.3	22	16.3	66	80.5	47	88.7	113	83.7
Gov. Contracts	2	20	20	16	22	16.3	8	80	105	84	113	83.7

### 5.3.2: GENDERED ROLES AND MARKET ACCESS

The female smallholder farmers indicated that they received less support from men during their crop cultivation, weeding and harvesting. This they explained, was because men worked in urban areas or the nearby sugar cane and lumber industries. They further explained that due to the nature of jobs they take, men had little or no farming experience, they received no training from the extension officers. *“Men possessed different sets of skills which they used to generate income for their households therefore they had less interest in horticultural farming, they would rather keep livestock than crop farming.”* However, some farmers maintained that they received monetary and labour assistance from their husbands or sons in the form of remittances and paid labour. However, some of the farmers indicated that they had no gender barriers in their households as they worked together on their farms, made decisions on what to cultivate, the choice of crop to be produced and the volume of crops sold in the markets. Some of the few men interviewed were not members of the farmers’ groups but they had attended the meeting on behalf of their spouses.

The greater participation of women in rural agricultural production and ability to sell produce in the markets were emphasised by the superior presence of women (83.7%) farmers compared to men (16.3%) in this study. All the women were members of farmers’ groups which were under the guidance of the local extension officer and their elected committee. This structure empowered and motivated women farmers to produce more from their little farms and sell their harvest. The table 5.3 shows that the choice of crops to be produced, the decision on how much produce to be sold and the gendered access to markets had a significant relationship with female farmers who have access to markets at  $P < 0.05$ . Women were able to participate in the available markets; this was made possible by their membership in the farmers’ group where they acquired improved farming skills and they could procure good quality inputs collectively. Moreover, the women farmers held superior

decision making roles on their farms as well as in their farmers' group committees. They were empowered to produce adequately with or without the assistance of their male relatives and access markets on their own to earn income for their households wellbeing and food security. These observations were consistent with other studies by (Murugani, 2016, Quisumbing, 2013). However, the farmers could not manage their income from crop sales effectively, mainly due to the inconsistency of sales, low production volume and low quality of their produce. The farmers depended heavily on the independent traders as their main market, even though they also had access to other market platforms they did not earn enough to sustain their livelihoods from their farms alone, they were still dependent on government social grants for their food security.

<b>Table 5.4: Association between gender and socio-economic characteristics</b>				
<b>Variables</b>		<b>Gender</b>		<b><i>X<sup>2</sup> test</i></b>
		<b>Male (%) (n=22)</b>	<b>Female (%) (n=113)</b>	
Income Source	Government grants	63.6	59.3	ns
	Remittances	0	3.5	
	Casual income	4.5	10.6	
	Farm Harvest	31.8	26.5	
Farming method	Hand planting	9.1	42.5	***
	Machinery	18.2	15	
	Mixed Methods	72.7	42.5	
Land Access	Rented	18.2	25.7	ns
	Allocated by Chief	50	41.6	
	Inherited	31.8	32.7	
Food Security Hunger Frequency	Rarely (1 to 2 times)	9.1	10.6	ns
	Sometimes (3 to 10 times)	81.8	68.1	
	Often (more than 10times)	9.1	21.2	
Food Security Money for Food	Rarely (1 to 2 times)	22.7	8.8	ns
	Sometimes (3 to 10 times)	72.7	76.2	
	Often (more than 10times)	4.5	15	
Gendered Market Access Opportunity *	Man	4.5	3.5	***
	Woman	13.6	47.8	
	Equal Access	81.8	48.7	
Choice of Crop	Man	27.3	2.7	***
	Woman	72.7	95.6	
	Equal Access	0	1.8	
Sales Decision	Man	31.8	7.1	***
	Woman	68.2	91.2	
	Equal Access	0	1.8	
Sales of crops in Market	Yes	86.4	54.9	**
	No	13.6	45.1	
Farming experience	1-2 Years	18.9	81.1	***

	3-5 Years 6-8 Years >10 Years	3.5 33.3 26.6	96.5 66.7 71.4	
Barriers: Transport	Yes No	16.7 15.2	83.3 84.8	***
Prices and Market Information	Yes No	21.2 8.0	78.8 92	***
Selling as a group	Yes No	26.7 11.2	73.3 88.8	***
Quality of Produce	Yes No	17.5 15.3	82.5 84.7	ns

Notes: \* Gendered Market Access variable indicates who had more Market Access between men and women farmers.

### 5.3.3: MARKET ACCESS CHALLENGES FOR SMALLHOLDER FARMERS

Market access assurance for smallholder farmers' agricultural produce is vital for their participation in markets, however; there are different factors that inhibit their active participation in markets. The farmers in this study had access to land (50%) of the male respondents and 41.6% of the females reported that they received their land from the Traditional Authority. Access to land stimulates on-farm activities as indicated on table 5.4 the farm harvests sales were the second common income source for men (31.8%) and women (26.5%) after government grants. Despite their ability to trade their agricultural produce in the markets, the farmers depended heavily on social grants, this was attributed to small land sizes accessed especially by the female farmers. The majority of smallholder farmers' in this study had been engaged in farming for a longer period but, their farm harvest remained low and could not fully sustain their livelihoods. Farming experience is essential for the farmers to attain maximum yield from the little land they have access to. In this case the farmers despite having some farming experience, had low productivity and they also had to share their farm income with their household requirements. The farmers' experience can be enhanced through specific training by the extension service to equip them with better farming skills, improved planning and most importantly cooperative action. The farmers were mostly members of farmer's groups but their collective action was limited to only a few activities in the farming process. About 88% of the interviewed women and 11.2% of the male farmers indicated that they sold their products individually. Their collective action was mainly during the acquisition of inputs and farm machinery hire. Collective action when engaged in all the stages of agricultural production could improve the farmers yields, knowledge sharing and ability to access the formal markets. According to Chitja and Mabaya (2014) smallholder farmers have managed to penetrate formal markets and increased their

access to inputs through collective action. The smallholder farmers in this study could increase their collective action beyond input acquisition into market access and participation to increase their income and household food security.

Access to market information and prices were also other barriers to market access by the smallholder farmers. Market information boosts smallholder farmers' confidence, informed decision making and proper planning. The interviewed farmers in this study generally felt that they did not have access to market information. About 92% of the interviewed females reported that they did not have access market information about the type of crops required in the markets but the men (21.2 %) mentioned that they had a certain degree of access to market information. This could be attributed to the nature of the rural society whereby women are culturally expected to take care of their households, thus limiting their movement and contact with the outer societies other than their community while men could easily travel and meet different information sources, other farmers and extension services. Raphela (2014) articulated that farmers can produce and provide the right type of goods required in the markets if they are provided with the resources and information. Farmers who had been engaging in the green mealies production had built a strong market on their own, they planned on production and prices through their farmers' groups committees and had built trust with their customers. However, the other farmers still found difficulty in accessing market information.

The majority of smallholder farmers in this study had challenges with transporting their produce to the markets. They sold their crops at farm gate prices and they opted for green mealies and vegetables mainly to merchant traders who bought produce from the farms and sold it in the city and bigger towns. The majority of the interviewed female farmers (84.8 %) felt that they had no transportation problems because the independent merchant traders frequently visited their farms to buy their products, however, contrasting responses were observed with about 16 % of the interviewed male farmers who maintained they did not have challenges with transporting their produce to the markets. This could be attributed to the ability of men to travel with ease to far places over extended periods of time while it is culturally restrictive for women who are expected to stay at home and care for the family. Furthermore, it is commonly men who own vehicles or possess driving skills in the community, thus giving them the ability to transport their products with ease.

The smallholder farmers continually farmed their land with passion despite the common setbacks to their productivity. They worked collectively even though their cooperation needed improvements at certain stages as well as enhancement of the existing characteristics to enable them increase their

agricultural income which is their source of livelihood. The ability to access credit, the improvement to extension services, farm technology and improvement in market access for both male and female is essential for the improvement of their household food security and income. These can be achieved through the improvement of the existing structures such as farmers' groups and formalisation of the available markets.

#### **5.3.4: MARKET AVAILABILITY AND DEFICIENCY OF INFORMATION**

Farmers highlighted their lack of market access during the interviews and the focus group discussions as indicated in table 5.2. Most farmers sold their produce to independent traders who acted as middlemen between the farmers and the market. This arrangement was seen by the farmers as their main trusted market opportunity and they did not have information on how or where they could access other lucrative markets. The interviewed farmers used mobile phones to communicate prices and market information amongst themselves and with their trusted buyers but not for arranging or procuring new markets elsewhere. Some of the farmers reported they produced better and good standard vegetables than those sold in large supermarkets in main towns and cities but they did have the information on the requirements for accessing those markets. The farmers further reported that sometimes the independent traders had high demands for their produce that was higher than their supply capacity. This was caused by their weak market information and low production; had they been made away of the demand they could have cultivated more products.

#### **5.3.5: LOW HARVEST VOLUME AND QUALITY**

The smallholder farmers had minute farm lands which were generally below one hectare in size. This prevented them from producing adequate crops even in times of high demand or when more produce was requested by their customers. From the focus group discussion as shown in table 5.3.2, the farmers indicated that they were approached to produce for a potato company but they were unable to secure that great market due to low production from their small farms. They further linked their low productivity to high inputs costs which could only be accessed by the few farmers. These forced them to cultivate their farms in partitions leaving some portions uncultivated thus resulting in very low yields. Some prominent farmers had devised an approach of borrowing or renting out unused land from those farmers who could not cultivate their land. On these lands they produced different crops from their main lands in an effort to increase their market access opportunities. Herbel et al (2012) and Murugani (2016) mentioned that smallholder farmers could access markets

with harvest from lands as small as 0.2Ha if they produced horticultural crops and sold them collectively. Collective action could be used as a generic tool to enhance adequacy of production, access to inputs and marketing of their crops.

#### **5.3.5: ACCESS TO FARM INPUTS AND TRANSPORT**

In this study the majority of the farmers surveyed indicated that they were members of farmers groups, 83.7 % were women and 16.3 % were male farmers, but they specified that they operated independently when marketing their products. The farmers also stated that they contributed money in their respective farmers' groups and collectively procured inputs such as seeds and chemicals. Despite their participation in farmers' groups, most farmers complained of the high input costs more specifically the cost of fertilizer and machinery hire. They elaborated that they were assisted by government with subsidized machinery provision, however; they still felt the price to be too high and unsustainable. Moreover, some women farmers mentioned that they had to ask for money from their husbands to acquire inputs. This highlighted the struggle women farmers had to endure in their quest to produce adequately for both consumption and markets. These findings are consistent with the literature (Murugani et al, 2014; Chitja and Mabaya, 2014) that women farmers being the ones active in rural smallholder farming, usually face challenges in accessing farm inputs and in distribution of their produce to the markets. Agricultural inputs such as machinery, seeds, pesticides, herbicides and fertilizer are essential resources for smallholder farmers' production, however, they often find it tough to access them.

#### **5.4.0: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Smallholder farmers seek ways to improve their agricultural productivity and their market access to attain food security and sustainable livelihoods for their families. However, they face numerous challenges in accessing formal markets. The challenges that smallholder farmers face were thought to differ between men and women due to the prevailing customary laws and cultural norms which are patriarchal in most rural communities under traditional leadership. This study observed the impacts and challenges of land access and gender on smallholder farmers' ability to access formal markets.

Most farmers were women over 50 years of age, who had obtained access to land mainly through their marriage ties, they had land plots less than one hectare in size and they cultivated crops for consumption and for sale. The farmers were challenged from fully participating in formal markets by

low production volumes, high input and transportation costs, lack of market access information and lack of understanding on the issues between formal and informal markets. The farmers resort to planting smaller areas of their land due to high input costs, they do not have enough money to buy seeds or pay for machinery to plough their entire fields and if they did, they tended to mix several crops per unit area so they could benefit from increased food security and sale of surplus harvest.

The farmers' marketing setup was mainly composed of the independent traders who provided their own transport, these methods created a strong dependency on the farmers thus they could not distribute their crops to markets on their own. Furthermore, the farmers cited high transport costs to be a major reason why they could not take their produce to urban markets. The farmers also lacked access to market information, despite owning mobile phones and listening to radio programmes, they showed that they only received calls from their customers as well as fellow farmers but did not use them to communicate with stakeholders in formal markets. Some farmers hinted that they were once exposed to sugarcane production which is a major commercial crop produced in farms adjacent to their area, but they could not continue with its production because it took too long to harvest and thus reduced their general household income.

The smallholder farmers have found methods of overcoming the challenges they come across in accessing markets, they have shown the ability and capacity to produce different crops which can be traded to secure their household income. Their commitment to farming can be supported through secured land rights, improvement in their cooperative action and business oriented agricultural production.



## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1.0: INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapters introduced the research problems and objectives of this study, the issues surrounding the gendered aspect of communal land access, the smallholder farmers market access and how the two concepts; land access and gender impact the smallholder farmer's ability to access markets. The descriptive profiles of smallholder farmers engaged in agricultural production for consumption and for sale of surplus produce in the market were outlined. Smallholder farmers' constraints to market access and the present institutional arrangements were observed. This chapter provides the conclusion and recommendations on the impacts of gender and land access on smallholder farmers market access.

### **6.1.1: SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY**

The general objective of this study was to find how gender influenced land access and its impacts on how smallholder farmers access agricultural markets for sustainable livelihoods. The three specific objectives of the study were first to determine the relationship between gender and communal land access. Secondly the identification of the factors affecting smallholder farmers' accessing land and their effects on market access and how land access enhances smallholder farmers' access to markets. Lastly, the factors affecting smallholder farmers to access agricultural markets were identified. The study obtained data from a randomly selected sample of 135 farmers who produced and sold their crops in agricultural markets and were under the Traditional Authority. A mixed methods approach was used. The data collected was both qualitative and quantitative obtained from the use of questionnaires and focus group discussions. The data analysis incorporated both descriptive and content analysis. The descriptive data was analysed using chi-square tests to investigate relationships between land access, gender and market access indicators while the data obtained from focus group discussions was subjected to a content and theme analysis.

### **6.1.2: CONCLUSION**

Increasing women's access to land is crucial to fighting hunger and poverty. However, gender disparities in land access remain significant in most countries, regardless of their level of development. This study showed that most of the agriculture activities were done by women who only possessed secondary rights to land access. They acquired land through marriage due to the

patriarchal structure of land allocation in most rural areas in South Africa. Most of the women had a low level of education and had to rely on agriculture as their main source of livelihood generation and food security. Women who needed extra land to plough indicated that they had to lease it from those who could not cultivate their land. The land was easily allocated to men who are regarded culturally as rightful custodians of the land even though they are not fully engaged in agricultural production.

Gender inequalities in land rights are universal. Women do not only have lower access to land than men, they are often also limited to secondary land rights because they hold these rights through male family members. Women, therefore, risk losing entitlements in case of divorce, widowhood or their husband's migration. Evidence also shows that women control lands of smaller size compared to those controlled by men. The secondary rights to land for women need to be enhanced through improved systems that recognise women as major contributors to household food security. They need to be empowered through the equal allocation of land and life skills for the betterment of their livelihoods.

Despite the challenges women face with regard to land access and weak land rights, women farmers continued to produce agriculture products to for the market. The results revealed that women farmers being the majority of the total smallholder farmers were the most affected by the unequal land allocation models practised in their community which was under traditional authority. The gender inequality in land allocation has major effects on women farmers' productivity in this patriarchal setup whereby men have stronger land access rights than women who bear the burden of producing food and livelihood for the family. Women farmers rely mainly on agricultural income which is often little and cannot fully sustain their household requirements. Moreover, women are expected to undertake their cultural roles and this causes them to have multiple roles such as reproduction and taking care of the home, children and the elderly. The results further showed that women face more challenges with regard to market access due to the gendered acquisition of productive resources such as land and water, lack of assets, inadequate funds to purchase farm inputs and the unequal division of household chores which highly reduces their energy and farming time. The overburdened women farmers cannot produce efficient quality and quantity of the cash crops expected in the markets, these reduces their household income and threatens their food security especially when they do not have additional income in the form of remittances or other sources.

To mitigate their challenges, women formed farmers' groups to increase their capacity in terms of buying and sales. They could access inputs and machinery at lower costs when working in groups than they could afford as individuals, these boosted their confidence towards market access. However, they encounter further challenges in accessing the formal markets. Their crops are characterised as a low quality which can only be sold in the informal markets. Moreover, they were unable to produce required quantities by formal markets due to their small land sizes.

### **6.3.0: RECOMMENDATIONS**

Access to land is the main challenge facing women smallholder farmers in rural communities, they also bear the burden of cultural and reproductive roles which limits their agricultural production capacity. It has been proven by several research platforms that women play an important role in agriculture which serves as their main source of livelihood. Furthermore, women, farmers face numerous challenges in accessing agricultural markets compared to men who do not participate much in the farming activities. Therefore, women farmers need to be empowered in terms of accessing land as a productive resource on their own without reliance to marriage ties as surety of land access. This can be achieved through the engagement of women farmers in the policy and decision-making and research platforms. Women participation in policy, decision making and research platforms enables the often ignored gender disparities to be given the necessary attention hence providing lasting solutions and achievement of gender equality. Women need to be involved in the decisions and design of agriculture and rural development programmes intended to improve the farmers' production capacities.

- Government and Non-Governmental Organisations have a role to play in making women farmers aware of their rights to productive resources; land and water through training and awareness campaigns and provide platforms for women and men to participate in redrawing the traditional laws to be gender inclusive to reduce inequality in resource allocation.
- Customary laws need to be subjected to rigorous changes to adhere to equality in resource allocation. Both men and women should be made aware of the importance of women's land rights and legal assistance be provided by Government and NGOs to assist and ensure that all women get access to agricultural land.

Gender has to be seen as a central figure of rural agriculture to create equality and balance among the farmers. This will enable long-term solution to the unequal distribution of resources ensuring

their adequate usage. The secondary rights to land for women need to be secured through improved systems that recognise women as major contributors to household food security. Land acquisition documentation that recognises women can also be used to increase their chances of accessing credit and ability to participate in cooperatives that target formal markets and long-term contracts.

- Farmers should be provided with legal documentation recognized by financial institutions by governments to enable them to access credit facilities.
- Cooperative action enhances smallholder farmers achieve economies of scale, therefore the farmers need to be assisted by NGOs to formulate strong legally recognized cooperatives that will access financial services and increase their market power. These will boost their productivity and income for the farmers.
- The farmers' groups should be provided with ongoing training by NGOs and government which will enhance their stability of production and independence.

It is essential for market access developments to realise the different gender roles of men and women which affect them in accessing the markets. Socio-economic issues such as access to credit, extension services, access to land as well as labour challenges affect men and women differently during the agricultural production and during the marketing of the products. The participation of women in markets generally improves livelihood, household income and food security. This was highlighted in focus group discussions whereby farmers indicated that there was an increasing number of men who offered to work on the women's farms since they earn income from the sale of their products.

Market access improvement is essential for the promotion of equal distribution of resources for men and women in their communities. It has been proven in several studies that when women farmers have access to secured land rights and access to markets they devote more of their budget to the education of their children, they have more savings from their income which was used for securing livelihoods and food security. Women who had strong land rights and inheritance rights were usually safer from domestic violence and they had healthy children not challenged by malnutrition like those from families where women had no access land.

- The government and NGOs can assist smallholder farmers by linking them with credit and financial services providers so that they can participate in formal markets.

Secure land rights boost agricultural production which increases the amount of income generated from the sale of products harvested from the little land they cultivate. The increase in household income ensures development in both the farmers' households as they invest more in assets and property that can be used to increase their market participation. The securing of land rights is effective even for farmers with the smallest land plots. Vegetables and fruits planted on these micro-plots can be produced in higher percentages when smallholder farmers collaborate by cultivating similar vegetables in their individual plots which they later sell collectively in the markets.

- Extension services will need to be frequently trained to acquire new technological innovations and improved practices which they will use to improve their smallholder farmers. The NGOs and governments can provide Subject Matter Specialists to provide specific information on critical subjects such as disease control, reduction of chemicals, financial management, and produce quality. This will enable farmers to participate in formal markets without failure to meet their high standards and requirements.

When women have strong land access rights, their decision making, leadership and market participation are improved. This is essential for rural community agricultural developments since women are the main contributors to rural agriculture and thus, they have better hands on experience which can be used in research that aims at providing solutions to their common challenges. Formal laws are usually not enforced even though they are believed to not discriminate against women, this poses a threat to women ability to access land and markets. The empowerment of women will see them participate more in enforcing the laws to ensure equal land access and market participation.

Gender analysis can be conducted to enhance deeper understanding between men and women on gender issues. This analysis can improve the participation of men and improvement of their knowledge on how to assist women in engaging fully in agriculture markets. When men are made to understand the concept of gender equality, they will engage in all the farming activities and assist women to achieve more yields, reduced labour burdens and improved economic empowerment.

- Facilitation of the active participation of gender experts, civil society and land legislation bodies in educating rural populations about women's land access rights will enhance their agricultural productivity through land access and bridge the gender gap between men and women.

- Government should support efforts to sensitise Traditional Authorities and equip them with tools to protect women's rights to land.
- NGOs should support campaigns advocating for access to information for communities about existing and new land legislation and policies.

The investment in infrastructures such as roads and farm machinery is crucial for market access development for smallholder farmers. When rural roads and water access are improved, farmers can access inputs without the hassle and they are able to reduce the commonly high transportation costs. The improvement in infrastructure is good for market participation as it also opens new marketing opportunities for farmers. With good road networks in their communities, farmers can shift from the cultivation of grains to high-value vegetables which are highly demanded in the formal markets. The improvement of infrastructure creates easier access to other services such as health, education and financial services which are key in smallholder farmers' empowerment.

- Construction and maintenance of rural roads by government can benefit smallholder farmers, NGOs can also educate farmers on high-value vegetables required in formal markets and how to increase their production.

Collective action through farmers' groups has a great market access benefit for smallholder farmers in rural communities. It is through this cooperative action that farmers can access formal markets, engage in long-term contracts, access bulk purchase discounts on inputs and machinery as well as low transport costs. Financial service providers have shown to offer credit assistance to groups of people rather than individuals. Farmers groups can again broker better prices and suitable payment terms for their products, this also benefits farmers to consider farming as a business rather than just as a survival method. Support institutions are therefore required to ensure the existence of farmers groups. Farmers need to be trained on how to manage their groups, leadership roles, record keeping and financial reporting to empower them and enhance their farming capacity.

Smallholder farmers could benefit from secured market avenues such as contract farming. Smallholder farmers need to access lucrative markets provided by large agri-business firms, export agencies school feeding programmes as well as processing plants. The contract farming secures markets for smallholder farmers and helps them avoid the unpredictable prices in the open markets. Furthermore, they can benefit from services provided for participation in formal markets such as

credit, high technology equipment, subject matter specialists and extension services which will increase the farmers' productivity and income generation.

- Government can support smallholder farmers by creating platforms for secured trading and sustainability by linking smallholder farmers with formal markets and formulating supporting policies that will enhance the farmers' ability to penetrate bigger markets.
- NGOs can also play a role in facilitating smallholder farmers access to urban markets and linkages to agribusiness firms or government institutions such as hospitals and prisons.

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## **APPENDIX A**



**SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE, EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES  
UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL**

**ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNAL LAND RIGHTS AND GENDER IMPLICATIONS ON SMALLHOLDER FARMERS  
ACCESS TO MARKETS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**Student Name: Thapelo Mothae**

**Supervisor: Dr Joyce Chitja**

**A. RESPONDENT'S PERSONAL DETAILS**

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers Group \_\_\_\_\_

2. Sex of Respondent

1. Male	2. Female
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3. Age of Respondent

1.<25 yrs.	2. 26-35 yrs.	3.36-45 yrs.	4. 46-55 yrs.	5.56- 65 yrs.	6.> 65 yrs.
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4. Marital Status of Respondent

1. Never Married	2. Married	3.Divorced	4.Widowed
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5. If Married, Please Provide Type of Marriage

1. Full Traditional	2. Part Traditional	3. Court/Church	4. Other, Specify
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6. Home Language of Respondent

1. Zulu	2.Xhosa	3. English	4. Afrikaans	5. Others (Specify)
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7. Respondent Race Classification

1. African	2. White	3. Coloured	4. Indian	5. Others
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8. Respondent's Educational Level

1. None	2. Primary	3. Secondary	4. Tertiary	5. Other (Specify)
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9. Occupation of Respondent:

1. Retired	2. Salaried Private Sector	3. Civil Servant	4. Self- Employed	5. Unemployed	6. Others
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10. Sources of Monthly Income

1.Pensions	2.Remittances	3.Wages	4.Farm Harvest	5.Casual Income	6.Government Grants	7.Others (Specify)
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11. What is the main livelihood strategy for the household breadwinner?

1. Farming	2. Self Employed	3. Casual Labour	4. Others
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12. How many times in a month does the household experience hunger?

1. None	2. Few	3. Several	4. Most times
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13. How many times do you run out of money to buy food in one month?

1. None	2. Few	3. Several	4. Most times
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14. What Livestock do you have in your Household?

1. Cattle	2. Goats	3. Chicken	4. Other (Specify)
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15. Do you own livestock in the household?

1. Yes	2. No
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16. If YES, who makes decisions to sell or slaughter livestock

1. Male (Husband)	2. Female (Wife)	3. Jointly
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**B. LAND RIGHTS**

17. How did the household get its land?

1. Bought	2. Given by Chief	3. Leased	4. Rented	5. Inherited	6. Given by Father
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18. Who owns the household land?

1. Man	2. Woman	3. Both
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19. In whose names is the land registered?

1. Man	2. Woman	3. Both
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20. What rights do you have over the land?

1. Control	2. Access	3. User	4. Tittle
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21. How long have you used the land? \_\_\_\_\_ Years.

22. What do you use the land for?

1. Farming (Gardening)	2. Livestock Keeping	3. Residence	4. Others (Specify)
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23. How big is your farming land? \_\_\_\_\_

24. What activities do you do to prepare your land?

1. Till the soil	2. Clearing (rock/ bushes)	3. Addition of fertiliser	4. Others (Specify)
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25. Do women own land in your community?

1. Yes	2. No
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26. How do women get land access rights in your community?

1. Marriage	2. Given by Chief	3. Given by Father	4. Buy	5. Other

Who decides on?

	1. Men	2. Women	3. Both
27. What to plant			
28. How many harvests to be sold			
29. Land allocation to household members			
30. What to buy in the Household			
31. Choice of Cash Crop			
32. Choice of food Crop			

33. How is land owned in this Community?

1. Title Deed	
2. Register of Land Owners Local Council	
3. Register of Land Owners Local Chief	
4. It is a Family Land	

34. Have some of the members of the community lost land because HOUSEHOLD:

1. HH moved to a new place	2. HH sold the land	3. HH does not obey local laws	4. HH could not use the land	5. Others (Specify)
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35. How does a female household member lose land rights in the community?

1. Divorce	
2. Long time without use	
3. Disagreement with Family	
4. Husband Death	
5. Other (Specify)	

36. Whom do you approach in a land dispute?

\_\_\_\_\_

37. What happens to women's land rights when a marriage ends?

1. Stays on Husband 's land	2. Goes back to her family	3. Allocated new land in village	4. Other (Specify)
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38. At what level of the production cycle are men involved?

1. Planting	2. Weeding	3. Harvesting	4. Sale
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39. Is there equality in land inheritance by boys and girls? Explain below

1. Yes	2. No	3. Other Explain
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### C. MARKET ACCESS AND LIVELIHOODS

40. How many times do you plant in a year?

1. Once a year	2. Twice a year	3. All year round
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41. Which crops do you grow and why?

Crop	For Sale	For Consumption	Other
Maize (Green Mealies)			
Potatoes			
Beans			
Vegetables			
Others _____			

42. Do you have access to markets for agricultural produce?

1. Yes	2. No
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43. If YES, where do you sell your agricultural produce?

1. local shops	2. Supermarket	3. independent traders	4. GVT Contract	5. Others .....
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44. Have you had formal contracts for Sale of your produce?

1. Yes	2. No
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45. How much produce do you take to the markets?

1. All Produce	2. More than half	3. Other
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46. How much produce was damaged before being traded?

1. All	2. More than Half	3. Less than Half	4. Just a Few
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47. Do you have storage facilities?

1. Yes	2. No
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48. Which assets enable you to market your produce?

1. Motorcar	2. Cell Phone	3. Television	4. Radio	5. Other.....
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49. How do you decide on which crop to grow?

1. Common crop	2. Good Price	3. High Demand	4. Easy to Store	5. Other (Specify)
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50. Who has more access to markets between men and women?

1. Men	2. Women	3. Equal Access
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Which of the following are barriers to Market Access?

51. Transport	
52. Quantities and volumes required by buyers	
53. Prices offered by buyers	
54. Others _____	

55. Do buyers require value added and processed agricultural produce?	1. Yes	2. No
56. Do you have access to Prices and Market Information?	1. Yes	2. No
57. Are you selling agricultural produce as a group/collective?	1. Yes	2. No
58. What problems do women face in marketing and market access?	1. Yes	2. No
59. Do men and women face the same challenges in accessing markets?	1. Yes	2. No
60. Has cooperative membership improved Market Access in your community?	1. Yes	2. No
61. How many years have you been selling agricultural produce?		
62. Do your land rights enhance your ability to access to markets?	1. Yes	2. No

63. Between men and women who spends more hours on the farm?

	Men	Women
1. Who spends more time on the farm		
2. Who decides on what to farm?		
3. Who decides on how much produce to sell?		
4. Who takes produce to the Market?		
5. Who arranges the prices?		

64. What are the challenges faced by farmers in producing for markets?

1. Agricultural Equipment (soil preparation, irrigation, harvesting)	
2. Agricultural knowledge (pest & disease control, fertilizer, seed etc.)	
3. Post-harvest practices and knowledge	
4. Consistency of supply	
5. Market and business knowledge	

## **FOCUS GROUP GUIDE**

1. What is the relationship between gender and communal land access?
2. How do your land rights affect productivity and access to markets?
3. What factors affect smallholder farmers from accessing agricultural markets?
4. How does communal land access enhance smallholder farmer access to markets?
5. How has market access improved smallholder farmer's productivity?
6. What support have smallholder farmers received?
7. How have women been accessing markets and where are the markets located?
8. What recommendations can be made to improve smallholder farmer's access to markets?

## ETHICAL CLEARANCE



**UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL**  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

11 April 2016

Mr Thapelo Mofhele 218507101  
School of Agricultural, Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Mofhele

Protocol reference number: HSS/1477/015M  
Project Title: Assessment of Communal Land Rights and Gender Implications on Smallholder Farmers access to markets: The case of South Africa and Lesotho

**Full Approval – Expedited Application**

In response to your application received 14 October 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....  
**Dr Shemika Singh (Chair)**  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/s/

Cc Supervisor: Dr Joyce Chitja  
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Onesimo Mutanga  
Cc School Administrator: Ms Marshia Mankjoo

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